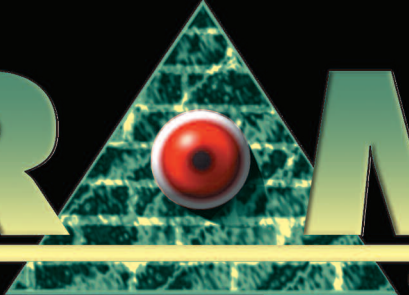


PYRAMID[®]



Issue 3/70 August '14

FOURTH EDITION FESTIVAL



DESTINATION: ABYDOS

by David L. Pulver

ELEMENTAL XIA CHAMPIONS VS. THE SHENGUAI

by Jason "PK" Levine

INTO THE WILDERNESS

by Matt Riggsby

HORDE NINJA

by Peter V. Dell'Orto

TEN FOR TEN

by Sean Punch

GAMING IN THE ANCIEN RÉGIME

by William H. Stoddard

REVISITING HIGH-TECH

by Hans-Christian Vortisch

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Article Colors

Each article is color-coded to help you find your favorite sections.

Pale Blue: In This Issue

Brown: In Every Issue (humor, editorial, etc.)

Green: Columnist

Dark Blue: GURPS Features

Purple: Systemless Features

COVER ART

John Zeleznik

As of August 2014, *GURPS Fourth Edition* is 10 years old! This issue celebrates with several prominent *GURPS* contributors, who add the latest *GURPS* insight to past projects . . . with amazing results.

Anchors aweigh! Our first *Destination: Abydos*. *GURPS Basic Set* co-author David L. Pulver offers *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy* adventure ideas and template suggestions, *GURPS Zombies* undead picks, *GURPS Mass Combat* information for two armies, and more.

As Line Editor during *GURPS'* first decade (and beyond), Sean Punch ponders the last 10 years in *Ten for Ten*. Get his top picks for new and optional rules from the numerous supplements that he's written in the past decade, as well as a peek behind the curtain with his reasoning for their importance.

William H. Stoddard, author of *GURPS Social Engineering*, takes the opportunity to update the social aspects of *GURPS Swashbucklers* for Third Edition in *Gaming in the Ancien Régime*. Learn about key sociopolitical traits, the proper way to act in refined French society, and significant adventuring opportunities.

GURPS Dungeon Fantasy Adventure 1: Mirror of the Fire Demon is a fantastic scenario on its own, but now you can take it *Into the Wilderness* with its creator Matt Riggsby. Add details from *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 16: Wilderness Adventures*, including a *Revised Hostile Terrain Table*. You'll also run across some new cold-weather loadouts for individuals and groups.

When *GURPS Thaumatology: Chinese Elemental Powers* invades the *GURPS Monster Hunters* line, you now have *Elemental Xia Champions vs. the Shenguai*. Jason "PK" Levine – the shadowy mentor behind *Monster Hunters* – reveals the secrets of these new champions and enemies with a template, monsters, powers, and more.

When a single ninja won't do, you need to seek out the *Horde Ninja*. At great risk, Peter V. Dell'Orto, author of *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 12: Ninja*, presents the mysterious "ninja-as-monster," including stats and tactics, plus a new advantage that allows fighters to become more powerful as their numbers are whittled down.

Hans-Christian Vortisch – our resident expert on all things gun-related in *GURPS* – discusses two new weapon options he might have considered from one particular hardback when *Revisiting High-Tech*.

Random Thought Table demonstrates how rules can jumpstart the imagination, while *Odds and Ends* features *GURPS City Stats* for Paris circa 1720, plus ideas for using rules to your adventure-generating advantage.

With this 10th anniversary celebration of the Fourth Edition of *GURPS Basic Set*, don't wait a second more! Be the first to pour a fifth and join us here in seventh heaven.

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FROM THE EDITOR

WHEN DOES LOOKING BACK MEAN LOOKING AHEAD?

It was 10 years ago today (more or less) Fourth Edition taught the gang to play . . .

By the nature of the publishing business, *GURPS* spends most of its time looking forward. Sure, we're immensely proud of what's come out in the past, but our sights usually have to be set on what's coming next week/month/year, lest deadlines and production gremlins devour us in our sleep.

So when Sean Punch suggested offering a special issue of *Pyramid* that commemorated the 10th anniversary of *GURPS Fourth Edition*, it took some head-scratching to wrap our mind around the idea. How could we look at the past *and* forward at the same time? Then collectively, we had a brainstorm. We asked some established Fourth Edition authors to take one of their past works and examine it through a lens of what is possible today. What wouldn't have been feasible to include in an earlier work without writing *another* supplement (one that has been written in the meantime)?

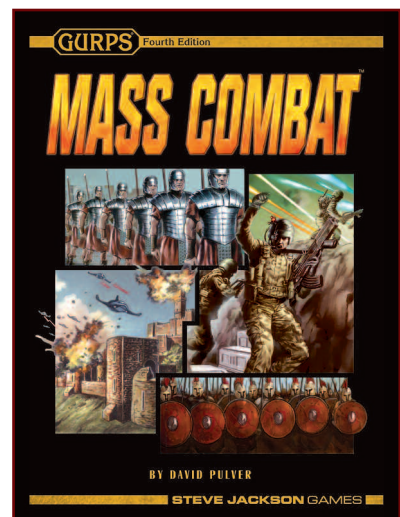
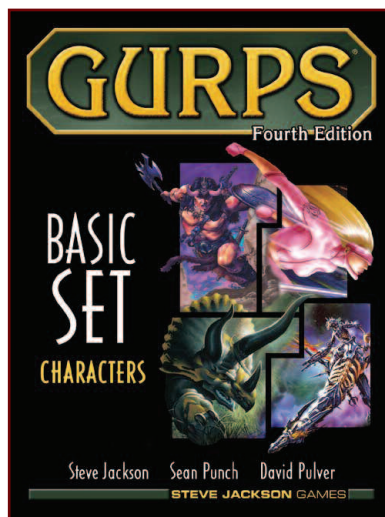
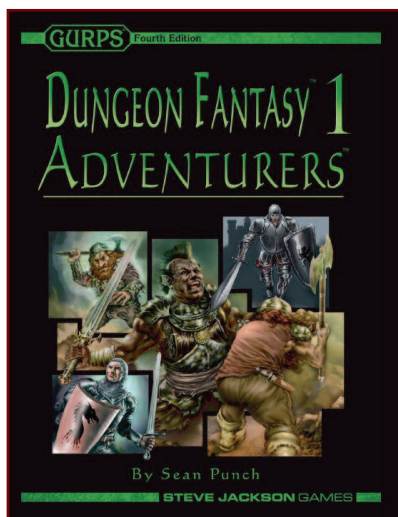
Thus David Pulver's *GURPS Banestorm: Abydos* couldn't feature stats for the titular locale's armies in the *GURPS Mass*

Combat format, nor could it include insight for how to use it in *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy* campaigns, because neither of those existed when he started writing *Abydos*. Similarly, Matt Riggsby's *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy Adventure 1: Mirror of the Fire Demon* couldn't include detailed wilderness encounters, because *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 16: Wilderness Adventures* wasn't yet a twinkle in Sean Punch's eye. And so on.

I'm immensely proud of this trip down memory lane, especially because we used the opportunity to pave new ground at the same time. However, we recognize that we can't walk alone, and – as ever – we're most grateful to *you*, our gaming audience, for making this first decade possible. Thank you from us all, and hopefully we'll see you 10 years from now in the same spot . . . perhaps with a totally different look back!

WRITE HERE, WRITE NOW

How have the last 10 years of *GURPS* supplements affected your campaign? What are you looking forward to with the line? Let us know via private feedback at pyramid@sjgames.com, or join the public discussion online at forums.sjgames.com.



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Army Rosters

As with Abydos, Quartedec wouldn't deploy an entire legion plus levies in anything short of a war. The roster below is what is ready for a rapid response or quick attack by the earl: one cohort of the legion, plus a force of knights levied from his nearest castles and estates. The *entire* legion plus most of the chivalry of Quartedec are five times this size; also add a couple extra mage and engineer elements as legion-level assets.

Elements: 94. *Cost:* \$20,150,000 to raise, \$2,806,000 to maintain.

Naval Strength and Sieges

Quartedec's naval strength was diminished following its last naval defeat by Abydos, but it can build or hire a nearly equivalent number of War Galleys and Merchant Galleys (Basic equipment; Average quality) of its own in an emergency; if it needed to invade, it would hire or levy sufficient Large Boats from fishermen, etc., to land the entire legion.

The city of Quartedec itself is defended by plentiful additional heavy artillery and levies, sufficient to deter any direct siege by Abydos.

Quartedec Muster Army Roster

<i>Elements</i>	<i>Total TS</i>	<i>Classes</i>	<i>Mobility</i>	<i>Features</i>
2 Legionary Mages (Battle Mages)	35	Art, C31, F, Rec	Foot	–
50 Legionary Spearmen (Heavy Infantry)	500	–	Foot	–
10 Legionary Crossbowmen (Bowmen)	50	F	Foot	–
5 Legionary Scouts (Light Cavalry)	25	Cv, Rec	Mounted	–
2 Knights Hospitaller (Heavy Cavalry)	35	Cv	Mounted	Fanatic, Impetuous
10 Quartedec Knights (Heavy Cavalry)	150	Cv	Mounted	Impetuous, Levy
15 Quartedec Militia (Light Infantry)	7.5	Rec	Foot	Levy
<i>Artillery TS</i>	35			
<i>C3I TS</i>	35			
<i>Cavalry TS</i>	210			
<i>Fire TS</i>	85			
<i>Recon TS</i>	67.5			
<i>Force TS</i>	802.5			

Legionary Mages

A typical noble-raised legion has some 60-70 battle mages, which is far more than most Yrth armies deploy! (Elf armies, with their higher ratio of mages, and that of Abydos, which gets extra mages by also relying on women and long-lived necromancers, are rare exceptions). Legionary mages (schooled by

Battle Mages

the Templars) are, however, better trained in arcane battle tactics than the Ravens, and better equipped with Powerstones and specialized military magic items. They are especially famed for their prowess in Earth magic. Those at Quartedec are also well trained in Water and Air magic, due to the threat of battles on the Lake of Styx. These statistics can also represent Knights Templar.

TS: 17.5. *WT:* 1.

Classes: Art, C3I, F, Rec. *Mobility:* Foot.

Quality: Very fine equipment; Elite troops.

Features: None.

Cost: \$1,000K to raise; \$116K to maintain.

The Quartedec legion has eight elements of legion mages with TS 140.

Legionary Spearmen

Heavy Infantry

These soldiers are the backbone of the Megalan legions. Soldiers have helms, mail, long spears, medium shields, and short swords.

TS: 10. *WT:* 1.

Classes: None. *Mobility:* Foot.

Quality: Fine equipment; Good troops.

Features: None.

Cost: \$120K to raise; \$17.6K to maintain.

The Quartedec legion has 300 elements of heavy infantry legionaries with TS 3,000.

Legionary Crossbowmen

Bowmen

These are supporting missile troops, in mail, and equipped with crossbows, pavises, and short swords.

TS: 5. *WT:* 1.

Classes: F. *Mobility:* Foot.

Quality: Fine equipment; Good troops.

Features: None.

Cost: \$120K to raise; \$17.6K to maintain.

The Quartedec legion has 60 elements of legion crossbowmen with TS 300.

Legionary Scouts

Light Cavalry

Imperial legions maintain a small force of well-trained light cavalry for scouting and pursuit. Traditionally, the Megalan legion's indigenous cavalry have not been quite as impressive as its infantry, but the Earldom of Quartedec has a strong equestrian tradition and its locally recruited riders and mounts are fully up to par with the infantry.

TS: 5. *WT:* 2.

Classes: Cv, Rec. *Mobility:* Mounted.

TEN FOR TEN

BY SEAN PUNCH

My memories of the development of the *GURPS Basic Set, Fourth Edition* – that is, of most of 2002-2004 – are a complete blur. David Pulver and I faced a deluge of input. We had more than 14 years of customer feedback on Third Edition to wade through, to which the staff, freelance writers, and longtime playtesters reviewing our efforts added *thousands* of suggestions. Our own ideas were very often swept aside in the torrent – an occupational hazard!

In the ensuing decade, a lot of half-formed thoughts from that time have bobbed back to the surface. I cannot speak for David, but many of my projects over the past 10 years have contained rules that I wish had shaped up quickly enough to grace the *Basic Set*. I'd love it if every *GURPS* player bought and used those supplements, allowing my late-breaking ideas to sneak into the system's core through the back door, but the realities of hobby budgets aren't lost on me. Fortunately, this special issue of *Pyramid* offers me a way to resolve that conflict.

Here are 10 short, sweet concepts from supplements I wrote in the 2004-2014 period that I feel would have been worthy of the *Basic Set*, collected for the benefit of gamers without bottomless pockets (or who like quick references!), and garnished with creator commentary.

APPEARANCE ROLLS AS LOYALTY ROLLS

Source: *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 15: Henchmen*.

The GM may specify that an Ally's appearance roll doesn't describe the odds of the NPC showing up – the follower participates in *all* adventures and is present whenever that makes sense – but rather the chance of that person obeying commands. When the PC issues orders, roll against frequency of appearance at the moment of truth; any success means that instructions were followed, any failure indicates they weren't. A repeated attempt, if possible, is permitted only after the time it would take to execute the orders. Examples:

- A hero in combat could yell, "Hand me my sword!", "My sword, give it to me!", "The blade, knave!", etc. and roll every turn until it works.
- An order like "Fight these foes!" is issued once, at the start of the battle. Failure means the Ally falls back, flees, or similar.
- A command such as "Stand watch for the middle shift" means the GM rolls secretly to see whether the Ally actually pays attention. The player learns this only at the *end* of the watch – if the GM feels the PC would even know.

This is best left optional, as some players prefer completely loyal Allies who aren't always around. However, in globetrotting campaigns or those involving missions where "no reinforcements"

is a regular complication, it's jarring to have lowly Allies casually bypassing great distances and hostile forces. There, it does less violence to drama to have the question be one of discipline, not presence.

*Ten short, sweet concepts
from supplements, collected
for quick reference.*

COMPLEMENTARY SKILLS

Sources: *GURPS Action 2: Exploits* and *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 2: Dungeons*.

The GM may rule that a *complementary skill* could logically assist the *master skill* required by an undertaking, potentially yielding a bonus. The GM decides whether the individual performing the task must attempt both skill rolls, needs an assistant with the complementary skill, or may choose either option. It's also up to the GM whether these rolls must involve different skills or if a helper using the same skill can make matters easier by sharing the workload.

Roll against the complementary skill *before* trying the master skill roll. Only personal modifiers (due to afflictions, disadvantages, etc.) influence the complementary skill roll – never external ones. If the complementary skill requires a Quick Contest, the target resists normally. The outcome gives a modifier to the master skill, cumulative with other modifiers such as equipment bonuses.

Outcome (Uncontested)	Outcome (Contested)	Modifier
Critical Success	Victory by 5+	+2
Success	Victory by 0-4	+1
Failure	Loss by 1-4	-1
Critical Failure	Loss by 5+	-2

The character attempting the master skill roll *must* use this modifier. If you don't trust your assistant, don't request a complementary skill roll!

It isn't legal to "chain" complementary skill bonuses; a complementary skill can't boost a master skill that serves to complement some third skill. However, the GM may let the master skill benefit from *several* complementary skills for a long task (p. B346) that involves multiple PCs in a major team effort. The total bonus cannot exceed +4.

A classic *xia* will take Judo, Karate, and a solid cutting weapon like Broadsword. A more practical, modern fighter may focus exclusively on weapons, but shouldn't overlook unarmed training; a *xia* needs to be able to defend himself if disarmed. Your secondary skills determine whether you're an action hero (DX-based skills), wise master (IQ- and Per-based skills), or a little of both. Theology (Shamanic) specifically represents Taoism in this case.

In *Monster Hunters*, there is no need for Harmony with the Tao (*Chinese Elemental Powers*, p. 15), as skills like Alchemy, Esoteric Medicine, and Fortune-Telling (Feng Shui) work at "full strength" by default. You may use points earmarked for elemental powers to buy or improve these – though it isn't worth raising Alchemy higher than 12 unless the GM also allows you to raise your Magery (Elixirs Only). See *GURPS Thaumatology: Ritual Path Magic* (pp. 28-30) for elixir-creation rules.

Note that your power Talents do *not* add to cinematic skills; they merely enable the purchase without requiring Trained by a Master or Weapon Master.

SAMPLE POWER SETS

Choose one of the 70-point power sets below, or use them as inspiration when picking your own combination of abilities. All items marked with the same footnote (* or †) are bought as a set of alternative abilities.

That Special Touch

The various "Touching . . ." abilities are powerful weapons against living subjects, like most cryptids and lycanthropes, but not against purely supernatural foes. In game terms, Resistant to Metabolic Hazards adds to the roll to resist the attack (for Touching the Heart, the +3 or +8 to resistance instead reduces the fatigue injury by 3 or 8), while Immunity to Metabolic Hazards negates the attack completely.

Wood

The combination of Catapult Hand and Throwing Art is potent, and you can use Root Grip to obtain missiles. Lizard Climb (*GURPS Martial Arts*, p. 61) requires secondary skills Acrobatics and Climbing at 14. Similar to the warrior, your Power Blow is intended as a utility skill, not a combat one; Club Fist gives +2 to Power Blow rolls to smash things.

Talent: Chinese Wood Talent 1 [5].

Wood Abilities and Perks: Catapult Hand [9*]; Club Fist [2*]; Endurance of Bamboo [33†]; Root Grip [1*]; Skin of Oak [7]; Storm of Wind [5†]; Thorns [1].

Cinematic Skills: Lizard Climb (H) DX-1 [2]-13; Power Blow (H) Will-2 [1]-13; Throwing Art (H) DX [4]-14.

Fire

You have wide-ranging command over fire, along with insight into basic *qi* that can be invaluable in telling man from monster. Inner Awareness also gives +2 to your Esoteric Medicine and (if applicable) Fortune-Telling. Flying Leap and Light Walk require secondary skills Acrobatics, Jumping, Stealth at 14; both receive +2 when combined with Lightened Body.

Talent: Chinese Fire Talent 2 [10].

Basic Ability: Inner Awareness [4†].

Fire Abilities and Perks: Commanding Fire [4*]; Flame Breath [1*]; Heat Endurance [19†]; Hot Metal [1]; Illumination [1]; Lightened Body [2†]; Smoke Veil [2*]; Storm of Fire [21*].

Cinematic Skills: Flying Leap (H) IQ [4]-12; Light Walk (H) DX-2 [1]-12.

Earth

Use Avalanche, Kiai, and Dust Cloud to keep your foes confused, before bringing your fists to bear as deadly weapons. Commanding Earth can cause further penalties and is useful for getting past stone barriers.

Talent: Chinese Earth Talent 2 [10].

Earth Abilities and Perks: Avalanche [3*]; Commanding Earth [4*]; Dust Cloud [3*]; Skin of Earth [15]; Storm of Stones [25*]; Striking Surface [1]; Sure-Footed (Uneven) [1].

Cinematic Skills: Body Control (H) HT-1 [2]-13; Kiai (H) HT-1 [2]-13; Pressure Points (H) IQ [4]-12.

Metal

This *xing* gives a wide range of attacks, both close and ranged, along with command over an element that many weapons comprise. Glinting Edge gives +2 to use Breaking Blow – not enough to soak time penalties, so reserve it for noncombat use – and Immobility adds +2 to Immovable Stance.

Talent: Chinese Metal Talent 1 [5].

Metal Abilities and Perks: Attracting Iron [2*]; Commanding Metal [4]; Glinting Edge [7†]; Immobility 2 [1†]; Skin of Bronze [23]; Storm of Metal [21*]; Stream of Needles [2*]; Ultimate Blade [1].

Cinematic Skills: Breaking Blow (H) IQ-1 [2]-11; Immovable Stance (H) DX-1 [2]-13.

Water

In a campaign set near water, even if that just means the occasional trip into the sewers, your mobility and adaptability allows you to engage aquatic foes and take others by surprise. Touching the Heart is included here despite its drawbacks (*That Special Touch*, above), due to how effective it is when you *can* use it. Consider raising your Per, as both Blind Fighting and Sensitivity (from *Martial Arts*, p. 62) rely upon it.

Talent: Chinese Water Talent 1 [5].

Water Abilities and Perks: Breathing Water [14]; Dragon Swiftess [2*]; Quenching Touch [1]; Resistance to Fire [2*]; Summoning Fog [17†]; Taking the Narrow Passage [18*]; Touching the Heart [2†]; Water Spear [1†].

Cinematic Skills: Blind Fighting (VH) Per-1 [4]-11; Push (H) DX-1 [2]-13; Sensitivity (VH) Per-2 [2]-10.

All Elements

You have a smattering of every *xing*, optimized for understanding *qi* flow and kicking butt. Inner Awareness can alert you when there is something wrong with a person or place, after which Inner Discrimination provides full details *and* gives +4 to your Esoteric Medicine and (if applicable) Fortune-Telling rolls.

ABOUT *GURPS*

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Errata. Everyone makes mistakes, including us – but we do our best to fix our errors. Up-to-date errata pages for all *GURPS* releases, including this book, are available on our website – see above.

Rules and statistics in this book are specifically for the *GURPS Basic Set, Fourth Edition*. Page references that begin with B refer to that book, not this one.

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