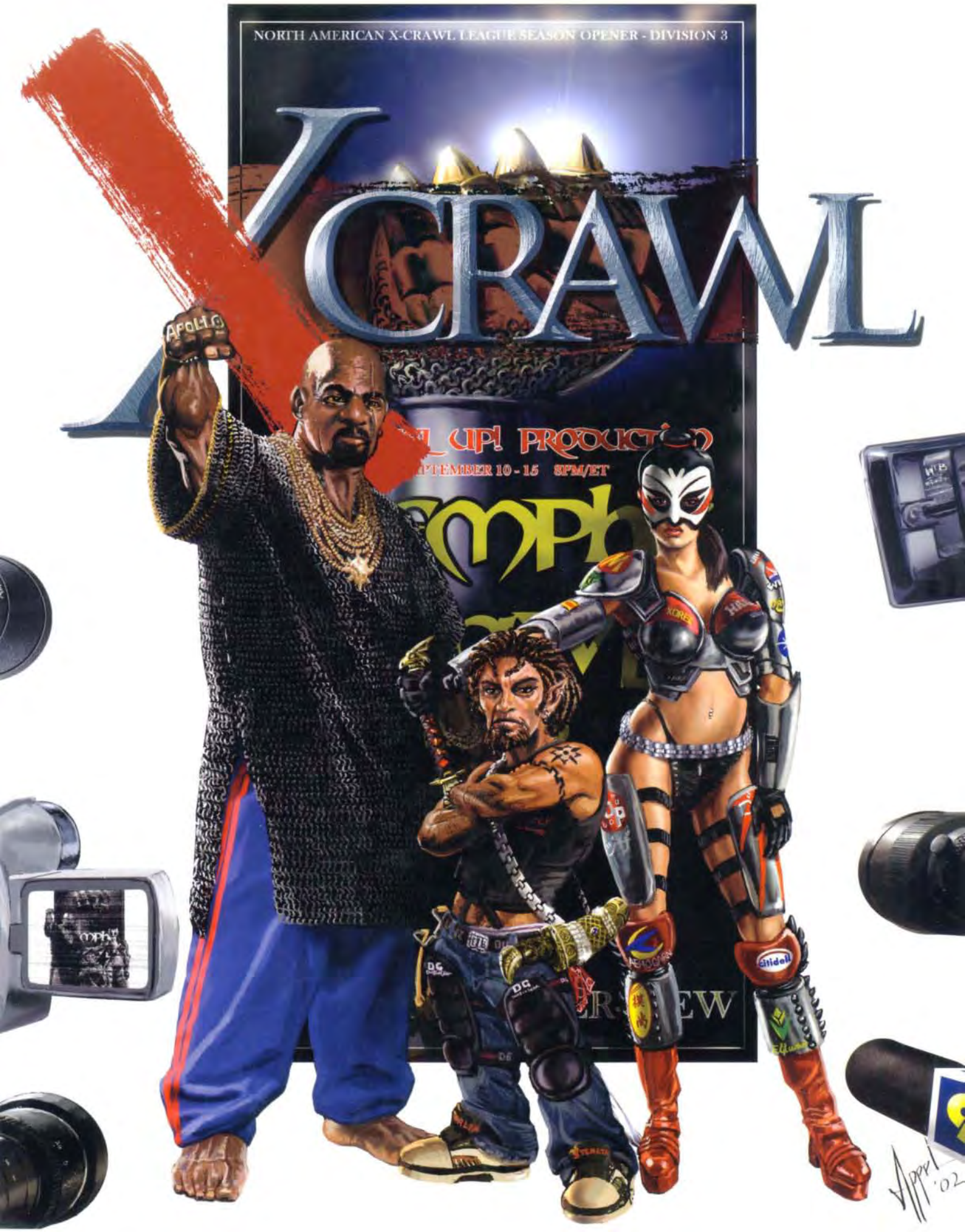
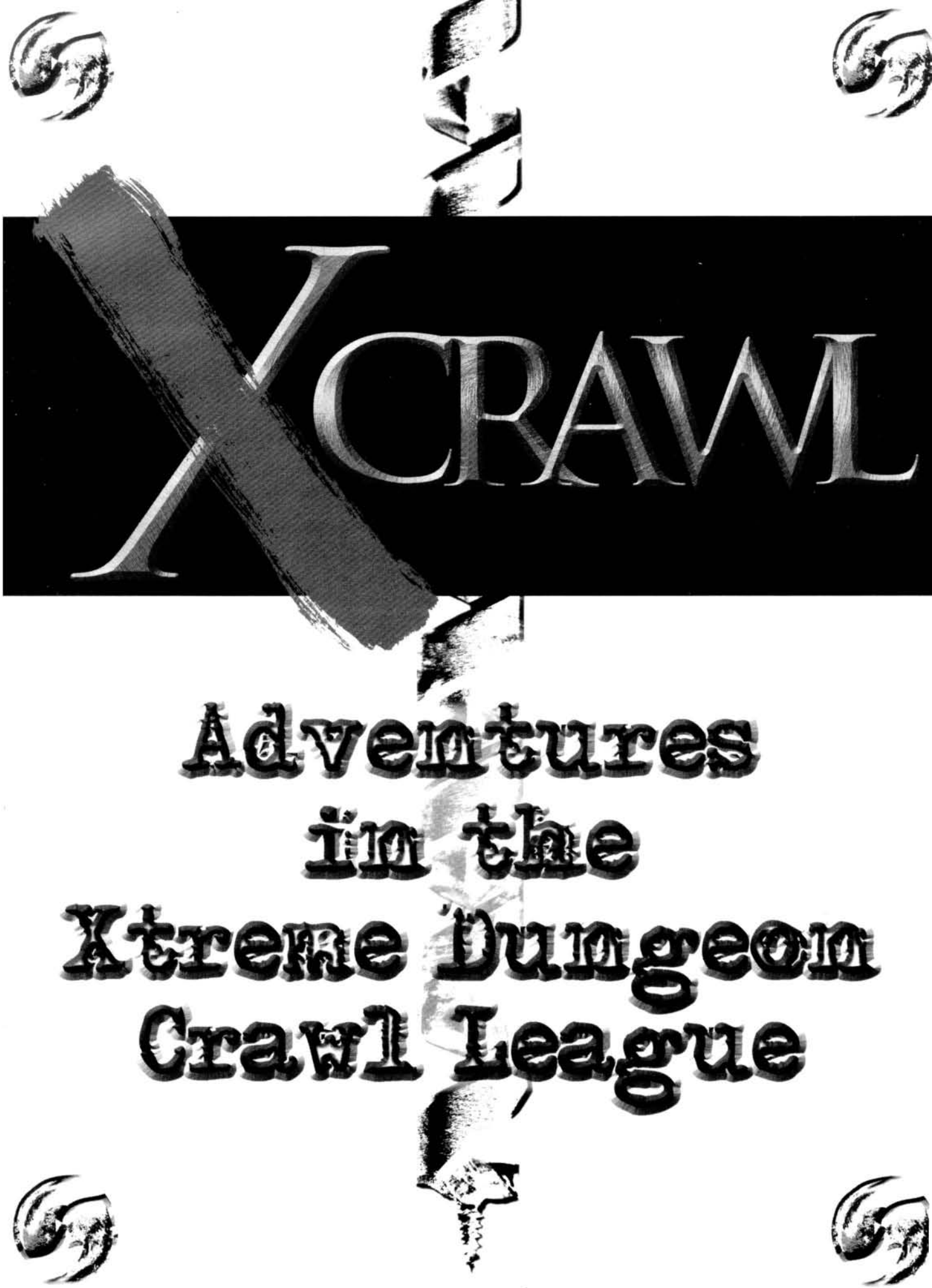

NORTH AMERICAN X-CRAWL LEAGUE SEASON OPENER - DIVISION 3
X CRAWL
APOLLO


XCRAWL
Adventures
in the
Xtreme Dungeon
Crawl League

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Dedication:

Love to Mother and Father for their unflinching support of my writing/ hobbies/ general strangeness; every World's Greatest's Mom and Dad mug belongs to y'all, take them freely. Love to my sister and David, my accomplices in language. Love for the home team Don, Nino and Nick. Love to Team Pandahead. Love to my heroes Monte Cook, Jonathan Tweet and Skip Williams. Love to all of my teachers, especially Dr. Julian Wasserman and Greg Johnson. Love to Micah; you had nothing but support for me and I thank you from the bottom. Love for all my playtesters–and watch your behinds, we're just getting started. Love to gamers everywhere. And to role-playing game haters: whatever. What we do is the most honest and under-appreciated art form there is. Some of the world's greatest stories have been told exactly one time by folks with dice in their hands. Peddle your negativity elsewhere–we aren't in the market.

This book is for Jason Jenkins and Peter Morson.

– Brendan J. LaSalle

a Bionic Frying-Pan game

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NOTICE
Xcrawl is a game. It isn't real. Real swords, real arrows, and real wounds are real dangerous. So, have fun, but DON'T keep it *real*; keep it fantasy.

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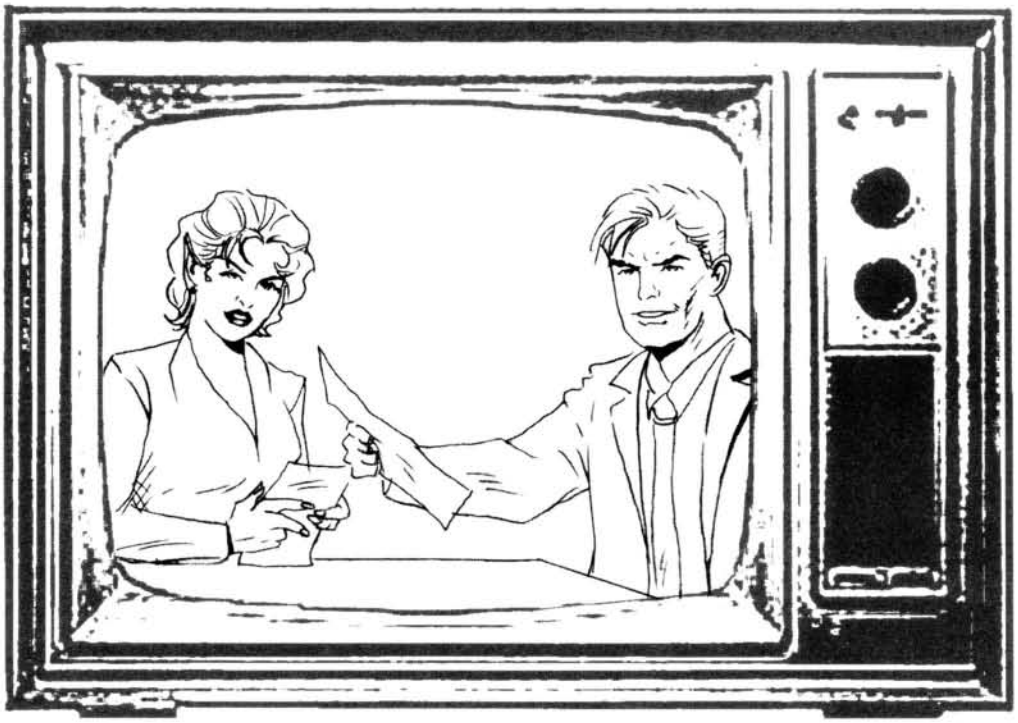
"Jupiter and Juno be praised, their glory be sung from each and every mountain. Good evening and thanks for tuning into Empire Sports 1. I'm Cliff Nelson."

"And I'm Monica Silverstring. Of course our top story for tonight– the beginning of the Year of our Emperor Ronald Augustus the Uniter 4699 Xtreme Dungeoncrawl Spring Games. Tonight's opening Ceremonies, hosted by our beloved Emperor Ronald I, may he reign forever, commemorate our fifteenth annual MemphisCrawl, this seasons opener, pitting veteran Dungeon Master Julie Klugman, DJ Cudgel Up! against six teams that Las Vegas has predicted can not win. Chris?"

"That's right, Monica. 'Ritualistic slaughter,' is what Xcrawl Monthly's Hal Heitman is calling it. It seems that a number of injuries, personnel shake ups and last minute schedule conflicts have taken all some of the bigger names and now of the eight participating teams not one is free of substitutions or in some cases gaps in their personnel.

"The Starblades, out of Boston U., recently lost their long time cleric to pregnancy. Sheila "Hand of Glory" MacRenko removed herself from the active roster and indeed has scandalized the Great Temple by announcing her impending motherhood out of wedlock. The long-term effects are yet to be seen but this might be the end of a promising Xcrawl career.

But the high flying Starblades aren't the only ones suffering personnel losses. Simon "The Moleman" Underhill, called the best lockpick in the Guild by some, is still petrified from a basilisk encounter during last seasons Motoraya MexicocityCrawl. His teammates are in



negotiation for a counter-spell, but it doesn't look like he'll be up and around for MemphisCrawl, and that will leave them woefully shorthanded.

"In other news, Archmage Jose Villalobos announced his retirement today. This is a shock to the Adventurer's Guild, as one of the mages who helped define the game is finally stepping down after a long and glorious career. He is quoted as feeling that this was the right time for him, and that coming off last years' victorious season made this difficult decision a bit easier. He intends to return to his native home in the Caribbean League and devote his time to his grandchildren and spell research. From the entire staff here at Empire One: watch over him, O Apollo, and grant him prosperity and health."

"Wow–what an amazing career!"

"That's right, Monica - Archmage Jose "Ring of Fire" Villalobos has played in twenty seven sanctioned events and was granted Highest Lauds four years in a row by the Adventurer's Guild. He still holds records for counter-spells in all divisions, records that some say may never be broken. He will be missed by the entire Xcrawl community."

"At this point we are just ten minutes away from the opening ceremonies and we couldn't be more excited here at Empire 1. This capacity crowd is here to watch DJ Cudgel Up! work her magic. But will it be the mass murder that everybody fears, or will we see some team ascend to highest glory? Only the Oracles know–and as you know they may not be consulted prior to any Xcrawl event. We here at Empire One Sports salute all our champions and wish them well.

"But if they die . . .they die."

INTRODUCTION

What you hold in your hands is a gateway. Oh sure, it looks like a book, but in the right hands this book has the power to turn the world outside your window into an amazing place. A setting filled with horrible monsters, dynamic heroes, and political intrigue of high drama. Come to think of it, that isn't any change from the world outside your window, it's just an escape. A chance to be something more than you are, and something that you might dream to be. It's a world unlike any other. It seems familiar at every turn, but wonderfully new wherever you look. It's the world of Xcrawl.

The concept of a role-playing game is nothing new. They've been around for decades, formally, and for far longer than that in a greater sense. And there is no point in putting out something that has already been done. There is no reason to have a game that is like every other game on the market just for the sake of saying that you can do it better. If you are going to do something, it had better be something original. And that's what Xcrawl is.

You can say that it is a little bit of fantasy adventure. You can say that it's just modern gladiator combat. You can say that it's extreme sports brought to gaming. You can even compare it to professional wrestling. And you won't get any arguments from us. We think that it's all of these things, but it's all of them blended together in a way that hasn't been seen in the pages of a role-playing game. It's a world of re-imagined history, echoing the past and the present, and bringing a new concept to something that has been around for a very long time.

The important thing is that you bought this book. You want to know what's inside. You are intrigued by the ideas presented here. There was a reason that you picked up this book, and a reason that you want to read it. You can think whatever you want about this book before you read it, but we know that you will realize one important thing when you have finished

There is something special here. Now, with all the appropriate apologies, let me see if I can get in the right voice...**ahem**

Laaaadieees and gentlemen, boys and girls, and children of all ages. It's time to join the spectacle and splendor of life in the Crawl. It's time to join Pandahead in presenting the greatest show on Earth, the greatest challenge of our day, and the greatest thrill of them all. It's time... prepare for the Games. ...LEEETTT'S GET READY TO MELEEEEEE!!!

ahem Sorry about that. But it's all part of the show.

Welcome to Xcrawl.

Your next adventure WILL be televised...

XCRAWL SPEAK

Adventurer's Guild - The organization that regulates Xcrawl. Characters must be members of the Adventurer's Guild to participate in Xcrawl events, or to own a weapon larger than a dagger or a quarterstaff.

Chester - Derogatory slang for any monster an Xcrawl participant may encounter. Belived to be derived from the name of an dangerous, yet inept, Athach that trapped, and subsequently lost, its third arm while running through a fast-closing NoGo door.

Choke - A natural one on a Mojo-enhanced roll.

Commoners - The citizens of the NAE. Commoners are taxable serfs serving the Empire. Commoners have very few rights and live an existence of hardship and toil. Commoners may not legally possess weapons or travel internationally.

Crawler - The nickname given to any adventurer who plays in the Xcrawl games.

Destiny - A natural twenty on a Mojo enhanced roll.

District - A geographical section of the NAE.

Dungeon Judge - The designer and host of an Xcrawl event. Dungeon Judges dictate what traps, monsters, treasure and prizes will be included in their dungeon. Dungeon Judges are better known by the letters DJ and their name, such as DJ Devastator or DJ Cudgel UP!

Endorsement - A monetary agreement for a Crawler to represent a product or service to the public.

Face - A Crawler who acts the good guy. The type of character who gets cheers from the crowd.

Fame - A rating that represents a characters celebrity and wealth. Long time Xcrawl adventurers are the superstars of popular culture, and many become rich from endorsements and personal appearances.

GM - Game Master. This is the guy actually running the game, not to be confused with Dungeon Judge, which is a powerful NPC who runs an Xcrawl event.

Grandstanding - The act of playing to the crowd. The way that a Crawler gets noticed and turns the crowd for or against him.

Half-Twinked - Derogatory term for describing a half-elf.

Heel - A Crawler who acts the bad guy. The type of character who gets jeers from the crowd.

Mage's Guild - The regulating body of arcane powers in the NAE. Anyone wielding arcane might must be members of the Mage's Guild to legally use magic in the NAE. Alternately known as The Guild of Magi.

Master Celebrity - A prestige character that understands the concept of marketing and sales.

Mojo - The intangible power of teamwork, which propels adventurers working together to success greater than they could reach as individuals.

Mojo Pool - A bonus pool that allows characters to aid their teammates with d20 rolls, including combat and skill checks.

NoGo - A door marking an area off-limits to Crawlers.

Nobility - The upper echelon of society in the NAE. The nobility is composed of titled landowners, businessmen and courtiers. Nobles are privileged, wealthy and connected.

NAE - The North American Empire, the world's foremost superpower. A Roman-style dictatorship under the command of Emperor Ronald I. The NAE is the origin country of Xcrawl.

Rip - A clean kill, as in Rest In Peace.

Signature Move - A combat action that becomes identified with a particular character.

Sponsorship - An agreement for a Crawler to exclusively use a particular product in The Games.

Stump - Derogatory term for a halfling.

Substitute - A back-up player on a team.

Team - A group of adventurers who band together to compete in Xcrawl events.

Thieve's Guild - The organization that regulates the rogues' activity in The Games.

Trappers - Professional hunters who capture monsters for use in Xcrawl events.

Turn - The attitude the Crawler shows the crowd. He can be either face or heel, depending on his attitude and actions.

Twink - Derogatory term for an elf.



CHAPTER ONE
History of the World

"The Dunguun Gangstaas are making their way into Cudgel UP!'s dungeon. On point is Oni, the popular shadow scout and lockpick, and mysterious freebooter never seen without her mask."

"What do you think she's hiding under there, Monica?"

"No telling, Cliff. Following Oni comes The Messenger, priest of Apollo, then The Stud, an unpredictable fighter and dedicated Xcrawl participant, who's getting a rare chance to start a Crawl. At the back is The Sleeper, the arcane combatant with an arsenal of magic at her fingertips."

"You missed one–tiny Geronimo Nick, the halfling trap and lock expert. There he is, behind Stud."

"Wow, I looked right at him and didn't see him. Always creeping, that one. A born sneak."

"The players have made their way into the dungeon, past the secret door and into the first hall. Now, home viewers who watched the pre-game show know that Cudgel Up! arranged a rather inhospitable welcome for the team–you can see here a group of Hobgoblins are waiting on the other side of the door that Nick is searching."

"Those hobgoblins look like they mean business."

"They sure do, Monica. Cudgel Up!'s chief hobgoblin, Ru'Dat Cho, has been drilling his troops for months. We are about to see if that training will pan out."

"Geronimo Nick has given the door the thumbs up–they change order and now Stud takes the front line."

"Ladies and gentlemen Xcrawl action is right around the corner. Stud throws open the doors–here comes the hobgoblins!"

"It's on! It's on! The Gangstaa's have entered the battle! The action heats up in Memphis! Stay tuned to Empire One for continuous coverage!"

THE HISTORIC AGE

History? Don't talk to me about history! I am history!
–WARSONG, BLADE OF THE ANCIENTS

There was a time when mankind was only one of the races of the world, and not its conquering champion. When humans were still dwelling in caves and using stone tools, the race of elves was already ancient beyond reckoning, to say nothing of the dwarves and their cousins, the gnomes. Indeed, the elder races considered the earliest men lowly beings unworthy of contempt, in a class with orcs and goblins. This changed when the titan, Prometheus, who loved mankind more than his own place amongst the immortals, taught humans the use of fire, and began mankind's evolution into a civilized race.

It was a long, slow journey from cave-dwelling savages to a cultured people. Humans did as best they could, learning to gather and hunt, create shelters and worship. The elder races observed humans in their infancy, and found them curious. While they were occasionally violent and ignorant, humans were obviously good natured; they cared for their children, they honored their gods, and in return received divine guidance and intervention. Humans sacrificed for one another and, in most instances, mated for life. This separated them from races like kobolds and goblins who, in those early days, were little more than savage beasts, evil and cruel to their enemies and one another. In the eyes of their first supporters, the gnomes, once mankind was clever enough to get themselves through winter without freezing to death or stealing from their neighbors, they were on their way to becoming civilized. The gnomes extended the hand of friendship to man, and it was from them mankind learned irrigation and the cultivation of land. Eventually, the dwarves shared their secrets of metalworking with their newfound human friends–not wanting to be thought of as poorer neighbors than their "little cousins,"the gnomes. Even the haughty elves could not deny mankind's potential forever, and they eventually condescended to teaching humans the secrets of hunting with bow and arrow, as well as introducing them to the ways of wizardry.

CASTLE ALASHAN

The mighty and mysterious Castle Alashan has stood for thousands of years, and it remains a mystery to historians to this day. Its unique structure and unprecedented design seem to support the belief that the castle did indeed spring fully formed from the earth. But what powers created it, and for what purpose? Some believe that Alashan was not always a home to humans, but might be the ancestral home to the zeetha, and could be the primary cause for their hatred of mankind. There are symbols and runes etched into Alashan's stone and wood frame, but no one has ever discovered their origin; these symbols became central to the history of the pre-cataclysm world, and they seem to have originated with the creation of the castle. The castle is said to have a network of caverns beneath it hiding ancient treasures of incalculable worth. However, the catacombs are off limits to all but the Order Of Alashan, a group dedicated to the preservation of the history and legends of the Shan empire. The Order has populated the castle for untold generations and are nearly a government onto themselves. If they know the secrets of Castle Alashan, they have yet to share them with outsiders.

Generations of men lived and died, cultures evolved and evolved further–almost too quickly, it seemed, to the elder races. Soon, humankind was flourishing all over the world. The first great king of men was Alzad the Just, a warrior and scholar known for his cool wit and strong moral conviction. His people lived in the region now known as Persia, scattered amongst nomadic tribes who ranged the entire region. Alzad spent his youth exploring the region with his band of wayfaring adventurers, and he created the earliest known maps of North Africa and the Mediterranean region. He returned from one lengthy adventure to find his homeland threatened by an invasion of zeetha, a race of repugnant aardvark-like humanoids who lived on flying islands and could fall any distance without harm. For reasons that still aren't clear, the zeetha fostered a racial hatred of humans, and sought to enslave them. Alzad and his band were proud fighters, and unified the tribes of the region in defense against the invaders, eventually taking the battle to the floating homeland of the zeetha itself, driving the beasts far away for all time. The unified tribes became the Kingdom of Shan. It is said that the day after the leaders of the tribes declared Alzad their king, the majestic castle of Alashan rose from the earth fully formed in a single day.

Alzad the Just was, in many ways, the father of modern human civilization. He was the first to codify law and apply it equally to his subjects, the first to mint coins and regulate the economy, and the first human king to establish diplomatic relationships with the elder races. And although Alzad the Just died after his first decade of regency, his line continued on, and the kingdom of Shan stood for generations—and the territories of man expanded until they covered the Earth.

This was the beginning of the epoch modern historians call the Heroic Age. For untold thousand years, man spread out into the world and found itself besieged from all sides—by orcs, goblinoids, dragonkind, fantastic beasts and one another. In those days evil existed boldly in the world, not bothering to hide itself under a veneer of principal or national interest. And it was humankind who led the fight against evil, eradicating it from all that was good in the world—though there are some who say it was a fight about territory rather than principle. Evil and its allies could not stop destiny, however, and soon a global civilization emerged, with men, elves, and dwarves as both allies and enemies in war and commerce.

The War of Red Ice

Commonplace battles of no importance and inter-kingdom conflicts undeserving of mention occurred often during the heroic age, but there were three melees modern scholars understand beyond simple terms. The first of these was the War of Red Ice. This remarkable time of violence begins with a creature named Rukanga (a name which translates as "None Left to Weep"), now known as the greatest orc general who ever lived. He was as vicious and fierce as any orc, but also patient and sly, and cunning on the battlefield. Rukanga was a member of the Red Ice tribes, existing on the fringes of civilization in what is now the Russian Empire. The Red Ice tribes were small in number, but fanatically dedicated to elvish genocide. Rukanga devised a strategy of conquering human cities and fortresses, and using their resources and fortifications, launching attacks against the elves from seemingly friendly locations. He would not remain long enough for a retaliatory attack; once the raid on the elves was finished, he and his people would fade again into the wilderness. His tribe would generally bivouac during the summer, increasing their numbers and training for the hard-fought battles that would inevitably thin their ranks. Then, when winter brought the long nights and uncomfortable



weather for their human adversaries, they would strike again. The Red Ice orcs pushed west and south, leaving burning cities and terrified refugees in their wake. His strategy was surprisingly effective and he assumed control of several orcish tribes, each of them drawn to his successes against mankind and the elves. Rukanga warred against mankind and elves for a decade, always eluding his trailing pursuers across the wastelands. This conflict became known as The War of Red Ice. The armies of Rukanga slayed untold thousands before he was finally destroyed during an attack on Alashan itself. Perhaps Rukanga became too confidant, but common thought maintains that the great general knew that his time was short, his enemies too powerful and devout, and he chose the manner and place of his final battle: the home of the greatest human king in the world. To this day, orcs revere Rukanga as their greatest hero. Their legends say he will one day return to lead the orcs in the final war against humanity.

Edwier's War

Mankind was bold, ambitious, and possessed a short memory for alliance. Their numbers increased rapidly, and they constantly expanded their boundaries as they multiplied. It was natural for them to eventually come into conflict with the elder races. In the years following the War of Red Ice, mankind rebuilt itself and continued to expand, encroaching upon the various lands of others, and often into elvish territories. Deep in the forest the elves called Moonwood, in what is now known as the Welsh region of Briton, human explorers discovered the sacred elvish city of Laressa. The elves believe Laressa to be the birthplace of their race, and most elves of the Heroic Age endeavored to make a pilgrimage to this sacred place at some point during their long lives. Human explorers were warned by the elves to leave this land alone, but the determined beings could not be lured away from such rare timber and ample hunting. Negotiations and threats proved to be useless, and the elves were moved to using force to repel

THE HALFLINGS

Halflings were discovered in their idyllic farm communities during the Heroic Age–they had made a point of keeping their existence as quiet a matter as possible for as long as they could. Always mistrustful of the "big races," halflings kept quiet, rural communities in secluded areas, hidden with great cleverness from prying eyes. Over time, bold halflings decided they should become a part of the world at large and began to reach out to the others. During the Heroic Age halflings actually abandoned their isolationist ways and became a part of world events. They invited humans into their villages, and began open trade with the elder races. By inviting the humans into their villages, they inadvertently invited in the enemies of humans. The homeless halflings found themselves alone, having to steal for survival, driving away the elder races and discovering humans to be intolerant at best. The halflings decided to become a part of the worldly community, and in return, they lost their homelands and became a wandering tribe, mistrusted by all. Ask any modern halfling and he will tell you that they would have been better off if they had stayed on the farm, but it's far too late for that.

the human "invaders." Elvish forces swept down on the settlement of Newwood one starlight night, killing every man, woman, and child. This horrible event caused the city to become known as Bloodwood, much to the dismay of the humans trying to find a home in this new land, and markers still remain in the ruins of the city–along with the occasional graffiti from the younger, more disrespectful elves. King Edwier of the nearby Kingdom of Rachelov, who sent his own personal forces to Newwood for security, was outraged by the attack, proclaiming it a direct attack on his own kingdom. Edwier declared a holy crusade against elves throughout the region, and forged an alliance with the neighboring kingdoms of Ehnt and Trulan. These three nations began a full-scale assault of the Moonwood. They were surprised to find themselves facing brigades of dwarves alongside the elves, sent by nearby King Udar to aid their allies. Edwier turned to the other kings of man for aid, proclaiming war was declared on humans everywhere. Though rash and shortsighted, Edwier was charismatic. In only six months the King of Rachelov amassed an army of fifteen thousand, marching them into Moonwood for the express purpose of the total obliteration of what Edwier called "an abomination on the concept of peace." But it is foolish to storm into the religious center of a race without expecting equal resistance; and the battle that ensued, The Battle of Night Everlasting as it has come to be called, set the tone for the years to come. Over eighteen thousand lives were lost in a battle lasting twenty-two days. The war lasted eighteen years, and casualties on both sides were extreme. The war finally ended when King Edwier, who was prepared to continue his costly vendetta indefinitely, was assassinated by his advisors, calling him mad with power, and installing his cousin, King Terrance I, as regent, who desired a quick and peaceful end to the war. A settlement was negotiated and the Moonwood, along with several other elvish and dwarvish lands, were declared off limits to human colonization. In the end, the conflict known as Edwier's War was the first time the encroachment of man was successfully repelled by the elder races.

LARESSA

The great elvish city of Laressa remains an important part of their culture to this day—as well as a matter of deep controversy among the races of man and elf. While the memory of man is short, the memory of elves is longer than their considerable lifespans. To the most devout elves, man can never be trusted as an ally. The government of elves, however, is far more forgiving. Special grants have been put into place allowing select humans to come to Laressa for study and the chance to immerse themselves in the heart of elvish culture and faith. The leaders of the elves hope that this exchange will lead to further understanding of the two peoples. This isn't a solitary view, with a list of potential human ambassadors to Laressa numbering in the thousands. Many radical elvish groups consider this a debasement of their holy land, and go to long, and even violent extremes to remove humans from Laressa. As a result, what was once a grove of solitude and peace is now a place of unrest and distress. Elves and humans both see the city of Laressa as a point of great concern for the future of complete peace between the two races.

The Age of Wrack

Despite the efforts of Terrance I, a dark, *evil time held firm hold upon all of* mankind. Cults dedicated to baneful gods appeared on the landscape of ancient religion, as did vile dictators and sorcerer kings subjugating and exploiting everything at their disposal for their own twisted ends. Men made pacts with demons, selling their souls in exchange for worldly power and wealth. It seemed that civilization itself was on the brink of ruin, and the human race poised to fall to depths below that of the orc or goblin. The danger didn't arise from some obvious outside threat, but from within the dark heart of humanity. Mankind's greatest struggles have always been against themselves, and this was never more true than during the third great conflict of the Heroic Age, The Age of Wrack.

In the latter half of the Heroic Age, the Kingdom of Shan, considered the pinnacle of human culture and refinement, turned down a dark road when the young King Cheveline shocked the nation, turning away from worshiping the ancient gods, as his ancestors had for generations, and declaring his loyalty to the demon Fosblyte. Fosblyte, called the Lord of Worms and the Wild Eyed, whispered in Cheveline's ear from the day he was born, hoping to use him as a *tool of destruction and chaos on earth.* On the day of his coronation, Cheveline declared that all the temples in his kingdoms be demolished and replaced with unholy shrines dedicated to his patron demon. Naturally, this wasn't an order immediately obeyed. Thousands called for the king to be deposed, removed from the throne and banished from the kingdom. This was all foreseen by Fosblyte, who had taken the appropriate steps to insure that his puppet remain in power. All those who stood against Cheveline were destroyed by infernal powers manifested by the boy king. Cheveline vigorously punished traitors and dissenters within his ranks, and his army did very little to resist his orders from fear of torture—or worse. During his reign, he declared all clerics and their followers refusing to convert put to death, their maimed bodies hung in public places for all to see. Any who tried to leave the kingdom soon found massive packs of demon dogs set at the borders of the country to keep its citizens "safe" within its borders. Many clerics did renounce the ancient gods and the deities of justice and law to save their lives, but the majority of faithful fled the cities and began an underground resistance to King

Cheveline's rule. Cheveline's army, fortified with profane magic and demonic allies, were assigned the task of rooting out all opposition, marching them before their king for ritualistic slaughter. King Cheveline himself was "rewarded" by Fosblyte with vampirism for his loyalty to the forces of evil, becoming the first known human vampire, and began a new kingdom of undead, converting his own servants and most loyal officers to vampiric cohorts.

The period of vampire King Cheveline's reign is now called The Age of Wrack, and is considered the darkest times of the Heroic Age. Cheveline gained many powerful allies, including the alfar–the legendary dark elves–who sought to bring ruin to their hated enemies. Mankind was unprepared for the dark elves, their existence being a complete mystery to this point, coming up from the underground for the first time since before the dawn of man. Cheveline was instantly enamored with his new dark allies, and began a grand plan of conquest. Armies of undead marched by the thousands on all the kingdoms of the world, aided by the alfar's powerful magics, destroying everything in their way. The elder races watched the armies marching against the cities of man, and, still distrustful of the humans due to Edwier's War, made a fateful decision. They did nothing. They hid in their far off sanctuaries, choosing non-involvement in a war they felt would pass over them—a war which, in truth, was saving them for last. The only race siding with man was the diminutive race of halflings. It was a fateful decision. The armies of the Vampire King turned their attention to the halfling villages, routing them from their homes and taking from them their native lands for all time. For the first time, the fate of the world seemed in the hands of a madman with power beyond his control or understanding driving him beyond human means.

Such an ignominious fate was not to be. A paladin named Cyral and his centaur companion Drake arrived from the far off Kingdoms of Salsgorney (modern day Briton, Ireland region), summoned by the priests still loyal to their ancient gods in



the underground resistance of Shan. It is said that the Paladin's deity directly appeared to the young Cyral, appointing him to do battle with the vile King Cheveline, and restoring the kingdom to its righteous status. The great paladin drew about him a circle of heroic companions who went to war against the kingdom of Shan, the armies of the undead, their alfar comrades, and the demon-influenced vampire at the head of the monster.

After nine years of fighting man and demon alike, Cyral and his companions finally penetrated the ancient castle Alashan and found themselves face to face with Cheveline. The ensuing fight became a thing of legend. For two days Cyral took the point of the conflict, deflecting the damage to keep his companions alive. The final blow was struck as Cyral drove his enchanted blade through the heart of the beast, at the sacrifice of two of his friends, who threw themselves on the Vampire King's twin weapons long enough to give the Paladin the chance he needed. A glorious day dawned on the empire of man, but the evil was far from finished. The destruction of Cheveline brought horrible repercussions on the heroic Cyral and his surviving friends: Drake was slain by the vampire King's lover and then returned to unlife as a vampire, only to be destroyed by his longtime companions. Cyral's wife and family, left behind in Salsgorney, were murdered in vengeance by the agents of Fosblyte. Cyral died a year and a day after he slew Cheveline, brought low by an ancient curse cast upon him with the foul king's last breath. Peace and light were returned to the land, but its greatest heroes were lost.

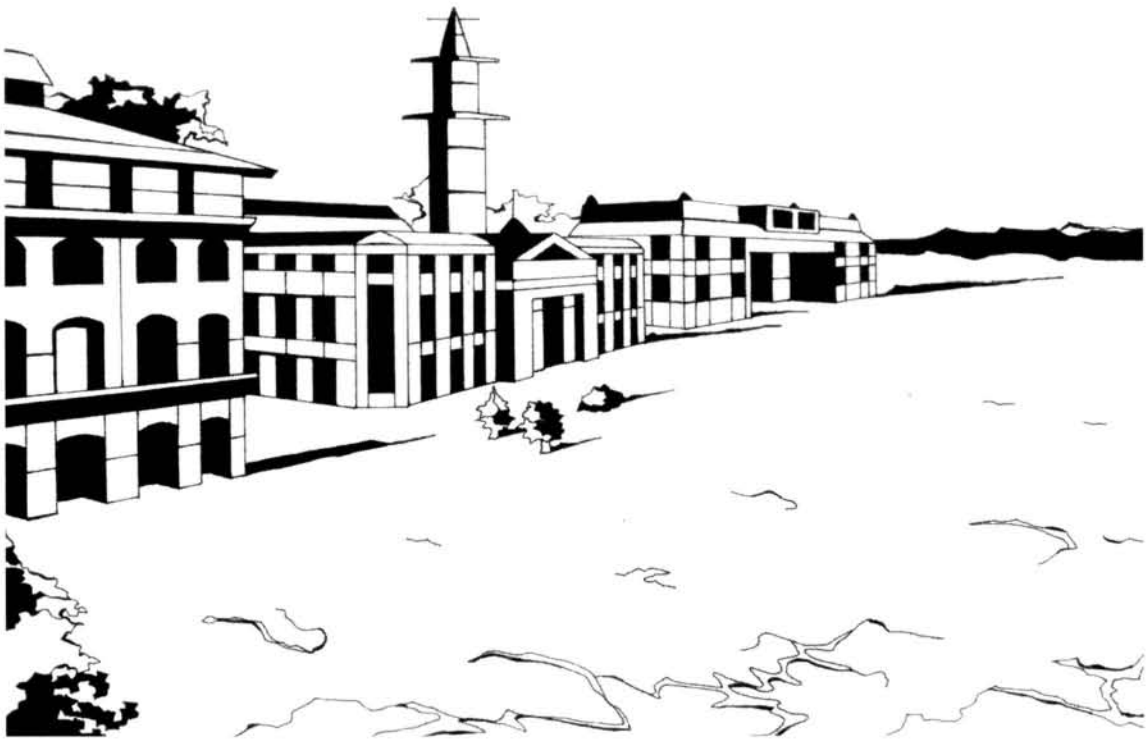
The Age of Wrack was followed by generations of relative peace and prosperity. With time, the wounds against the elder races healed, and mankind could once again side with elves and dwarves as companions. The majority of the sons of men were moral and upright, and for generations mankind stood alongside elves and dwarves and gnomes against the savage and evil races of the earth: goblins, orcs, evil dragonkind—and the alfar. Even after Cheveline was destroyed and Fosblyte's ties to the world were broken, the alfar remained an enemy to man. Mankind made a new enemy in their war against evil, one that would plague them for centuries to come. And for the elder races, while there was always some suspicion and mistrust of the "latecomer" humans, it could not be denied that humankind proved itself again and again to be a steadfast ally against evil.

The Cataclysm

Five hundred years after the fall of King Cheveline came another terrible threat to the world—a great and terrible war between the gods of men and the elder titans. It is said that the titans fathered the gods, just as the gods fathered all the races of the Earth. However, it was the gods whom the humans worshiped and loved. Even Prometheus, who had forsaken his place amongst the immortals to bring man to enlightenment, was a figure largely thought of as beneficial, not holy. The titans were only legends, the fearsome old ones predating all the godly pantheons. Mankind paid them no mind whatsoever, and over ages and ages of man the titans grew jealous. The titans resented being pushed into the background, feeling they deserved to be revered, not only equally, but above the gods in the divine hierarchy. They were the elders. They created the world itself, so the children of the Earth should pay them proper homage. The trickster deity Loki saw the jealousy of the Titans as an opportunity for mischief and took action. Disguised as the titan Chronos, Loki rallied the titans, claiming mankind could only love the titans if they could show their superiority by slaying the warrior gods of the various pantheons,

such as Sif, the wife of Loki's enemy Thor. The foolish and easily swayed lesser titan, Adnir, took these words to heart and attacked Sif in her garden. She was unprepared for such a vicious assault, and was injured gravely, but she survived the attack. As a result of his cowardly attack, Adnir raised the ire of the followers of mighty Odin, and in vengeance they hunted the titan, and slew Adnir, maiming his body beyond description. It took Loki little time to report what transpired to the elder beings, and outraged, the titans declared war on all the deities of man.

The war between the deities of man and titans raged for years, creating natural disasters in its wake unparalleled in the epoch of human history. The war distracted the gods from their duties, and the normal processes were turned upside down; the tides came in and out without pattern, winter followed spring and then it was winter again without summer, drought followed floods, earthquakes shook the lands and the sun seemed to forget how long a day was supposed to last–all without warning or understanding. Mankind was lost and confused, crying to their gods for guidance, but no answers came. Yet, despite this seeming abandonment, man did not forsake their gods; they continued to pray and ask for guidance, angering the titans even further. Finally, in a desperate and misguided attempt to undercut the power base of the gods by destroying their followers, the titans used their considerable magic to flood the earth, hoping to kill all mortal life on the planet. Terrible rains fell for weeks, and mankind was nearly destroyed. The gods were outraged. They had not considered the titans capable of attacking the one thing they desired most, the love of mortals, and even though they were weakened terribly by so many of their followers dying at once, they took revenge. As one, all of the gods attacked the titans hidden city in the outer plains, looking to destroy them, once and for all. The titans were decimated by the boundless fury of the gods who struck in holy vengeance. The titans lost their immortality that day, and the greatest



part of their powers, though for years they struggled to regain their place in eternity. And in what may have been the worst blow to them, the titans have now been almost entirely forgotten for their part in creating human civilization.

The Cataclysm changed the way gods dealt with man. The celestial powers have since stayed their hands from directly affecting the daily lives of their worshippers for fear of skewing the balance of the universe again. The gods now choose to act through their divine intermediaries (such as celestials and outsiders) and through their clerics on Earth.

The Cataclysm was nearly the end of mankind. Civilizations that survived countless wars, famine and revolutions were wiped away in a moment of anger, a flood that lasted little more than a month. Only a fraction of the Earth's population survived the deluge. The art, architecture, music and culture of a very rich age became the stuff of speculation and myth, and many societies were completely erased. What was lost in that war will never be recovered. Since very few records survived the Great Flood, the civilizations existing before the great flood became legends to those who came later, and eventually faded into the annals of the forgotten. The heroic age remained shrouded in mystery until the magical blade Warsong was found in 4654 (pp. 88-89), changing our perspective on that lost era.

From the detritus of the Cataclysm, the intelligent races of the world began to rebuild their civilizations. Old political boundaries were forgotten and the old empires and kingdoms no longer had any meaning. The civilization of the heroic age was reduced to legends and the odd surviving artifact. It was necessary to fashion a new alphabet after the flood, as all written records were lost and writing itself became a forgotten art. For the elder races, this began their period of isolation. The dwarves blamed the gods of mankind for the destruction, and they took themselves deep underground, far from the cities of men. The elves began to construct their secluded forest realms, modeling them after Laressa and Moonwood, moving their lives to a spiritual level, and moving away from the what they saw as the temporary lives of man and their cousins. The gnomes chose to live amongst humans, dwarves, and elves alike, as they still loved all of their traditional allies. It was the halflings, already homeless and recovering from tragedy, who fared the worst. Their homelands were completely forgotten, and in the post-Cataclysm world there seemed to be no place for them. The halflings went from communities to small bands of twenty or so, wandered from place to place, making their way in the world however they could. A lifestyle that has followed them through time to this day.

THE MIDDLE AGES

Before long, human settlements popped up on the landscape once again. Small cities became large cities, grew again, and transformed into the great cities of old: Athens, Constantinople, Yedo, Timbuktu, and Rome among them. Mankind began its domination of the planet. And perhaps the most ambitious of all of man's civilizations was the Roman Empire.

There was no other great civilization that showed the endless appetite for territory and conquest. Conversely, no empire contributed as much to mankind as Rome. At its height, the Roman Empire spanned the known world, invading and assimilating cultures as they discovered them. They brought the culture and education of their empire with them, so, with each conquered country, mankind became less localized and more global. Suddenly there was a common cultural thread tying together the various tribes of man. There was little that could be done to stop them, the Roman Empire had

both military might and magic on their side, and used it to their best advantage, and to the advantage of mankind as a whole.

The Romans didn't just fight to conquer the world of man, but also to repel the many tribes of orcs in their path. Tribes of orcs were everywhere, gaining strength through numbers and fear. Fear is something that works on the unprepared, and the Roman legions were prepared–and fearless. It was near the western border of the Alps that the Romans first came into conflict with the barbaric nomads, and the orcs fell quickly. After they suffered a few losses to the Roman Legions, the orcs united under a common banner. They viewed this new army as a threat to their continued existence, and began a full assault on Rome and all of her colonies. Their savagery was astounding. The orcish forces attacked relentlessly on all fronts, staggering the well trained troops. It seemed that Rome would lose this war, fighting at once in Asia, Europe, and Africa, keeping them from sending reinforcements to any one location. However, when matters seemed to be darkest, the orcs made a serious tactical error. Filled with confidence, the Dog Foot clan of Orcs brought their ancient enemy into the fray. They led a full-scale assault on the elvish stronghold Larillilo, deep in what is now known as the Black Forest. The elves retaliated, and their staunch allies, the dwarves, came with them. This brought the elder races into the conflict in earnest – elves and dwarves joined with the humans of Rome. Their combined might was no match for the orcs, but a final defeat of the barbarians seemed elusive. A dwarf called Stonefist–the rest of his name has been lost to time–began to suspect there was more at work in this conflict. Leading an elite team deep into the orcish stronghold, Stonefist discovered their secret; the clans weren't coming together of their own accord, but were under the control of more diabolical minds–the alfar.

The dark elves were orchestrating the entire war from their underground cities, in an attempt to dominate the world from beneath. They were using the orcs as the first wave of an attack that they felt would elevate them to the most dominant race in the world. Along with their allies–the kuo toa, the hobgoblins, and the durgars–the alfar were already planning the second stage of the war. Those plans were disrupted by the foolish Dog Foot orcs, who brought the elder races into the conflict far too quickly. The alfar schemed to enslave the humans, and use their might to decimate the remaining surface dwelling peoples of the Earth. Stonefist and his team were able to transport the necessary information back to a nearby human base, but he did so at the cost of his own life; the alfar were able to poison him before he could escape, and the venom proved too great for him. In the year 2405 the tide turned for good. The combined might of the surface dwelling people drove the orcs to the wastelands, and forced the alfar to take an active hand. Two years later, in the year 2407, the alliance of men, dwarves, and elves became galvanized with the signing of the Treaty of Sardinia, a mutual defense compact governing the peaceful relations of man and the elder races, a pact which is still held to this day. Included in this charter is a compromise governing human encroachment. It was stated at the time that Rome agreed to stay out of the dwarvish mountains and the deep forests in exchange for certain trading and tariff guarantees. This compromise is often used as the basis for relations in modern diplomacy.

The dark races stood little chance against the surface alliance, and in 2711 the alfar surrendered, capitulating to a force of men, dwarves, and elves that managed to strike deep within the European Zura'ah'zura, in the dark citadel Rotzamor'el, deep beneath modern day Bucharest. An agreement was designed by the leader of the human forces, with with demands for heavy reparations by all of the dark elves allies at the core of

the contract, with the alfar themselves hit by the stiffest penalties. Much of the alfar homeland, the Zura'ah'zura, was to remain open to constant inspection by dwarf, human, and elf specialty teams, making sure that the dark elves were not building to another attack. The alfar agreed to remain beneath the surface and to reign in the orcs and goblinoids. Of course, this agreement was broken so often and became so costly to the surface world that historians often call it the "Folly of Caesar."

The Growth of the Messianics

It is in the years following the end of the war against the underworld that the Messianic cults are first described in historical record. These bizarre cultists follow The Messianic Gospels, the recorded letters and sermons of a group of twelve prophets united by a strange concept of one god. The monotheists were centered in the Middle East, and began circulating their thoughts to any who would listen. At the time, the area was ripe with poverty and despair, creating an atmosphere of mistrust and fear, causing the people to turn away from the gods who swore to protect them to follow the cult and their gospels. These Gospels denounced the deities of man and the magical arts, claiming them evil and unnatural, and promised the coming of a "savior" who would be the scourge of evil creatures, deities, and even the elder races. This, naturally, came into direct conflict with all of the reasonable and civilized peoples of the time, and chief among them was Rome. The Messianic Gospels came to the attention of Roman Emperor Tiberius Caesar, whose life was threatened when a group of Messianic terrorists charged him wildly, in an obvious attempt at murder. The wise Emperor saw the cult as a threat to both Roman rule and the Treaty of Sardinia, since the cult sought not only the destruction of human civilization, but also all of the other friendly peoples in the world. Tiberius declared the Messianic Gospels treasonous, and those found in their possession were put to death, often in public displays held in the famed Roman Coliseum to thrilled audiences. The Messianic Peoples–known to the rest of the world as the One God Cult–were intent on spreading their cult, continuing their mission of spreading the Gospels to peoples everywhere, regardless of the danger. The so-called Missionaries began to carry the Messianic Gospels to all corners of the globe, bringing with them strife and conflict, tearing apart villages and towns which had stood for hundreds of years. The Romans and many of the other civilized people decided that the time for reaction was past, and they declared a hunt on the cultists. The Messianics began to die at the hands of the empire, and quickly moved underground, hiding and taking their cult to a secret level, spreading their gospels through any means available. To that end they kept moving, trying to leave seeds in their wake, rather than stay in one place where they could be eradicated, and many of the early human explorers were secretly agents of the One God Cult. The Messianics spread all over the globe, finding great success in their attempts at destroying beliefs that had stood for countless generations, trying to supplant the gods that would wisely and justly watch over their flock. They had success in every corner of the globe, everywhere that is but Asia. Even Africa, ruled by dragons, ancient sorcerer kings, and the indomitable Zulu Nation, saw its share of Messianics activity, but Asia was resolute in their traditional beliefs, and they fought back the invading infidels.

The Messianics were extremely successful in discovering new lands and creating colonies, but were extremely unsuccessful at holding onto them. Because the Messianics decried wizards, the elder races, and clerics alike, they were no match for opposing forces using

wizardry and divine power. They also ran afoul of the local goblin and orc populations who enjoyed battling humans who weren't as adept in combat. They also found enemies in the form of dragons, who consider human beings in their territory both a viable food source and a possible threat. And if all this could be survived, the Missionaries knew it was only a matter of time until Rome decided to take action against any colony spreading the insane promises of the Gospels. In order to survive, the Messianics turned to the only asset their religion did not specifically prohibit: technology. The Messianics were pioneers in medical research, explosives, animal breeding and agriculture. Their advancement of technology enables them to survive to this day. Of course, the rest of the world would soon follow course, adopting the creations of the Messianics, and using their inventions against them. The Messianics played an important role in history due to necessity; they became the technical vanguard of the Earth in order to simply survive a world filled with many enemies and virtually no allies, and helped to shape the concept of the future.

The Fall of Rome

During this period, the Roman Empire continued to expand, dominating Europe and North Africa, the Middle East, and the Netherlands. However, in a classical historic blunder, the Roman Empire tried to expand into Asia too quickly and found their renowned military stretched too thin. The Legions of Rome were defeated again and again by the Mongols and, further in Asia, the armies of the Ming dynasty. Rome, not willing to concede defeat, sent reinforcements to their eastern front, intent on conquering this stubborn foe—but their actions left their kingdom woefully unprotected. Taking advantage of this weakness, the alfar queen Malinjah broke the treaty with Rome, sending ten-thousand goblins to attack Athens, with the plan of taking the defensible island nation of Greece as a stronghold. The proud nation of Greece, left with only a skeletal force from Rome, rose up, and not only fought off the invading goblins, but freed themselves from Rome's rule. Rome lost the gem of their empire; the country that helped to inspire and shape their society was independent once more. The situation in Greece was just the beginning. Having stretched their military resources too far, Rome found themselves unable to hold their rebellious empire. First the Germanic tribes threw off Roman rule, then the Britons. Eventually, the North African Empire found emancipation after a bloody civil war that pitted the Roman army and loyalists against nationalists and their Zulu allies. The empire which took generations to conquer crumbled in less than a decade, and while the nation of Rome survives to this day, it has never again seen the military and political power it once enjoyed.

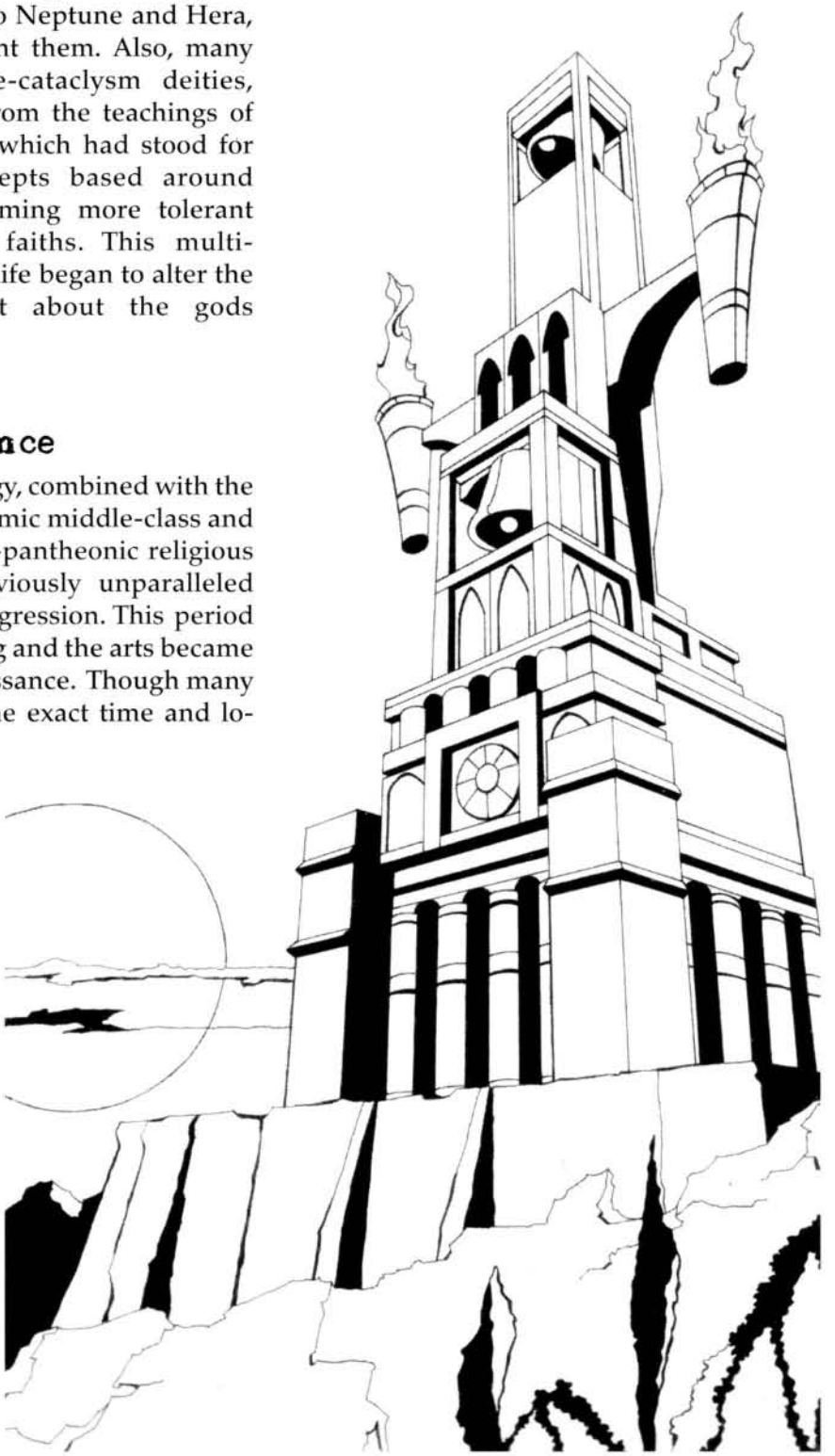
After shaping the destiny of the world for so many years, Imperial Rome was now a nation in decline. These newly freed nations were now free to govern themselves and trade with other nations without having to bear the heavy burden of Roman taxation. This lead to a period of economic growth and expansion, creating a new class of citizen, a wealthy middle class. The growing middle class had free time and disposable income to spend on travel, education, and the arts. Museums and libraries were built, and Universities dedicated to secular and classical studies began to shape the ideals of mankind. Like many new societies though, these newly freed nations and burgeoning social class suddenly discovered nowhere left to turn but the past.

The nations that successfully seceded from the Roman Empire found themselves in a cultural identity crisis. Nations like Briton, Libya, Spain, and Egypt found themselves in a position to

turn away from the Roman gods and customs that had been forced upon them and to return to their own classical periods. However, these nations did not easily give up their Roman heritage. In Briton, for example, shrines dedicated to non-Roman gods began to appear alongside temples to Neptune and Hera, but did not supplant them. Also, many turned to the pre-cataclysm deities, seeking guidance from the teachings of antiquity. Societies which had stood for centuries on concepts based around religion were becoming more tolerant towards alternate faiths. This multi-pantheonic view of life began to alter the way men thought about the gods and religion.

The Renaissance

The rise of technology, combined with the creation of an economic middle-class and a change to a multi-pantheonic religious view led to a previously unparalleled time in cultural progression. This period of growth in learning and the arts became known as the Renaissance. Though many historians debate the exact time and location of the start, most believe the Renaissance began in the country of Rome, with Emperor Medici I. Medici wanted to return Rome to its former glory, if not through military power, then through artistic influence. He began to commission artists to create dynamic new temples and government buildings. He wanted the people to become involved with the country once more, and discovered that their new artistic and educational freedom was an ally rather than a hindrance. The first great accomplishment was the grand Temple to



THE REFORMATION

During the time of The Renaissance, the religious community found themselves torn about the progress of man. Many clerics and priests accepted science and exploration as a part of the will of the gods, but there were some who saw their actions as an affrontage towards the gods themselves. In reaction, a group of holy leaders formed a coalition headed by a priest named Martin Luthor. These priests constructed a list of violations against the gods, and posted them on the front door of The Luminarium, proudly divorcing themselves from the sects accepting science. They demanded faiths be reformed, recreated to include dictates governing the rights of science and scientific exploration. They accused most temples of becoming too interested in wealth and material goods, forgetting the spiritual calling that created each church. In public ceremonies they proclaimed the religious leaders as corrupt, and the scientists as instruments of demons and dark gods, trying to undermine the strengths of humanity and the other races. Naturally, this outraged the organized temples, who had these priests officially removed from power. This didn't dissuade the coalition, who formed what they called "true and pure" denominations devoted to their gods. These faiths all turned their backs on the ways of science, deciding to keep with the traditional ways practiced by their ancestors. Called "Luthites" after the leader of the coalition, these obscure sects even exist to this day. Though small in number, they feel that science and progress are offensive to the gods, and live in the distant corners of the world, subsisting off the earth and what their gods grant them.

Apollo, called The Luminarium, designed by Vincente D'Oro. It was D'Oro's designs that attracted many of the country's most aspiring talents to Rome, but one talented youth by the name of Leonardo DaVinci felt that the city of Florence, and not Rome, was destined to become the true cultural center of the country. Strangely enough, it was the cousin of Medici I, Victor Borgia, who became DaVinci's patron and helped to create the rivalry between Florence and Rome. This rivalry sparked competition among the cities of Rome, with various politicos and aristocrats from major cities bringing artists to their sides, with each city becoming synonymous with the artist; Venice had Michelangelo, Bologna had Raphael, and Carrara had Donatello, each of whom left their distinctive mark on society alongside Leonardo. The rivalries didn't stop within the borders of Rome, and soon the cities of Paris, Munich, Amsterdam, and Barcelona were taking part in the artistic rivalry, with each locale gaining amazing architecture and paintings of unequalled quality.

It was a period of amazing development not just for the visual arts, but also literature and science. Science, making a clean break from the creations of the Messianics, made phenomenal leaps. Inventions such as the telescope, microscope, and printing press began to change the way we studied our world. Mankind was finally able to see beyond the natural means provided by the gods. And, while there was a extreme reaction from the religious community (a movement which became known as The Reformation), scientists continued to explore and create. Scientists such as Copernicus, Galileo, and Aldrous (known as the "Father of Technomancy") developed a scientific method that sought to understand the forces that moved the universe, and advanced the works of man to unheralded heights.

Renaissance thought was also heavily influenced by trade with Asia, which began in earnest after the defeat of Rome in the Asiatic Campaigns. The Vietnamese Emperor Van Tran, who

dominated Eastern culture and life, became fascinated with the pale invaders from the west and sent ambassadors and scholars to learn from the Europeans. These learned Asians brought their understanding of mathematics, astronomy, and navigation to the European countries. Asian culture had a huge impact on the Renaissance, from design and architecture to music and poetry. The coop-eration of the races of man began to bring the notice of the others, who found diplomatic relations and advancement in art a sign of progress. The Renaissance began to interest the elder races, and for the first time in hundreds of years open relations began in earnest. Dwarves and men began to trade goods openly and often. Elvish and gnomish scholars came to France and Rome to study under the likes of DaVinci, Raphael, and Michelangelo. In Briton, the Renaissance sparked an amazing literary tradition. Shakespeare, a brilliant playwright and poet whose work endures and influences to this day, wrote dozens of plays, including the celebrated "Trokio and Juliet," which dared to discuss the previously taboo subject of romance between elves and humans. Half-elves, the inevitable product of unions between man and elves, began to find themselves afforded a measure of cultural respect for the first time during the Renaissance, largely due to Shakespeare's classic tragedy.



Beyond The Renaissance

Europe was the center of commerce and industry in the west. In the East, Japan successfully wrested its freedom from the Vietnamese Empire in 4471 and established itself as the Eastern center of commerce and culture. The Great Dragon Emperor Chang Fe Hung, became the de facto leader of the warlords and nations of the Pacific when he wrested control from the human rulers of the country in a mostly bloodless coup that was supported by the military and civilian population as a whole. The Gold Emperor, as he was known, would send both human and dragon vassals to attend to matters of state, and no challenge to his authority went unmet, though all were ultimately resolved through dispassionate logic and reason. Blending classical human learning with the benevolent and farsighted philosophy of Gold Dragons, Chang Fe Hung ruled for a thousand years—wisely and justly, if impersonally. Hung's power and popularity brought him into conflict with the Ming Emperors of China, who coveted his leadership of the East. Though Hung didn't bear them any ill will, the Ming sought his destruction through first covert and then overt action. Naturally, the wise dragon responded in kind. The Great Eastern War broke out between the two nations. The conflict saw conventional forces combined with the power of dragonkind on both sides of the conflict, since both China and Japan had dragon allies. Under the strategic leadership of Emperor Hung, Japan and her allies eventually prevailed and toppled the Ming Emperor, making way for the more enlightened Ch'ing Dynasty, which rules China to this day.

During the time of the Great Eastern War, Briton was on its way to becoming the premier empire building nation of Europe, sending brave explorers worldwide to find trade routes and create settlements. However, many of these explorers were Messianic, and Briton unwittingly populated the globe with the One God Cult. Briton, along with most civilized nations, had inherited its hatred and fear of the cult from its Roman forbears, and those discovered with the Gospels or any of their symbols were put to death, and their children sent to the prison colonies of Australia along with the thieves, murderers, and others considered criminals.

Soon the Messianic people made an amazing discovery; a new world to the west, a continent undiscovered by Rome or the European powers. The One God Cult believed that this was the promised land, where they would settle and hold their vigil for the coming Messiah. Under the guise of explorers trying to find western sea routes to Asia, the Messianic people began an exodus to this New World, a land they named America after the man who was the architect of the plan, Amerigo Vespucci.

THE NEW EMPIRE

The Americas proved to be an extremely harsh environment for settlers. They found a barbaric native human population who were in constant conflict against the native goblinoid population. In the hopes of reducing enemies, the Messianic provided support for the barbarian tribes, choosing to side against a familiar enemy. The technology of the Messianic peoples helped turn the tide in North America, but as soon as the threat of the goblinoids was put down, the Messianic turned on their Native American allies. In one violent meeting after another, they forced the natives to convert or be exterminated. The Native Americans had powerful shamans and spirit allies, and the war between the Messianic settlers and the aboriginal people of North America went on for years. With the forces evenly balanced, it might have lasted for decades, with no clear victor, but fate played a hand. A Spanish explorer, hired by the country of Rome, discovered the Messianic New

World. His name was Christopher Columbus, and he was quick to report his findings to Rome, who immediately commissioned him an admiral of their navy. His one ship was soon joined by two others from Rome, and he laid claim to a territory on the eastern shore of North America, in what is now Columbia. The secrets of Rome were not secrets for long, and soon all of the other powers of Europe were sending military forces to claim their own part of the new world, ignoring the claims of the Messianics and the Native Americans. Finally the Britons, French, and Spaniards became directly involved with the conflict, attacking the Native Americans and the Messianics equally, driving them both from claimed territories. Soon, the majority of the Messianics resumed their familiar pattern, and blended once again into the folds of the new empire, hiding their true identities and living in the colonies funded by European countries.

Not all of the Messianics were willing to disappear, though. A few of the Messianic settlers were very much at odds with the Britonnian idea of rulership—they hated having wizards in their communities, and objected to the stiff taxes Americans had to pay. The Messianic stirred up enough anti-british sentiment to start a revolution, which began with the burning of the Massachusetts Institute of Magic in Boston on Dec 16, 4470. This was the beginning of a war unlike any the world had seen. Up to this point, all wars were between nations connected in some way by land. The New Empire was across a vast expanse of water, and this distance gave the settlers the opportunity they needed. The War for American Independence was a bloody conflict that lasted three years. Using the technological advancements of the Messianics, the revolutionary forces were able to keep the ground forces of the Britons struggling, systematically attacking and eliminating the mages and clerics sent as fortification. Eventually, the Americans–with the aid of France and Spain who lent weapons and money to help the Americans fight the rival Britons–were victorious. The Britons surrendered to General George Washington, leader of the American Armed Forces, on July 4, 4473.

General Washington was the hero of the nation, and the Messianic leaders were sure that he would assume the leadership of their nation in the name of their beliefs. He assumed power, but not in the way they hoped. Washington was a firm believer in the self-determination of North America, but he was also devoted to his half-elvish mistress. He couldn't bring himself to support a system that vilified the elder races, and he knew that no nation banning wizardry outright could stand for long against the myriad forces arrayed against it. With little ceremony, Washington assumed power of the newly dubbed North American Empire on September 9, 4473, and without delay he issued his first command. Using the utterly loyal American military, George Washington arrested the leaders of the American Messianic movement and had them all put to death on charges of counter-revolutionary activities. Thus was formed the North American Empire, with Emperor George Augustus I as its sole regent.

George I made Columbia his capitol, and named his capitol city Washington, after himself. There he built his Imperial Palace, which stands—with additions and modifications—to this day. As a youth, Washington was trained by the Roman Legion, and thus was well versed in the political structure of Rome. When creating the designs for the American government, Washington fully adopted the Roman system, and made their ancient pantheon the official state religion. He also adopted Latin as the official state language—although only the aristocracy ever uses anything other than English. And in an attempt to appease the commoners he kept the names of the settlements the Messianics

founded. Thus, settlements such as St. Louis and St. Paul were allowed to retain their names. And while the Messianics kept slaves, George Augustus saw it as both a barbaric custom and an economic mistake, since all non-landowners were basically taxable serfs serving the Empire. By Imperial decree, George Augustus freed all slaves in North America on Jan 1, 4474.

Emperor George Augustus I was a dynamic and farsighted leader. He understood that the technological weapons of the Messianics were not only the key to America's victory in the Revolution, but also key to its emergence as an economic power. America began to export firearms and farm machinery worldwide. Military and agricultural technology, along with textiles, gold, silver, and coal became the Empire's chief exports. George Augustus I also adopted the Treaty of Sardinia, and invited the elder races to migrate to America. Many dwarves, elves, gnomes, and halflings came to North America alongside the thousands of human immigrants who came west to make their fortune in the North American Empire. Lured by tales of mountains of pure gold, endless forests, and freedom from subhuman aggression, the non-humans settled and created a new world for themselves in the Americas. The elves created the city of Sattersala in the California forests, a settlement still considered in its infancy in elvish terms. The dwarves created networks of mines near cities like Telluride and Butte, and began the business of finding all the secret wealth hidden under America's soil. The gnomes and halflings did their best to integrate directly into American society, hoping to find peace among the humans once again, with very little of the long term prejudices that still haunted them in Europe.



Manifest Destiny

Time passed, George stepped down from the throne, and the chain of Emperors began. The country prospered, and saw relative peace for decades. These were the years of the American Dream—a dream that one day the NAE would span through all of North America. Emperor John I—the fourth Emperor of the NAE—began to make this dream manifest, sending the North American Legions north to capture all the settlements in the Canadian regions. The NAE met firm resistance from French settlers, Algonquin natives and the odd pockets of Messianics and non-humans in the far reaches of the continent, but they were all isolated and ill organized, and could not stand before the well trained troops of America. It took nearly twenty-five years of fighting a Roman-style imperial campaign to conquer the Canadian territories. Once they fell, the NAE focused its attention on the south. The Spanish, French, and Wolfblood Goblins were all fighting for control for the wealthy southern regions. The French were also fighting against the Spanish and English in Europe at this time, and they believed that America could be a powerful ally. French General Remad sent secret emissaries to the NAE to secure their help in fighting against the Spanish. The power-hungry Emperor John II was in power at that time, and he readily agreed to lend his support to the French. John II lent the French gold and weapons, and the use of his secret air force—an elite battalion of hippogriff riders trained in air-to-land and air-to-sea tactics. In exchange, the French gave up all claims to territories in the Americas.

While the war raged on in Europe, John II sent his Legions to Texas to fight the Spanish. The Americans were lead by the famous General James Bowie, who was known for his tenacity and aggressive tactics. Legend has it that a bloodlust would overcome Bowie to such a degree that during the battle he could be as much a danger to his nearby troops as to the enemy. After a bloody two-year campaign, the Spanish surrendered and gave up their territories in North America. The strain of fighting the NAE in Mexico and the French in Europe was too taxing, and in order to preserve their homeland, they were willing to concede the territories of the New Empire. The NAE was now the power in command, though they did not yet have complete control. There were many pockets of resistance to be overcome; dozens of Messianic missionary outposts all over Mexico were equipped with cutting edge weapons and communications equipment, and they continued fighting to the last man. A notable battle at the missionary outpost called The Alamo lasted for weeks, with the missionaries inside unwilling to surrender their fort. In the end, General Bowie himself led the NAE forces against the small outpost, and while he did finally capture it, he did so at the cost of over eight hundred of his own men—and his own life. To this day, it is said that the Messianics refer to this event with great reverence, reminding themselves the commitment some felt for their cause. It took another dozen years of fighting guerrilla resistance before the NAE truly controlled the Mexican territories. In 4538, troops found the hidden stronghold of the Messianics in southern Mexico; the Legions destroyed it, and the dream of Emperor John I finally came to pass. The North American Empire was truly complete, spanning the continent from border to border.

The War of Subterranean Aggression

Other than the occasional skirmish with the European powers, the North American Empire lived in relative peace until dwarvish miners discovered a vast array of caverns underneath Oregon during a geological survey in the summer of 4559. The caverns they discovered weren't entirely natural, shaped and

formed in a manner that was far too familiar to the dwarvish explorers. This was the discovery of the North American Zura'ah'zura, home to a vast array of humanoids and alfar. The discovery was uniquely one-sided, as the dark elves had been aware of the surface dwellers for decades, choosing to remain in anonymity. The alfar considered the discovery an invasion of their sovereignty, claiming all of underground North America their own. Despite hurried negotiations, the alfar and their orcish allies declared war against the surface world on April 12th, 4559. Their first strike was the destruction of Ft. Sumter in the Georgia district, which was magically engulfed into a cavity in the earth, killing an entire Legion of Imperial soldiers. The NAE reacted firmly, immediately sending troops into the known Zura'ah'zura, fighting a war unlike any that had been fought on American soil.

The War with Zura'ah'zura lasted six years, but the cost was far more reaching. Emperor James II was forced to nationalize the entire economy to aid the war effort. Fierce battles were fought both above and underground. At one point, 80,000 orc regulars were held off at the Potomac River by less than 7,000 human and elvish troops as they tried to strike at the Imperial Palace in Washington. General Ulysses Grant commanded the Potomac forces, and swore an oath to ensure the safety of the Imperial Palace. Grant enhanced his command with magical elixirs designed to keep him at peak efficiency for extended periods. When later asked about Grant's use of elixirs, James II is said to have commented, "find out who the alchemist is, and get him to make them for the entire army." Many consider this the turning point in a war that was seeing no clear victor to that point—but the war was far from over.

Huge battles were fought in Stone Mountain, Charleston, Boise, and Reno. The infamous General Tzan of the alfar, called the "Invisible Spider," coordinated the Alfar and orcish troops from his citadel deep within the Earth, while the surface world alliance was lead by the canny General Lee in what is now considered to be one of the greatest cat-and-mouse military campaigns ever fought. Again and again Tzan tried to capture key targets only to find his army had been chasing Lee's so called "Phantom Legions," decoy forces which lead the orcish regulars away from vital military objectives. Tzan was no fool, and he soon began to unravel Lee's strategy and use it against him, harassing his primary targets and decoys alike with strategic magical and conventional strikes. If not for the ineptness of his orcish sub-commanders, Tzan might well have forced the North American Empire to capitulate. However, the orcish generals were easy to antagonize and bluff, and many close battles were lost by their inability to carry out the alfar High Command's orders in a professional fashion. In the end, a mixed strike force of humans and dwarves penetrated the heart of the Zura'ah'zura and threatened to collapse the cavern housing the alfar city-state of Lathonicha' ah with explosives unless hostilities ceased. The alfar surrendered, and signed the Treaty of Montreal on December 12th, 4558. The treaty forced the alfar to pay huge war reparations, recognize the North American Empire, and police all the underground territories to prevent any further orcish or goblinoid invasions. The NAE conceded that Zura'ah'zura was "separate and insubordinate" to the NAE, with the chief authority being the alfar, and pledged non-interference on condition of peaceful trade. To date, the treaty has held; peace with the alfar and residents of the North American Zura'ah'zura has led to many benefits for both cultures and nations under the agreement of free trade.

THE INDUSTRIAL AGE

The War of Subterranean Aggression sparked the slow-burn Industrial Revolution in North America, which changed the way people lived and worked. The need to create mass-manufactured goods for a society that was larger than anything the world had seen led to major changes in the structure of society. Agriculture became less important than manufacturing to the economy, and the manufacturing cities in the NAE grew in size and stature. People moved to major urban areas for work, becoming employees of big business, and the owners of the businesses became celebrities and socialites, rivaling the celebrated families of renowned. The idea of the American Dream, the ability to come to the New Empire and make a fortune of your own, creating a family of importance and power, spread through the world, and the floodgates of immigration opened. Many who came to the NAE found the dream alive and well, while others found nothing but the same suffering and toil they left in their homelands.

Some of the world's greatest inventors called the NAE home. Edison patented the electric light, which soon replaced arcane lights throughout the world. Ford became the father of modern manufacturing with his assembly line innovations. Railroad lines began to connect people throughout the Empire, shipping goods faster and more efficiently than ever before. However, no technological invention had a larger impact than the airplane. Two human brothers who always dreamed of flying, Wilbur and Orville Wright, created a machine that would let them soar through the air. A gnomish inventor named Deedler Tonchson heard of the Wright's invention and took it one step further, modifying it to carry additional people, using gnomish technological experience to increase the efficiency of the human design a dozenfold. The combination of technology and economics changed the world, and in 4626 the first commercial airliner flew across the Atlantic Ocean to land in Rome, beginning a whole new era of world commerce. What would once take days or weeks now took hours. The New Empire was now a part of the world economy.

The Great War

In 4636 a new threat to world stability and peace arose. The Germanic Nations Chancellor, Adolph Hitler, declared himself Fuhrer following a bloody coup and declared war against the neighboring Kingdoms of France and Poland, citing them as "genetically inferior and a threat to the purity of the Aryan Nation." Hitler's army invaded

DRAGONS AND THE GREAT WAR

Japan could have become an unstoppable juggernaut during the Great War if it had been able to bring its allies, the dragons of Asia, into the conflict. However, the half-dragon Emperor Tojo alienated all of dragonkind when he disrespectfully demanded that they fight for the Axis cause. As one, the dragons that had been the foundation of Tojo's war plans turned their back on the human allies and stayed neutral during the conflict. Tojo attempted both an apology for his rash behavior, and military might to force the dragons into action, but the only response was to kill all but one of the forces sent to the dragons, the sole-survivor left alive to deliver the message to Tojo. With his military needed to fight the war, he gave up the conflict against the dragons, vowing revenge on a future date.



Poland, annexing it into their own Empire, and began to crush France from two fronts. Rome, suffering from a depressed economy, chose to side with Germany, and open a third front against the French. The French forces fell in a matter of weeks. The German Empire, combined with the territories of Rome, comprised the majority of the European landscape. Suddenly, the small country with the poor economy becomes noticed by the world. Germany and her allies became a force of considerable power. The other countries bordering the new Germany expressed fear and concern, and began to look for allies to aid them.

Meanwhile, Hitler made a pact with the island nation of Japan, whose conflict with China was not going well, and provided them economic support in exchange for military aid, which created a seeming monster. In 4638, Hitler's Germany, along with their allies the Japanese, the Italians, and a dozen prominent tribes of hobgoblins (which The Fuhrer declares to be the "Green Aryans") find their challenge opposed by the civilized world. The NAE and former enemy Briton allied themselves against further aggression from the expanding Germany. Their alliance, based on defense rather than aggression, led them

to take no action against the Axis powers unless they threatened their borders or those of their allies, including those countries surrounding Germany that requested aid. The Japanese, led by the upstart Emperor Tojo, half-dragon grandson of Emperor Chang Fe Hung, broke the tension in a violent way, leading the first offensive against the NAE with an aerial strike at the American naval base at Tacoma, accompanied by an attack by hobgoblin stormtroopers against Cincinnati. The targets were chosen as an attempt to knock out American manufacturing in the midwest, along with its Pacific naval power. This began the huge conflagration known as The Great War, pitting America, Briton, and the Black Forest elves and dwarves against the Axis powers and their hobgoblin confederates.

The Great War was the first truly global conflict. For the first time, the greatest casualties of a war were suffered not by the military, but in the civilian populations of Europe and Asia. Hitler believed in the destruction of the so-called "lesser races" and began a campaign of genocide unparalleled in human history; Messianics, halflings, homosexuals, gypsies, and fairies were wiped out by the thousands in concentration camps across Europe. Hitler's forces kept these camps hidden from the world when the war began, and they would have remained secret if not for the courageous efforts of a female hobgoblin named Kriak Bugstomper, who helped over twenty refugees escape. Once the truth was out, the nightmare of war became a nightmare of a deeper sort. Public opinion began to play a role in the war, and the burgeoning media stepped in to cover the war in a way never before experienced. The world was shocked and fascinated by the brutal images of this war, the first filmed conflict in human history, and the evil of Hitler became legendary.

The Great War ended in 4641 with the assassination of Hitler by the eminent Elvish sorcerer Serendalah. Elite elvish forces invaded Berlin, part of a large Allied force pushing back the Axis powers, and Serendalah and his squad found Hitler in an underground bunker. The entire facility was destroyed. The loss of The Fuhrer caused the surrender of Germany, which was quickly followed by the rest of the Axis powers. The hobgoblins did not so much surrender as die out completely, with dozens of major tribes being utterly destroyed. It is said that there are still pockets of Great War hobgoblin survivors who never surrendered, plotting and gathering strength for their next offensive.

The Aftermath of War

The Great War permanently changed the world economy. For the first time, manufactured goods surpassed agricultural products as the staple of global commerce. Technology became widespread throughout the world, and rural towns and cities began using electric lights instead of arcane illumination. It was only a sign of the world turning away from traditional magic and old ways. Instead of storytelling and magical pursuits, the populous began to watch the newly invented technology of television. The world no longer cared about kings and wizards, but about other people whose lives were shown for the world to see. This change did not go unnoticed by the former center of the world's attention; many Emperors came out against technology, stating that it could only lead to harm. And the Reformation Cults saw a sudden rebirth among clerics and wizards in an attempt to pull the devout back to their side. It was a futile effort, and the power of television and the people displaced the former stars.

The early 4600's were a time of social unrest. During the reign of Howard I, the economy took a serious blow when over speculation in the exchange markets led to a devaluation of American currency.

The nations coffers had already been heavily depleted on Howard I's ill-fated campaign to rid North America of dragons (see p. 83), and the collapse of the exchange market cemented the nation's economic crisis. The commoners bore the brunt of the depression, and famine was widespread. They turned to the Emperor, who addressed the nation directly on television, promising recovery efforts and a turn for the better. Six months later, with no promises met, the public grew restless. The commoners rioted in the streets for want food and heat in the winter of 4619, burning government offices and businesses. The general populace in North America desired increased freedom for years, and the depression of 4619 finally galvanized them into a full blown movement; for the first time, talk of a different system of government arose. It was all Howard I could do to maintain control of his Empire. Relief was slow to come and even a normalization of the economy and an increase in the American standard of living were insufficient to completely placate the angry citizens of North America. Howard I's reign gave way to that of James III, who was eventually assassinated by agents of his cousin, Henry Turber. Once Henry was incarcerated, the nation turned to the Oracles to choose the next Emperor–they chose Ronald I.

In 4678, Emperor Ronald I ascended to the throne of North America, determined to return America to a bygone age of glory and greatness. To this end he sanctioned Xcrawl, the dynamic sport that demonstrates the power and courage of the Empire's best and brightest. The world turns slowly towards the next age. Ronald I completely controls all of the major forces in North America: the Legions, the Mage's Guild and the Aristocracy. He is loved by the common people for his creation of Xcrawl, and some dare call him the greatest Emperor since the days of George Augustus, now considered a deity who walked amongst men. For now, his control is complete, but that which he fears most remains beyond his grasp. Rumors persist of a prophecy that the Messianic Savior's time is soon. Will this be the age which sees the Old Regime driven from the face of the earth? Will his son, Ronald II, never sit on the throne? Old Ronald listens closely to the Oracles and watches his Empire closely for any sign of revolt. But our Emperor is strong. He sits on the throne of the North American Empire, ready to face whatever threat might challenge the might of our land.



LIBENTER · VIVO · RECTOR

The Flag of the North American Empire



CHAPTER TWO
THE WORLD TODAY

"Well, the Pittsburgh Law Enforcement All-Star's substitute lockpick doesn't seem to be working out. It's been twelve minutes and thirteen seconds since he began his attempt to…"

"Excuse me, Monica, we have to leave the Pittsburgh team for the moment. We take you now live to the Dunguun Gangstaas who have just been engaged by the walking dead. As you can see here, it looks like Oni was on point when the zombies started their deadly amble out of the secret door. The team has spread out to better meet the charge."

"The zombies all have their faces covered with masks. That's become the standard for Xcrawl since the Necromancer's Guild was hit with a class action lawsuit initiated by family members recognizing their deceased loved ones being re-killed on television. Still, I think the smiley-face masks are just as creepy as the…"

"Stud takes a bite to the shoulder. Oni kills her zombie and sets her self up for…hold on! It looks like The Messenger has decided to make his move! Invoking the power of exalted Apollo, he chases those zombies back into their alcove. The unholy power of the undead proves to be no match for an agent of The Glorious One."

"And here comes the ref. He is declaring the encounter over! The Gangstaa's celebrate by spray-painting their logo on a fallen corpse. They sure are a rambunctious group."

"Hmm…that was almost too easy."

"Don't worry. Cudgel UP! is a hard competitor. She's still testing this team, perhaps playing a little cat-and-mouse. The fun is just beginning."

NORTH AMERICA: WELCOME TO PARADISE

"If you knew what was out there, you wouldn't leave the house without a shotgun, a spellbook and a gallon of holy water."
–MONSTER COLLECTOR HANS STOPPARD, COMMENTING ON THE MODERN WORLD.

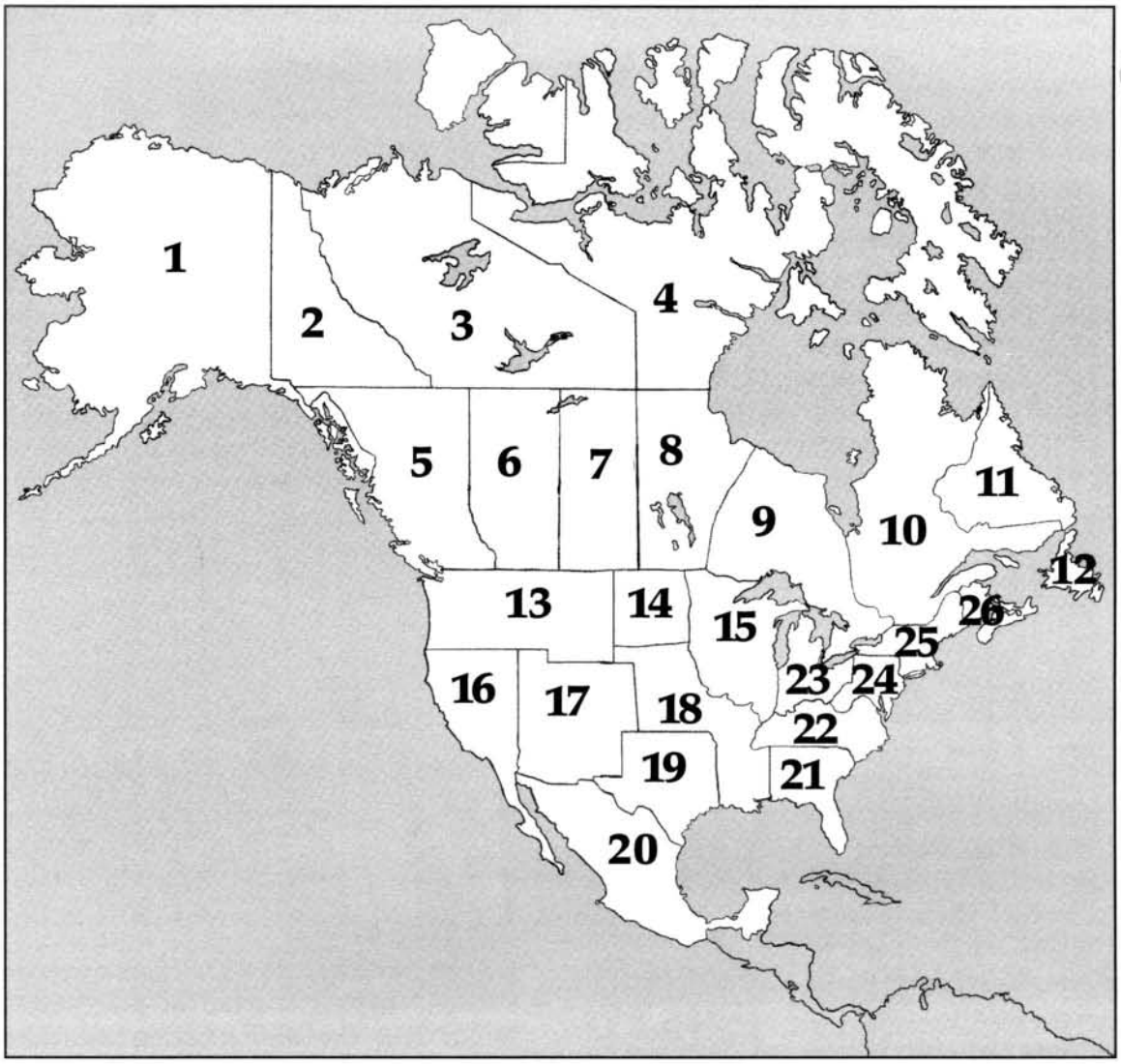
The world in 4699 is certainly an interesting place. Empires and city-states vie for control of natural resources and territory, and the occasional bloodletting between nations is understood to be a necessary part of modern diplomacy. The wilds are ruled by fierce creatures and uncompromising barbarian tribes. The Zura'ah'zura spans almost the entire globe and is home to a bevy of nightmarish horrors and devious dark races. Some wonder if there is truly a need for Xtreme Dungeon Crawl events at all; why stage danger when danger lurks everywhere in the world?

The North American Empire stretches from the farthest reaches of the Alaskan territories to the Panama Canal. The nation is under the sole command of the Emperor, who is commander of both the civil and military state. The NAE is easily the world's superpower. It is the largest and wealthiest country, with vast economic and military power. As such, the NAE is the target of resentment throughout the entire world, particularly in Rome. The Romans are quick to point out that, at the height of the earlier Empire, they controlled more than double the territory of North America, but this is a point of bitterness rather than pride.

Visitors to the NAE are impressed by its clean cities, towering Romanesque architecture, and amazing expanses of wild lands. Many Europeans are amazed by the size of the NAE; the entire continent of Europe can fit inside its borders, and the majority of the country is still not developed—but where developed, it is amazing. Human cities tower over the landscape. It has proved much easier to build taller cities than expansive cities, and the Empire cities appear to be towers of the gods themselves. The architecture is heavily influenced by classical Greek and Roman design; one sees Corinthian columns, majestic arches and arcades with marble statues honoring the heroes of the realm. On the outskirts of the cities are acres and acres of rich farmland. The NAE is basically a confederation of giant population centers, hedged in on all sides by dense forest, untamed mountains or virgin plains. There are heavily patrolled highways connecting all the cities, but other than fortified refueling and rest stations, there is very little development outside of urban population centers. While the danger of monster attack is far less than it used to be, there are still many, many areas where dark beasts dwell and threaten humanoid life.

Each region of the Empire is ruled by a local Governor, who has immediate jurisdiction over his realm. Despite being separate, each of these regions—called Districts—has qualities and laws that are unique to themselves, but they all must answer equally to the Emperor. While there has been some unrest, each of these Governors is directly appointed by the Emperor himself, so their loyalty is never questioned. There has never been a case of rebellion in the Empire, and each Governor is responsible for making sure that his District remains true to the honor and guidance that has kept the NAE strong for centuries.

The current Emperor is Ronald I, who has reigned since his coronation in 4678. Ronald I is ancient, kept alive through magic and twenty-four hour medical attention. Despite what some feel to be



MAP OF THE NORTH AMERICAN EMPIRE

1. Alaska
2. Yukon
3. Northwest Territories
4. Nunavut
5. British Columbia
6. Alberta
7. Saskatchewan
8. Manitoba
9. Ontario
10. Quebec
11. Newfoundland
12. Labrador
13. Oregon
14. Dakota
15. Illinois
16. California
17. Arizona
18. Louisiana
19. Texas
20. Mexico
21. Georgia
22. Virginia
23. Ohio
24. Columbia
25. New England
26. Nova Scotia

an ailing body, his mind is as robust as ever, and he is known for his charismatic leadership and his relentless pursuit of both policy goals and his enemies. It is said that the Emperor laughs at criticism but never forgets the critic. As Emperor, Ronald is the Commander In Chief of the armed forces, the Leader of the Aristocracy and the Master of Temple, a secular position that gives him authority over all the Temples in the Empire. The Emperor has a huge staff of experts on all areas of government, science and history to advise him on any policy decision he considers. Besides his advisors and cabinet members, Ronald I has exclusive access to the Oracles. Once a year he makes a pilgrimage to the Temple of the Oracle in the Southern Keys, seeking insight and a glimpse of the future. Rumor has it he is currently extremely concerned with the coming of the "one who will usurp the Empire," which the Oracles have predicted will happen in the relatively near future. The Emperor has interpreted this as the coming of the Messianic "savior," who it is said will rid the world of magic, monsters and the elder races. The prophesied event would mean the end of the NAE, but Ronald continuously plots to prevent it. Any possible sign of the coming of the savior is secretly and carefully investigated by agents of the Empire, without thought given to privacy or even justice for the citizens who are affected. The matter is simply too big for Ronald I to concern himself with the niceties of justice—but it is all done in the service and best interest of the empire.



Ronald's chief adviser and wizard is Lord Byford, known as "The Eye in the Clouds." Byford is head of the Mage's Guild and the godfather to Ronald's children. His powers are immense: he is a high level spell caster with access to the greatest artifacts and the Empire's most potent magical tomes. From his fortified tower in the District of Columbia, Lord Byford scryes carefully on nobles and commoners alike, seeking out criminals, traitors and possible threats to the empire. He is loyal to the Emperor, but his first loyalty is to the NAE. Some claim that as of late he wonders if Ronald I has the best interests of the nation in mind, but these rumor mongers don't know Lord Byford.

General Aaron Stormcroft is the Commander of the North American Legion, and he answers only to the Emperor. Stormcroft is a huge, hulking figure who seems slow and stoic, but is capable of quick and decisive action. He

SOCIAL STRUCTURE

The social caste system works roughly like this :

- **Emperor**
- **Nobility**
- **Celebrities**
- **High level clergy**
- **Guild Magi**
- **Elves**
- **Guildmasters**
- **Clergy**
- **Merchants, Teachers, artisans, dwarves and gnomes**
- **Laborers, most commoners**
- **Halflings, criminals, the indigent**

joined the Legions in 4665, lying about his age so that he could fight in the Brazilian Campaigns (the minimum age for Legionaries is 18, and Stormcroft was 16 at the time). He became a field commander and quickly developed a reputation for courage and an animal-like instinct for his opponent's weaknesses. He has overseen dozens of minor conflicts since being promoted to the top military position in 4687, but has never been tested by a major war.

Imperial America has an entrenched Guild system which regulates licensing and standards for many professions. Any trade requiring a high degree of specialized skill has a Guild to protect the interest of its members. These Guilds are all ultimately answerable to the Emperor, and possess only the authority he grants them. There is a Teamster's Guild, a Librarian's Guild, a Navigator's Guild and so forth. The most prominent, powerful and exclusive one is the Mage's Guild, to which any practitioner of arcane magic must belong. (see Magic, P,.51)

Each major city and province has a Baron, Earl or Duke who has been appointed by the District's Governor as City Mayor. The local Baron is the highest authority regarding any question of justice or property in his jurisdiction, and he has control over the lesser nobility in his domain. The Mayor of any given city appoints a bureaucracy and magistrates, who act as judges in any legal dispute. In theory, a magistrate's decisions are based on precedent—legal decisions of the past used to create standards for current adjudgements. However, there is no real due process. It is the prerogative of a magistrate to punish any citizen who offends him and exonerate those of some importance. And the magistrate always defers to the will of whomever appointed him, as the appointment can be stripped away just as quickly as it was given.

THE ARISTOCRACY

"Redmond, I say you are a cad and a disgrace to the Empire, and unworthy of Helen's affection. I will meet you with rapier behind the monument to Castor and Pollux tomorrow morning at dawn—if you are a man of honor."

– THE FINAL KNOWN WORDS OF SIR BRIAN GLENN.

The average nobleman is born into wealth and title, and is sophisticated, well-bred and highly educated. Nobles in the NAE are typically, but not exclusively, of European descent, though that is changing. By tradition, the Emperors award title and land to whomever they find worthy, helping to breed the

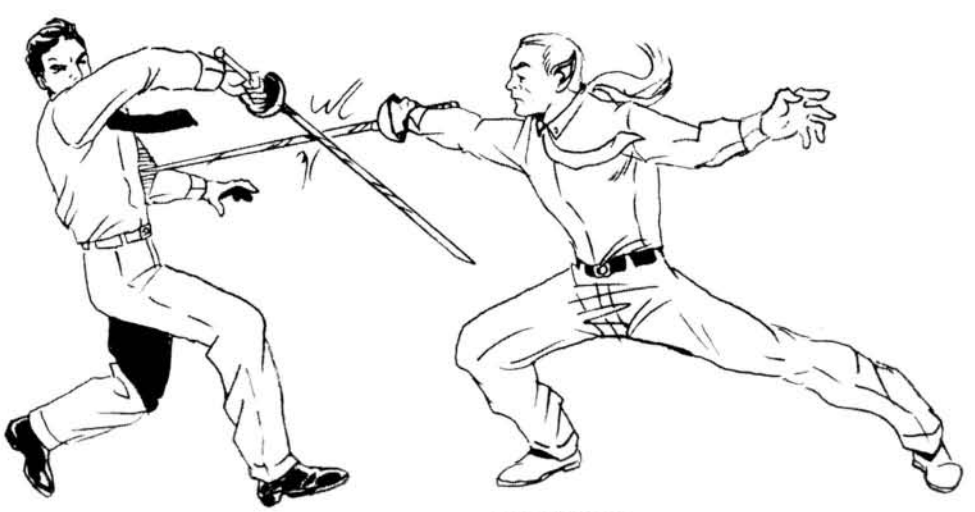
HONOR DUELS

The honor duel is an archaic carry-over from an earlier period still common among the nobles of not only the NAE, but the world as a whole. Honor duels are usually fought with the rapier, but it isn't unheard of to have pistol duels. Traditionally, the offended party chooses the time and place of the duel, while the challenged chooses the weapon. Each party brings along a second, who watches for foul play and carry the bad news to the family of the loser. The classic duel is fought to the death, but occasionally one will be decided by first blood. A nobleman refusing to fight an honor duel may find himself ostracized as a coward by his peers.

Any number of offenses can provoke an honor duel. Some nobles love to fight and will seek any excuse to challenge another, even to the point of provoking a duel. The infamous Earl of Des Moines was a magician with the blade, and participated in no less than thirty-eight duels—one provoked by a negative comment about the wine being served at a reception for the Earl's sister's wedding.

American Noble. Even though some of the aristocracy feel umbrage towards these upstart nobles, intermarriage is common between noble houses of different nations. The breeding of nobility can be of any race and national origin, with houses and lineage from all of the civilized people. And while it is rare, some aristocrats hold titles in both the NAE and their homeland. There are even some aboriginal noble houses, descended from the Native Americans who supported George Augustus I, and subsequently awarded title and land in the New Empire for their loyalty. And while some consider them slightly inferior, they are nonetheless respected for their title.

Educated by both private tutors and in exclusive academies, all nobles are obliged to study the classics of both Rome and America. Since the highest level of literature is still crafted in Latin, their position demands fluency in that ancient language (although English is commonly used while speaking). In most ways, nobles are the pinnacle of intelligent learning. They are well versed in history, political thought, and very often some branch of spellcasting. Noblemen and women also receive some martial training, generally with the rapier and firearms, but sometimes with heavy weapons and armor or the martial arts. This comes in handy since honor duels



NOBLES AS PLAYER CHARACTERS

Some players may wish to have a character with aristocratic origins. While it is rare for members of noble society to do any adventuring—you have to be fairly hungry to put your life on the line either in The Games or in the real world—it does occasionally happen. Imagine the young Duke who has lost his title and fortune, who turns to Xcrawl to try to recapture glory for his family. Or the spoiled young countess who becomes a monster hunter to spite her conservative parents. Players who wish to be from nobility must have at least one level of the Aristocrat class. Generally, the more levels a character takes in Aristocrat, the more status he has in high society; a player who never gains another level in Aristocrat will be poorly regarded by his peers, perhaps being judged neglectful of duty to their station.

are an illegal but all too common happenstance of their decadent life styles, and every noble family has had to avenge deaths that began with an insult or simple discourtesy.

Since magical or divine power facilitates a place in the aristocratic power structure, noble parents generally encourage at least one of their children to pursue either wizardry or the clergy. However, the majority of noblemen and women go into business and work on maintaining their fortunes, while filling their days with as much pleasure and opulence as possible. Many are drawn to military careers and the greatest of the aristocratic families have several Generals or War Wizards in their lineage. Some own sports teams or other entertainment franchises, and almost all donate to the The Games in hopes of securing the best seats for the most exclusive events. Nobles love Xcrawl. Nothing is quite so cathartic as seeing legendary monsters and brave adventurers tear one another to bits. Besides, anything that keeps the minds of the commoners off their poor lot in life is in the best interest of the Empire—and the Aristocracy.

The aristocratic falls into two categories: landed or unlanded. Landed noblemen own estates, farms, city blocks and, in some cases, entire towns, and tend to be the captains of industry and leaders of the government. A metropolis like Los Angeles has about fifty chief land owners who own property and collect taxes from the inhabitants. Some smaller cities, such as Fargo, are completely owned by a single landowner. Unlanded noblemen are cavalier in their attitudes and actions, flitting from city to city and country to country, shirking most responsibility, hoping to find adventure wherever they go. Despite their attitude, most unlanded noblemen strive to become landed at some point. It is said that unlanded noblemen are little better off than commoners, and there is no aristocrat who is fully above underhanded dealings to increase the size of his estate—or his standing in the eyes of the Emperor. It is understood that the gentry are bound to act with genuine noblesse oblige, but as with any such institution there is corruption, nepotism, and even outright plotting.

Unlike commoners, the nobility are allowed to travel internationally. Many aristocratic families have vacation houses in places like France, Australia and Bermuda. Many prominent families travel with the specific purpose of finding new contacts and favorable marriage prospects amongst the international gentry. The receiving nobility looks forward to such occasions, as it gives them the rare opportunity to throw a

truly gala party, to which any and all viable prospects would be invited. Not being invited to the more influential families parties can be considered a major affrontage, and can lead to many honor duels. Business travel is also common for the nobility, as most major corporations have international interests.

Advantageous marriage with a prominent family is a common social strategy. Everyone tries to marry into a better family, or at least an equal one, though the logistics of this make it impossible. Upon occasion, however, the titled and well-born will enter into marriage with commoners. Celebrities, wealthy businessmen and prominent figures will occasionally marry a titled family and receive titles themselves. While they will be afforded all the privilege of their new rank, they will always be considered of slightly lower social status than pure "blue-bloods."

With the exception of Emperor Ronald I's family, the most prominent noble family in North America is the Leibrocks. The Leibrocks came to North America from Amsterdam during the pre-Revolutionary times, and they supported George Augustus in his accession to Emperor. There are Leibrocks in every branch of the Imperial bureaucracy and military, and their line boasts several prominent historical figures. The Leibrock clan matriarch, Dame Linda Leibrock, is the City Mayor of Philadelphia. She is a forceful woman in her sixties, a society mainstay with a reputation of not suffering fools lightly. Once her husband died, she assumed control over all of his various financial and social interests and maintains tight control over her financial empire by putting easily manipulated family members and friends in key positions of power. There is a famous story often recanted of Dame Leibrock killing two thieves who broke into the families estate; she brained them both with a fire poker, then called their families and demanded they come and collect the bodies personally and apologize on their behalf. Dame Leibrock's precocious daughter, Pamela, is considered a very likely candidate for marriage to the Emperor's son, Prince Ronald II.

COMMONER

"I got a duke, a priest, a taxman, and a wife/ leaves me just 'bout three g-note for the rest of my life."
–Lyrics from Cafeteria Joe's "Empire Blues"

Citizens of Imperial America have a mixed lot. On the one hand, life can be fairly idyllic. Education, public libraries and mass transportation are all provided by the state for free, as are health and dental care. There is very little crime, and population centers tend to be safe and clean. The NAE boasts nearly full employment, and senior citizens are guaranteed a pension to help them in their old age. There is very little pollution per capita, and natural beauty abounds. And as long as you stick to the cities and avoid going out on the night of the full moon, the chances of being devoured by some hellish aberration is extremely slim.

On the other hand, such benefit can come at a high price. There is no protection of privacy, liberty or individual rights. Commoners have no say whatsoever in their government, and no control over how taxes are spent—and taxes are huge. Up to seventy percent of income is required as tribute for the highest income brackets, and failing to pay is a criminal offense, with a punishable fine that strips many commoners of their entire possessions. If you aren't gentry, your rights are at the will of your betters. You can be imprisoned without trial, tried without representation, and punishment can be as creative as the local magistrate deems. Many crimes carry either death or

banishment as the penalty, but indentured servitude, permanent polymorphing and public humiliation are not considered outrageous sentences. If a commoner simply offends a man of position he can be unofficially "blacklisted" by word of mouth. The repercussions could echo through every part of their life—old friends fear to associate with the blacklisted individual, job offers stop coming in and harassment becomes the norm. The blacklisted citizen may as well join Xcrawl and hope for the best.

Commoners work. They are the waiters, VCR repairmen, soldiers, plumbers and copy editors, auto mechanics, vacuum cleaner salesmen, midwives and bus drivers, stewardesses and garbage men—the staples of society. Commoners can expect to work extremely hard until they are sixty, when they are allowed to retire and receive a small government pension. There is free education to all, but it is quite basic and very much rooted in the classics. Citizens are encouraged to learn Latin to better understand the classics and scripture, but regretfully, very few pursue this opportunity. Latin is the first step to greater things, including the clergy, which affords the best level of education available to the common man. Outside of joining the clergy, commoners never have access to studies beyond the basics: mathematics, reading and writing and extremely basic science. Some schools offer non-human languages, such as elvish or goblin as courses of study, but these classes tend to be unpopular. Many commoners lack all but the most rudimentary education, choosing vocational training instead. Vocational training generally guarantees citizens a job and Guild protection. All levels of education, including vocational, come with mandatory citizenship classes, where commoners learn why they should trust the government, work hard and not make waves. The NAE is, after all, the most benevolent and caring empire on Earth.

Commoners are not allowed to leave the country at will. Generally, only commoners who work for major corporations ever leave the country, and then only on business, and only when accompanying nobility. Nor will you find commoners coming into the NAE. Immigration is no longer openly permitted in the Empire, choosing to build a society from the stock already available. In the early days of the NAE, immigrants were welcomed to help the nation balance its huge labor deficit, but Emperor Gerald III closed America's borders to general immigration in 4589, bowing to pressure from the Guilds wanting to protect their memberships from foreign job competition.

Commoners can move up in station, but it is rare. Many commoners join the church for just that reason; it is the one sure way to advance in social status, but life in the clergy is neither easy nor especially glorious. Without the calling, the gods themselves may find some actions blasphemous, which can have repercussions far more serious than those of state. Some commoners strive to become celebrities, trying to make a name in the entertainment, sports or business world. Celebrities have a chance at an advantageous marriage—if they aren't too controversial—though the marriages that end poorly can cost a celebrity far more than fame. Many commoners believe that Xcrawl is the best way to rise socially, and it is true that the Champions of the Games tend to marry very well. There is a tradition of young aristocrats falling in love with the daring and glorious Xcrawlers; one renowned Duke actually renounced his title after his parents forbid his marriage to a beautiful young warrior who had captured his heart. So, for the talented athlete, Xcrawl can be the first step to title and privilege. However, aspiring socialites do well to first concentrate on survival.

RELIGION

Much of the average commoner's life is based around faith and religion. There are temples to all the major deities of the Roman pantheon in each city, and, as is appropriate, commoners worship at them during the appropriate times of the year. And while the entire Olympian Pantheon is paid respect, every citizen in the NAE chooses a patron deity, appropriate to their station and life focus. The wealthy may choose to honor Jupiter or Apollo, while those who toil in factories often pay homage to Vulcan, where the heads of business might choose Minerva or Mercury. Citizens offer special sacrifices and prayers to their patron deities, asking for guidance or success. Sacrifices can range from gifts of money donated to the

THE ROMAN PANTHEON

It is an over-simplification to state the Roman gods are nothing but the Greek gods given new names. In fact, the gods of Rome numbered in the hundreds, and were so specific in their realm that they often didn't have temples built. Instead, there were simple household ceremonies to honor the specific god of any need. The first territory conquered by the Romans was that previously held by the Greeks, and as such (as they did throughout their empire) they adopted the native gods into their own faith. For the sake of simplicity and clarity, Xcrawl adheres to the concept that Roman gods mirror their Greek counterparts.

The major Pantheon of Olympus is as follows:

Apollo–god of the arts

Bacchus–god of wine and mysteries

Ceres–goddess of agriculture and fertility

Diana–goddess of the hunt and protector of children

Juno–goddess of marriage; consort of Jupiter

Jupiter–god of the sky; ruler of the Roman pantheon

Mars–god of war

Mercury–god of merchants; messenger of the gods

Minerva–goddess of wisdom, war, and crafts

Neptune–god of the sea and earthquakes

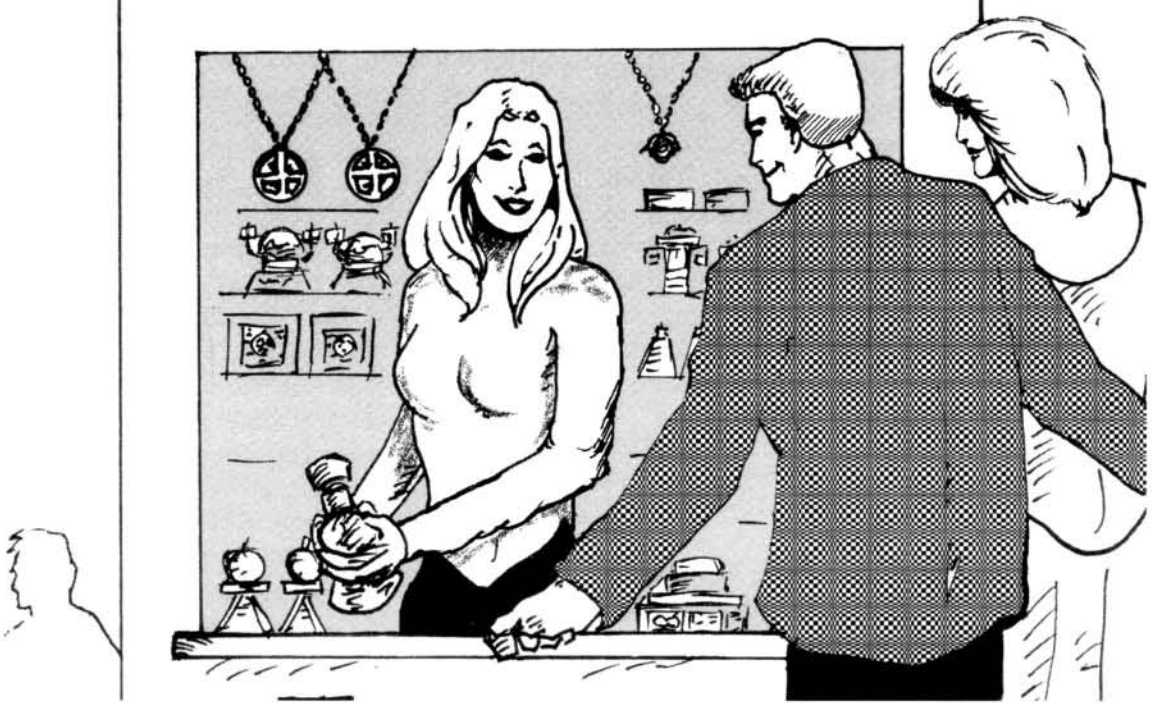
Pluto–god of death and the underworld

Venus–goddess of love and beauty

Vulcan–god of smiths and metal-workers

*These gods are also accompanied by the lesser or minor gods: **Furiae**, the punishers of the unfaithful; **Discordia**, goddess of mischief; **Cupid**, the god of love; **Morae**, goddess of fate; **Charities**, goddess and personifications of charm, grace, and beauty; **Sol**, the god of the sun; **Horae**, the goddess of the seasons and of order; **Faunus**, god of wild nature and fertility, and the giver of oracles; **Fortuna**, goddess of luck; **Vesta**, goddess of the hearth; **Trivia**, goddess of decision.*

Roma's Charms



temples or something symbolic such as nectar or wine at the appropriate time of the year. Depending on the deity and festival, the follower might be required to offer more elaborate sacrifices, such as flowers or, in very rare cases, livestock. Though living sacrifices were common in more barbaric times, enlightenment has led to sacrifices that honor the spirit of the gift, if not the actual living body.

Priests and Priestesses are afforded a higher measure of respect than commoners. Ministering to the sick and despondent, performing marriages and funerals, and other ceremonies put clerics at the centers of their communities. And naturally, their divine gift of holy magic makes them honored as a true voice of the gods on Earth. Clerics do not earn high salaries for their work, but their bed and board is provided by their temple, and are often given gifts by local patrons seeking favor. The holy clergy can be found in all areas of life, tending to the gods in both public and private temples. Many of the more affluent citizens take great pride in constructing private temples used only by themselves and family members, with clerics and their aides tending to the temples. Some clerics even work in the secular field, becoming teachers, administrators, librarians, and many other professions. Clerics are not forbidden to take part in Xcrawl events, either; indeed, some temples valuing glory and martial prowess encourage it.

Major holidays include Winter and Summer Solstice, Remembrance Day (May 18th), Veterans Day (April 19th) and Independence Day (July 4th). To most people, the Winter Solstice is the most important holiday of the year. It is a solid week of feasting and merrymaking, a time to give thanks to the gods for all their blessings. The Emperor's cup, the official end of the Xcrawl season, is held every spring and is a hugely anticipated

event. For many, The Emperor's Cup is more than just the end of a sports season, it is a time for everyone to celebrate the glory of the gods, reflected in the actions and accomplishments of warriors at their peak. The champions of Xcrawl are, after all, the chosen ones of the gods.

The Day of the Dead, the third Sunday in October, is when citizens are expected to tend to the graves of their ancestors. Over the years, The Day of the Dead has become more and more of an excuse for the commoners to party rather than celebrate, and it becomes a challenge to find an empty bar stool in any city that day. The Emperor's birthday and the anniversary of his coronation are also celebrated with feasting, music and ceremony.

Commoners are amazingly superstitious; they watch for omens and signs of witchcraft and deviltry in their daily lives. If the family car breaks down, it might be a curse from an evil sorcerer, and if an honest mechanic comes along and fixes it cheaply, that mechanic was sent by the blessing of Mercury. Nothing is simple or coincidence, to the common people all things happen for a reason. Commoners fill their lives with dozens of private little rituals, such as not wearing a particular color of clothing on certain days or carrying specific lucky tokens or charms. Of course, the commoners are not alone in their beliefs. Many superstitions are universal: entering a house right foot forward to ensure good luck, tapping the roof of your car if you drive through a red light, keeping a gold coin in a room with a sleeping infant being but a few. The temples do not discourage superstition; it is to their advantage to keep the population fearful of the invisible world.

MEDIA

"Coming up next, the secret sexy photos the Duke of Manhattan doesn't want you to see. An Empire Broadcast Two exclusive, right after these messages."

Second only to religion in keeping the populace pacified is television. The NAE nationalizes all public networks, and all programming originates from the Government Media Offices. This is to give the citizens the truth, as the government sees it—and that version of the truth continually glorifies the Emperor's every word and action and vilifies all opposition. Military actions are "just and right crusades," accused criminals are "desperate and calculating agents of evil," government critics are "slanderers and liars." Of course, the commoners realize the government controls the media and takes anything on the public news with a grain of salt—for the most part.

Programming for television is mostly light comedy and dramatic shows that reinforce the values of the Empire: loyalty, fidelity, honesty and hard work. A typical show is the popular "Larry's Castle," about a hard working butler whose dedication to his honest, but foolish employers, involving him in misadventure after misadventure—which all seems to work out to his betterment in each half-hour episode. Sports are also highly promoted. Conventional games such as baseball and soccer are popular, as is horseracing, but the most popular sport by far is Xcrawl. During the season, hours and hours of normal programming are pre-empted to make schedule room for massive media coverage of The Games. Even in the off-season several programs are dedicated to news and gossip about Xcrawl players. TV offers an abundance of religious programming as well, and many of the major temples broadcast their services throughout the year.

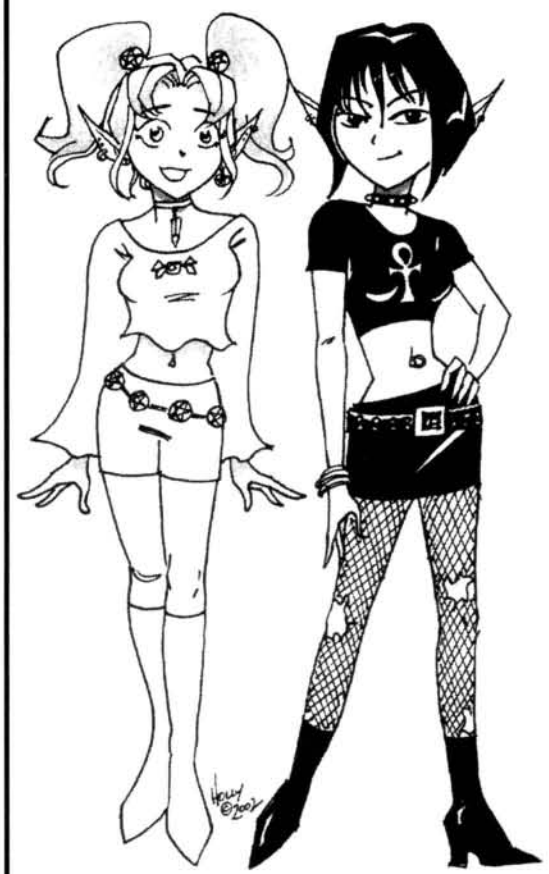
For a few, there are alternatives to government-controlled television. People of means can afford the many pay television channels, which offer a large variety of movies, arts, music shows and specialized programming. Noticeably absent is adult entertainment of any kind; since pornography is officially banned by Imperial law. Pay TV is prohibitively expensive, though, so it is rare for anyone aside from nobility to enjoy its services. A popular feature is Xcrawl pay-per-view, allowing viewers to watch every second of televised events, including the players resting, eating and bathing. "The next best thing to slaying the monster yourself," claims the advertisement. Most commoners just wait and rent the video.

There are other media outlets, such as newspapers, magazines and radio, but none of them can match the television's popularity. All media is subject to high-level censorship, and any subversive criticizing the government or promoting radical viewpoints finds themself quickly silenced.

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CULTURE

The NAE is almost two nations, culturally. The nobility enjoy Roman opera, theater, and the ballet. The commoners love rock shows, football season and comedians who destroy fruit with huge mallets. There is a wide gulf between what is culturally acceptable between the classes, and it is a gulf seldom crossed. Aristocrats who enjoy hip hop or bowling must do so largely in secret, or risk being labeled as uncouth degenerates. Conversely, commoners who enjoy classical music or wine tasting are considered snobs trying to reach beyond their station.

The country has a huge variety of music due to its multinational tradition. Commoners love rock, soul, hip hop and country–although it's the rare individual who enjoys all of them. The one music that everybody agrees upon is the blues. Blues music originated in the NAE, and most commoners consider the songs the soundtracks to the hard lives they live. The music originated from halflings telling tales of their hardship through their lives, which they did in small circles. The stories were designed to recant their history to the younger halflings, so their culture would never completely die. The "big people" began to listen to the songs, and, while not appreciating them for what they truly were, new songs were



written and recorded by others. Open mike nights are hugely famous in bars and clubs across the nation, and almost every music circuit has an undiscovered bardic genius picking guitar and singing about how life can "just get to you sometimes."

The only entertainment crossing cultural lines is Xcrawl. Commoners and nobles both anticipate the season, and follow their favorite teams faithfully. There are few sights as entertaining as a Duke or Baron wearing a t-shirt with his favorite team logo emblazoned across the chest. Many nobles vie for the privilege of a private booth at the major crawls, and will donate thousands of gold pieces for a chance to sit close enough to hear the arrows stick in a body. Few commoners can afford to go the to The Games, but that doesn't keep them from following the action on TV and in the sports pages. Some consider it ironic that it took a sport to bridge America's cultural gap, while others compare it to slowing down to look at a car wreck—one just can't turn the eyes away.

THE MILITARY

"Our lives for the Empire!!"
–MOTTO OF THE NORTH AMERICAN LEGION.

The North American Legion is considered to be the finest fighting force on earth, and there are very few who would argue this point. They have cutting edge technology, high-level magic and well trained and disciplined troops. However, the armies of North America haven't fought a full-scale war since The Great War against the Axis powers more than fifty years ago. The military is almost constantly fighting small battles somewhere in the world, but many question whether or not the Legion in 4699 is prepared for a large war.

The Legion is divided into several military divisions, each under control of a General. The major divisions include Infantry, Armored Calvary, Air Calvary, Air Support, Rangers, Navy and Intelligence. While no division is considered more important than any other, each of them considers their actions a matter of pride, and the typical

grunt is very happy to boast of his accomplishment—especially if there are any soldiers of another division there to hear them.

Any modern fighting force hoping to win a major conflict must have magical support, and the American Legions are no exception. There are War Wizards who act in either primary or support roles on the battlefield, while specialist mages work in areas such as intelligence gathering and reconnaissance, and an entire alchemical corps dedicated to keeping the elite troops stocked with potions.

While the peaceful nature of the country is renowned, the NAE is constantly in conflict somewhere in the world. Military action is a perfectly viable policy decision, one that all major nation states do not fear to use when it seems diplomacy is at a standstill. It has been several years since the military might of the NAE has been tested, but their ability is never beyond question. The Legion regulates the majority of the national interest: Special Forces protect the highways that criss-cross the NAE, the Air Calvary is called upon to destroy powerful monsters threatening civilian populations, the Navy wards our coastlines against pirates and sea invasion, and so forth.

The last major conflict involving the North American Legion was the Brazilian Campaigns of 4665-7. War erupted between two Brazilian warlords—Bigota and DeGama—and America lent military support to its long time ally, Bigota, while the English supported DeGama. This, in effect, once again brought America into conflict with Briton. The war lasted two years, during which America advised and equipped the forces of Bigota. The conflict ended with American troops directly involved in only a dozen battles. General DeGama was killed after a two month siege of his underground fortress, and the war was over. Many Americans believed the military should have moved against Briton after the war, but the Emperor called his armies back. This act of leniency showed America's desire for peace, and was useful as a means to forge stronger diplomatic ties with Briton.

MILITARY RANK IN THE NAE

The military follows a simple chain of command. At the top of the list is the Emperor, our Commander in Chief. Below his is the Secretary General of each Division of the Legion. The ranks then proceed from Generals to Prefects, Tribunes, Centurion, Principalis, Immunis, Discens, Miles, down to the lowest rank of Tiros.

Citizens must be eighteen years old and physically fit to join the Legions, and they must have a clean criminal record. Blacklisted citizens will rarely get anything but non-combat positions, if they are accepted at all. Service is for a minimum of four years, though many find the military regiment ideal and join for life. Until 4612 two years of military service was mandatory for every male adult, but the law was abolished to save federal funds. Currently, there are more volunteers for positions than the army can fill, and many applicants are turned away. And while there has been no need for it for decades, all citizens are automatically registered for selective service, and can be called upon to serve in times of war. Non-human citizens are permitted to join the Legion, but encounter deep prejudices; very few of the Elder Races are ever able to rise above the rank of Centurion.

The military occasionally use Xcrawl-style war games as a military exercise, specifically the Infantry versus Cavalry crawl held every year in Philadelphia. Other than those organized events, soldiers are banned from participating in The Games. Soldiers are property of the state, after all, and it wouldn't do to have them killed needlessly.

TECHNOLOGY

If not for the efforts of the early Messianics, worldwide technological advancement would have been minimal. For millennia, the world relied on magic: magic to cure the ills of the world, magic to fix whatever problems arise, whatever was needed. To the populous as a whole, magic was the axle upon which the world turned. The Messianic's disdain for magic was responsible for the earliest advances in technology, and it forever changed the world. Firearms, the telegraph and steam engines were all developed by the Cult of the One God and later adopted by the rest of the world. Now, there is no corner of the world that does not rely as heavily upon technology as it does magic, and there is no country more advanced in the ways of science than the NAE.

Despite the wonders of modern science, there is still very little medical technology. When the need arises, the rich make a hefty donation to the temple and have their pain and illnesses cured by divine power. This is still the easiest and most effective cure for any ill known to man. Most families of means have a healing potion or two stored away for emergencies, just to be safe. The poor must seek out herbalists, acupuncturists and other such "wise folk" who care for them as best they can, though without the power of the gods, their cures are very weak. There is an entire class of wandering monk who move from city to city, dedicating himself to easing the pain and afflictions of the commoners as best he can. These White Monks—so-called for the white headbands they all wear—are trained in energy medicine, chiropractic techniques and even use such esoteric therapies as hypnosis to help ease pain, but they cannot cure true illness. Science has created basic medicine and vaccinations, though their cost is still quite prohibitive to widespread use. The nobility have magic to keep them safe, and, as sad as it may seem, commoners with no access to divine healing will likely die from serious illness and injury.

It is amazing how far technology has advanced in some areas. Architecture,

XTECH VS. REAL TECH

There are many areas where the technology in the world of Xcrawl is far behind that of the real world. There is no space program, no nuclear power, no cell phones, no digital photography and no satellites. Computers are little more than fancy word processors, and the average commoner has never touched an electronic keyboard. Many of the old ways are still prominent; farmers still use windmills to power their farms, newspapers still use moveable type and most combustion engines are designed to run on corn-based ethanol rather than gasoline. As a result, despite the common use of airplanes, the aircraft in the world of Xcrawl is relatively primitive. There have been no vehicles to approach the speed of sound, and the concept hasn't even been realized. A rudimentary knowledge of surgical techniques and antibiotic substances exists, but advances such as organ transplants, prosthetic limbs, or radiation treatments are unknown through any means short of magic.

metallurgy, mining, and agriculture are all ahead of other sciences and are the backbone of industry and the economy. Alcohol powered cars zip about at speeds of up to 80 miles per hour. Commercial airliners soar the skies with amazingly efficiency. The Messianics did mankind their one kind favor with the advancement in technology—but without magic, society would fall apart.

MAGIC

"It is said that the key to national power lies in controlling magic at the highest level, and the NAE certainly does that."
ARCHMAGE, COLLAF THE OUTSPOKEN

To legally learn and practice magic in the NAE, one must be a member of the Guild of Magi. Citizens wishing to join the Guild must first find a current guildmember to sponsor their membership. A grueling entrance exam follows, testing the applicant's knowledge and capacity for abstract thought. Those who pass must endure a three-year probationary period, during which they learn magic theory, astronomy, alchemy and eventually, zero-level spells. At the end of this period there is a grueling three day exam, which includes a dissertation on an obscure point of magical theory and a demonstration of spell-casting ability. Only when guildmember passes this exam is he considered a Wizard.

There are, of course, sorcerers who develop innate magical powers in their youth. Sorcerers, by law, must join the Guild of Magi to use their powers legally. Some sorcerers operate outside the system, an act considered treasonous in the NAE. It should be noted that bards are not required to join, largely because they are rare, self-policing and their powers considered relatively insignificant (see Bards, pp 129).

The Guild of Magi has an extremely formal system of thirty-six ranks. Probationary members are ranks one through three, first level wizards are rank four, and as wizards advance, they go up in rank. A wizard's rank does not necessarily correspond to skill level; skilled wizards who don't politic well may have a low rank, while relatively weak wizards who learn to play the game may advance more swiftly than others. Wizards who participate in Xcrawl normally hit the glass ceiling at about ninth rank. Xcrawl is for adventurers, not serious scholars

Transgressions against the guild can lead to demotion, or in extreme cases arrest and execution. Wizards are forbidden to use scrying magic without approval, or to enchant others for their personal exploitation, or to use their magic in any way which may defame the Guild or scandalize the nation. The NAE has been without scandal since the reign of Richard I, and there is no tolerance of anything that might revive those horrible thoughts. Wizards of less than the very highest ranks are forbidden to contact extra-planar beings, use large scale reality altering magic (such as wish spells), or to travel to alternate dimensions or the Astral Plane; even the wizards of the highest ranks can only do such actions with express permission, and then only under the watchful eye of a superior. There are very strict rules regarding wizardly experimentation, and all such work must be fully documented and shared with The Guild. The Guild frequently scryes on its own members to ensure loyalty and compliance with regulations, but such is the way of wizards.

As the wizards progress, they are fewer in number at higher rank. There are well over one million registered wizards of rank one, while there are only ten thousand wizards who have made it to rank ten. The numbers thin quickly from there, moving to the hundreds to the teens, and then to single digits. There is

only one 36th rank wizard at any one time: currently, Lord Byford, "The Eye in the Clouds," Emperor Ronald's personal wizard.

There is a much smaller guild dedicated to the arts of necromancy. The Necromancer's Guild is an exclusive organization of dark wizards, who guard their power and secrets jealousy. The Necromancer's Guild provides all the undead creatures used in Xcrawl, and the necromancers remain very proud of that fact. Even within their own ranks, there are some who believe that, if not for their usefulness to The Games, the Necromancer's Guild would be outlawed. Necromancer's are never permitted to participate in Xcrawl as players, as it is considered a conflict of interest.

THE ECONOMY

The economy of the NAE is based primarily on manufactured goods, but agricultural products still thrive. With the rest of the world relying on America for the technology that has become its trademark, the NAE exports millions in machinery, equipment, vehicles and all manner of technological goods—with one notable exception. There are no military exports from the NAE. America uses its technological edge to keep ahead of the other countries, and they do not want to let that slip. Of course, the other countries of the world have military technology of their own, but it cannot match that of the NAE. The Emperor uses economic might to help keep things in America's favor by insuring that the economy is crisp, and that our glorious military cannot be questioned.

The NAE uses gold (eagles), silver (crowns) and copper (pennies) coins for day-to-day trade. Coins are, of course, unwieldy for large transactions, and no one is expected to keep the actual minted currency on hand. The NAE issues Treasury Notes for large denominations of money. These are hand painted bills on sturdy vellum, with bright colors and artwork depicting historic events, famous places and past emperors. They always have a gold piece equivalent representing an amount of gold held in trust by the National Treasury. Treasury Notes of any denomination can be drafted, and are considered legal tender for all debts in the North American Empire. Thus, a citizen might use a one hundred gold piece note to pay for his rent, while a countess might have a seven-hundred and fifty gold piece note scribed for her by the bank to pay a debt. Counterfeiting treasury notes is extremely difficult and a capitol crime, punishable by banishment or death.

THE GOLDEN RULE OF MONEY

The exchange rate is standard for the d20 system, i.e. one gold piece equals ten silver pieces, one silver piece equals ten copper. When comparing Xcrawl money to the real world, one gold piece is equal to $3.00. This is a simple and handy conversion when a player wants to buy items not listed in the equipment section. Your wizard wants to buy an automatic camera? Look up its real world price and divide it by three to figure its cost in gold. Remember, some items are simply not available: there are no palm pilots, lap top computers or cell phones, or any advanced technology of this sort. This is a handy formula but not an absolute one, and GM's should check the equipment list for notable exceptions (pp 154)

CRIME

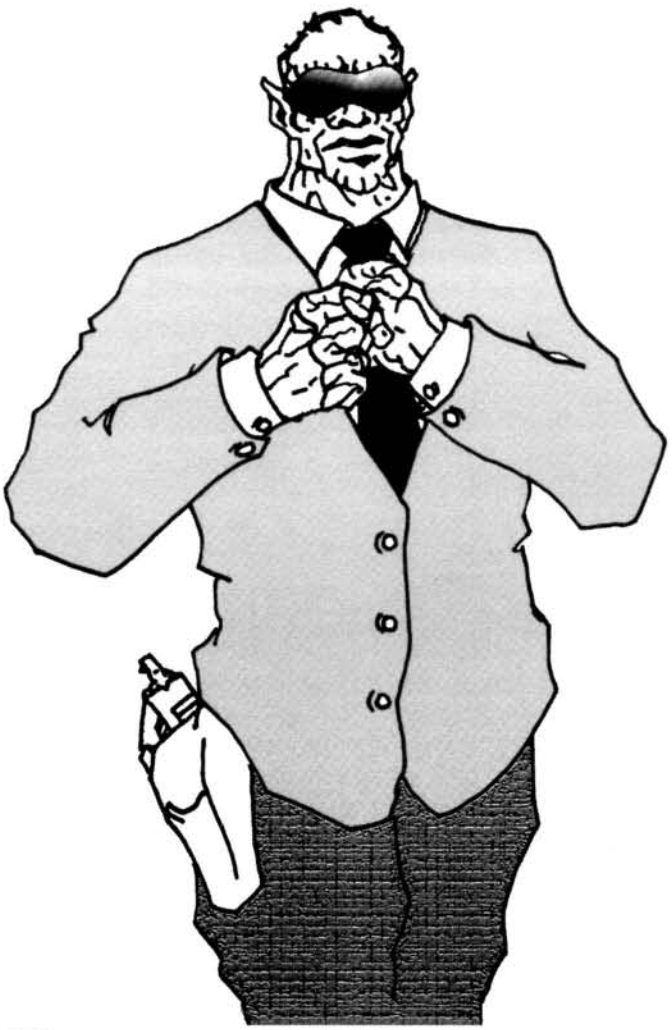
"In room four you'll see ten orcs with mauls. That's when you go down. The one with the helmet, let him get you into the northwest corner. He'll shove you out the NoGo door, and that will DQ the whole room. You hear me? Here's the first ten thousand. You'll get the rest when you deliver the dive."

– BILLY BOY SHENFIELD, HEDGING HIS BETS

The normal city in the NAE is free of robbery, murder and other violent crimes, but there are exceptions to every rule. Crime still occurs, but it is quickly quieted by the authorities, and the government controlled media tends to turn a blind eye. When a violent crime does become public knowledge, the public is drawn to it like a moth. The common people want all of the details of the event, and they desire to see the criminal brought to justice. Murders and violent offenders tend to be captured and punished very quickly and very severely, often being publicly executed as a warning to other criminals. "Repeat offender" is not a phrase heard much in the courts of the NAE.

However, there is one class of criminal virtually ignored by law enforcement: organized vice crime. The citizens of the NAE are a vast market for pornography, gambling, prostitution and narcotics, all of which are patently illegal. Just because they are illegal doesn't mean there isn't a huge demand for these industries, and organized crime is happy to fill the void. The nobility comprise the majority of this market, with lives of boredom and decadence, and the disposable income to indulge themselves in the pleasures the underworld has to offer. Many aristocratic families have been brought low by incurred gambling debts or shamed by members who are dependent on narcotics. This doesn't curtail the growth of vice, and during the modern age many criminal experts feel that illegal activities are at an all-time high.

There are dozens of different organized crime cartels, each specializing in their areas of influence, such as sports betting or drug smuggling. These syndicates are extremely wealthy and well connected—and some are secretly sponsored by noble houses. Though the houses only spend money on large organizations worthy of notice in their minds, the majority of criminal syndicates are very



small. Many of the smaller organizations are structured as gangs. These gangs defend their markets and turf ruthlessly, and gang wars are extremely common. As long as the gangs limit their violent tactics to other criminals, law enforcement tends ignore them. The conflicts are usually very small, and don't effect the populace as a whole, since it is rare for any of them to use military style weapons such as guns or swords. Outside of law enforcement and Adventurer's Guild members, weapons such as firearms, crossbows and even two-handed swords are forbidden to civilians and even difficult to come by illegally. The garrote and dagger tend to be the weapons of choice of underworld criminals.

Organized crime is a huge supporter of Xcrawl. The Games are a prime source of profit for them. Bookies handle millions of gold in bets every season as folks wager on every aspect of the game: first kill, first player death, best time and so forth. The Mob will sometimes go so far as to try to "fix" the outcome of competitions in order to control the odds. Many Xcrawlers have been coerced into throwing matches, either by disqualifying themselves mid-dungeon or wasting time to run out the clock. Needless to say, the Adventurer's Guild takes an extremely dim view of players who cheat. Such players might find themselves the targets of such DJ grudge monster favorites as the invisible undead tyrannosaurus or the ever-popular ogre magi ninja.

THE MESSIANICS IN MODERN TIMES

There is still a worldwide Messianic movement in 4699, although it operates in secret. They are not the power they once were, existing only on the fringes of the Empire. The so-called One God Cult has split into dozens of splinter groups, each with their own agenda and set of beliefs about the coming of the Next Times—their fabled period that will come about after the birth of the Messianic "savior." Some believe that the savior now walks the Earth, and that the end of the old regime is imminent. Some are terrorist groups, bombing the occasional temple or magical target. Others try a more sedate route, holding services and meetings that inevitably end in disaster for the cultists as they are discovered by authorities. The One God Cult is outlawed worldwide, with only a very few nations tolerating their overt presence. In the NAE, having a copy of the Messianic Gospels is a misdemeanor punishable by a fine and re-education, while collusion with the cult is high treason, punishable by death.

In the NAE, the most powerful of these cryptic groups is the Hidden Disciples. They have members from all walks of society—including the nobility and high-ranking military officials. The group has developed secret techniques to confound scrying and mind-reading, organizing themselves in cells so that captured members cannot be forced to betray the entire movement. The Hidden Disciples are dedicated to distributing the Messianic Gospels through whatever means they deem necessary. They print literature in clandestine operations throughout the nation and try to make them available to all. A very common tactic of theirs is to break into a hotel at night and leave a copy of their information in each room, or to slip secret messages into popular recordings. The Hidden Disciples are still dedicated to technological advancement, and their state-of-the-art gadgets allow them to pass through conventional security systems with ease. They realize their time has not yet come; they simply want the rest of the humanity to await the savior with them—and turn their backs on magic, the gods and the elder races.

The Emperor, who fears that the time of the Messianic savior might be at hand, has chosen to infiltrate and monitor the Hidden Disciples and other Messianic

groups rather than exterminate them. He has several agents who have wormed their way into the Cult, and they collect information and watch for signs. Ronald's plan is a simple one–find the savior before the Messianic do, and imprison, dispel or destroy him.

NON-HUMANS

For all the woes of commoners of the NAE, there is one you won't hear much complaint about: racism. It seems very petty to disparage an individual for the color of his skin or his place of national origin when there are creatures of an entirely different species living amongst us available to fear and mistrust.

Humans have always had a difficult time accepting the elder races as equals. There is a great deal of jealousy over their longevity, their enhanced abilities and their ancient cultures. Many humans feel that elves, dwarves, gnomes, and even halflings look down on humans and more often than not, they're absolutely right. That's not to say that all of the members of these races feel superior to the humans, merely that they tend to look at humans as too naïve and aggressive for their own good. History has shown the elder races that humans are almost obsessively greedy and territorial, as evidenced by the fact that they are the dominant race on the planet. The elder races realize that they are being displaced—that their ancient cultures predating man by eons are now on the decline, that humans are inheriting the earth, and their time may well be numbered. They feel much as the descendants of the Roman Empire do—America is the usurper, the newcomer who stands in the position that the great nations once held. This is a situation that is both puzzling and crushing to the others. The days when they held sway over what a few of the alfar have termed "the human infection" have come and gone, but to the elder races those days are still in the recent past.

Quite naturally, the humans can be just as narrow-minded, and often more so. Radical hate organizations exist, calling for complete segregation of the elder races, and the complete destruction of orcs and goblins; these groups are rare but they tend to be excessively vocal and



NON-HUMAN DIVERSITY

Regional variety for the elder races is just as real as it is for the humans. Players should feel free to play any race or nationality combination that strikes their fancy. Nordic dwarves and middle-eastern gnomes are completely acceptable. With rare exceptions, non-humans display the same physical racial distinctions as the humans of the same regions. Thus a Japanese elf would have straight dark hair and almond-shaped eyes, and an African halfling would likely have brown skin and brown eyes. Integration of the races from different areas has led to a plethora of possibilities when it comes to hair, eye and skin coloration. This does not extend to the demi-human races such as orcs and kobolds, who have their own variations depending on tribe. The elder races displaying uncommon regional traits do not suffer any extra social prejudice in the NAE–but they don't suffer any less, either.

sometimes violent. While most humans accept the elder races as equals, their dealings with non-humans are often affected by their stereotypical views of the others.

The other races each have their own take on life in the NAE.

Dwarves

"Don't bother–I know who you are. You sure looked cute on TV with your little shield with the 'PowerDrinkz' logo. How I pity your mother. You can wait in line with the rest –you ain't nobody special to me."

—NONK THE BOUNCER, TURNING DOWN AN XCRAWLER'S REQUEST TO COME BACKSTAGE.

"We still have the mountains." So says Mogorn, High Priest and the spiritual leader of the dwarves of North America. When Emperor George Augustus I extended his invitation to the elder races of the world to come and settle in North America, the dwarves believed that they might have found the Dwarfhome, the legendary land where all dwarves would live together in peace deep beneath the earth. The majestic Rocky Mountains of America called to their souls, and since the Emperor adopted the Treaty of Sardinia, it seemed a perfect opportunity. Mogorn was one of the first dwarves born in the NAE, and he remembers how his father thought it all seemed a little too perfect.

Dwarves who made the harrowing passage by sea to settle in to the post-revolution NAE never guessed what the New World had in store for them. Once the dwarves began to dig their great Colorado mine, George Augustus I appointed Lodar Findlespur, a charismatic young dwarvish chieftain, to the position of Duke of Telluride, granting he and his family lands throughout Colorado. At first this seemed like good diplomacy, and the appointment was cheered by the dwarvish people. Then the Emperor made Duke Findlespur responsible for collecting taxes from his dwarven brethren, turning Findlespur into their landlord. Findlespur's loyalty to the Emperor was guaranteed–not only had he been made Duke, the first such appointment man ever conceded to dwarf, but he stood to make a mountain of gold from his portion of the taxes.

The dwarves protested this as a clear violation of the spirit of the Treaty of Sardinia, but to no avail. The only alternative to submitting to the Emperor's demands was war, and while a

few of the dwarves were perfectly willing to band together against the human tyranny, most realized they were too cut off from their European and Scandinavian brethren to expect help from those far sources.

Dwarves don't have a long history of enjoying sea travel. Most weigh too much to swim easily and feared that any of their kin coming to help them would be forced into a naval battle they were not prepared to fight. To this day, the Telluride dwarves grumble about the taxes they pay to old Findlespur. The dwarves have been forced to live as North American citizens, bowing down to the rule of man, and the response most dwarves have about the twisting offer to come to the North American Empire mirrors the words of Morgorn of Morden: "we still have the mountains." For now that has to be enough.

A few isolated dwarves can be found in any city in America, usually living in the gnomish quarter. The majority work as police, artisans, technicians, miners and mechanics. Dwarvish architects and engineers are highly valued, and command huge fees. However, most dwarves stick to the Colorado region, the only area in the NAE with a dwarvish majority. Telluride, in the Colorado region of North America, is the dwarvish "capitol" of the NAE. The dwarves there have a holy mission–to complete their underground mining complex, the first of the great halls of dwarfkind to be built in North America. Their current name for the project is Younger Cousin, a reference to the established Dwarven mines in Europe and Asia. Once the work is complete, the mine will receive its mature name. Younger Cousin has been under construction for over two hundred years, and huge sections of it are strictly off limits to humans. Colorado has dozens of underground dwarvish communities, many of which are situated around Telluride. Dwarves are allowed to worship their ancestral deity Mordin, and very few favor the Roman Pantheon.

Dwarves tend to regard Xcrawl as human foolishness. However, there are individuals who are drawn to the games by the chance for riches, magic treasure and the occasional opportunity to take a chunk out of a giant. Dwarven fighters are highly valued for their toughness and their fearlessness in battle, and sometimes human teams will try to recruit a dwarf, offering enticements such as first pick of the treasure or top billing. Dwarvish Xcrawlers are often ostracized within their communities–glory in Xcrawl does not translate to glory in dwarvish society. Most dwarves reject human culture in general, and few would ever do something as useless as watching television –and Xcrawl is seen as the apex of human television culture.

Dwarves of the NAE tend to be wealthy, even when compared with dwarves from around the globe. It is true that a dwarf can come to the NAE and make his fortune. The trouble is conceding to the rule of a human Emperor–it's against dwarvish cultural principals, and there are those who say such an insult to dwarvish pride cannot be endured forever.

Elves

" . . . so when I saw your archer get eaten on TV–sorry about that, by the way, bad luck for sure–I thought I would give you a call. I'm a fair shot myself, and . . . Experience? Oh, you know– a bit here and there."
–Salvo Shehan, 304 year old Elvish fighter, getting ready to start a new career.

When the elves arrived in America, they traveled far and wide searching the perfect place to build a city. They were amazed to discover tribes of elves native to North America, who had their own culture and ancient citadels. The chief North American elvish clans were settled in the California region, living peacefully for generations in Sattersala, the Grand City in the Trees. Elves worldwide were

ELFCRAWL?

Elvish Xcrawlers often find themselves singled out in combat, particularly by the orcs and hobgoblins who hate the fair race with unequaled passion. The reasons are many and varied—not the least of them being that elves are more easily accepted by the humans—but one of the strongest factors is simply that orcs commonly believe the elves at the top of a great conspiracy to keep them subjugated and degraded. The fact that there is some truth to the matter only makes the situation worse, of course. To an orc there can be no greater glory than going home with a pair of elf ears as a prize. Smart players will find a way to use this to their advantage, fortifying their elves and exploiting the openings such unwanted attention invariably creates.

delighted to find out that there was an entire new tradition of elvish music and poetry to explore, and elves came to the NAE in droves to embrace their long lost kinfolk.

The elves take much less umbrage than the dwarves do at living in a human empire. It's a matter of perspective to them–the first generation of settlers to sign treaties with George Augustus I are still alive. They are in no rush to pass judgement on their current situation–after all, who knows what the next hundred years might bring?

Elves can be found in all the major cities but they favor the New England and California districts. The American nobility is fascinated by elves and their culture, and most elves find themselves extremely welcome in aristocratic society. Some elves have been granted titles themselves, and they mingle freely with their human counterparts. As always there is some intermarriage, and the NAE boasts a larger than average half-elvish population. Elvish music and art are very popular, and their crafted goods command a great price on the marketplace. It is the rare aristocratic home that does not proudly display at least a few elf-made amenities.

Elves do appreciate human culture, although few will admit that it rivals their own. The art of the Renaissance is popular with elvish collectors, and they also have a great love of human folk music; some have embraced free-form jazz as a way to express themselves.

The first elvish children born in America are only now reaching young adulthood, and the majority of them have made the empire their home, embracing the ways of humans and elves alike. These free spirits love the cultural freedom they find in the NAE, and they spend much of their time traveling and exploring the continent. Almost without exception, the elves that participate in Xcrawl are from this group of youngsters. The older generations are only mildly interested in the televised death sport, and wonder if it is not the beginning of a general decline of society. Some elves have found ways to make money from the games, becoming coaches, trainers, or agents to the Xcrawlers.

Gnomes

"Of course we're happy. We get the joke."
–GNOMISH PROVERB

Gnomes have lived among humans for so long that they are almost completely accepted by the bigger folk. They don't feel at all oppressed by living in the NAE. Why would they? They are provided with as much work as they can handle, and they are treated slightly favorably by commoners and the gentry alike. They are permitted to worship their ancestral deities as the other races are, and every city has at least one temple for their gods.

As long as you can deal with their sense of humor, the easy-going, hard-working gnomes make great neighbors and co-workers.

Gnomes came to the NAE with the early English and Spanish settlers, and have lived here amongst humans ever since. They can be found in every major city, doing what they do best–tinkering, teaching, repairing and generally having a grand time of things. Many cities have a gnomish quarter, but gnomes are the majority in only one city–Metterie, in the Louisiana district. Metterie is home to several gnome-owned businesses, including the famous Blueskin Jeans Co. which makes America's favorite denim Gnomes have no trouble finding employment anywhere in the NAE, especially in the technical trades. Gnomish technicians are highly valued in almost every industry, and technical guilds have been known to put special restrictions on the excessive hiring of gnomish workers to help keep the workforce balanced.

Gnomish entertainers are extremely popular–there are more gnomes on TV and in the movies than all of the other elder races combined. The gnomish sitcom "Zabbo and Angie" ran for years and spawned an entire industry of movies, spin-offs and merchandising. Gnomish puppeteers have taken the art form to an entirely new level in the NAE, and their shows play to sold out audiences nationwide. There is also a strong bardic tradition amongst North American gnomes. Many of these bards are considered amongst the best in the world, and they are the keepers of history and songs in their communities. Gnomish bards tend to be strict traditionalists, playing nothing but their own homemade instruments. These bards wander but tend to avoid adventure per se.

Gnomes don't really get into the Xcrawl scene as active participants. Something about being roughly bite size to larger monsters deters them. Gnomes tend to avoid violence and undue stress, which is most of what Xcrawl has to offer. The practical gnomes are not easily lured by riches and fame, and the average gnome's idea of adventure is trying to retrofit an eight-track player into their dishwasher. The Games do employ large numbers of gnome technicians and wizards, but gnomish participants are extremely rare. Of course there are some exceptions; there are gnomes who love nothing more than the thrill of outwitting opponents and defeating mechanical traps. The amazing gnomish illusionist Artho "The Infuriator" Whiskertail played the circuit for years and still holds the distinction of being the only player to ever make a DJ cry.

Half Elves

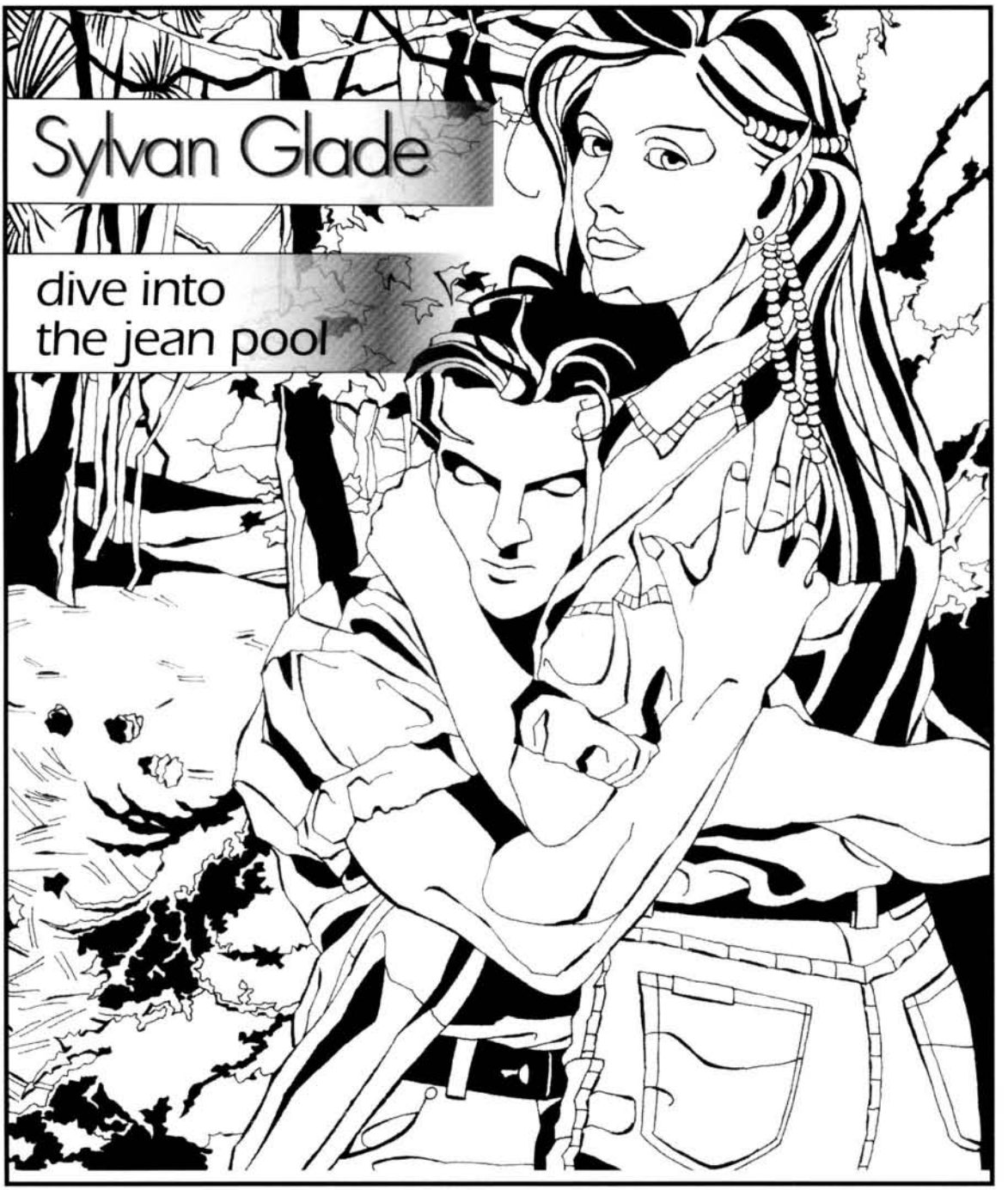
"I really don't much care what people call me. Half-elf, human or elf, it's all just labels. Anyway you look at it, the chicks dig me."
–Erusia Holstead, half-elf, on interspecies mating.

Half-elves in North America are much like half-elves anywhere–living on the fringes of human and elf society. Both groups accept them, though more often than not it's the humans who treat them as something special. They are still a rarity in the eyes of many and some of them experience a certain level of celebrity just for being of exotic birth. While they do not experience the prejudice that half-breeds did in ages past, there is still the feeling that they can never truly be a part of either culture. They live everywhere, including the elvish stronghold of Sattersala and every major American city, but there is no single locale with a half-elvish majority–there simply aren't that many of them.

There is a good bit of intermarriage between elves and human nobility. Aristocratic half-elves are normally

accepted by their society peers as equals, although there is some jealousy and mistrust. The half-elves born of commoners are often far more aggressive than their aristocratic counterparts, simply because they have fallen victim to ridicule and harassment. Most are barely acknowledged by their elven parents and are often seen as something of an embarrassment, which has left them almost completely isolated from their elven heritage.

Xcrawl has become something of an inroad to a greater acceptance in the eyes of many half-elves. If accolades cannot be won simply by being who you are, then your worth must be proved, and the Games are a good way to prove worth. Many of the legendary participants of Xtreme Dungeon Crawl are half-elves who combine innate ability with a tremendous drive for excellence, making them fierce competitors.



Half-Orcs

"Did you just ask me If I had a problem with killing orcs? You must be new."

–Thule "Pecos Pete" Aforovron, to a fledgling sports reporter

Every half-orc in North America is either in the NAE illegally or in some way connected with Xcrawl. By Law, half-orcs are not permitted citizenship in the Empire and very few of them are even allowed the right to visit without an armed "escort." However, there is a legal loophole giving half-orcish Xcrawlers the privilege of living above ground as long as they are professional adventurers in good standing with the Guild. Most come from either Orc City 1 or Orc City 2 (see Zura'ah'zura, p. 75), and are allowed to participate in Xcrawl by special arrangement with their Dungeon Judge.

Half-orcs do not garner the same modicum of respect as most of the hybrids found in the NAE. The past history of the orcish clans hasn't been forgotten by the humans, and the orcs are generally considered little better than rabid dogs. The fact that most half-orcs are considered an unfortunate by-product of rape has done nothing to garner them favor. Their lot in life is not an easy one, and most of the half-orcs born to a human mother are given up for adoption or suffer a quick "accidental" death, with most coroners and law enforcement agencies turning a blind eye. It's rare to find a half-orc born in the NAE who can claim to have been raised in a caring environment.

So, it's no surprise that most of the half-orcs found in the NAE are connected with the Xcrawls. Given their abnormal size, their penchant for ferocity and their status as no-citizens, there is little left for them aside from a life of crime and persecution. Xcrawl is more than a way to make a decent living, it's a means of surviving in a hostile environment.

Xcrawl half-orcs are rare, but popular. Commoners and gentry alike love them for there frightening stature and brutality, and many become favorites of the circuit. The half-orc warrior Dakro "Red Dog" Effram had a line of action figures and bobble-headed dolls that continued to sell thousands nationwide even after his spectacular death at the hands of DJ Devastator. Some half-orcs are able to stay with Xcrawl even after they tire of adventuring, taking positions as trainers, monster liaisons or creature handlers. Living above ground is a privilege worth fighting very hard for indeed.

The creatures in Xcrawl give no special consideration nor quarter to half-orc players. In fact, if the half-orc player wears signs of his tribal affiliation he may find himself singled out by humanoids who hold grudges against his clan.

Halflings

"Oh, give me a break! Officer, I was just walking home. This is my bag. Ow! Easy!"

–Nob Hardscrabble, just walking home.

Halflings don't have it easy in the NAE. However, they don't truly have it easy anywhere. Prejudice against halflings is worldwide. Nation to nation, the stereotypes are all the same–thieves, opportunists, master liars and con artists. In the face of such overwhelming disapproval, halflings have learned to stick together and make their way as best they can in the world.

Halflings did not arrive in North America in appreciable numbers until after the American Revolution. Once George Augustus I adopted the Treaty of Sardinia, halflings immigrated by the thousands to the NAE, lured by the promise of a life free from persecution. They did not find that life in America.

THE UNDERGROUND

The Underground is a halfling-dominated group committed to hiding and moving fugitives from the law. Almost every halfling has helped The Underground at some point in their careers, either by donating money, hiding their fellows on the lam or simply by looking the other way at the right time. There are many humans and elves that surreptitiously support The Underground, recognizing the unfair treatment halflings receive at the hands of the government. Many an Xcrawl purse has been donated to one of the various halfling Benevolent Societies, which use those funds to directly aid runaways. The halflings are still permitted to worship Their ancient goddess and her pantheon, and the Temple not only fights for the fair and equal treatment of their worshippers, they often hide criminals for years until they can be smuggled out of the cities where they are wanted. It's not uncommon for fugitive halflings to find refuge in Telluride, or in the elvish stronghold of Sattersala. For many, the ultimate escape is to find passage to Australia where they can start their lives over.

Even the earliest halfling settlers were discriminated against. Time and again halflings were forced to leave their farms and ranches because some human had decided he wanted their land for himself and was able to convince the local Baron that humans make better tenants. Even though they met the same prejudice in the New Empire as they had faced everywhere else, they also found better opportunities in the NAE than anywhere else in the world. Halfling immigration was fairly constant until Gerald III closed the borders in 4589.

Halflings live in every major city, but tend to center on southern cities such as Savannah, Biloxi, and Greenville. The majority of halflings are farmers, ranchers, craftsmen, brewers, animal trainers, and journalists. halflings tend to be extremely mobile, and will relocate at the drop of a hat if the right job comes along. While the nobility generally do not mix with their tiny cousins, halfling cuisine is extremely popular. Every city has a few high-priced halfling restaurants that serve delicacies to rich patrons, as well as a few holes-in-the-wall that have food which is just as good or better at a fraction of the price.

The belief that halflings are all rogues and con men often becomes self-fulfilling prophecy. Halflings have a difficult time finding decent employment due to the entrenched bias against them, and this causes frustrated halflings to turn to crime. And when halflings do go bad, they do it with an natural grace and mastery that make them the arch-rivals of detectives and law enforcement agencies. The legendary con man Billy Boy Shenfield was so good that he could continue to practice his trade even after there was a movie made of his life–which he starred in himself. Halflings generally avoid organized crime–any group of halflings is immediately suspect and will find it impossible to ply their trade without attracting attention. The irony is that although there is no halfling mob per se, authorities worldwide believe that there is a huge halfling criminal conspiracy led by some unknown untraceable mastermind. Halflings do nothing to disprove this belief, but they are amused by the idea.

Like the rest of the world, imperial America is intolerant of halflings, and halfling criminals are consistently persecuted far beyond the scope of their offenses. If a crime is committed and the authorities can find even a circumstantial or superficial excuse, all of the local halfling youths may well be brought in

for questioning. Any who resist will likely find themselves under arrest for aiding and abetting. If the idea was to make the halflings more likely to cooperate, it backfired in a big way. Very few of the diminutive race would willing aid any police efforts to gain information. And in some cases they go out of their way to make life for the human law enforcement agencies as difficult as possible.

The majority of Xcrawl participants are human, but halflings make up the second most predominant racial grouping. The halfling rogue is a prized player on any team, and any half-decent lockpick and sneak-sword can find work on the Xcrawl circuit. Fame is one of the few ways halflings can find a measure of acceptance and respect in this world, and this draws players to Xcrawl even more strongly than riches.

EUROPE

"Xcrawl simply proves what we have believed about America all along–it is a cultural disease that would gladly infect the rest of the world."
–Former French Aide,
Jeffrey Loquette

Once, the nations of Europe could collectively claim to be the greatest Imperial powers in the world. Those heady days are gone, and now Europe finds itself eclipsed by the NAE as the world's economic and military superpower. However, Europe remains a world cultural and business center. Europe is divided into several smaller Kingdoms.

Europe has the highest population of elves in the world. Grand Larillilo, deep in the Black Forrest, is the de facto world capital of elvish society and culture. The elves believe that Larillilo is the birthplace of their race. Thousands of elves live in this grand autonomous elvish stronghold in relative peace, trading with the neighboring humans and dwarves but otherwise remaining isolated. They accept an extremely limited number of tourists and journalists from outside, and the waiting list for admittance is never less than five years long. Elves are, of course, always welcome, and most make the journey to Larillilo at least once in their long lifetime.

Europe has a high population of gnomes and dwarves as well, many centered in Scandinavia and Allemenda . There are several ancient mines and underground cities of the dwarves, most famously the dwarvish kingdom of Rolidar, near Warsaw. Rolidar is a vast underground city known for its ostentatious riches and in-demand craftsmen. It is also known for not tolerating intruders.

The monarchs of Europe originally balked at Xcrawl, labeling it barbaric and vulgar. However, videos of Xcrawl events began to slowly trickle into the continent and became the rage amongst the nobility. Television specials regarding Xcrawl began to run weekly on British television; on the surface these shows condemned The Games as inhuman and savage, but in truth they secretly loved the famous American pastime. It took years, but Xcrawl began to catch on all over Europe. First, Lars XVII of the Scandinavian Empire hosted an event in Stockholm, and other nations quickly followed suit. Today, there is an International League, which holds tournaments throughout Europe and Asia, though each kingdom has their own events which are more or less exclusive to participants of their own country. After all, the purpose of the Games is to glorify the nation, not to give foreign adventurers a chance to outshine the locals.

The aristocracy of Europe have much the same relationship with the commoners as their North American counterparts. The oldest continental families tend to own much of the land, and the nouveau riche tend to control the corporate sector. Commoners have rights that vary from

kingdom to kingdom, but they are basically serfs with very little in the way of rights or freedom.

Briton (Wales, Ireland, Scotland)

Briton is united under Queen Katherine IV, who is often referred to as "The Iron Bitch," behind her back. She rather likes the title. Katherine IV is known for her determination to improve the station of Briton in the world. Katherine sleeps less than four hours a night and micro-manages her Kingdom down to the smallest possible detail. It is her belief that anything less than extreme dedication to her nation will lead to being overtaken economically and socially by what she considers to be the lesser nations, America included. Despite Katherine's unique attitude towards the rest of the "civilized world," Briton enjoys a healthy relationship with the NAE. London, the capital city, has a huge gnomish and elvish population. Non-humans find themselves very much welcome in Briton, with the exception of halflings. Halflings in Briton are perhaps more persecuted there than anywhere else in the world, but they refuse to leave. Briton is their native homeland, and they hope one day to reclaim a part of it for their people. Briton's chief industries are banking, tourism, shipbuilding and manufactured goods.

The Kingdom of Allemenda

Once known as Germany before the fall of Chancellor Hitler, Allemenda is currently ruled by Emperor Bismark. Bismark is called the "Quiet Emperor" for his reputation of keeping his own council. Allemenda is a young nation, and not really quite set on what it will become in the future. There are far too many entrepreneurs who are willing to take advantage of this situation, and many of them have started turning profits in schemes that will surely prove detrimental in the long run.

Allemenda controls the German and Swiss territories of the Alps, and while there is no official state religion—yet–the Norse gods are enjoying something of a renaissance in these lands. Many of the citizens have turned to the ancient gods from their people's history. Allemenda has a strong economy based in manufacturing, lumber and tourism. There are growing rumors that there is something unhealthy happening in the region, but no one has been willing to discuss exactly what that something might be.

The Scandinavian Empire

The Scandinavian Empire controls the territories of Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Iceland. And is ruled by the staunchly conservative Empress Miiala X, who has made her territory the dominant economic and navel power in the entire region. Scandinavia is known for being the first Empire in Europe to embrace Xcrawl. The Norse Pantheon, predominated by Odin, Thor and Loki, is the state religion. Scandinavians are known for their practicality and their mistrust of outsiders. Miiala X has made a point of promoting the xenophobic attitudes of her people.

There are far more orcs living in the country than anyone likes to admit. The humans have tried to get rid of them on numerous occasions, but, like cockroaches, they keep coming back. (Well, like cockroaches who are known to kill anyone who crosses their paths.) Of equal import, though they try not to think about it, is the abundance of trolls who roam the land. For the most part, the trolls mind their own business—some have even become farmers and shepherds to their own personal reserves of fresh meat—but there are enough incidents per year to make them noteworthy.

The Kingdom of France

France is ruled by King Jean Philippe III and remains an internationally recognized center of human culture. Some of the world's grandest temples and museums are here, and many of Europe's greatest artists are of French decent. The French hate Xcrawl with unequaled passion, considering it the flowering of Western arrogance and stupidity. This is a fact they are extremely public about, so long as there are no tourists in the area. France is home to the elvish citadel of Sashmala, and the Sashmala elves are the most fashionable and aristocratic of their kind. The French economy is based on tourism, dairy and farm products and steel.

What is less known is that there are parts of France—like the catacombs under Paris—that are havens for things best not dwelt upon. The catacombs have been "cleared of all evil" no less than fifteen times in recorded history. Each and every time, the things both alive and undead that reside there come back stronger than before. The French don't like Xcrawl, but that might also be because it hits a little too close to home for some of them.

The Roman Empire

Led by Emperor Bruno XVI, the Roman Empire, now an Empire in name only, has suffered through many coup attempts, and Bruno XVI came to power only after his older brother, Bruno XV, was assassinated by Messianic terrorists. In an ironic turn, the Roman Empire, which began the persecution of the Messianics, now has one of the highest populations of the One God Cult. The Emperor continually seeks for ways to increase Rome's international reputation, and the Roman League Xcrawl is second only to the NAE in danger and spectacle. Bruno XVI will do anything to return his nation to the heights of glory it once held, and is constantly looking for opportunities to gain new colonies in the world. Rome still reveres the Roman pantheon, and the world's oldest temples to Apollo and Poseidon are here. Thousands of religious tourists visit these sites every year.

The Kingdom of Transylvania

Transylvania controls all of the slavic territories, including Bulgaria, Austria and Yugoslavia, and is ruled by King Dracul IV. The line of King Dracul may be the oldest in Europe, and Transylvanians are very proud of their ancient heritage. The King himself is a reclusive but effective ruler, known for his exacting management style and his odd office hours. Transylvania is known for its high standard of living and its harsh laws –public execution is the proscribed punishment for a wide variety of crimes, and many first time offenders are sent to "reeducation camps," which have an alarmingly high death rate among inmates. Transylvania has limited religious freedom and Messianic followers are persecuted more here than anywhere else in the world. The Transylvanian Army is a small but renowned fighting force that accepts international recruits–many fugitives and malcontents join the Transylvanian Foreign Service in an attempt to start a new life. Transylvania has Xcrawl teams, but as of yet no events of their own.



ASIA

"We must hold the example of civilization up for the world to follow. We must be the single candle that leads others into the light."
–His Majesty the August Emperor Han Tzan, speaking to his cabinet.

Asia has the largest dragon population in the world. Hundreds of dragons live throughout China and Vietnam. These dragons generally live in peace with their human neighbors, although they conflict with one another quiet frequently. The ancient dragon known to man as Icewing inhabits a mountain in the Chinese region of Nepal, and it is said that he is the single wealthiest being on the planet. His hoard is legendary, and there have been many unsuccessful attempts to relieve him of some of his excess gold.

Asia loves Xcrawl. There are two Asian Xcrawl organizations that host events–one official and one not. The Pan-Pacific Combat Association is the official and sanctioned league. Pan-Pacific Combat Association events are known for their one-on-one challenges, lavish production and incredible prizes. The Asian season runs directly after the North American season, and many players from the NAE go to Japan and China once their own season is over, either participating or working for the crawl. Tokyo holds the biggest Asian event of the year, and DJ Pepper Tomato always puts on an outrageous contest. There is also an underground league–Asian gangsters have created violent illegal crawls that are held in various secret underground sites. These illegal games generally allow both adventurers and monsters to use modern weapons, such as firearms and explosives, and the body counts can be staggering. These illegal games generate millions in gambling revenues each year and the organizations that stage them are quite willing to kill to keep their secret.

The Empire of Japan

The Empire of Japan is still the de facto leader of the Asian world. Emperor Tojo



was succeeded by His August Majesty Dragon Emperor Han Tzan after the Great War. Emperor Tojo left his office shamed, having alienated both his human subjects and the Asian dragons with his arrogance and cruelty. Tojo is now considered a villain by Japanese historians. Han Tzan is a full blooded gold dragon, and his ascension to the throne heralded the return to the glorious days of the Chan Fe Hung dynasty. The Japanese refer to modern times as the New Classical age, and there has been a return to the values and style of the 44th century. Modern Japanese wear traditional kimonos and enjoy classical music and theater as their ancestors did hundreds of years before. However, amongst the youth of Japan there is a high demand for Western culture. Japanese teens are obsessed with western culture, especially rock and roll and Xcrawl.

Asia enjoys a relationship with dragonkind unknown throughout the rest of the world. Han Tzan is not only the Emperor of Japan; he has also restored the relationship between his empire and the Dragons of Asia. This relationship makes Japan nearly untouchable from a military aspect. Japan has an extremely strong economy based on manufacturing (consumer electronics and automobiles most profitably), banking, and consumables such as fish and rice. Very few of these products ever make it to the NAE, though, as intense economic rivalry between the nations prohibits open trading.

The Empire of China

The Empire of China is ruled by Emperor Hoy of the Ch'ing Dynasty–at least for the moment. China is a nation of perpetual unrest, where the warlords constantly vie for supremacy. Emperor Hoy is a strong man and extremely intelligent, but he is fighting a battle that has been waging since long before he was born. Despite his efforts and the threats against many of the warlords, there has been little ground captured in the struggle for true peace in the empire. The Emperor has managed to keep these conflicts from escalating into a full scale civil war, but it remains to be seen whether or not he can continue to maintain the status quo.

China has the world's largest agrarian economy, and the Chinese produce more herbs and grain than any other nation in the world. There are several black market organizations within the empire that are officially condemned, but privately praised for the monies they bring in. Chief among these is the rising export of narcotic mushrooms that are allegedly grown in deep caverns, never seeing the light of day. More than a few people have speculated whether or not the alfar are behind the drugs. There is also a strong black market dealing in forbidden treasures, such as unicorn horn—which it is said can cure virtually any illness—and even dragon's blood.

The Vietnamese Empire

The Vietnamese Empire is ruled by Emperor Duc Vet Ngyen, who overthrew the last emperor in a mystical duel that was, to quote one reporter, "mind numbingly devastating to Ngyen's predecessor." The Emperor nominally pays respect to Japan, but is secretly determined to be the sole leader of the Asian world. Emperor Duc Vet Ngyen is a sorcerer of considerable power, and is notoriously very harsh on his critics. While he is an effective ruler of his mostly agrarian kingdom, it is rumored he traffics with evil outsiders in an effort to discover some way to make Vietnam the supreme power in the east. The Dragon Emperor watches Vietnam carefully.

INDIA

"You are not welcome here. You are unclean. Leave before you offend the wrong people."
–A STREET BEGGAR TO A VISITING DIGNITARY IN CALCUTTA, TWO DAYS BEFORE THE DIGNITARY DISAPPEARED FOREVER.

India is a mystery. A shadowy country hiding its rulers and actively discouraging outsider involvement inside their borders. The ruling government is called The Shirah, with the only known official being Madam Dal Arraja, though she openly acknowledges that she isn't her country's head official. A few centuries back the British Empire tried to make itself a presence in India. They failed miserably. What remained of the invading forces fairly crawled back home and strongly urged that no other attempts along those lines ever be made. Seventeen attempted campaigns later, the British forces finally got the hint.

India is off limits. No one enters the Indian Empire without being seen and few stay for more than a few days. There is a saying about India that is short, sweet and accurate: "The people of India are not xenophobic, they just don't like strangers." There is no fear of outsiders in the empire, but there is a very real distrust of them. There are formal ties to most of the other empires of the world, but for the most part when there are discussions about trade policies, the people of India go out of state to handle the negotiations.

Naturally enough, there are almost endless rumors about what happens beyond the borders of the Indian Empire. Many claim that the Gods of India are alive and well and actually, physically present and in charge of the empire. Others claim that the royal family is a hideously beautiful cross-breeding of naga and human, and that they offer sacrifices to the gods that are surely abominations in the eyes of a sane world. Still others claim that the clergy of India has long since taken control and that any who would dare oppose them are cursed, marked and crippled, left to crawl across the ground as little better than snakes. The rumors go on almost endlessly, with little to substantiate them.

But India is a challenge, and one that many seem to find irresistible. There are mysteries to be solved and, according to the most popular rumors, actual dungeons as there were in olden days. Claims that monsters still roam the countryside dwelling in old abandoned places, hoarding treasures and stealing real princesses, abound. Though nothing has happened as yet, there are people talking about taking Xcrawl to an all-new level, one where the stakes are far more deadly than even the most challenging games. There is talk of actually taking a crew and a few of the best teams into India to find one of these real dungeons. Television executives have discussed a Reality Television show, taken to the absolute extreme, with creatures that have never been seen before and towns filled with hostiles. The ratings would be magnificent.

KINGDOM OF AUSTRALIA

"This little thing? Nah, it was no trouble a'tall. I saw a big one in Tasmania once–crackey! Now that was good sport."
–AUSTRALIAN COLLECTOR ARTHUR RUSKIN, POSING IN FRONT OF A DOWNED 10,000 LB. GREY RENDER.

The Kingdom of Australia, which includes the New Zealand and the Tasmanian territories, was a prison colony until it rebelled and broke away from Briton in 4588. Today, the Kingdom

of Australia is an autonomous nation with a thriving economy and strong cultural identity. Geographically isolated, Australia is a kingdom unaccustomed to challenges to its sovereignty.

King Malcolm the Gentleman rules Australia. Malcolm began life as a commoner, and spent much of his young adulthood teaching high school history in Perth. Queen Eliza II was ruling Australia at that time. Eliza was an eccentric who never took a husband nor had any heirs. She died with no clear path of ascension to the throne. Malcolm followed the story in the news, and was shocked to return home after class one day to find an entire retinue of royal guards and servants awaiting him. His lineage had been traced by relatives who discovered the as yet unknown Malcolm to be the late queen's nephew, having been given up for adoption. Malcolm has proven to be a just and wise king and is considered by many to be the greatest Australian ruler in history. He certainly is the most loved; his politeness and generosity of spirit to all have earned him the caveat "The Gentleman." In his short reign, Malcolm has reformed the nation's education and law systems and removed many entrenched praetorian elements of Australian's off-corrupt class system.

The monarchy of modern day Australia is modeled after the English system, although King Malcolm is considering adding a parliamentary aspect to the nation's government. This is strongly resisted by the nobility, who want to avoid a cultural gentrification that might begin with giving regions a degree of autonomy or, most radically, a say in the governing of the nation. The Australian economy is largely based on agriculture, wool, minerals and tourism.

Australia has the highest population of halflings of any nation in the world. Thousands of English halflings were deported to Australia, and since the revolt they have been living on the fringes of human society as they do everywhere else. Australia seems to agree with the halflings; on average, the halfling population is two to three inches taller than their brethren from around the world. While there is still a near zero tolerance for them, Australia is also home to many half-orcs who, like the halflings, were deported from Briton when Australia was a prison colony. Most of the half-orcs tend to live in the Outback, and gather in groups for strength and their own protection against fearsome creatures.

The Kingdom of Australia is home to a seemingly endless array of monsters of all sorts. Collectors come from the entire world over for the rare game of Australia, including 30' long dire crocodiles and the fearsome Xcrawl favorite, the hoogabungaroo. Australia also has the highest population of giants in the world. Giants of every sort can be found here, living in tribal communities far from the human population centers. On occasion, a raiding party of giants will invade civilized lands, stealing livestock or murdering travelers. Such attacks are answered with terrible force–the Australian Special Forces has a ranger task force that does nothing but deal with giants. The offending giants are never given a second chance. Giants are not granted Australian citizenship, so it is perfectly legal for hunters to capture them and sell them into Xcrawl.

Xcrawl is a sore subject for many Australians. The Games were legal and thriving until the ascension of King Malcolm, who believed Xcrawl to be a shameful waste of resources and life. He banned the games, but this move was met with derision from the commoners and gentry alike, so Malcolm engineered a compromise. Ozcrawl is the sport they play Down Under these days, and while it is not a death sport, it is by no means a game for the meek. With its motto of "No rules–just fight," Ozcrawl is set in faux dungeon settings just like Xcrawl, but players must fight their way through other humans and humanoids without pads, armor or weapons. It's a huge brawl

with fights that can literally go on for hours as the participants beat one another senseless. Australians complain that it just isn't the same without the death sport aspect, but some believe it is, if anything, more brutal than North American Xcrawl. Ozcrawl is also not without deaths. Though they are deemed "accidental," it's not unusual for one of the fist fighting contenders to break a few too many bones in an opponent or simply just snap a spine. People who look to fighting without weapons find the greatest challenges in the Ozcrawl arenas, and build names for themselves in Australia. Though not as well reimbursed as the best of the Xcrawlers, there is a long line of Ozcrawlers who make a solid living endorsing sportswear and other products.

AFRICA

"One man, one vote! One man, one vote! One man, one vote!"
–THE CROWD OUTSIDE OF THE ROYAL PALACE OF ZIMBABWE,
STILL GOING STRONG IN THEIR THIRD DAY OF PROTEST

The African continent is known for its wealth of natural resources, its rich history, and its rare and powerful

CASTLE ALASHAN TODAY

Castle Alashan is far more than just a castle. Through the course of the centuries it has become a metropolis that is larger than most people understand. Alashan is a seat of cultural prestige and magical powers, and to this day has a college of magical arts that is second to none in human history—at least according to them. While the Haj Sulette in Egypt is the oldest magical college, the Kalibaha'r University is strictly an invitation only school, and those who enter its esteemed halls are seldom the same when they leave as graduates. Some of the most powerful human mages ever to walk the planet graduated from Kalibaha'r and it is said that the most powerful among them remain within its hallowed halls, teaching the worthy about the deepest secrets of the universe. Because the university is only open to mages who have sworn blood oaths of secrecy, there are rumors aplenty of what really happens within to those who reside within. Every few decades someone who is terminally stupid attempts to enter the university and earn a name for himself or herself as a top-notch reporter. None of them have ever come out again.

The rumor mill has always worked overtime when it comes to Kalibaha'r. Some claim that powerful assassins are bred within the university, and a few insist that those very same assassins are in the process of replacing the monarchs around the world, setting the path for a world empire that would most surely shake the foundations of everything in existence.

Still others claim that the sorcerers have already succeeded in their mission to rule the planet, and that the current sad state of affairs is directly due to their incompetence. No one takes that last rumor too seriously: it's assumed that if the mages did in fact rule the world, Xcrawl would be a thing of the past. The wizards of Kalibaha'r have made their distaste for The Games abundantly clear. Naturally a few point to that very fact as proof that they have already taken over and are using their alleged disdain for The Games as a smokescreen to hide that fact.

Perhaps the most unusual claim is that there are no wizards at all within the halls of Kalibaha'r. A few swear that they have been inside the university and learned a long time ago that the buildings are merely hollow shells, window dressing to hide knowledge that Kalibaha'r is in fact the home of the gods—all of the gods.

creatures. There are five major kingdoms and many smaller ones in Africa.

Pockets of Africa have never evolved from pre-historic times. Trappers specializing in African hunts soon learn to prepare for the biggest game of all–dinosaurs. Dinosaurs are rare and valuable animals, and for many hunters they are the ultimate prize. Many crawls pay top dollar for the worlds largest natural predators. For all the money there is to be made there, hunters are extremely wary about working in Africa–it is said that there is a being of great power and furious temper which defends the beasts of the land and air from unjust exploitation. Trappers roaming Africa are sometimes discovered torn limb from limb, strung from trees or dashed upon rocks from great heights. None have ever discovered the source of the attacks and Africans tend to consider it a protecting spirit championing the continent's natural balance.

There is no African Xcrawl League as yet, but several African teams compete in world competitions. The Lions of Addis Ababa became the first foreign team to ever win the prestigious TexarcanaCrawl in 4687. The Zulu Nation was working on a huge outdoor crawl that was to take place over ten square miles of dense jungle, but original surveyors discovered an ancient temple to some forgotten foul power right in the middle of the game play area–plans to host an event there have been postponed until the secrets of the dark place can be unearthed.

The Kingdom of Persia

The Kingdom of Persia is ruled by His Most Royal Highness, Pasha El Shabaz. Persia can trace the line of its ruling family back to the days of the Cataclysm, and many consider Persia to be the world's oldest culture. Archeologists from around the world come to Persia to sift throughout the debris of mankind's first civilization. Castle Alashan, which is basically an autonomous city-state in the middle of Persian territory–still stands here, and is a worldwide tourist attraction. The Persian economy is primarily based on petroleum, medicinal herbs and gold. There are wizard artificers in huge numbers in Persia, and many of the great magic items of the world come from this region. Persia continues to be one of the wealthiest nations on the planet, and is also considered a cultural center for the scholarly.

The Egyptian Empire

Egypt's empire is ruled by Pharaoh Vai Sandeer. Egypt is a vast and ancient land,

THE CULT OF SET

The Cult of Set is a constant threat to the African nations. Originating in Egypt, the Cult has spread its influence among Africa's poor and disenfranchised. Those who worship Set believe that the evil god must be appeased with sacrifice and strife here on earth, and they work to sow as much chaos and discord as possible. Many of Set's most vocal followers claim they have been rewarded with power and wealth, or simply with having their fondest wishes fulfilled in exchange for their fealty. Set's clerics routinely raid graveyards and mortuaries to find fodder for their dark arts; skeletons and zombies are created and released to wander the countryside to kill and terrify. The high priests of Set are often non-humans, and the Cult of Set has powerful naga and yuan ti allies. There is a group of African paladins called The Light of Dawn who dedicate themselves to combating the menace of Set and his earthly minions.

whose economy is based on petroleum products, tourism, and manufactured goods. The world's highest quality paper comes from Egypt, and most wizards will accept nothing else for their spell books and scrolls. The oldest college of magic, the Haj Sulette, is in Cairo and has produced many of the world's most powerful magic users. The ancient institution has never gathered the same insidious reputation as the Kalibaha'r, likely because of its open door policies.

State law proclaims the Egyptian Pantheon as the only official gods of Egypt, but the law is barely enforced. Shrines to many other gods are scattered throughout the major cities—Cairo in particular—and no one has been persecuted for their beliefs in over a century.

The Ethiopian Empire of West Africa

The Ethiopian Empire of West Africa is ruled by Emperor Aacelesta. The Emperor is a high level cleric, and he is considered a prophet and the voice of his deity on earth. Ethiopia is a deceptively peaceful nation; at various times throughout history, Rome, Persia and Egypt have all tried to invade Ethiopia only to meet impassable resistance from the country. West Africa has some of the highest yielding diamond, gold and platinum mines in the world, and Ethiopia guards its wealth jealously. Ethiopia is at constant war with the menace of the cult of Set, who has many temples in the region.

Not surprisingly, dwarves are considered valuable assets in Ethiopia. The dwarves in the area are held in high esteem and given free reign to build as they see fit beneath the ground, provided they remain honest. If Ethiopia can be said to have any serious problems, it's the bothersome recurrence of the indigenous kobold population. Despite the best efforts of the dwarves in the area to eliminate the kobolds, they keep coming back, many of them calling out in defense of the Great Mother. No one has, as yet, figured out exactly what it is they are defending and most of the experts agree that they are no referring to mother earth when they start their rants.

The Zulu Nation

Led by supreme Warlord Daz Diaku, the ancient Zulu people rule most of the continent south of Zaire. Warlord Daz Diaku is a legendary warrior who led the Zulus to victory over the Dutch and French. His ferocity in battle and his cunning as a strategist quickly won Diaku the title Deathlord, which is only compounded by the tales that Diaku traveled to the land of the dead in order to rescue the spirit of his slain wife. Daz Diaku is known for taking a personal hand in virtually all negotiations with other nations and is considered by some of the people he's dealt with to be "the most terrifying man they've ever met." The Zulu Nation leads Africa in production of steel, rubber, and plastics. The Zulus place a great deal of emphasis on martial prowess, and there are several fighting academies here which produce many of Xcrawl's top warriors.

Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe is led by King Nakouro. The tiny African nation of Zimbabwe holds a unique place in the world's political history. Zimbabwe is a tiny but rich nation with historic blood ties to the Zulu and Ethiopia. Zimbabwe was lead solely by a succession of kings for years until the reign of King Bokouro, who ruled from 4640-63. Bokouro was a decadent and self-absorbed leader who nearly bankrupted his country with his gambling and carousing. At one point, the queen's heirloom crystal ball had to be sold to pay the King's tab at a Monte Carlo brothel. A local businessman, Tam Ardo, was incensed into creating an

underground movement to lessen the king's power. Was a king necessarily smart or wise simply because he was king? Ardo began a movement amongst the merchants and businessmen to find a way to keep Bokouro from ruining the country. Finally, Ardo's coalition called for a general strike to protest the excesses of the Bokouro regime. There were reprisals and blacklisting, and many of the collation's adherents simply disappeared at the hands of the army, including Tam Ardo himself. But after a decade long struggle, Bokouro finally gave in to the pressure and allowed a Parliament to be created in 4654, the first ever of its kind. Each of the districts of Zimbabwe has a senator representing their interests to the king. Collectively, Parliament has the ability to shape national policy by prohibiting the king from passing laws or edicts–a three-fourths vote can contradict any decision the king makes. Citizens of modern Zimbabwe have an unprecedented level of personal freedom, and there are no punishments for criticizing the government or turning away from the official national deities. There was an attempt at such a system in ancient Rome, but the emperor's wizards simply controlled the minds of any opposing the emperor and the system was rendered moot. Zimbabwe has the first successful parliamentary system in the world, and some political theorists foresee a time when they will have no king at all, for better or for worse.

SOUTH AMERICA

"Our people are favored of the Gods, and with them on our sides we are assured victory over the pig Bigota and his supporters. Long live Brazil!"
–FROM THE LAST SPEECH OF BRAZILIAN WARLORD GENERAL DEGAMA

South America was a colonial target of the Spanish and French, but the sorcerers of the Incas proved to be too great a challenge for the European invaders. The Messianics were much more successful at settling in the South American region, largely because the Incas were extremely interested in their knowledge of technology. Of course, once the Messianic had a foothold in the country they turned on the native peoples, attempting to force their conversion. Almost overnight the entire nation rallied against them, and in four months of bloody fighting, the Messianic were forced to flee the continent.

Spain, however, managed to succeed where other would-be invaders had failed. At least they managed to stay around. The Aztec god Quetzecoatl claimed the Spaniards were to be left alone, and the Aztecs listened. A lust for gold and riches eventually convinced the Spaniards conquistadors that it might not be such a bad thing, living under Aztec rule, and in time a colony grew in Mexico.

Sadly for the Aztecs, Quetzecoatl then grew silent and the Spanish influence grew stronger and stronger. Before a full century had passed, the Aztec had become a Spanish Territory. With no word from their gods to tell them otherwise, the people of Mexico allowed themselves to be annexed and controlled by the Spanish. There were many who wanted to see the Spaniards removed, but without a sign from their gods, they didn't dare oppose their new rulers.

George Augustus I decided that would never do, and worked quickly to change matters in the region. The first North American Emperor sent in messengers and offered assistance to the Mexican people who were tired of Spanish rule, and little by little the resistance grew until the civil war in Mexico broke the Spanish hold over the area. The battles for Mexico was long and bloody, though little of the blood was anything but indigenous.

OLD TIME RELIGION

Each nation has its own rules and regulations regarding religion. Some of them haven't changed much in the last several centuries. In an effort to remain politically correct with many of the larger nations, several of the countries that practice "questionable faiths" have taken to showing the proper fealty with less-than-savory individuals. Or, translated, many of the countries that still allow worship of gods that demand human sacrifices allow the practitioners of those faiths to pick and choose from the most violent criminals. It's really not wise to commit violent crimes in most of the South American nations, for example, where there are thousands of sacrifices every year in the name of faith.

While there are numerous complaints about these sacrifices, they are seldom heard by the people in power. Gods demand appeasement and there are ways around the humanitarian concerns of the people in other nations. These days, Xcrawl has made it much easier for several of the smaller countries to scoff at comments made by their more powerful neighbors. If death for entertainment is considered acceptable, how can death for religious compliance be any less appropriate?

Once George Augustus I helped wrest control of the Mexico Territory from Spain, he knew that stable allies to the south would be of key importance to his long-term empire building plans. George Augustus I did everything in his power to aid in the development of the South America, including economic and military aid to landowners trying to cement their control of the populace. Modern South America is a blending of American, Incan and Aztec culture with Messianic technology and a Romanesque governing structure.

South America has an Xcrawl league with very few major league events. However, the non-lethal Division 4 events are staggeringly popular here. The South American leagues are a haven for both inexperienced newbies who need to gain some experience before risking their life in the majors, and over-the-hill adventurers who want to score a few more victories before retirement. These events draw huge crowds of commoners, and has-beens from the world over can come to South America and be superstars again, albeit on a much smaller scale. In addition, South America is

PIT FIGHTING

Pit fighting is brutal and always lethal. The illegal game puts two combatants together in an enclosed ring, where they engage in battle until only one leaves. These fights have endless variations–warriors versus monsters, monsters versus monsters, wizards versus elementals, and so on. The Pit Fights are frowned upon by the legal system, but the people running the events are seldom captured or prosecuted. Officially, the fight ends when one opponent or the other surrenders or is incapacitated. In reality, they are death matches, with no holds barred and no mercy shown. The fights are huge gambling events generating millions annually for organized crime, and it takes remarkably little to make the police turn a blind eye, just as long as the fights don't attract undue attention to themselves and the bodies are disposed of properly.

infamous for both unsanctioned Xcrawl-like events and illegal pit fighting, more than balancing out the mild nature of the Division 4 events.

The Colombian Empire

King Poloneio de Vargas rules the Colombian Empire. Columbia has de facto control of everything north of the Madeira River. Columbia is the manufacturing capital of the world, and they make everything from automobiles to roller skates to electronics to tennis shoes. King Poloneio De Vargas is an extremely intelligent and charismatic ruler, known for his devotion to his patron deity. Columbia has extremely close ties to America; there are dozens of marriages between American and Colombian nobility, and even the King has married a duchess. There is a huge dwarven population in the Colombian Mountains, and they are hard at work on an underground city that may one day be the rival of Younger Cousin in Colorado. Many of these dwarves came south to escape what they saw as human oppression in the NAE. The dwarves of Columbia have only slightly more autonomy then their North American counterparts, but they do have a significantly smaller tax burden. Columbia keeps a large standing army, primarily due to its frequent conflicts with the Brazilian Empire.

The Brazilian Empire

Brazil is actually a loose confederation of several feudal factions. The nation has been in an almost constant state of civil war since the Brazilian Campaigns of 4665-7. The two strongest Brazilian warlords, Bigota and DeGama, battled over mineral rights along the Amazon River. Eventually, America and Briton joined the fighting as the conflict escalated out of control. Even the death of General DeGama could not end the cycle of hostility. Today, there is an uneasy peace, which frequently erupts into violence. The major victims are the Brazilian commoners, who have existed in the wake of civil conflicts for generations. Many believe that the Brazilian region will never know peace.

There is a strong underground movement in Brazil, a growing shadow campaign that exists solely to unify the people and leave the ruling class out of the picture. To date, no one knows who is in charge of this group, but the rumors claim that the so called "Army for Peace" has been actively recruiting half-orcs and other, fiercer creatures for their campaign against the ruling class.

The Kingdom of Peru

Lead by Queen Ta'Malla, Peru is an insular and regimented nation shrouded in mystery. Few ever see Queen Ta'Malla, who never sets foot outside her palace. It is rumored that she was so badly deformed at birth that no amount of magic could correct her appearance. This could not be farther than the truth. Ta'Malla is a beautiful but paranoid woman with a terrible fear of assassination. She sees enemies everywhere, and constantly wears dozens of protective talismans to keep her safe from physical attacks and mind control. Peru is a wealthy nation, their economy is based on agricultural products such as cotton and coffee, as well as fishing, mining, and lumber. Peru has adopted the old Incan deities as their own, but there are also Roman temples to be found.

Queen Ta'Malla has several wizards in her employ, and pays them handsomely for their loyalty. The mages mostly work to keep the queen safe from prying eyes and any threat—real or imagined—that might come her way, but from time to time she has them run errands for her that are extremely sensitive in nature. Rumors that the queen is actually a powerful sorceress in her own right have yet to be confirmed or denied.

ZURA'AH'ZURA

Zura'ah'zura, which translates from the alfar as "the land beneath the land," is the collective term for the populated underground cavern networks stretching for miles and miles beneath the surface in various parts of the globe. The alfar were the original denizens of Zura'ah'zura, carving an entire world for themselves deep within their beloved earth.

The Zura'ah'zura is a vast web of tunnels and caverns. There are regulated pathways—some as wide as superhighways, some little more than mean tunnels—connecting various checkpoints and populated areas. There are also thousands of smaller tunnels, both natural and alfar-fashioned, leading to hidden grottos and hollows. None of them are architecturally what the surface world would consider complete or finished; they are rough, angular caverns which, in many places, have been left intentionally difficult to pass to prevent strangers from wandering into their homes.



The alfar have a sophisticated underground aesthetic. It would never do for them to carve smooth and regular passageways, like common dwarves, preferring caverns angular and naturalistic—even when this makes for treacherous passage. Alfar tunnel aesthetic is influenced greatly by their excavation methodology. The dark elves consider the actual digging far beneath their station, and will *charm* or otherwise enslave creatures with an affinity for burrowing, and force them to do the excavation. Once this is done, workers brace and reinforce the new passageways, making them structurally sound while retaining their rough-hewn appearance. The end result is typically disjointed, uneven and, to the sensibilities of the alfar, sublime. For non-alfar, the effect can be disturbing, with rolling walls and ceilings, dipping and turning, creating a disquieting sensation.

The Zura'ah'zura is, of course, dark. The caverns and passageways are unlit, and human travelers must bring their own light sources, infuriating the alfar to no end. Even in alfar cities, there are no electric lights. While they do utilize electricity, they use only arcane light—and even then, sparingly.

Cities are tall and unlit. The alfar still favor magic over technology, which is reflected in their architecture. Alfar designs consist largely of huge branching towers set into stone at impossible angles, created and set by alfar magic. Often buildings are stretched from cavern floor to ceiling, and are magically bonded with the rock, with narrow twisting bridges linking the towers, and windows the size of doors opening into the caverns.

WHAT THE WORLD DOESN'T KNOW...

The alfar were courted by Hitler during the Great War to be his allies against the non-humans of the world, and he offered dominion over all the elder races as a reward should they join the axis. The alfar declined to join the axis powers, but they did introduce the German emissaries to the hobgoblins chieftains, and it was the hobgoblins who ultimately became the backbone of the axis infantry. The dark elves felt it wisest to let Hitler wage his war and to see who was left standing afterward. They felt the surface world might be ripe for conquest once the Great War had ravished the surface. However, when the war was over, the alfar realized a surprise attack at that time would not be an assured victory, so they waited. And they wait still.

Alfar send "colonists" out continually to the edges of the known underground, searching for new caverns and routes to the surface. Expanding the Zura'ah'zura is a priority of the dark elves as they plot against the surface world. The principal is sound enough: create more and more territory for their enemies to search in order to diffuse their resources. The alfar engineers are currently hard at work at an ambitious project they call The Great Western Tunnel. The Great Western Tunnel, half constructed and half natural, will reach beneath the Pacific Ocean to Asia. This will allow both underground trade with their brethren on other continents and to secretly move troops to strategic points. Surface dwellers can use planes or ships to move troops around the globe in times of war, and the alfar believe that the Great Western Tunnel will allow them to offset that advantage.

There are five major cave networks that make up the Zura'ah'zura:

North America

With its alfar capitol, Lathonicha'ah, deep beneath Montreal, the North American Zura'ah'zura is the most expansive of the cave networks. A single traveler can move along its winding underground passages from the Canadian territories all the way to Panama without ever having to surface. The alfar of Lathonicha'ah are the upstart newcomers of their people, and considered inferior by their brethren. The current Queen of the North American Zura'ah'zura is Zo'zha'na, the sorceress-priestess supreme.

Africa

The dark continent has the oldest segment of Zura'ah'zura, and the majority of its intricate tunnels have never been seen by human eyes. There are four major African alfar enclaves constantly vying for supremacy; the largest is Kulotat'el, deep beneath Zaire. While Africans are aware that somewhere beneath their continent is an entire underground civilization, very few are aware of the extent the ancient maze of caverns branch beneath their territories. While there is not outright war between the underground nations of Africa, plotting and intrigue are constantly the order of the day, and skirmishes are very common.

The Eurodark

This alfar kingdom was given its name by its surface-dwelling counterparts, and the alfar refuse to even state the true name of their kingdom until a formal apology has been issued and all instances of the name are stricken from record; it has been over a millennium since the

land has been called anything but the Eurodark. This is the most familiar alfar territory to man. Its capital city, Rotzamor'el, is miles beneath the Empire of Transylvania. Indeed, the alfar and the line of Dracul have ancient treaties allowing for trade and cultural exchange between the nations. The undisputed queen of the Eurodark is the beautiful and elegant Da'zinga, who is a bit of a celebrity on the surface world. Da'Zinga can often be seen at the most affluent parties and gatherings thrown by the loftiest of noble houses, constantly amazing European nobles with her constantly changing appearance. European citizens can be granted passage to see a few of the wonders of the Eurodark, and thus Da'zinga's kingdom boasts the only underground economy benefiting from surface world tourism.

Eastern Europe

This underground region is the home of Tazol-tazol, the center of alfar religion. Tazol-tazol, deep beneath the surface of Siberia, has caverns running deeper than any other known to intelligent beings, and it is possible to go deep enough underground for the pressure to become too much for the unacclimated to draw breath, and there are many reports of humans, elves, and even dwarves dying on ventures done without alfar supervision. The Eastern European Zura'ah'zura is the home of the Great Temple, where sacrifices to the alfar's patron deity, Loki, are so commonplace that an entire industry is dedicated to designing unique sacrifices for the trickster god. All alfar clerics are honor-bound to make the dangerous pilgrimage to the Great Temple at the beginning of their careers, proving their wit and capability to Loki. The Eastern Zura'ah'zura is also the home of the great hidden city of the kuo toa. The unknowably ancient kuo toan's dream their dark dreams and perform their unspeakable rituals to honor their dark gods far from the knowledge of man.

Australia

The Australian underground lies beneath the western section of the continent. It is called Arekeen'te, and is familiar to the surface dwellers, and monster hunters worldwide know its reputation as the best location for hunting truly exotic and valuable creatures. Though difficult to get permission to enter, monster hunter's love exploring the dark caverns carved beneath these lands. The alfar king, A'xala'de'xala, rules in Arekeen'te, and tolerates intrusion without permission into his realm with no tolerance. The official penalty is for the intruder to be expelled, never allowed to return to the great hunting ground; though it is amazing how many intruders are killed for "resisting expulsion."

All known passageways from the surface leading to the Zura'ah'zura are guarded, just as a country would guard any of its borders.

THE SECRET UNDER AUSTRALIA

Under the eastern part of Australia lies the alfar secret weapon. A Zura'ah'zura remaining secret to the entire world. A land that the dark elves call Hth'ultchain, or "the fortress of tomorrow." Once the main caverns were established, the alfar collapsed all passageways to the surface world. Now, the only way to reach its vast cavern network is by magic. The alfar of the western passageways are self sufficient, militant and magically protected from scrying. It is here that alfarkind make their plans for war against the surface world. The alfar army is constantly training for a strike against the surface, and their wizards breed terrible creatures with the intent of one day releasing them as a first strike against the hated surface elves. They sit, they plan, and they wait for the time to be right. They have no intentions of waiting forever.

Anyone wanting passage must show proper identification and travel visas, with all goods carried in and out of the Zura'ah'zura subject to search by both the human and alfar security experts. Monsters brought up from underground are always quarantined. The alfar are allowed to travel to the surface with a passport issued by the nation, but they must pass a thorough security examination. These passports are strictly reserved for businessmen and traders. All surface-worlders traveling through Zura'ah'zura are required to travel with an escort, and much of the alfar territories are completely off-limits to outsiders.

There are secret ways into and out of Zura'ah'zura, and this allows for abuses of the system on both sides. Some monster hunters will sneak into the alfar kingdoms, hoping to bag a creature or two without paying taxes or acquiring expensive licenses. The alfar continuously sneak out of their lands and into the surface world to perform all sorts of nighttime mischief. The punishment for using any unofficial entrances or exits is exceedingly harsh from both kingdoms.

THE ALFAR

"Pardon my poor English, you must not be understanding me, no? These are quality creatures, unharmed and ready to fight. I realize that you are a human, but you must have a basic understanding of supply and demand, no? If you can't meet my price, I will simply take my goods elsewhere, and I am certain that the ChicagoCrawl specialists would pay handsomely for these creature specimens."
–DOZA'RIF REE,
ALFAR MONSTER BROKER

In a time before the historic age, in a time that is now scarcely remembered by even the eldest of the races, there was only one race. A race that most closely resembled what we now call an elf, whose society was ancient long before the rise of man. A race that was extremely proud, boasting of accomplishments they feel man can never hope to equal, but they have one great shame. This race gave birth to the greatest enemy of the civilized world, the alfar.

The ancient race–their true name long forgotten–sprang from the ground itself, given the gift of life by powerful gods. The trickster god, Loki, watched this race grow and multiply, and began to create a plan. He approached one of the youngest of the race, disguised as an elder, and spoke to him. "You know, young one," he stated, "our race is born of the earth. Yet we betray our birth. We reach for the gods, staying out of our true home. To grow as a race, we must plant ourselves. We must return to the earth."

The young one thought about the words, and he repeated them to others. Sometimes they laughed, and sometimes they listened. And always, Loki watched. Loki appeared from time to time, reinforcing his tale. Convincing the young ones that their race was doomed if they remained on the surface of the Earth. The youth of the race told the elders that the people must move underground, and naturally the elders called them mad. But the young ones would hear nothing of it; they were determined to save their race, even if they must do it by force. They stole away in the night, kidnapping hundreds of their own, delving into the depths of the earth.

And in the heavens, Loki laughed.

For decades, the young rebels stole to the surface at night, mingling with their own, and returning to the world below with new recruits–some willing, some forced. The elders began to take notice of these rebels, and knew that they had to do something to stop them, so they called down a terrible curse. Those that lived in the dark of the earth, and would only travel by the dark of night, would be identified by the dark of their skin. The

races were divided on that day, forever to be apart, while knowing that they were once together.

And again, Loki laughed.

The trickster god appeared before the subterranean race again, this time in his true form. He acted appalled by the treatment these proud people received from those they were only trying to save. He promised to guide them through this troubled time. He named them the alfar, a word he claimed meant, The Chosen. The others later came to choose the name elf. And thus the elves and the dark elves were born.

Millennia passed. The alfar grew to worship Loki, treating the god as their savior, and cursing the elves who lived above. The alfar began to hate their cousins, and since they were forced to wear a different color skin, they chose to look as different as possible. They began to change their appearance, deforming their features. Tattooing their flesh with bizarre colors, piercing every area of their body, and polymorphing their forms. The more exotic, the better. The elves were joined by the other elder races, and finally the young race of mankind. But the alfar found allies of their own in the dark races of the world: the goblins, orcs and worse.

The alfar worship Loki, and the highest of the clergy know the truth. That their race was tricked underground. That their race was never doomed to die above ground. Instead of anger, they hold the trickster god in reverence; they see trickery as the height of intelligence, and this greatest trick is a sign of brilliance. As a race, the alfar seek to emulate Loki, tricking others into conflict against each other. Why fight your own fight if you can get someone else to fight for you?

The greatest asset of the alfar has ever been patience. The alfar wait, training and growing in strength, burning for the day when they will blight the surface world and end all life above ground. Nothing else will do.

The alfar have carefully watched the history of the surface-dwellers unfold, choosing ripe times to make their presence known. The Age of Wrack seemed the perfect time to strike out against the surface world, and they might have prevailed if not for the unforeseen defeat of their human allies at the hands of Cyral and his band. The dark elves felt they had no choice but to strike at the young North American Empire after their presence in the New World was discovered in 4559. If they did not strike first at the surface world, the high elves and their human allies would obliterate them with a pre-emptive strike. That war went badly for the alfar, and they are determined not to repeat their mistakes. The next time the alfar wage war it will be at a time and place of their choosing.

The alfar are the undisputed masters of Zura'ah'zura, but they share their realm with dozens of other races–orcs, hobgoblins, bugbears, and trolls to name a few.

The Other Races of the Zura'ah'zura

Orcs

"You want your glory? I have your glory. I've got your paycheck!"
–unknown orc into a camera at last year's LasVegasCrawl

The two major Zura'ah'zura cities concerning Xcrawl the most are Orc City 1 and Orc City 2. The orcs have their own names for their underground urban areas, but the names change so often due to frequent coup d'etats and overthrown governments that long ago the surface world started calling them by their numerical names; and since its almost impossible to make orcs hate humans any more or less than they already do, the

names don't especially offend. Orc City 1 is located miles below Guadalajara, in the Mexico District. Orc City 2 is underneath the Montana district. The orcish cities are like third world ghettos, little more than rank warrens with limited electricity and waste management. The orcish economy is built on mercenary/security work, raiding and Xcrawl.

Orcs have an interesting relationship with Xcrawl. About half of the orcs encountered in a sanctioned event are there against their will. In orc society, there isn't much of a legal system; murder and brutality are so commonplace that they are simply accepted parts of life. Some crimes do require a reaction, though, and rapists, thieves and "haters" (defined as any orc who disparages his brethren for having become a success) are usually killed outright. Orcs who can't pay their debts on time are also considered criminals. However, rather than being killed outright, these orcs can find themselves "sold" by the orcish chieftains to Xcrawl to pay off debts—both real and imagined. Most unskilled orcs encountered in Xcrawl are debtors being given the chance to fight their way to freedom.

The rest of the orcs in Xcrawl are paid performers, competing for choice positions in The Games. To understand the logic of this, one must consider the orcish mindset. Their society is completely based on violence and domination. Orc lives revolve around killing and death. So why not kill humans and, glory willing, elves? The financial reward is also exceptional for the risk, to the skewed orcish mindset. By their standards, an orc surviving an entire Dungeoncrawl finds himself wealthy. He can now buy himself some respect in the form of decent living quarters, a few wives and some quality weapons. His life has been improved vastly. And, if an orc dies in The Games, he was weak and would have died anyway. Some orcs are Xcrawl lifers. They will stay on with Crawls, getting trustee positions, allowing them a measure of freedom. Dungeon Judges always need monsters to act as liaisons and enforcers within their menageries. Not to mention the fact that the floors need to be mopped and new tunnels carved out of rock. This may be the best position that an orc can find. He will be fed and taken care of while he has the chance to brutalize and dominate the orcs under him. Ah, bliss.

Goblinoids

"See how they fret over their environment? The temperature and lights in the stadium have to be just right or the weakling humans can't be comfortable. We can use that."
Kolirocktar, hobgoblin
Xcrawl participant/ spy



GOBLINS AND THE GAMES

Most goblins in Xcrawl are captives, forced into the games by their hobgoblin masters. Goblins are the masters of prison craft, smuggling contraband and creating illegal weapons right under the noses of their human overseers. More goblins escape from Xcrawl menageries than any other race, and there are entire free bands of goblins on the North American continent who are fugitives from some DJ's Xcrawl. A few goblins, such as the Cudgel Up! Dancers, are well paid and valuable participants, and they receive far better treatment than detainees.

Fearsome and violent, bugbears are a crowd favorite. Bugbears are almost always brought to Xcrawl against their will, but they don't try too hard to escape. The living conditions in The Games is generally greatly improved over the life they can expect in their homeland. Dungeon Judges make sure that bugbears get plenty of food, oversized weapons and the opportunity to bully those smaller and weaker than themselves. This makes the bugbears feel right at home.

Hobgoblins sign up for Xcrawl right and left. Their plan is to sacrifice a few warriors to the human's stupid game, all the while using it as an extended training exercise. The hobgoblins watch mankind carefully, learning absolutely everything they can about the world of humans, elves and dwarves. One day there will be a reckoning, and this time the hobgoblins have every intention on dominating the humans, the elves and all the others.

Goblinoids, including hobgoblins and bugbears, once rivaled orcs in numbers and military force. The Great War changed all of that. Most of the major hobgoblin tribes—the Princes of Death, the Black Faces, the Wall of Skulls and the Burning Eye—were decimated before the Axis powers surrendered in 4641. The hobgoblins, provided with modern weapons and vehicles by the Germans and Japanese, fought fierce battles against the allied forces all over the world. The hobgoblins were the only army to use infantry in North America, landing on the beaches and fighting in places like Savannah, New Jersey and Los Angeles. They encountered unprecedented resistance from Americans, and millions were destroyed by the superior weapons and training of the humans and elves. Those who survived the war returned to their homelands to find their cities overrun by orcs. The major orc tribes saw their opportunity to strike at their hated enemies while they were weak, and took it. In fact, Orc City 2 is a former hobgoblin stronghold overrun in the days after The Great War.

Modern hobgoblins are nomadic minorities in the Zura'ah'zura, although their numbers swell with each passing year. They survive by raiding on the fringes of underground society and are constantly trying to claim new strongholds for themselves. Many form mercenary bands and work for the highest bidder in the constant conflicts characterizing underground politics. The hobgoblins maintain their dream of world conquest, and believe that war against the surface world is inevitable. They want revenge; revenge against their former Germans allies, revenge against the orcs and alfar who subjected and used them, and especially revenge against the North American Empire.

MONSTER ECOLOGY

"Oh, look, how...quaint. A beautiful little manling. What a romantic figure you cut–the last man standing, defiantly pointing that silly pistol at me. How amusing I find your misplaced bravery. I may have to have you bronzed."

–FIGORAXIAN, ANCIENT RED WYRM OF ARIZONA, TO THE LAST LEGIONNAIRE OF THE 22ND INFANTRY.

Where would the Xcrawl be without monsters? Once, they were terrors to the human world and then, surprisingly, they were practically extinct. At least that's what the humans keep telling themselves.

The days when the world was raw and unexplored may be over, but that doesn't mean the world has been completely tamed. Though it's true that many of the oldest threats to humanity have been subdued, there are still plenty of creatures out there who can rip the average humanoid apart, and the Xcrawl producers couldn't be happier about it.

Monsters are what make Xcrawl worthwhile in the eyes of most observers. Half the fun of The Games is waiting to see what creatures might show themselves, and then trying to figure out whether or not the participants will survive the encounters.

Some of the monsters encountered aren't really that hard to find. Some of them are even manufactured just for the event, like zombies and animated skeletons, as well as the occasional golem.

But the real challenge comes from the creatures hiding themselves from mortal view or, in the even rarer cases where the monsters haven't concerned themselves with hiding at all...

Dragons

"I hold one principle most dear: progress. America must be allowed to grow into its full potential as the richest and strongest nation in the world." So spoke Emperor Howard I, in an address to congress in February of 4610. Howard I believed that the biggest obstacle to progress in the NAE was dragonkind. Dragons were an economic calamity, he assured, who selfishly claimed huge territories for themselves–land that could be better used for railroads, coal mines, hotels and everything else that made America great. Howard I believed that modern weapons would finally give man the edge against dragonkind, and that America had an economic mandate to destroy all dragons. Howard I's plan was simple, even simplistic: kill a few of the toughest and most famous dragons, and the rest will get the idea and take off for greener pastures. His aides assured him that guns and electricity made this a possibility for the first time in human history.

Howard I began his crusade in the south, attacking dozens of dragons in coordinated raids across the Georgia district. Dragons were cut down by automatic weapon fire and explosives. These raids were extremely successful, although costly in terms of human life. Howard I believed that once the dragons were all destroyed, the NAE could then destroy all the monsters within its borders and use one hundred percent of its territory. Howard I believed himself prepared to go down in history as the greatest Emperor the NAE had ever known.

And then dragonkind made its voice heard. First, the city of Atlanta was reduced to ash in one horrifying day by two dragons working in concert– a red and a silver, who would normally be natural enemies. Then, all communication throughout the NAE was cut off as packs of dragons destroyed telegraph wires nationwide. Three days later, Japan sent notice to Emperor

Howard I–if the attacks upon dragons continued in North America, America would soon face a war not only against dragonkind, but against Japan, China, Vietnam and Siberia as well. The United States capitulated, and North America was saved from what was likely total devastation.

Every nation has its own regional monsters, but dragons are universal. Dragons can exist in any climate, live for thousands of years, and have immense physical and magical power. Some feel that dragons could someday take over the world, but dragons know better–it is already their world. Man just lives in it.

Dragons greatly influence the shape of human society. The great Wyrms each claim their own territory and guard it fiercely against encroachment–humans who attempt to build a power station or oil refinery in some dragon's territory learn very quickly who is in charge. While dragons do not allow humans to exist in their territory, they do not begrudge other monsters taking up residency near them, provided that they don't become a nuisance. In fact, the odd population of dangerous creatures is actually a boon in a dragon's territory, as they are a further ward against those who would hunt them for their treasure or skins. Dragons actually encourage certain creatures to dwell near them. Kobolds are always welcome to live nearby as they leave offerings of food for the dragons in honor of the protection they provide. The territory of dragons, therefore, becomes extremely inhospitable for mankind. This means that humans generally live near population centers to avoid accidentally encounter something toothsome and slimy. While humans avoid these hostile territories, monsters learn to avoid human population centers as well. An owlbear that wanders into Tacoma is going to find itself dead or collected very quickly. There is an understood, unspoken balance to the world, one which allows both monsters and man to exist.

There are some very notable exceptions to this rule. The dragons of Asia tend to live in harmony with man, mostly due to the respectful attitude that Asians tend to show them. Asian dragons may even visit cities and towns, and, instead of being attacked outright, they are treated as honored guests. The tribes of Native Americans are another exception. The aboriginal Americans still roam the land free, dealing with beasts and monsters as they encounter them. The Native Americans and their allies, the elves and centaurs, have learned to live in harmony with the natural world, and they work together to fend off monsters whenever the occasion arises.

The oceans are also a haven for monsters. There are entire races of intelligent beings, such as sahuagin, mermen and kuo toa who live in the depths. These creatures have their own societies, cities and cultures. Indeed, the rumors concerning the city of Atlantis are true–the mermen and the deep elves have discovered this ancient citadel in the hidden depths of the Atlantic ocean, and have repopulated it with their own kind. The undersea folk take great pains to hide Atlantis from the civilized world–the city is both camouflaged and magically protected from discovery. Intelligent sea dwellers generally avoid humans, but will occasionally attack the lone distressed ship. The exception to this rule is the aquatic elves, who will occasionally venture onto land to trade or visit their land-bound cousins. The sea is also home to terrible ancient beasts like sea serpents and dragon turtles, and mankind doesn't dare intrude into their territory.

Of course, the world's greatest monster breeding ground is the Zura'ah'zura. Alfar monster hunters surprise DJ's again and again with yet another new species never before seen above ground. It seems that the underground ecology is every bit as rich as the surface world. And every bit as deadly, if not more so–the alfar are constantly encountering creatures like

purple worms and mind flayers, who shun the surface world, but are a very real threat to the underground alfar nations.





CHAPTER THREE
XCRAWL ORIGINS

"This fight has more twists than a medusa's stocking cap. The Dunguun Gangstaa's are on the floor of Arena B, battling a group of goblins and barely holding their own."

"The crowd is literally on their feet. The Messenger is feeding a potion to the wounded Stud, who just seconds ago took a ballista to the chest. Sleeper is holding her own, already having downed two goblins. This leaves the two scouts, Geronimo Nick and Oni, to hold their own in a front line battle that they obviously don't want any part of."

"This simply isn't their kind of fight. They would rather be waiting in the shadows, looking for an opportunity to make that big play. And this battle isn't getting any easier just yet–that ballista crew is prepping another shot, even as we speak."

"Are those members of DJ Cudgel Up's famous Cudgel Up! Dancers?"

"Not yet. Every goblin in this dungeon is vying for a position with the Dancers, the squad being three members short since a knifing in the showers that occurred…"

"Hold on–Stud is back in the game! Apollo has answered the prayers of The Big Man. Just look at Stud charge the goblin's flanker! You can almost hear the sigh of relief that Oni and Nick must be…"

"Oh no!"

"Jupiter! The ballista team has made its move! Stud takes another spear to the chest! He's down! Stud is down again! Mercy of Olympus–it doesn't look good for the Gangstaa's!"

"Gah. Have you…have you ever seen anybody lose so much blood?"

"Two ballista shots in one combat–that has to be some kind of record!"

HISTORY

"Xworld is where I say I'm from, 'cause I'm all about Xcrawl. The dungeon is life. Every dungeon is a test to see if you can hack it, and if you can't hack it underground you can't hack it period–you might as well get eaten by a troll because you weren't gonna make it anyway, and at least dying on TV gives the rest of us a thrill. Trust me–if you don't live in Xworld you ain't really alive."
–JASMINE "NAILBOMB" BROOKS, XCRAWL SORCERESS/ ROGUE.

"Well, of course they weren't always specifically dungeons. That was just what we called it, back in the good old days. I remember sitting at the Inn of the Nasty Lassie or something like that when Zimble explained it to a first-year bard. He said that whenever a party went underground they called it a dungeon crawl. Zimble thought it was because they went through a lot of ruined castles and fortresses, and the nastiest beasties always seemed to hide out in the dungeon."
–THE MAGICAL BLADE WARSONG, ANSWERING A RESEARCHER'S QUESTION REGARDING HIS USE OF THE WORD "DUNGEON."

"Don't let them eat me! Stop the game! Stop the game!"
–A TERRIBLY WOUNDED ELLA "E-SHARP" SONGSMITH, BEING CARRIED OFF BY A CLUTCH OF GIANT RED ANTS.

The Cataclysm erased much of mankind's history for thousands of years. Very few historical records survived the great flood, and archeologists and sages had to piece together a picture of the antediluvian world by the mean evidence left behind when the old world died. In 4664, scholars had a vision of the past skewed by histographic trends and cultural bias–humans believed that the old times were dominated by men, dwarves by dwarves and so on. But the entire pre-cataclysm age was illuminated by the discovery of Warsong in October of that year.

An American archeological team working in Sicily was digging through the ruins of what seemed to be an ancient fortress. Among the bones, pottery shards and arrow heads, one young intern made an amazing discovery–an intricately carved short sword, perfectly preserved. As he brushed the grime off he gave himself a horrible slice on the finger–somehow, after untold thousands of years, the blade was still razor sharp. It had to be magic.

Archeologists rarely found magical artifacts–dragons had ways of discovering hidden magical treasure, and most of the pre-flood magic items currently reside in some great Wyrm's hoard. The team was sure that it was a major find.

They had no idea. As soon as one of the archeologists took it by the handle, it started to speak an ancient dialect of persian. Translation wizards were brought in, and researchers found that the sword was called Warsong, crafted in the pre-cataclysm age for an elvish general. It had changed hands dozens of times in its long existence, carried by several adventurers–most prominently a half-elvish bard named Zimble, who possessed it for more than a decade. Warsong actually witnessed the Heroic Age, and after being trapped underground for a century, was more than willing to talk at length about its experiences, the battles it participated in and the thousands of stories learned from Zimble.

Warsong gave the world an entirely new perspective on history. After several years of research and fact-checking, scholars finally

WARSONG

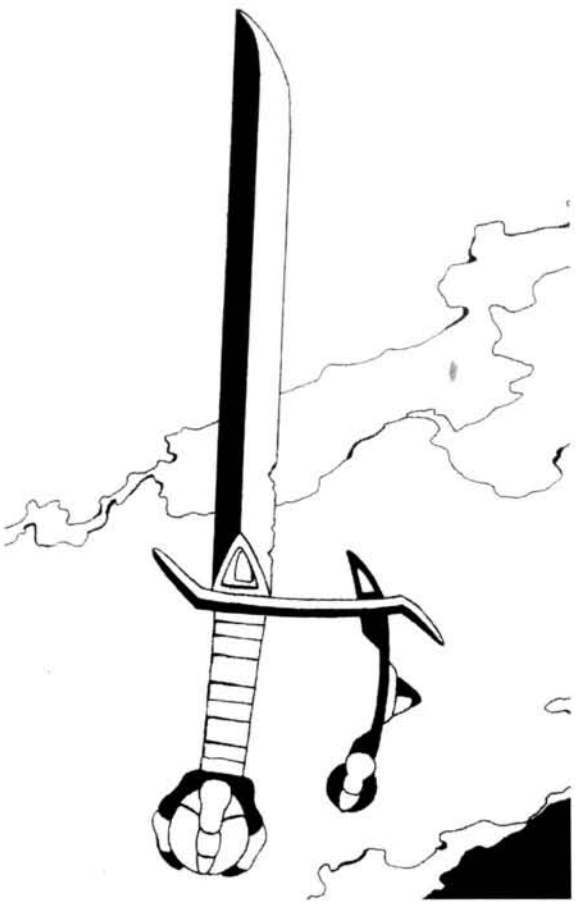
- **+4 keen dancing shortsword**
- **Int 14**
- **Sheds non-detection (at 14th level) in a five foot radius.**

Warsong speaks ancient Persian, elvish and is learning modern English. It was kept by the History Department of Yale University for ten years before it was offered as a gift to the Emperor. It is currently in possession of Emperor Ronald I of North America, who plans to pass it on to his children when they are old enough to rule. Warsong is a sore spot in human-elvish relations; the American archeologists claim it by right of discovery, but the line of the general who originally owned the weapon still lives, and demands its return. Warsong itself just wants to get off the wall in Ronald I's study and back to adventuring. He doesn't much care who wields him, he's just glad to be useful.

decided that the sword gave an accurate depiction of events–if perhaps a bit skewed towards the importance of battles and adventurers he personally took part in. Long accepted facts were disproved, historical theories were tossed out, and textbooks worldwide had to be completely rewritten.

While the new historical perspective was enlightening, what really captured the imagination of the world were descriptions of the actual "dungeons" that Warsong helped explore. People were spellbound by the blade's tales of underground exploits. The bard who owned Warsong specialized in tales of adventurers, and these tales invariably evolved into stories of a small group of specialists delving deep into the caverns and tunnels, boldly confronting terrible monsters, deadly traps and other underground hazards. Warsong loved to tell about the time Zimble and his companions spent two months underground fighting mind flayers and troglodytes while they searched for an artifact that would allow them to rescue a companion they had lost in a trip to another plane of existence.

The stories of dungeon crawls impacted popular culture immensely. Dozens of novels of the heroic age charted on the best sellers list. Movies and television shows quickly followed, and a company in North America created a hugely popular strategy game, called Dungeonbattle, which used miniatures and dice to simulate underground combat. The game was huge on college campuses, and soon it became an entire industry–dozens of imitators sprung up with endless variations on the same theme. There were even conventions where players would get together and



THE TRUTH BEHIND XCRAWL

It was the first year of Emperor Ronald's reign, 4678, and the new Emperor knew he had a hard road ahead of him. Ronald originally held the position of Lord Mayor of Los Angeles for eight years, and was considered an effective politician and city manager. In early '78, Emperor James III was assassinated and the next in line for succession, the Emperor's cousin Henry Turbel, was discovered to be the responsible party. James III's wife asked the Oracles who should rule, and they named Ronald of Los Angeles. Ronald I assumed the throne during a particularly turbulent time in the nation's history. The nation's economy was strong, but there were signs the commoners were growing fed up with their lot. The twentieth anniversary of Zimbabwe's parliamentary system had just passed, and there were those bold enough to call for such a system in North America to balance the power of the Emperor. Ronald's fear that the commoners would soon demand democratic reforms seemed to be supported by his first visit with the Oracles, who predicated that "one who will usurp the Empire" would appear during Ronald I's reign. Ronald assumed that this usurper would be the Messianic savior, and he began his plans to bring their group down. Ronald knew that, given time, he could cement his position and wipe out Messianic resistance, but time seemed to be growing short. What he needed was a distraction. War seemed the most obvious choice, but he was afraid to commit his military resources anywhere in the world in case he needed them to help fight against the One God Cult. In October of 4678 Ronald sat alone in his chambers, watching the news on television and brooding over his predicament when the news about Fleeman and his Dungeonbattle group in Massachusetts caught his attention.

He had struck upon the very thing! Even as Lord Mayor of Los Angeles he had mused over bringing back death sports in the manner of the gladiator combats of ancient Rome to keep the commoners busy while the ruling class did the work of ruling the Empire. The idea was dismissed since Ronald I didn't believe that the nation would accept the idea of prisoners killing one another for sport. But killing monsters . . . well, who wouldn't pay to watch brave warriors fight evil monsters? This was the distraction he needed. Xcrawl would keep the masses occupied, and allow the status quo to remain in place indefinitely. So far, his plan has been a complete success.

hold huge Dungeonbattle tournaments for prizes.

There are always a few on the extreme edge of any movement, and for Dungeonbattle it was Will Fleeman. Fleeman was a dropout of the Boston College of Magic working as a short-order cook. His love of Dungeonbattle hurt his studies, and he was taking a few semesters off, trying to decide what to do with his life. He played Dungeonbattle four nights a week with his buddies, and they played until all the old scenarios seemed boring and stiff. Finally, on one dull night in October of 4678, Fleeman had a flash of inspiration: it would be incredible to make some fake weapons and play underground for real! Trespassing in an unfinished underground parking garage, he and his friends began to play a live version of Dungeonbattle with padded weapons and fake spells (Fleeman didn't have a license to use real magic, since he hadn't finished his guild training). The game was more fun than ever, until one weekend they came across a pack of ghouls tunneling into the bottom level of the garage during an attempt to break into a nearby mausoleum. Using improvised weapons and Fleeman's unsanctioned magical abilities, the group just barely managed to destroy the fiends and escape to alert the authorities.

The media ate up this amazing story. Kids pretending to be adventurers getting involved in a real-life dungeon crawl, and saving the day to boot! A wave of Dungeonbattle mania swept the nation. Rule books flew off the shelves, and all the old Heroic Age movies were re-released theatrically. And in a startling turn of events, Fleeman and his group were invited to the imperial palace in Washington DC to be personally congratulated by Emperor Ronald I.

Ronald I invited Fleeman and his group to a Winter Solstice feast in their honor that December. In a public ceremony, Ronald I bestowed the George Augustus Medal of Honor upon each of them for their heroism. While acknowledging that confronting the ghouls and using magic illegally was imprudent and reckless, he praised them for their bravery and resourcefulness, and issued a full pardon to Fleeman for unauthorized use of magic. He then made an amazing proposition; would Fleeman and his group be interested in helping to create an entirely new sport based on Dungeonbattle? Once he was over his fainting spell, Fleeman accepted the position as the first commissioner of the sport that would come to be called Xcrawl, and later became its first DJ.



The Emperor's Cup

THE 4699 SEASON

September 10th –15th Annual MemphisCrawl, DJ Cudgel Up! (Division Three)

September 19th–3rd Annual New York Invitational, DJ Grinder (Division Two)

October 28th–1st Annual St. LouisCrawl, DJ Rasputin Kruschev (Division Two)

November 5th–8th Annual Las VegasCrawl, DJ Outrageous Fortune (Division Two)

November 14th–Brinstan WheelingCrawl Classic, DJ Moby Dick, (Division Three)

November 25th–Motoraya Mexico CityCrawl, DJ Bonedaddy Terminus (Division Two)

December 3rd–Philadelphia Infantry Vs. Cavalry Crawl, DJ Brigadier General Edward Merrick (Special)

December 14th–The 10th Annual Apollo Cup, DJ Grandjo Dean (Division One)

January 1st–12th Annual TexarcanaCrawl, DJ Devastator (Unlimited Class)

January 31st–4th Annual MontrealCrawl, DJ Blackheart (Division Three)

March 3rd– 8th Annual San DiegoCrawl, DJ Bearclaw (Division Two)

March 12th–19th Annual Emperor's Cup, Washington DC, DJ Herobane (Division One)

In 4680, the first Emperor's Cup was held in Washington City. The entire nation tuned in on TV as four teams competed in a three-level dungeon event run by Fleeman himself, calling himself DJ Herobane. Six adventurers died during the crawl, and while certain elements in society condemned the brutality and senseless death of six athletes, the contest was a nationwide ratings phenomena. The first Emperor's Cup went to the Tennessee Scorchers, who went home with more than 18,000 GP in cash and prizes.

There are now twenty-five events in the North American Xcrawl season, and dozens more worldwide. There is a non-lethal "boffer league," so called for the padded boffer weapons, for players and viewers who can't quite stomach the death sport aspect. The Games are vastly evolved since the first crawl in 4680 but they still remain the most popular and dangerous sport in the world.

THE MODERN LEAGUE

The North American Xcrawl season runs from early September until the end of the Emperor's Cup in March. Individual events live and die by their popularity–if a certain adventure ceases to get ratings it will likely close its doors down. The list below only covers the major events. There are other, smaller events held every weekend, but the "big twelve" competitions are considered the prime Crawls of every season.

There are some events that are only held once, to honor a certain event or time period. For example, the birth of the Emperor's third son in 4691 was celebrated with the New OrleansCrawl, which was only held that year.

Division Classes

Each Xcrawl tourney is given a level of difficulty and classified in one of four Divisions. The Division refers to the event's relative level of challenge. Division One events are the most difficult, and meant only for the most experienced adventurers. Division Two events are less challenging, and Division Three events are meant for beginners. "Difficult" is a relative term–each Division is potentially lethal, but a novice team attempting a Division One event is almost assured a terrible and quick death, while an experienced team would only be invited to a Division Three game if the DJ wanted a ringer. Division Four tourneys are non-lethal "boffer" events. Players are known by their division as well–they are referred to as the highest division number that they have attempted so far. Players that compete in Division Three events are called Division Three players, and so on up to Unlimited Class players.

The designation Unlimited Class was created in 4695 for matches that are lethal to almost everyone, and that only the

DIVISION CLASSES

Xcrawl is divided up into several divisions, with each class being more difficult than the previous. The basic breakdown works as follows:

Division Four: character levels 1-3

Division Three: character levels 4-6

Division Two: character levels 7-10

Division One: character levels 11-15

Unlimited Class: character levels 16 and up

most experienced players should attempt. The Xcrawl commissioner decided the Texarcanacrawl crawl be declared an unlimited class event once the death toll got too high to ignore any longer. It has been rumored that the Emperor's Cup will be declared an unlimited class event at some point, but the truth is Herobane is not an especially bloodthirsty DJ, and the event's designation will probably never change.

The Infantry Vs. Cavalry Crawl is a special event, outside of the normal Division rankings. Players are exclusively members of the North American Legion. This crawl is held in Philadelphia by the military as an extended training event. Three teams from the Infantry and three teams from the Cavalry compete for top honors in a three level crawl, using standard rules and equipment. The natural rivalry between segments of the armed forces makes this an especially entertaining match.

Xcrawl's director is the Games Commissioner, who has the final say over any disputes that take place in Xcrawl. The Commissioner approves floor plans, trap designs and monster populations, and regulates every other aspect of the game. The current Commissioner is the young Duke Bradley Leibrock, who has held the office for only a year. Bradley Leibrock is smart but somewhat intimidated by the Dungeon Judges, and he has yet to rule against them in any dispute. Under Leibrock's passive leadership, Xcrawl is more lethal than ever.

XCRAWL & TELEVISION

"What we need to do is find a way to let us put cameras in the showers. Think about it–the brave warrior chicks clean their wounds, maybe they got that look on their faces, there thinking about how close they came to buying it... no, no we do it tastefully–lots of steam and, I dunno, towels and whatnot."
–XCRAWL TV PRODUCER ED MERRICK DURING A BRAINSTORMING SESSION.

Xcrawl is not an adventure designed to challenge and stimulate the players–Xcrawl exists to thrill and captivate audiences, create national pride and, some argue, to distract the nation from the real problems of the day. The key to making it work is television.

Xcrawl creates the biggest ratings share anyone ever imagined. It truly tries to be all things to all people; it has action and adventure, it has spectacle, it has heroism and pathos, and it has humor (albeit of the dark variety). While the Dungeon Judges control the specifics of the dungeon, the producers control the financing and this gives them a good bit of say over how lethal the dungeons are, if not the specific adversaries and traps the players must face.

Xcrawl plays differently than games like football or baseball on TV, since each individual heat can last for days, and the entire crawl can take weeks to complete. Because of this, the nightly hour-long

NO PEEKING!

Players are sequestered in a green room with a referee during the pre-game show. While a few details always leek out, DJ's are notoriously obsessed with keeping their dungeons under extremely tight wraps. If a DJ even suspects an information leak, they have no problems making drastic last minute changes to their monster roster to keep players on their toes.

Xcrawl show on regular TV generally plays highlights–the best parts of the crawl. They will go "live to the dungeon" if they happen to be on when something interesting happens. This can be anything TV worthy, from a fight, player death during a trap, or an audience member fainting–anything the TV producers think might gain ratings.

Real crawl aficionados order the pay-per-view. The PPV follows the entire crawl for its entire duration. The home audience can watch their favorite teams pick locks, creep through hallways, eat and sleep.

A few months after a crawl is over, the entire crawl is released on video and DVD. The video shows all of the "best parts" of the event–you see each team in their every fight, every trap, every rescue, etc. It has all of the good stuff with the more mundane moments edited out. The video will always be at least a four or five tape set. The DVD allows the fans to either watch the highlights or the entire crawl along with special features like multi-angle viewing, extended "making of" featurette, in-depth player interviews and biographies and the like. On the best Xcrawl DVD releases, the DJ and his main staff do a commentary track where they discuss every aspect of the entire event. The rare player may be asked to do a commentary track if the producers think they were interesting enough.

American Xcrawl events all start with a pre-game show lasting as long as three hours. It begins with an formal invocation to the gods and a salute to the Emperor and Nation, which concludes with a celebrity singer leading the audience in the singing of the national anthem, "America Super Potens Maximum" (everybody learns the Latin words to this in grade-school Citizenship class). The DJ then introduces the dungeon, taking the TV audiences on a tour of all the rooms and obstacles. There are often interviews with the trap engineers, referees and sometimes even a few of the more articulate monsters. A common Xcrawl device is to have several beautiful women who are "prisoners" in the dungeon, and part of the players task is to "rescue" them from the terrible monsters holding them captive. The captives are commonly called "princesses" or "damsels". This is good theater, and the pre-crawl show always makes a huge production of the plight of the "princesses," almost as if they were as important as the player characters. It should be noted that these women are never really in any danger - as long as nothing in the dungeon goes haywire...

Once the dungeon is presented to the crowd, the DJ introduces the players from all the different teams. Rookies might get the chance to say a few words while Xcrawl notables might get pre-recorded interviews, filmed from different angles to show off their best sides. Players are always given a chance to make a brief statement on live TV–their last words in public before they go out to face death.

TV AS AN OBSTACLE

A nasty DJ trick is to use the AVS system to distract the players during crucial moments. The thief tries to disable a particularly vile trap–a previously invisible AVS appears, showing a section of crowd, all who have been given shrill whistles to blow and brightly colored scarves to wave. Or archive footage could be shown of the thief screwing up an earlier trap and being injured. The gamemaster might assign a concentration check for the thief to work normally under these conditions, and give a penalty to the disable device roll for a failed check. There are endless varieties of the video distraction, and DJ's just love to explore them.



Clips

Every DJ and seasoned player has at least one clip–a little video short set to music demonstrating their finest or most notorious moments. DJ Cudgel Up! has her clip set to a moody minimal groove electronic funk piece. Her clip plays as follows–

A long haired thief getting electrocuted by a doorknob trap, his hat catches fire. An orc warrior grappling a cleric of Apollo–the orc bites her ear off and spits it out. A group of adventurers walk down a hallway, only to have one of them sucked up into some sort of trap–the rest do not seem to notice their wizard is missing and they continue down the hallway. The grand finale–a group of adventurers running from a bunch of club wielding goblins who have taken control of both the situation and the camera–they ecstatically mug and give the forked fingers to the audience while they chase the adventurers out through a NoGo door.

During a dungeon, the DJ plays their intro clip again and again–the players should have it memorized by the end of an event. Once players have been around for a while, the media will create a clip for them. Alternately, players can pay to have a professionally produced clip made for them and set to the music of their choice. This will generally cost anywhere from five hundred to three thousand GP's, but to many players it's worth the expense to have their best moments played before every dungeon. Gamemasters might give players a once-per-crawl Mojo Bonus for having a cool clip (see Mojo Pool, p. 116-119).

Once the players are actually in the dungeon, they are constantly in range of several Arcane Video Screens (AVS). The AVS is a technomagical innovation that has had a huge impact on Xcrawl The AVS is a two way magical screen that both films the players and projects to them. In other words, everything in range of an AVS is

HOW DOES A CRAWL RUN?

The San Diegocrawl is a three-level timed event. Nine teams go through the first level in heats of three–DJ Meenie Genie actually has three different versions of level one, each with different monsters, traps and challenges. After all nine teams are given a chance to run through, there is a one day break, during which players are allowed to heal and re-equip, and then the top three teams go on to the second level.

The second level uses the same three physical dungeons that were used for the first level, but the monsters, traps and treasure are all different–Meenie Genie's crew changes everything between levels, even the decorations and lighting. Meenie Geenie is careful not to have any team go through the same physical dungeon more than once. There is another one day break after the second level. Finally, the best of the three teams get to go on to the third level.

The third level is a completely different structure that nobody has been through, and is the most challenging and highest paying level. Either the best of those teams completes level three, in which case they are the overall winners, or they lose—in which case the team in second place gets the opportunity to try level three, after Meenie Genie has a chance to restock the dungeon and perhaps alter her overall strategy.

captured on video, and at the same time the DJ can use the screens to show the players whatever he wants. Usually these screens are either invisible or static, showing a single fixed-image advertisement. DJ's can use this screen for two-way communication with the players, and will use it to congratulate players when they do well, taunt them when they are having a difficult time, and to generally narrate the dungeon. Each DJ has their own style of AVS use–some hang out constantly, provoking and generally being a distraction to players, some remain silent except when the players either win or die. While AVS is an amazing innovation, they don't do the best job of getting close ups or good camera angles. Very often during the dungeon there will be live camera teams following the players. Smart players quickly realize that when the live cameramen show up they had better be on their guard.

Sideshows and Skits

There are always skits. The DJ will create fun little vignettes to amuse the home audience and terrify the players. DJ Outrageous Fortune has a two minute long segment that has him paying bribes to all the Guild Inspectors to allow some outrageously over-the-line factors in his dungeon, like twenty-story fire-breathing lizards and giant threshing machines that roll down the hallway cutting down everything in their way. Japanese DJ Pepper Tomato has a famous skit where she sneaks into the players hotel rooms the night before her dungeon and whispers disheartening things into their ears while they sleep–the "players" all quit before the crawl begins, and Pepper is inexplicably forced to do the whole dungeon herself in her underwear. There are endless variations of these skits, and some fans claim that they are their favorite part of the crawl. Skits might be shown to the audiences when the action gets slow, or at other appropriate times during The Game. DJ's will also have their TV production teams quickly cobble up a montage of the low points of a teams performance to throw in their faces–your

fighter might have to watch that embarrassing fumble again and again and again . . .

Sideshows are little more than live entertainment to keep audiences amused while the players are sleeping or recovering from their latest battle. Most of the sideshows are short situation comedies, and in some cases deliberate parodies of the dungeon the players are going through. Sometimes these are even used to give hints to the viewing audience about what will happen to the players in the future. Most of these sideshows have either parodies of famous public figures or groups of skilled acrobats dressed as Xcrawl participants, stumbling through dangerous areas and running across comical threats. A skilled DJ can work in a few product ads at the same time, allowing for a little extra budget, but as often as not these sideshows are rushed improvisations with little by way of actual plotting.

It should be noted that DJ's choose a soundtrack for their dungeons as well. Normally, only the audience can hear it, but there might be rooms that have booming music for effect as part of the encounters. DJ Neon Valkyrie loves to use children's music in a horrifying juxtaposition to moments of carnage and bloodletting. Division Four DJ Sally Forth has a weird obsession with the composer Rachmoninov and uses his music exclusively. Some dungeons will even have live bands playing live background music for the entire dungeon.

Live Audience

"Oh mother, these seats are awful. We never have good seats. Can't we get a lower box? Mother? Can't we? We won't even be able to see blood or anything from here. Mother? Can't we?"

–The young Earl of San Jose, moments before the start of the Emperor's Cup.

At certain points in the dungeon there will invariably be stadium box seating for a live audience. Tickets for major events are generally reserved for rich patrons, and the crowd tends to be made up of nobility, celebrities and powerful businessmen. The audience sits in plush boxes, equipped with their own bathrooms and televisions. Servants rush in and out with refreshments.

Generally, the live audience moves with the action. A typical dungeon level has at least three rooms that are large enough to merit box seats. There are often several groups going through the early dungeon levels, and the nobility are lead from dungeon to dungeon backstage to watch the different teams at different times. Once a room has been completed, they will quickly leave and move on to the next stadium room so that they won't miss anything. Some speculate that the reason Xcrawl has so many traps is to delay the action long enough allow the nobility a chance to use the bathroom between rooms.

Division Four events generally have full-stadium seating. The gentry would never be caught dead at such a low-brow affair, and the boffer crowd is likely to have a much more standard sports feel–enthusiastic fans screaming and yelling, drinking beer and devouring hot dogs. The truly dedicated might come in face paint or costumes, or bring their own boffer weapons to brandish during particularly exciting moments.

EQUIPMENT

In the early days of Xcrawl, there were few restrictions on equipment. Every DJ failed to take their player's resourcefulness into account, and players tried every conceivable device to give them an edge on the competition. Power tools, smoke bombs, battering rams, and huge bags of marbles were all factors in the early Games. Finally, after a cameraman was hospitalized for three weeks after impaling himself on a

masterwork caltrop, the Adventurer's Guild created standardized equipment rules.

Banned Equipment

The following equipment is disallowed from all sanctioned Xcrawl events: power tools, hand tools other than thieves tools and multi-purpose knives, siege equipment (including battering rams), incendiary devices other than standard Alchemist's fire, floor hazards (such as caltrops), poison or tranquilizers of any kind, firearms or propulsion weapons other than bows and crossbows, and electronic devices other than watches and flashlights.

The referee checks all player equipment before every level, and if anything questionable comes up, he goes to the DJ for a ruling. DJ's are more likely to disqualify non-standard items rather than allow them, and if non-standard equipment begins to unbalance the dungeon, the DJ will take steps to restore that balance, one way or another. Some Crawls go so far as to have their own banned list, and it is the responsibility of the Crawlers to check for any such list before the event begins.

Henchmen

"Not the double blade, the two handed! Are you trying to get me killed?"
–Veteran Crawler, Miles "ToGo" Lawson to a confused henchmen.

If a player chooses, it's perfectly acceptable to bring a retainer—also called a henchman—through the dungeon. A retainer is part professional caddy and part cheering squad. He carries all excess weapons and equipment, and mugs for the camera as he sees fit. A henchman can be very useful, carrying a few extra quivers of arrows or a spare shield or two.

Henchmen are often show business wannabes who are desperate enough for the exposure that they are willing to risk getting hurt. Some of them dress themselves as jesters and make comments throughout a fight—much to the annoyance of some DJs—and others ham it up for the cameras whenever a fight has ended. Many of them are skilled in performance, and they can cheer the team on during fights with the bad guys. Players make arrangements for pay with henchmen before the crawl starts. Most get a flat fee plus a bonus if the player—or team in some cases—wins. It's not uncommon for retainers to actually be apprentices to the more seasoned players, and more than one famous retainer has moved into actual participation after a few dungeons worth of working on the sidelines.

While retainers are not part of the actual team, many of them work as hard as the actual players–and there is always a risk of death when going through a tourney.

A henchman is only there to carry stuff and look good. He may not attack unless his life is directly threatened. He is a viable target for monsters, however, and he must get over obstacles that are in the players' way in order for him to complete the dungeon level along with his team. Some henchmen wear a noncom badge which will whisk them away should he take a hit, but sometimes one hit is enough. Every year, a henchman or two dies from some dungeon mishap. It should be noted that if the henchmen disappears due to taking a hit, the equipment he carries is lost to the team until they can be reunited after that level of the crawl. Even if the henchman uses the non-com option on an early level, he may go on to deeper levels with the team if he chooses.

Referees

"Hey–you with the lockpick. Try to go through the heating ducts one more time and you're outta here."
–Abner Hershfield, making the call.

Xcrawl refs are tough as nails–they have to be. They have to deal with evil monsters, rule-bending characters and egotistical Dungeon Judges, all who have a very different agenda in a Crawl. The Xcrawl ref learns to be impartial but very strict and by the book.

Generally, the refs don't follow a band of players through corridors and into rooms. The refs brief the players before the crawl begins, and check to make sure their equipment is all permissible. The players can call for a ref whenever they want, and one will come from backstage to answer any questions about the rules they might have. Xcrawl referees all wear noncom badges that will teleport them to a nearby emergency room should they be injured, and they all carry heavy pistols in case there is a close encounter they simply cannot avoid.

Breakrooms

Crawling is hard work, and the DJs know it. DJ's must provide at least one breakroom per level for a long crawl. The door to the breakroom will look like a normal dungeon door. Inside, there are full bathrooms with showers, food and drink, and comfortable sleeping couches. Generally, a paramedic is available in these rooms, tending to the players injuries if requested. These breakrooms are never trapped and are fully off-limits as far as wandering monsters go -- even if players spend the night. Corporations will often sponsor these breakrooms -- players are likely to find themselves relaxing in the SubChieftan / Steelstone Tire breakroom. Sometimes members of the press are allowed to wait here to take pictures or interview the players. Nobility who sponsor the crawls will also wait to meet the players personally in a breakroom from time to time, depending on the crawl. Usually, these things happen at smaller crawls where appeasing the sponsors is vital to the success of the new game. The larger, more established Crawls make it very difficult to get to the backstage areas, no matter what your station in life. DJ's tend to make breakrooms as comfortable as possible–players waiting here are not in any sort of time out status, and the game clock is still running. Many teams have lost competitions for dallying too long in a breakroom.

Disqualification

Certain actions—attacking non-combatants, excessive brutality or mutilation of enemies, ignoring officials or other inappropriate behavior in front of the camera—can provoke a disqualification, or DQ. Players will always receive a verbal warning from a referee before an official DQ is given out. A player who is given a DQ is excused from the dungeon, although his team can carry on without her.

Please note that Xcrawl is a death sport and "inappropriate behavior" is modified accordingly. A player "cussing a blue streak" after losing his left hand to a pendulum trap is certainly excusable, but a line of players giving the DJ a celebratory "moon salute" on nationwide television is not.

Non-Combatants

The princesses, referees, live cameramen, and paramedics in the dungeon all have one thing in common: none of them want to get hurt. The Games issue a special badge to each non-combatant ('non-com') in the dungeon. If an individual wearing a non-com badge takes any damage at all, a contingency teleport spell whisks them away to a nearby emergency room. Non-coms can actually strike themselves if they feel threatened, and thus teleport away to safety. It should be noted that players attacking anyone wearing a non-com badge automatically receive an event disqualification, a hefty fine and possible legal consequences. Remember, retainers do not have non-com badges. Just as with the players themselves, they risk life and limb.

NoGo

Players are a resourceful lot and can find uses for almost everything in the dungeon, including props and special effects that could give them an unfair edge over a dungeon or create a safety hazard. To keep players from disabling parts of their dungeons, there are certain items that are designated as NoGo. If a player tries to tamper with any of the "off-limits" props—special effect pyrotechnics or mounted weapons such as ballista—or gain access through a designated non-play zone–like the air conditioning ducts or floor drains–all nearby AVS will flash "NoGo". This is a warning to players that these things are off limits. Players who continue doing whatever it was that got them flashed will receive a disqualification.

Most dungeons have NoGo safety doors that lead backstage. Players who fear imminent death can run through one of these and disqualify themselves from the dungeon. Crying out for mercy or a "time out" doesn't work in Xcrawl–players must actually make it out the door. Usually, monster handlers with modern weapons–including rifles, stun guns and sometimes tranquilizer darts–wait outside the NoGo doors to stop monsters from killing characters once they have fled. Exiting during a crawl is seen as a sign of cowardice, and players who do this more than once or twice find themselves unwelcome at future Xcrawl events. Division One events typically do not have such doors, and if a player sees a NoGo door in an unlimited class event, he had better check it for traps thoroughly.

Surrender

Monsters have the option of surrender in Xcrawl events. A player is expected to respect the legitimate surrender of any creature they encounter, and many DJ's disqualify their players if they continuously brutalize creatures who yield. Once a monster has surrendered, the players simply call for a referee to come and lead the defeated monster enemy out of the dungeon. However, there is a special condition where surrendered monsters can earn themselves a huge bonus—they can break their surrender and attack. If a player turns his back on a surrendered creature, and that creature can successfully defeat the party, that creature is considered the winner of the competition. Volunteer creatures in Xcrawl have a clause in their contract that pays them a huge bonus if they slay a party through such treachery, and they watch for any serious opportunity. Players are not expected to respect a monster's surrender twice, so intelligent monsters will only go for this option if complete victory seems like a possibility. Of course, non-intelligent monsters don't ever surrender, although they may try to run away from a losing battle.

Winning Xcrawl

Dungeons always have conditions that must be met in order to win. Typically, at least one party member must survive and complete the dungeon in order to win. There are often other conditions, including finding certain items or rescuing a few princesses. Every DJ can set her own win conditions, although win conditions are subject to rulings by the Games Commissioner. Many events use a scoring system, where teams earn points for completing certain tasks, or accomplishing particular goals. Some of these goals are very specific, while others are left for interpretation by the DJ. Every Crawl is different, and some even change their scoring system from year to year.

Almost every game is a timed event, where the players are competing against other teams. This means that, in addition to the set win conditions, they must complete the dungeon quicker than the other teams in order to win. A dungeon is generally at least three levels long, and

there are multiple teams attempting the early levels—it's not unusual for several teams to actually be in the first level at the same time, though they will all be in different locations to avoid extra confusion. Typically, a DJ runs the first level with several different teams at once, or in several heats for especially large groups. The teams with the best score will go on to the second level, and the very best time of that crawl goes on to the final round. If the final team fails to complete the dungeon, the second best time gets the opportunity to give it a try. Note that even if the clock runs out and a team cannot possibly win their level, the dungeon goes on–the players won't be told that they have no chance of winning until its all over. The dungeon never "ends"–players must finish the level or admit defeat and quit.

Dungeon Judges

"Children, listen hard–I love it when you live. And I love it when you die. Xcrawl is my world and you are about to earn your honor. Keep your chins up and your eyes open–there ain't no second chances in my world–and if you die, you die."
–DJ Grandjo Dean's traditional Xcrawl invocation to her players.

"Once again this year I promise only this: the most honest portrayal of small scale genocide that I can muster. With all of my black heart I promise no mercy save that which your gods deem fit to leave you with. And as always, I invite all the families of the adventurers to share my box with me during the game. I'll even supply the tissues."
–DJ Devastator, before the TexarcanaCrawl.

"Have fun."
–The only words DJ Bonedaddy Terminus ever speaks to his players.

Simply put: the Dungeon Judge is the dungeon. Everything from the brand of cyanide gas to the color of the hobgoblins' jerseys is their decision. Once a DJ is chosen for a certain competition, his word is law. He can only be overruled by the Commissioner.

Dungeon Judges don't have to worry about money. They earn hefty fees from the crawls they manage, and receive additional money from sponsors to manage and grow their menageries. In exchange for these donations, DJ's give away choice seats for their events and advertising preference. The nobility is extremely supportive of Xcrawl, as The Games detract immensely from the looming issues of the day–issues such as poverty, inequality and unsafe living conditions. Most DJ's live in luxury, and if they aren't already members of the aristocracy, they are generally treated as such.

Dungeon Judge is the most coveted position in Xcrawl, and very few ever receive their own game to run. Someone who progresses to Guild Level Dungeon Judge is a formidable individual. Barring extraordinary circumstances, it takes ambition, ruthlessness, connections, wealth and charisma to earn the DJ title. Sometimes retired Xcrawl players are considered for DJ positions by distinguishing themselves on and off the playing field (see Rewards, P. 177). DJ's need not ever have been players, however. They can come from virtually any background at all.

Julie Klugman, AKA DJ Cudgel Up!



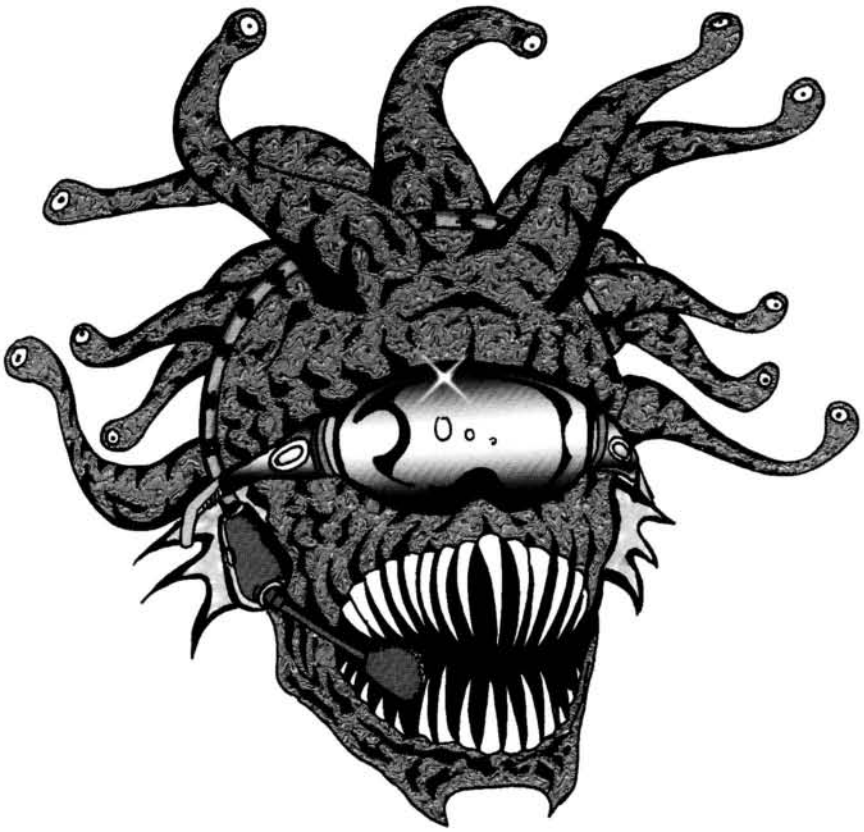
Julie Klugman was a tabletop Dungeonbattle player since she was nine years old. As a young woman she displayed a great talent for acting and eventually starred in an off-Broadway production of "Trokio and Juliet". Her acting work brought her in contact with a number of high profile New Yorkers; in particular, a local sorceress Viscount who admired her spirit. This led to an apprenticeship with the Mage's Guild, and eventually a job with a Division Four event. Her expertise with summoning magic made her invaluable to boffer league DJ's. Finally, she was given the chance to run the MemphisCrawl, a game, later awarded the Year's Most Promising Debut by The Adventurer's Guild.

Anthony Rico, AKA DJ Outrageous Fortune

Anthony Rico was a Hollywood special effects expert, working with some of the biggest names in the industry. He produced an early Dungeonbattle movie, "The Day No Orcs Would Die" and was invited by The Guild to be the Celebrity Assistant for the Division Four Brookshire Charity Engagement. "Celebrity Assistant" is usually a figurehead position, but Tom gave his DJ several fantastic ideas that were incorporated in the final game. Rico's suggestions turned a fairly run of the mill boffer event into a horrifying gem of a weekend. Without ever having played tabletop Dungeonbattle, Rico received his first commission for a dungeon that week.

T'Kow Ny'Kyladar, AKA DJ Devastator

T'Kow Ny'Kyladar is a beholder who was originally captured in the Zura'ah'zura and used as an Xcrawl monster. Known as Devastator, T'Kow led the league in Player Character Kills, and he once freed himself from his room and killed all the other monsters in the Crawl just to ruin the game for DJ Herobane, who offended him by putting him on level two instead of level three. While he was a constant disruption, he was tolerated because he was so popular with the audiences–he even had his own fan club. Devastator knew he would never be allowed to leave Xcrawl alive, so he concocted a scheme to improve his status. First he surreptitiously *charmed* a few key members of Herobane's staff. With his



dupes aiding him, he took a menagerie tour group hostage, including a prominent Duchess. He demanded a personal guarantee of freedom from Emperor Ronald and the chance to run his own dungeon for the lives of his own hostages. The Emperor gave his word to Devastator in person, fully intending to go back on it and kill Devastator once the hostages were safe. However, Devastator turned the tables on him by recording their conversation and broadcasting it, using the Xcrawl television studio. Ronald I had no choice but to abide by his word, and Devastator received his DJ title. Devastator has since become the most popular DJ on the circuit, and the Emperor has decided against having him killed. Devastator is always being brought before the Commissioner because of unnecessary roughness, intentionally going beyond accepted boundaries to get at players, taking vendettas outside of the game and general conduct unbecoming a DJ. He is a feared competitor, known for his ruthlessness and his affected politeness. He and DJ Herobane are archenemies, and constantly seek to upstage one another.

THE ADVENTURER'S GUILD

"Honor, Glory, Professionalism"
–ADVENTURER'S GUILD MOTTO

Founded in 4683, The Adventurer's Guild is the professional organization of Xcrawl participants. It exists to protect the interests of its members, and to regulate the sport. One must be a member of the Guild in order to participate in Xcrawl–indeed, citizens have to show their Guild Membership Card in order to simply purchase armor and weapons more lethal than a short sword or short bow.

There are rules for Guild members. Specifically, members cannot participate

in unsanctioned dungeon events, they cannot use their powers and skills to coerce others or commit crimes, and they must hold themselves up as a positive example to the Empire. The purpose of the games is to further glory the empire, and guildmembers are required to uphold those ideals.

The top guild position in the Guild is Games Commissioner, a post appointed by the Emperor himself. The current Games Commissioner, Duke Bradley Leibrock, is actually more interested in social climbing and skiing than watching over Xcrawl. He tends to let the Dungeon Judges do whatever they feel is best, an attitude which endears him little to the membership at large. Guildmembers have secretly met to discuss the "Leibrock Problem," although to date nothing has been done to oust him from his position.

There are local guildhalls in every city. Some are little more than tiny meeting halls, while others are quite elaborate; the central hall in Washington is as large as a cathedral and has a memorial wall dedicated to members who perished in The Games. The local halls hold an open "meeting" every Tuesday, which usually involves alcohol. The Adventurer's Guild has de facto control over the international Xcrawl world as well. While The Guild does not have actual authority over international crawls, they can ban international players from the American Games if their leagues do not comply with Guild regulations; any ban would cause an outright revolt amongst international players, all of whom eventually want to play in the prestigious American events. Most international leagues follow the Guild rules for this reason, with some notable exceptions (see Illegal Crawls, p111.).

One of the services the guild provides is insurance. Guildmembers have access to a discounted plan that fully covers any injuries sustained during The Games for 1250 GP a year. Many guildmembers spurn insurance, relying instead on the kindness of their cleric both in and out of the season.

Dungeon Population

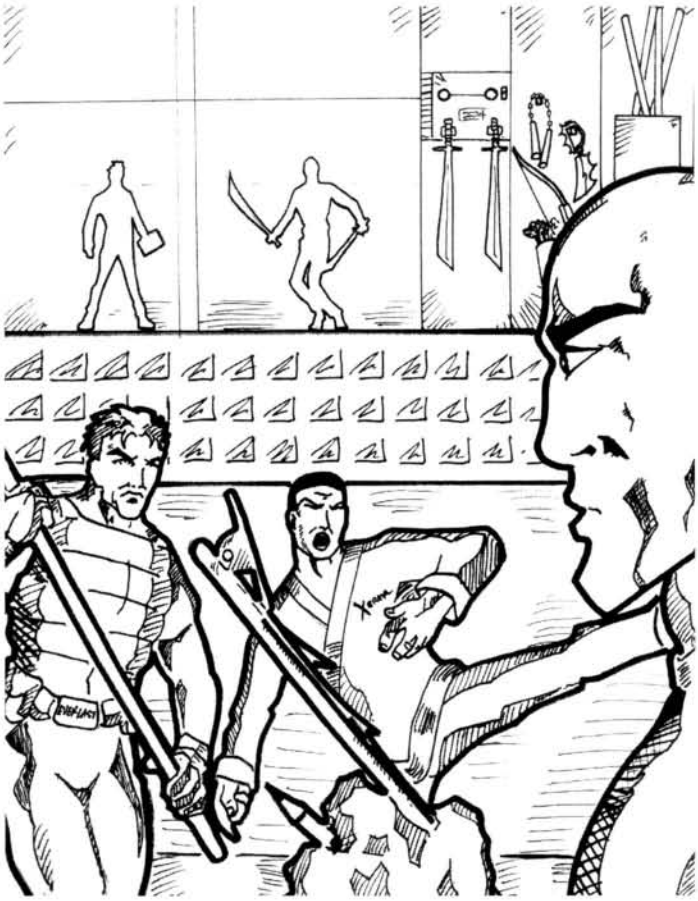
"Come on, you feeble pukes! I'm the one who killed yer ugly mamma! Come get some! I love it!"
–Vrusk, Troll superstar.

DJ's each have their own creature menagerie. Monsters generally come from four sources: breeders, trappers, volunteers and the Necromancer's Guild. Some monsters are bred in captivity for Xcrawl. There are ranches where creatures that can be bred through animal husbandry are raised. Breeders sell to DJ's worldwide, and often have clients in other countries, trying to acquire a more "exotic" creature for their locale. Breeders can make an extremely good living for themselves.

Trappers are the backbone of the DungeonCrawl creature industry. Trappers roam the world, above and below ground, searching for valuable creatures to sell to eager DJ's. Trappers tend to be extremely formidable–they can't actually permanently harm their prey or they won't get paid, which necessitates the use non-lethal means to bring down dangerous monsters. Trappers come from all races and nationalities but the most famous are alfar, who are given free reign to scour the Zura'ah'zura for the most unusual creatures. It is considered extremely prestigious for a DJ to have alfar trapper contracts, and these individuals can earn hundreds of thousands of gold a year from a single event.

There are monsters who volunteer to be Xcrawl "paid performers." Volunteers are usually orcs, goblins, hobgoblins, gnolls, ogres and giants. This type of humanoid has special visas allowing them to live above ground in North America, as long as they are actively associated with a

Dungeon Crawl. Humanoids usually learn about Xcrawl opportunities through so-called talent agents. Every city in the Zura'ah'zura has agents offering to pay humanoids an advance fee if they sign a contract with a Dungeon Judge. The agent handles everything, from travel visas to funeral arrangements. The agents earn a fee for creatures they sign up, and a bonus for discovering good performers. Volunteer creatures are shipped off to a DJ's menagerie where they are fed, trained and equipped. During the event, they sit and wait for the players to arrive. And they know that if they manage to kill a player they have a huge bonus waiting for them–as if the average orc or hobgoblin needed an incentive to kill adventurers...



Undead are an Xcrawl mainstay. The Necromancer's Guild has exclusive rights to provide all the undead used in NAE Xcrawl events. The Guild considers themselves artists. Undead are considered extremely valuable dungeon crawl monsters, requiring very little care on the part of their handlers, and are generally not intelligent enough to break free from their cages. Undead also add an irreplaceable element of horror to the games. Every year there are protests initiated by shocked individuals who see their dead relatives destroyed on television, but the Guild seems to enjoy the added bit of abhorrence this creates.

DJ Derek "Demon" Darko is not above using the undead to create a different kind of shocking moment. On no less than four separate occasions, he's managed to get the bodies of ex-Xcrawlers reanimated and sent in to do battle with the members of their old teams. Not surprisingly, the ratings on these encounters have always been exceptional, but none has caused quite the same stir as the very first time he used this method of keeping himself amused, when he sent the corpse of Johnny Coltraine into the dungeon after his own widow, Elisha. Rumor has it that Elisha's psychotherapy is going very well, though no one has yet been able to confirm that she might one day return to The Games.

The DJ's menageries are normally kept underground and under several redundant security systems and watches. DJ's employ handlers to maintain security as well as the care and feeding of the creatures in their charge. Handlers are often seasoned rangers with experience in dealing with captured creatures. These menageries have "trustees" as well, humanoid monsters who have been with a DJ for a season or two. These trustees act as liaisons between the DJ's and creatures and earn a salary for their efforts. Some trustees

stay with crawls for years and become valuable members of the DJ's staff.

Some monsters become so popular with audiences that they begin to have followings of their own. Superstar monsters are more popular than beginning level players, and the crowd goes wild when they fight. Superstars receive special treatment from their DJ's, including better food and living quarters. Vrusk is a troll who has been with the Memphiscrawl for eight years. He actually receives fan mail, which is read to him by his handlers. DJ Cudgel Up! accepts input from her star troll on how encounters should be set up for maximum carnage. Vrusk doesn't care about fame or rewards, of course–to him, slaughter is its own reward.

Prizes

"MaxiWax? What the hell am I supposed to do with a year's supply of . . . ur, I mean, thanks Mr. DJ. Hey, this is going to make my car look like a million gold (sigh)."
–EDDY "CATFISH" LONDON, DIVISION THREE BARD.

Just like the money for the upkeep of the DJ's menagerie, Xcrawl prizes are donated. Most companies donate prizes to The Games for promotional reasons. Millions watch Xcrawl every year, and having products given away to adventurers is excellent exposure. Xcrawl is a bonanza for marketing and advertising, and it's considered a great honor for corporations to participate by donating merchandise and services to be given away.

Dungeons are advertised by their purse size. "Over 400,000 GP in prizes!" seems like a lot, but it translates to 400,000 GP being spread out to all the participating teams in all the different heats, even the losing ones. In this example, the winning team would be lucky to walk away with 80,000 GP in prizes, including the value of any magic items they might find.

Each room the players defeat typically has a little something in it. Every DJ has their own way of distributing treasure to their players, and its usually fairly theatrical. The home audience loves to watch the players collect treasure, and the DJ's play this aspect of the game up as much as possible.

Treasure chests may or may not be trapped, but the actual treasure is always safe, and at least nominally beneficial. It is considered bad form to give out cursed items or bogus prizes.

Every dungeon has a grand prize reflecting its level of difficulty. Expensive SUV's, vacation cruises for all the players plus one guest each, and other valuable and coveted prizes are typical. Division One grand prizes are huge; a normal one may include a magic item package with something tailored to each surviving player's needs, a luxury car for each player or simply a giant cash award.

It should be noted that Ronald I does not tax Xcrawl winnings. However, Adventurers' Guild members are expected to spend nothing but their Xcrawl winnings on their equipment and magic items. This is a guild rule preventing players from gaining an unfair advantage on their fellows by selling their possessions and buying excess potions, talismans and weapons. This rule was originally created to protect the families of adventurers, some of whom became homeless once the family Guildmember hocked the car and took out a second mortgage on the house to buy themselves a few extra Potions of Invisibility.

THE MINOR LEAGUES

"Time out! Time out! My sword broke! Ow! Hey you jerk – I said time out!"
LYNN "WHISPER" ROGERS, DIVISION FOUR ROGUE

Players have to get their start somewhere. When the Emperor's Cup was first held in 4680, no one had any idea how popular Xcrawl would eventually become. Lack of willing and competent adventurers became a problem for The Games after only a couple of years.

The situation was rectified with the creation of Division Four, a non-lethal level of event allowing players to learn their skills in an environment forgiving of mistakes. Division Four is generally played without monsters. Human athletes play the part of the "monsters," and they wait in the dungeons for the players to arrive. All participants use padded armor and weapons, and the only attack spells allowed are sleep, charm or hold spells. The prizes are typically smaller –an average Division Four game has a total purse of 5,000 GP.

Its not just the up and coming that participate in Level Four Boffer Leagues, so-called for the padded "boffer" weapons used by players and opponents alike. As mentioned before, adventurers too old or too slow for Xcrawl very often take positions in Division Four. A retired Division One fighter with a bad knee makes a great final "monster" for a group of newbies.

Almost every smaller city and university holds at least one annual boffer event. These are very popular live events with the commoners, who will likely never have a chance to see real Xcrawl up close. Events are held in stadiums, gymnasiums or civic centers, and, while they don't typically get any television coverage, they usually make money from local advertisers and sponsors.

Some cities even go so far as to sponsor "Junior League" events for children ages 14 and up. Very few parents want their children to grow up to be adventurers, but there are the rare few who see Xcrawl potential in their children–or who just want the most rambunctious ones out of the house for a few hours. Junior League generally has challenges such as simple logic problems and mechanical puzzles to represent traps, adults in monster suits who collapse after a certain number of touches from the player's foam weapons, and prizes like movie passes and trophies. Its not just Division Four fans who attend these events, either, there are coaches and trainers who watch these events very carefully, trying to find the next superstar warrior or archmage.

TO BOFF OR NOT TO BOFF

Gamemasters will generally want to skip the boffer leagues and start the PC's off as Division Three players, but it's entirely your discretion. If you think you can make non-lethal combat against men in padded suits a good time for your players, there is absolutely nothing stopping you. Such events will generally be composed of a three dimensional maze set up on the ground of some stadium. The maze has no ceiling, and the audience can see into every room before the players can. Only padded weapons and armor are allowed, and no explosives or grenade like weapons are permitted. *(see Equipment, p. 154)*

Entering the League

Division Four events are extremely easy to enter. Beyond Division Four it can be tricky.

A character must actually be invited to participate in any Xcrawl event. Generally, Division Four teams showing potential will eventually be invited to a Division Three event. There are enough Xcrawl events with a high enough attrition rate to mandate new teams coming up from the Minor Leagues regularly. Division Four teams that can't cut it will likely be Division Four forever; such teams generally disband after a few disappointing years.

Some teams skip Division Four entirely. If a team can find either an agent, a corporate sponsor, or a noble patron, they can usually arrange to be invited to an event. Some teams must wait on an "alternate" list, and hope for an established team to forfeit an event to get their chance at the big time.

THE BIG TIME

"June 'Sellsword' Jenkins; Xcrawl champion, double-blade expert and all around hard competitor. Holds the league record for humanoid kills in her weight class. Her sub? The eight inch turbo turkey with lettuce, mayo, and extra jalapenos. Nothing to fill her up. Nothing to slow her down. How do you want your sub?"
–COPY FROM A SUBCHIEFTAN SANDWICHES AD CAMPAIGN.

Anyone who makes it to a Division One event is considered a major player. Only the smartest and toughest teams are invited to participate in Texarcana or the Emperor's Cup. Division One events are lethal from the first room to the last, but the prizes are huge. TexarcanaCrawl survivors will likely earn ten times what the average commoner earns in an entire year. Of course, your chances of being torn apart by angry yeti increases considerably, but that's a trade-off the big leaguers are willing to face.

Players surviving a Division One event will find themselves in a new world. They are invited to high society events, given preferential treatment at clubs and restaurants, and afforded a measure of respect usually given only to aristocrats. They make contacts amongst the rich and famous and might even wile their way into a favorable marriage. Some superstars are given title and appointment by the Emperor, but that individual must be a truly amazing competitor and impeccably upright citizen to receive such lauds.

Successful players are celebrities, nothing less. After a few successful years in the crawl, everybody knows a champion's name and reputation. There are dozens of media outlets exclusively dedicated to Xcrawl players, not to mention the many personality magazines reporting on celebrities in general. Superstar players often have fan clubs dedicated to them, and some may even be the subject of a biographical "movie of the week." As long as the player keeps winning, he is marketable. Celebrity is, of course, a double-bladed sword. Fame and recognition soon disrupt personal privacy and star players might find that living a life in front of the camera is not all that it was cracked up to be.

Players don't become rich from Xcrawl winnings. Only at the highest level are the prizes are good enough to make one wealthy. For many adventurers, endorsements, promotional appearances and movie cameos are their real bread and butter. Glory, honor and respect are wonderful but they won't pay the rent. Certain players complain about "sell-out adventurers," claiming it defeats the purpose of heroic competition. But for many, the path of the adventurer is a path to riches, and the only way to truly get there is to hire an agent and get on the bandwagon.

Teams and individual players hire agents to find opportunities and represent their interests. An agent is an expert businessman who is well connected and fully versed in the language of "the business." His job is to find money-making opportunities for his client, to maximize profits from any venture, and to generally look out for the best interests of their clients. An agent generally makes anywhere from 5% to 20% of their clients total earnings, including XDC winnings.

Agents seek to match their clients with just the right opportunities. This can be a vastly diverse undertaking. Agents want their players to appear in the best movies, represent the best products and even date the right celebrities. "There is no such thing as bad publicity" is their motto, and some agents are not above fabricating controversy in order to keep their clients names on the public's mind. Of course it makes the agent's job easier when their clients are charismatic and likeable, but brutal cutthroats are marketable as well–it just takes the right plan. Some commonly available opportunities include Xcrawl commentators or officials, product spokesperson, charitable fund representative, and aspiring restaurateur. At the highest levels, the Xcrawl superstar virtually becomes her own industry, trading on her likeness and appearances as the marketable commodity she is.

THE INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE

"Stupid American pig! You swing that thing like a little baby. Come little baby! I will twist your head until your brain comes out of your ears. I've got your paycheck!"
–RUBATTARD, FRENCH OGRE

The first International Xcrawl debuted in 4688–the Stockholm Action Event, hosted by Lars XVI of the Scandinavian Empire. It was fairly tame by today's standards. The final conflict was an illusion of a room full of manticores, which the winning team recognized in mere moments–but it opened the door for other world events of its kind. Today, there are Xcrawl events held in Briton, Rome, Allemenda , Japan and Brazil, to name just a few.

It can be difficult for a North American player to fit in the International league. Players from the NAE are considered "privileged," since they are from the home nation of the games. Most international crawls allow a maximum of one North American team to participate in each crawl. Generally, players find themselves disrespected by foreign journalists and audiences. However, for all this animosity, relationships between Xcrawl teams are surprisingly tight. There is a real feeling of esprit de corps between Xcrawlers, and that bond transcends national borders. There is also the fact that a player never knows when he might find his entire team decimated, and himself unemployed and looking for a new crew. Today's rivals are often tomorrow's shieldmates in the volatile sport of Xcrawl.

The international season generally runs all year, but there are only a few events held during the NAE season. The Dungeon Judges are, as point of national pride, almost always native to the hosting nation.

The regular employees of Xcrawl events tend to travel to international events all year for work. Xcrawl develops some very specific skills. The Games need cameramen who don't flinch at fireballs, translators who can understand everything from Goblin to Swedish, paramedics who are used to treating ghoul paralysis and mummy rot. Skilled Xcrawl professionals can work nearly year round by traveling from crawl to crawl.

The major international events are as follows:

The Stockholm Action Adventure, DJ Neon Valkyrie

The Stockholm Action Adventure is hosted by the Empire of Scandinavia. This is a hit or miss event for its participants. After the disappointingly dull first year, DJ Neon Valkyrie over-corrected and killed sixteen players in a jaw-dropping display of lethal ingenuity. The crawl has continuously swung back and forth between being too easy and mercilessly treacherous, and woe to the player who hits it on the wrong year. Neon Valkyrie reinvents her style each year, and players never know what to expect from her next.

The Tokyo Dungeon Spectacular, DJ Pepper Tomato

The Tokyo crawl is considered by many players to be the most terrifying experience they have ever faced. The Tokyo event, hosted by puckish DJ Pepper Tomato, is the only game worldwide that features dragons. Dragons actually volunteer for the Tokyo event, in exchange for a princely fee to be paid in gold coins and jewels and a guarantee that they will be healed after the match. The audience considers dragons the heroes of Tokyo's Xcrawl, and millions watch these games to see these terrible, majestic beasts fight. The Dungeon Spectacular is always full of surprises, not the least of which is the feisty Pepper Tomato herself charging in to the occasional fray in her huge suit of magical powered armor.

The Athena Games, various DJ's

The Athena Games are held every year at a different time and location in the Roman Empire. Known for their classical themes and high-level competition, the Athena Games are a truly international event lasting a minimum of three weeks. There can be no mistake that the Athena Games are designed to glorify the Roman Empire past and present; classical architecture and creatures are always the focus of the Games. The event is held in a vast labyrinth filled with minotaurs, medusas, gorgons, sirens and the like. There are no restrictions on team nationalities or compositions, and participants come from around the world to fight for the coveted Chalice of Athena. There is an extremely lavish opening ceremony and a spectacular finish with fireworks and a flying parade. The Roman Emperor Bruno XVI nearly bankrupts his nation every year creating The Athena Games, and any of his staff suggesting that the nation's budget might be better spent on military improvement or reinforcing their decaying infrastructure soon has to find a new source of employment. It speaks well in the



emperor's favor that the Games normally bring in enough money to make up for the expenditures, and generate enough extra cash flow from video rights to fill a few extra coffers besides.

The Allemenda Underground Invitational, DJ Velvet Fist

The Allemenda Underground Invitational lacks real monsters. The Allemenda n Emperor doesn't want his nation associated with mass killings, so DJ Velvet Fist populates his dungeon with state of the art traps, high-level obstacles, puzzles, undead and constructs of every conceivable shape and size. The dungeon tends to be a highly cerebral competition, and is one of the most popular matches on European television. Velvet Fist is obsessed with being on the cutting edge of dungeon technology, and his small army of gnomish technicians work night and day to come up with the next big innovation.

ILLEGAL CRAWLS

"This is the greatest day of my life. All the training, all the injuries and pain have been worth it. Today I am the instrument of the great Lord Orc's vengeance and I will not fail him."
–Kroot, orcish warrior, after being informed of his appointment to the Chainsaw Squad of the unsanctioned Rio De Janeiro crawl.

It wasn't long after the inception of Xcrawl that both players and DJ's began to push the envelope. Did electric spearguns count as technological weapons? Did hellhounds actually count as demons, or were they just mutts with an attitude? Did flash-bang grenades violate the rules on explosives? After every member of the Bronx Sidewinders tried to sponsor one another for membership in the Mages' Guild specifically to create a brigade of poisonous rattlesnake familiars in 4680, the Games Commissioner formalized the rules and regulations to prevent these kinds of abuses. In response to this, illegal crawls ignoring modern convention are secretly held worldwide by gangsters who can make huge profits on the illicit gambling revenue.

The two most notorious locales for unsanctioned dungeon events are South America and China. South American gangsters hold both one-on-one pit fights and full dungeon crawl events, with shanghaied creatures and naturally occurring undead. Of course, there are no restrictions on the types of monsters these events use, and players can expect to meet vampires, lycanthropes and even demons in these matches. There is virtually no restriction on arms or armaments either, and fans are often treated to such conflicts as a goblin with a sub-machinegun fighting a wizard in kevlar body armor. The upper levels of these crawls are often populated by creatures such as tigers, crocodiles and sharks that are easily procured, but once you get into the lower levels, DJ's favor creatures that can't be harmed with conventional weapons to nullify the player's firearms advantage. The governments of Columbia and Brazil publicly vow to end all such illegal events, but the gangs are careful to put all the principal authorities on the payroll, and the entire nation looks the other way. These events generate billions in gambling revenues every year, and there are certain Brazilian warlords who build their national budgets around these events.

When the warlords of Brazil need a DJ, they ask for Hernesto Hernandez. Hernandez, who changes his DJ name for each crawl, is known for blatantly constructing challenges to thwart specific groups. He researches all of the players to find their weaknesses, and exploits them

to the fullest. Hernandez himself is a necromancer, who claims the bodies of everyone who dies in the event for The Game. Many adventurers in his events have had to face the horror of fighting their dead allies, now transformed into zombies–or worse.

China originally wanted to run legitimate international Xcrawl events, but with a twist–all the competing teams would be in the same dungeon at the same time, and would have to eliminate one another in order to win. The international community was outraged, of course, and demanded the player vs. player aspect of the China Games be abolished. The Chinese walked out of Guild negotiations, and took their games underground. Although the Chinese are very up front about hosting their version of The Games, crawls are held in secret since participating adventurers are banned from Xcrawl worldwide for participating. The China Games have the same weapons and creature restrictions as their legitimate counterparts, but all the players begin at different places in the dungeon working towards a goal only one team can achieve, such as finding a certain key or killing a creature. Evil adventurers clandestinely play in the China Games every year, generally wearing masks to protect their identity. There are huge prizes, and the players receive a bonus for every other player they "neutralize." These games are bloody spectacle; a very common strategy is to immediately find and eliminate competing players. Treachery and foul play are the norm. Many events end with teammates killing each other in order to take home all the prize money for themselves.

The Black Diamond, DJ Jade Lion

The premiere Chinese event is The Black Diamond, held in a huge underground maze with four separate entrances. Four teams compete directly against one another to be the first to reach the center, secure some token, and find their way out. DJ Jade Lion is the master of ceremonies. He is a mysterious masked figure, who insists on training his creatures personally. A Jade Lion event is every bit as dangerous as American Division One competitions, with the added challenge of dealing with three other teams bent on killing the other players to win.

While it's true that the contests are technically illegal, they've garnered a lot of celebrity for the participants who manage to survive. More than one Black Diamond winner has gone on to international acclaim, and the rising star of Hong Kong's action flicks these days, Hannibal Cho, started his career by surviving three Black Diamonds.

OLD AGE & RETIREMENT

"You know, it used to be about glory. We put our lives on the line to show foreigners that we were number one, the toughest and the best. Nowadays, these kids just want to make money and star in their own workout video. The Games don't even have warriors anymore–they got rock stars with workout machine muscles and a magic sword they momma bought 'em in a pawn shop. Sigh. It's not like back in my day . . ."
–Jim "Dinosaur" Green, retired Xcrawl Fighter/ Rogue/ Cleric, deep in his cups at local adventurer's tavern, The Pilt.

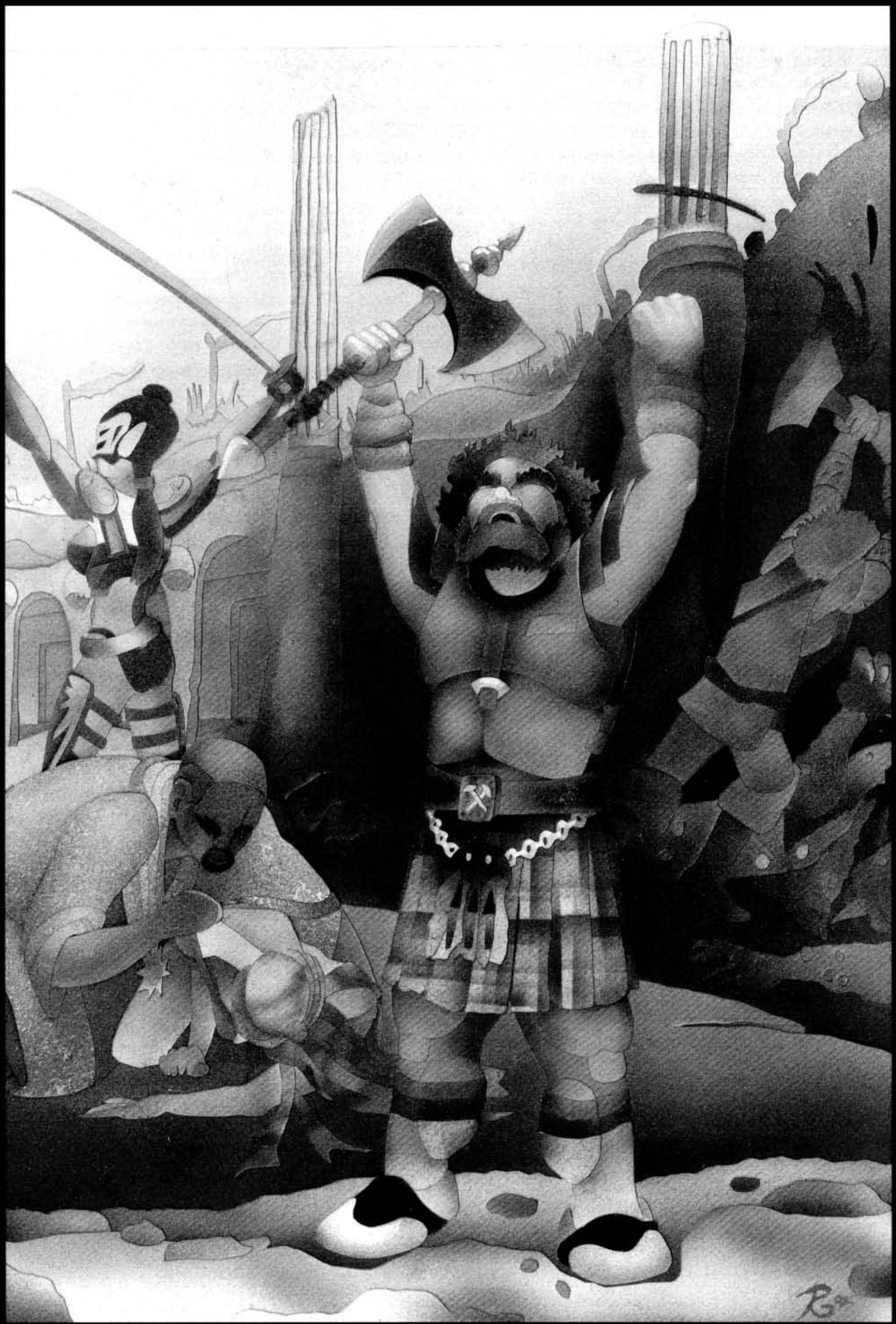
Xcrawl is definitely a young man's sport. It takes a young person's drive to risk life again and again for some gold and a new SUV. Far too many of the players never reach anything close to old age, granted,

but there are always a few. Some players, notoriously wizards, hang in until they are well into middle age, but the average human adventurer hangs up his sword well before he reaches 40. The first generation of Xcrawlers, who were there at the start in 4680, have almost all retired. But life isn't over for these retirees–there is always a way to cash in on one's former fame.

For many retired adventurers, the finest experience left is to work as a commentator or sports reporter. All the major television broadcasts, radio stations and newspapers have at least one commentator on staff, and some have dozens. This allows them a role, if a vicarious one, in the world of Xcrawl. Commentators who actually played in The Games can give the invaluable "insiders perspective" on an event, and most command decent salaries.

Retired adventurers can definitely cash in on their reputation. There are always jobs available as trainers, monster handlers, spokespersons, or even dungeon "consultants," offering advice on how to maximize the danger and production values for minimum budgets. Some ex-players become trappers, using their experience to help track down creatures in their natural environment. Retired adventuring clerics can always go back to the temple. Wizards can always get Mage's Guild teaching positions, or take a job as some noble's personal wizard. Other retirees parley their fame into acting or sponsorship roles. And of course, there is always the old fighter who opens the bar to regale patrons with stories of valor and daring-do–stories that get bigger and better with each passing year.





CHAPTER FOUR

Da Breakdown

"Ouch! Yes indeed! Yes indeed! Sleeper just blasted Vrusk with a sheet of arcane fire. I don't care who or what you are, that has to hurt."

"But will it be enough to stop the seemingly indestructible Vrusk?"

"Well, it may slow him down long enough for the invisible Oni to find the opening she's been looking for since the fight started. I have to admit, Monica, Vrusk is one of my all-time favorite competitors, and today you are seeing him in rare form."

"He's a horrible, horrible creature."

"He certainly is! Horrible for players everywhere. He's killed six players in his career, and sent scores more to a humiliating defeat. Rumor has it Vrusk is in constant pain from the barbed wire he's forced into his skin, and that's just the way he likes it. And now he takes his vengeance, hitting Sleeper with a big left claw."

"Sleeper looks staggered."

"The Messenger gets into position to aid Sleeper. Stud swings, and again misses. I don't know if he's fully recovered from those two ballista shots."

"He's fine. Stud is the quintessential tough guy."

"Vrusk is taking a moment here to grandstand. It looks like the troll's entire fan club has turned out for today's match. Look at all the signs–can you read that one, Monica?"

"Sorry, I don't speak giant. But if I had to guess I might say . . ."

"Oh! Breathtaking back attack from Oni! The troll looks rocked . . . and out of nowhere here comes a second sneak attack from Geronimo Nick, still invisible from the last room! Vrusk is staggered! This could be it!"

"Oooh–he just grabbed the halfling and is grinding him against his barbed wire."

"Sleeper lines up for a spell. She's in a rough position here because any spell she uses might also get the wounded halfling."

"What's she casting? Here comes the spell…"

RULES CHANGES

As the gamemaster, you don't have to use any of these additional rules. Xcrawl can be run using the existing d20 system. However, they are included here for your consideration to make your Xcrawl sessions a distinctive playing experience.

Character Creation

Players should start at third level with three thousand GP to purchase equipment, unless you want to actually run some non-lethal Division Four events. PC's can buy the permissible market magic items (see equipment, pp. 154) before their first gaming session.

NEW RULES

The Mojo

"Okay, listen up Odo. You can do this. So far, you've only missed one trap on this whole level, and we saved Christi, didn't we? No harm, no foul. You're doing a great job. I'm proud to be on the same team as you. Now, take a deep breath and disarm this piece of crap like we all know you can."
JILL "KUNG-FU" DITTMAN, LEADER OF THE LOOSE NOOSE PATROL.

Xcrawl is a death sport. Participants must utilize every possible advantage and resource to simply survive. Teamwork is invariably a factor. The Xcrawler puts his life into the hands of his teammates in every room of every event, and the bonds that are forged between players are comparable to that of any sport. To simulate the intangible bond between players that propels them to greater success as a group, you can use the special Xcrawl Mojo rules.

Only an official team can utilize the Mojo. That means a group of three to eight (not counting substitutes) with a team name they can all identify. The entire group must spend time training together, learning one another's style and moves. A bunch of random adventurers who get together at the last minute to do the St. LouisCrawl doesn't get a Mojo bonus. If the same group comes back the next year as the Heartbreak Blackjacks or Whoopass, Inc., they can access The Mojo.



The Mojo is a bonus pool, represented by a number between zero and twelve. The Mojo can never be less than zero or higher than twelve. Awards that would take the pool higher than twelve are wasted. Penalties that would take the pool lower than zero simply bring it to zero, no less.

Players can give one another points from this pool to use as a bonus for any d20 roll other than saving throws. The catch is that players can't ever ask for a bonus from the Mojo pool–it has to be freely offered by another player. If a player asks for points out of the pool he is automatically disqualified for using any Mojo for that particular encounter–teamwork just doesn't work that way.

The Mojo only works in Xcrawl events. It has as much to do with the spirit of the game and energy of the crowd as it does the team's unity. Even teams who have a Mojo score can't access it during adventures taking place outside of Xcrawl events.

At the beginning of each new dungeon, players roll 1d6 plus any bonus or penalty (see table p.118) to find their starting

EXAMPLE OF MOJO POOL USE IN PLAY

Don (die hard fighter) and Nino (crafty rogue) of the Marietta Manglers are in a tight spot in the middle of level two of the MontrealCrawl. Nino's rogue comes out of the shadows, going for a sneak attack on the yeti that has Don cornered. The team needs this one badly. Nino will have to move silently across the room in order to sneak attack the yeti about to kill his partner.

Don: Get this creep! Take two from the Mojo pool for the move silently check.

Nino: Will do. (rolls) With the +2, I get a 19.

GM: Well done. You are set for the sneak attack. Subtract two from the Mojo pool and roll for the sneak attack.

Don: Take another two out the pool for the sneak attack.

Nino: Cool. (rolls) Blau! Dropped a 20!

GM: Sweet! That one was destiny, so don't subtract any from the Mojo pool, and add an extra two to the pool for rolling destiny.

(They finish off the encounter, and later they find themselves in another sneak attack situation deeper in the dungeon.)

Don: Go ahead and take two from the Mojo pool for this sneak attack.

Nino: (rolls). Aw, no. I dropped a 1.

GM: Ouch. That's a choke. Go ahead and subtract two from the pool, and an extra two for the choke, for a total of minus four.

Nino: Well, that sucked.

Don: It's all good. We can still whip these guys.

PRE-GAME MOJO BONUS

+1 having a rousing pre-Crawl speech from the team captain

+2 having an official coach.

+2 for having an athlete class character in the group (see New Classes, p.135)

+1 if the teams last Crawl was a victory

-1 if the team's last Crawl was a loss

+2 if the Crawl takes place in the home town of anybody on the team

-4 hostile crowd (sway DC 40+)

-2 lame crowd (sway DC 35+)

-1 weak crowd/ no crowd at all (sway DC 30+)

+0 Average Crowd (sway DC 25+)

+1 good crowd (sway DC 20)

+ 2 supportive crowd (sway DC 15)

+4 the whole world is rooting for you (sway DC 10)

Mojo. Remember, no matter how well players roll, the pool can never be higher than twelve. The Mojo pool resets every dungeon, not every level, or encounter, or gaming session.

Players can offer Mojo points for any standard d20 roll other than saving throws, in or out of combat. This allows the players to aid one another during key junctures in the adventure. If the rogue comes across a particularly nasty lock, offer him three points from the pool. If the mage is pinned down in combat and simply must get the sleep spell off, give him a few points for his concentration check. Points out of the pool translate directly to a bonus on the d20 roll. For example: three points from the pool given to an individual means he gets a +3 on his next skill or attack roll

This is an "out of game" bonus, rather than an "in game" bonus–it can be completely intangible. The characters won't necessarily be interacting any differently when the Mojo is granted–although simulating it can be fun. Imagine everyone suddenly cheering on their heroic teammate in his one-on-one fight with a nasty ogre, giving the fighter the edge he needs to win. Imagine the team silently praying while the cleric works to stabilize a battered comrade in arms. Players can grant Mojo to one another in any given situation, even if their characters are unaware of one another's need for help. For example: if the ranger sneaks ahead on a scouting mission and is ambushed by a troll, the players can give him a bonus from the Mojo Pool for his first attack roll, even if their characters aren't aware that the ranger is under attack.

There are special Mojo die roll situations: destiny and choke. When a player rolls a natural twenty on a roll that has been given a Mojo bonus, it is considered destiny. Destiny represents a classic sports moment; the character has forgotten herself and become so immersed in performing an action that she has become the action. She is unencumbered by thoughts or hesitation, and her success is complete. If a player rolls destiny, she still gets the bonus, but no points are subtracted from the Mojo Pool. In addition, destiny adds one point to the Mojo Pool.

IN-GAME MOJO BONUS

-2 for "bad form" (brutalizing surrendered creatures, disrespecting audience, etc.)

+1 per critical in combat

+1 per room victory

+1 for exceptional move

+1 any DQ

-1 any fumble in combat

-3 party infighting

When the player rolls a natural one on a roll that has been given a Mojo bonus, it's considered a choke. Just when you needed that player to be at his best, he drops the ball. Fans leave their seats, the commentators are at a loss for a quip and simply shake their heads. If a player rolls a choke, the points that were offered, plus an extra two points, are subtracted from the Mojo Pool. The Mojo Pool can still never go below zero.

If a new player is added to the group, he can access the Mojo once he's been with the group long enough to be accepted by them. Be lenient with the players in this matter–if the PCs have time to practice together for a few weeks before the crawl, treat it as sufficient training time to acclimate a new member, allowing him access to the team Mojo.

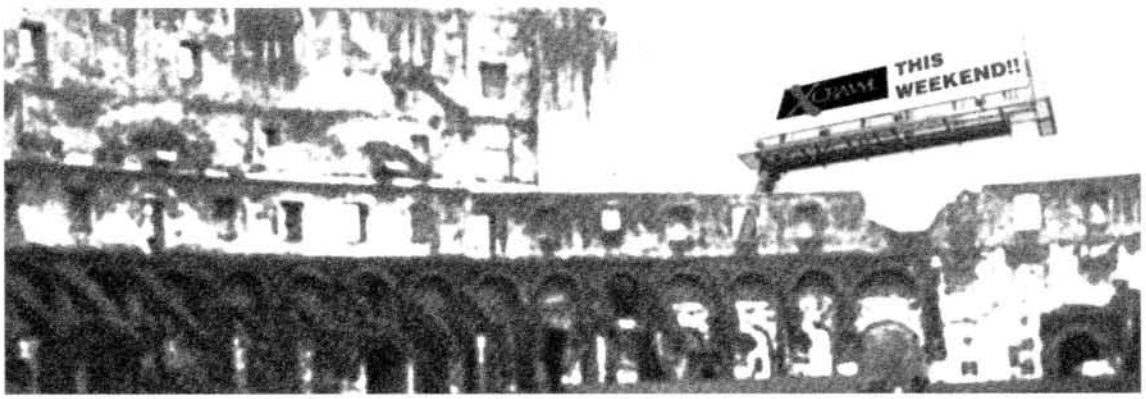
Last Man Standing

If every member of a party is killed or incapacitated save one, then that individual is the Last Man Standing. In that situation, the player gets three free Mojo points he can use at his own discretion (since, essentially, he is the team at this point). The other players can still offer him whatever remains in the pool for other rolls, even if they are unconscious or dead.

Monster Mojo

"Goblins Rule! Humans Drool! Goblins Rule! Humans Drool!"
Traditional Goblin Xcrawl Chant

In Xcrawl, players often come up against monsters who train together for months in preparation for an event. Once monsters are assigned a room, they become akin to a little clique in the dungeon and in effect become their own team eligible for Mojo. The gamemaster can assign Mojo points to appropriate teams of monsters in his dungeon when he sees fit. Of course, the GM alone must decide how those points will be spent during an encounter.



Fame

"Well, really, it's an honor just to be here. I just want to do my best, and help the team out as much as I can."
Doug Wagner, fame rating three, April 4699.

"That was a really pretty speech. Bravo. Now let me tell you how things are–I bring in the money. I am the reason we have a commercial, I am the reason we have the new equipment, and I am the only reason we received an invitation to this dungeon in the first place. You can dress the facts up any way you like, but that's the way it is. So, that's my magic shield, dibs or no dibs. Otherwise I walk, and this entire team goes into the dustbin of loser history. Capiche, babe?"
Doug "Flatline" Wagner, fame rating fifty-four, June 4699.

"Yeah, I took some time off after we lost in Arlington. You know, I did some training, started working on my book, that kind of thing. Anyway, I heard you guys are short a brawler and I thought, wow, I should give a call and see if maybe I could, you know, join you guys in Mexico City. Sure, I'll hold."
Doug "Flatline" Wagner, fame rating 17, October 4699.

"Hi, I'm Doug. Would you care to start with an appetizer tonight?"
Doug from the late shift, fame rating zero, December 4699.

Fame is a measure of the character's current popularity. A character with a high fame rating is recognized everywhere he goes. Fame comes with many perks: preferential treatment, better rates for personal appearances and endorsements, and a higher likelihood of being invited to the top events. Fame also complicates and inconveniences the lives of the Xcrawler, sometimes immensely; celebrities have no privacy, and are considered fair game for comedians, and frivolous law suits.

Fame is measured on a scale of 1 to 100. Players earn fame points for completing dungeon levels, performing memorable actions, and in other special instances decided upon by the GM.

Turn

A player is designated a face or a heel. The vast majority of Xcrawl participants are faces. These are players who demonstrate values like teamwork, sportsmanship, and honor. Players who identify themselves as faces can receive up to one bonus fame point per dungeon level for heroic or otherwise distinguished actions. Only truly heroic and self-sacrificing actions should earn players bonus fame points.

A heel must walk a fine line. A player who identifies himself as a heel can win fame points for unsportsmanlike, cruel, or selfish behavior. Being a heel generally means the player refuses to accept legitimate surrender, disrespects the DJ's and referees, and fights with his teammates. Being a heel does not mean that the player is immune to consequences of his actions, and players who insist on striking referees, ignoring Guild regulations and the like are just as likely to be disqualified or arrested. The difference is, being disqualified or arrested actually improves the fame of a heel character.

Earning Fame Points

The following accomplishments all carry



a standard fame award amount:

Standard Fame Point adds:

• 1 point for successfully completing a Dungeon Level

• 1 point for successfully completing five consecutive Grandstanding or Mugging checks

• 1 point for winning an Xcrawl competition (in addition to points earned for completing levels)

• 2 points for successfully performing a Signature Move in combat)one time per dungeon level)

The following accomplishments all carry a standard fame penalty

Standard Fame Penalties: Face

• 2 points for being disqualified from a dungeon

• 1 point for fighting with teammates on camera

Standard Fame Penalties: Heel

• 1 point/ level for failing to live up to heel reputation

• 1 point/ level acting out of character on TV

Additional Fame

• 1-2 points for exceptional memorable action during a crawl

Example of Exceptional Memorable actions:

Throwing yourself in front of a near-lethal attack

Saving the lives of your comrades

Turning a loss into a victory against all possible odds

Players will likely ask to be awarded fame points for cool moves, high damage rolls, and good strategy. Only truly memorable actions merit fame points. Fame points are not experience points.

Players can gain fame outside of Xcrawl as well. If the players do something extraordinary they can be rewarded with a fame point. This should be something that truly stands out; rescuing a cat out of a tree isn't worth a fame point, unlike rescuing a little girl from a burning building. Just the opposite should be true for a heel character; punching reporters, disorderly conduct arrests, and general belligerent behavior all help to add to their fame rating.

Remember, this about fame awards: If nobody knows what you did, it's just like it never happened. Fame is all about appearance and public persona. Characters who are clever can get away with all kinds of transgressions without being penalized for fame. However, if the media eventually gets wind of whatever violations the players committed, fame penalties are retroactively lost. However, positive fame is usually not awarded retroactively.

FAME TABLE 1

Fame Rating	Bonus	Unofficial Title
01-10	+1	Nobody
11-20	+2	Minor Leaguer
21-30	+3	Insider
31-40	+4	Contender
41-50	+5	Major Leaguer
51-60	+6	Player
61-70	+7	Star
71-80	+8	Superstar
81-90	+9	Megastar
91-100	+10	Legend

Fame Bonus: The fame bonus can be added to certain skills, representing the advantages of having a household name.

The following rolls may be eligible for the Fame Bonus:

–During an Xcrawl event, a player may add his fame bonus to any grandstanding or mugging attempt he makes. Other than grandstanding or mugging, fame may not be added to any other performance rolls. Being famous does not make anyone immune from the occasional poor performance.

–Outside of Xcrawl, the character can add his fame bonus to Charisma rolls that involve manipulating fans, sycophants and anyone who feels they can profit from making a celebrity happy. This bonus is always subject to GM approval. Fame bonuses may be added to appropriate bluff, diplomacy, intimidate, innuendo checks, as well as any other checks that the GM deems appropriate.

It is extremely important to remember that not everybody is a fan. Imagine a superstar football player trying to get preferential treatment in his team's arch-enemy's home town. Dwarves and gnomes are not typically impressed by Xcrawlers, nor are high-caste nobility, media professionals or the extremely cynical. As stated before, Fame bonuses are always situation-based and require the approval of the GM.

STANDARD APPEARANCE FEE

The standard appearance fee for a character is the amount he can normally charge for making a personal appearance. This includes acting in commercials, movie or TV cameos, RV shows, and the like. The standard appearance fee a player commands is equal to 250 GP times his fame rating. Thus, a character with a 100 fame can command a minimum fee of 25,000 GP per appearance. Of course, these numbers are nothing more than a basic

guideline: the GM is free at any time to rule that the players are offered more or less money depending on the circumstances

The player's agents receive the appropriate percentage of their clients earnings (usually ten percent, but sometimes as high as eighteen and a half). The government gets half the income that the players earn from appearances and endorsements. The rest of the money may NOT be used to purchase adventuring equipment, magic items or any other goods or services connected with Xcrawl. This money can be used to purchase homes, automobiles and other goods and services. The Adventurer's Guild regulates this money to the gold piece, and violators can be banned from the Guild–and thus from The Games–for life.

EXAMPLE OF STANDARD APPEARANCE FEE USE

Oni (fame 22) receives an offer to appear in a TV commercial for Kabuki After Shave. Using the above formula, the GM determines that she can command 5,500 GP for her appearance. She asks the producer for that amount and receives it.

Oni receives an offer to appear in a Thoqua Wax Auto Shine Infomercial. Despite her fame rating, the GM decides that the production company can only squeeze 2,000 out of their budget for Oni. Oni asks for her standard 5,500 and the producers respond with an offer for 2,000 GP, take it or leave it.

Oni receives an offer to play a kung fu badass in an upcoming all-girl action flick. The GM decides that the producer loves Xcrawl, loves Oni, and wants her in the movie, period. The producer offers Oni 50,000 GP off the bat, regardless that her fame rating dictates a lesser standard fee. Oni decides to buy a walk-in humidor.

Other Uses for Fame

Your fame score is the percentage chance of being recognized in a public place. Whenever a character with a fame rating arrives at a public location, roll percentage dice versus his fame rating–if the roll is equal to or lower than his fame, the player is spotted and recognized. How this affects any given situation is completely up to the GM. If you are stuck for ideas, you can consult the following random table.

Random Recognition Roll (d12)

1 Players asked for (autograph, memorabilia, etc)

2 Players disrespected by fans of rival Xcrawl team

3 Players receive (wanted/unwanted) amorous attention

4 Players receive (legitimate/criminal/wacky) business proposal

5 Players assaulted

6 Players challenged to competition

7 Players asked to pose for pictures

8 Players pick up a stalker

9 Players asked for money for (good/selfish/bizarre) cause

10 Players quietly shadowed by sneaky reporters

11 Players clung to by annoying fan

12 Players are recognized but are (snubbed/ridiculed) by locals

Avoiding the Spotlight

Some players may attempt to avoid the harsh light of fame. There are plenty of possible reasons: the player could have something to hide, could just hate the media circus, or may simply be shy. In any case, it is possible for Xcrawl players to maintain a somewhat lower profile than normal.

If the player decides to avoid the spotlight, he may not add his fame bonus to any rolls, in or out of Xcrawl, nor may he accept any endorsements or personal appearance offers. While a player is able to maintain avoiding the spotlight, his fame rating should be considered half normal for purposes of being recognized in public.

Freeform Fame

You do not need to use the included fame rules to address the issue of fame in your game. As GM, you can instead roleplay a character's fame, deciding for yourself when it becomes a factor. You can decide when a character is recognized in public, what types of endorsements he is offered and how much money can be earned. This may ultimately lead to a richer roleplaying experience, but it will be more difficult to adjudicate.

Signature Move

"Well, you're an adult, and you are going to do what you want, but I'm telling you, you aren't invincible anymore. If you insist on using the Kamikaze Slammahooch, eventually that tendon is going to give out."
Dr. Kim Sung Woo, White Monk, to a stubborn high-flying Xcrawler.

A signature move is defined as a personal tactic or maneuver that a player develops to its utmost in order to impress the audience. Signature moves are becoming

EXAMPLE SIGNATURE MOVES

The Hey, How You Doin?
–The Call, a sneak attack, a defensive roll (tumbling check DC 18)

Hot Time in the Old Town
–The Call, a Fireball *spell, a flashy dance move (performance DC 15)*

Nine Dragon Tails
–The Call, a flurry of hand to hand strikes, an Improved Trip attack

Good For What Ails Ye
–The Call, a Cure Serious Wounds *spell, a thrown hammer attack*

Explode Off the Line
–The Call, an intimidation check (DC varies), a bull's rush

Nothing Up My Sleeve
–The Call, a Slow *spell, a* Summon Monster *spell (in this case the summoned monster would have to hit and damage its target in order for the move to be considered successful)*

The Kitchen Sink
–The Call, a bow attack (player's maximum number of shots), a thrown axe

Ain't I A Stinker
–The Call, a taunting dance (performance DC 15), a hurled vial of Alchemist's Fire

more and more popular as Xcrawl develops as a sport.

Fans love signature moves. Xcrawl players develop outlandish and interesting moves to distinguish themselves from other players. If done correctly, a signature move adds to a character's performance and fame.

Acquiring

Gaining a signature move costs 1000 XP, to represent the time and effort of training. Xcrawlers develop additional ones using the Extra Signature Move feat.

Constructing

A signature move is a three-round action that can only be undertaken when a live audience is present. A signature move must have the following components:

The Call
The player performs some action to let the audience know he is preparing to use his signature move. This can be by use of a hand gesture, a dance step, a certain posture or even creative use of the *prestidigitation* spell. The only rule is that it must clearly broadcast the player's intention to perform his signature move. The call is a full round action that may or may not provoke an attack of opportunity (GM's discretion).

First and Second Actions
The signature move must be a two action combination taking two combat rounds. These moves may be attacks, attacks modified by feats, spells, or skills that can be performed in one round. These actions cannot be one action repeated. For example: a disarm followed by a sword strike is permissible. A power attack followed by an improved trip is permissible. However, two consecutive power attacks cannot be a signature move. A signature move can consist of two spells, but they must be different spells.

The player should work with his GM when designing his signature move. In all cases, the signature move should have an identifiable name.

Benefits

A Crawler may perform his signature move at any time during an Xcrawl event when an audience is present, but it only receives bonuses and earns fame the first time it is used on any given dungeon level. A player receives +2 competency bonus on any attacks or skill checks which are performed as part of his signature move. Spells cast as a part of a signature move receive a +2 DC to its saving throw when applicable.

Grandstanding and mugging checks may not be part of a signature move, but any grandstanding or mugging checks performed the round after a successful signature move receive a +6 synergy bonus.

Rogues may make a sneak attack a part of their signature move, but the player must still indicate via The Call that the attack is about to take place. Invisible Xcrawlers have a very tough time getting the audience's attention. The signature move must be visible to the audience at all times.

A signature move is not considered successful unless all of its components are successful. Attacks must hit and damage their targets and skill checks must be performed successfully. Trip attacks must topple an opponent, bull's rushes must push them back, etc. Spells must do at least some damage–if the targets save but still take some damage, then the spell is considered successful. Attacks which hit and do not damage the target are not considered successful. For example: if a part of a rogue's signature move is a sneak attack which hits, but fails to penetrate the target's hardness or damage resistance, then that attack is not considered successful and will not gain bonus points.

Successfully performed signature moves earn the player one fame point. Signature moves which take the target down are worth a total of three fame points. Note that signature moves which effect multiple targets (such as a fireball) must take out at least one opponent to be worth three fame points, but taking out multiple targets will not earn the player more than three fame points.

Players who fail to successfully perform their signature move lose one fame point per attempt. If the player rolls a natural one during any part of a signature move check, he loses three fame points and one extra point is dedicated from the Mojo pool (for a total of two–one for the natural one, one for it occurring during a signature move).

If the player has multiple signature moves, then he can earn fame for using each of them during a single dungeon level.

Sponsorship and Endorsements

Most Xcrawl participants actively seek out corporate sponsors. Corporate sponsorship is a great way for players to earn extra money and keep their equipment costs low. Xcrawl is an obvious place for adventuring equipment manufacturers and retailers to advertise their products, and this is by far the most prevalent form of sponsorship in The Games. Sponsors producing Xcrawl equipment will often give players free top of the line gear for using their products during a crawl. The most common equipment endorsements include arrows and bolts, armor, weapons, footgear, backpacks, energy drinks, and medical supplies. Sponsors demand players to use their products exclusively during the games as part of the agreement. Any player with a sponsorship deal caught using a "non-company" product will suffer financial penalties from sponsor or worse – lawsuits.

Endorsements refer to companies who simply pay players to wear corporate logos during a match. The most common non-adventuring products seen advertised in Xcrawl are fast food, consumer electronics, alcoholic beverages, and automobiles. Any money earned from sponsors is subject to the standard imperial tax rate (usually around fifty percent), and the proceeds may not be used to purchase Xcrawl equipment or magic items, per the Adventurer's Guild rules. Endorsement deals always require the players to wear a corporate patch at all times during every Xcrawl event, subject to the length of the agreement, and generally pay on a per-crawl basis. Rates are dependent on the players fame rating (see Fame, pp 120).

Sponsorship patches are vinyl (or less commonly, twill) stickers that are displayed on players' armor or equipment. Players attempt to wear their patches in an interesting and memorable way; sides of the helmet for warriors, back of the traveling spellbook for wizards, and on the backs of the hands for rogues are common placements. Superstars may wear so many advertisements that they appear to be little more than a walking billboard.

Teams

"Remember – there's no 'I' in "Ork-slaying Sons-A-Bitches. Wait. Okay, there is...but you get the point!"
OVERHEARD IN THE DETROIT BURNING WHEEL'S LOCKER ROOM.

At its most basic, an Xcrawl team is defined as a group of players who band together under one name, and train together for at least one month. Teams tend to be fairly loose – a team's roster is subject to injuries and death, and often player substitutes are necessary to ensure success in a particular crawl. Example: a

team might bring in a ranger for one crawl if they expect to face his favored enemies in bulk. Many teams employ a permanent substitute on the roster, ready to fill in as a last minute replacement for the ill or infirmed. Xcrawl teams are more malleable than other sports organizations, and last minute roster changes are very common during the season.

A team must register its name with the Adventurer's Guild. Registration costs 200 GP, and an annual renewal fee of 20 GP. Teams may never change their names; if they want to change their name, they must break up and reform.

Disqualification

Players who violate the rules in Xcrawl will first receive a warning from the ref, either in person or over an AVS. If the player persists, he will receive a final warning and any further violation will result in a disqualification. Disqualified players may not continue the dungeon, although their team may play on without them.

Players who are disqualified from three separate events are considered habitual rule breakers. In these rare cases, the Adventurer's Guild Disciplinary Committee will hold a special session, where they may decide to fine a player, or in extreme cases revoke that characters guild membership. Fines can run from 200 to 5000 GP, payable immediately to the guild. If a player is kicked out of the Adventurer's Guild, the disavowed player is forced to return all magic items in his possession, and is forbidden from participating in Xcrawl events for life. This is considered a great dishonor, and players lose twenty fame points. The Disciplinary Committee is chartered to pardon players and re-admit them into the guild, but this has yet to occur.

CHARACTER CREATION

Characters

"Participants in The Games risk their lives for the greater glory of the North American Empire and should be considered amongst our heroes. I salute you all, and pray to mighty Jupiter for your protection."
EMPEROR RONALD I, OPENING CEREMONIES FOR THE 4698 GAMES.

"Ooh, look at that fat cleric! He'll make a nice, big target. I got five gold that says he dies in the monkeybar room."
DEKKEN FLINT, XCRAWL CAMERAMAN, BACKSTAGE AT THE OPENING CEREMONIES FOR THE 4698 GAMES.

"Did you see that fat-ass cleric? Dead man walking."
EMPEROR RONALD I, QUIET ASIDE TO A BODYGUARD AFTER THE CEREMONY.

Xcrawlers are given a very high level of respect and consideration. Even rookie players are minor celebrities, and considered a slightly higher class than commoners. High ranking players are treated like major stars, getting preferential treatment almost everywhere they go. Even the Dungeon Judges acknowledge their heroism.

But the monsters, trap engineers, necromancers and creature-wranglers have a different name for Xcrawl participants –"The Chow." Every year, new players come up from the boffer leagues, dreaming of wealth and respectability. And every year foolish and unlucky players are rewarded with infirmary, humiliation, insanity, and death.

Sometimes being smart and brave isn't enough–players get hurt or killed all the time. Consider the purpose of The Games. Xcrawl was not created for the participants, but for the audience, both the attending nobility and the millions at home watching the pay-per-view. The audience wants blood, and if it looks like the players have it too easy they get bored and turn the channel. DJ's create their dungeons with the understanding that a twenty percent kill ratio is completely acceptable–much more than that and the Games Commissioner will feel he has to intervene. Xcrawl dungeons are extremely challenging, and players should never be foolish enough to believe that their lives are not in peril.

Xcrawl players are a special breed. Passionate, courageous, greedy, and sometimes as twisted and violent as the monsters they fight. The Games are a haven for the romantic, the suicidal, the ambitious, and the incurably violent. Each Xcrawler has his own reasons for entering the game, but all have one eye on victory and one eye on survival. For all the odds that are stacked against them, the smart, courageous, and talented can have success beyond their wildest dreams.

Background

Most characters will be North Americans who, for whatever reason, have decided to participate in Xcrawl. Characters can be from almost any country, although players should get permission from the GM to play non-American Xcrawlers. All the players might share a similar background, or they may have nothing at all in common before they formed as a team. The players all had to meet before they decided to be a team together–they might all be from the same city or university. On the other hand, they may have only gotten together for the crawl, meeting through mutual acquaintances or through a classified advertisement. It is up to the players to decide what the details the extent of their relationship.

Barbarians

"You dare insult me with such an offer? By the blood of my ancestors, Agar the Reaver will not stoop to shill for a lite beer!"

Agar the Reaver, learning the finer points of contract negotiations.

There are indeed barbarians in 4699, but they don't commonly participate in Xcrawl. Consider the mountain dwarf who has never been above ground, the Native American warrior from a tribe still following the old ways, or the half-orc from the depths of the Zura'ah'zura who lived all his life amongst his savage brethren. Barbarians tend to be the protectors and leaders of their tribes, and very few have even heard of The Games. However, a few of these wild warriors develop a need for money, fame, or action, and in 4699 there is no better place to find it than Xcrawl.

Players choosing the barbarian class need a plausible explanation of their character's origin and subsequent participation in Xcrawl. Barbarian characters wishing to gain more barbarian levels must return and live in their native lands to continue to rise in barbarian levels. In 4699, its all too easy to fall under the sway of the convenient comforts and distractions of modern society. If the barbarian character can't spend time in her homeland interacting with her people, she must progress as a fighter or another class.

Abilities

Barbarian characters may take the scent feat, and receive a +4 competency bonus to tracking and wilderness lore checks when they are in their homelands. They begin the game illiterate and with only a vague understanding of the difference between technology and magic. Barbarians can't begin the game with the Drive skill, nor can they begin play proficient with any type of firearm.

Bards

"Is everybody out there having a good time? I can't hear you! I said is everybody having a good time!?!"
Elsa "E-Sharp" Songsmith, working the crowd.

The bard is an extremely versatile Xcrawl competitor. His natural charisma makes him a great spokesman. He is a natural in front of the camera, and can stir a live audience into a frenzy. His fighting skills are above average, and the magical power of his music can give the entire team an edge. Bards can be the best friend of the entire team, and once the crawl is over there is nobody better to tell the heroic tales of the dungeon to the rest of the world.

While the bard is a spellcasting class, there is no governmental control over bardic music like there is for wizards and sorcerers. Generally, the magical abilities of bards are considered inconsequential, and beneath the notice of both the government and the Mage's Guild. There are no specific laws governing magic use by bards. Bards are very protective of their favored status–they vigorously police their own members in order to avoid governmental regulation. Bards misusing their powers will be brought in line very quickly by their peers.

Abilities

A bard with nine ranks or better in performance may attempt to stir the crowd up to empowering heights during crucial times. While this has numerous role-playing uses, it can additionally raise the team's Mojo. In order to perform this skill, the team must have a Mojo Pool and there must be a live audience. The GM assigns the task a DC, depending on how difficult a crowd is to motivate–an enthusiastic crowd would have a DC of 20, a sluggish crowd would have a DC 25, and a hostile crowd might be a DC 35. The bard must take a minimum of 30 seconds (five combat rounds) to get the crowd worked up by encouraging them to scream and applaud, chant a certain players name, start the wave, etc. Once the five rounds are up, the player makes his performance roll. If he is successful, he can add to the team's Mojo pool , adding a point for every extra success on his roll plus his Charisma bonus. For example, Anwar has an 18 Charisma and attempts to energize a tough crowd (DC30). He spends thirty seconds getting them to chant the team's name while pumping their fists. He gets a 36 on his performance check, so he adds ten points to the Mojo Pool–six points for beating the DC by six, and four points for his charisma bonus. The Mojo Pool can still never go higher than twelve. The bard may stir the crowd up whenever he is willing to spend the time and energy, but can only attempt to add to the Mojo Pool one time per dungeon level.

Dungeon Judges will sometimes attempt to distract their players with video or music. A bard can use his skills to counter DJ distraction techniques. If a DJ attempts to distract a player using video or music, a bard can defend by an appropriate use of the performance skill. If the DJ tries to distract using banter, the bard can counter by taking up a conversation with the DJ. If the DJ uses flashy images or annoying music, the bard can counter with song. However it's done, the defending bard must make an opposed performance roll versus the DJ's performance. Whomever the DJ was targeting for distraction can use the bard's performance check in place of his concentration check for purposes of ignoring the attack.

Bards in 4699 can incorporate electric instruments into their performance, but electronic instruments are generally banned from sanctioned Xcrawl tournaments. Bards can take the drive (dex) skill as a class skill if they so wish. Bards do not gain the scry skill–it takes special permission from the Mage's Guild to learn to scry, and bards are never granted this permission. Bards once

passed this knowledge secretly from generation to generation, but they eventually stopped this practice to avoid government regulation; no bard wanted to go through the years of organized training the Mage's Guild demands. While bards are not banned from using magic, any bard using magic recklessly will find themselves arrested, jailed, and likely executed.

Clerics

"To Apollo we offer this sacrifice of wine and ask for victory here in Las Vegas– or if we lose may we at least cover the spread. Watch over us, O master of learning, and if we die today may you number our souls amongst your favored."
Robert "The Messenger" Stanford, ten minutes before the beginning of Level Two.

Clerics are the most sought-after teammates in Xcrawl. A good cleric is worth more than his weight in gold to an adventuring party–he is the spiritual center, the divine healer and very often the glue that holds a diverse group of specialists together. North American clerics are encouraged to represent their patron deity in The Games by their respective Temples. Indeed, clerics of Apollo and Mars may find it difficult to advance to the highest levels of their temple hierarchy without having some combat experience, be it in Xcrawl or as a chaplain in the North American Legion.

Players creating clerics native to the NAE must choose one of the Roman deities to worship. Foreign clerics may worship gods from outside the Roman pantheon, but they will always be met with a certain amount of hostility from North Americans. Non-Roman pantheon clerics will be received better in the NAE if they keep displays of faith to a minimum–although, inevitably, very few true believers are willing to inhibit demonstrations of their beliefs. Such is the nature of faith.

Abilities

Xcrawl clerics have the same abilities as their standard counterparts. They can take drive (dex) as a class skill if they so choose.

Druids

"There must be balance in the world. So tonight, while Americans sit in their plastic houses devouring televised pabulum and microwave pork rinds, I will sit amongst the beetles and field mice in the tall new grass and pray for the enlightenment of man."
The druid called the Mississippi Straw Hermit, in a rare loquacious moment.

North American druids face a great deal of mistrust and hostility from the nobility of the NAE. They are considered an anti-progress, subversive group blatantly flaunting imperial law and tradition by worshiping outside the Roman pantheon. To the commoners of the NAE, however, druids are folk heroes who can be persuaded to cure sick livestock or bring rain to drought-stricken crops. The mysterious nature-cultists are often the last resort for terminally ill commoners who can't afford the tribute the temples demand for healing magic. Druids are so revered by the commoners that they merit a special status in the NAE; they are not flagrantly persecuted for their beliefs, as long as they keep their influence subtle and their presence in North American cities to a minimum. Another factor in the druids ability to exist in the hostile political environment of the Empire is the common perception that their powers are relatively insignificant. Modern man arrogantly considers himself the master of the environment. Individuals faced with a druid's awesome

wrath have no choice but to rethink the notion of man's dominion over the earth.

Most American druids are wandering nature priests living outside of cities, far from the influence of the Emperor. Many druids are Native Americans, and often the spiritual leaders of their people. Since the might of dragonkind basically prevents man from sprawling into any area that they choose, druids can choose to live in amazing expanses of wild lands. Truth be told, there are many more druids in North America than Emperor Ronald believes, but very few are ever encountered at the same time.

While it is extremely rare, druids occasionally participate in The Games. Some join for hate of unnatural monsters, and some join to raise funds for their tribes or for their favorite environmental cause. There is a sect of druids who believe that monsters possess the souls of natural animals twisted by the modern world's evil; they believe that slaying monsters frees their souls to be returned to their natural form. These druids may play The Games with the express purpose of freeing as many tortured souls as possible by killing monsters. Whatever the reason, druids who join Xcrawl have the advantage of possessing skills and powers that can confound most DJ's.

Abilities

The druids abilities are unchanged in 4699. However, while familiars are welcome in Xcrawl, animal companions are not. Due to their beliefs, druids are not able to use firearms, automobiles, or any of the other fetishes of modern society. Since they are not regulated by the government, druids may learn the scry skill from other druids, but they should realize that its unauthorized use in the NAE is banned and the penalties for its use are imprisonment or death. Druids who have learned to scry must practice in secret.

Fighter

"Am I supposed to be impressed by that mosquito bump? You have got to be kidding. You want to see a righteous scar, look at this–goblin barbed spear, right to the chest. Another quarter inch to the left and it would have pierced my heart. Makes that little love-mark of yours look like a hickey."
June "Sellsword" Jenkins, impressing companions at the post-crawl dinner.

A fighter is an extremely specialized athlete concentrating on his martial skills to the exclusion of all else. Being so specialized, a fighters options are very limited; fighters may work as bouncers, bodyguards, or trainers in the off season, but Xcrawl is the only opportunity they have to truly use their skills. A pure fighter is an extremely rare breed in Xcrawl. More often, several members of an adventuring crew will each have a few levels of fighter in addition to whatever other skills they may possess. A pure fighter is real treasure to an adventuring party, and although he might find his limited skills unmarketable in the outside world, he can easily find steady employment in The Games.

Abilities

Xcrawl fighters are proficient in all simple and martial firearms, excluding heavy weapons. Although these weapons are banned from use in The Games, the fighter's training still covers them. They may take performance (cha) and drive (dex) as class skills if they so choose.

Monk

"Jeeze, Chuck, you are so stupid! Monk beats sorcerer any day of the week. The dumbo sorcerer just stands there waving his wussy wand and mumbling like* a-dur, what do I do?** ***and by the time he's done–Bam! Swack! Blau!–he's cryin' for his mommy 'cause the bad-ass monk just kung fu kicked him in the balls like forty-nine times in a row. Duh! When I grow up I'm totally joining Dragon Shaolin."

Billy Cooper, educating underclassmen at Mt. Honner Elementary School.

Xcrawl has completely revitalized the acetic tradition of monks in the North American Empire. The monk had become just one more relic of the ancient world. The few masters left were ancient and tired, and enrollment at the remaining monasteries had dwindled to almost nothing. Then came the first Emperor's Cup. DJ Herobane felt he needed include a few open-hand fighters to keep in line with his goal of recreating tabletop Dungeonbattle in a live setting, so he invited a few practicing warrior monks from China to round out his adventuring parties. The victorious Tennessee Scorchers featured a young monk called White Crane who captured the imagination of the nation's youth with his dramatic gravity-defying techniques. A new generation was introduced to the ancient tradition of fighting monks and enrollment swelled in monasteries across the nation.

Xcrawl is a significant test of a monk's skills. Monks participate in The Games to hone their abilities, to demonstrate the superiority of their fighting style, and to honor their master and school. For many students raised on Xcrawl, the point of becoming a monk is to prove their manhood by facing death in front of a televised audience, with nothing but empty hands and purity of spirit.

Abilities

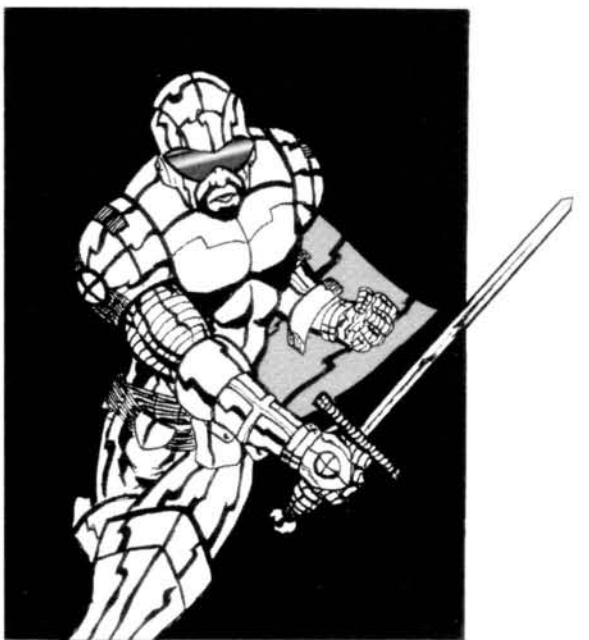
The monk's abilities are largely unchanged. Monks are not proficient with any type of firearm, nor is drive a class skill available to them.

Paladin

"I'm going to do you a favor. I'm going to give you the chance to make things right. Take your wife home, love her, honor her, and treat her like she deserves–treat her with respect. Do this and I will consider you a friend, a friend who I would risk my life to defend. But if you insult me by throwing my friendship back in my face, if you take your hands to that woman again–then I come and visit you one last time. And your title and your rich friends and the .44 you keep in your trunk won't help you–nothing will help you ever again."

Detroit Paladin Jackson Cabra, providing sound advice

The paladin tradition has never died. Modern paladins follow much the same code as their pre-cataclysm forbears, righting wrongs and fighting evil at every



turn. This lack of evolution puts the paladin at ideological odds with Xcrawl. In the eyes of the paladin, morality is black and white. There is right and just action, and everything opposed to it is evil. But as the world has become civilized, it has become harder and harder to tell friend from foe. Xcrawl encapsulates the paladin's ethical conflict with the modern world. What does it mean to kill monsters for sport? Is it just to slay beasts who are part of a controlled menagerie, and therefore of no real danger to anyone? Is glory earned in Xcrawl true glory? Modern times are confusing enough for the paladin without Xcrawl, and most avoid it. A few will join Division 3 tournaments for the experience of fighting monsters and facing truly evil creatures, but none have ever progressed any further. The farther a paladin progresses through the Xcrawl divisions, the more he is tempted by sins of pride and greed. As one gains fame and fortune, the environment becomes more and more morally questionable, and the paladin will have none of it.

Modern paladins exist on the fringes of society. They see the modern world as generally decadent and unprincipled, and spend their time protecting the weak from as many threats as possible. Modern paladins are urban vigilantes and soup kitchen volunteers, social activists and justice-bringers. While most paladins in the NAE follow the Roman Pantheon, there are more and more that are finding these gods petty and undeserving, so a growing movement away from the sanction Roman gods has spread across the nation in secret. Paladins find America a veritable sewer of evil and will often go off alone into the wilderness to purify themselves of the taint of modern civilization.

Modern paladins do not outright attack people in whom they sense evil; rather, they tend to strive to show by example how living a just and true life is its own reward. However, once a paladin finds an individual guilty of an evil act, they will stop at nothing to bring that individual to justice–one way or another.

Abilities

The paladins base abilities remain unchanged. Paladins are proficient in all simple and martial firearms, excluding heavy weapons. They make take drive (dex) as a class skill if they so choose

Ranger

"Shhhhhh."

John Two-Elk, warning his wolf to tread lightly in the lair of the manticore

Modern rangers are as ambivalent about Xcrawl as they are about the rest of civilization's weirdness. Fighting creatures on camera for a bunch of overstuffed aristocrats? The ranger doesn't see the point. However, their interest might be piqued if a favored enemy is featured in a particular dungeon. Because of this, very few rangers belong to any particular Xcrawl team full time, but some sign on for a specific crawl if they know they will encounter one of their favored enemies.

The majority of trappers are rangers. Trappers roam the world, above and below ground, capturing rare and exotic creatures to sell to the games. Monster hunters are motivated by money, but also the challenge of bringing fearsome creatures down unharmed. Many modern rangers choose the trapper prestige class, specializing in capturing and containing the deadliest creatures on earth.

Abilities

The rangers abilities are largely unchanged. Rangers are proficient in all simple and martial firearms, excluding heavy weapons. Rangers in 4699 do not necessarily practice the two-handed fighting style that there ancient predecessors were famous for; modern ranger training is a bit more flexible. Xcrawl rangers may begin play with the ambidextrous and two-weapon fighting

feats or they may choose any other two combat feats, as long as one is a prerequisite of another to show a continuous line of training in a single discipline. Beginning rangers may therefore start with power attack and cleave, or point blank shot and rapid shot, or any other linear combinations. Rangers make take drive (dex) as a class skill if they so choose. Rangers animal companions will not be welcome in most Xcrawl events.

Rogue

"Sorry I'm late–locked my keys in the car. Get it? I locked my...aw, ya'll are a bunch of stiffs."
Division Four rogue Eddie Joe McCaulkland, ten minutes late for practice.

Every rogue in Xcrawl knows this one certain thing: any DJ playing tactically makes disabling the rogue a priority. Rogues must be very careful. They are the key to the ultimate success of the adventuring group, being the trap and lock experts in a world of traps and locks. A good DJ will constantly harass and threaten the rogue to increase his chances of taking out the party with a trap. Many teams have multiple rogues trained in tandem lock picking and combat for just this reason.

Rogues are an extremely specialized group, and those that aren't participants in The Games are locksmiths, security experts, or full-time criminals. All rogues must register with the Thief's Guild in order to participate in The Games; the Thieves Guild regulates and defends the rogue as an upstanding and honest citizen, despite their training as perceived criminals. The halfling rogue is one of the archetypal Xcrawl players. Halflings take to the profession naturally, and for many this is the best way to find a measure of respect in 4699.

Abilities
Xcrawl rogues do not begin the game proficient with firearms of any kind. They may make take performance (cha) and drive (dex) as class skills if they choose.

Sorcerer

"Well, you can't exactly go to school to become a sorcerer. The power is in your blood, or it isn't. But you can still be an adventurer if you really want to–work hard, find your natural aptitude, and get in shape. Anyway, who should I make this out to?"
Sara "Take That" Ferguson, signing an autograph for a young admirer.

Sorcerers tend to be crowd favorites. Their natural charisma and explosive powers make them stand out in any group of adventurers. Their flamboyance also makes them a natural target of dungeon monsters, who watch enough tapes to know they have to kill the magic users quickly in order to defeat adventuring parties. Sorcerers need to quickly learn to take full advantage of whatever protection their teammates can provide.

Many sorcerers believe that Xcrawl is the best chance for them to explore and thus increase their powers. The stuffy atmosphere of the Mage's Guild is antithetical to their nature. Sorcerers don't want to study–they want to flex their magical muscle. Xcrawl provides a true test of their skills.

Abilities
Sorcerers must be a part of the Mage's Guild to perform their craft legally in the NAE, and the mandatory training allows them to take all knowledge skills as class skills, each taken separately. The stringent guild training requires sorcerers begin with a minimum of at least four ranks in spellcraft, four ranks in knowledge (arcane), two ranks in knowledge (astronomy) and two ranks in alchemy. Sorcerers may take performance (cha) and

drive (dex) as class skills if they so choose. They automatically get knowledge (arcane) and knowledge (astronomy) as class skills. They may not begin the game with the scry skill–special guild permission is required to ever learn this skill or any of its attendant spells.

Wizard

"Aw, come on! This is taking forever. I have to be in the green room in ten minutes. Who do I have to turn into a frog to get my friggin' latte?"
Saul "Rock 'N Roll" Santiago, tired of waiting in line.

A surprising number of Xcrawl teams feel they have no need for a wizard on their squad. A sorcerer is generally considered a better bet for their high offensive capabilities. However, smart teams realize a wizard's flexibility can be crucial to success in The Games. Wizards can prepare scrolls and potions, and can utilize magic wands, giving them unsurpassed magical flexibility.

Guild Mages tend to spend as much time playing the political game as they do studying magical effects. Wizards fed up with the claustrophobic academic environment of The Guild are drawn to Xcrawl. Some join for the fame and money, some for the thrill, and others join to make social contacts with the nobility. Many nobles retain a personal wizard–a prestigious and comfortable position for the luck wizard–and The Games are a great way to gain the attention of potential employers.

Abilities
Wizards must be members of the Mage's Guild in order to practice their craft legally in 4699. In order to pass the rigorous Guild examinations, they must have at least four ranks in spellcraft, four ranks in knowledge (arcane), two ranks in knowledge (astronomy) and two ranks in alchemy.

Wizards can prepare scrolls for Xcrawl events. Division Three events allow wizards to bring twenty total levels of spells of prepared scrolls, Division Two allows forty spell levels, Division One allows sixty levels, and there are no restrictions for Unlimited Class events. Scrolls that were won as prizes in earlier events do not count towards this level maximum–they are considered treasure, not prepared scrolls.

Wizards may take performance (cha) and drive (dex) as class skills. They may not begin the game with the scry skill–special guild permission is required to learn this skill or any of its attendant spells.

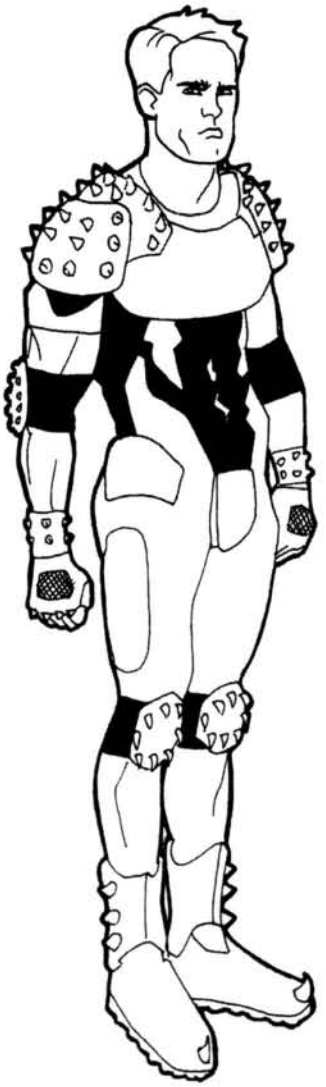
NEW CHARACTER CLASS

Athlete

"Well, this is my first pro crawl, so I'm just going to do my best to hold up my end of things and help the team out wherever I can. Really, it's an honor just to be here."
Robbie "Rope A Dope" Newman, giving his first Xcrawl interview.

Athletes continuously train and condition their bodies, making themselves competitive challengers and keeping themselves free from injury. In 4699, there are professional baseball, football, hockey, and basketball leagues. There are also events like figure skating, track and field, and skiing that attract athletes of all kinds.

Many Xcrawlers come from either a professional or amateur athletic background. Players should consider taking a few levels of the athlete class if they have professional athletics in their background, but it is not absolutely necessary. The athlete class represents an



individual who has completely dedicated himself to his sport, distinguishing himself from the weekend snowboarder or after-work softball player.

Background: Virtually any. Athletes come from all walks of life, drawn by the common need to compete and excel.

Races: Generally, only humans and half-elves are willing to make the effort to be a full time athlete. While members of all races train to be their best at their chosen endeavor, only a few ever take the athlete class. Dwarves certainly compete in contests, but they consider athletics as a full time endeavor somewhat frivolous. Elves lack the drive to put in the work needed to be an athlete. Gnomes would generally to build a running machine than actually do any running themselves. And halflings have trouble gaining enough trust.

Game Rule Information

Abilities: A high constitution is essential for every athlete–stamina, endurance and concentration are a part of every sport. Dexterity and strength are also important for the athlete, but in different measures depending on his favored sports. Basketball guards will tend to have a higher dexterity, while baseball pinch-hitters will focus on strength.

Alignment: any

Hit Die: d10

Class Skills: The athlete's class skills (and the key abilities for each skill) are balance (dex), bluff (cha), climb (str), concentration (con), drive (dex), intimidate (cha), jump (str), knowledge: sports (int), perform (cha), profession (wis), ride (dex), sense motive (wis), spot (wis), swim (str) and tumble (dex).

Skill Points at 1st level: (4 + Int Modifier) x 4

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 4 + Int Modifier

Class Features

The following are class features of the athlete.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Athletes are proficient with all simple, light and sports weapons (see equipment, p 154). Athletes who choose Xcrawl as one of their specialties are additionally proficient with any type of padded weapon used in Division Four Xcrawl events, but not their lethal equivalents.

Constant Training: Athletes have the drive to train hard for their sports. Consistent training means a minimum of three hours a day, six days a week spent training for their sport. Training can

ATHLETE

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort	Ref	Will	Special
1	+0	+1	+1	+1	Constant Training, Bonus Feat, 1st Sport
2	+1	+1	+1	+1	
3	+2	+2	+2	+2	
4	+3	+2	+2	+2	Bonus Feat
5	+3	+2	+2	+2	2nd Sport
6	+4	+3	+3	+3	
7	+5	+3	+3	+3	Bonus Feat
8	+6/+1	+4	+4	+4	
9	+6/+1	+4	+4	+4	
10	+7/+2	+4	+4	+4	Bonus Feat, 3rd Sport
11	+8/+3	+5	+5	+5	
12	+9/+4	+5	+5	+5	
13	+9/+4	+6	+6	+6	Bonus Feat
14	+10/+5	+6	+6	+6	
15	+11/+6/+1	+6	+6	+6	4th Sport
16	+12/+7/+2	+7	+7	+7	Bonus Feat
17	+12/+7/+2	+7	+7	+7	
18	+13/+8/+3	+8	+8	+8	
19	+14/+9/+4	+8	+8	+8	Bonus Feat
20	+15/+10/+5	+8	+8	+8	5th Sport

include weights, roadwork, aerobics, meditation, scrimmage or any other activity the GM rules appropriate. They can take a break of up to three days without losing their bonus, but after three days the athlete must begin the cycle again. An athlete with the opportunity to train for a minimum of six weeks can add +2 to their strength, dexterity or constitution. This bonus is temporary and contingent on their continued practice and training. If the athlete is training for an entire season, they maintain this bonus throughout the season, as long as they are able to train constantly throughout. For example: professional football player Ed Heurchuck trains for six weeks to gain a +2 on his constitution. He can maintain that bonus throughout the entire season if he continues training constantly. If he gets injured and loses more than three days, he has to train for another six weeks to get the bonus back. An athlete may

change the focus of his training–stop training in constitution and begin in strength, for example–but he must begin his cycle of training again, immediately losing the old training bonus.

Bonus Feats: The athlete gains a bonus feat at first level, and an additional bonus feat every two levels thereafter. These feats must be from the following list: alertness, cross-training, curve ball, dodge (mobility, spring attack), endurance, great fortitude, improved initiative, improved unarmed strike (stunning fist), intensive training, iron will, leadership, lightning reflexes, rally, run, skill focus, or toughness. The character must have all the necessary pre-requisites in order to take one of the above as a bonus feat.

Favored Sport: Athletes begin the games with one favored sport. This can be any sport: football, soccer, lacrosse, curling, etc. The athlete can't take running or swimming as a chosen sport; they must specify an event, such as the 100 meter dash, the decathlon or the men's freestyle. Combative sports, such as boxing or fencing, may not be chosen (these kinds of athletes are better represented using fighters, monks or other appropriate classes). The athlete's chosen sport is the event they work at the hardest, dedicating their lives to master. Athletes get a +2 competency bonus on all concentration, balance, climb, jump, perform, swim or tumble checks while they are playing their chosen sport. Xcrawl is absolutely a viable choice for a sport–many pro-athletes begin their careers playing Level Four Collegiate Xcrawl.

After every five levels, the athlete may choose a new specialized sport. When they gain a new sport, the bonus for their previous sports go up by +1. This means that a 20th level athlete will have +5 on his original sport, +4 on the next one he chose, all the way down to +1 for his last specialized sport.

PRESTIGE CLASSES

Master Celebrity

"Do you have any idea what it's like to give up your privacy, to have your soul torn out and have the media turn it into entertainment for the masses? I don't know how I do it day to day–courage, I suppose, or perhaps the right word is strength."
A HEAVILY SEDATED CHA CHA TURNER, GIVING A PHONE INTERVIEW FROM HER BEL AIR MANSION.



THE MASTER CELEBRITY

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort	Ref	Will	Special
1	+0	+0	+1	+2	Make It Look Natural, Eminence
2	+1	+0	+1	+3	Work the Media
3	+1	+1	+2	+3	Therefore I Am
4	+1	+1	+2	+4	Crossover
5	+2	+1	+3	+4	Reinvention

Superstar athletes, high ranking nobility, high-profile captains of industry, notorious tabloid side-show freaks–they all have celebrity in common. Anyone can be thrust into the spotlight, either by hard work or accident. However, the master celebrity knows all the angles. Fame is a game to the master celebrity, and he has the deck stacked. Nobody is more at home in the spotlight. The master celebrity always looks cool and collected, his every action effortless and unrehearsed. He is in the right place at the right time in the right outfit–ten times out of ten.

Requirements

To become a master celebrity, a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Skills: Perform 10 ranks, Sense Motive 10 ranks, Bluff 5 ranks

Special: To become a master celebrity, the character must survive a major media scandal. This can be anything from an improper sexual liaison to being banned from Xcrawl for cheating, but it must involve the equivalent of being on the cover of at least three magazines and having reporters camp out on your lawn for a minimum of one night.

Class Skills

Hit die: d4

The class skills for the master celebrity (and the key ability for each skill) are appraise (int), bluff (cha), concentration (con), craft (int), diplomacy (cha), disguise (cha), innuendo (cha), intimidate (cha), perform (cha), profession (wis) and sense motive (wis).

Skill points at each level: 4+ intelligence modifier.

Class Features

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Master celebrities are proficient with pistols and daggers.

Make It Look Natural

Master celebrities continuously train to look and act natural and at ease in every situation. Starting at 1st level, the master celebrity adds her intelligence modifier to any charisma rolls when dealing with the media, their fans or people in "the industry"–whatever her industry happens to be.

Eminence

A master celebrity receives double awards any time he gains fame points. For example, completing a dungeon level usually nets one fame point, so the master celebrity gains two. He doesn't lose double the normal fame points when penalized.

Work the Media

At second level, the master celebrity can manipulate the media into her own public forum. Any time she is confronted by members of the press, she can make a contested performance roll (versus a profession roll from the reporter, cameraman, talk show host, etc.) to completely change the angle of the story. For example: *Cha Cha Turner, second level "famous for being famous" master celebrity, is being interviewed by a newsradio journalist. The journalist intends to ask questions about Cha Cha's recent divorce and impending breast surgery, but Cha Cha is angry at having been given a speeding ticket that morning on her way into the studio. Cha Cha makes her performance roll versus the journalist's professional skill roll; she wins, and turns the entire half-hour into a personal tirade about how all traffic cops are buffoons and how misunderstood and put upon her life is in general, with the journalist feeding her all the right questions.* This is an extraordinary ability.

Therefore I Am

At third level, the master celebrity is able to believe his own press with such conviction that he can go beyond his normal abilities, actually becoming the amazing phenom the media has dubbed him. He can choose one skill he is notorious for, such as bluff or sense motive. If he chooses performance, he must choose one performance specialty which will receive the Therefore I Am bonus. From that point on, the master celebrity receives a +4 confidence bonus with that skill.

Crossover

At fourth level, the master celebrity no longer has to choose performance skill specialties; she is simply excellent, and any project she touches turns to gold. With a minimum of practice she can sing just as well as she can tap-dance, play the tuba, or cry on cue. New performance specialties can be learned in as little as six hours with expert coaching, twelve hours with a book or video guide, or in two days teaching herself. She must have at least minimum exposure to the performance specialty in order to learn it on her own. If the master celebrity has never seen the stone giant mating dance, she can't teach it to herself, but if she saw an Arts TV special on it she can learn it with no problem. The master celebrity's Therefore I Am bonus still only applies to a maximum of one performance specialty. Crossover is an extraordinary ability.

Reinvention

At fifth level, the master celebrity can actually reinvent herself. After a period of absence from the public spotlight for introspection and perhaps a dalliance with esoteric philosophies, the master celebrity can change the assignment of the skill points she used to purchase ranks. In other words, she can reconfigure her ranks in any manner she feels suits her new, enlightened status. This can cause her to completely lose some skills, and beef up skills that were largely ignored for her entire career. She may not choose new skills, only re-assign points to her existing skills. Reinvention can only be done once. The master celebrity may also change her alignment, patron deity, sexual preference, and spouse at this time with no media backlash. The power of Reinvention is such that the whole world sees this as a natural progression, and she is forgiven her past sins and is born again in the public eye. This is a supernatural ability.

Trapper

"Easy, big fella, easy. This won't hurt a bit."

ANWAR EL SALIB, TRAPPER, FIFTY PACES FROM THE ALPHA MALE BULETTE AND LINING UP HIS SHOT.

There were trappers before the first Xcrawl event in 4680. Monsters were captured and brought in alive for testing or display in a zoo. Trappers were a small but elite group in a barely profitable industry, hunting for the challenge more than anything else.

Xcrawl changed the entire profession. Modern day monster hunters can command huge fees for bringing in the beasts–the more dangerous and exotic, the better. Trappers practice a whole range of non-lethal techniques for bringing down dangerous creatures. Monster hunters go after all kinds of creatures: giants in Australia, yeti in Nepal, purple worms in the Zura'ah'zura, dire sharks in the deep sea, and many, many others.

Requirements

To become a trapper, a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Base Attack Bonus: +6

Skills: handle animal 6 ranks, knowledge (monster lore) 4 ranks, move silently 8 ranks, wilderness lore 8 ranks

Feats: Track

Class Skills

The trapper's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are bluff (cha), climb (str), concentration (con), handle animal (cha), hide (dex), intuit direction (wis), knowledge (monster lore)(int), listen (wis), move silently (dex), search (int), sense motive (wis), spot (wis), use rope (dex) and wilderness lore (wis).

Skill points per level: 4+ int modifier

Hit die: d10

TRAPPER

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort	Ref	Will	Special
1	+1	+2	+2	+0	Subdual Specialist, Favored Prey 1
2	+2	+3	+3	+0	Scent, Exotic Weapon 1
3	+3	+3	+3	+1	Scentless
4	+4	+4	+4	+1	Exotic Weapon 2
5	+5	+4	+4	+1	Favored Prey 2
6	+6	+5	+5	+2	Eyes in the Back of Your Head
7	+7	+5	+5	+2	Bond With Region
8	+8	+6	+6	+2	Exotic Weapon 3
9	+9	+6	+6	+3	Think Like A Monster
10	+10	+7	+7	+3	Locate Creature, Favored Prey 3

Class Features

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Trappers are proficient with all simple and martial weapons and all firearms. Trappers are also proficient with the net and the tranquilizer rifle.

Subdual Specialist

The trapper is an expert at bringing down creatures without killing them. At first level, they no longer suffer the -4 penalty for attacking to subdue.

Favored Prey

Trappers tend to specialize. At first level, the trapper can choose one particular beast to be his favored prey. The favored prey can't be humanoid. The trapper must choose a specific creature, not a creature type. Example: a trapper could choose naga, but not aberrations. The trapper gains a +1 bonus for hide, monster lore, wilderness lore, sense motive and search rolls against her favored prey. In addition, she deals an additional 1d4 subdual damage when fighting to subdue her favored prey.

At fifth and tenth level, the trapper gains an additional favored prey. Every time she receives a new one, she adds another +1 bonus on the above mentioned skill checks against her previous favored prey. Thus, at tenth level the trapper has +3 on her first favored prey, +2 versus her second and +1 versus the third.

Scent

At second level, the trapper gains the scent feat for free.

Exotic Weapon

Trappers are always looking for new and better ways to bring down creatures fast. At second, fourth and eighth level, the trapper gains proficiency with the exotic weapon of his choice.

Scentless

At third level, the trapper has developed the techniques of masking or hiding his scent. Monsters who attempt to locate the hunter by scent have a -10 to all relevant rolls.

Eyes in the Back of Your Head

Trappers eventually develop a preternatural danger sense against unnatural creatures from spending so much time in the wild. At 6th level the hunter can't be flanked by non-humanoids, and receives a + 4 to spot ambushes by non-humanoid monsters.

Bond With Region

The seasoned monster hunter has been around enough to get the feel of a new place quickly. A trapper spending two weeks getting to know a new location before a hunt will form a bond with the region, gaining +4 to all move silently, hide and wilderness lore rolls in this locale. This bonus stacks with all other monster hunter bonuses.

Think Like A Monster

The trapper has spent so much time fathoming the thoughts and actions of the creatures he stalks that he has almost become one of them. At ninth level, the trapper can get inside the mind of any creature he stalks for a minimum of one day. Once he has the creature in mind, he receives + 4 on all tracking and sense motive rolls against the creature, and a +2 competence bonus to his AC when facing it; he can actually predict where the creature will try to land his next blow and react to it before-hand. These bonuses stack with all other trapper bonuses.

Locate Creature

Once per day, the trapper can use *locate creature* as a druid of his class level. This is an extraordinary ability.

Guild DJ

"My translation spell is about to run out, so I'm only going to say this once–I don't need your attitude. Not now. Finish your meal, warm up and then get out there. But cut the crap–if Barney or any of the other handlers tells me you even breathed mean in his direction, I'll trade you to Miami. Now, you play nice and keep these punks from getting up that ladder. We can discuss your accommodations later, but right now I need you to kill somebody, you hear me? I want one hundred and ten percent."

DJ Bonedaddy Terminus, giving last minute instructions to a rookie umber hulk.

Someone who progresses to Guild Level Dungeon Judge is a formidable individual. It takes ambition and, to a degree, ruthlessness. A candidate must be connected, wealthy, and popular. Very few individuals ever reach this lofty position, but those who do are the most feared DJ's in the league.

Requirements

To become an guild DJ, a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Base Attack Bonus: + 3

Skills: diplomacy 10 ranks, knowledge: dungeon crawl 8 ranks

Feats: Leadership

DUNGEON JUDGE

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort	Ref	Will	Special
1	1+	0+	0+	+2	Creature Language, Mastery 1, Poker Face
2	2+	0+	0+	+3	Creature Language, Skill Focus
3	3+	1+	1+	+3	Creature Language, Mastery 2
4	4+	1+	1+	+4	DJ's Blessing, Skill Focus
5	5+	2+	2+	+4	Creature Language, Mastery 3
6	6+	2+	2+	+5	Creature Language, Skill Focus
7	7+	2+	2+	+5	Creature Language, Mastery 4
8	8+	2+	2+	+6	Skill Focus
9	9+	3+	3+	+6	Creature Language, Mastery 5
10	10+	3+	3+	+7	Creature Language, Skill Focus

Special: Must have the approval of the Games Commissioner.

Must have at least one trapper connection and one aristocratic connection.

Must spend a minimum of six months apprenticing to an established Guild DJ.

Class Skills

The guild dungeon judge class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are bluff (cha), diplomacy (cha), gather information (cha), handle animal (cha), innuendo (cha), intimidate (cha), knowledge (dungeon crawl), perform (cha) and sense motive (wis)

Skill points per level: 8 + intelligence modifier

Hit die: d4

Class Features

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Dungeon judges gain no new weapon or armor proficiencies.

Creature Language
The guild DJ absorbs new languages quickly in his daily transactions with monsters. As the DJ progresses through levels, he learns new languages regularly, enabling him to communicate with his stable of beasts. The languages of elves, dwarves, halflings, or any of the human languages may not be chosen. The guild DJ learns a bonus language at first level, then again at second, third, fifth, sixth, seventh, ninth and tenth level.

Mastery
A dungeon judge exerts a powerful influence upon her menageries, her technical crew, and her fans. A first level guild dungeon judge gains a +1 on all bluff, diplomacy, handle animal, innuendo, intimidate, and sense motive rolls when dealing with any of her subordinates, including monsters in her charge, or fans. This bonus increases by one for every odd-numbered guild DJ level the character achieves to a maximum of five at ninth level.

Poker Face
The guild dungeon judge learns to conceal his thoughts behind an inscrutable mask of understated menace. A guild DJ receives a +10 bonus for resisting sense motive, bluff, and innuendo checks.

Skill Focus
The guild DJ receives the skill focus feat at every even numbered level. This bonus must be applied to a new skill each time.

CROWD DIFFICULTY CLASS

Before each crawl, the gamemaster may either choose the sway DC of the crowd or roll it randomly using The Crowd DC Table (see appendix, p 186). There are many factors to consider when figuring the crowds sway DC–if there is local favorite team competing with the PC's, if the players are coming off a victory or a loss, if the players have received considerable positive or negative media of late, etc. Always consider the situation when looking at the crowd DC, whether you randomly roll or determine it yourself.

DJ's Blessing

The guild DJ can motivate creatures in his charge with a pre-event speech. He may choose a single monster or a group of creatures that will act together in a single room. This speech must be in the native tongue of the creatures to be affected. Recipients of the DJ's blessing gain +2 to hit and +2 on all willpower saves for two rounds per guild DJ level. This bonus is initiated with the first round of combat for the creatures; if the monsters are caught flatfooted, they do not receive this bonus until they have the opportunity to attack, and the surprise round doesn't count towards the power's duration. The DJ's blessing is an extraordinary ability.

SKILLS AND FEATS

New Uses for Old Skills

Bluff (Cha)

Famous Xcrawl players can use bluff to receive preferential treatment. Celebrities may, of course, receive this treatment anyway, without making a roll. A bluff skill allows a player to ease his way past a finicky maitre d', to talk jewelry boutique proprietors into lending a prized necklace out for an awards ceremony, or any other situation where the player can finagle VIP treatment. The GM sets the difficulty class based on the player's fame and the situation. A world famous Xcrawl mage might only have a DC of 20 for getting past the security at the New York Provincial Arena to meet his arch-rival in the locker room, but a relatively unknown halfling rogue might have a DC of 30 for the same task.

Heal (Wis)

Medicine in the modern world is beyond anything imagined in the Heroic Age. A skilled healer with access to modern equipment can make a first aid check on an injured individual to rapidly aid his recovery. The DC for a first aid check is 18. A successful first aid check heals one point of damage, plus one point per character level of the victim. Example: breakroom paramedic Alma Perez performs emergency first aid on a clumsy rogue to remove the barbed dart lodged in his windpipe. Her roll is successful and the rogue regains six hit points–one base point and one point for each of the rogue's five levels. First aid may not be successfully applied after the injured party has received magical healing–magical healing accelerates the natural healing process, and after a healing spell or potion, bandages and pain medication are of little use. Magical healing still effects the injured after they receive first aid; if the first aid comes before magical healing, the injured party receives the full benefit of both. A modern healers kit gives a +4 circumstance bonus to heal checks.

Knowledge: Xcrawl (Int)

Xcrawl players are usually lifelong fans of The Games. Players may take knowledge: Xcrawl to represent thousands of hours spent watching their favorite players battle their way through dungeons. This skill allows players to learn general knowledge regarding a dungeon judge's reputation for stinginess, a superstar creature's favorite tactics, or the previous owner of a powerful magic weapon. The GM can allow an Xcrawl lore roll for any piece of information the player may have gained from watching Xcrawl, with the skill check DC based on how rare or specialized the knowledge. Example: a GM may assign a DC 20 for his players to realize that the floating horror they face is a warhead, a DC 25 to know that warheads are magical constructs, and a DC 30 to know that all warheads come from North American Legion surplus. All Xcrawl participants can attempt to use knowledge: Xcrawl untrained.

Performance (CHA)

Performance is a vital skill to the would-be champion Xcrawler. Xcrawl is a spectacle for the audience, and smart players learn to work that audience very early on in their career. There are two new performance styles pertaining to Xcrawl: grandstanding and mugging.

Grandstanding is the art of working the crowd for maximum applause and recognition. A player can grandstand at any time when a live audience is present in a room. He can do it in any manner he sees fit–the one fisted salute to the crowd is always popular, but the possibilities are endless. Each crowd has a target DC to sway them determined by the gamemaster. A player attempting to grandstand makes a performance check versus the crowd's DC. A success indicates the crowd reacts favorably—clapping, hooting, pumping their fist, or whatever else is appropriate. A critical success might mean a standing ovation. Failure can mean boos and catcalls or worse–stony silence.

The gamemaster assigns bonuses as he sees fit. Grandstanding at appropriate times, such as right after a hard-fought dramatic victory, for example, should receive a bonus, while grandstanding during inappropriate times–such as right after a teammate dies horribly–should receive a definite penalty. There are many other factors that might come into play; consider the ranger who insists on butchering his kills and parading around with severed heads–that sort of mayhem will not sit well with the nobility of the NAE, and such action will incur major grandstanding penalties. Well known players will often develop certain grandstanding moves that the audience loves and comes to expect. Example: after every successful fireball, Justin "Blaze" Cropper jumps in the air, clicks his heels and points at the crowd. Once the player's move becomes well known to national audiences (performing the move three consistent crawls is a good standard), he should receive a +2 when using his move during grandstanding attempts. A familiar grandstanding move should not be confused with a signature move, and the two cannot be combined directly–though one can certainly be done following the other.

Arbitrating attempts to sway the crowd is an art rather than a science. If a player has some spectacular successes early on, the DC of the crowd might be lowered for the entire event. It is entirely possible that, during the course of the dungeon, the players may win the entire audience over. After a few spectacular successes, the gamemaster might consider lowering the overall sway DC of the crowd. Of course, a few failures will move DC in the opposite direction.

Mugging is grandstanding for the camera alone, with no live audience. It is a more subtle art, but an extremely important one. The difference between grandstanding and mugging is the difference between acting in the theater and acting for a movie camera; using tiny suggestive gestures instead of grandiose ones. Winking, blowing kisses, or giving steely-eyed looks all work well.

The DC for mugging is always twenty-one. Mugging and grandstanding may both be performed untrained. Players may use mugging and grandstanding to effect a characters fame (see Fame, pp. 120).

Scry (INT)

Scrying is a controlled activity–it is how the government secretly regulates the nation. Through the Mage's Guild, scrying is closely controlled. See Magic in 4699 (pp. 150) for more details.

New Skills

Drive (dex)

Commoners in 4699 are more likely to make use of the free mass transportation system the government provides than drive their own vehicle. The drive skill indicates that a character is one of the privileged few Americans with the skills to operate a motor vehicle. There is a national licensing system requiring citizens to take both a written and skill test to receive their Writ of Vehicle Operation (WVO), allowing them to legally drive in the NAE.

Driving in and of itself does not require a skill roll. A drive skill check might be required for any dangerous maneuver or hazardous situation.

Typical DC's for difficult maneuvers are as follows:

Hard Swerve in traffic: DC 15

Swerve to avoid head-on collision: DC 20

Full stop to avoid collision: DC 20

Swerve to a 180 degree turn: DC 30

Hazards such as difficult terrain, rain or snow, and low visibility can add 10 to the DC of any maneuver, or 20 for extreme conditions.

Cars in the NAE are alcohol powered, and have a top speed anywhere between 40 and 70 miles per hour. They do not pollute; their only emission is oxygen.

Untrained: Driving can be attempted untrained, but it is extremely dangerous. A dex roll is required for all standard operations of the vehicle, with a typical DC of 15. The untrained driver must roll to start the car, make a turn, merge with traffic, etc. Any failure means either a stall or collision as appropriate, decided by the gamemaster.

ROAD RULES

These are extremely simplified vehicle rules. Driving in combat situations will rarely, if ever, come up in a standard Xcrawl campaign. However, gamemasters are encouraged to modify and alter vehicle combat rules to fit their particular campaign.

Feats

"Well, it looks like this dungeon is gonna end for the Loose Noose Patrol right here if somebody doesn't do something about F'nagh, the kobold sorcerer who has been playing havoc with them since...hold on! Icefinger charges in from the back row! What's he doing? It looks like–yes, he is loading two arrows at the same time into his bow! Is he out of his mind? Nobody can–Jupiter and Juno, he did it! He hit the sorcerer with both arrows! F'nagh is down! You heard me right, F'nagh is down! This is incredible! The Loose Noose Patrol has been given this victory by their archer, Elras "Icefinger" Loresis right here in Kansas City! And the crowd is going ab-so-lute-ly wild!"
Commentator Steve Savage,
on the edge of his seat.

Automatic Weapon Proficiency

Prerequisite: None

Benefit: You are proficient with light automatic weapons.

Normal: Characters fighting untrained with any weapon receives a -4 to hit. Firearms are banned from all sanctioned Xcrawl events, and are illegal for civilians to own in the NAE.



Crowd Favorite

The crowd gets behind you very easily.

Prerequisite: Minimum Charisma bonus +3, four ranks in perform

Benefit: You gain +4 to all rolls to motivate the crowd or grandstanding.

Curve Ball

You can pitch a baseball in a subtle arc, baffling defenders.

Prerequisite: sports weapon proficiency

Benefit: You gain +2 to hit using a baseball for attacking targets more than 30' away.

Double Shot

You can fire two arrows at the same time at a single target.

Prerequisite: Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot, minimum base attack bonus +6

Benefit: The archer may, as a full round action, simultaneously fire two arrows at one opponent. The archer must be within 30' of his target in order to effectively hit with double shot. The archer rolls separately for each attack. Each attack is at the archer's highest ranged attack bonus, with an additional -4 penalty. Damage from these arrows is considered one attack for purposes of defeating damage reduction or hardness, and distracting spellcasters. Example: a creature has damage reduction of 10 and is struck by two arrows fired in a double shot. The arrows do seven and five points, respectively. The attack is treated as having done 12 points total, and the creature takes two points of damage. The same shots against a spellcaster would require a single concentration check DC

22. The archer may not take an extra shot (per rapid shot) after a double shot.

Extra Signature Move

Prerequisite: One signature move purchased normally using experience points.

Benefit: You may additional signature move for your character. Extra signature move must be purchased for each additional signature move the character wishes to add.

Pistol Proficiency

Prerequisite: None

Benefit: You are proficient with simple pistols and revolvers.

Normal: A character fighting untrained with any weapon receives a -4 to hit. Pistols are banned from all sanctioned Xcrawl events, and are illegal for civilians to own in the NAE.

The Profile

You kill with style and distinction.

Prerequisite: charisma bonus +3, four ranks in performance

Benefit: After you slay an opponent, you get +4 on your grandstanding skill check. This benefit lasts for one round.

Rifle Proficiency

Prerequisite: none

Benefit: You are proficient with rifles and scatterguns.

Normal: A character fighting untrained with any weapon receives a -4 to hit. Rifles and scatterguns are banned from all sanctioned Xcrawl events, and are illegal for civilians to own in the NAE.

Rally

You know how to motivate your teammates in a tight situation.

Prerequisite: Cha bonus +3, minimum character level 5.

Benefit: Once per dungeon level, you can call for a rally as a free action. All teammates must be able to hear the rallying player's voice to gain the benefits of the feat. For one round, every member of the team gets + 2 to hit and + 2 on willpower saves. Victims of enchantment magic get a new save at +2 to resist the spell's effects when rally is called.

Serpentine

You are skilled at charging into missile fire.

Prerequisite: Dodge

Benefit: You gain a +4 AC bonus when directly charging opponents firing missile weapons. This bonus is nullified by circumstances causing the character to lose his dexterity modifier from his armor class.

Two-Fisted Healing

You can divide the benefits of a healing spell between two recipients.

Prerequisite: Extra Turning

Benefit: A cleric may divide the benefits of a *cure light wounds, cure moderate wounds, cure serious wounds* or *cure critical wounds* between two recipients. The cleric must have both hands free and be able to touch both injured parties. The cleric rolls normally for the amount of damage healed, and the total is split evenly between both parties, with the odd point going to the cleric's choice.

MAGIC IN 4699

The Guild and the National Temples have very strict rules governing the use of divine and arcane magic in the modern NAE. Magic is power, and the NAE is a totalitarian state sharing as little power as possible. In order to do so, there are regulating bodies for both divine and arcane magic, who dictate which spells are banned and which are legal without regard to the common man.

Divine Magic

The Emperor of the NAE always has the additional title Master of Temple. This is a secular position giving him control over the rules and organization of the state sponsored religion, The Roman Pantheon. This effectively makes him the chief religious figure in the nation. Beneath the Master of Temple are the High Priests. Each deity has a High Priest, who is considered that god's ultimate authority on earth. The High Priests control the day-to-day activities of the temples under their rule, and presides over all the major ceremonies for their representative god. The Emperor works with the High Priests to dictate the spells legally available to the priests under their rule.

REGULATED DIVINE SPELLS

2nd–*desecrate, undetectable alignment, lesser planar ally*

3rd–*animate dead*

5th–*ethereal jaunt, unhallow*

6th–*geas/quest, scrying*

9th–*miracle*

The NAE bans the following divine spells from use without special dispensation from the Temple. The gamemaster should feel free to add or remove spells from this list as he sees fit.

Arcane Magic

Arcane magic is subjected to the tightest controls. The Mage's Guild thoroughly polices itself for fear of provoking the wrath of the Emperor. Should the power of the Guild be seen as too great or too uncontrolled, the Emperor might further restrict their powers, or ban them altogether. No wizard ever willingly parts with power, and so the Guild sets stringent guidelines concerning the use of magical power, and punishes transgressors harshly.

Using magic to commit a crime is a felony always punishable by death. Mesmerizing and abusing citizens, sexually or otherwise, is also an

BANNED ARCANE SPELLS

2nd–*detect thoughts*

4th–*detect scrying, scrying, lesser geas*

5th–*lesser planer binding, animate dead*

6th–*planar binding, geas/quest*

7th–*sequester, greater scrying, control undead, ethereal jaunt, plane shift*

8th–*mind blank, greater planer binding, trap the soul, clone, screen, binding, etherealness*

9th–*gate, wish, astral projection*

executable offense. But no aspect of wizardry is watched more closely than scrying. The Guild teaches the far-seeing ways to only its most trusted members, and these skills are only to be used in service of the government or the Guild itself. Generally, one must be at least 21st rank to be taught the ancient art of scrying and its attendant spells. Of course, arcane spellcasters may find a way around these regulations. Wizards very often find their own way to scry independent of the Guild; these wizards must constantly be on guard, lest their secrets be discovered; the traditional punishment for unauthorized scrying is permanent polymorphing into a tropical fish–or worse. Sorcerers will sometimes develop the ability to scry on their own. The Guild recognizes this chance and always on watch for members displaying the talent for scrying.

Spell Research: There is no cost for arcane spell research for spells–it only takes time in the Guild library. Guild wizards may do independent spell research, but members are bound by Guild rules to disclose the results of any independent spell research they undertake. Failure to do so is grounds for expulsion from the guild and criminal charges.

Copyrighted Spells

In 4682, a fledgling spellcaster named Melsenschlap shocked his teachers and classmates by developing a spell giving wizards a defensive advantage in combat. This spell was Melsenschlap's 1-D Fighter, and many Xcrawl conjurers made it part of their arsenals, despite its prohibitively costly material component: a specially prepared 150 GP note. War wizards also favored the spell, and the Legion spent millions on the spell in training and combat situations. Thousands of castings, with thousands of 150 GP notes. Money that was simply going up in flames. Treasury investigators later discovered that the money did not simply disappear when the spell was cast, it was teleported to a magical collection tin Melsenschlap had developed. By the time he was caught he owned a yacht and a ten-story research tower near Burbank. While Melsenschlap's scam violated no specific law or Mage's Guild tenant, it was universally considered bad form, and Melsenschlap was sentenced to two years hard labor for his misdeeds. But the money-making potential of this spell attracted the attention of the Mage's Guild, who later that year began to grant spell patents to the authors of original spells–provided that the Guild receive a percentage of the proceeds.

This movement has had an enormous effect on the spellcasting community. Many inventive wizards who spent years developing spells in secret have come forth to apply for spell patents. The Mage's Guild has made a small fortune on selling patents, and gathering a twenty percent royalty on spell income. And the estates of more than one long-dead grandmaster wizard have retained legal council in their attempts to receive thousands of years of back-owed royalties.

Copyrighted spells require a specially prepared magical device to collect the earnings. To date, neither Melsenschlap or the upper echelon of the Mage's Guild have revealed the secrets of its construction.

To create a copyrighted spell, a wizard must design a unique spell and take it before the Mage's Guild Council of Preparations for copyright approval. There is a 250 GP submission fee, and a 150 GP research fee charged by the Guild, and a five week waiting period for research time before the mage can go to his first meeting. If the Council of Preparations approves the spell, it goes before the Board of Copyright Justification, which questions the mage on the origins of the spell to assure that it is uniquely of their creation. If the Board approves the spell, the wizard gains a copyright and a new source of income.

Technomagic

Technomagic is an extremely new discipline allowing the interface of magic and technology. This branch of spellcasting is still in the experimental stages. Technomagic is famously unreliable, and spell attempts frequently backfire with destructive results. The secret to technomagic is the Arcane Transformer, a specially crafted piece of hardware that fragments magical effects into billions of complicated shards of arcane information, which can be rewoven by a skilled wizard to create unique and often immensely powerful outcomes. Known technomagical possibilities are arcane video screens, technomagical constructs, and the enhancement of scrying and other forms of magical divining. Technomagic is an area of magic still being explored–carefully–by the Guild of Magi.

New Spells

Melsenschlap's 1-D Fighter©

Transmutation (copyrighted)

Level: Sor/Wiz 4

Components: V,S,M

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Target: Creature touched

Duration: 3 rounds +1 round/level

Saving Throw: None or Will negates (harmless)

Spell Resistance: No or Yes (harmless)

Melsenschlap's 1-D Fighter makes the target quasi-intangible from one direction, usually the rear. Typically, the spell is cast on a fighter or other character standing in front of the casting wizard. Once the spell is cast, the wizard can see and cast spells through the target. Images seen through the target creature appear as if they were filmed using primitive motion picture cameras. The magic user may cast spells through the spell recipient; those spells pass through to their intended targets as if the recipient of the spell didn't exist. The target is fully substantial from the front, and may attack and defend himself normally. He may also be attacked normally. The target creature feels a tingling sensation and must endure the visual shock of spells seemingly bursting forth from his chest, but is otherwise unaffected.

Material Components: A 50 GP note, specially prepared with magical symbols, which disappears when the spell is cast.

Marco Polo

Enchantment (compulsion)(mind-affecting)

Level: Sor/Wiz 3, bard 3

Components: V

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 25' radius centered on caster

Target: One or more creatures in given range

Duration: 1 round + 1 round/ level

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

Description: This spell, named for a child's game (which was in turn named for a famous explorer), forces opponents to shout out in response to the caster's call. Once the spell is cast, the spellcaster may shout "Marco!" once per round as a free action, and anyone who failed their save in the affected area is compelled to joyfully call back, "Polo!". This spell automatically disrupts spellcasting with a verbal component and bardic music if the caster interrupts his opponents by forcing them to shout. This spell is also useful for finding invisible or hidden creatures, interrupting tedious battle cries, hindering intimidation or performance checks, and similar situations (GM's discretion on what effect

calling out "Polo!" will have in those instances).

This spell affects friend and foe alike in the target range. Any creature speaking a language can be effected, though the creature need not speak the caster's language for the spell to work.

Rachanda's Workout©

Transmutation (copyrighted)

Level: Sor/Wiz 1

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Target: Creature touched

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: No

Spell Resistance: No

Description: This spell charges the target's body with positive energy which courses through muscles and fatty tissue and invigorates the vital organ systems. In effect, it gives the target the benefits of having an amazing workout. This has no in-game effect, but it can be used to fulfill an athlete class character's constant training requirement. The target is fatigued for half an hour after the spell is cast, as well as being extremely sweaty, a bit sore, and hungry.

Material Component: A specially prepared 10 GP note, which disappears once the spell is cast.

Villalobo's Knife Outta Nowhere©

Evocation (copyrighted)

Level: Sor/Wiz 3

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Target: One creature

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Special

Spell Resistance: Special

Description: This spell causes a vaguely dagger-shaped plane of force to materialize somewhere in an opponent's blind side, striking the opponent with great velocity. This knife strikes automatically and does 1d6 damage plus 1d6 damage for every odd numbered caster level above fifth–2d6 at fifth level, 3d6 at seventh level, etc.–to a maximum of 7d6. The plane of force disappears after it strikes. Targets with the uncanny dodge feat may make a reflex save against this spell normally. If the save is made, the knife misses its target and disappears. The knife may be used to unerringly attack static targets, such as a length of rope or a potion beaker. If the spell is used to attack a target being held by an individual, the individual gets a reflex save. All proceeds from Villalobo's spells are donated directly to the Jose Villalobo House, a charity for war widows and orphans.

Material Component: A specially prepared 25 GP note, which disappears when the spell is cast.

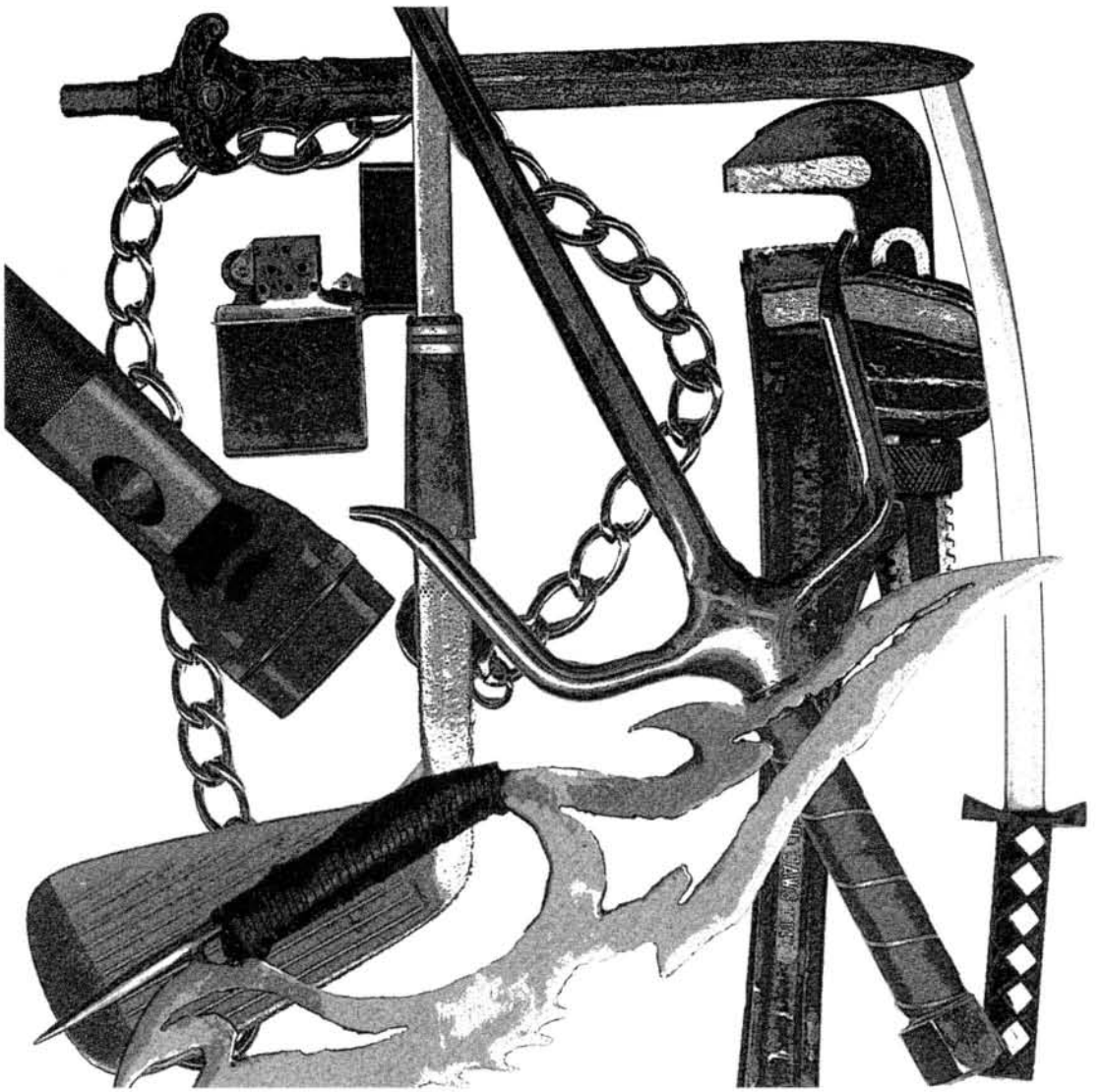


EQUIPMENT

"Well, sure, that sword will work. Phang is a great brand, I own a Phang short sword myself. But you have to believe me–if you really want to kill somebody before they kill you, you have to get yourself a Zoltan. Sure, it costs extra, but when you're facing a room full of death-dealing nasties, you want the best. Handcrafted in Telluride, each one a unique, individually numbered collector's item that can sever a giant's spine and not chip. Really, they sell themselves."
DAVID WORTHY,
EARNING HIS COMMISSION

Players may purchase any equipment offered in the Player's Guide for its listed price in gold. The GM may rule that some items are either completely unavailable–items like tindersticks or smokesticks are simply obsolete. However, some of the favored equipment of the ancient dungeon explorers is still popular with modern Xcrawlers. Alchemist's fire has not only made a comeback, but Xcrawl has made it the only acceptable pyrotechnic weapon for sanctioned events. The GM has final say on what equipment is available to players.

In the armor and weapon charts, cost is given in gold pieces, the range increment is given in feet, and the weight is given in pounds, unless otherwise noted.



SIMPLE WEAPONS–MELEE

Item	Cost	Damage	Critical	Range Increment	Weight	Type
Brass Knuckles	8	1d4	x2	2	–	bludgeoning
Club, boffer	10	0	1	0	2	bludgeoning
Knife, boffer	5	0	5'	5	–	bludgeoning
Machete	4	1d6	x2	–	5	slashing
Pitchfork	5	1d4	x4	–	–	piercing
Shiv	–	1d4	x2	–	.25	piercing
Sword, boffer	10	0	1	0	2	bludgeoning

SIMPLE WEAPONS–RANGED

Item	Cost	Damage	Critical	Range Increment	Weight	Type
Slingshot	10	1d4	x2	30'	2	bludgeoning

MARTIAL WEAPONS–MELEE

Item	Cost	Damage	Critical	Range Increment	Weight	Type
Chain, fighting	4	1d6	x2	–	5	bludgeoning
Ice Pick, combat	15	1d4	x4	–	3	piercing
Wrist Blade	45	1d4	19-20/x2	–	4	slashing
Wrist Blade, double	60	1d6	19-20/x2	5	–	slashing

MARTIAL WEAPONS–RANGED

Item	Cost	Damage	Critical	Range Increment	Weight	Type
Arrows, boffer (20)	2	0	1	20'	3 lb.	bludgeoning
Buckler, Throwing	45	1d6	x2	50'	5	bludgeoning

SPORTS WEAPONS–MELEE

Item	Cost	Damage	Critical	Range Increment	Weight	Type
Bat, aluminum	15	1d6	19-20/x2	–	5	bludgeoning
Hockey Stick	10	1d6	x2	–	5	bludgeoning
Golf club	20	1d4	x2	–	2	bludgeoning

SPORTS WEAPONS–RANGED

Item	Cost	Damage	Critical	Range Increment	Weight	Type
Baseball	2	1d6	x3	50	1	bludgeoning
Flying disc, combat	13	1d8	x3	60	1	slashing
Bowling ball	15	1d6	x3	20	15	bludgeoning

EXOTIC WEAPONS–MELEE

Item	Cost	Damage	Critical	Range Increment	Weight	Type
Chainsaw	35	3d8	x3	–	15	slashing
Mace, double-headed	50	1d8/1d8	x2	–	25	bludgeoning

EXOTIC WEAPONS–RANGED

Item	Cost	Damage	Critical	Range Increment	Weight	Type
Arrow, tranquilizer	15	1d4	x2	50'	.25	piercing

Weapon Description

Arrows, boffer (20)–The standard Division 4 bow ammunition. The arrows have a thick pad over the head helping prevent injury. These arrows do no damage, but one point of subdual damage on a critical hit.

Arrow, tranquilizer–Tranquilizer arrows are designed to deliver a chemical injection upon striking an opponent. Opponents struck take 1d4+6 temporary constitution damage, fortitude save for half (DC 18). Any victim reduced to less than 0 points of constitution by a tranquilizer must make an additional fortitude save (DC = 15+ 1 per point of constitution damage less than zero) or fall into a coma. Comatose creatures roll a fortitude save every day (DC 18). If they make this saving throw they wake from their torpor. If they fail, they remain comatose. If they roll a 1 on this save, they die. This represents a standard dose of sedative; arrows can hold different doses, depending on the intended target.

Baseball–A baseball used as a weapon by a trained athlete is devastating. A baseball thrown by an untrained user does 1d3 damage, and has a 30' range increment. Baseballs thrown in combat may not be "batted away" by an opponent using a bat or other weapon, unless the target has the appropriate feat (deflect arrows).

Bat, Aluminum–An aluminum bat is quicker than a standard bat, making it easier to strike an opponent with deadly accuracy. A standard bat has the same statistics as a club.

Bowling ball–A bowling ball is not a very effective weapon. It must be rolled along the floor, and it is very easy to avoid. Bowling balls can only be effectively used on a smooth, level floor. A target may make a reflex save (DC 20) to simply sidestep an obvious bowling ball attack. However, bowling balls missing their intended target continue to roll in a straight line, and may strike any opponent standing along that line (roll a

MARTIAL WEAPONS – FIREARMS

Item	Cost	Damage	Critical	Range Increment	Capacity	Weight	Min Str
.25 pistol	300	1d8	x3	50	10	2	9
.35 pistol	400	1d10	x3	50	10	2	12
.45 pistol	600	1d12	x3	50	8	4	14
.55 pistol	1000	2d8	x3	50	5	6	16
.25 rifle	300	2d4	x3	90	5	5	9
.45 rifle	700	2d6	x3	120	5	6	12
20GA Scattergun	500	2d6	19-20/x3	20	5	5	12
10GA Scattergun	1100	4d6	19-20/x3	20	5	5	14
Bringdown Launcher	500	5d6* *(see p.158)	x2	20	3	8	12

separate attack). Bowling balls automatically "cleave" per the great cleave feat; if a bowling ball attack deals enough damage to drop an opponent, the ball continues to roll in a straight line attacking anyone standing along that line to its maximum range.

Brass Knuckles–Brass knuckles are a weapon, and cannot be used in conjunction with any special hand-to-hand abilities a character possesses, such as a monk's hand-to-hand skills. Brass knuckles may not be taken away with a disarm attack. Other than the above, using brass knuckles is considered an unarmed attack.

Bringdown Launcher–This is a shotgun-like weapon firing a rubber, sap-like projectile filled with lead pellets. It does subdual damage, and the victim must make a STR check (DC = the amount of damage received) to avoid being knocked prone. These non-lethal weapons are favored by police and monster trappers.

Buckler, throwing–This is a standard buckler aerodynamically designed to be hurled like a flying disc. It straps to the wrist, but has a special quick release mechanism allowing it to be quickly removed and thrown.

Chain, Fighting–This is a 10' long weighted chain. It does bludgeoning damage, but is otherwise functionally identical to the spiked chain.

Chainsaw–This is an alcohol-powered sawing tool which can be used as a gruesome weapon. A chainsaw holds enough fuel to run continuously for one hour. A chainsaw has a hardness of 8 and 10 hit points. If damage from an explosive weapon (such as alchemist's fire), heat or explosive offensive spell (such as a Wall of Fire), or a firearm breaches a chainsaw's hardness, it can explode (item save DC 16), doing 3d8 points of fire damage to anyone holding it, and 1d8 points of explosive damage to anyone within a 5' radius. The wielder makes a Reflex save (DC = 10+ the amount of damage the weapon takes) to avoid the direct damage and fall into the explosive radius. Anyone in the explosive radius makes a Reflex save for half damage. Chainsaws are banned from all sanctioned Xcrawl events.

Club, boffer–This is one of the two standard weapons permitted for Division 4 events. It is fully padded with a fiberglass core, and safe to use. It does no damage unless the player scores a critical. It does 1 point of subdual damage on a critical hit.

Hockey Stick–A hockey stick may be used to perform a trip attack. If the attack fails, the user may drop the hockey stick to avoid being tripped.

Flying Disc, Combat–This is not a toy. The combat flying disc is aluminum, and has a sharp edge. It is designed to strike at long distances with great accuracy. A target must have the deflect arrows feat to safely catch this weapon, otherwise it deals normal damage when caught.

Golf Club–Golf is all the rage with the aristocracy. A set of golf clubs holds a variety of clubs with different specialties–putters, drivers, irons, and woods. They all have the same statistics for game combat purposes. An entire set of golf clubs can be enchanted with a *magic weapon* spell, like a quiver of arrows.

Ice Pick, Combat–This is a dangerous one-handed weapon, with an impaling striking head. Many DJ's favor ice picks for weapon-using monsters because of their menacing appearance.

Knife, boffer–This is the standard backup weapon permitted for division 4 events. It is simply foam cut into the shape of a dagger, and can do no damage.

Mace, double-headed–This is a stout, 5' iron-shod stave with a flanged mace head on either end. It may be used as a double weapon, following the standard rules for two-handed fighting.

Machete–A machete is a single-bladed agricultural tool used for cutting underbrush. A machete is a standard weapon for commoner farmers, who are not allowed to own weapons.

Pistol–This is a one-handed semi-automatic firearm. The .25 is favored by the nobility and security forces. The police forces of the NAE carry .35 pistols. The .45 is standard issue for NAE military forces, and is also favored by Xcrawl security and referees. The .55 is designed to bring down the most dangerous of foes, such as ogres. Pistols are small enough to conceal under a jacket.

Pitchfork–A pitchfork can be used as a weapon, as creatures wandering onto farms worldwide have discovered for themselves.

Rifle–These are long-barreled firearms designed for long-range shooting. They are normally too large to easily conceal.

Scattergun–Commonly called a shotgun. These weapons fire a burst of shot rather than a single projectile. Riot police and hunters often carry shotguns. Without modification, they are too large to easily conceal.

Shiv–A shiv is a homemade knife, often made of discarded tools, tableware, or other makeshift materials. Goblins living in the menageries of Xcrawl dungeon judges are renowned for their ability to make a shiv out of almost anything.

Slingshot–A slingshot is composed of a 'Y' shaped handle and a heavy-duty elastic draw string. Slingshots are cheap and easy to make, and are favored by commoners. Halflings receive their +1 racial attack bonus modifier with sling shots, just as if they were using a thrown weapon. Slingshots fire steel ball bearings costing 2 GP per gross (144). If the wielder is forced to use rocks or other non-standard ammunition, the damage is reduced to 1d3.

Sword, boffer–This is one of the two standard weapons permitted for Division 4 events. It is fully padded with a tubular fiberglass core and is generally safe to use. It does no damage unless the player scores a critical. It does 1 point of subdual damage on a critical hit.

Wrist Blade–This is a long, thin blade mounted on a heavy leather and steel wrist mount. It takes three rounds to put a wrist blade on, or one round if the wielder has competent assistance. A wrist blade may be worn at all times by a fighter, giving the fighter a weapon at the ready at all times. A wrist blade may not be lost in combat due to a disarm roll–they are attached, and one must actually sever the straps to take it from the wielder. While handy, wrist blades are awkward, and on a natural attack roll of 1 the user has struck himself for the weapons normal damage, including strength bonus.

Wrist Blade, double–As a wrist blade, but with a double-bladed head. Other than the differences in damage, the double wrist blade follows the same rules for the single bladed variety. Masterwork double wrist blades cost twice as much as normal.

Notes On All Firearms:

The table is an extremely basic list of generic firearm types available in the NAE. GM's should free to expand and alter this list as they see fit.

Firearms are not allowed for use in Xcrawl, nor are they legal for civilian commoners of the NAE to possess. Police, military, security guards and the nobility are allowed to own guns, although everyone must gain a license to carry a firearm from the government.

Masterwork versions of the pistols mentioned are available at standard cost for masterwork weapons. Magical firearms have been created, but they are prohibitively costly and time consuming. Magical bullets can be created using spells such as *Greater Magic Weapon*, though they are very rare.

The capacity refers to how many shots may be held in a clip. It takes a full round action to eject a spent clip and load a fresh one.

All pistols listed are considered semi-automatic. Characters use their normal ranged attack bonus, and have their normal number of ranged attacks with a firearm. Ranged attack feats–for example rapid fire and precise shot–apply to firearm use.

The minimum strength (Min. Str) is how strong a character must be to fire the pistol effectively. A character must be strong enough to deal with the gun's recoil. If a character attempts to fire a gun and he is not strong enough to effectively use it, he receives a -2 to hit for every point of Str he is below minimum. Example: a character with a 12 strength would receive a -4 if he attempted to shoot a .45 pistol, which has a STR minimum of 14.

Armor Description

Armor, boffer–This is the standard acceptable armor for Division 4 events. It consists of plastic shoulder pads, shin, and forearm protectors covered in thick foam padding. It comes with a padded helmet and safety goggles.

Bonded–Bonded armor consists of unconnected fiberglass plates for the shoulders, forearms, groin and thighs, a plastic chest and back protector, fingerless gauntlets, oversized chrome-reinforced combat boots with protection for the knee caps and a sturdy plastic helmet with a mesh face guard. None of the pieces interlock or overlap; each piece is strapped separately to the body. This affords the wearer a great deal of maneuverability, but no protection for his joints–the neck, elbows, back of the knees and hips are exposed. Bonded armor is light, and some rogues prefer it for Xcrawl events. Bonded armor takes a full ten minutes to don, five minutes with a competent assistant.

Composite Sports Gear–Composite sports gear is similar to the sports padding worn by hockey or football players. It consists of rigid interlocked plastic plating for the chest, a plastic helmet with mesh face mask, a groin protector, and armored athletic shoes. It is available in its standard configuration, with forearm, shin and spine protector or in a light configuration without those components.

Micromesh armor–Micromesh armor is composed of a layer of artificial leather over a layer of titanium alloy chain mail. The individual links are less than an eighth of the size of standard chain mail links, giving the armor superior flexibility, while the special alloy makes the dense mesh exceedingly light. The armor consists of a bodysuit of micromesh material with chest plates, paratrooper-style combat boots with knee protection, and a micromesh hauberk.

Micromesh armored clothing–This is micromesh armor designed to look like street clothes. It has no helmet. High fashion custom versions are available from anywhere from 100 to 250 percent above standard cost. Although it has the appearance of regular clothing, micromesh armored clothing carries all of the benefits and penalties of normal armor. You must be proficient with light armor to effectively wear micromesh armored clothing.

MiniLynx© Armor–The BlueSkin Jeans Co. out of Metterie has entered the competitive Xcrawl armor market with the MiniLynx©, a variation of micromesh armor. The armor consists of a thin layer of titanium alloy mail of tiny interlocking rings, which is flexible, light and durable. The armor additionally protects vital areas with a layer of microspring padding that applies negative force against incoming attacks, helping to protect against the impact of heavy blows. This armor is available in two configurations; the standard includes a shirt and breeches of MiniLynx over stretch denim, with combat boots and microspring padding over the

ARMOR

Item	Cost	Max Dex Bonus	Armor Bonus	Armor Chk Penalty	Arcane Spell Failure	Spd (30'/20')	Wt
Armor, boffer	10	+1	10	0	5%	30'/20'	10
Bonded	250	+3	+5	-1	15%	30'/20'	20
Composite Sports Gear							
Standard	150	+4	+3	-2	20%	30'/20'	15
Light	150	+3	+4	2	20%	30'/20'	10
Micromesh armor	550	+5	+3	-2	25%	30'/20'	10
Micromesh armored clothing	850	+3	+5	0	20%	30'/20'	8
MiniLynx							
Standard	2500	+6	+4	-4	25%	20'/15'	20
Light	3200	+4	+8	-1	25%	30'/20'	8
Riot Gear	1000	+5	+1	-5	35%	20'/15'	20
Shield, Large, Plastic Riot	100	+2	–	-2	15%	–	8
Shield, Small, boffer	10	+1	–	-1	5%	–	3

chest, knees, elbows, and groin, with a microspring padded helmet with built-in mesh eye protection to leave the wearer's peripheral vision unobstructed. The skimpy configuration is popular with players wanting to show off their bodies–the armor has a sleek and sheer design exposing the midriff and thighs of women's armor, and the chest and thighs for men's. The skimpy configuration also

substitutes a fashionable half-helm with the same built in eyewear. Either configuration includes tiny hidden pockets in the boots.

Riot Gear–Riot gear is generally used by police in crowd control situations. It consists of bullet resistant padding for the shoulders, arms, and legs, a vest with ceramic plates, and a heavy helmet with plastic face shield. Riot gear is generally prohibited in Xcrawl events, although monster handlers often have riot gear available in case of an emergency.

Shield, large, plastic, riot–This is a transparent plastic tower shield, used by police during crowd control situations.

Shield, small, boffer–This is the standard shield available for Division 4 events. It is a lightweight plastic shield with a thick layer of foam padding. It offers the same protection that a standard shield does to armor class, but it has a hardness of 2; standard weapons striking it will destroy it fairly quickly.

Adventuring Gear Description

Backpack, waterproof–This is a sturdy nylon backpack with waterproof seams covering the zippers and openings. It fully protects its contents from rain and other light soaking. Fully submerged, it will protect its contents for up to half an hour, before water begins to penetrate the seal.

Compass– This is a small glass device featuring a needle continuously pointing north. It lists all the cardinal directions and their degrees, so an experienced outdoorsman can use one with a map to orient his exact position. A compass is delicate, and any hard blow will render it useless.

Knife, survival–This sturdy knife has the same combat statistics as its normal cousin, but has a compass built into the handle. The compass can be unscrewed to reveal a small interior chamber only large enough to hold a few matches and a needle and thread, or similar items. The compass is fairly durable, and can endure a short fall or other light blow.

Knife, multipurpose–This is a handy, versatile tool. Typical designs have a tiny blade, a screwdriver, scissors, saw, bottle opener, can opener, awl, toothpick, and tweezers. If a rogue lacks thieves tools, he can use a multipurpose knife to lower his open locks penalty from -2 to -1.

Knife, gnomish third hand–This amazing device has all the tools of a standard multipurpose knife, as well as a small clamp, universal eating utensil, hollow breathing tube, and stud finder. The blade is self-sharpening so it always keeps its edge. Its complicated design makes the gnomish third hand more fragile than a standard multipurpose knife–one good blow renders 1-4 devices unusable. If a rogue lacks thieves tools, a gnomish third hand reduces his penalty to open locks and disable devices from -2 to -1.

Flashlight, headset–This is a flashlight mounted onto a headband, providing hands-free illumination for the wearer. It creates a cone of light 60' long and 20 wide at the end. Full batteries allow it to shine for up to 12 hours.

MAGIC EQUIPMENT

Card-carrying members of the Adventurer's Guild may buy certain types of magic items, for their standard listed prices. This includes 1st level potions, 1st level wands and 1st level scrolls, +1 armor, weapons and ammunition, and +1 rings of protection. Other magic items must either be created by the character, found during their adventures, or won in Xcrawl events.

ADVENTURING GEAR

Item	Cost	Weight
Backpack, Waterproof	15	2 lb.
Compass	20	–
Knife, survival	5	1 lb.
Knife, multipurpose	20	–
Knife, Gnomish Third Hand	60	1 lb
Flashlight, headset	25	1 lb.
Flashlight, Light	5	1 lb.
Flashlight, Heavy	20	5 lb.
Goggles, protective	12	–
Goggles, underwater	15	–
Lighter, masterwork	7	–
Pen, good (10)	1	–
Rope, Modern, 50'	20	5 lb.
Scope, bow or crossbow	80	1 lb.
Watch, Sports	15	–

CLASS TOOLS AND SKILL KITS

Item	Cost	Weight
Healers Kit, Modern	100	3 lb.
Thieves' Tools, Modern	120	2 lb.
Spellbook, Waterproof	110	3 lb.
Spellbook, Puzzlelock	200	3 lb.

CLOTHING

Item	Cost	Weight
Adventurer's Outfit, modern	60	10 lb.
Business outfit	50	8 lb.
Street Clothes	15	8 lb.
Fine Clothes	100 +	8 lb.

Flashlight, light–This is a standard rubber-handled flashlight. It creates a cone of light 60' long and 20 wide at the end. Full batteries allow it to shine for up to 12 hours.

Flashlight, heavy–This is a huge, heavy flashlight with a metal sheath and a safety glass cover. It creates a cone of light 80' long and 22' wide at the end. It can be used in combat with the same statistics as a club; if used in combat there is a 10% chance per blow it will no longer be functional as a light (non-cumulative). Full batteries allow it to shine for up to 12 hours.

Goggles, protective–Protective goggles are eyewear designed to keep out dirt and other eye irritants. They do not protect against a blow in combat. They can be clear, or tinted to protect against bright light.

Goggles, underwater–These goggles are designed to offer maximum sight underwater. Characters wearing underwater goggles have their normal vision under the water's surface. Darkness and murky water still adversely affect the goggle wearer's sight.

Lighter, masterwork–This is a refillable, sturdy lighter with a flip top. For a small fee they can be engraved.

Pen, good (10)–This is a standard ink pen with a self-contained ink supply.

Rope, modern, 50'–Modern rope is made out of sturdy nylon or plastics. It can be burst with a successful strength check (DC 24). It is not as supple as silk rope.

Scope, bow or crossbow–This is a specifically designed telescopic sighting scope to improve accuracy over range. A bow and a crossbow need entirely different types of scopes. While you cannot freely exchange the scope from a bow to a crossbow, for game purposes have the same statistics. Lining up a shot through a scope is a full round action. The player uses the scope to fire on any target or targets which are moving at no more than double their normal move. A scope offsets any incurred penalties for range or cover by a factor of three before they begin. Example: the standard range on a heavy crossbow is 120'. Each range increment after the first incurs a -2 penalty to hit. A crossbow with a scope allows the user to shoot up to 360' with no range penalties, after the initial range the penalties incur as normal–at 480' it gets a -2, and -4 at the 600' maximum range. A scope is a delicate object, and any blow against one in combat renders it useless by knocking it out of alignment. Realigning a scope is possible with the appropriate craft skill. Used against a target under cover, a scope gives a normal chance to hit an opponent under half cover, and lowers the difficulty of hitting an opponent under 9/10 cover to -6. A scope has a hardness of three and ten hit points.

Watch, sports–This is a tough, water-resistant watch displaying the time and date, which doubles as a stopwatch. It has a tiny light so the player can check the time in full darkness.

Class Tools And Skill Kits

Healers kit, modern–This kit contains sterile bandages, burn cream, aspirin, and other useful first aid items. It adds a +4 circumstance bonus to any heal check. It can be used ten times before it is spent.

Spellbook, waterproof–This is a spellbook with a thick nylon sheath. It has a double reinforced seam to keep water out, even when submerged underwater for an extended period of time. It also has an outside pocket big enough for pens and a notepad.

Spellbook, puzzlelock–This specialized spellbook has a wooden cover with a puzzle inlayed on the surface. To open the book the puzzle must be solved in the right method, or the puzzle becomes increasingly difficult. The puzzle can be shifting pieces of wood, hidden tumblers

requiring the whole book be shifted, or any number of other mechanical puzzles. There are hundreds of variations, so very few puzzlelock spellbooks unlock in the same way. Each is a custom, handmade item taking a minimum of a week to make. Its lockpick DC is 26.

Thieves tools, modern–These are picks and skeleton keys, a magnifying lens, a small stethoscope, and a universal flexible tool all specially designed to aid a thief in opening a lock. Modern thieves tools give a +2 bonus when used against archaic or ancient locks.

Clothing

Adventurer's outfit–Every adventurer has his own style–the cost and weight shown represents the average adventurer's outfit. Leather and spikes, surplus camouflage gear, spandex, artfully ripped T-shirts, embroidered flowing robes, and breathable athletic jerseys with football pants are all considered adventurer's outfits.

Swimming Outfit– A men's swimming outfit is a pair of slick trunks. A woman's swimming outfit is either a one or two-piece streamlined suit. They dry extremely quickly.

Food, Drink and Lodging

Hotel stay (per day)–A night at a standard hotel includes hot water, clean towels, and a television. Checkout is at 10:30 AM.

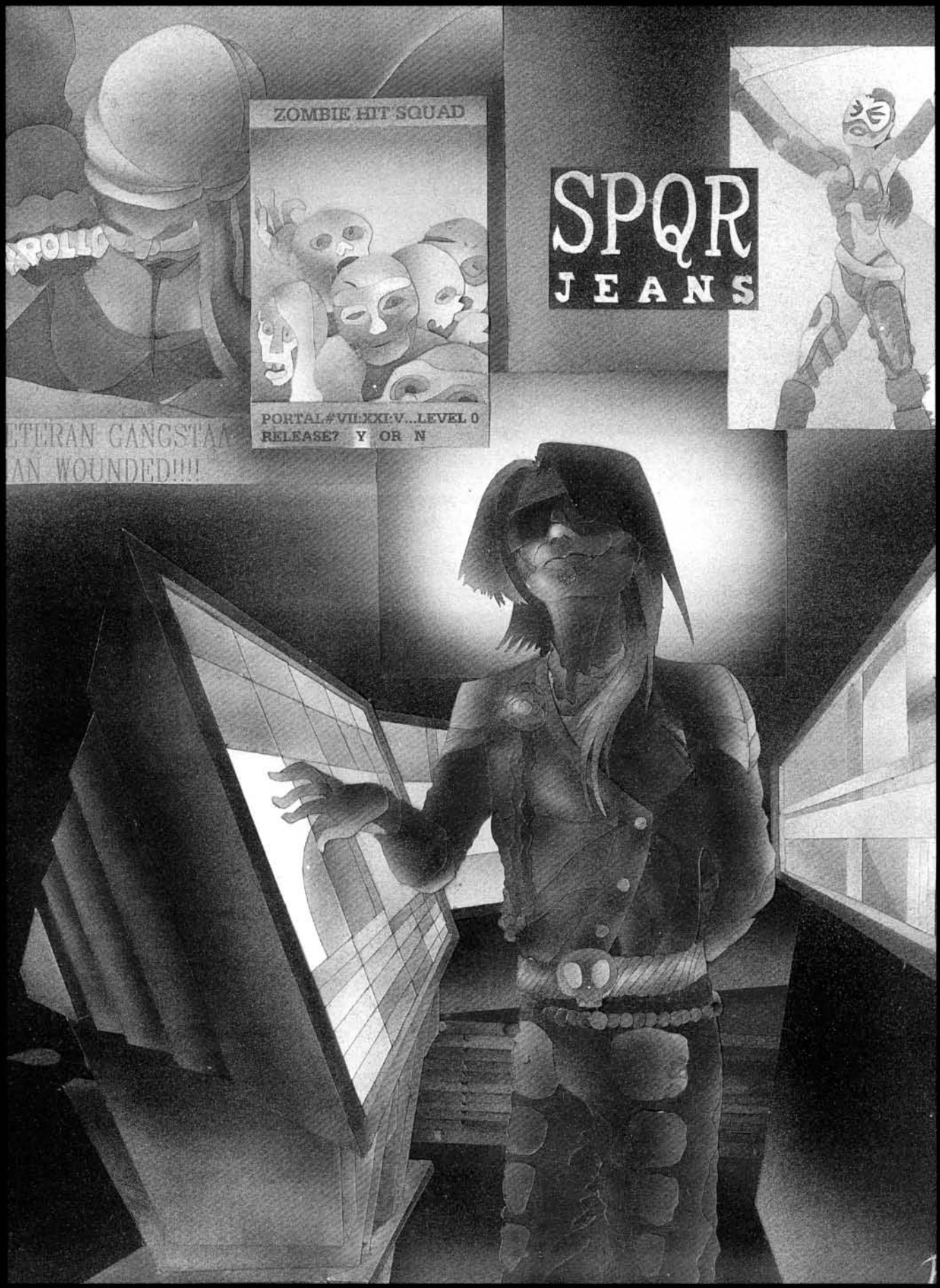
Hotel stay, four star (per day)–A night in a four star hotel includes luxurious accommodations, access to spa and gymnasium facilities, free continental breakfast, and valet parking. Check out is at noon.

Hotel stay, resort (per day)–A night in a resort hotel includes top-level accommodations, access to personal trainers and physical therapists, and day care. Amenities such as live entertainment, private golf courses, and boat tours are generally available as well. Checkout is flexible.

Motel stay (per day)–This is a stay in a fortified rest area off one of the nation's highways. Fuel and food are always available, and there are twenty-four hour guards, trained and equipped to deal with the occasional monster or humanoid raid. Checkout is at 10:00 AM.

FOOD, DRINK AND LODGING

Item	Cost	Weight
Hotel Stay (per day)	25	–
Hotel Stay, four star (per day)	100+	–
Hotel Stay, resort (per day)	200+	–
Meals, MRE, per day	6	1 lb
Motel Stay (per day)	15	–


ZOMBIE HIT SQUAD
PORTAL#VII:XXI:V...LEVEL 0
RELEASE? Y OR N
SPQR
JEANS

CHAPTER FIVE

GAMEMASTER'S SECTION

"Well, the Gangstaa's have finished level one of the here at MemphisCrawl. But at what price?"

"It wasn't an easy day for the tenacious Gangstaa's. Geronimo Nick limps off the field, and Oni and The Messenger are all but carrying Stud, who took more than his share of the damage from this fight. Sweet Minerva, just look at him! He can barely move, but he manages to give the camera the thumb's up as they lead him off."

"Smiling through a mouth full of broken teeth–that's The Stud in a nutshell."

"Nobody is free from injury at this point. The Sleeper is holding the bandage over the ear she almost lost to that orc attack. The Messenger, who must be nearly out of power at this point, is definitely favoring his chewed-upon arm."

"One wonders what drives the players."

"Well, Monica, it has to be a combination of desire to be the best, to glorify the empire and, of course, the fame and the gold."

"Oni has stated publicly on more than one occasion that she's in it for the money, period."

"Whatever the reason, Xcrawlers demonstrate that the North American Empire is the home of the bravest men and women the world has to offer. Emperor Ronald I, the Merciful Uniter, has created the sport to end all sports–the only sport that matters–Xcrawl."

"Indeed. And what will happen on level two? Will the Gangstaa's continue to lead the pack, or will another team move ahead? Tune in this Wednesday at 1:00 for continuous coverage of this year's season opener, live here from beautiful Memphis. Well, signing off until level two, I'm Monica Silverstring."

"And I'm Cliff Nelson. May mighty Jupiter bless all of your days. Good night from all of us here at Empire Sports One."

THIS SECTION IS OFFICIALLY NOGO TO ALL PLAYERS– READ FURTHER AT RISK OF PERMANENT DISQUALIFICATION.

RUNNING THE WORLD

The world of 4699 is rife with opportunities for adventure, even without Xcrawl.

Xcrawl presents a dramatic break from your normal campaign, allowing your player's to explore characters that aren't found in a traditional fantasy adventure scenario. Here are some recommendations to help make Xcrawl a challenging and fun break from normal role-playing experience.

It's Your World

This book can only be the springboard for your own unique and vast adventures. Don't be married to anything in Xcrawl that doesn't thrill you or your players. Tailor your game to your taste, and to the tastes of your group. Xcrawl can be played for laughs, or as a supreme hack-and-slash vehicle, or as a very serious setting allowing soul-searching role play.

You can emphasize different aspects of Xcrawl world to create the exact play experience you want. Xcrawl has some horrific aspects. The Game itself is essentially a death sport where sentient creatures kill one another to satisfy a population's appetite for spectacle and blood. You can make the distopic parts of Xcrawl the focus of your campaign–the cruel Emperor who uses The Games to distract the commoners from the Empire's lack of freedom and social justice, the blood-mad fan waving his beer while participants are killed by terrible beasts, the terrified participants who realize too late what they have gotten themselves into. Xcrawl can certainly be played with a political or social angle if that will best please your group.

Of course, it's perfectly okay to go the opposite route. Think about the hack-and-slash possibilities of Xcrawl. As GM, you can whisk your players off to a challenging dungeon with almost no exposition–no meeting at the inn, no discussion of the mysterious occurrences leading them to the underground fortress, no negotiating the purchasing of equipment or transport, etc. Instead, you can start in the greenroom, play through rooms filled with monsters, traps and treasure, finish in the parking lot and pick up at the next event. Pure hack and slash with a built in motivation: players are professional adventurers out to win The Games. The full-out dungeon assault can be a fun and exciting scenario, and Xcrawl can easily fit that bill.

The world of 4699 exists outside of The Games, and you can create an entire campaign allowing your players to fully explore this unique environment. The players could be North American Special Forces fighting threats to the NAE worldwide, spies for another Empire out to uncover vital national secrets or pro-democracy rebels bent on overthrowing



the totalitarian power structure. The possibilities are infinite, and the world of Xcrawl is similar enough to our own to find endless amounts of source material on the nightly news and in history books.

Or if you prefer, don't use North America at all. If you have an existing campaign world that your players are used to adventuring in, it could certainly be your Xcrawl world as well. Xcrawl is set in a mythical version of North America, but you should not feel obliged to use that particular scenario at all. Setting the game in a "modern" version of your personal campaign world will make the scenario at once familiar and wonderfully alien for your players. What would your campaign world be like with the addition of technology and world spanning dictatorships?

For example: *GM Dave is going to run some Xcrawl as a break from his usual scenario, set in his normal campaign world of Blueworld. His players were based in Red City, and have had dozens of adventures in the city and its surrounding environs. GM Dave decides to set his Xcrawl game in Blueworld, and makes the first event the Red CityCrawl.*

Dave can even create some fun crossover details in his Xcrawl game. If his PC's were heroic in the original campaign, they might be remembered with a street named in their honor (this is a society paying huge respect to its fallen heroes). In fact, why couldn't the GM place some of the player's old magic weapons in the dungeon? If you want to get players interested, try placing Ol Scrappy, the + 3 talking sword that the players originally found in the hoard of the Dank Lizard Queen, somewhere in your Xcrawl event. Or you might even let the players create the ancestors of their original characters, fighting the ancestors of their ancient enemies –or better yet, the same enemies who have somehow survived!

Showmanship

In the NAE, an Xcrawl event is held with one purpose: to captivate the audience. As the gamemaster, you should endeavor to do the same. Showmanship is an integral part of Xcrawl. You must strive to be a master showman, and encourage showmanship in your players.

Your powers of description are essential to your showmanship skills. Details allow your players to suspend their belief. Suspension of disbelief is the key to creating a world where your players can immerse themselves. In order for your players to truly suspend disbelief, they must have a clear and focused picture of the game in their minds. The skill for you to develop is **visualization**. The better you can visualize the events and characters of your game, the better you will be able to describe them to your players. Consider a normal Xcrawl room–eight orcs with scimitars in a 30' x 30' chamber. Now fill in the details of that room with your imagination. What are these orcs wearing? What is the condition of their armor and weapons? Do they stand stiff as soldiers, or are they crouched in defensive postures? Are they quietly anticipating the inevitable battle, or do they fill the air with war cries? What does the room smell like? If you create this room in your head, you can create it in the player's heads. A key detail is the quality of light in your setting–describing whether the room is dark, nearly dark, harshly lit or lit by torches or arcane lights will have a huge impact on how your players picture the situation and react to the encounter.

Use your voice, body and hands to help describe the characters and settings in your game. Good storytellers don't limit themselves to just using their voice–gestures can tell the story in a way that simple narration can't. Something as simple as raising your hands over your head in the manner of an ogre with a sledgehammer can really bring the game to life for your players. The same goes for using your voice. You don't have to be a master impressionist to effectively use your voice to make the game more realistic for your players; it's amazing what a simple effect like putting a growl into your voice when you character a beast, or affecting the effete tones of a nobleman, can do. Experiment with your voice, and use your player's reactions tell you how it works for them.

Players best remember the small details of your game. The more memorable you make them, the better stories you will tell. "You stab the goblin–it falls over dead": that description tells the player everything they need to know. "The goblin misjudges your swing. His block is too high, and you are able to lunge under and run him through the chest. He croaks once through a mouthful of blood, slides off your sword and lands in a heap on the floor"–that description will stay with your players. Note that in the above description you don't even have to use the word *dies*–your players know that goblin is dead because you described the situation well enough. That's good storytelling.

Xcrawl has so many real world elements–television, live audiences, a sports arena-like atmosphere –that it lends itself well to a slightly more realistic style of play. When you describe the action, consider violence in the real world. Think back to any reality television you may have seen, where cops struggle with suspects or innocent joggers struggle against pit bulls. Real world violence is messy and horrifying- you don't want to turn your players off to the game by constantly bombarding them with horrific descriptions of gore, but letting them see the occasional glimpses of just how horrible combat truly is will turn your Xcrawl campaign into something special.

TIPS FOR A BETTER XCRAWL

1. Flow Like Television

This time around, the adventure will be televised.

The media plays a huge part in the Xcrawl game. Xcrawl is a televised event, and you will often have to describe televised images to your players. Work on describing televised images as well as possible. Watch television, and practice describing what you see. Television gives the audiences a strong central image, changing scenes quickly and completely. It constantly grabs at the audience, and avoids "dead air" as much as possible. Work on creating the effect of watching TV for your players, and you can make the experience all the more real for your players.

2. You May Have To Whack Some Guys

Here's the scenario: between levels you choose to have a little expository role-playing. You decide Emperor Ronald I has



made it to the season opener and he wants to meet the players. You describe him as he and his entourage enter the Green Room.

You: " . . . and his majestic robes flow about him. He is like a giant among men. As you all bow down before him . . ."

Player: "I don't bow. Shadowfoot doesn't bow down before anybody. I just stand there and look him in the eye."

You: "Um, are you sure? As a lifelong citizen of the NAE, Shadowfoot knows that this is the Emperor, the representative of the gods on earth, and he knows that the Emperor traditionally doesn't take kindly to those who don't accord him a measure of respect. Want to try that again?"

Player: "Nope. Shadowfoot made a promise to his father on his death bed to bow down before no human. See? It's in my character description right here."

At this point you owe it to your players to whack Shadowfoot with extreme prejudice. Emperor Ronald should nod his head, glance sideways at his guards, and they should escort the player out. A moment later the players should hear gunshots erupt in the parking lot. The Emperor might shake his head sadly and recommend finding a new rogue to fill out the roster.

Another example: the players have just finished off a truly difficult room–one of those down-to-the-last-die-toss scenarios. As the players catch their breath, DJ Lassie Faire shows up on a nearby AVS.

DJ: "Well done my hearties! I thought my hoogabungaroos were going to finish you for sure!"

Player: "Are you kidding me? They were trifles. Space fillers. Busy-work. Come on, don't you have any real monsters in this wimpy dungeon? I, Guffman the Slayer, thirst for a real challenge!"

Once again, if you don't lay the smackdown on them for this kind of outburst, your players are not getting their money's worth. The world of Xcrawl simply does not make allowances for that kind of behavior. If the players get away with embarrassing the DJ on nationwide television then the scenario simply won't work for them–they will be "snapped out" of the game in the same way that a poorly chosen phrase can snap a reader out of the spell of an otherwise arresting book. Handle the situation in a satisfying and educational way. In the above example, DJ Lassie Faire is going to laugh off this slight while on camera, but once the interview is over she should take a moment to go through her "Now It's Personal" monster file and come up with something really interesting for this crew–like those rabies-infested blink dogs she's been saving for a special occasion. She might not kill the players outright for this kind of infraction but she will certainly avenge the insult. And when the players are breathing hard and treating their wounds, Lassie Faire should pop up on a nearby AVS and apologize for the poor performance of her 'wimpy' monsters. "I mean, a few of you aren't even infected!," she might say with a smirk.

A third example: in the HomeTownCrawl, you decide that the DJ Local Yokel is famous for his outrageous door traps. You let the players know this in advance–they have all watched the HomeTownCrawl in previous years on TV, and they have a good idea of the DJ's style. However, one of your players has created a fearless dwarf barbarian, who insists on impatiently kicking every door down. "I'm just playing in character," says the player. Which is fine–the player has a character concept and is running it to the hilt. As gamemaster, you simply have to let that barbarian take his lumps. Indeed, you may well decide that Local Yokel is going to take advantage of the dwarf's recklessness by making the door traps even worse than usual; a DJ will definitely make changes to the lower levels of his dungeon if he finds a golden

opportunity like this.

Xcrawl should be hard. In a perfect game, smart players with just a little bit of luck on their side should be victorious only after much trial and setback. Don't waste mercy on the foolish or unwary. Characters who act flagrantly stupid should be out in the parking lot alongside Shadowfoot.

Of course, as the gamemaster you should resist going too far–you don't want to run a scenario so difficult that the player's can't enjoy themselves. A good time should be the fundamental value of Xcrawl. If a game isn't fun, what's the point? Strive for that golden balance where the player's have to work hard and pay attention to win. There is nothing quite so satisfying as hard earned victory.

3. Put Your Characters At Center Stage

There is no point in playing a game where the player characters are not the center of attention. This is a scenario which, under normal circumstances, you should let the player characters be the ones to go on to the lowest levels of the dungeons–they should not automatically win any given scenario, but unless they die or are disqualified they should be allowed to attempt the most dangerous levels.

In a normal Xcrawl scenario, it is easy to allow your players to go on to the lowest levels. If they becomes obvious that they don't have the best score, change the circumstances and let them go on to the lowest level. For example–in the AtlantaCrawl, the players foolishly squander their resources and are forced to rest twice on the second level. There is no conceivable way that they have beaten their rivals, the Pittsburgh Law Enforcement All-Stars. If you want the players to go on to the third level anyway, let the players know that they have come in second place–the All-Stars beat their time by a full thirty hours. Disappointed, the players begin to make plans for their next scheduled event. However, a day after they begin making their preparations they watch the Xcrawl Show on Empire Sports One and they hear that the All-Stars have been disqualified for using their controversial "choke hold & pepper spray" maneuver–the players have been invited back to take a stab at level three! It is very easy to change events to make sure your team gets every



opportunity that you want them to have. Of course, if it would better serve the campaign let the AtlantaCrawl decision remain, and lead the players on to bigger and better things.

4.Don't Let Players Play Themselves

There is a temptation in fantasy games to create a scenario allowing the players to an alternate version of themselves, creating a character whose abilities more-or-less match the abilities of the players themselves. Resist this temptation. Such a game is a sure way to bruise egos, hurt feelings, and generally make people wonder why they decided to play at all. Character creation is a minefield–players either overestimate or underestimate their skills and abilities, sometimes wildly, and the player's perceptions of themselves often clash with the perceptions others have of them. Grudges from the real world are transferred into the game, lessening the enjoyment for those unfortunate enough to be the receiver of the other player's negative attention. And what do you do when character-who-is-based-on-me dies? Players playing themselves create needless distractions, always overshadowing any entertainment it provides. Resist the temptation.

5.Utilize The Familiar

This seems to conflict with the advice above, but consider using real world elements in your game to increase the sense of "twisted reality" that Xcrawl conveys. The world of 4699 is not so far different from our own–is it so hard to imagine all of the elements from the real world you can borrow? Real world athletes might be the superstars of Xcrawl. Real world companies might be the sponsors of The Games, and real world locations will certainly make an appearance. You can infuse your game with characters and places to enhance the reality of the game. If your players win a corporate sponsorship, you could simply create a fictional corporate entity or you could choose an appropriate one from the real world. Of course, your favorite cross-training athlete would play Xcrawl–he'd be a natural. And your favorite soft-drink manufacturer certainly sponsors Xcrawl, because if they don't, the competition will.

Used judiciously, real world/Xcrawl world crossovers can be a lot of fun.

6.Reward Personality

Xcrawl is a personality sport. If you want to go all the way in The Games you have to be memorable to the crowd. The most memorable players aren't always the most effective or the skilled individuals–it's the most interesting players that stand out in our minds.

Players create a persona for themselves, and having an interesting persona should be rewarded. Players with a popular gimmick will be invited to more events than players who don't because they command ratings. Sure, he gets disqualified every time, but the home audience just loves it when Kaptain Karaoke lights his helmet on fire. Heroics win the game, but ratings bring in the cash, and in the end that decides who plays and who stays home. Widdamaker might have killed more hobgoblins than The Great War, but everybody loves the antics of happy-go-lucky rascal Busy Bee, who manages to make a funny face at the camera even when nearly been blown to bits by an undetected door trap. That kind of silliness–which gets stale quickly in a normal game–works just fine for Xcrawl. Players who stand out will be treated as exceptional, even if they aren't truly talented in combat. Think about the most memorable sports players working today–how many of them are famous for their skills and how many are famous for their outrageousness? The answer is that

the player who has both becomes a superstar. Xcrawl players at the highest levels are like professional wrestlers–the fans know what to expect from them, and the players make sure they don't go home disappointed. Players who create such a persona for themselves should receive more offers and have more recognition than those that don't.

7. Don't Roleplay Checking Into The Hotel

As the gamemaster for an Xcrawl campaign, you have to be selective at which parts of your characters lives you 'fast forward' through. Since the game is so close to our own world, there are many subjects you can skim over–ordering in restaurants, the daily workout, the drive to the stadium ("You take a left on 25th street–make a spot check to not miss your exit . . ."). Role play the adventures and leave out as much of the mundane as possible. This will allow for quicker and more satisfying game play. Don't ignore the mundane, but a passing mention is enough.

BUILDING AN EVENT AND CAMPAIGN

When you create your own Xcrawl event, there are many factors to keep in mind. The following checklist can help keep some of the most important factors straight:

Setting

Decide where and when your Xcrawl event takes place. In North America, the dungeon will basically be known by the city where it resides–for example, the DenverCrawl or the MemphisCrawl. You can choose any city you want to exist in your version of the NAE, but it should be a city large enough to have all of the elements needed to host an Xcrawl event–money and nobility being chief amongst them. You can literally place your event anywhere you wish. If you want to play International events, so be it. Just remember that the location will effect the overall flavor of the event. Also, determine when in the Xcrawl season it takes place. Perhaps your event will occur during an odd time of the year. Why? Is your event an up-and-comer, which has to wow the crowd with the most brutal spectacle ever televised? Does it mark a special occasion? The Xcrawl season schedule is important and should be a consideration in your event design.

Dungeon Judge

The DJ has so much control over the dungeon that you should create them first. Give them a name, a nickname, a personality and a bit of background history. What does your DJ want in a crawl? Do they want to simulate an actual underground crawl like in the pre-cataclysm world, or do they want spectacle and flash? Are they vindictive, sportsmen-like, or capricious? Once you have an idea of who your DJ is, you can begin preparing the dungeon.

Physical Environment

Decide how many levels the dungeon has, and what the structure will be like. Consider your traps, special encounters (under water, suspension bridges, etc.). Are there any special physical obstacles or challenges you want your players to face?

It's good to include at least one arena-type room per level. This is a room with a major encounter, an audience and perhaps an electronic scoreboard. Live audiences are an essential part to any dungeon. The attending nobles are the lifeblood of Xcrawl, and they pay big money to get close to the action.

BUILDING YOUR DUNGEON JUDGE

A DJ can come from any background. They should be smart, charismatic, well-connected and wealthy. Long-time DJ's should also have a few levels of Expert (Dungeon Judge)–expert class skills would include performance, bluff, sense motive, knowledge (architecture, trap design, Knowledge: monsters and arcane). Magic is intrinsic to running an Xcrawl event. If the DJ isn't a powerful wizard, he certainly has several on his staff, and dozens of lesser conjurers to create effects like AVS and non-com badges.

Earlier, you were advised not let players play themselves in Xcrawl events. The same is true about creating yourself as an Xcrawl DJ. Part of the beauty of Xcrawl is having the in-game DJ, your evil doppelganger, to do your dirty work. To play yourself as a DJ in the game involves the ego too much. Did you personally make the scenario too easy or too hard? Is this a reflection on you as a person? Best to remain the gamemaster in the shadows, and let your DJ create his world for the players.

There is a full range of dungeon spectrums you can create. On the one hand, you can create a dungeon which is very similar to a 'traditional' dungeon. The players won't see any live cameramen or game show-like accoutrements. This would represent a DJ who has painstakingly created the most 'realistic' dungeon he could muster. The opposite side of the spectrum would be akin to an ultra-violent gameshow. This would be a completely artificial environment involving scoreboards, music and pyrotechnics. This represents a DJ wanting maximum spectacle and no concern for creating a traditional feeling event. The sample dungeon, MemphisCrawl XV(p.183), is an example of this type of crawl. It has 'Princesses' running around who need rescuing, a game-show like treasure system and special effects. Its up to the DJ (and thus you, the GM) to decide the tone and flavor of your event.

There are endless variations on what you can do designing your dungeon. Imagine the historic crawl: the DJ gets his hands on an ancient artifact and a map some wayward scout made of an underground adventure, along with encounter notes. The DJ decides to create an entire event around the ancient relic, interlacing the information he found–how strict or as loose is up to you to decide. You can modify any dungeon into an Xcrawl style event. Imagine your player's horror when they realize that the undead-laden Xcrawl event they are halfway through is hauntingly similar to the lair of the ancient lich you ran last year...

Scoring the Crawl

The majority of Crawls are still scored only by time. The first team to accomplish the goals and get through the dungeon in the best time wins. But that isn't the only system used these days. Many DJ's have created specific goal-oriented scoring systems unique to their dungeons, giving teams headaches and forcing them to train for something besides speed. A popular scoring system right now is the Lord Stableford System (LSS), which assigns values to accomplishing or failing to accomplish certain tasks. As gamemaster, you need to decide what scoring system you will use in your game. You can use timed events, the LSS, or a system of your own design. It's entirely up to you, but try to keep it fair and entertaining for everyone.

THE LORD STABLEFORD SYSTEM

Lord Stableford is a noble in the Ohio District who found himself growing tired of seeing teams built strictly for speed. He thought that many games weren't being won by the best team, but rather by the team that moved the quickest. So, he approached some local DJ's and constructed his own scoring system. Ironically, it was DJ Kachina, the designer of PhoenixCrawl, who first used the system. It has become something of a popular oddity, and while not used in any of the major events to date, it is becoming somewhat commonplace in the smaller crawls. The teams with the highest scores advance to the later rounds, and the team with the highest cumulative score at the end of all the levels is declared the winner.

The system scores as follows:

Clearing/finishing a room: +8 points

A PC is wounded in the room: -1 point per PC

Successfully disarming a trap: +2 points

Successfully locating, but not disarming a trap: 0 points

Failing to locate a trap: -2 points

Finding a hidden item: +3 points

Unraveling a hidden message: +3 points

An NPC is killed: -15 points

An NPC (non-com) gets wounded: -7 points

A PC is killed: -20 points

Rolling a critical hit: +2 points

Rolling a critical miss: -2 points

Forcing a monster to surrender: +1 point per monster

A teammate is disqualified: -15 points

Successfully performing a Signature Move: +2 points

REWARDS

Experience

Characters advance normally in Xcrawl, but experience points are tallied differently. As dangerous as it is, Xcrawl is an artificial environment giving the players many advantages. Players have easy access to extra equipment, breakrooms and paramedics. A player can choose to escape through a NoGo door–disqualifying himself, but saving his life. There are built-in breaks between levels, giving the players a chance to heal and memorize spells. All of these advantages should be taken into account when you compute awards. Experience for an Xcrawl encounter is calculated in one of three ways:

1. Standard Xcrawl

A standard Xcrawl event allows players to rest between levels. The dungeon provides the players with breakrooms and paramedics, and players in danger of

imminent death can choose to quit rather than to continue. When calculating experience points for a standard dungeon, the average party level should be considered two levels higher than normal. For example: a party consisting of two fourth level characters, a fifth level character and a seventh level character would normally be considered to be a fifth level party for purposes of calculating experience points. For a Standard Xcrawl encounter, they should be considered to be an average of seventh level.

2. Difficult Dungeon

Some Xcrawl events are played straight through, with no breaks between dungeon levels. For XDC events which are more restrictive, the team's average level should be counted as one level higher for purposes of calculating experience points.

3. Haywire Encounters

Sometimes those pesky monsters just won't follow the rules. When the circumstances of the adventure go beyond the parameter of what the DJ intended, then you have a haywire encounter.

Some examples:

–A band of goblins seeking revenge for their fallen leader smuggle themselves out with the laundry and jump the players in the parking lot after the crawl.

–A hungry ogre sneaks out of his pen in search of food. He winds up locking himself in the walk-in freezer of the studio commissary, and is devouring raw hamburger with abandon. If the police get involved, it will become a media scandal. The DJ asks the players to deal with the ogre quietly as a personal favor.

- One of the paramedics has gone mad. Once the players are resting in a breakroom, he launches a plan to kill them all and steal their bodies for nefarious purpose.

Haywire encounters are counted as their full experience point value. The average party level is not changed when determining experience.

It is entirely possible for all of these circumstances to exist in the same dungeon. The Motoraya MexicoCityCrawl is a standard dungeon. However, the third level leads directly to a secret fourth level, making all encounters on the fourth level difficult dungeon encounters, since the players have no chance to rest, refresh and re-equip between before attempting it. And when the players are suddenly attacked by a green slime infesting the air ducts, the dungeon has gone haywire, and experience points should be calculated accordingly.

Limiting the amount of experience points a party earns has the added effect of making the campaign more like a simulated sports than traditional adventure gaming. If you were to distribute experience points normally for all the player's encounters, they would likely do only one Division Three event, which would give them enough experience points to try a Division Two event. This, in turn, might give them enough experience to attempt a Division One event, and so on. The characters could conceivably be ready to retire after a single season. Stretching out the party's advancement over many dungeons gives the campaign a more "sports-like" feel–the players can have a career lasting for several seasons, retiring after perhaps twenty or thirty events.

Treasure

Each DJ has his own method of distributing treasure, but the one constant is that creatures will never have



it on their person. Looting bodies is, hypocritically, unpalatable to the prime time audience. Generally, the DJ wants to make finding treasure more ceremonial than picking it off a hobgoblin with an arrow stuck in his head.

Treasure might be contained in a chest, or hidden somewhere in the dungeon environment. Remember that the treasure is for the PC's, but the show is for the audience. Handing out treasure is a great opportunity for good TV moments, so normally the action stops and the players are given a moment to compose themselves before the treasure is awarded. The audience loves to see the party get treasure, and many DJ's will take advantage of this by making it more of a spectacle–a sliding panel will swoosh open, revealing a velvet lined hollow full of newly minted stacked gold pieces, or a leggy supermodel will enter the dungeon and present the prize to the players personally.

DJ *(speaking directly to the players through an AVS): Well, it looks like you finished off my bugbears for good. Well done, heroes!*

Player: *Thanks. It was a hard fight, but we came together as a team and with Apollo behind us our victory was assured.*

DJ: *Well put. Let's see what those nasty bugbears left behind. Ladies and gentlemen, are we ready for the treasure?*

The crowd applauds and whistles

Announcer: *For defeating the bugbears, the players win 5,000 GP and an all-expense paid trip to Orlando!*

Player: *Yes! Yes! Did you hear that, crew? We're going to Cartooneyland!*

DJ: *Not yet you aren't–the dungeon only gets harder from here on, and if you die–you die!*

Treasure normally consists of the following:

Gold

Coin of the realm is the most common treasure item in any dungeon. All monetary winnings are recorded with the Adventurer's Guild. Xcrawl winnings are not taxed in the NAE, but Adventurer's are expected to use only their Xcrawl winnings to purchase new equipment after their first dungeon. This doesn't include any donations that sponsors might make to the party or individual players–if the AAArrows Co. sponsors the New Orleans Jazzmen, you can rest assured that they use nothing but AAArrows, provided free as promotional items.

Magic Items

Magic items are generally donated to Xcrawl through corporations and individuals who in return receive either advertising space, or choice seats for the competition, or some other form of compensation. DJ's are prohibited from distributing certain types of magic: artifacts (including minor artifacts), items that work with extradimensional powers, teleportation or mind control. This rule exists not only to prevent a magic item from giving the players an unfair advantage; the Guild wants to be sure to keep items out of the dungeon which would be extremely dangerous for sentient monsters to get their hands on.

The most common magic item awards are magic weapons and armor, protective devices, potions, scrolls, wands, and minor wondrous items. Magic rings, excluding protection rings, are generally only found in Division One or higher level events. Magic armor and weapons are generally +1 to +3. The players must declare all of the magic items that they bring into the dungeon, including prepared scrolls, and the DJ has the final say on what is permissible and what is not.

Every magic weapon found in Xcrawl (excluding ammunition) will have its own name. It simply makes for better theater when the players receive **The Skull-Creaser**, rather than an everyday **+2 battleaxe**.

In low-level Xcrawl events, magic items with the power to undo specific damage are often given out after certain encounters. For example: the DJ plans an encounter with a basilisk. Two rooms later, he gives away a **Potion of Stone to Flesh**. This is entirely up to the individual DJ, whose first priority is to entertain the crowd, not protect the lives of the players.

Prizes

"250,000 GP in prizes!""500,000 GP total purse!" Xcrawl events advertise themselves with wildly exaggerated numbers. Make no mistake, all the competing players together won't take home that much gold. The total purse includes the value of all the magic items and prizes given out. Any team will only get a fraction of the prizes advertised, no matter what the number–and then they have to divide them up among themselves.

Prizes are donated by the manufacturers as promotional items. Xcrawl is a bonanza for marketing and advertising agencies, and it is considered a great honor for corporations to participate by donating merchandise and services to be given away. This is one of the things that helps to inflate the "value" of the event; the DJ doesn't have to pay for the item, so they count the value at its most inflated rate.

Large, bulky prizes won't just be lying around in the dungeon for players to tote out. Players collect awkward or heavy prizes after they have completed the dungeon.. This has two benefits: if the players die mid-way through the dungeon, the prizes are not lost, and it also allows the players to avoid the awkward challenge of carrying items like food processors and karaoke machines through the dungeon.

Feel free to get creative and choose your own kinds of prizes. A good rule of thumb: make 1/3 potentially useful in an adventuring sense, 1/3 prizes which are glamorous and prestigious but not useful, and 1/3 'groaners.'

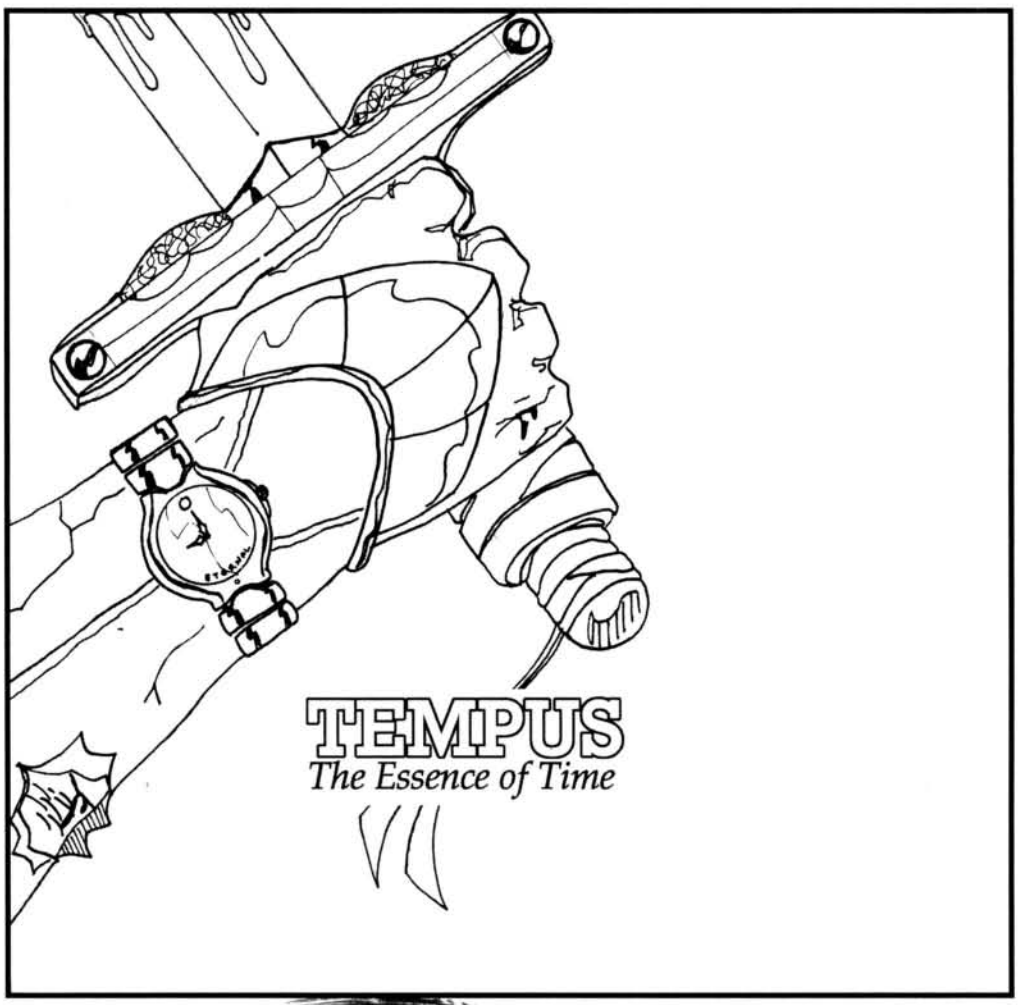
Useful: Lifetime subscription to Xcrawl Monthly, a year's supply of crossbow bolts, masterwork tools and weapons, waterproof scroll cases and coupons for medical attention.

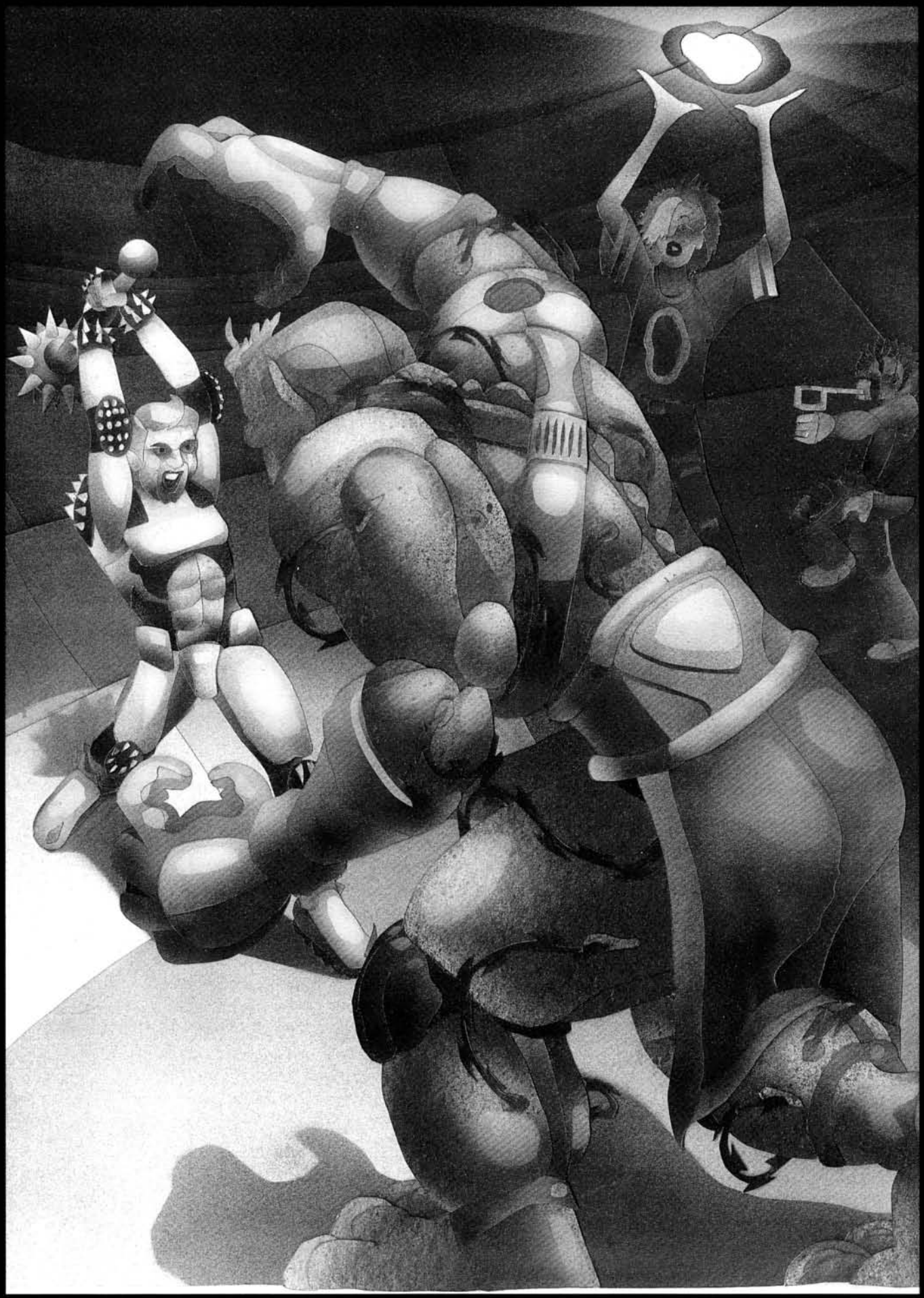
Glamorous or Prestigious: Vacation packages, luxury auto-mobiles, tattoo gift certificates, masterwork sports equipment, jewelry, and fine leather coats.

Groaners: A year's supply of car wax, donation to an obscure charity in the party's name, an invitation to a temple dedication, a case of Owlbear Chow.

Liquidating Prizes

What, your barb-arian isn't inter-ested in a lovely new set of designer luggage? Players might try to sell prizes that they receive in Xcrawl. Selling prizes usu-ally earns around fifty to seventy-five percent of the items total value (GM's discretion). Players can sell excess magic items to the Adventurer's Guild at any time for 75% of their book value, and the monies received from these transactions can legitimately be used to purchase new Xcrawl equipment and magic items. Some prizes, such as vacation packages, cannot be sold. Money that players earn from selling prizes to anyone besides the Adventurer's Guild is no longer Xcrawl money–they get taxed on whatever they earn from selling prizes, and money earned from prizes may not be used to purchase Xcrawl equipment.





CHAPTER SIX
THE APPENDIX

SAMPLE CRAWL: MEMPHISCRAWL XVI

Introduction

MemphisCrawl is a typical Xcrawl event. This scenerio demonstrates the difference between Xcrawl events and traditional dungeons. MemphisCrawl is a flamboyant, effects-laden, potentially lethal dungeon, built around the idea of spectacle. It is designed to give your players an introduction into the world of Xcrawl.

The Crawl

MemphisCrawl is the beloved Division 3 season opener of North American Xcrawl. The event is highly anticipated by players, journalists, and fans. The dungeon is a three-level competition, pitting six teams against each another for the best time completing their levels. The dungeon is scored on a best-time basis; the two teams from each day with the best time progress to the lower levels. There are six teams participating in MemphisCrawl XV, including the player character team

The Competition

The Furious Six, Los Angeles

The Grandfather Harlequins, San Antonio

The Pittsburgh Law Enforcement All-stars, Pittsburgh

The WyldBurger Masters of Disaster, Cleveland

The Frogmen, Spokane

The PC's team–with the appropriate name, of course.

The first level will be run in two heats of three teams each, with the player character's going in the first heat. The day after the first three teams have finished or are eliminated, the second three teams begin. The winner of the second level has a 24 hour break before the third level begins.

There are actually four physical levels. The three arenas serving as the first level for each beginning team, and a separate arena that is used only for the third level. When the two winning teams go on to the second level, they are playing in the same physical structures used for one of the other team's level one. Of course, DJ Cudgel UP! changes the content of every level, making it appropriately more difficult as needed.

DJ Cudgel UP!, Dungeon Judge Julie Klugman

Julie is a showman and an aggressive opponent. Her goal is to put on an event that will stun her viewers and inspire heroics from her players. She demands good play, but she isn't vicious or vindictive (some critics fault her for this). She came into MemphisCrawl fourteen years ago, and she is now one of the more respected Division Three DJ's.

Cudgel UP!'s staff includes the following personnel:

Referees: Abner Hershfeld, Kathy Wicklander, Darnell Lawerence, Pam Treat

Paramedics: Jayella Wonderwell, Myrna Trechtchoya, David Lantree, Ben Hoffman, Melvyn Huckabee

Monster Trustees: Ru'Dat Cho, hobgoblin chieftain; Doslajden, orcish warchief; Vrusk, troll superstar

Trapmaster: Lothar "The Real Prick" Silvergoat, dwarvish expert trapmaster 7th, fighter 2nd.

MemphisCrawl Official Rules

The gamemaster should tailor the game to his player character team. If the gamemaster has five players, it just so happens that five is the maximum number of players MemphisCrawl allows this year–likewise if you have three, six or more players. The dungeon is designed to be challenging for five 3rd level players who have all the advantages of Xcrawl, including modern equipment and access to paramedics and the like. The players have all the standard equipment restrictions, plus the following: a maximum of five potions brought into each level per player, a maximum of five vials of alchemist's fire per player, a maximum of 40 arrows or quarrels for archers, and a maximum of 12 levels of scrolls per spellcaster. The players may bring one retainer into the MemphisCrawl, who follows the standard rules for retainers. Retainers will be assigned a non-com badge, with a contingency teleport spell to transport them to a nearby medical facility should they take a hit.

All of the text inset from the body text is meant to be read to the players aloud.

NOTE ON ABBREVIATIONS

Trap DC–spot/disable device. Example: a DC 18/24 trap requires a spot check of 18 to find and a disable device check of 24 to disarm.

Level One: The Game Begins

The players begin the dungeon in a green room, where they wait for the dungeon to begin. Read the following to the players.

This is a typical studio greenroom–comfortable and simple, with concrete walls, fluorescent lighting and vending machines. Benches and folding chairs fill the room, and every chair faces the a huge arcane video screen on the north wall. There is a craft services table with bagels and cream cheese, miniature chocolates, coffee, juice, and soft drinks. A referee is here, wearing the traditional black and white striped uniform. He wears a shoulder holster with a heavy pistol. The door to the east is marked NoGo.

The players are required to be in the green room by noon. When they arrive, Referee Abner Hershfeld explains the rules of the

dungeon to the players, answering any questions they may have and checking their equipment. The pre-crawl interviews begin at 2:30, and the players can spend the two-and-a-half hours how they choose. The ref will not allow them to begin play early; any players who pay special attention to the starting door–i.e. start checking for traps, listening, etc.–before the ref gives the go ahead will first get a verbal warning, a second offense will get them a disqualification (DQ).

At one o'clock, two live cameramen assigned to the PC team arrive. They are Dekkan Flintspar, fourth level gnomish expert (broadcast technology), and Jovaris Burrowdeep, third level gnomish expert (photographer). Before the crawl they check their equipment, quiet everybody so Dekkan can record some background room noise, and eat. They speak gnomish to one another and common to anyone else. They absolutely refuse to discuss any aspect of the crawl with the players, and will complain to the ref if they are being badgered for information.

At 2:00, the Pre-Crawl Show begins. The pre-game show consists of an extended evocation to Apollo, an introduction of the DJ, a segment on the history of the MemphisCrawl, a virtual tour of the dungeon for the home viewers, and a little background on the participating teams. The players are not permitted to watch the show, so the AVS plays episodes from the popular sitcom "Larry's Castle" until it is time for their interview.

The interview begins at 2:45. They will be asked by cameraman Jovaris to assemble in front of the huge MemphisCrawl Logo covering the entire south wall. DJ Cudgel UP! will appear on the AVS and address the players directly, introducing them one-by-one to the audience. She acts appropriately flip about the players chances, which she assures the crowd are minimal. She will likely have a joke or witty comment for each player regarding such topics as what they had for their "last meal," whether or not they have notified their next of kin, etc.

She then introduces the dungeon. The TV images flip back and forth between Cudgel UP!, the crowd, the princesses, and whatever else may be appropriate. Read the following section to the players:

"Okay, its time to get serious. At ease, players, while I describe the scene. This is dungeon level one–the rewards are small, but so are the challenges. Okay, I may have crossed the line a few times, but hey, that's life in the pros. (Crowd laughs).

Your job is simple enough: fight the monsters, collect the treasure, find the princesses, and escape. There are three princesses hidden on the first level. Is everyone ready to meet your princesses? [big cheer from crowd] Glad to hear it. Ladies and gentlemen, your MemphisCrawl Princesses!"

The TV shows a team of sleek dancers performing a tight, provocative routine to hard hitting drum and base. They wear black bikini tops and shorts, topped by old fashioned conical "princess hat," complete with a colorful tassel at the top. The camera focuses on the lead dancers one at a time, and graphics of their names appear:

Princess Vogue: Beautiful Black girl with braids.

Princess Keya: Gorgeous blonde, athletic white girl, fresh faced and cute.

Princess Felony: Freaky punk girl with black hair, colorful tattoos, nose and belly piercing. She sticks her pierced tongue out at camera.

Princess Success: Italian woman with an excess of gold jewelry.

Princess Fire: Red hared, fair skinned beauty with freckles.

Princess Azure: Sinewy Middle-eastern bodybuilder with a silver nose ring.

Princess Passion: Pacific islander with graceful, entrancing dance moves.

Princess Mystery: A beautiful Asian woman, wearing a distinctive jade choker.

Princess Victory: Statuesque Native American woman.

Princess Electra:: Black girl with a blue wig. More exotic than traditionally attractive.

Princess Janet: Dosen't seem to fit at all with the rest. She dosen't dance well and looks very frightened. She is not particularly attractive or graceful.



The dance routine is interrupted by four performers in stylized "doom guard" armor, who show up and capture Vogue, Keya, and Felony. The princesses act outraged and afraid (in some cases, the acting is very, very bad, but they all look fantastic).

Cudgel UP! returns:

"Okay, my Doom Guards are going to hide the three princesses somewhere on the first level. Your mission: free all three princesses, collect the red, white and blue card keys, and find your way out. Is that so hard? Bill, do you think that sounds hard? (The camera shows producer Bill Waguspeck sitting at a huge control panel and wearing a headset. He shakes his head silently.) Hey Barry, does anyone in accounting think that sounds so bad? (The camera shows a bunch of pale smiling accountants at their desks, all of them grinning and shaking their heads.) Nope, accounting dosen't think that sounds so bad. What about you guys? (Camera switches to a room full of goblins, orcs, trolls, and hobgoblins–all of them armed to the teeth. They each shake their head and smile wickedly. A goblin in back points a spear and actually touches the camera lens, and the monsters laugh a mean laugh.) What about you guys? (Archive footage of a pack of zombies trying to eat the camera.) Whatever. Okay, lets get ready to crawl!

In the name of Apollo, we thank our merciful Emperor Ronald I for providing us this opportunity, once again demonstrating the glory of the Empire. So having said, let us begin these proceedings. Are you ready players?

Camera shows the players, who will hopefully say something heroic, or at least nod.

In the name of Emperor Ronald I, the most benevolent and just, I declare this contest begun. The dungeon awaits! We wish you all success and adventure, but if you die . . . [the crowd erupts with the traditional cry "You Die!"]. Begin!"

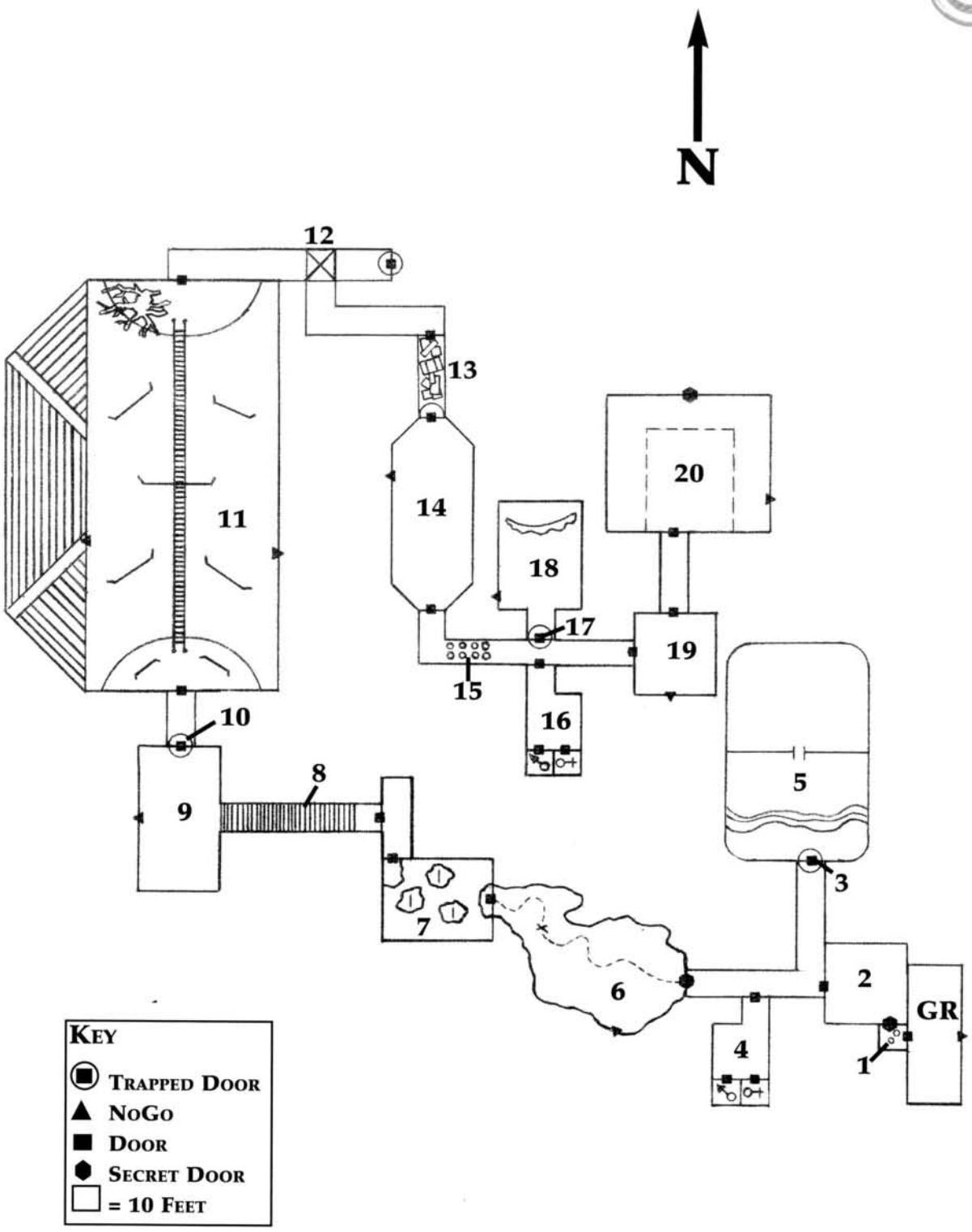
That is the official beginning. The ref gives a signal to the players, the screen goes back to the MemphisCrawl Logo.

At this point the players can open the door and begin.

CROWD DC TABLE

01-05	*DC 10*	*Hometown*
06-15	*DC 15*	*Friendly*
16-40	*DC 20*	*Good Natured*
41-60	*DC 25*	*Decent*
51-85	*DC 30*	*Average*
86-95	*DC 35*	*Riled*
96-00	*DC 40*	*Hostile*

LEVEL ONE


N
12
13
14
11
20
18
17
19
15
16
10
9
8
5
3
7
6
2
GR
4
1
KEY
TRAPPED DOOR
NOGO
DOOR
SECRET DOOR
= 10 FEET

DUNGEON ENVIRONMENT

The entire dungeon is dimly lit. With no other source of lighting, visibility is 30'. Corridors are twelve feet high, and there are two AVS's on opposite sides per ten feet of hallway. The AVS's will be showing static ads for various sponsors of the MemphisCrawl unless Cudgel UP! decides to use them otherwise. These ads glow like television screens; the light they shed provides ten feet of visibility. The walls, floor, and ceiling are faux stone. Unless otherwise noted, the following holds true through the entire dungeon.

–All doors are DC 20 to bash down. Each door is under a gothic archway with different themes carved in relief–gargoyles, demons, and huge staring eyes are typical door designs. All secret doors are DC 21 to locate.

–Treasure is always behind a secret compartment in the wall. Once the players finish a room, Cudgel UP! will say a few words and then the panel irises open. Inside are always five envelopes with a letter printed on it. The letters are C-R-A-W-L. The players may choose one envelope, and in each room four of them will have a treasury note and one will have a bonus prize–often an extra treasury note, but sometimes something special.

–Detect Magic *cast anywhere in the normal MemphisCrawl dungeon levels indicates dozens of magical effects in each room, including invisible AVS's monitoring the players actions, wards against scrying, and other magical protections.*

1. Descent

The room is a dark shaft, ten feet by ten feet, and it goes down as far as you can see. Three feet away from the open doorway are two smooth poles, about three feet apart from each another.

It is an easy jump roll (DC12) to leap to a pole and slide down. At the bottom of the poles, players find themselves in a darkened ten by ten room. There is a secret door hidden in the north wall.

2. Welcoming Committee

This room is dimly lit, and in the shadows you see figures moving forward menacingly towards the door.

There are six hobgoblin fighters here, each armed with a longsword.

1st level Hobgoblin Fighters: init +1, AC 15, two handed sword +1(1d8+1, 19-20/x2)

Treasure: 200 GP treasury note–envelope "W" has an extra 200 GP note.

3. Electrical Trap

This door has an electrical trap (DC 20/20, 1d8+3 electric damage). The trap springs when the knob is touched. Kicking the door open avoids the trap.

4. Breakroom

This is a standard breakroom. The room is carpeted and has two comfortable couches and three bunk beds. There is a cold buffet here with sandwiches and fruit, and a tiny refrigerator full of soft drinks and juice. There are also bathrooms with showers and towels. Paramedic Jayella Wonderwell is here, and treating injuries if necessary (total heal roll +14, includes modern healer's kit). Jayella is a half-elf earning extra money selling Xcrawl player gossip to the tabloids. If the players stay here for any amount of time, she will choose the player she believes to be the least intelligent and cozy up to him. Once she has a player's confidence, she will ask questions, hoping to find out some interesting tidbit she can pass on to her reporter contacts.

5. Neptune's Challenge

Door locked, DC 18.

A magnificent tiled mosaic dominates the east wall of this room. The mosaic depicts Neptune commanding the creatures of the sea. The floor of this room gives way to a large pool of clear water. The pool goes all the way to the far wall, and looking underwater you see a dark passageway seemingly leading to another room. The water is shallow at the edge of the pool, but gets extremely deep at the wall.

The underwater opening leads to the other half of the room. If the underwater passageway is lit magically, the players see that it is only a foot thick. Nothing happens until one of the players swims through the passageway to the other side. At that point, the other side of the pool lights up. Two lizard men wait underwater, attacking as soon as a player comes through. Shackled at the bottom of the pool is Princess Vogue. The Princess is underwater and mugging for the camera, acting afraid and helpless. She dosen't thrash or give any indication that she is in danger of drowning; in fact, she is protected with a *water breathing, mage armor* and *sanctuary* spells, as well as her non-com badge. The bottom of the east side of the pool is a giant concave AVS. Cudgel Up is on screen, humming the theme from a famous undersea thriller while the lizard men attack. She realizes that the underwater character can't hear her humming so she is also subtitled, follow-the-bouncing-ball style. (DAH-DUM, DAH-DUM, . . .) There is also a giant video screen (with sound) on the east wall of the west side of the room, so any players left on the bank of the pool can see the comrade through the passage is in danger. Assuming they kill the lizardmen, 'rescue' Princess Vogue and get to the other edge of the pool, Vogue leads the PCs (who went to the east side) out of the water, where live cameras waiting at poolside. Her lines:

"Wow–I thought I was a goner! Thank you so much for rescuing me, adventurers–you are my heroes." She might kiss the cheek of her rescuer. "Here is something to help you on your journey."

With great ceremony, Princess Vogue goes into her bikini top and comes out with the red key card. At this point, the hidden portal holding the treasure appears. Once the cameras are off, Vogue is obviously unhappy about having to be underwater with the lizardmen.

Lizardfolk: hp 19, 14.

Treasure: A 500 GP note–envelope A has an extra 500 GP note.

6. Mecha-Peril

This room is decorated to look like a natural cavern, with a rough-hewn façade and hanging stalactites on the cathedral ceiling. The room is dark and wide, and apparently empty.

There are clusters of mecha-piercers hanging from the ceiling, activated by sensors in the floor. Players walking across the floor are attacked by 1-4 MeccaPiercers each round. Players examining the ceiling with a powerful light source can find a clear path through the room by watching the ceiling (spot check DC 20). Once the players find the path, they have to move slowly, making a DC 12 reflex save each round for three rounds. Players who remove their backpacks and walk sideways receive a +2 on the roll. The room has one further trap: about three quarters down the "path" is a trip wire (marked X on the map). The first player making his way down the path must make a spot check DC 25 (20 if she states she is actually looking) to notice it. If it goes unnoticed, the first person in line hits the trap and gets a shower of needles shot at them from tiny slits in the ground underneath, doing 2d6 damage.

Mecc-piercers:+3 to hit, 1d6 dam.

7. Orc Ambush

Door locked, DC 20.

The door opens onto a rough ledge overlooking a sunken room. The floor twenty feet below writhes with the movement of small creatures. Strange

lights from the ground make menacing shadows on the walls and ceilings of this room. There are three "islands" in this room, all having a barrier of some sort erected on them. The islands zig-zag across the room, and on the opposite wall you see a similar ledge with a another door.

There is enough room on the ledge inside the room for four medium-sized creatures to stand. All the islands are eight feet apart–close enough for a strong character to jump. There are three well-trained orc fighters on each island, hiding behind the barriers. Once the players are in the room, the orcs begin to fire crossbow shots through the arrow slits in the barriers. If the players leap to the islands, the orcs switch to their double-bladed axes. They fight smart and as a team (they have a Mojo Pool). The floor below the islands is covered with hundreds of rats, and the weird shadows are the effect of the rats crawling over the lights set into the floor. Any player falling to the lower floor takes 2d6 damage, plus one point of damage per round from rat bites until they can get back to the islands or ledge. If the players defeat the orcs and make it to the far ledge, the treasure case opens next to the door.

2nd level orc fighters: AC 16, hvy. crossbow +3 (double bladed axe +1/+1 (1d8+2, 1d8+1, x3) hp 28, 24, 26, climb+4, jump+8, tumble +4, exotic weapon (double axe), ambidexterity, two weapon fighting. Mojo Pool 1d6+4.

Treasure: 200 GP note–envelope R has an extra 200 GP note. There is also a certificate here for a year's supply of Crusher© Xcrawl boots for each member of the team.

8. Going up?

The corridor ahead gives way to a massive escalator going up–the stairs are flush from wall to wall with no hand rails. The stairs appear to move more than twice as quickly as a normal escalator. The corridor goes up into darkness.

There is no specific trap on the escalator, but the bugbears hiding at the top control its movement. They can reverse it or stop it entirely as they choose. Players riding the escalator when it is reversed must make a reflex save (DC 20) or lose their footing and fall, taking 1d6 damage. The escalator moves at a speed of 60, no matter which direction it is running. Characters have to sprint up in order to make it to the top when it is reversed; a character moving at 60 will go nowhere, and a character who can run 90 will move up the stairs at 30' per round.

9. Escalator Control

At the top of the stairs are two bugbears, concealing themselves on either side of the entrance. They have an AVS allowing them to watch players on the escalator, and the bugbears will flip the lever (just at the left side of the door) when they feel reversing the escalator will put the players at the worst possible disadvantage. They each have a heavy crossbow, and there are four goblins who do nothing but reload for the bugbears–the goblins each have an extra heavy crossbow, 20 quarrels, and a bugbear's morningstar. There are two other bugbears, hiding in the shadows, waiting for the opportunity to flank. If possible, they will grapple the players and toss them back down the escalator. Once the bugbears are eliminated, the goblins surrender.

Bugbears: hvy crossbow +3 (1d10, 19-20/x2)

Treasure: A 200 GP note–the L envelope has an extra 200 GP note. There is also a **+2 Nose Ring of Resistance**, which adds +2 to all saves when it is worn in a pierced nose.

10. Explosive Trap

(DC 20/22) Opening this door does 3d6 explosive damage in a 10' radius, unless the trap is discovered and disarmed.

11. Assault!

As soon as the door opens you hear the roar of a massive crowd. A huge room,

longer than half a football field, confronts you. Stadium seating surrounds the arena, and you see fans in skyboxes cheering as you enter. The door opens onto a ledge, overlooking a giant battlefield. Two barriers stand at the edge of the cliff with arrow slits–you appear to be on the inside of the barriers. Stretching from the edge of the cliff is a long and precarious rope bridge, extending all the way across the room to another ledge. You recognize Princess Felony, tied to a massive barren oak tree, on the far ledge, a lone hobgoblin guarding her. She calls out to you for help. Hanging in the center of the room, eighty feet up from the floor is a massive electronic scoreboard, with all of your names and vital statistics listed. Far below the ledge on the floor are several massive barriers, similar to the ones currently protecting you.

This room has invisible walls to protect the spectators. It is a 50 foot drop from the ledge to the floor below. On the floor are ten hobgoblins with longbows hiding two to a barrier, and waiting for players to pass across on the bridge. They fire their longbows at any available targets, but if any players come down to the ground to face them, they drop their bows and regroup for melee. On the entry ledge, two goblin rogues wait just outside of the player's barriers (marked X on the map). Once the players enter the room, the rogue's each drink a potion of *invisibility* and wait for an opportunity for a sneak attack.

If the players defeat the goblins and hobgoblins, they can make their way along the rope bridge and free Princess Felony. She mugs for the camera, snearing and showing her pierced tongue again, then congratulates the players, and gives them the blue key.

Hobgoblins: hp 7, 9, 5, 6, 8, 6, 7, 4, 5, 4. Longbow +2 (1d8, x3)

2nd level goblin rogues: hp 15, 13, initiative +7, AC 17, shortsword +2 (1d6-1), hide +8, listen +5, move silently +6, sneak attack +1d6, evasion, improved initiative. Saves Fort +0, Ref +3, Will +0.

Treasure: No CRAWL choice–simply an envelope with a 1000 GP note, the **Short Sword +2** known as **Backtalker**, a **Potion of Cure Serious Wounds** and a **Potion of Cat's Grace**.

12. False Door

The false door at the end of the corridor is trapped (DC 20/20). The hallway dead-ends in the door, there is no other visible way out of the hall. If the door is opened without the trap being detected and disarmed, the section of hallway marked by an X collapses 50', doing 5d6 damage to anyone standing in the area. If the trap is successfully disarmed and the door is opened, the section slowly descends 50'. The door goes nowhere–there is an AVS behind it, and Cudgel UP! might have a few choice words for whomever opens the door. The door must be opened, and the area marked by an X lowered to continue on the level.

13. Rusty Monkey

Door, locked (DC 23), no trap.

This door opens onto a 20' dead drop. The corridor below goes thirty feet, and is strewn with old, rusted car parts. There is a door on the opposite wall with a small ledge in front of it. The ceiling has climbing rings mounted into it, running all the way to the door on the west wall..

Players can monkey climb across the span between the doors with a climb check (DC 14). The last rung before the door is trapped, and any player grabbing it for support will fall 20' into the auto graveyard, taking 2d6+5 damage. It is a fairly easy swing from the second to last rung to the ledge (tumble DC 12).

14. Superstar Troll

Door, locked (DC20), no trap.

This room is shaped like a basin; the floor slopes down to the center of the room to a large grillwork drain. Standing between



you and the drain is a huge troll with barbed wire looped through his flesh in several places. At the far end of the room are two cameramen and a referee. There is an audience watching the action from galleries along the north and south edges of the room.

The spectators are kept safe behind invisible walls. A successful knowledge: dungeon crawl roll (DC 15) lets the players know that this is Vrusk, a famous monster who enjoys grandstanding for the crowd. He has razor-style barbed wire woven in and out of his skin which he simply forced into his body and let his flesh regenerate around it. He will instantly attack, hoping to take advantage of players still making it over the pit. Vrusk will grab a character and hug him, causing horrible ripping wounds (1d4+2 damage per round, and bleeding for 1 point per round until bandaged or healed). He will carry a character around like this, hoping to prevent area fire attacks, holding the character with one arm and attacking with his free claw and bite. After the first attack, roll a d6 every round for Vrusk–on a 1 he will spend the round playing to his fans, regardless of how dire combat has become for him. When Vrusk goes down one time, the referee calls the fight and declares the players the winner before the troll can regenerate. The ref prevents the players from actually killing Vrusk if possible, as he is an extremely popular monster. Vrusk's fan club is camped out in the gallery (hostile crowd, DC 30), and they will boo the characters for defeating their favorite monster.

Vrusk, 1st level troll fighter: HP 78 (including 10 points of permanent wounds from barbed wire), AC 18, 2 claws +10 (1d6+6), bite +5 (1d6+3).

Treasure: 1000 GP note–the "L" envelope has an extra 500 GP note. There is also a **Potion of Invisibility** and a set of DeFunt Masterwork Thieves Tools.

15. Whirling Fun

This corridor has a very obvious obstacle (CR1). There are a series of whirling poles, each with dozens of bludgeoning attachments, on either side of the hallway. Some of the bludgeons change position with every revolution, making this an extremely treacherous passage. Players can see a lever on the far side of the hallway, just beyond the reach of the last obstacle. A

player must make two tumble checks (DC 19) to make it through the corridor unhurt; otherwise they take 1d6+4 damage as they are struck by the whirling attachments. Small characters receive a +4 size bonus on this tumble check. There is a further trap in this room (DC18 to spot; trap CR 2): the lever is coated with sticky contact poison (DC19, 1d6 temporary con. damage). Moving the lever into the down position turns off the obstacle.

16. Breakroom 2

This breakroom is identical to previous one (room 4). The paramedic here is David Lantree, an Xcrawl wannabe (total heal roll +16, includes modern healer's kit). David tells anyone who will listen about how he could have made it in The Games if he hadn't blown his knee out playing soccer.

David Lantree: Monk 1, expert (paramedic) 3, hp 20.

17. Door Trap

Door (trap DC 20/15–also locked, DC 20): The door is cold to the touch, although this has nothing to do with the trap. The door is rigged to spray anyone opening it with bright day-glow green paint (reflex save 25 to avoid the huge cloud of paint). Players coated in the paint have a -4 to hide checks until they can thoroughly wash themselves and their equipment. A rinse in the bathroom sink won't get the paint off adequately–it takes a shower and thorough equipment washing.

18. Northern Exposure

This room is kept at 20 degrees. Snow is on the ground, and the walls are slick with ice. Frozen winds blow across the room, created by giant fans in each ceiling corner. A barrier of ice has been erected towards the east wall, providing 50 percent cover to six hobgoblins who attack characters with javelins as soon as the door is opened. The hobgoblins are all wearing heavy fur to protect against the cold. The floor is slick west of the barrier (east of it are rubber mats for the hobgoblins), and anyone crossing the room at greater than half movement must make a dexterity check (DC 17) or fall.

Hobgoblins: hp 8,5,7,7,6,4.

Treasure: 500 GP note–envelope C has gift certificate for an Ar-Teck Down ski jacket for each surviving player. There is also a case with 20 **+1 heavy crossbow bolts**.

19. Teaser

This room looks more like a factory showroom than a dungeon room. It is carpeted, and a hard, driving song plays in the background. A beautiful model in a swimsuit stands in front of a shiny black SUV. Spotlights strike the car from every angle–it is an impressive piece of machinery. The car revolves around on a platform, showing it off from all angles. Once it does one complete slow revolution, the entire south wall becomes a giant video screen. DJ Cudgel UP! is there, twirling a key ring with two car keys on it. "Ladies and gentlemen, let me introduce you to our grand prize; the Vindicator 870 4X4. Simply the finest luxury SUV made in the Empire today, proudly brought to you by the folks at Empire Motors. If you make it all the way through the third level, then this baby goes home with you. And don't worry–everyone will fit; I already tested it out." The image changes to an advertising clip about the Vindicator. The scene is a breathtaking panorama of the rocky mountains. Cudgel UP! opens the hatch to show off the huge cargo space, and body bags start appearing in the open space–one for each member of the party. The scene changes and Cudgel UP! is driving down a rugged path with a decaying zombie in the passenger seat. "Can you feel that smooth ride back there? Why, I bet eternal rest has never been so . . . restful." You see the bodies in the cargo bed, in repose even though the car is bucking over the rugged terrain. "So what do you think?" says Cudgel UP!, addressing the zombie. "Is this the ride of

your life or what?" When the zombie simply stares straight ahead, the frustrated DJ pushes it out the door. The final image is the zombie lying in the road–a caption reads "Note: Actual Zombie." The image changes back to the DJ. "Okay, back to work. You only have one more room to finish before this level is over, but the challenges just keep getting harder. And if you die–you die!" Now the AVS, SUV and model all disappear. The illusion of a showroom is gone, and there are simply two doors–one leading to the rest of the dungeon, one NoGo door leading out of the dungeon entirely. LAST CHANCE appears to be written in blood on the wall next to the NoGo on the exit door.

There is nothing else in this room.

20. The Cudgel UP! Dancers, part one

This 30' high room has a 15' wide catwalk all around the edge, halfway up. The room is full of goblins carrying aluminum baseball bats. In the far north corner of the catwalk, the final Princess is tied to a chair. She looks theatrically helpless. For a moment, the entire floor is an AVS displaying Cudgel UP! wearing a tuxedo. "Ladies and gentlemen," says the DJ "I present the Cudgel UP! Dancers" Alright, my goblins . . . cudgel up!"

The dancers are Cudgel UP!'s elite team of goblin fighters. Once the fight begins, the dancer's theme music, "The Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairies" begins to play from hidden speakers. There are twelve goblins here–nine on the ground with the players, and three on the catwalk. There is one goblin each on the north, south, and east side of the catwalk, and each one has a case of throwing rocks. These goblins practice constantly, and have a Mojo Pool. They have several maneuvers to use against players, and bark code words at each other to coordinate their actions. Their three main maneuvers are as follows:

–Three goblins set themselves directly under the rock throwing positions. The rock throwers will then drop rocks for the goblins to bat at the players, instead of throwing them directly. Rocks striking in this manner do +3 on damage. On a fumble, the goblin loses his bat.

–If players get on the catwalk and threaten the rock throwers, the goblins may launch one of their team up to head them off. This requires two goblins interlocking their hands and setting for the assist, and one using the other two as a springboard. The set goblins will boost the goblins leap, giving him a +6 circumstance bonus to his leap check and negating height restrictions on distance. This maneuver takes practice–players attempting the assisted jump will likely look foolish on Imperial television.

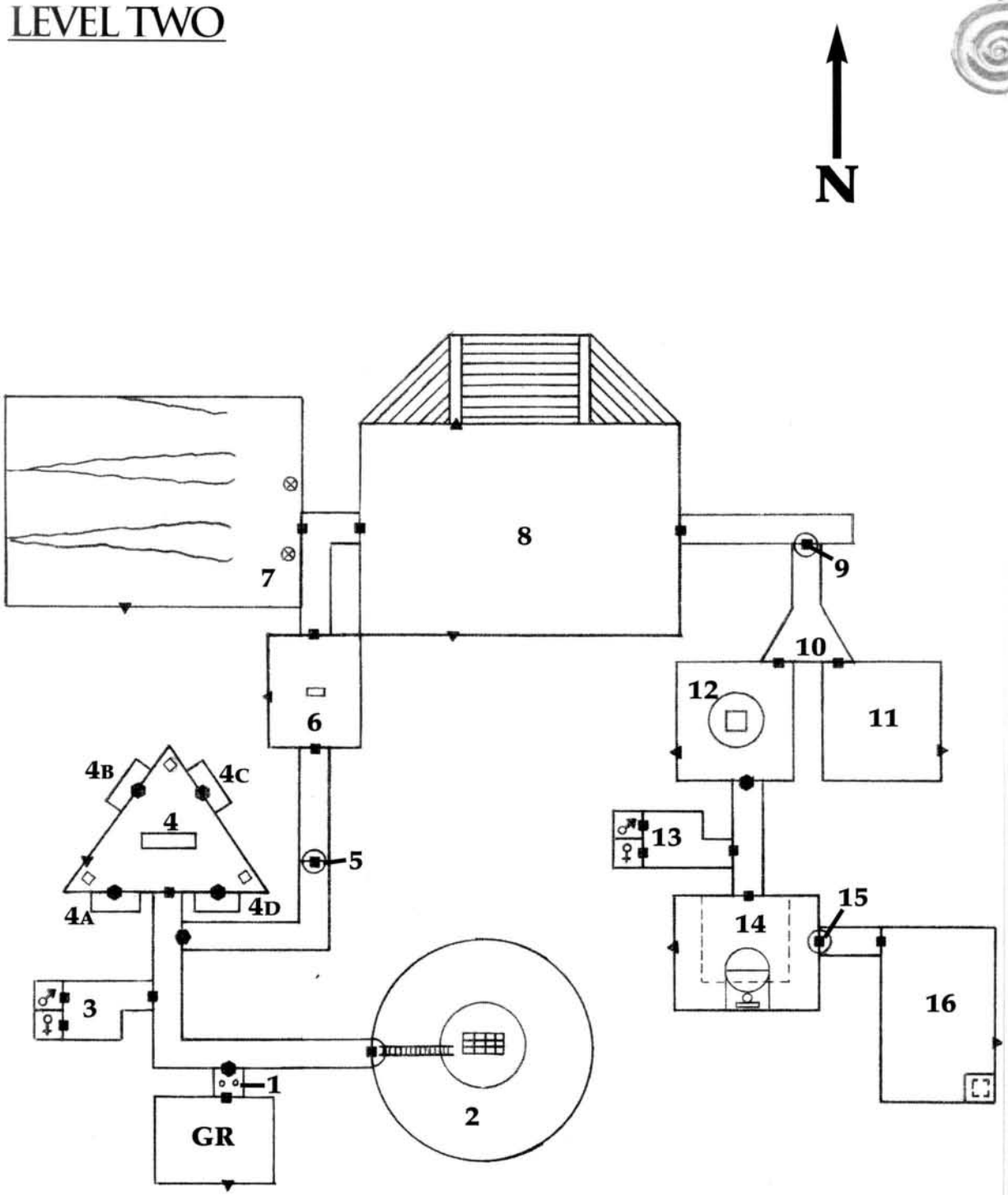
–If a goblin can get behind a PC fighting multiple attackers, he will crouch down behind the player's legs. If the character takes a hit while a goblin is set, he must make a reflex save (DC 10+ damage taken) to avoid toppling backwards over the goblin behind him.

These goblins are precious to the DJ. They have permission to surrender after taking only two hits. Once all the goblins are down or surrendered, the NoGo door to the south is blown off its hinges in a pyro-and-smoke effect–outside waits a crowd of cheering onlookers. The players only have to free Princess Keya and the first level is completed. Princess Keya congratulates the characters and gives them the white card key. The players can file out past a throng of fans and journalists snapping pictures. Each player receives the traditional bouquet of red roses for victory over the level.

Cudgel UP! Dancers 2nd level goblin fighters: AC 16, club +3 (1d6+1) or throwing rock +3 (1d3+1) jumping +10, weapon focus: club, skill focus: jump, expertise, HP 22, 19, 15, 13, 17, 16, 17, 11, 14, 16, 14, 17. Mojo Pool 1d6+6.

Treasure: There is no envelope choice here, only a 1000 GP note, two **Potions of Cure Serious Wounds**, an arcane scroll of *Cure Serious Wounds x3* and a **+2 Ring of Protection**.

LEVEL TWO



KEY

- TRAPPED DOOR
- NOGO
- DOOR
- SECRET DOOR
- = 10 FEET

Level Two: Mayhem Redux

The players get a full day to rest before level two begins. The two teams with the best times go on to the second level–the winners were The Grandfather Harlequins from San Antonio and, coincidentally, the player characters. You can create stories for the losing teams; how they suffered casualties, disqualified themselves, or were destroyed utterly.

The players must report to their designated green room by noon. The green room is practically identical to the one on the first level. There are cameramen, production assistants, and a few journalists sharing the room. Players with a 15 charisma or higher will be approached by reporters for a quick interview about the first level before the crawl begins; if they can make a performance roll (DC 18) for a successful interview, they don't look incompetent or cowardly no matter how it role-plays out. At 2:45, Cudgel UP! appears on the AVS. She counts the players:

"One...two...three...hmmm. It looks like some of you survived level one. Oh, well. 'Tomorrow is another day', as they say. And for you, my dear guests, let me just say this–your tomorrow is today. And today may be the last day of the rest of your life. Now, you remember how we did it last time. The fun continues on level two. Watch for monsters, traps, and obstacles. Your life is forfeit as of this very moment–do your best to prepare yourself."

She will interview the players, mentioning their successes and failures from the previous level. She spends a moment talking to each player, then moves on.

"Okay, it's go-time. This level finds four more Princesses in peril, needing a bunch of glorified burglars to get them out. Ladies and Gentlemen, I give you your princesses." You see the four princesses: Princess Success, Princess Fire, Princess Azure, and Princess Passion. They dance a little, then are "captured" by the Doom Guards and taken away. "Okay, lemmings–listen up to Cudgel UP! Free all four princesses, collect the four card keys–gold, silver, bronze, and steel. Find your way out. Its not brain surgery, folks, but you might require some if you aren't careful. I pray to Apollo for your success, but if you die . . . you die! In the name of Emperor Ronald I, the most benevolent and just, I declare this contest open. Begin."

1. Entrance

This room is ten by ten, with two poles to slide down. It is identical to room one on the first level. The secret door is on the north wall.

2. Fire in the Hole

Door, locked (DC22) and warm to the touch.

When the door opens, a blast of warm air hits you. Looking inside, you see a bridge of steel and chains. It is suspended over a 20' drop into what appears to be lava. Across the bridge you see a pillar of concrete rising out of the inferno. Its top is 50' across, with several large flaming skeletons brandishing scimitars pacing menacingly. Moving around the perimeter of the pillar are three more flaming skeletons, hanging by their ankles on swinging chains. The swinging skeletons make equidistant revolutions around the edge of the pillar, each holding his scimitar at a dangerous level. Suspended over the pillar is a cage holding Princess Fire. She doesn't pretend to be in distress like the other princesses have–in fact, she looks a bit peaked.

The bridge is three feet wide, with safety chains set like railing. Players falling into the fire take 3d4 per round until they can escape. There are ten skeletons on the pillar, who have been specially treated against fire (Fire Resistance 8). The skeletons are surrounded by flames, and any player touching one takes 1d4 points of fire damage. Three skeletons will make their way over the bridge to meet the players as they make their way over. Any player passing from the bridge to the top of the pillar must make a reflex save (DC 18)

or be subject to an attack of opportunity by the swinging skeletons. The reflex save DC is lowered by four for each of the swinging skeletons destroyed.

The cage is suspended fifteen feet over the pillar. The heat is getting to Princess Fire. She has been up in her cage for a bit too long, and has skipped more than a few meals attempting to lose weight for the show. She has become dangerously dehydrated. Right now she is not ready for the cameras–she has lost three points of Con, and loses another every five minutes until she gets some water (her full Con is 14, she is currently at 11).

When the room has been completed, Princess Fire hands over the silver key without much comment–she's on her way to the hospital.

Large Skeletons: scimitar +3 (1d8) HP 22, 13, 19, 18, 14, 17, 22, 15, 15, 13.

Treasure: 500 GP note; envelope C has an additional 500 GP note. There is also the **+2 Mace** known as **The Sergeant**.

3. Breakroom

This breakroom is identical to the others. Paramedic Jaella Wonderwell from the first level is working this room, and she continues to pry the players for their secrets (total heal roll +14, includes modern healer's kit).

4. Deck the Dungeon

This triangular room looks to be straight out of a Las Vegas casino. The walls are dark paneled and the lights are dim, with focused attention on a green felt card table in the middle of the room. The ceiling is mirrored and all the fixtures are polished brass. There are three statues here, one in each corner of the room. Each one depicts a famous Xcrawler. There is a man in a hooded robe, his face completely hidden, sitting behind the table. He wears a non-com badge. He dexterously shuffles a deck of cards like a magician–cards fly through the air in front of him and seem to shuffle themselves on the table. There is a bench in front of the card table, and the cardmaster beckons you to sit.

The cardmaster doesn't speak or stop shuffling until someone sits down at the table. At that time he says: "Choose: one or two picks." He will lay out one card for every pick the player chooses, but he has shuffled the cards he wants to the top of the deck. The GM can determine which card is chosen by rolling randomly, or by assembling the playing cards listed below, shuffling them and letting the players choose. The cards are as follows:

I–King of Spades–The secret door to 4A opens up, and six ghouls rush in to attack.

II–Queen of Spades–The secret door to 4b opens up, and a pack of four worgs rush out and attack. A fifth worg, wearing a distinctive jade choker, comes through the secret door as well, but she just sits there without attacking. If she is struck in combat, she disappears. If the worgs are defeated without the sixth one being attacked, she transforms to a beautiful asian woman. She introduces herself as Princess Mystery, and gives the players a special prize–a pair of **Elvish Boots**.

III–Jack of Spades–The secret door to 4C opens and 10 hobgoblins charge in and attack.

IV–Deuce of Spades–The cardmaster flips the player an envelope. Inside is a certificate for a trip for the entire team to Acapulco, airfare and accommodations included.

V–Ace of Spades–The secret door to 4D opens up, and a minor death flies out and attacks. It is similar to the Minor Death listed from the **Deck of Many Things**, but it does not hit automatically (scythe +6) and additional Minor Deaths do not appear if friends help fight it. The Minor Death disappears (along with his scythe) if destroyed, and if the players run out of the room it will not follow.

VI–Joker–The joker card is a tiny AVS, with a picture of Cudgel UP! in a harlequin costume. Her image swirls around several

times and laughs hysterically. Whoever drew this card is *cursed*: their perception is inverted, they see everything upside down. This gives them -6 to hit in melee and -10 to hit in ranged combat until the player has at least three hours to get used to the effect, when the penalties drop to -3 and -5, respectively. As long as the curse is in effect, the player is considered flanked by all attackers. This effect is permanent until dispelled with a *Dispel Magic* or *Remove Curse*.

Nothing happens if the players choose no cards and leave, but if a player decides on a number of picks he must take them or be disqualified. If the players simply search the room and find the secret doors, the creatures within will still rush out and attack except for Minor Death, who will do nothing until he is attacked first. Once all six possible outcomes have been faced, the cardmaster will disappear.

Ghouls: hp 17, 13, 18, 9, 16, 8.

Worgs: hp 41, 32, 19, 26.

Hobgoblins: hp 4, 8, 6, 9, 5, 7, 7, 5, 6 , halberd +1 (1d10+1, x3).

Minor Death: init +7, HD 7D12, hp 55, speed 80' fly, AC 15, 1 **Ghost Touch Scythe**+5 (2d8), special qualities: undead, incorporeal, unnatural aura, sunlight powerlessness, saves Fort +2, Ref +5 Will +7.

5. Trapped Door

Door, trapped (DC 22/20). A section of this door that looks like normal wood is actually a shaped putty charge. If it is not discovered, it explodes doing 5d4 in a 20' radius.

6. Cloak Room

This room looks like a dance club. Red and blue revolving spotlights make strange shadows, while a disco ball shimmers in the center of the room. On the floor in the center of the room is a treasure chest. It is hard to see, but there appears to be a door across the room on the north wall.

The chest is a prop made of cardboard. It serves as bait for the cloaker hiding in the shadows near the corner of the room. The monster attacks the team when the chest is investigated. The cloaker is not at all interested in the niceties of the Xcrawl rules, and is just as likely to attack a henchmen or a cameramen as a competitor. The extremely expensive creature will be rescued if at all possible: referees, handlers, and medics will run in through the NoGo door to stop the players from killing it once it goes down. They will declare the monster vanquished and the room completed.

Cloaker: hp 69.

Treasure: 500 GP note–envelope A has an extra 500 GP note. There is also a quiver of 20 **+1 arrows**.

7. Joust

This room appears to be a dirt bike racing track. Three dirt trails rise up to 20' dirt hills. At the top of each hill is a gnoll fighter riding a fearsome beast resembling a cross between a horse and a dog. Each gnoll has a lance, and they look poised to attack. Just to the right of the door you entered is a normal horse, a bay Tennessee Walker nearly fifteen hands high. It is geared with full Imperial tack and a war lance in a holster.

The gnolls are riding barkers. The gnolls charge with their lances, but will switch to flails once they are close enough for hand-to-hand combat. Once engaged in hand-to-hand, the barkers will also attack the party.

The saddle of the horse to the right of the door is trapped (DC 15/15). If a player mounts the horse it explodes, doing 3d6 to the player and killing the horse. Otherwise, it runs away to avoid the fearsome barkers.

2nd level gnoll fighters: AC 17, HP 28, 26, 24, lance +3 (1d8 +2, x3, double damage from charging mount).

Barkers: hp 21, 19, 18. See Bestiary, p 212.

Treasure: 500 GP note–envelope C has an additional 500 GP note. There is also a **+2 buckler**.

8. Bug Bowl

Door, locked (DC24) double doors. A successful listen roll (DC 18) registers crowd noise.

This is a huge arena room. It is lit like a concert hall; you can see a few random lights out in the audience, glowing advertisements, and the electronic scoreboard above, but otherwise this room is dark. You hear the roar of the crowd and there is a faint rank smell like decaying flesh.

Invisible walls protect the crowd.. If the players have a light source, it reveals the arena is full of webs, hanging from the floor to ceiling in a dozen places. If the players don't have a light source, there is a one-in-six chance per round that they touch a web and become caught. This will also alert the spider. There is a huge, monstrous spider here, hiding on top of the scoreboard. There are also two fomorians here with a permanant spider climb spell cast on each, one clinging to either invisible wall. They are taking cover behind two large patches of webbing. The fomorians will try to flush the players out towards the center of the room with arrows. Once any player's makes their way across the arena floor, the monstrous spider will glide down from the scoreboard on its web and attack.

At the far east wall of this room is a human-sized cocoon, standing near the exit door. It is a prop made from papier mache, and once the players investigate, it will fall apart and Princess Azure will step out, congratulate the players, and hand them the gold key.

2nd level formian fighters: Each has a short sword, plus short bow with twenty arrows. Hp 58, 62.

Monstrous spider, huge: 80 hp.

Treasure: 1000 GP note–envelope L has an additional 500 GP note. Also, two **Potions of Neutralize Poison**, and a separate envelope with a certificate for an Armstrong Baby Grand Piano (masterwork).

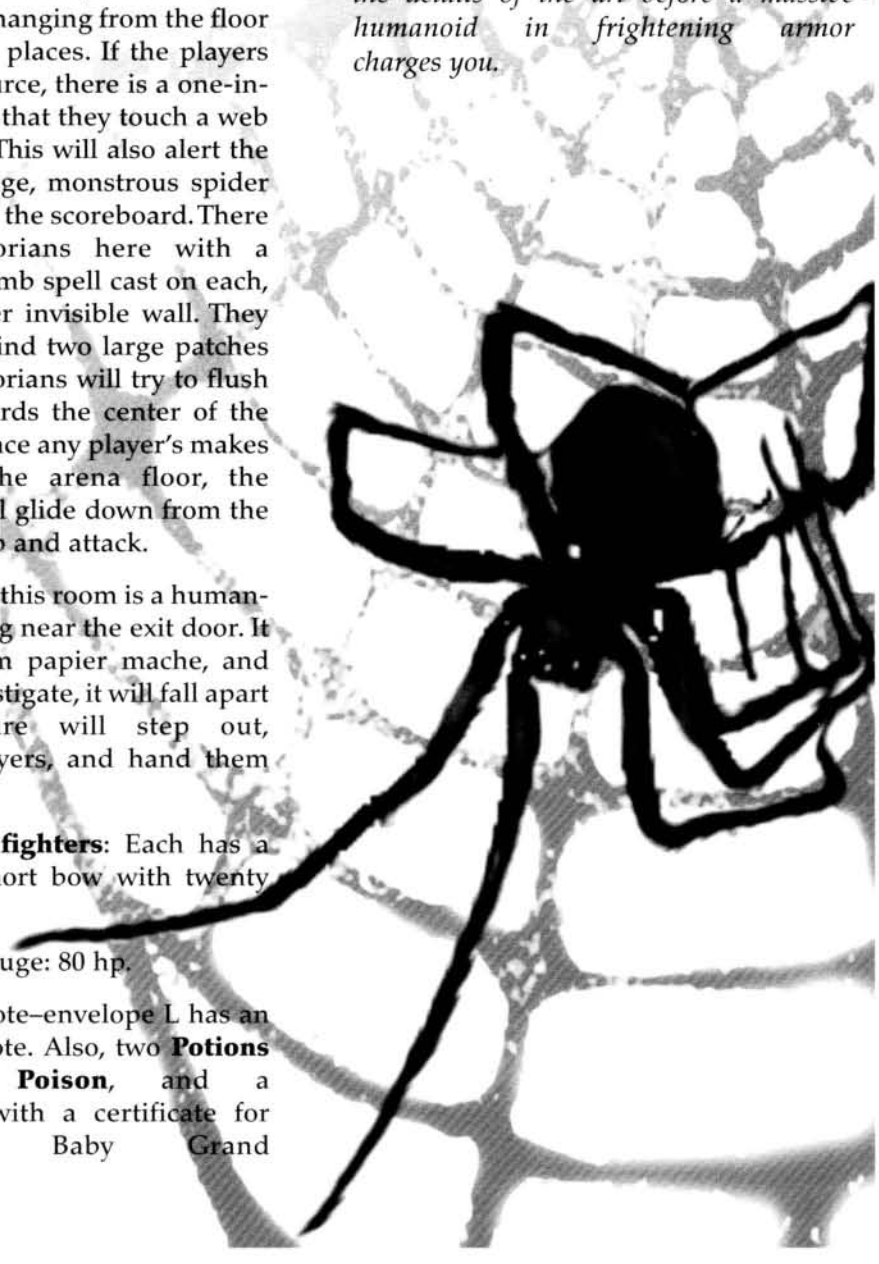
9. That's No Door!

This door is actually a mimic (search check DC 25 to notice anything amiss). If any player touches it, they will be stuck and automatically grappled.

Mimic: hp 65.

10. The Door Guard

A roughly triangular room is dominated by two impressive pieces of artwork, both of them murals covering huge areas of the far wall. You scarcely have time to notice the details of the art before a massive humanoid in frightening armor charges you.



A single ogre fighter is in the room. He wears a huge suit of full, spiked plate mail, and carries a huge greatsword. He charges the first player to enter.

There are two painted murals on the south wall, each covering a door. The west door is painted with a beautiful lady with a green fan, hiding all of her face but her eyes. The east door has a fearsome tiger, which seems to leap at the characters.

3rd level ogre fighter: hp 77, huge greatsword +11 (2d10+7), 10' reach, saves Fort +8 Ref +2 Will+1, weapon focus (greatsword), power attack, cleave.

11. The Lady

The walls to this room are mirrored. Six female orcs, who all brandish double axes, wait inside.

These female orcs are a MemphisCrawl clique. They were originally little more than "comfort women" for the orcs in the dungeon, but they began to assert themselves and actually challenged the male orcs for dominance. Cudgel UP! was so impressed that she had them all trained to work together. The have a Mojo Pool.

2nd level orc fighters: AC 16, hp 18, 24, 16, 19, 20, 20, 15, double axe +1/+1 (1d8+1/1d8), exotic weapon (double axe), ambidexterity, two weapon fighting. Mojo Pool 1d6+1.

Treasure: 200 GP note, envelope R has an additional 200 GP note. There is also a gift certificate for a years supply of American Whey breakfast cereal.

12. The Tiger

This large room has a white marble floor and ceiling with gold trim. There is a magnificent fountain here, with a 20' wide basin. A statue of a tiger seems to play and splash about by a palm tree at its center; water rains down from the top of the tree. Hundreds of coins seem to sparkle in the fountain. Other than that, the room is bare.

There are 258 silver pieces in this fountain. If the player throws a coin in and evokes the name of Poseidon, a water spirit will appear and invite all the players to take a drink. A knowledge: religion roll will let players know that this fountain is sacred to Poseidon. Players who drink the blessed water will be cured of all curses, poisons, and 3d8+8 points of damage. If the floor of the fountain is searched, the players will find a hidden trap door (DC 20 to find). The trap door leads to a dark underwater chamber–if lights are shined within, the players will see a chest. The chest is bolted to the floor of the underwater chamber, locked (DC 20), and trapped (DC 18/18). If the trap is sprung the water instantly heats up to boiling, doing 2d6+4 per round to the players until they get out. Inside the chest is a waterproof pouch containing a 2000 GP note and a ticket for each player for an Imperial Cruiseline's seven-day, six-night tropical cruise.

13. Breakroom

This is identical to the previous breakrooms. Paramedic Melvyn Huckabee is here to help players in need (total heal roll +17, includes modern healer's kit). Melvyn is a new father, and he brags about his two-month-old daughter to anyone who will listen. He has an enormous amount of photos in his wallet.

14. Cudgel UP! Dancers, part II

This room is decorated like a high school gymnasium, with a hardwood floor, a basketball hoop, and painted half-court boundaries. There are six goblins here, each wearing numbered, studded leather armor and a football helmets. All of them are carrying a baseball bat and wearing a buckler. They prepare themselves to attack.

These are more of the Cudgel UP! dancers. Besides the six obvious ones, there are six more hidden in the rafters. A successful spot check (DC 18) will alert the players to the goblins near the top of the room. They are each attached to the ceiling with high-strength, elastic cords, which leaves them dangling one foot from the floor when they drop. They can fall to the extent of their cord, attack, and automatically spring back up to the ceiling on the next round. They

can catch and hold on to the ceiling with an attack roll at armor class 15–if they fail, they will fall again, with a 50% chance of being close enough to their first target to attack again. Cudgel UP! permits her dancers to surrender after being struck twice each. Once the entire goblin squad is surrendered or defeated, a secret door in the ceiling opens and Princess Azure is lowered down, gagged and tied up with elastic cords. Once free, Princess Azure congratulates the players, and gives them the bronze key.

2nd level goblin fighters: AC 17, club +3 (1d6+1), jumping +10, weapon focus: club, skill focus: jump, expertise, HP 22, 19, 15, 13, 17, 16, 17, 11, 14, 16, 14, 17. Mojo Pool 1d6+6

Treasure: A 500 GP note–envelope R has an additional 500 GP note. There is also a gift certificate for a Billiard Entertainment Center by Walnut Entertainment, which includes tables, sticks, rack, overhead authentic carnival glass light, matching end tables, and barstools (12,000 GP value), and a divine scroll of **Remove Blindness, Remove Curse** and **Remove Disease**.

15. Door trap (22/22)

This door has a very difficult lock (DC 25) and the lock has a poison needle trap (poison DC 18 or 1d6 temporary dexterity damage). CR 2.

16. Chuul Love This!

This room is tiled and has a 25' vaulted ceiling. In the southeast corner is a large cage on a short pedestal. You see Princess Passion in the cage. Her conical princess hat is missing.

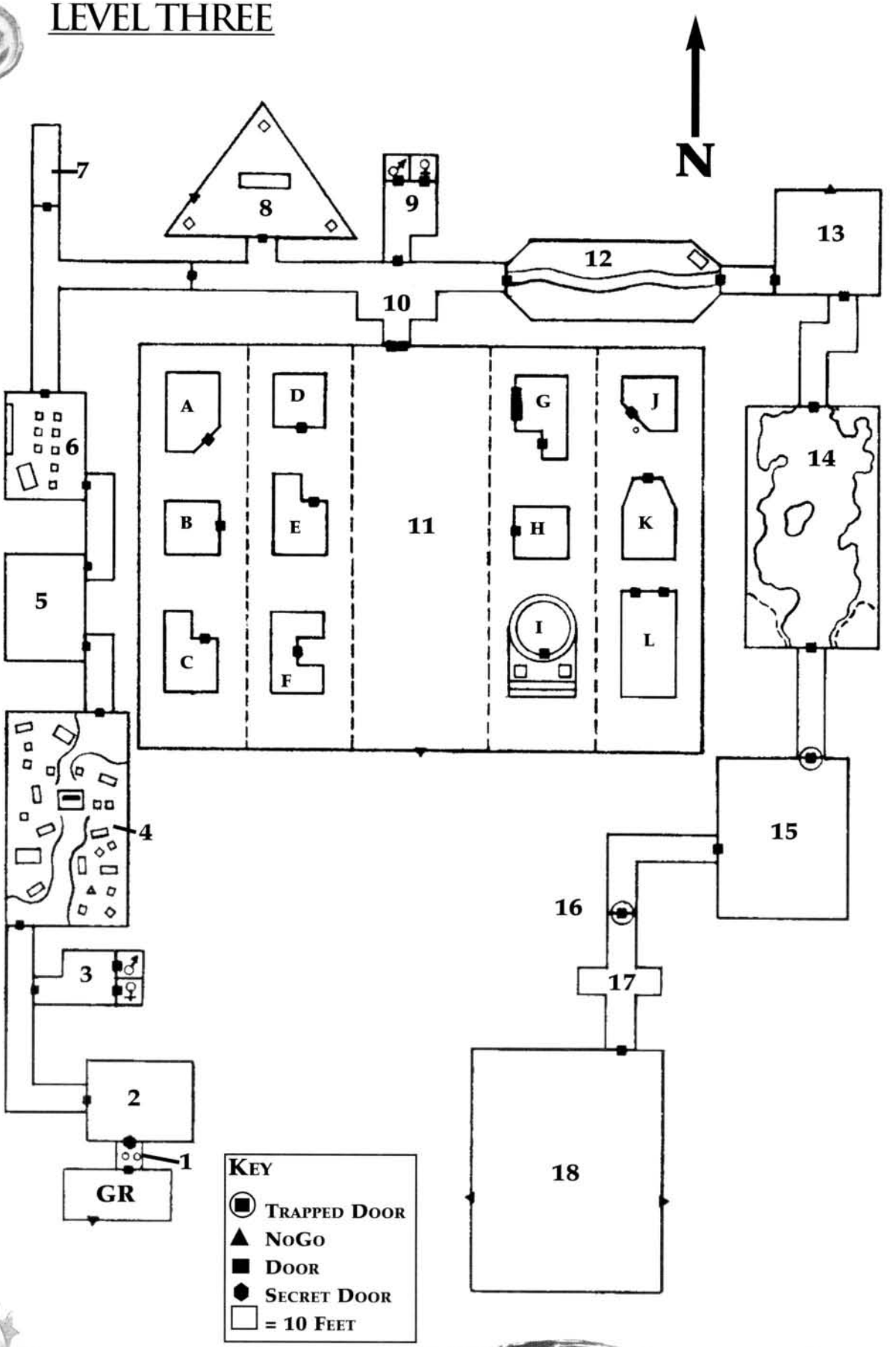
Once all of the characters are in the room, the door closes and seals itself. This is not a trapped door; Cudgel UP! is operating the door by remote control. Once the door is sealed, sprinklers in the ceiling start raining water down–hard. Within two minutes, the room is filled with five feet of water. The water continues to 'rain' from the ceiling, but drains are set to keep the water level at five feet. The cage is a cube, ten feet on a side, sitting upon a two foot pedestal, so the princess in her cage is standing in three feet of cold water. The top of the cage is large enough for a group of characters to stand on if they can climb up. The bars are not especially narrow, and a character can pass through with an escape artist check (DC21, 17 for small characters). Once the room is full of water, a lesser chuul is dropped in through a chute in the ceiling. The chuul takes 3d6 from this ill-planned stunt, and is extremely angry. It attacks relentlessly. When the chuul is vanquished, the bars in the front of Princess Passion's cage slide into the floor, the water drains away, the door opens, and a live camera crew rushes in. The princess is quite terrified by the water and chuul attack, but manages to congratulate the players and hand over the steel key.

Once the players have collected the treasure, the NoGo door in the east wall bursts open with a pyrotechnics and smoke effect. The characters hear cheering from outside–Level Two is over. They can walk out through the door, which leads to the parking lot. A small group off fans and journalists are there, and players will be photographed, congratulated, and asked for autographs. Each player will receive the traditional bouquet of red roses. There is a full day's break between the end of the second level and the third. Unless the players blatantly took too much time completing the level, they should be declared the winners and move up to the third level.

Lesser chuul: HD 6d8+24, hp 75 minus 3d6 falling damage, AC 20, attacks 2 claws +8 (2d6+3).

Treasure: 1000 GP note–envelope W has an extra 500 GP note. There is also a **Wand of Mage Armor**, a suit of **+2 leather armor** (the appropriate size for the party's rogue), and a certificate for a mahogany Dining Room set, with an extended table, six high-backed chairs and an armoire by Fallofield Fine Dining (total value 16,000 GP).

LEVEL THREE


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NOGO
DOOR
SECRET DOOR
= 10 FEET

Level 3.

The players begin in the level 3 greenroom. Level 3 is not one of the other levels recycled, it is its own structure, and Cudgel UP! has disallowed the media from coming in for a preview. Only Cudgel UP! and her crew have been inside. If the players try to get insight about the third level during the off day, they won't be able to find out anything.

The players must be in the green room by noon. Unlike the previous two levels, the green room is a flurry of activity before Level 3 begins. Dozens of people want to meet the adventurers–noble families want to introduce themselves and their children, agents want to discuss contracts, and many others in this same vein. The famous movie actor, Blake Noosum, shows up with his entourage and invites the players to go out on his boat later on in the summer (he forgets about the offer almost as soon as he makes it). Players with a 13 charisma or higher will be approached by reporters for a quick interview about the first level before the crawl begins; if they can make a performance roll (DC 18) for a successful interview, they don't look incompetent or cowardly no matter how it role-plays out. At 2:30 the referee kicks all the non-essentials out, and at 2:45 DJ Cudgel UP! appears on the AVS.

"Well well well...ladies and gentlemen, can we have a round of applause for our heroes? [Big, respectful applause.] Well done, my friends, well done. But it's not over yet, and the best is yet to come. Or is that the worst? Are you ready to descend into the depths of my dungeon? Feel like you are up to it? Well, I'll tell you one thing: the survivors will drive home in the incredible Vindicator 870 4X4–and the losers will go on to the Elysian Fields on foot. So, how did we enjoy the second level?"

Cudgel UP! will do a brief interview of the players, congratulating them for their earlier successes and chiding them for their mistakes. If any players have died, she might say something unnerving about the whole party getting together after the crawl. She will spend a moment with each player, then go on.

"Okay, you are the heroes–but not yet the champions. First you have to survive my dungeon, rescue the last three Princesses, collect the star, sun, and moon keys and find the way out. Remember, there is no time limit on the third level, so take the time to stop and smell the corpses. And now, let me introduce to you Princess Victory, Princess Electra, and Princess Janet."

The image changes, and we see the three Princesses–Princess Victory and Princess Electra dance about and pose for the camera. They show Princess Janet separately–she is dressed like the other princesses, but she is obviously not a dancer. She looks a bit frightened.

"It's time, friends. Time to grasp for glory. The third level of the dungeon awaits. I pray to all the powers of Olympus to watch over you, keep you safe, and grant you victory–but this is the real thing, and if you die . . .you die. In the name of Emperor Ronald I, the most benevolent and just, I declare this contest open. Begin!"

The door opens, and you see two poles decanting into the darkness.

1. The Entrance

From the outside, this door seems to be identical to the previous two–two poles descending into darkness. Unlike the previous two entrance rooms, this one has a trap (DC 25/25–a failed disable device will instantly spring this trap). The secret door on the north wall is trapped–if the characters try to open it without disarming it, the door above (leading from the greenroom) seals shut and the ceiling begins to descend on the players–they have ten rounds to escape or the ceiling will crush everyone to pulp. The door is tough to bash down (DC 28). There is a counter lever to open the door hidden in the door frame (DC 23 to spot), and as soon as the counter-lever is flipped the players are free.

2. Reception

The door opens into a dark, thirty-foot by forty-foot chamber. There is an AVS on the far wall playing a swirling pattern. It is almost hypnotic.

There are six bugbears here–two hiding in the shadows on either side of the wall, and the rest hiding in shadows in the far corners. They attack quickly and without mercy.

Bugbears: hp 30, 28, 25, 17, 23, 14.

Treasure: 500 GP–envelope C has an extra 500 GP note. There is also a full set of magical King's Iron **+2 Golf Clubs** in a designer bag.

3. Breakroom

This room is identical to the breakrooms of the previous levels. Paramedic Myrna Trechtchoya is here, and she will help player's however she can (total heal roll +15, includes modern healer's kit). Myrna, the daughter of a Russian count, is actually attending a medical school in Tennessee. She has volunteered to work for the MemphisCrawl as part of a class project. Her English is unpracticed–she says 'please' and 'thank you' a lot.

4. Boot Hill

Door, locked (DC 26)

The room before you is cast in an odd grey light, coming from no discernable source. Dirt covers the floor, sloping slightly upward to the north wall. There are dozens of unmarked tombstones scattered about, creating a disturbng image. In the center of the room is a wooden gallows. Swinging from the rope is a humanoid shape, limp and lifelesss. The hanged man is dressed in western gear, with a cowboy hat, denim pants, a leather vest, and boots. You can almost feel a faint breeze moving through the room.

Ten ghouls hide behind the tombstones. Once all of the players are in the room, they rush forward and attack. The hanged man is actually a minor flesh golem, and once the players have begun melee with the ghouls it will detach itself from the noose (a full round action), leap down, and relentlessly attack any spellcasters in the party, including clerics attempting to turn the ghouls. The golem attacks the closest target if there are no obvious spellcasters.

Ghouls: hp 19, 17, 18, 16, 13, 9, 20, 15, 14, 13.

Minor flesh golem: HD 6d10, hp 45, speed 30 (can't run), attacks 2 slams +6 (2d6 +3). Special attacks: berserk. Special qualities: construct, magic immunity, damage reduction 15/+1. Saves: Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +3.

Treasure: 2000 GP note–letter R has an additional 500 GP note. There are also gift certificates for a lifetime subscription to *Lamp and Dagger: The Monthly Magazine for the Modern Crawler* for each member of the team.

5. Down Under

Door, locked (DC 22).

A vaulted ceiling towers above you in this brightly lit room. It is plain except for two AVS showing static advertisements for a local steak restaurant. Unseen speakers play haunting digeridu music. There is an audience here, in skyboxes thirty feet off the floor. You can see nobles high above you, waving and cheering. Clamoring at you from across the room are two horrible three legged insect-like creatures.

The audience (crowd DC 20) is protected by invisible walls. The creatures are hoogabungaroos. There are actually four of them. Two are hanging on the wall above the door, and will attempt to sneak up behind the players.

Hoogabungaroos: hp 36, 18, 41, 29. Bestiary p 213.

Treasure: 1000 GP note–envelope W has an extra 500 GP note. There are also gift cards, one for each player, providing free meals for a year and a day from the Kangaroo Steak and Chop Restaurant chain.

6. Ghoul School

Door, locked, DC 21.

You are reminded of aone-room school house looking inside this room. Several rows of student desk-chairs fill the space, and there are maps and educational posters hanging throughout the room. Sitting behind the teacher's desk is a bearded human wearing the distinctive robes of the Necromancer's Guild. Sitting at the desks are eight students with their backs to you, unmoving. There is a hanging movie screen at the front of the classroom in front of the chalkboard, and an 8MM movie projector at the back on a rolling platform. The chalkboard is filled with simple math equations and graffiti–including an absentee list with all of your names listed on it.

Any character with the disguise skill can make a check (DC 18) to realize that all of the 'students' are wearing wigs or oversized hats. The necromancer is Gill Finch, a low level guildmember. Once the players enter the room, he points at the 'students' and orders them to attack. The students heads then fly off to attack–they are actually vargouilles, who were perched upon dummy bodies and disguised with hats and wigs. Finch strikes his own breast, activating his non-com badge, and disappears. If the vargouilles manage to kiss any of the players, a special film clip will play for them on the screen at the front of the room, after all the monsters are dead. The room will dim, and the players will see the following:

A black and white image flickers on the screen, looking like a junior high school instructional movie, poorly filmed and scratched throughout. Hoards of flying vargouilles fly around in a cage, menacing the camera while the narrator drones on. "So you've been bitten by a vargouille? Not good. Nope, not good at all. Well, this is what's in store for you in the next several hours."The scene changes to an orc tied to a chair. While he thrashes about, a varagouille flies up and kisses him. The film shifts to time lapse photography–hours pass in moments, showing the orc's hair falling out, as he thrashes and screams soundlessly while the narrator drones on about the gruesome physiological specifics of his plight. Finally, the orc's head transforms into a vargouille, detaches itself, flies off, and attacks the camera. A close-up of the headless body shows a caption underneath: Attention– An actual orc was harmed during filming. DJ Cudgel UP! appears on the screen, wearing a graduate school cap-and-gown. She drones on in the voice of the narrator, informing you to get ready to take notes–she's about to tell you the cure. Before she can begin, the film slows down to a few frames per second, stops, and catches fire.

Vargouilles: hp 7, 8, 6, 5, 7, 6, 4, 5.

Treasure: 500 GP note–envelope R has an additional 500 GP note. There is also a gift certificate for 5000 GP worth of tattoo work from Insidious Ink, a Memphis tattoo parlor.

7. Fighter's Challenge

Once the player's reach this point, an AVS appears over the door showing referee Darnell Lawerence. He informs the player's of the Fighter's Challenge, and states that only one player may enter. The remaining players will be able to watch the fighter's progress on the AVS.

You appear to be at the end of a long shooting gallery. A brightly lit sign at the far end reads PIGEON: 50 GP. BLUE BONUS PIGEON: 500 GP. A machine rests at the far end, and once the door behind you shuts, it lights up, and you hear a hum of machinery. The sign changes slowly to read READY?, then SET, then GO!

The machine launches clay "pigeons" at the player, sending them within close attack range of the PC. The pigeons (AC 20) are small and launched quickly, breaking with one shot. Not is all that it appears, though, as a separate machine, hidden in the ceiling, also launches darts at the fighter. The machines fire for 20 rounds.

FIGHTER'S CHALLENGE

1st–1 pigeon

2nd-1 pigeon & 1 dart (+4, 1d4+1 dam). This first dart is poisoned–DC 18 or 1d6 temporary strength damage.

3rd–2 pigeons

4th–1 pigeon

5th–1 pigeon & 1 dart

6th–1 pigeon

7th–1 pigeon & 2 darts

8th–1 pigeon

9th–1 pigeon & 1 dart

10th–1 pigeon

11th–1 pigeon

12th–1 pigeon & 2 darts

13th–2 pigeons

14th–nothing happens (machine malfunctions)

15th–BONUS pigeon launched (distinctively blue)

16th–2 darts

17th–1 pigeon

18th–1 pigeon

19th–one pigeon & two darts

20th–Confetti falls from the ceiling, and the character's total appears on the screen.

Treasure: The fighter earns 50 GP for every standard pigeon, and an extra 500 for hitting the bonus pigeon.

8. False Casino Room

You have a sense of deja vu. This room appears virtually identical to the Vegas style room on the second level. The walls are dark paneled and the lights are dim, focusing on a green felt card table in the middle of the room. The ceiling is mirrored and all the fixtures are polished brass. The room is triangular, with the similar statues in the corners. However, while those statues were all of famous Xcrawl heroes, these are all of famous Xcrawl losers–each depicted in a most unflattering pose. Behind the table sits a hooded figure, shuffling a deck of cards. There is a bench in front of the card table.

This room is a false version of the cardmaster room from level 2. The figure behind the table is actually a medusa. If the players ask, inform them that the figure is not wearing a non-com badge, nor is it shuffling incredibly well like the cardmaster from the second level. If a player sits at the bench, they will find that they are stuck to it with a strong adhesive–they can rip free only with a strength check (DC 20). Once a player sits, the medusa will throw back its hood and set to work with her gaze attack and short bow, which she has hidden beneath the table. The cards are ordinary playing cards.

Medusa: hp 46.

Treasure: A 1000 GP note–envelope A has an additional 500 GP note. There is also a **Pearl of Power** (2nd level) and a **Potion of Stone to Flesh**

9. Breakroom

This room is identical to the breakrooms of the previous levels. Paramedic Ben Hoffman is here (total heal roll +15, includes modern healer's kit). He is from Dallas and his accent is very thick, and sometimes he is difficult to understand. He is an ex-Legionnaire with hundreds of stories about when he was "in the Emperor's service."

10. Guardian

Opposite the breakroom is a single ogre in full, spiked plate mail, carrying a halberd. He stands guard in front of the double doors to the south. He won't attack the party unless they try to get to the doors–or if they provide him with an obvious target. There are also three *invisible* goblin rogues in this area who will attempt to sneak attack once melee has begun.

4rd level ogre fighter: hp 85, huge halberd +11 (2d6+7), 10' reach. Saves: Fort +9 Ref +2 Will +1. Weapon focus (halberd), improved trip, and improved grab.

2nd level goblin rogues: hp 17, 15, 12. Initiative +7, AC 17, shortsword +2 (1d6-1), hide +8, listen +5, move silently +6, sneak attack +1d6, evasion, improved initiative. Saves: Fort +0, Ref +3, Will +0.

11. The Spectacle

Door, locked (DC 22)

This room is enormous. The ceiling is at least twelve stories up, and skyboxes soar as far as you can see. A looming electronic scoreboard with all of your names and vital statistics sits high above. The interior of the room appears to be several small towers on several steep tiers. A thirty foot rise sits to your left and right, and on each are three small buildings. There is a second thirty foot rise behind that, and each of those has three additional buildings. The overall effect of the room is an inverted step pyramid. Looking in, you get the sense of a replica of a tiny city–you see a tiny Firehouse, Police Station, and even a miniature Temple of Apollo. As you enter the room, a second ceiling fixture hydraulically lowers into view; it is a huge hourglass, and inside you see Princess Janet. She is in the top half, with all of the sand in the bottom. The scoreboard flickers to life, and Cudgel UP! appears on the screen. Her booming voice drowns out the crowd noise. "Welcome to the Third Level Spectacular! And ladies and gentlemen of the audience, can we have a big hand for our heroes?" A thunderous ovation from the audience fills the arena. "Well, the fun isn't over yet. This is our dungeon house-to-house search; you have half an hour to find the Talisman of the Hourglass and destroy it. The Talisman is hidden somewhere in one of these buildings. Out of the kindness of my heart, I present you with a hint: only one of these towers has a trap–but it's a doozie, trust me. If you can find the Talisman and destroy it in the alloted time, you will save Princess Janet." Suddenly, the hourglass abruptly flips over. Princess Janet is thrown roughly on the glass floor as sand begins to rain down upon her. "Incidentally, I should mention that Princess Janet has been convicted of high treason, and has graciously accepted our offer of a chance to commute her sentence. If you find the talisman, she survives; if you fail, then it is the will of Olympus that her original sentence be carried through. Prepare yourselves! As always, your lives are at stake. The sand is running out for Janet, and perhaps for yourselves. We wish you luck but if you die...well, you know."

The audience is protected by invisible walls. 'Princess Janet' is Janet Tagore, a devout Messianic who was sentenced to death and offered a chance to commute it to a life sentence–all she has to do is survive the dungeon. Players attempting to climb/fly up and save her will receive a warning, and if they continue will be disqualified from the dungeon. Each tier is 30' tall, with a 15' x15' base. Each tower door is locked (DC 17) but somewhat flimsy (DC 18 to bash down). There are twelve towers, each with its own encounter.

A. Fancy Halfling Restaurant. Inside are 10 skeletons, who will rush out to attack.

B. Schoolhouse. Inside are four goblin fighters manning a small balista mounted to the floor (can be fired every other round when manned by two goblins, +4, 4-24/x3). They have three bolts. The goblins will fire the balista at the first player opening the door, then rush to melee with their hand axes. If they do well, they have been promised membership in the prestigious Cudgel UP! Dancers, so they fight fiercely.

One of the goblins has an illegal weapon–a syringe full of toxic floor cleaner. If he is pressed, he will attempt to inject one of the players with it (fortitude save 24 or 1d4 con/2d6 con).

C. Pet store. Six stirges fly out and attack when the door is opened.

D. Police station. Six orcs dressed as police officers aremed with pole axes are inside. These orcs know they are in way over their heads, but refuse to surrender. They use the reach of their weapons to keep the characters in the doorway as best they can, but if the battle goes poorly for them they will begin to cheat; they will try to attack cameramen and any retainers the players bring, and they may attack the tower itself, trying to flip it from the inside (DC 25 to flip the tower over, players standing in the direction it falls need to make a reflex save (DC 19) or take 4d6 crushing damage). The orcs might also try to crash through the thin walls (wall: 3 hardness, 10 hp to breach).

E. Fire House. Inside are four goblins with a high-pressure hose. They will attempt to blow players off the side of the ledge (ranged touch attack affecting a 5' area, +3 to hit, attacks as a 30 str. bull rush, 1d6 subdual damage). If players go over the side of the ledge they take 2d6 falling damage.

F. Record Store. Four-piece heavy rock band Aggregate Convention is here, all wearing flamboyant stage costumes and non-com badges. Once their door is opened, they start playing their latest hit, an ode to Xcrawl. The crowd claps in time to the music.

G. Bus Station. This door has an extremely basic, but deadly trap (DC 18/18). If the door is opened without disarming it, the entire structure explodes, sending fragments of wood over a 30' radius (4d6 dam, reflex save DC 20 for half damage).

H. Xcrawl Guild Hall. On a small table in this room is a draught beer for each of the characters. The first player to down one receives a year's supply of Groff Beer. An AVS appears and displays the president of Groff Beer, who congratulates the winner personally.

I. Temple of Apollo. When the characters reach this tower, an AVS appears over the door. Cudgel UP! informs the players that this is the cleric's challenge, and only one player may enter. Once a player enters, the door shuts and locks behind him. Inside is an undead celebrity–deceased movie action hero, Dean VanDeisel. The star of a dozen kung-fu movies, VanDeisel bequeathed his body to the Necromancer's Guild in return for certain dark favors. They have since turned him into a wight. Once the cleric is inside, the instantly recognizable VanDeisel attacks. His hands have been covered with thick leather mitts, preventing him from using his energy drain attack, but if he is turned he will cower in the corner and attempt to gnaw through the laces (it will take him three rounds to get one mitt off). Once the late VanDeisel has been defeated the door will unlock itself.

J. Post Office. A non-combatant 6th level wizard is here, concentrating on a *Hypnotic Pattern*. Players passing through the door will need to save (Will negates, DC 16) or stand transfixed.

K. Library. The Talisman is here, sitting on a ledge in the rear of the tower. The Talisman is a 12" tall hourglass with enchantment runes carved into its ebony wood. It is guarded by a sand warder, who immediately uses his sandstorm power to obscure the room. Once the talisman is smashed, the sand will stop running down on Princess Janet and the entire structure will lower itself to the floor of the arena. The hourglass then opens to release the terrified prisoner, or if a half-hour has passed, it will spill her dead body onto the ground.

L. General Store. Six dire rats charge out of the room. They are less interested in the characters than in escaping altogether, and if they are unmolested, they will scamper away and attempt to find a way out of the room.

Once the Talisman is destroyed, the room has officially been completed, but the players may search all of the towers regardless. If rescued, Janet Tagore, incoherent with relief, babbles her gratitude to the party, hands them the sun

key and is led off in handcuffs by waiting police–she still has to serve a life sentence for Cultisim.

Skeletons, medium: hp 7, 6, 4, 8, 3, 8, 7, 5, 6, 6.

Goblin balista team: hp 6, 7, 4, 6.

Stirges: hp 7, 4, 6, 9, 4, 5.

Police Orcs: 8, 4, 6, 7, 9, 5.

Firehouse Goblins: hp 4, 7, 5, 6.

Dean VanDeisel: 4th level fighter/ 2nd level master celebrity wight–hp 49, init +5, AC 14 (includes dodge), 1 slam + 6, (1d4+4). Saves: Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +7. Feats: improved unarmed strike, stunning fist, improved initiative, blind fighting.

Sand Warder: see Bestiary, p 214.

Dire Rats: hp 4, 3, 9,7, 5, 5.

Treasure: There is no envelope choice here; only one envelope is available with a 1500 GP note. The players also get a scroll of *Lesser Restoration*, **The Downtowner, an elvish-made +2 shortbow** with a +2 mundane scope, and a certificate for a crate of Doc Malone's Surfboard Wax.

This entire room is a Haywire Encounter for experience point purposes.

12. Troubled Waters

Door, locked (DC 25) Players listening at the door (DC 15) will hear rain on the other side.

Hard rain falls in this room, reducing visibility to about ten feet. A level, five-foot path leads across the room, but otherwise the floor slopes up towards the ceiling on both sides. A large, dark figure, hulking menacingly, moves towards you slowly. In the distance, you hear a woman's cry for help.

The troll Vrusk is here for a rematch. This room design is his idea; the water raining from the ceiling will put out any fires used to attack him. At the far end of the room is Princess Electra, held in a narrow cage (lock DC 20). Once she is freed, she congratulates the characters and gives them the moon key.

If Vrusk did not survive the first encounter, substitute troll Klinger will be used (standard troll, hp 86).

Vrusk, 1st level Troll fighter: HP 78 (including 10 points of permanent wounds from barbed wire) AC 18, 2 claws +10 (1d6+6), bite +5 (1d6+3).

Treasure: 500 GP note–envelope C has an extra 500 GP note. There is also the **+2 double-bladed sword** known as Seattle Slew, a **Potion of Cure Serious Wounds**, and a **Potion of Water Breathing**.

13. Floppy Happy Town

The room is decorated like a child's nursery. Giant blocks litter the ground, with bright colors on the walls, and huge stuffed animals sitting in stacks. In the southeast corner is what appears to be a giant kobold wearing a diaper, sucking on a pacifier.

The giant kobold in the corner is named "Snookums." He is only two-and-a-half years old. He will not fight under any circumstances. A non-com badge is being used to hold his diaper together, and if he is attacked he teleports away. When the party enters the room, Snookums will immediately crawl over to the them, wanting a toy. If they don't give the baby a magic item (other than a potion), the giant kobold baby will follow them through the rest of the dungeon, crying. If the party attacks the baby, 30 kobolds burst out from the blocks and stuffed animals, yelling at the party for "hitting their baby brother!" If Snookums is attacked, DJ Cudgel UP! will appears on an AVS dressed as a "mommy," chastising the party for trying to kill a child. She will demand that the party sacrifice one magic item to the "nurse" (a beautiful woman in a sexy nurses outfit who enters from a secret door) before they can receive the prize for the room. The party can leave without giving up a magic item, but they do not get the prize for the room. If the party

gives Snookums a magic item, the secret panel opens up revealing the prize for the room, and DJ Cudgle UP! runs a quick video of a bunch of adventurers looking remarkably similar to the PCs working at the "Lil' Tykes Dungeon," changing diapers, burping babies, etc. She announces that it's "good to have skills to fall back on."

Kobolds: 4 hp each.

Prize: A 500 GP note–letter C has an additional 500 GP note. Also, there is a 1000 GP note for the Imperial Infant baby store, and a case of Blurber's Strained Carrots.

14. Charity Kill

This room is done in faux-cavern style. Stalactites hang from the ceiling, and the ground is rough and uneven, with stalagmites growing from the floor. A folded, wooden stepladder is leaning against the east wall.

The ladder was left by workmen who were putting the final touches on the stucco stalagmites–it has no bearing on this room whatsoever. In each corner of this room are two phantom fungi (for a total of eight). They have been starved for days in preparation for this event. Once the team enters, the fungi immediately move silently (+5) into position and attack. As soon as a creature dies, a 20' x 15' foot AVS scoreboard appears on the south wall. Every time anything (including the PCs) dies, the DuraChef company donates 10,000 GP in the killing player's name–or in his memory–to The Ronald I House, a charitable trust fund for war widows and orphans, and the AVS is keeping track of the money. After the battle, Cudgel UP! congratulates the players on doing their part to help the disadvantaged by killing sentient fungus creatures.

Phantom Fungus: hp 22, 17, 19, 15, 18, 24.

Treasure: 500 GP note–envelope C has an extra 250 GP note. There is also a certificate for a state of the art DuraChef 360 Food Processor for each player.

15. Cudgel UP! Dancers, part III

Door, trapped (DC 20/20) and locked (DC 22).

Any attempts to unlock the door without first disarming the trap will cause the entire hallway to be flooded with toxic numbing gas (Fort save 16 negates) for one round. Players who don't save will find their sense of touch deadened– they won't be able to feel their hands or feet until the poisonous effect wears off (one hour). During combat, they must make a concentration check each round to avoid dropping any held items (roll once per item held). If the trap goes off, the goblins in the next room are signaled, and they will charge through the door and attack.

This large room is flooded with red lights and neon covers the walls. Smoke billows from the door. You hear the war cries of a large group of goblins.

There are sixteen goblins in this room, all carrying clubs and wearing bucklers. Some of the goblins have stuck decorative feathers in their helmets. The smoke is created by a special effects machine, and reduces visibility to 10'. The goblins take full advantage of this, hiding in wait for an opportunity to surprise a player. The goblins have a Mojo Pool.

The goblins also have an ally–Mary, an ogress who has been made an official Cudgel UP! Goblin. Mary stands in the far southwest corner of the room, waiting for a character to get close enough to strike. During melee, one of the goblins will call out to her if the situation seems dire. She rushes in with her war club, ready to crack skulls. If defeat looks imminent, the goblins will surrender en masse.

Cudgel UP! Dancers 3rd level goblin fighters: AC 17/15, club +4 (1d6+1) or throwing rock +4(1d3+1). Jumping +10, weapon focus: club, skill focus: jump, expertise, dodge. HP 29, 27, 22, 19, 15, 13, 17, 16, 17, 11, 24, 16, 14, 17. Mojo Pool 1d6+6.

Mary the Ogress: hp 45.

Treasure: 500 GP note–envelope A has an extra 500 GP note. There is also a pair of

Goggles of Night and a prize certificate for a set of fine china from Lewvberts of New York (300 GP value).

16. Rogue's Challenge

As you travel down the hallway, you see a door with six obvious locks. An AVS sits over the door, and Cudgel UP! is watching as you walk towards the door.

When the players get close enough, the DJ announces that this door is the rogue's challenge, and she turns over a small hourglass. The door has six locks–DC 18, 20, 24, 22, 15 and 23. Locks number 2 and 4 are trapped; #2 shocks the rogue for 3d6 hp if not disarmed before the open locks check. The trap on lock #4 will inject the rogue's hand with an infusion of hyper-ground glass and salt via air hypo–leather gloves don't protect the rogue from this trap. The glass and salt combination does 1d3 damage, and gives the victim a -2 on all disable device and open lock rolls until he can have the problem corrected; it will take battlefield surgery to remove the glass and salt from the rogue's hand (heal check DC 24). Once the player has unlocked all of the locks and disabled the traps (one way or another), the AVS will display his score–he earns 100 GP for each lock he bypassed on the first attempt, and 100 GP for disabling each trap (for a possible total of 800 GP).

17. Coverage Team

In these alcoves are live cameramen. They simply wait for the players to pass and follow 10' behind the last player in line.

18. Final Challenge

Door, locked, DC 25. A listen check (DC 18) will register crowd noise.

An elaborate door stands before you, detailed images of death and pain carved into the surface. Opening the door reveals a darkened room, the only lights coming from stadium seating high above your heads. The dim echo of an electronic scoreboard fades from view, shutting off as you open the door. Suddenly, a spotlight shines across the room–it illuminates a dragon-like head, which hisses at the light. Another spotlight shines, and another dragon head hisses. The crowd begins to roar. Soon, there are seven spotlights, and the horrific image of a dragon-like creature in the southwest corner fills your vision. The din of the crowd is deafening as you step into the final room.

As soon as the team enters the room there is a burst of pyrotechnics and the flash of dozens of footlights–the creature is a seven-headed hydra. Princess Victory is in a cage behind the creature (lock DC 10). The hydra rushes to attack the PCs. The crowd is on its feet the whole time, cheering at the top of their lungs (crowd DC 15). Once the beast is defeated, the NoGo door on the west wall opens, and the Vindicator 870 4X4, full of red roses, is brought in by eight pure-white draft horses, pulling it on a flatbed sled. Red rose petals cascade from the ceiling and fireworks burst in the air. DJ Cudgel UP! comes out, along with all of the princesses–except for Princess Janet–and they congratulate each player individually. The players are each given the traditional victory laurels and red capes.

Seven Headed Hydra: HP 107.

Treasure: Cudgel UP! personally gives the players a 5000 GP note, keys to the Vindicator 870 4X4, and a writ granting the players a 400 GP bar tab at the local adventurer's tavern, A Pilsner In Hell.

After the Dungeon

The players are invited to the traditional dinner at the Dungeon Judge's house. Cudgel UP!, as Julie Klugman, lives in a mansion in west Memphis. Her home is charming–if a bit ostentatious–and the celebration includes a huge catered feast, and a reception where the players will meet dozens of VIP's, including Lord Mayor Davenport. The team is on its way to an amazing Xcrawl career...

BESTIARY

Alfar

Medium-Size Humanoid

Hit Dice: 1d8+2 (5 hp)

Initiative: +1 (Dex)

Speed: 30

AC: 17 (+1 dex, +4 chain shirt, +1 small shield, +1 dodge)

Attacks: short sword + 1 melee

Damage: short sword 1d6

Face/Reach: 5'x5'/5'

Special Attacks: none

Special Qualities: darkvision

Saves: Fort + 1, Ref + 1, Will + 1

Abilities: Str 10, Dex 13, Con 15, Int 14, Wis 9, Cha 5

Skills: Bluff +2, Diplomacy +4, Hide +5, Move Silently +5, Listen +5

Feats: Dodge

Climate/Terrain: any underground (Zura'ah'zura)

Organization: solitary, patrol (5-8),

Challenge Rating: 2

Treasure: standard

Alignment: usually neutral evil

Advancement: as character class

The alfar are a cursed underground race of dark humanoids. The Zura'ah'zura is their land, and for millenia they have lived beneath the surface world. Throughout history they have risen again and again to threaten the world with their twisted views.

The average alfaris five and a half feet tall, with pointed ears nearly a foot long–though it is rare to find one in its natural form. The alfar have long tried to distance themselves from their surface cousins, the elves. Alfar are masters of altering their form and appearance. Every alfar tries to customize his appearance to look nothing like the others of his kin, with elaborate tattoos, piercings, and brandings being common. Alfar are additionally masters of alteration magic, developing new and unique spells that alter appearance and form–whether through illusion or actual shape changing.

Alfar have the following traits:

- +2 constitution, -2 wisdom: Alfar are tough but run very short on common sense and will power; they are exceptionally impulsive and temperamental.
- 60' darkvision
- +6 on listen checks: The keenness of A
- +4 natural bonus on hide and move silently: Skulking is the most prevalent Alfar survival skill. Alfar are taught to creep about since birth.
- Ambush Sense: Alfar assume that death lurks in any tunnel. If threatened by ambush, an alfar gets an automatic spot check to notice it as if he had been searching for ambushes all along. This is an extraordinary ability.

Favored class: Rogue

Alfar speak their own language. Many speak english and other surface languages.

Barker

Large Beast

Hit Dice: 3d8+6

Initiative: +1 (dex)

Speed: 60

AC: 15 (-1 size, +1 dex, +5 natural)

Attacks: 2 claws +3 or bite +3

Damage: claw 1d4+4, bite 1d8+4

Face/Reach: 5' x 10' / 5'

Special Attacks: Pounce

Special Qualities: None



Saves: Fort + 7, Ref +8, Will +7

Abilities: Str 18, Dex 13, Con 15, Int 8, Wis 13, Cha 9

Skills: Climb +2, Listen +5, Spot +7

Feats: Scent, Endurance

Climate/ Terrain: any underground

Organization: solitary or pack (2-5), sometimes domesticated

Challenge Rating: 3

Treasure: none

Alignment: neutral

Advancement: 5-7 HD (medium size); 8-12 HD (large)

Barkers are huge predators who are occassionally raised for use as riding animals by savage races. They have jackal-like heads with a wide mouth full of jagged teeth, long legs ending in paws with short claws, a whip-like hairless tail, and tiny black eyes. They range in color from light brown to black. Sometimes they display species characteristics such as spots or patches of odd color on their bodies.

Riding the predatory barker is very different from riding a prey animal such as a horse or camel. The skills are almost entirely different, and barkers require much more aggressive handling. A rider untrained in riding a barker takes a -4 penalty on all ride checks.

Pounce: If a barker has no rider, he may leap upon an opponent and make a full attack regardless of how far he has moved that round.

Carrying Capacity: A light load for a barker is up to 250 pounds. A medium load is up to 350 pounds. A heavy load is up to 450 pounds. Barkers are wild and must have a rider to be controlled–they can't be trained to pull wagons or other burdens.

Hoogabungaroo

Medium-Size Beast

Hit Dice: 4d10+16 (36)

Initiative: +7 (Dex, Improved Initiative)

Speed: 40, wallwalking 20

AC: 19 (+2 dex +7 natural)

Attacks: 1 bite +5 or 1 kick

Damage: bite 1d8+3 and poison

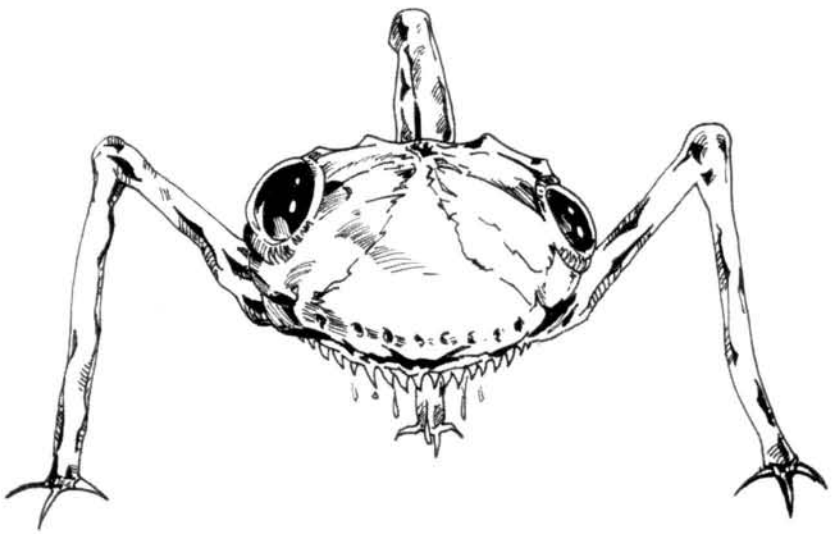
Face/Reach: 5' X 5' / 5'

Special Attacks: Poison

Special Qualities: Wallwalking

Saves: Fort +7 , Ref +4, Will +4

Abilities: Str 16, Dex 14, Con 18, Int 5, Wis 9, Cha 8



Skills: Move Silently +4, Spot +4,

Feats: Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (Bite), Scent

Climate/Terrain: desert

Organization: solitary or band (2-5)

Challenge Rating: 4

Treasure: none

Alignment: always neutral

Advancement: 5-6 HD (large); 7-8 HD (heinous)

The hoogabungaroo, known on the circuit as the "horror from down under," is a hideous, insect-like beast hailing from the deserts of the Australian Empire. They stand between seven and eight feet tall, with three spindly legs and a body with eyes on the side, and a downward-facing mouth full of jagged teeth. They have no skeleton, instead being covered with a chitinous exoskeleton supporting their weight. A ring of tiny orifices around its mouth serves as its olfactory organs, and scent is its primary sense. They have a single, upward-facing vent used to breathe and excrete.

They are vicious hunters with strong territorial instincts. Their life revolves around eating and breeding. These beasts lay eggs in insect-like clutches.

Combat: Hoogabungaroos are canny opponents. They favor attacking from above, crawling down walls and cliff faces to surprise opponents. If they paralyze an opponent with their bite, they drag him off to be devoured later in peace.

Wallwalking: Hoogabugaroo's have clinging organs on the ends of their legs, letting them move up and down walls with no penalty to their movement rate.

Poison: Opponents bitten by the hoogabungaroo must make a fortitude save (DC 17) or be paralyzed for 10-40 minutes. Juniper berries are a natural cure for this paralysis. A poultice infused with the juice of fresh juniper berries will negate the paralysis in 1-4 minutes.

Sand Warder

Medium Elemental (dust)

Hit Dice: 4d8+9 (25)

Initiative: -1 (dex)

Speed: 20', can't run

AC: 16 (-1 dex, +7 natural)

Attacks: 2 slams +3

Damage: 2d4+6

Face/Reach: 5' x 5' / 5'

Special Attacks: Sand Mastery, Cone of Sleep, Summon Sandstorm

Special Qualities: elemental, damage reduction 10/ +1

Saves: Fort + 7, Ref + 0, Will + 1

Abilities: Str 19, Dex 8, Con 17, Int 9, Wis 11, Cha 13



Skills: Listen +5, Spot +4

Feats: Blind Fight, Improved Trip

Climate/ Terrain: any

Organization: solitary

Challenge Rating: 4

Treasure: none

Alignment: neutral

Advancement: Large 8HD (Large); huge 16 HD (Huge)

Sand warders are summoned from the paraelemental plane of dust to protect an area or item from intruders. The ancient Egyptians first perfected the art of calling these beings, and set them to guarding tombs and holy sites. The sand warder appears as a vaguely man-shaped column of animated sand, constantly sliding apart and reforming itself like a dune in a high wind. It has two glowing red eyes, but no other discernable features. They speak several earth-born languages, but never innate communication.

Combat: The sand warder begins combat by summoning a sandstorm, then attempts to put as many opponents as possible to sleep with its breath weapon. Any opponents who are put to sleep discover that sand warders are fond of burying victims alive, rather than killing them outright. Their slam attack leaves nasty abrasion wounds that are exceptionally painful. Their trip attacks are quite effective during combat, as opponents are often standing on part of the malleable warder without realizing it–the warder simply needs to pull itself out from underfoot to send an opponent off-balance.

Elemental: Immune to poison, sleep, paralysis and stunning; they are not subject to critical hits.

Sand Mastery: The sand warder gets a +1 to hit and damage in combat if both it and its opponent are in contact with sand–fighting on a beach or in a sand storm both fulfil this requirement. They are sand-based creatures, and water attacks *slow* them for 2d4 rounds.

Cone of Sleep: Sand warders can blast opponents with a cone of sleep (30' long, 20' wide at the end). Opponents must make a fortitude save (DC 16) or fall asleep for 2d10 minutes. Victims can be awakened by being shaken or slapped, but noise or being carried off will not disturb their slumber.

Summon Sandstorm: Once per day the sand warder can summon a sandstorm, with a 200' radius (blocked by normal barriers). The sand storm lasts for 10 rounds and leaves every stationary object in its area of effect buried in 3' of sand. The high winds of the storm disallows missile fire and reduces visibility to 10'. The sand warder's vision is unimpaired by the sand storm.

Warhead



Large Construct

Hit Dice: 10d10 (55)

Initiative: -1(dex)

Speed: 30 hover (can't walk or run)

AC: 24 (-1 size, +15 natural)

Attacks: 2 slams +14, mounted weaponry

Damage: slam 2d10+7 or by mounted weaponry

Face/Reach: 10' x 10' / 5'

Special Attacks: weapon and bomb door

Special Qualities: Construct, Spell Resistance 18, Damage Reduction 20/+1

Saves: Fort + 5, Ref + 0 , Will + 3

Abilities: Str 21, Dex 9, Con –, Int –, Wis 11, Cha 1

Climate/ Terrain: any air

Organization: solitary or surplus warehouse full (200)

Challenge Rating: 12

Treasure: none

Alignment: Neutral

Advancement: 12-18 HD (Large); 19-33 HD (Huge)

Warheads were created by the North American Legion's magical R&D department. They have fallen out of favor with military strategists, however, due to their prohibitive cost, slow deployment and extreme vulnerability to artillery. A clever monster broker bought the army's entire surplus, and now sells them at huge profit to Xcrawl events. They are currently in fashion with the nobility of North America as estate guardians.

Warheads are hovering techno-magical constructs that can wreak havoc against conventional troops and war wizards. They fight without mercy or rest, relentlessly pursuing enemies until they are destroyed. They are often deployed to harass enemy spellcasters in large battles. They are constructed from concrete, steel, and wood, and are perfectly spherical except for their 'face,' which is usually set in an unsettlingly delighted grin. When they are traveling or inert, they are perfectly smooth, but in battle their arms and weapons emerge from hidden panels in their sides, top, and bottom. They generally have two arms (which are smallish in proportion to its 12' radius body). They also have space for a turreted weapon on top and a bombardier door beneath they use to drop ground based attacks.

Combat: When they were used in the military, warheads were fitted with turreted machine guns, rocket launchers, recoilless riffles, or flame throwers. They dropped explosive charges from their lower bomb doors–generally mines or napalm charges. Their attacks have been toned down a bit for Xcrawl, however. For the games, a warhead normally has only a top mounted heavy balista (+5, 3d10 damage). They use their bottom mounted doors to drop caltrops or Alchemest's Fire on groups of oponents.

Construct: Immune to mind-influencing

effects, poison, disease, aging and similar effects. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, or energy drain. Warheads need to be lubricated every 10 days in a process taking eight hours and costing 50 GP for the expensive blend of artificial lubricant and pumpkin seed oil. Unlubricated warheads lose a point of dex for every ten days they go unattended. They continue to lose a point of dex every ten days until they are reduced to zero, at which time they freeze up and become inert.

Radar Invisible: The warhead design gives the construct a +20 hide bonus versus any sort of radar.

Construction: Warheads cost a minimum of 250,000 GP to create, which dosen't include the price of weaponry. The secrets of their construction are classified–the Legion research wizard who spearheaded the massively over-budget Warhead project is now protecting an Antarctic weather station, and his notes and blueprints have been filed away as classified by military intelligence.

Zeetha

Medium Humanoid

Hit Dice: 1+1 (5)

Initiative: +2

Speed: 30' / 60' leap

AC: 17 (+1 dex, +6 natural)

Attacks: short sword +2, or by weapon type

Damage: 1d6+2

Face/Reach: 5' x 5'/ 5'

Special Attacks: none

Special Qualities: weightless fall, mountain leap

Saves: Fort +4, Ref +2, Will + 1

Abilities: Str 13, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 8

Skills: Knowledge (human culture) +2,

Feats: Alertness

Climate/ Terrain: cold mountain

Organization: scout party 2-3, war band 2-20

Challenge Rating: 2

Treasure: standard

Alignment: usually lawful evil

Advancement: as character class

Zeetha are an ancient race of hateful, aggressive humanoids. They believe that the earth has been stolen from them by mankind and the elder races. They feel they have a holy imperative to destroy all of mankind and claim the earth for themselves.

Zeetha are slim, wiry magical humanoids that average 4 foot tall and 70 pounds. Males are larger and heavier than females, but females are more aggressive and intelligent. Long scalloped ears, a snout reminiscent of an aardvark, and lithe, four fingered hands are their primary characteristics. Vegetarians with a multi-chambered stomach, zeetha can digest nearly any kind of plant matter, including grass, leaves, and weeds that are poisonous to humans. Their coloration is generally brown or gray, and they sport tufts of black hair. Their eyes are red, and each has a double pupil.

In the days before the great cataclysm, the zeetha launched an all-out assault on mankind, but were repelled by the heroic Alzad and his band before they could gain a foothold. The zeetha fled to far off mountain strongholds before they were destroyed utterly, and from these hidden enclaves they planned their vengeance against mankind. However, factionalism and infighting have kept them from ever being a serious menace since the time of Alzad. They continue to inhabit remote mountains and their cloud fortresses.

Zeetha worship a pantheon of deities led by the terrible Keshana, goddess of covert war and vengeance. Keshana teaches the zeetha patience, as they wait for the day when mankind is weak and divided–then the zeetha will make their presence known.

The largest population of zeetha live in the mountains of Nepal. Nepalese zeetha spy on both China and India. Zeetha speak their own language, and many speak chinese or pharisee as well. Zeetha spies will learn english, or any other language necessary for a mission.

Combat: Zeetha believe in long term strategies, carefully planned ambushes, and invisibility. There has not been a confirmed sighting of a zeetha in hundreds of years, and the entire race is considered to be extinct. This is a false belief; many lost mountain climbers and explorers are victims of zeetha long range scouting parties.

Zeetha Traits. Zeetha have many distinctive abilities:

- +2 dexterity, -2 charisma: Zeetha are nimble and fleet. They are also belligerent, cruel, and obsessively disdainful of outsiders.
- **Alchemic Mastery**: Zeetha gain a +4 racial bonus on alchemy checks; they have a natural gift for creating and identifying potions.
- **Weightless Fall**: Zeetha can magically effect inertia. A conscious zeetha may fall any distance without harm–they land with no impact, nor even any sound. This is a supernatural ability.
- **Mountain Leap**: Zeetha gain a +30 racial bonus on jump checks. This is a supernatural ability.

Favored Class: rogue. Sorcery is an uncommon trait amongst these mountain dwellers, although many zeetha study magic. There is no monastic tradition amongst the zeetha.

Zeetha master alchemists sometimes create magical, floating islands. They have created a potion infused with their own blood allowing them to make rocks and earth "immune" to gravity. The alchemist can direct the island to hover or fly (30', clumsy). These islands are always hidden in natural cloud banks, and are used to spy on the terrain below. To date, these islands have not been discovered by man.

CHARACTER ARCHETYPES

XCRAWL MONTHLY PRESENTS:

An Interview with the Dunguun Gangstaas

One of the hottest teams working their way through the ranks of Division Three is The Dunguun Gangstaas. While not a new team, they have recently seen a rebirth, with four of the original five members retiring, leaving only team captain, Xian, with the new group. The team has only been in its current rostership for just over a year, and many are already predicting a huge year for the group. We caught up with them just after practice, preparing for the new season.

XCM: Why don't you take a moment and introduce yourselves.

The Messenger: Praised be Apollo, I am The Messenger. Blessings be upon you.

XCM: Thanks, I mean, same to you.

The Sleeper: I'm the Sleeper, sorceress extrodinare, at your service. Also available for weddings, coming of age, and children's parties.

The Stud: The guys call me The Stud. (snickers from the team)

Pecos Pete: Pecos Pete

Oni: <Thanks, Pete, that was enlightening. Oni, lead lock-pick–

Geronimo Nick: Hey!

Oni: – at your service.

XCM: Am I sensing some controversy here?

Geronimo Nick: Not really. Too-tall here likes to pretend she's the only one on this team who can jimmy a door. My numbers are just as good as hers...

Angus: Ach! Not this nonsense again.

Geronimo Nick: It's true!

Angus: Ye prattle like washerwomen. I'm Angus, yer basher and all around knockabout. For Glasgow!

XCM: Angus, there aren't many dwarves who play Xcrawl, let alone Scottish ones. Do you get a lot of negative feedback from your brethren about being a star?

Angus: Oh, yeh, certainly. Me own mum won't invite me over for the Friday meal–says she's embarrassed. But I know she's just nervous. She doesn't want to see me eaten by something. If yer readin' this mum, dinna worry–they ain't yet bred the orc to take yer boy down.

XCM: So why do you do it?

Angus: We dwarves have let the auld ways slip away from us. I want to make sure that there's at least one dwarf who remembers how to swing an axe. Killing filthy goblins an' making off with the gold–it's a tradition we should be proud of.

XCM: And you, Oni, do you feel you are continuing a tradition as well?

Oni: Xcrawl lets me carry on my two very favorite traditions: eating hot meals and sleeping indoors. Seriously, I'm a performer, and Xcrawl is my favorite gig. Eventually, I want to branch out, try some new things. I actually have thought about becoming a DJ.

Stud: Traitor.

Oni: I'm going to do some writing as well. I'm working on a book deal with Goodberry Press. Life story plus photos. Its gonna be big.

XCM: Messenger, do you feel it contradicts your faith to be involved with the Dunguun Gangstaas.

Messenger: Absolutely not. If ever there was a bunch who needed some spiritual guidance, it is this crew. Apollo commands we bring the light of his name to the darkest places.

XCM: Is that what Xcrawl is for you, bringing the light of faith to the darkest place of all?

Messenger: Absolutely! I play The Games to demonstrate his glory.

XCM: Sleeper, do you feel comfortable being the only arcane support going into Memphis?

Sleeper: I have no worries at all. My powers are growing every day. Magic courses through my veins. I won't let my fans down. The Sleeper will be victorious!

XCM: And should your powers fail you?

Sleeper: I'll nail somebody's head to the wall with my crossbow. Have no doubts about the Sleeper–the Sleeper will hold up her end of things.

XCM: Stud, you aren't a regular member of this team.

Stud: Well, I'm sort of a permanent substitute. I'll be participating in the MemphisCrawl this year, so at least for now I'm on the active roster. I'm just hoping to contribute.

XCM: You were a star receiver in college. What made you give up a seemingly promising football career for a dangerous sport like Xcrawl?

Stud: I was drafted into playing on our college Division Four team when their regular fighter blew his knee out and couldn't make it. I thought I would just try it that once, but when I was actually playing, it was incredible. There is nothing else like it. No other challenge compares. Football lost whatever thrill it once held for me. So, I decided what the heck, I would try The Games. Plus, I got cut from the pros.

XCM: Pete, what made you choose your moniker?

Pecos Pete: What?

XCM: Why did you decide to name yourself after the famous American folk hero?

Pecos Pete: I picked it out of a book.

XCM: So, it dosen't have any special meaning for you?

Pecos Pete: He was supposed to be some kind of Texas badass or something, so I decided to use it. What's wrong with it?

XCM: Nothing. Nothing at all. I was just curious about...so, tell me something. What do you do on your days off?

Pecos Pete: I'm not allowed to leave the hotel. Mostly I watch TV.

XCM: I see. So, Geronimo–you were brought in to replace the bare-handed fighter, Xian, when she decides to retire. How would you feel, being her replacement?

Geronimo Nick: Well, nobody could actually replace Xian. I don't think that's why they brought me on. Really, its best to have two sneak-swords on any team. When your safety is concerned, you want a second opinion.

XCM: As a halfling, do you feel that playing The Games helps lift the image of your race?

Geronimo Nick: I didn't know our image needed lifting.

XCM: Oh, well I didn't mean...

Geronimo Nick: I know what you meant. Truth is, yeah, I hope people see me representing the Empire on TV and realize that the stereotype is hogwash. Does it actually help? I have no idea. But I hope so.

XCM: Okay, soon you face off against CudgelUp! and her minions. What are your thoughts going into this competition?

Oni: It's ours.

Geronimo Nick: We own this.

Angus: She should just hand over the gold now.

Pecos Pete: I'm going to kill some chester.

XCM: Any strategy?

Messenger: We will be as one, united and working towards a common purpose. Apollo will be out light and our strength. Nothing will be insurmountable.

Sleeper: I'm going to hold on to my big guns for as long as I can. I want to save something for the big rooms.

Stud: I'm playing as fast and loose as I can. I've watched all the tapes on the Cudgel Up! Dancers, and we have a plan for dealing with them. I think that I can be a big help.

Oni: Sure you will...

Geronimo Nick: I want to hit fast, and fade into the shadows. I'm not giving anybody a good target all night.

Oni: Yeah. The stump will be great. He's the second best lockpick on our team, after all...

Geronimo Nick: HEY!

Pecos Pete: I'm definitely going to kill as much as I can–everything in arm's reach.

XCM: Hopefully excluding your fellow Gangstaas.



character record sheet

Player _____

Adventures in the Xtreme Dungeon Crawl League™

Character Name	Team Name	Division Rating
Angus "GUS" McRedblade	Dunguun Gangstaas	3

Class	Race	Alignment	Level	Patron
fighter	dwarf	neutral good	4	

Age	Gender	Height	Weight	Eyes	Hair	Skin
55	male	4'	4'	green	RED!!	caucasian

ABILITIES

	SCORE	MODIFIER	TEMP SCORE	TEMP MOD
Charisma	10	0		
Strength	17	+3		
Dexterity	16	+3		
Constitution	18	+4		
Intelligence	14	+2		
Wisdom	12	+1		

INITIATIVE

MODIFIER

TOTAL	=	Dex	+	Misc
+3		+3		

SPEED

20

ATTACK BONUSES

BASE +4

	Total	=	Base	+	Str	+	Size	+	Misc	+	Temp
Melee	+8		+4		+4						
Ranged	+7		+4		+3						

HIT POINTS

TOTAL	CURRENT HP	SUBDUAL DAMAGE
51		

ARMOR CLASS

TOTAL	=	10	+	Armor	+	Shield	+	Dex	+	Size	+	Misc
21		10		+4		+3		+3				(+4)

WEAPON

The Guillotine — Type: Great Ax, keen

Total Attack Bonus: +9

Damage: 1d12+6 — Critical: 19-20 x3

Range _____ Size _____

Special Properties _____

WEAPON

_____ — Type _____

Total Attack Bonus _____

Damage _____ — Critical _____

Range _____ Size _____

Special Properties _____

EXPERIENCE POINTS

SKILLS

Skill	Ability	TOTAL	=	Mod	+	Ranks	+	Misc Mod
Alchemy	int		=		+		+	
Animal Empathy	cha		=		+		+	
Appraise	int		=		+		+	
Balance	dex		=		+		+	
Bluff	cha		=		+		+	
Climb	str	11	=	4	+	7	+	7
Concentration	con		=		+		+	
Craft-_____	int	7	=	2	+	5	+	
Decipher Script	int		=		+		+	
Diplomacy	cha		=		+		+	
Disable Device	int		=		+		+	
Disguise	cha		=		+		+	
Drive	dex		=		+		+	
Dungeon Crawl Lore	int		=		+		+	
Escape Artist	dex		=		+		+	
Forgery	int		=		+		+	
Gather Info	cha		=		+		+	
Handle Animal	cha	2	=		+	2	+	
Heal	wis		=		+		+	
Hide	dex		=		+		+	
Innuendo	wis		=		+		+	
Intimidate	cha		=		+		+	
Intuit Direction	wis		=		+		+	
Jump	str	11	=	4	+	7	+	
Knowledge-arcana	int		=		+		+	
Knowledge-astronomy	int		=		+		+	
Knowledge-nobility,royalty	int		=		+		+	
Knowledge-the planes	int		=		+		+	
Knowledge-religion	int		=		+		+	
Knowledge-dungeon crawl	int	4	=	2	+	2	+	
Knowledge-_____	int		=		+		+	
Knowledge-_____	int		=		+		+	
Listen	wis		=		+		+	
Move Silently	dex		=		+		+	
Open Lock	dex		=		+		+	
Perform-_____	cha		=		+		+	
Perform-_____	cha		=		+		+	
Perform-_____	cha		=		+		+	
Pick Pocket	dex		=		+		+	
Profession-_____	wis		=		+		+	
Read Lips	int		=		+		+	
Ride-_____	dex	4	=	3	+	1	+	
Scry	int		=		+		+	
Search	int		=		+		+	
Sense Motive	wis		=		+		+	
Spellcraft	int		=		+		+	
Spot	wis		=		+		+	
Swim	str	10	=	4	+	6	+	
Tumble	dex		=		+		+	
Use Magic Device	cha		=		+		+	
_____	___		=		+		+	
_____	___		=		+		+	
_____	___		=		+		+	

FAME RATING

17

TURN

face

SAVING THROWS

	Total	=	Base Save	+	Ability	+	Magic	+	Misc	+	Temp
Fortitude	+7		+3		+4						
Reflex	+4		+1		+3						
Will	+2		+1		+1						

Conditional Modifiers: +2 vs poison or magic

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XCRAWL

Adventures in the Xtreme Dungeon Crawl League™

CRS – page two

Campaign

Team Members

COMMERCIAL ENDORSEMENTS

Agent-

Sponsors-

Contracts-

MONEY

Copper Pieces

Silver Pieces

Gold Pieces

PRIZES

SIGNATURE MOVE

Name The Long Drive

Description Killing Stroke followed by Performance Check (DC variable)

Stats Must kill opponent with single blow (removing body part), and then strikes body part with flat of ax, driving it towards the crowd

GEAR

waterproof backpack	spray paint
50' rope	1 potion healing (1d8 + 4)
zippo lighter	3 vials alchemist fire
maglight	
canteen	
goggles	
golf bag and clubs	

ARMOR

Type scale mail

Bonus +4 Max Dex Bonus +3

Check Penalty -4 Spell Failure 25%

Speed 20/15 Weight 30

Special Properties

SHEILD/PROTECTIVE ITEM

Armor Bonus Check Penalty

Spell Failure Weight

Special Properties

SPECIAL ABILITIES & FEATS

dark vision 60'
exotic weaponry
power attack
cleave
dodge

LANGUAGES

dwarven
pict

SPELLS

0:

1st:

2nd:

3rd:

4th:

5th:

6th:

7th:

8th:

9th:

SPELL LEVELS

DC Modifier

Spell Save DC	Level	Spells Per Day	Bonus Spells
	0		0
	1st		
	2nd		
	3rd		
	4th		
	5th		
	6th		
	7th		
	8th		
	9th		

SPELL SAVE

NUMBER OF SPELLS KNOWN

0:
1st:
2nd:
3rd:
4th:
5th:
6th:
7th:
8th:
9th:

NOTES

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XCRAWL™ character record sheet

Adventures in the Xtreme Dungeon Crawl League™

Player _____

Character Name	Team Name	Division Rating
Geronimo Nick	Dunguun Gangstaas	3

Class	Race	Alignment	Level	Patron
rogue	halfling	neutral good	4	

Age	Gender	Height	Weight	Eyes	Hair	Skin
unknown	male	3' 2"	90#	brown	brown	swarthy

ABILITIES

	SCORE	MODIFIER	TEMP SCORE	TEMP MOD
Charisma	14	+2		
Strength	10			
Dexterity	19	+4		
Constitution	13	+1		
Intelligence	15	+2		
Wisdom	11			

INITIATIVE

MODIFIER

TOTAL	=	Dex	+	Misc
+4		+4		

SPEED

20

ATTACK BONUSES

BASE +3

	Total	=	Base	+	Str	+	Size	+	Misc	+	Temp
Melee	+4		+3				+1				
Ranged	+8		+3		+4		+1				

HIT POINTS

TOTAL	CURRENT HP	SUBDUAL DAMAGE
22		

ARMOR CLASS

TOTAL	=	10	+	Armor	+	Shield	+	Dex	+	Size	+	Misc
21		10		+4				+4		+1		+2

WEAPON

_____ Type Short Sword

Total Attack Bonus +7

Damage 1d6 Critical 19-20 x2

Range _____ Size small

Special Properties _____

WEAPON

_____ Type throwing dagger

Total Attack Bonus +8

Damage 1d4 Critical 19-20 x2

Range 10 Size small

Special Properties _____

EXPERIENCE POINTS

SKILLS

Skill	Ability	TOTAL	=	Mod	+	Ranks	+	Misc Mod
Alchemy	int		=		+		+	
Animal Empathy	cha		=		+		+	
Appraise	int	3	=	2	+	1	+	
Balance	dex	8	=	4	+	4	+	
Bluff	cha	5	=		+	3	+	
Climb	str	9	=		+	7	+	2
Concentration	con		=		+		+	
Craft-	int		=		+		+	
Decipher Script	int		=		+		+	
Diplomacy	cha		=		+		+	
Disable Device	int	9	=	2	+	7	+	
Disguise	cha		=		+		+	
Drive	dex		=		+		+	
Dungeon Crawl Lore	int		=		+		+	
Escape Artist	dex	6	=	4	+	2	+	
Forgery	int		=		+		+	
Gather Info	cha	4	=	2	+	2	+	
Handle Animal	cha		=		+		+	
Heal	wis		=		+		+	
Hide	dex	15	=	4	+	7	+	4
Innuendo	wis		=		+		+	
Intimidate	cha		=		+		+	
Intuit Direction	wis		=		+		+	
Jump	str	5	=		+	3	+	2
Knowledge-arcana	int		=		+		+	
Knowledge-astronomy	int		=		+		+	
Knowledge-nobility,royalty	int		=		+		+	
Knowledge-the planes	int		=		+		+	
Knowledge-religion	int		=		+		+	
Knowledge-dungeon crawl	int	4	=		+	4	+	
Knowledge-	int		=		+		+	
Knowledge-	int		=		+		+	
Listen	wis	6	=		+	4	+	2
Move Silently	dex	13	=	4	+	7	+	2
Open Lock	dex	10	=	4	+	6	+	
Perform- grandstand	cha	4	=	2	+	2	+	
Perform-	cha		=		+		+	
Perform-	cha		=		+		+	
Pick Pocket	dex	7	=	4	+	3	+	
Profession-	wis		=		+		+	
Read Lips	int		=		+		+	
Ride-	dex		=		+		+	
Scry	int		=		+		+	
Search	int	9	=	2	+	7	+	
Sense Motive	wis		=		+		+	
Spellcraft	int		=		+		+	
Spot	wis		=		+		+	
Swim	str		=		+		+	
Tumble	dex	7	=	4	+	3	+	
Use Magic Device	cha		=		+		+	
			=		+		+	
			=		+		+	
			=		+		+	

FAME RATING

9

TURN

face

SAVING THROWS

	Total	=	Base Save	+	Ability	+	Magic	+	Misc	+	Temp
Fortitude	+3		+1		+1				+1		
Reflex	+9		+4		+4				+1		
Will	+2		+1						+1		

Conditional Modifiers +2 vs fear

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XCRAWL CRS – page two

Adventures in the Xtreme Dungeon Crawl League™

Campaign

Team Members

COMMERCIAL ENDORSEMENTS

Agent-

Sponsors-

Contracts-

MONEY

Copper Pieces

Silver Pieces

Gold Pieces

PRIZES

SIGNATURE MOVE

Name Hey...how ya doin?

Description Sneak attack followed by tumble defense

Stats

GEAR

4 concealed daggers	50' rope
sap	3 potion healing (1d8 + 4)
+2 ring of protection	2 vials alchemist fire
2 thunderstones	1 potion invisibility

ARMOR

second skin Type +2 leather

Bonus +4 Max Dex Bonus +5

Check Penalty Spell Failure

Speed Weight

Special Properties

SHEILD/PROTECTIVE ITEM

Armor Bonus Check Penalty

Spell Failure Weight

Special Properties

SPECIAL ABILITIES & FEATS

sneak attack +2d6
evasion
uncanny dodge
expertise
weapon finesse- short sword

LANGUAGES

halfling
spanish

SPELLS

0:

1st:

2nd:

3rd:

4th:

5th:

6th:

7th:

8th:

9th:

SPELL LEVELS

DC Modifier

Spell Save DC	Level	Spells Per Day	Bonus Spells
	0		0
	1st		
	2nd		
	3rd		
	4th		
	5th		
	6th		
	7th		
	8th		
	9th		

SPELL SAVE

NUMBER OF SPELLS KNOWN

0:
1st:
2nd:
3rd:
4th:
5th:
6th:
7th:
8th:
9th:

NOTES

has rivalry with ONI

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Character record sheet

Player _____

XCRAWL™ Adventures in the Xtreme Dungeon Crawl League™

The Messenger	Dunguun Gangstaas	3
Character Name	Team Name	Division Rating

cleric	human	chaotic good	4	Apollo
Class	Race	Alignment	Level	Patron

33	male	6' 2"	220#	brown	bald	brown
Age	Gender	Height	Weight	Eyes	Hair	Skin

ABILITIES

	Score	Modifier	Temp Score	Temp Mod
Charisma	14	+2		
Strength	17	+3		
Dexterity	11			
Constitution	16	+3		
Intelligence	13	+1		
Wisdom	17	+3		

INITIATIVE

Modifier

Total = *Dex* + *Misc*

+0 | | |

SPEED

20

ATTACK BONUSES

Base +3

	Total =	*Base* +	*Str* +	*Size* +	*Misc* +	*Temp*
Melee	+6	+3	+3			
Ranged						

HIT POINTS

Total	**Current Hp**	**Subdual Damage**
33		

ARMOR CLASS

Total = *10* + *Armor* + *Shield* + *Dex* + *Size* + *Misc*

18	10	+6	+2			

WEAPON

Apollo's Word Type Quarterstaff +1

Total Attack Bonus +7

Damage 1d6 +4 Critical 20 x2

Range_____ Size_____

Special Properties _____

WEAPON

_____ Type _____

Total Attack Bonus

Damage Critical

Range_____ Size_____

Special Properties _____

EXPERIENCE POINTS

SKILLS

Skill	Ability	TOTAL	=	Mod	+	Ranks	+	Misc Mod
Alchemy	int		=		+		+	
Animal Empathy	cha		=		+		+	
Appraise	int		=		+		+	
Balance	dex		=		+		+	
Bluff	cha		=		+		+	
Climb	str		=		+		+	
Concentration	con	9	=	3	+	6	+	
Craft-_____	int		=		+		+	
Decipher Script	int		=		+		+	
Diplomacy	cha		=		+		+	
Disable Device	int		=		+		+	
Disguise	cha		=		+		+	
Drive	dex	5	=		+	5	+	
Dungeon Crawl Lore	int		=		+		+	
Escape Artist	dex		=		+		+	
Forgery	int		=		+		+	
Gather Info	cha		=		+		+	
Handle Animal	cha		=		+		+	
Heal	wis	8	=	3	+	5	+	
Hide	dex		=		+		+	
Innuendo	wis		=		+		+	
Intimidate	cha		=		+		+	
Intuit Direction	wis		=		+		+	
Jump	str		=		+		+	
Knowledge-arcana	int		=		+		+	
Knowledge-astronomy	int		=		+		+	
Knowledge-nobility,royalty	int		=		+		+	
Knowledge-the planes	int		=		+		+	
Knowledge-religion	int	8	=	1	+	7	+	
Knowledge-dungeon crawl	int		=		+		+	
Knowledge-_____	int		=		+		+	
Knowledge-_____	int		=		+		+	
Listen	wis		=		+		+	
Move Silently	dex		=		+		+	
Open Lock	dex		=		+		+	
Perform- grandstand	cha		=		+		+	
Perform-_____	cha		=		+		+	
Perform-_____	cha		=		+		+	
Pick Pocket	dex		=		+		+	
Profession-_____	wis		=		+		+	
Read Lips	int		=		+		+	
Ride-_____	dex		=		+		+	
Scry	int		=		+		+	
Search	int		=		+		+	
Sense Motive	wis		=		+		+	
Spellcraft	int	6	=	1	+	5	+	
Spot	wis		=		+		+	
Swim	str		=		+		+	
Tumble	dex		=		+		+	
Use Magic Device	cha		=		+		+	
_____	___		=		+		+	
_____	___		=		+		+	
_____	___		=		+		+	

FAME RATING

17

TURN

face

SAVING THROWS

	Total =	*Base Save* +	*Ability* +	*Magic* +	*Misc* +	*Temp*
Fortitude	+4	+4				
Reflex	+1	+1				
Will	+4	+4				

Conditional Modifiers _____

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XCRAWL CRS – page two

Adventures in the Xtreme Dungeon Crawl League™

Campaign

Team Members

COMMERCIAL ENDORSEMENTS

Agent-

Sponsors-

Contracts-

MONEY

Copper Pieces

Silver Pieces

Gold Pieces

PRIZES

SIGNATURE MOVE

Name

Description

Stats

GEAR

4-finger holy ring

paperback sacred texts

scroll Bless x3

3 potion healing (1d8 + 4)

ARMOR

Type +2 chain longshirt

Bonus +6 Max Dex Bonus +4

Check Penalty -2 Spell Failure 20%

Speed 30/20 Weight 25

Special Properties

SHEILD/PROTECTIVE ITEM

Metal Shield

Armor Bonus +2 Check Penalty -1

Spell Failure 15% Weight 15

Special Properties

SPECIAL ABILITIES & FEATS

turn undead

extra turning

two-fisted healing

combat casting

LANGUAGES

latin

SPELLS

0: Detect Poison
Light x3

1st: Protection from Evil
Bless
Command
Endure Elements
Shield of Faith

2nd: Aid
Bull's Strength
Endurance
Spiritual Weapon

3rd:

4th:

5th:

6th:

7th:

8th:

9th:

SPELL LEVELS

DC Modifier

Spell Save DC	Level	Spells Per Day	Bonus Spells
	0	5	0
	1st	4+1	
	2nd	3+1	
	3rd		
	4th		
	5th		
	6th		
	7th		
	8th		
	9th		

SPELL SAVE

NUMBER OF SPELLS KNOWN

0:
1st:
2nd:
3rd:
4th:
5th:
6th:
7th:
8th:
9th:

NOTES

hit hip-hop recording star

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Character record sheet

Player _____

XCRAWL™ Adventures in the Xtreme Dungeon Crawl League™

Character Name	Team Name	Division Rating
ONI	Dunguun Gangstaas	3

Class	Race	Alignment	Level	Patron
rogue	human	chaotic neutral	4	

Age	Gender	Height	Weight	Eyes	Hair	Skin
22	female	5' 10"	135#	blue	blond	caucasian

ABILITIES

	Score	Modifier	Temp Score	Temp Mod
Charisma	16	+3		
Strength	14	+2		
Dexterity	18	+4		
Constitution	16	+3		
Intelligence	14	+2		
Wisdom	13	+1		

INITIATIVE

Modifier

Total	=	Dex	+	Misc
+4		+4		

SPEED

30

ATTACK BONUSES

Base +2

	Total	=	Base	+	Str	+	Size	+	Misc	+	Temp
Melee	+5		+3		+2						
Ranged	+7		+3		+4						

HIT POINTS

Total	Current Hp	Subdual Damage
33		

ARMOR CLASS

Total	=	10	+	Armor	+	Shield	+	Dex	+	Size	+	Misc
16		10		+2				+4				

WEAPON

Backtalker — Type short sword +2

Total Attack Bonus +7

Damage 1d6 +2 — Critical 19-20 x2

Range _____ — Size small

Special Properties _____

WEAPON

_____ — Type throwing daggers

Total Attack Bonus _____

Damage 1d4 +2 — Critical 19-20 x2

Range 10 — Size small

Special Properties _____

EXPERIENCE POINTS

SKILLS

Skill	Ability	TOTAL	=	Mod	+	Ranks	+	Misc Mod
Alchemy	int		=		+		+	
Animal Empathy	cha		=		+		+	
Appraise	int	6	=	2	+	4	+	
Balance	dex	6	=	4	+	2	+	
Bluff	cha	4	=	3	+	1	+	
Climb	str	6	=	2	+	4	+	
Concentration	con		=		+		+	
Craft-_____	int		=		+		+	
Decipher Script	int	6	=	2	+	4	+	
Diplomacy	cha	3	=		+	3	+	
Disable Device	int	11	=	2	+	7	+	
Disguise	cha	5	=	3	+	2	+	
Drive	dex		=		+		+	
Dungeon Crawl Lore	int		=		+		+	
Escape Artist	dex	7	=	4	+	3	+	
Forgery	int		=		+		+	
Gather Info	cha		=		+		+	
Handle Animal	cha		=		+		+	
Heal	wis		=		+		+	
Hide	dex	8	=	4	+	4	+	
Innuendo	wis	4	=	1	+	3	+	
Intimidate	cha	6	=	3	+	3	+	
Intuit Direction	wis	3	=	1	+	2	+	
Jump	str	8	=	4	+	4	+	
Knowledge-arcana	int		=		+		+	
Knowledge-astronomy	int		=		+		+	
Knowledge-nobility,royalty	int		=		+		+	
Knowledge-the planes	int		=		+		+	
Knowledge-religion	int		=		+		+	
Knowledge-dungeon crawl	int	5	=	2	+	3	+	
Knowledge-_____	int		=		+		+	
Knowledge-_____	int		=		+		+	
Listen	wis	4	=	1	+	3	+	
Move Silently	dex	8	=	4	+	4	+	
Open Lock	dex	10	=	4	+	4	+	2
Perform- grandstand	cha	4	=	3	+	1	+	
Perform-_____	cha		=		+		+	
Perform-_____	cha		=		+		+	
Pick Pocket	dex	6	=	4	+	2	+	
Profession-_____	wis		=		+		+	
Read Lips	int		=		+		+	
Ride-_____	dex	4	=	3	+	1	+	
Scry	int		=		+		+	
Search	int	9	=	2	+	7	+	
Sense Motive	wis	1	=		+	1	+	
Spellcraft	int		=		+		+	
Spot	wis	5	=	1	+	4	+	
Swim	str	2	=	2	+	6	+	
Tumble	dex	4	=	4	+		+	
Use Magic Device	cha		=		+		+	
			=		+		+	
			=		+		+	
			=		+		+	

FAME RATING

26

TURN

face

SAVING THROWS

	Total	=	Base Save	+	Ability	+	Magic	+	Misc	+	Temp
Fortitude	+4		+1		+3						
Reflex	+8		+4		+4						
Will	+2		+1		+1						

Conditional Modifiers _____

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XCRAWL CRS – page two

Adventures in the Xtreme Dungeon Crawl League™

Campaign

Team Members

COMMERCIAL ENDORSEMENTS

Agent- Guy Friege

Sponsors- Pop Soda, Xorez Communications, Citidell Fuels

Contracts- Elfworn Composite Gear (armor contract)

MONEY

Copper Pieces

Silver Pieces

Gold Pieces

PRIZES

SIGNATURE MOVE

Name

Description

Stats

GEAR

waterproof backpack	spray paint
50' rope	1 potion healing (1d8 + 4)
zippo lighter	1 vial alchemist fire
maglight	antitoxin (3 doses)
masterwork thieves tools	1 potion invisibility

ARMOR

Elfworn Bonded-Pro Type bonded

Bonus +3 Max Dex Bonus +5

Check Penalty -1 Spell Failure 15%

Speed 30/20 Weight 20

Special Properties

SHEILD/PROTECTIVE ITEM

Armor Bonus Check Penalty

Spell Failure Weight

Special Properties

SPECIAL ABILITIES & FEATS

sneak attack +2d6

evasion

uncanny dodge

dodge

LANGUAGES

elvish

japanese

SPELLS

0:

1st:

2nd:

3rd:

4th:

5th:

6th:

7th:

8th:

9th:

SPELL LEVELS

DC Modifier

Spell Save DC	Level	Spells Per Day	Bonus Spells
	0		0
	1st		
	2nd		
	3rd		
	4th		
	5th		
	6th		
	7th		
	8th		
	9th		

SPELL SAVE

NUMBER OF SPELLS KNOWN

0:

1st:

2nd:

3rd:

4th:

5th:

6th:

7th:

8th:

9th:

NOTES

ALWAYS wears her mask (has never been seen without it)

will do anything for money

known to be a bit of a smart mouth

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Character record sheet

Player _____

Adventures in the Xtreme Dungeon Crawl League™

Character Name	Team Name	Division Rating
Pecos Pete	Dunguun Gangstaas	3

Class	Race	Alignment	Level	Patron
barbarian	half orc	neutral evil	4	

Age	Gender	Height	Weight	Eyes	Hair	Skin
17	male	6' 4"	235#	black		orangish

ABILITIES

	Score	Modifier	Temp Score	Temp Mod
Charisma	8	-1		
Strength	19	+4		
Dexterity	14	+2		
Constitution	17	+3		
Intelligence	10			
Wisdom	12	+1		

INITIATIVE

Modifier

Total = *Dex* + *Misc*

+2 = +2 +

SPEED

40

ATTACK BONUSES

Base +4

	Total =	*Base* +	*Str* +	*Size* +	*Misc* +	*Temp*
Melee	+8	+4	+4			
Ranged	+6	+4	+2			

HIT POINTS

Total	Current Hp	Subdual Damage
53		

ARMOR CLASS

Total = *10* + *Armor* + *Shield* + *Dex* + *Size* + *Misc*

16 = 10 + +3 + +1 + +2 +

WEAPON

_____ Type Great Axe

Total Attack Bonus +8

Damage 1d12 +4 Critical 20 x3

Range _____ Size large

Special Properties _____

WEAPON

_____ Type throwing axe

Total Attack Bonus +6

Damage 1d6 +4 Critical 20 x2

Range 10 Size small

Special Properties _____

EXPERIENCE POINTS

SKILLS

Skill	Ability	TOTAL	=	Mod	+	Ranks	+	Misc Mod
Alchemy	int		=		+		+	
Animal Empathy	cha		=		+		+	
Appraise	int		=		+		+	
Balance	dex		=		+		+	
Bluff	cha		=		+		+	
Climb	str	10	=	4	+	6	+	
Concentration	con		=		+		+	
Craft-_____	int		=		+		+	
Decipher Script	int		=		+		+	
Diplomacy	cha		=		+		+	
Disable Device	int		=		+		+	
Disguise	cha		=		+		+	
Drive	dex		=		+		+	
Dungeon Crawl Lore	int		=		+		+	
Escape Artist	dex		=		+		+	
Forgery	int		=		+		+	
Gather Info	cha		=		+		+	
Handle Animal	cha	3	=	-1	+	4	+	
Heal	wis		=		+		+	
Hide	dex		=		+		+	
Innuendo	wis		=		+		+	
Intimidate	cha		=		+		+	
Intuit Direction	wis		=		+		+	
Jump	str	9	=	4	+	5	+	
Knowledge-arcana	int		=		+		+	
Knowledge-astronomy	int		=		+		+	
Knowledge-nobility,royalty	int		=		+		+	
Knowledge-the planes	int		=		+		+	
Knowledge-religion	int		=		+		+	
Knowledge-dungeon crawl	int	3	=		+	3	+	
Knowledge-_____	int		=		+		+	
Knowledge-_____	int		=		+		+	
Listen	wis		=		+		+	
Move Silently	dex		=		+		+	
Open Lock	dex		=		+		+	
Perform- grandstand	cha		=		+		+	
Perform-_____	cha		=		+		+	
Perform-_____	cha		=		+		+	
Pick Pocket	dex		=		+		+	
Profession-_____	wis		=		+		+	
Read Lips	int		=		+		+	
Ride-_____	dex	6	=	2	+	4	+	
Scry	int		=		+		+	
Search	int		=		+		+	
Sense Motive	wis		=		+		+	
Spellcraft	int		=		+		+	
Spot	wis		=		+		+	
Swim	str	10	=	4	+	6	+	
Tumble	dex		=		+		+	
Use Magic Device	cha		=		+		+	
_____	___		=		+		+	
_____	___		=		+		+	
_____	___		=		+		+	

FAME RATING

4

TURN

face

SAVING THROWS

	Total =	*Base Save* +	*Ability* +	*Magic* +	*Misc* +	*Temp*
Fortitude	+7	+4	+3			
Reflex	+3	+1	+2			
Will	+2	+1	+1			

Conditional Modifiers _____

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XCRAWL CRS – page two

Adventures in the Xtreme Dungeon Crawl League™

Campaign

Team Members

COMMERCIAL ENDORSEMENTS

Agent-

Sponsors-

Contracts-

MONEY

Copper Pieces

Silver Pieces

Gold Pieces

PRIZES

SIGNATURE MOVE

Name

Description

Stats

GEAR

belt of kobold skulls

3 throwing axes

3 potion healing (1d8 + 4)

concealed dagger

waterskin

2 days rations

ARMOR

Type hide

Bonus +3 Max Dex Bonus +4

Check Penalty -3 Spell Failure 20%

Speed 20/15 Weight 25

Special Properties

SHEILD/PROTECTIVE ITEM

Armor Bonus Check Penalty

Spell Failure Weight

Special Properties

SPECIAL ABILITIES & FEATS

darkvision 60'
rage 2x/day
uncanny dodge
fast move
power attack
cleave

LANGUAGES

orc

SPELLS

0:

1st:

2nd:

3rd:

4th:

5th:

6th:

7th:

8th:

9th:

SPELL LEVELS

DC Modifier

Spell Save DC	Level	Spells Per Day	Bonus Spells
	0		0
	1st		
	2nd		
	3rd		
	4th		
	5th		
	6th		
	7th		
	8th		
	9th		

SPELL SAVE

NUMBER OF SPELLS KNOWN

0:
1st:
2nd:
3rd:
4th:
5th:
6th:
7th:
8th:
9th:

NOTES

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XCRAWL™ character record sheet

Adventures in the Xtreme Dungeon Crawl League™

Player _____

Character Name	Team Name	Division Rating
Sleeper	Dunguun Gangstaas	3

Class	Race	Alignment	Level	Patron
sorceress	human	neutral good	4	Furae

Age	Gender	Height	Weight	Eyes	Hair	Skin
19	female	5' 7"	105#	brown	green (for now)	caucasian

ABILITIES

	SCORE	MODIFIER	TEMP SCORE	TEMP MOD
Charisma	18	+4		
Strength	11			
Dexterity	15	+2		
Constitution	14	+2		
Intelligence	13	+1		
Wisdom	12	+1		

INITIATIVE

MODIFIER

TOTAL	=	Dex	+	Misc
+6		+2		+4

SPEED

30

ATTACK BONUSES

BASE +2

	Total	=	Base	+	Str	+	Size	+	Misc	+	Temp
Melee	+2		+2								
Ranged	+4		+2		+2						

HIT POINTS

TOTAL	CURRENT HP	SUBDUAL DAMAGE
17		

ARMOR CLASS

TOTAL	=	10	+	Armor	+	Shield	+	Dex	+	Size	+	Misc
14		10						+2				+2

WEAPON

_____ Type Heavy Crossbow +2

Total Attack Bonus +6

Damage 1d8 +2 Critical 19-20 x2

Range 80 Size _____

Special Properties 20 masterwork bolts

WEAPON

_____ Type mwk dagger

Total Attack Bonus +3

Damage 1d4 Critical 19-20 x2

Range 10 Size small

Special Properties _____

EXPERIENCE POINTS

SKILLS

Skill	Ability	TOTAL	=	Mod	+	Ranks	+	Misc Mod
Alchemy	int	5	=	1	+	4	+	
Animal Empathy	cha		=		+		+	
Appraise	int		=		+		+	
Balance	dex		=		+		+	
Bluff	cha		=		+		+	
Climb	str		=		+		+	
Concentration	con	6	=	2	+	4	+	
Craft-_____	int		=		+		+	
Decipher Script	int		=		+		+	
Diplomacy	cha		=		+		+	
Disable Device	int		=		+		+	
Disguise	cha		=		+		+	
Drive	dex		=		+		+	
Dungeon Crawl Lore	int		=		+		+	
Escape Artist	dex		=		+		+	
Forgery	int		=		+		+	
Gather Info	cha		=		+		+	
Handle Animal	cha		=		+		+	
Heal	wis		=		+		+	
Hide	dex		=		+		+	
Innuendo	wis		=		+		+	
Intimidate	cha		=		+		+	
Intuit Direction	wis		=		+		+	
Jump	str		=		+		+	
Knowledge-arcana	int	8	=	4	+	4	+	
Knowledge-astronomy	int		=		+		+	
Knowledge-nobility,royalty	int		=		+		+	
Knowledge-the planes	int		=		+		+	
Knowledge-religion	int		=		+		+	
Knowledge-dungeon crawl	int	3	=	1	+	2	+	
Knowledge-_____	int		=		+		+	
Knowledge-_____	int		=		+		+	
Listen	wis		=		+		+	
Move Silently	dex	3	=	2	+	1	+	
Open Lock	dex		=		+		+	
Perform- grandstand	cha	8	=	4	+	4	+	
Perform-_____	cha		=		+		+	
Perform-_____	cha		=		+		+	
Pick Pocket	dex		=		+		+	
Profession-_____	wis		=		+		+	
Read Lips	int		=		+		+	
Ride-_____	dex		=		+		+	
Scry	int		=		+		+	
Search	int		=		+		+	
Sense Motive	wis		=		+		+	
Spellcraft	int		=		+		+	
Spot	wis	7	=	1	+	6	+	
Swim	str		=		+		+	
Tumble	dex		=		+		+	
Use Magic Device	cha	8	=	4	+	4	+	
_____	___		=		+		+	
_____	___		=		+		+	
_____	___		=		+		+	

FAME RATING

4

TURN

face

SAVING THROWS

	Total	=	Base Save	+	Ability	+	Magic	+	Misc	+	Temp
Fortitude	+3		+1		+2						
Reflex	+3		+1		+2						
Will	+6		+4		+2						

Conditional Modifiers _____

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XCRAWL

Adventures in the Xtreme Dungeon Crawl League™

CRS – page two

Campaign

Team Members

COMMERCIAL ENDORSEMENTS

Agent-

Sponsors-

Contracts-

MONEY

Copper Pieces

Silver Pieces

Gold Pieces

PRIZES

SIGNATURE MOVE

Name

Description

Stats

GEAR

+2 ring of protection

3 vials alchemist fire

3 potion healing (1d8 + 4)

ARMOR

Type

Bonus ☐ Max Dex Bonus ☐

Check Penalty ☐ Spell Failure ☐

Speed 30' Weight

Special Properties

SHEILD/PROTECTIVE ITEM

Armor Bonus ☐ Check Penalty ☐

Spell Failure ☐ Weight

Special Properties

SPECIAL ABILITIES & FEATS

summon famliar

improved initiative

combat casting

LANGUAGES

french

draconic

SPELLS

0: Read Magic, Detect Magic, Open/Close, Prestidigitation, Light, Ray of Frost

1st: Sleep, Magic Armor, Burning Hands

2nd: Web

3rd:

4th:

5th:

6th:

7th:

8th:

9th:

SPELL LEVELS

DC Modifier ☐

Spell Save DC	Level	Spells Per Day	Bonus Spells
	0	6	0
	1st	7	
	2nd	5	
	3rd		
	4th		
	5th		
	6th		
	7th		
	8th		
	9th		

SPELL SAVE

☐

NUMBER OF SPELLS KNOWN

0: 6
1st: 3
2nd: 1
3rd:
4th:
5th:
6th:
7th:
8th:
9th:

NOTES

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character record sheet

Player _____

Adventures in the Xtreme Dungeon Crawl League™

Character Name	Team Name	Division Rating
The Stud	Dunguun Gangstaas	3

Class	Race	Alignment	Level	Patron
athlete	human	chaotic good	4	

Age	Gender	Height	Weight	Eyes	Hair	Skin
25	male	5' 11"	190#	blue	blond	caucasion

ABILITIES

	SCORE	MODIFIER	TEMP SCORE	TEMP MOD
Charisma	12	+1		
Strength	17	+3		
Dexterity	14	+2		
Constitution	18	+4		
Intelligence	11			
Wisdom	9	-1		

INITIATIVE

TOTAL	=	Dex	+	Misc
+6		+2		+4

MODIFIER

SPEED

30

ATTACK BONUSES

BASE +4

	Total	=	Base	+	Str	+	Size	+	Misc	+	Temp
Melee	+7		+4		+3						
Ranged	+6		+4		+2						

HIT POINTS

TOTAL	CURRENT HP	SUBDUAL DAMAGE
41		

ARMOR CLASS

TOTAL	=	10	+	Armor	+	Shield	+	Dex	+	Size	+	Misc
16		10		+4				+2				

WEAPON

_____ Type Great Club +2

Total Attack Bonus +8

Damage 1d10 +5 Critical 20 x2

Range _____ Size large

Special Properties _____

WEAPON

_____ Type mwk throwing axe

Total Attack Bonus +7

Damage 1d6 +3 Critical 20 x2

Range 10 Size small

Special Properties _____

EXPERIENCE POINTS

SKILLS

Skill	Ability	TOTAL	=	Mod	+	Ranks	+	Misc Mod
Alchemy	int		=		+		+	
Animal Empathy	cha		=		+		+	
Appraise	int		=		+		+	
Balance	dex	5	=	2	+	3	+	
Bluff	cha		=		+		+	
Climb	str	10	=	3	+	7	+	
Concentration	con	1	=	-1	+	2	+	
Craft-_____	int		=		+		+	
Decipher Script	int		=		+		+	
Diplomacy	cha		=		+		+	
Disable Device	int		=		+		+	
Disguise	cha		=		+		+	
Drive	dex	4	=	2	+	2	+	
Dungeon Crawl Lore	int		=		+		+	
Escape Artist	dex		=		+		+	
Forgery	int		=		+		+	
Gather Info	cha		=		+		+	
Handle Animal	cha		=		+		+	
Heal	wis		=		+		+	
Hide	dex		=		+		+	
Innuendo	wis		=		+		+	
Intimidate	cha		=		+		+	
Intuit Direction	wis		=		+		+	
Jump	str		=		+		+	
Knowledge-arcana	int		=		+		+	
Knowledge-astronomy	int		=		+		+	
Knowledge-nobility,royalty	int		=		+		+	
Knowledge-the planes	int		=		+		+	
Knowledge-religion	int		=		+		+	
Knowledge-dungeon crawl	int		=		+		+	
Knowledge- sports	int	2	=		+	2	+	
Knowledge-_____	int		=		+		+	
Listen	wis		=		+		+	
Move Silently	dex		=		+		+	
Open Lock	dex		=		+		+	
Perform- grandstand	cha		=		+		+	
Perform-_____	cha		=		+		+	
Perform-_____	cha		=		+		+	
Pick Pocket	dex		=		+		+	
Profession-_____	wis		=		+		+	
Read Lips	int		=		+		+	
Ride-_____	dex		=		+		+	
Scry	int		=		+		+	
Search	int		=		+		+	
Sense Motive	wis		=		+		+	
Spellcraft	int		=		+		+	
Spot	wis		=		+		+	
Swim	str	10	=	3	+	7	+	
Tumble	dex	5	=	2	+	3	+	
Use Magic Device	cha		=		+		+	
_____	___		=		+		+	
_____	___		=		+		+	
_____	___		=		+		+	

FAME RATING

9

TURN

face

SAVING THROWS

	Total	=	Base Save	+	Ability	+	Magic	+	Misc	+	Temp
Fortitude	+6		+2		+4						
Reflex	+4		+2		+2						
Will	+1		+2		-1						

Conditional Modifiers _____

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XCRAWL

Adventures in the Xtreme Dungeon Crawl League™

CRS – page two

Campaign

Team Members

COMMERCIAL ENDORSEMENTS

Agent-

Sponsors-

Contracts-

MONEY

Copper Pieces

Silver Pieces

Gold Pieces

PRIZES

SIGNATURE MOVE

Name El Kabonga

Description Sunder followed by strike with club

Stats

GEAR

- masterwork morningstar
- 6 throwing axes
- concealed dagger
- 3 PowerDrinkz Energy Bars
- potion bull's strength
- 3 potion healing (1d8 + 4)
- 2 vials alchemist fire

ARMOR

The Stud-Suit — Type mwk spiked composite

Bonus +4 — Max Dex Bonus +3

Check Penalty -1 — Spell Failure 20%

Speed 30/20 — Weight 15

Special Properties spikes add 1d6 to hand-to-hand combat

SHEILD/PROTECTIVE ITEM

Armor Bonus — Check Penalty

Spell Failure — Weight

Special Properties

SPECIAL ABILITIES & FEATS

- favored sport: Xcrawl
- constant training
- cross-training
- improved initiative
- power attack

LANGUAGES

SPELLS

0:

1st:

2nd:

3rd:

4th:

5th:

6th:

7th:

8th:

9th:

SPELL LEVELS

DC Modifier

Spell Save DC	Level	Spells Per Day	Bonus Spells
	0		0
	1st		
	2nd		
	3rd		
	4th		
	5th		
	6th		
	7th		
	8th		
	9th		

SPELL SAVE

NUMBER OF SPELLS KNOWN

0:
1st:
2nd:
3rd:
4th:
5th:
6th:
7th:
8th:
9th:

NOTES

remarkably insecure
butt of all the jokes on the team
tries too hard to prove self

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character record sheet

Player _____

Character Name _____ Team Name _____ Division Rating _____

Class _____ Race _____ Alignment _____ Level _____ Patron _____

Age _____ Gender _____ Height _____ Weight _____ Eyes _____ Hair _____ Skin _____

ABILITIES

	SCORE	MODIFIER	TEMP SCORE	TEMP MOD
Charisma				
Strength				
Dexterity				
Constitution				
Intelligence				
Wisdom				

INITIATIVE

MODIFIER

TOTAL = *Dex* + *Misc*

SPEED

ATTACK BONUSES

BASE

	Total =	*Base* +	*Str* +	*Size* +	*Misc* +	*Temp*
Melee						
Ranged						

HIT POINTS

TOTAL **CURRENT HP** **SUBDUAL DAMAGE**

ARMOR CLASS

TOTAL = *10* + *Armor* + *Shield* + *Dex* + *Size* + *Misc*

WEAPON

_____ Type _____

Total Attack Bonus

Damage Critical

Range_____ Size_____

Special Properties _____

WEAPON

_____ Type _____

Total Attack Bonus

Damage Critical

Range_____ Size_____

Special Properties _____

EXPERIENCE POINTS

SKILLS

Skill	Ability	TOTAL	Mod	Ranks	Misc Mod
Alchemy	int				
Animal Empathy	cha				
Appraise	int				
Balance	dex				
Bluff	cha				
Climb	str				
Concentration	con				
Craft-_____	int				
Decipher Script	int				
Diplomacy	cha				
Disable Device	int				
Disguise	cha				
Drive	dex				
Dungeon Crawl Lore	int				
Escape Artist	dex				
Forgery	int				
Gather Info	cha				
Handle Animal	cha				
Heal	wis				
Hide	dex				
Innuendo	wis				
Intimidate	cha				
Intuit Direction	wis				
Jump	str				
Knowledge-arcana	int				
Knowledge-astronomy	int				
Knowledge-nobility,royalty	int				
Knowledge-the planes	int				
Knowledge-religion	int				
Knowledge-dungeon crawl	int				
Knowledge-_____	int				
Knowledge-_____	int				
Listen	wis				
Move Silently	dex				
Open Lock	dex				
Perform-_____	cha				
Perform-_____	cha				
Perform-_____	cha				
Pick Pocket	dex				
Profession-_____	wis				
Read Lips	int				
Ride-_____	dex				
Scry	int				
Search	int				
Sense Motive	wis				
Spellcraft	int				
Spot	wis				
Swim	str				
Tumble	dex				
Use Magic Device	cha				
_____	___				
_____	___				
_____	___				

FAME RATING

TURN

SAVING THROWS

	Total =	*Base Save* +	*Ability* +	*Magic* +	*Misc* +	*Temp*
Fortitude						
Reflex						
Will						

Conditional Modifiers _____

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XCRAWL

Adventures in the Xtreme Dungeon Crawl League™

CRS – page two

Campaign

Team Members

COMMERCIAL ENDORSEMENTS

Agent-

Sponsors-

Contracts-

MONEY

Copper Pieces

Silver Pieces

Gold Pieces

PRIZES

SIGNATURE MOVE

Name

Description

Stats

GEAR

ARMOR

Type

Bonus Max Dex Bonus

Check Penalty Spell Failure

Speed Weight

Special Properties

SHEILD/PROTECTIVE ITEM

Armor Bonus Check Penalty

Spell Failure Weight

Special Properties

SPECIAL ABILITIES & FEATS

LANGUAGES

SPELLS

0:

1st:

2nd:

3rd:

4th:

5th:

6th:

7th:

8th:

9th:

SPELL LEVELS

DC Modifier

Spell Save DC	Level	Spells Per Day	Bonus Spells
	0		0
	1st		
	2nd		
	3rd		
	4th		
	5th		
	6th		
	7th		
	8th		
	9th		

SPELL SAVE

NUMBER OF SPELLS KNOWN

0:

1st:

2nd:

3rd:

4th:

5th:

6th:

7th:

8th:

9th:

NOTES

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Adventures in the Xtreme Dungeon Crawl League™

Team Record Sheet

Team Name _____ Hometown _____

Wins _____ Losses _____ Division _____ Team Captain _____ Years As A Team _____ Campaign _____

ROSTER

	AC	HP	Primary Weapon	(To Hit Bonus)	Damage

SUBSTITUTE

	AC	HP	Primary Weapon	(To Hit Bonus)	Damage

PERSONNEL

Agent: _____

Coach: _____

Sponsor: _____

_____

Other: _____

_____

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

TEAM PRIZES

THEME SONG

MOJO POOL

NOTES

LOGO

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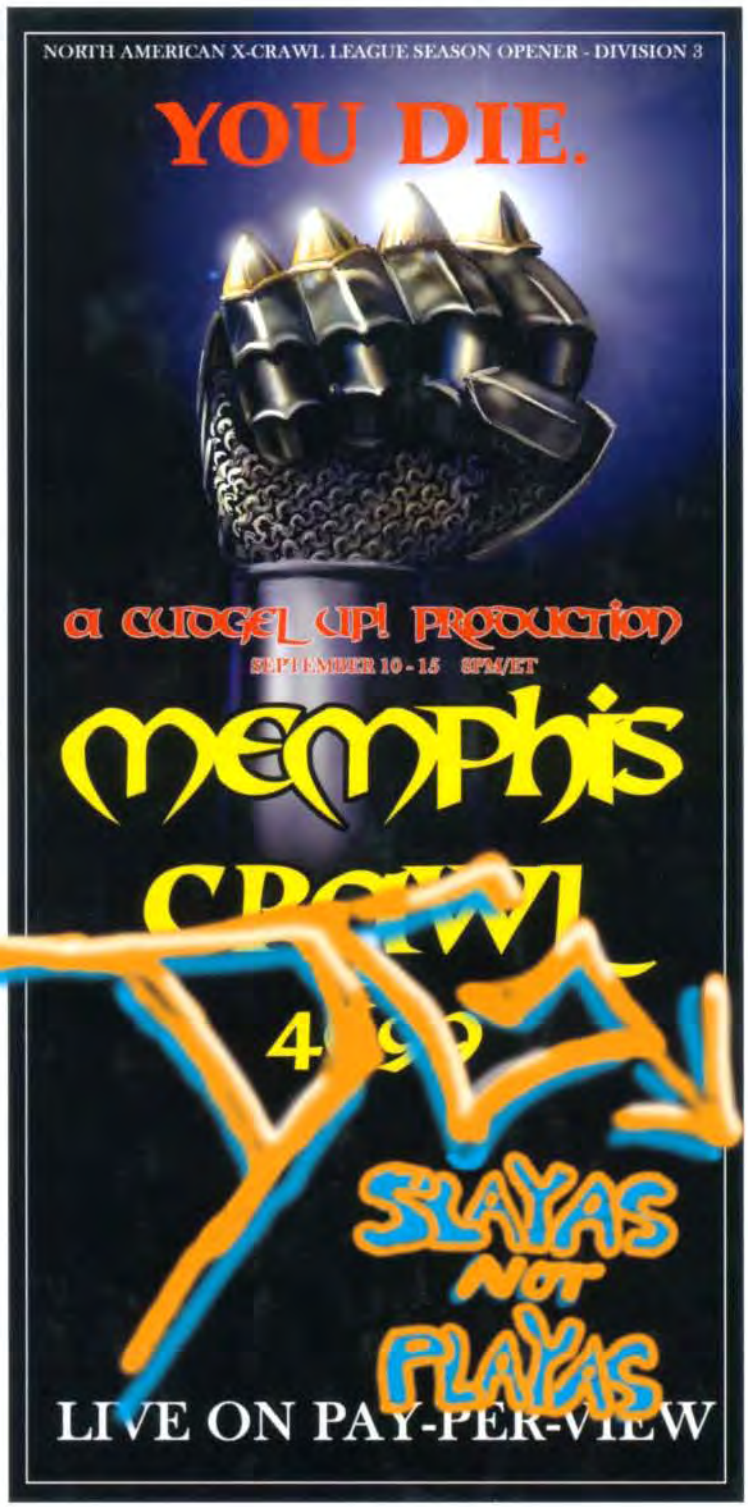
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