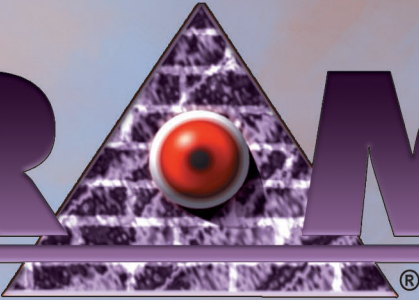


PYRAMID[®]



Issue 3/95 September '16

OVERLAND ADVENTURES



THE EMERALD HELL
by Timothy Ponce

MONSTER CARAVAN
by David L. Pulver

LOW-TECH TRANSPORTATION
by Christopher R. Rice

THE VILLAGE GREEN
by Jon Black

STEVE JACKSON GAMES

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CONTENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

FROM THE EDITOR 3

THE EMERALD HELL 4
by Timothy Ponce

LOW-TECH TRANSPORTATION 13
by Christopher R. Rice

EIDETIC MEMORY: MONSTER CARAVAN 21
by David L. Pulver

THE VILLAGE GREEN 30
by Jon Black

RANDOM THOUGHT TABLE:
KEEPING REINS ON THE WILDS 37
by Steven Marsh, Pyramid Editor

ABOUT GURPS 39

ARTICLE COLORS

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

- Pale Blue:* In This Issue
- Brown:* In Every Issue
- Green:* Columnist
- Dark Blue:* GURPS Features
- Purple:* Systemless Features

COVER
Abrar Ajmal

Some people take “Get lost!” as an insult. Heroes take it as a challenge to find adventure! This issue of *Pyramid* is devoted to various aspects of overland adventuring in low-tech settings.

Heroes often feel ready for anything, but are they truly prepared to survive if they find themselves in *The Emerald Hell*? This mini-supplement brings jungles to life in your **GURPS** campaign. Learn about travel within a rain forest, survival therein, and dangers waiting to claim the lives of the unwary. It even includes ideas for how to get explorers into the thick of this verdant wilderness.

Trade seems like an easy way to make a lot of money in a low-tech world, until you start running the numbers involved with *Low-Tech Transportation*. Christopher R. Rice – co-author of **GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 19: Incantation Magic** – breaks it all down for you to show you exactly how much money and supplies it takes to haul cargo long distances via various methods, including transport by cart, ship, or horse.

If you travel the roads of a fantasy world, watch out for the *Monster Caravan*. This month’s Eidetic Memory offering from **GURPS Banestorm: Abydos** author David L. Pulver details a ready-to-use group of enterprising creatures bringing their ill-gotten goods with them on the road. Discover 10 different inhabitants of the caravan (complete with **GURPS** stats) and the full contents of its five-car train.

Not every encounter along the winding path is waiting to kill you; sometimes you find yourself standing in tranquil contentment amid *The Village Green*. Learn about what makes a village, who and what can be found there, and how these kinds of settlements may vary between different tech levels.

This issue also features a Random Thought Table that offers some ideas for how to keep control over the seemingly infinite expanse of wilderness open to heroes. With this installment of *Pyramid*, the larger world suddenly became both more inviting and more dangerous . . . and it’s never been a better time to *get lost!*

There is no place to go, and so we travel! You and I, and what for, just to imagine that we could go somewhere else.

– Edward Dahlberg

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FROM THE EDITOR

THE CALL OF THE GREAT OUTDOORS

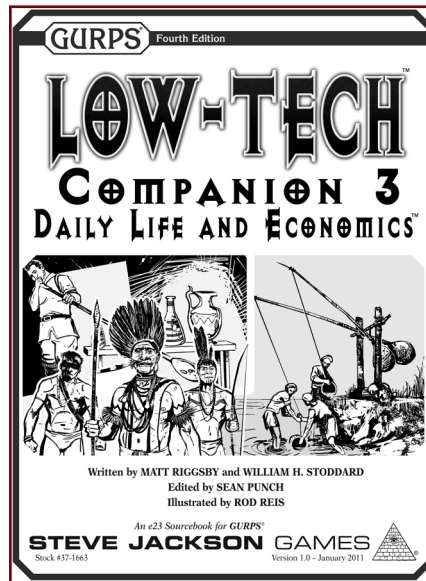
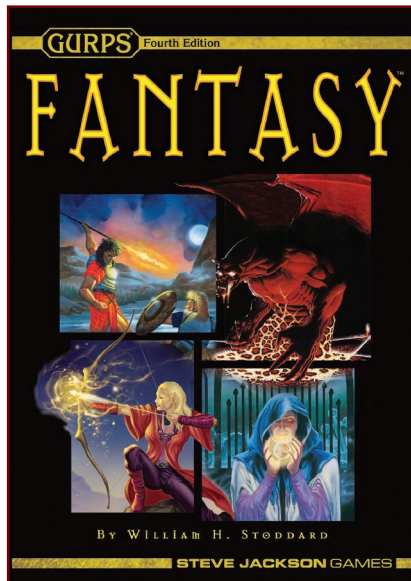
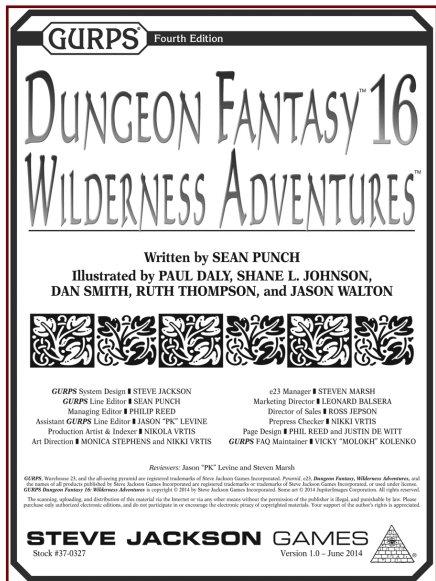
As I type this, the Kickstarter for the *Dungeon Fantasy Roleplaying Game* is still underway, having just funded. When I first conceived of this issue – many, many moons ago – it was inspired in part by the recently released *GURPS Dungeons Fantasy 16: Wilderness Adventures*. So *Dungeon Fantasy* fever is thick in the air here.

Although this issue focuses on the low-tech side of overland adventures, what's interesting from my point of view is that it's one of those topics that's applicable to just about any campaign or genre. Modern-era action/cliffhangers-type adventures can certainly get a lot of use out of an exciting jungle locale (pp. 4-12), as could any science-fiction setting looking to conjure a planet of peril. Similarly, I'm pretty sure *Stargate SG-1* and *Star Trek* both stopped by their respective "central castings" to create interesting premodern villages (pp. 29-36) for heroes to interact with. And, of course, what low-tech fantasy setting *couldn't* use a caravan of monsters (pp. 20-28)?

The idea of humanity-against-nature has been a part of our species' experience since the beginning, and the idea of attempting to tame the wilds – or at least survive – has permeated our art from the beginning. Whether you're looking for in-depth but usable realism that arguably makes *GURPS* unique, or the pick-up-and-play fun that has made the *Dungeon Fantasy* experience a hit with fans, hopefully there's something in this issue that will inspire you to "take it outside."

WRITE HERE, WRITE NOW

This issue of *Pyramid* has a smaller number of articles than usual, but are either more in-depth or meatier than many we've done in the past. So what do you think? Did you find something here that inspires you to go on your own outdoor adventures? Or did something here feel a little lost? Let us know privately via the digital gremlins at pyramid@sjgames.com, or join our virtual path-forging community at forums.sjgames.com.



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JUNGLE FEVER

Jungles are known for their strange and horrific diseases. Below are two generic maladies intended to represent the wide and varied infections that plague unprepared travelers.

Special Infections

Sepsis and gangrene are common jungle infections and often occur together. Use the following statistics for sepsis.

Vector: Blood Agent.

Resistance Roll: HT-3.

Delay: 6d hours.

Damage: 1d-1 toxic.

Cycles: 14 (daily cycles).

Symptoms: Absent-Mindedness and Low Pain Threshold after losing 1/3 HP. Confused (12) after losing 1/2 HP.

Confused (9) upon losing 2/3 HP.

Contagiousness: Mildly contagious.

Gangrene is similar except it has 16 eight-hour cycles and works its way through the body; damage taken applies to the injured hit location first until it's "dismembered," moving to neighboring hit locations from there. Repeat this process until the victim dies or overcomes the infection. Its symptoms include a sweetly rancid odor and

distinct blackish-green color; the victim gains Bad Smell and Distinctive Features after losing 1/3 HP. Gangrene often leads to sepsis.

Waterborne Illnesses

Water in the jungle is home to a variety of bacterial and parasitic infections. Most of these have similar symptoms, except that where bacterial infections cause prolific diarrhea resulting in fatigue damage with the Dehydration modifier, parasitic infections result in Starvation instead.

Vector: Ingested.

Resistance Roll: HT+3 minus 1d (HT-3 to HT+2).

Delay: 1d-1 days.

Damage: 1d-1 fatigue dehydration.

Cycles: 2d+5 (daily cycles).

Symptoms: Nausea occurs immediately, with retching on any critically failed resistance roll or one failed by 5+. Bad Smell and Susceptible 2 (Ingested Diseases) after losing 1/3 FP. Once HP loss begins, any critical failure results in a seizure (p. B429) lasting (20 - HT) minutes. At negative HP, any critical failure instead results in a coma (p. B429).

Contagiousness: Mildly contagious.

While the threat of contracting malaria, yellow fever, dengue fever, and the like can add danger to a game, not all groups find this fun. The GM may thus wish to skip random contagion checks and afflict the PCs only when it furthers the plot.

SURVIVAL

Surviving in the jungle requires the Survival (Jungle) skill, which identifies good places to camp, building materials for makeshift shelter, edible plants, potential dangers – like snakes, spiders, and predators – and food and drinkable water. The bare requirements for survival are food, water, and shelter to escape the rain. A fire for cooking and drying waterlogged supplies helps increase the party's comfort, but it is not necessary for survival – the jungle is not a cold place, after all!

Finding Food and Water

Adventurers can make the normal Survival (Jungle) or Naturalist rolls to forage and range weapon skill or Fishing rolls to find food while traveling (p. B427), or stop and take an hour to make any one of these rolls. Hikers can only attempt the latter option up to five times in an area before it is depleted; they must spend at least another five hours hiking to new foraging or hunting grounds before trying again.

Even with ample food, people must have water, and in the jungle heat, they need more than usual (see *A Cruel Climate*, p. 9). Fortunately, water abounds in the jungle. Unfortunately, much of it carries diseases and parasites (see *Disease and Infection*, pp. 7-8). A successful Survival (Jungle)

roll provides enough *safe* drinking water – from rain, water vines, etc. – for one person for a day without slowing travel. If more water is needed, up to five additional Survival (Jungle) rolls can be attempted within an area. Adventurers who want to know if a water source is safe roll against Survival (Jungle) or Naturalist-2.

Burn, Baby, Burn!

One other element is generally needed for efficient survival in the jungle, although it isn't *absolutely* essential. Fire can kill harmful parasites and illnesses infesting food or water. It also makes those unidentified rodents hunted earlier taste a *lot* better! But starting a fire in such a wet environment is exceedingly difficult. If it has rained that day, most kindling is too damp to use (see *GURPS Low-Tech*, p. 35). If it only rained the day before, kindling will be a little damp, giving -5 to the Survival roll to start a fire, and if it hasn't rained for longer, dry kindling is readily available. A person can attempt to dry kindling by keeping it next to his body for 1d+1 hours; success reduces the penalty for damp kindling to -2 and allows a Survivalist-5 to use wet kindling.

Whenever attempting to start a fire, make a Survival (Jungle) roll to locate the best possible kindling. On a success by 0 to 4, the searcher finds typical kindling available given the recent rainfall (see above); success by 5 or more *or* a critical success yields kindling one degree drier. Failure results in kindling one degree wetter, and a critical failure gives nothing usable regardless of weather conditions. If any gear for fire-starting is damp – a likely situation in the jungle – all times are doubled! (For times and methods, see *GURPS Low-Tech*, p. 35.)

Transportation Costs by Beast

Beasts of burden are a far more common method of getting goods from one place to another. Since even the average draft horse has ST 25 and Basic Move 6, they can haul 375 lbs. at Medium encumbrance . . . over six times as much as what a porter could carry! The GM may wish to restrict the ST of a typical horse due to technology level (see *Low-Tech Companion 3*, p. 15); this *substantially* reduces the travel rate and maximum capacity.

Basic gear for a horse weighs 30 lbs. (bridle and bit, horse-shoes, saddle, saddlebags, and stirrups), allowing another 345 lbs. to be carried. Someone who never intends to ride a horse only needs a packsaddle (40 lbs.) and a lead line! A packsaddle gives the standard benefits of a riding saddle (reduces FP loss from weight) and allows cargo to be carried. Unless the scene necessitates speed, assume that a muleteer takes the maximum possible time for Packing rolls (about 30 minutes per animal) to garner +5 to the skill.

A packhorse can only travel as fast as the person leading it; if being led by someone (who is unencumbered) on foot, that's 20 miles/day on a decent road, in good weather. If being led by a rider on another horse, Medium encumbrance means they move approximately 28.8 miles/day of fair weather and good roads.

Horses that can graze and be watered at the end of the ride – or during the trip – need a mere 0.75 lbs. of grain (\$1/lb.) per day. Traveling through lands without suitable pasture or grazing requires 3.5 lbs. of grain *plus* another 10 lbs. of hay (\$0.25/lb.) per day. In dry climes, water also must

be carried; the minimum is five gallons, which translates to another 40 lbs. of weight. Thus, food and water comes to 0.75 lbs. of weight per day of travel along routes with good grazing (40.75 lbs. in a dry climate) or 13.5 lbs. along routes with no pasture (53.5 lbs. in a dry climate).

Donkeys carry less (they have a ST 15 and thus a Basic Lift of 45 lbs.), but are cheaper . . . if somewhat intractable. Mules are more likely to stop working than to continue to the point of foundering (see *Optional Rules for Riding*, p. 14); when overloaded or overtired, they may simply refuse to move until unloaded. Large mules cost the same as draft horses, but have a ST of 22.

Merchants have no country. The mere spot they stand on does not constitute so strong an attachment as that from which they draw their gains.

–Thomas Jefferson

Transportation by Beast Summary

This information assumes a run-of-the-mill draft horse (p. B459). Adjust these rates appropriately for other animals.

	<i>Arctic</i>	<i>Desert/Dry</i>	<i>Temperate</i>
Weight for Saddlery (ridden)	30 lbs.	30 lbs.	30 lbs.
Weight for Saddlery (led)	40 lbs.	40 lbs.	40 lbs.
Required Food Weight per Day (grazing)	0.75 lb.	0.75 lb.	0.75 lb.
Required Food Weight per Day (no grazing)	13.5 lbs.	13.5 lbs.	13.5 lbs.
Required Water Weight per Day	–	40 lbs.	–
Total Weight Available*†	375 lbs.	375 lbs.	375 lbs.
Daily Travel Rate (ridden)	14.4 miles‡	14.4 miles‡	28.8 miles
Daily Travel Rate (led)	10 miles‡	10 miles‡	20 miles
Hourly Travel Rate (ridden)	1.8 miles‡	1.8 miles‡	3.6 miles
Hourly Travel Rate (led)	1.25 miles‡	1.25 miles‡	2.5 miles
Cost per Day of Travel (grazing)§	\$22.75	\$22.75	\$22.75
Cost per Day of Travel (no grazing)§	\$28	\$28	\$28

* If ridden, reduce by rider's weight. Assume 145 lbs. for an average ST 10 rider. For led animals, this assumes the handler is unencumbered and moving at his maximum rate.

† This assumes only one beast. Multiple beasts can carry more, but are more difficult to handle. To figure the maximum number of beasts a muleteer can control, subtract his Animal Handling skill from 10 and then consult the *Size and Speed/Range Table* (p. B550). Read this number in the *Speed/Range* column and look over to the *Linear Measurement* column to determine the maximum number of animals one level larger than he is that he can handle. Multiply total number by 2 for animals with the same Size Modifier as the muleteer or by 4 for his SM-1. For example, a SM 0 muleteer with Animal Handling of 14 could handle at most 10 animals of his SM +1, 20 animals of his SM, or 40 animals of his SM -1. Additionally, *stronger* beasts cost more (and thus cost more to maintain), but can carry more. See p. B459 for more details on buying animals with higher ST values.

‡ This rate assumes Bad terrain (p. B351) that is moderate to light snow or sand; *very* deep snow or soft sand reduces these times to 2.4 miles/day or 0.3 mph if led and 2.4 miles/day and 0.3 mph if ridden.

§ This cost is total for beast and handler and uses the food requirements for porters (p. 14) for the handler. Muleteers (p. 18) make \$400/month, thus each day of work is \$16.

Broadsword (14): 3d cutting or 1d+3 crushing. Reach 1. Only used if he loses his morningstar.

Morningstar (17): 3d+2 crushing. Reach 1.

Punch (14): 1d+2 crushing. Reach C.

Traits: Acute Hearing 2; Appearance (Ugly); Bully (12); Combat Reflexes; Infravision; Intolerance (Dwarves); Rapid Healing; Resistant to Disease (+3); Resistant to Poison (+3); Social Stigma (Savage).

Skills: Brawling-14; Broadsword-14; Flail-16; Intimidation-12; Knife-13; Leadership-13; Mining-12; Shortsword-15; Stealth-11; Tactics-11.

Class: Mundane.

Notes: Move and Dodge with Light encumbrance. Notable equipment includes:

- Morningstar “dwarf beater” (fine), \$240, 6 lbs.
- Boots (covering feet), \$80, 2 lbs.
- Broadsword, \$500, 3 lbs.
- Double mail hauberk (covering torso and groin), \$520, 44 lbs.
- Large knife, \$40, 1 lb.
- Medium shield (DB 2), further enchanted to provide its wielder with Magic Resistance 3, \$60, 15 lbs.
- Mail leggings (covering legs, DR 4/2), \$110, 15 lbs.
- Mail sleeves (covering arms, DR 4/2), \$70, 9 lbs.
- Barrel helm (covering skull and face, DR 6), \$240, 10 lbs.
- Belt (eight dwarf beards) with \$500 gold buckle shaped like a snarling wolf.
- Belt pouch holds 50 gold pieces.

*If your desires be endless, your
cares and fear will be so too.*

– Thomas Fuller

Trasha and Brutok (“The Terrible Twins”)

The orc caravan has two hulking ogres, Trasha and her twin brother Brutok, who serve as the leader’s bodyguards. They are sworn blood-siblings of Shazogh, who helped them escape the dwarf mines. In a fight, they’re used as assault troops to break the enemy line. Otherwise, they are detailed to help pull the heavy war wagons and to serve as super teamsters if wagons are stuck in the mud, break axles, etc. When the orcs relax (e.g., in friendly territory), the ogres also act as goalies for brutal football games (usually played with the heads of former foes). The other goblin-kin think it’s great fun to threaten captives with having the ogres “play ball” with them. The ogre twins mostly communicate in orc cave-man style (“ugh – Trasha will squash little armored man!”). They fight with flails fashioned by orc smiths from the chains they once wore as mine slaves.

ST: 20	HP: 20	Speed: 5.75
DX: 11	Will: 10	Move: 4
IQ: 7	Per: 9	Weight: 800 lbs.
HT: 12	FP: 12	SM: +1
Dodge: 8	Parry: 10	DR: 2 (DR 6 on skull)

Bite (13): 2d-1 cutting. Reach C.

Flail (14): 3d+7 crushing. *Does not* become unready, due to ST. Reach 1, 2*.

Kick (11): 2d+1 crushing. Reach C, 1.

Punch (13): 2d crushing. Reach C, 1.

Traits: Appearance (Hideous); Fearlessness 3; High Pain Threshold; Magic Resistance 2; Night Vision 5; Odious Racial Habit (Eats other sapient beings, -3 reactions); Resistant to Disease (+3); Resistant to Poison (+3).

Skills: Brawling-14; Flail-14; Two-Handed Axe/Mace-12.

Class: Mundane.

Notes: Notable equipment includes:

- Flail, \$100, 8 lbs.
- Oversized pot-helm, \$400, 12 lbs.
- Brutok has a sack on his belt with a collection of seven children’s dolls and similar toys (taken from children he has eaten).
- Trasha has a sack on her belt with 20 “shiny rocks” (zircons, bits of jade, and other semi-precious stones, \$300) and a wind-up music box she likes to play; \$100, 0.5 lbs.

Hobgoblin Guards

The elite of the caravan’s guards are 10 unusually fierce boar-tusked hobgoblin warriors armed with heavy curved scimitars (effectively broadswords). They carry shields, and wear helms and full mail. Their round shields are emblazoned with their tribal symbol: a yellow horned skull with a single fang against a sable field.

Six form a ready strike force under their leader Rhazbolg Melt-Face. Another three are usually stationed to guard the treasure wagon, and one acts a guard at the coin wagon.

ST: 14	HP: 17	Speed: 5.75
DX: 11	Will: 10	Move: 4
IQ: 8	Per: 10	Weight: 170-270 lbs.
HT: 12	FP: 12	SM: 0

Dodge: 7	Parry: 10	DR: 4/2
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Broadsword (14): 2d+1 cutting or 1d+1 crushing. Reach 1.

Punch (13): 1d crushing. Reach C.

Shield Bash (12): 1d crushing. Reach 1.

Traits: Appearance (Ugly); Bad Temper (12); Infravision; Rapid Healing; Resistant to Disease (+3); Resistant to Poison (+3); Social Stigma (Savage).

Skills: Brawling-13; Broadsword-14; Intimidation-12; Knife-12; Shield-12; Stealth-11.

Class: Mundane.

Notes: Move and Dodge assume Light encumbrance. Each carries 3d × \$5 in silver coins in addition to their gear. Other notable equipment includes:

- Broadsword, \$500, 3 lbs.
- Boots (covering feet), \$80, 2 lbs.
- Large knife, \$40, 1 lb.
- Mail shirt (covering torso), \$150, 16 lbs.
- Medium shield (DB 2), \$60, 15 lbs.
- Studded leather skirt (covering legs, groin, DR 3/2), \$60, 4 lbs.
- Mail sleeves (covering arms, DR 4/2), \$70, 9 lbs.
- Pot-helm (covering skull, DR 4), \$100, 5 lbs.

ABOUT *GURPS*

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