PYRAMID

DUNGEON FANTASIES

FIVE EASY PIECES
Sean Punch

MONSTERS AS TREASURES
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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
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Orange: Special Features
Purple: Systemless Features

COVER ART
Brandon Moore

IN THIS ISSUE

Gamers love to delve! Whether you're exploring the delights of the ***Dungeon Fantasy Roleplaying Game*** or the ***GURPS Dungeon Fantasy*** series that formed its inspiration, there's plenty of **GURPS** gaming goodness in this month's *Pyramid* that will prove *fantastic* for any crypt-crawling campaign.

When the 11 professions presented in the ***Dungeon Fantasy Roleplaying Game*** just won't satisfy you, but you want something faster than distributing 250 points among hundreds of individual characteristics, you need *Five Easy Pieces*. In a few steps, Sean Punch – author of the ***Dungeon Fantasy Roleplaying Game*** – shows how to create a highly customized character. Combine over a dozen themed trait modules, then follow the tips for optimizing, adding fine details, and checking you work. You'll also get an example character – Sergeant Emily Gore – and tips for using this system (and Sergeant Gore!) with ***GURPS Dungeon Fantasy.***

If you love to add bonuses to abilities and you wish you could do the same for your magic, seek out *Simple Spell Components*. This basic system – described by Peter V. Dell'Orto, author of ***Dungeon Fantasy Magic Items*** – provides a broad method for designating how spell components may be used. There are also two new **GURPS** traits and a long list of suggested material-college associations.

The natural order of the universe sees to it that monsters guard treasures . . . but what if you were to look at *Monsters as Treasures?* In this month's Eidetic Memory, David L. Pulver – author of ***GURPS Banestorm: Abydos*** – describes seven new monsters for ***GURPS Dungeon Fantasy.*** Each one includes full stats and notes about what makes them valuable beyond any loot they're guarding.

When the adventurers head to water, they need to be careful about meeting creatures who are *All Wet.* Whether it's a river, lake, or sea, the heroes could encounter one of these 10 new monsters. Along with ***GURPS Dungeon Fantasy*** stats for each being, you'll get a new watery racial template to add to your own game.

Discover the genesis of how ***Dungeon Fantasy Traps*** came into existence, in the latest offering of *Designer's Notes. **Traps*** authors Christopher R. Rice and Jason "PK" Levine provide their insights, plus give you five new traps, a new monster, and a new look at Mystical Runes, all with ***Dungeon Fantasy RPG*** stats.

This month's Random Thought Table wonders how necessary climactic moments are to the dungeon-crawling genre, while Odds and Ends has a few tips for making things a little more exciting, along with some bits we found at the bottom of a chest. Trips and traps, treasures and terrors, this issue of *Pyramid* has it all!

FROM THE EDITOR

WHERE FANTASIES BECOME REALITIES

I'm pretty sure the first **GURPS** book I picked up was **GURPS Wild Cards.** And I mean literally "picked up"; I remember thumbing through it at Waldenbooks whenever I'd visit there. I would have been about 15 or 16, I imagine, and my interest in the book's realistic treatment of super-heroes (despite my lack of knowledge at the time of the Wild Cards book series) was fascinating to me.

Looking through that book led me to the **GURPS Basic Set** (nearby on the same shelf), and my first realization that I could, indeed, use any **GURPS** book with any other, and it would make sense. It blew my mind. My soul still shuddered at an incident a couple of years earlier, when I'd purchased some **Advanced Dungeons & Dragons** adventures in the erroneous belief that it'd be completely compatible with the **Dungeons & Dragons** boxed sets I'd been buying; in fact, they were about as immediately applicable to my pre-teen mind as a 1967 automotive repair manual. (I advise against trying to make sense of **Queen of the Demonweb Pits** with just the **Expert Set.**)

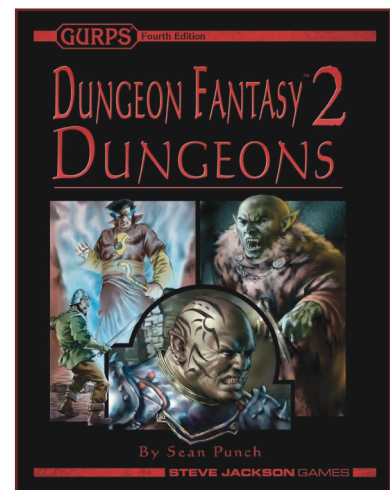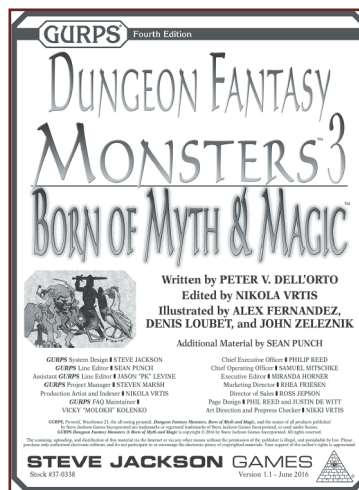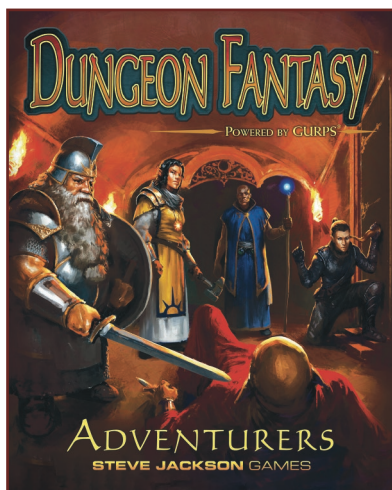This issue of *Pyramid* is the first one where we've embraced both aspects of our "dungeon fantasies" – the beautiful **Dungeon Fantasy Roleplaying Game** boxed set and the immensely popular and expansive **GURPS Dungeon Fantasy** series. And, unlike the brain freeze I inflicted on my 1980s gaming self, those two *are* really darn compatible.

One of the secrets of improvisational theatre is saying, "Yes! And . . ."; that is, if your acting partner has a crazy suggestion for what's going on in the scene, you nod and go along with it . . . adding on your own twists. The intersection of the **GURPS** and **Dungeon Fantasy** worlds is a perfect time to look at how **GURPS** encourages, "Yes! And . . ."

Regardless of what you're doing with **GURPS,** we hope that *Pyramid* has plenty of excitement to add to your game. The game is designed to ping-pong among possibilities, and now there's a new assortment of additions for your crypt-crawling campaigns. Pick up your sword or don your robe; adventure awaits!

WRITE HERE, WRITE NOW

We love to hear about how your dungeon-delving exploits are going! Let us know what you thought of this trove privately via email to **pyramid@sjgames.com,** or by joining the discussion at **forums.sjgames.com**.

FIVE EASY PIECES

BY SEAN PUNCH

A major difference between the ***Dungeon Fantasy Roleplaying Game*** (***DFRPG***) and its parent game, the ***Generic Universal Roleplaying Game*** (***GURPS***), is that the ***DFRPG*** uses professional templates to get you off to a running start while ***GURPS*** says, "Take these points and create a character!" The ***DFRPG*** makes such scratch-built adventurers highly optional (*Custom Professions,* ***Dungeon Fantasy Adventurers,*** p. 14) because creating them is intimidating for novices and time-consuming for everyone. Yet fantasy tales are filled with warrior-wizards, spellcasting rogues, and jacks of all trades, which means the 11 professions in ***Adventurers*** won't satisfy everyone.

A good solution – especially for groups of mixed gaming experience – is to build PCs from components finer than 250-point professional templates but coarser than individual traits. The approach described here involves adding together five 50-point "modules." These paint the character in broad strokes, and each allows a degree of customization – much like a template – to fill in fine details. A final check lets the player tweak the results and verify that everything is rules-legal.

The GM may require everyone to use this system or allow characters created using it to coexist with delvers built on standard professional templates.

1. STARTING POINT

The basic delver has no points in *anything,* like this:

Attributes: ST 10 [0]; DX 10 [0]; IQ 10 [0]; HT 10 [0].
Secondary Characteristics: Damage 1d-2/1d; BL 20 lbs.; HP 10 [0]; Will 10 [0]; Per 10 [0]; FP 10 [0]; Basic Speed 5.00 [0]; Basic Move 5 [0].
Advantages, Disadvantages, Skills, Spells: None!

2. MODULES

To create a 250-point hero, pick any *five* of the 50-point modules described here. You can choose most more than once, to favor particular areas (e.g., "I'm mostly a warrior but I dabble in magic."). The maximum number of times you can select a module appears under its name. See the module's description for the effects of repeated selections, which always include more points to customize with.

For each module, make the choices needed to customize it. Add the resulting attribute and secondary characteristic levels, advantages, disadvantages, skills, and spells to the blank character sheet above. Remember that attribute increases also improve secondary characteristics. Pool all points that repeated selections of a module assign to a category (attributes, advantages, etc.) *before* customizing – a larger budget enables purchases of big-ticket items that are out of reach of those who pick the module fewer times.

When choosing and customizing modules, traits that don't come in levels (e.g., High Pain Threshold) can be selected just once. If you already have such a trait, don't take it again.

For traits that *do* come in levels, like attributes and advantages, add the levels. Unless a module specifically allows it, though, you cannot exceed the number of levels normally permitted to *everyone* rather than to members of specific professions:

ST, DX, IQ, HT, Will, and Per: 20.
HP: +ST/3, rounded up.
FP: +HT/3, rounded up.
Basic Speed: +2.00.
Basic Move: +3.
Advantages: Maximum noted in trait description; e.g., you can't normally go past Enhanced Dodge 1, Striking ST 2, Outdoorsman 4, or Magery 6.

For each skill, add points invested from all modules. In total, you may assign 1 point, 2 points, or a multiple of 4 points per skill. Use the *Skill Cost Table* (***Adventurers,*** p. 70) to learn what level this buys relative to the controlling attribute. Use the final attribute level to determine skill level. Don't forget advantage bonuses, if any – see *Skills and Advantages* (***Adventurers,*** p. 71).

Brute Warrior

Maximum two choices

You're trained to fight using strength, toughness, and (probably) heavier weapons.

Attributes: ST +1 [10].
Advantages: 15 points distributed among ST [10/level], HT [10/level], HP [2/level], Fearlessness [2/level] *or* Unfazeable [15], Hard to Kill [2/level], Hard to Subdue [2/level], High Pain Threshold [10], Rapid *or* Very Rapid Healing [5 or 15], Recovery [10], Signature Gear [1/weapon], Tough Skin* [3/level], Trademark Move [1/move], Weapon Bond [1/weapon], or certain traits normally limited to knights (***Adventurers,*** pp. 28-29): Armor Mastery [5], Sacrificial Block [1], Sacrificial Parry [1], Shield Mastery [15], or Shield-Wall Training [1].

ALL WET

BY CHARLES SAEGER

We all know that delvers go to see strange new dungeons, meet exotic new monsters, and kill them. (Oh, and take their stuff.) But dungeons are on land. Water covers two-thirds of our own world and likely quite a bit of most fantasy worlds. So, what happens when delvers go into the ocean?

That's right. They find strange new sea caves, meet exotic new sea monsters, and kill them. And take their stuff, of course. So, in that light, here are 10 more monsters to trouble delvers who think they're tough because they can cast Breathe Water.

Give adventurers another reason to fear the sea.

DEEP ONE

Deep ones are fish-man dwellers of the sea. They can stand like men, jump like frogs, and swim like fish. Their voices are croaks, and their hands are webbed claws. Their eyes, which never blink, top off their narrow, fish-shaped heads.

Deep ones can come to land, and do so to mate with humans. The offspring that come from these matings start out as human, but begin to turn into deep ones well into adulthood. While changing, they will acquire a new deep-one trait each month; Immunity to Metabolic Hazards always comes last. Once they have fully changed, they go to live with the others in the sea. Deep ones vary much as humans do, and retain the skills they learned before the transformation.

ST: 14	**HP:** 14	**Speed:** 6.50
DX: 12	**Will:** 14	**Move:** 6
IQ: 11	**Per:** 11	**Weight:** 180 lbs.
HT: 14	**FP:** 14	**SM:** 0
Dodge: 9	**Parry:** 11	**DR:** 2*

Claws (16): 1d cutting. Reach C.
Club (16): 2d+1 crushing. Reach 1.

Traits: Amphibious; Chauvinistic; Dark Vision; Disturbing Voice; Doesn't Breathe (Gills); Immunity to Metabolic Hazards; Peripheral Vision; Pressure Support 3; Speak Underwater; Super Jump 1 (18'); Temperature Tolerance 3 (Cold); Unnatural Features (Narrow head, rubbery skin, shrunken ears, unblinking eyes).
Skills: Brawling-16; Broadsword-16; Jumping-15; Religious Ritual (Deep One)-11; Swimming-15.
Class: Elder Thing.
Notes: Unwilling to negotiate other than to set up mating. DR is natural. Deep one clerics exist and worship big, weird elder gods. See *Monster Modding*, in *Pyramid #3/108: Dungeon Fantasy Roleplaying Game III*, pp. 8-9, for spells and abilities for deep one priests.

DIRE KRAKEN

The dire kraken is the baddest monster of the sea. Those few who have lived through the kraken's strike can't settle on whether it looks more like a crab, an octopus, or a squid, but it's always big, often bigger than the boats it sinks in its wake. Its nine tentacles have spikes on the end, but it often does the most damage when it goes back down, as a whirlpool shows up in its wake.

ST: 130	**HP:** 130	**Speed:** 6.00
DX: 12	**Will:** 12	**Move:** 12
IQ: 4	**Per:** 10	**Weight:** 65 tons
HT: 11	**FP:** 11	**SM:** +7 (30 hexes)
Dodge: 9	**Parry:** 13	**DR:** 20

Bite (21): 14d+13 crushing. Reach C.
Talons (21): 7d+15 impaling. The talons are on the end of their tentacles, which can grab with ST 67. Reach C-30 (×9).
Whirlpool Spin: When the kraken goes back down, it leaves a whirlpool in its wake. Treat as the Whirlpool spell (*GURPS Magic*, p. 187), with the middle where the kraken's head was and a radius of 60 yards, but it isn't magical. Regardless of weight, anything floating in the whirlpool's radius must make rolls to avoid being sucked into the funnel. The whirlpool grows out to its full radius over a minute, and then starts ebbing the second afterward, first growing and then shrinking one yard at a time.

Traits: Cold-Blooded (50°); Doesn't Breathe (Gills); Double-Jointed; Enhanced Move 2 (Water Move 48); Extra Arms 7 (Extra-Flexible; Weak, ST 65); Extra Attack 8; High Pain Threshold; Night Vision 5; No Fine Manipulators; No Legs (Aquatic); Pressure Support 2; Temperature Tolerance 2 (Cold); Wild Animal.
Skills: Brawling-21; Survival (Open Ocean)-12; Swimming-14; Wrestling-21.
Class: Dire Animal.
Notes: It's the biggest thing around.

GIANT PIRANHA

There are many tales about how vicious piranhas are, with many levels of truth. Regardless of how dangerous a school of typical piranhas truly is, the big ones are deadly all on their own.

MO TRAPS, MO PROBLEMS

Traps was only so big, so a few things wouldn't fit no matter how much we scrimped on and shaved off of word count. I also ended up writing several entries I didn't send to PK for various reasons. Some of these outtakes became *Deathtraps* (in *Pyramid #3/106: Dungeon Fantasy Roleplaying Game II*), while we kept others in reserve for *this* article!

ANNIHILATING DOORKNOB

Not all Evil Runes are created equal. In fact, some are just not *fair*. This nasty trap can outright *kill* with just a touch! A contact-based Evil Rune is inscribed on a doorknob (typically on a reinforced door, so the trap cannot be avoided by bashing the barrier in) and affects anyone who touches it.

Detect: Per-based **Thaumatology,** or **Perception** + **Magery** for mages, or **Traps** at -10; add any bonuses or penalties for **Vision** (e.g., Acute Vision).

Disarm: DX-based **Thaumatology** at -3 or *DX*-based **Traps** at -6.

Avoid: A DX roll at -6 lets you avoid contact with the glyph on the doorknob.

Save: No.

Effects: Roll 4d and compare to the *larger* of the victim's **HT** or **HP.** If the amount equals or exceeds it, they and anything they were carrying are instantly turned to dust! If the amount is less, then the target takes that as injury instead. The trap's damage ignores DR.

Shots: Infinite.

Rearm: 1d seconds.

Steal: No.

HEAVEN AND EARTH

This oddly appointed room has pictures of angels and other divine servants standing, dancing, etc. on clouds, with images of mortals praying on their knees or face to the ground in supplication. There are several odd people-shaped depressions in the ground (at least two per party member) – some that would fit someone in a kneeling position, and others that could fit an entire body so that the person is hidden. These depressions change location and shape every time a new group or person enters the room.

Entering the room results in all exits slamming shut and the ceiling descending (at a rate of 3" per second) until it stops halfway. Next, the floor does the same, ascending just as fast.

About GURPS

Steve Jackson Games is committed to full support of **GURPS** players. We can be reached by email: **info@sjgames.com**. Our address is SJ Games, P.O. Box 18957, Austin, TX 78760. Resources include:

New supplements and adventures. **GURPS** continues to grow – see what's new at **gurps.sjgames.com**.

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ideas to add to your own game! The *Pyramid* web page is **pyramid.sjgames.com**.

Gamer and Store Finder (**gamerfinder.sjgames.com**): Connect with other people and places playing our games. Add yourself to our database so they can find you as well!

Bibliographies. Bibliographies are a great resource for finding more of what you love! We've added them to many **GURPS** book web pages with links to help you find the next perfect element for your game.

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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.