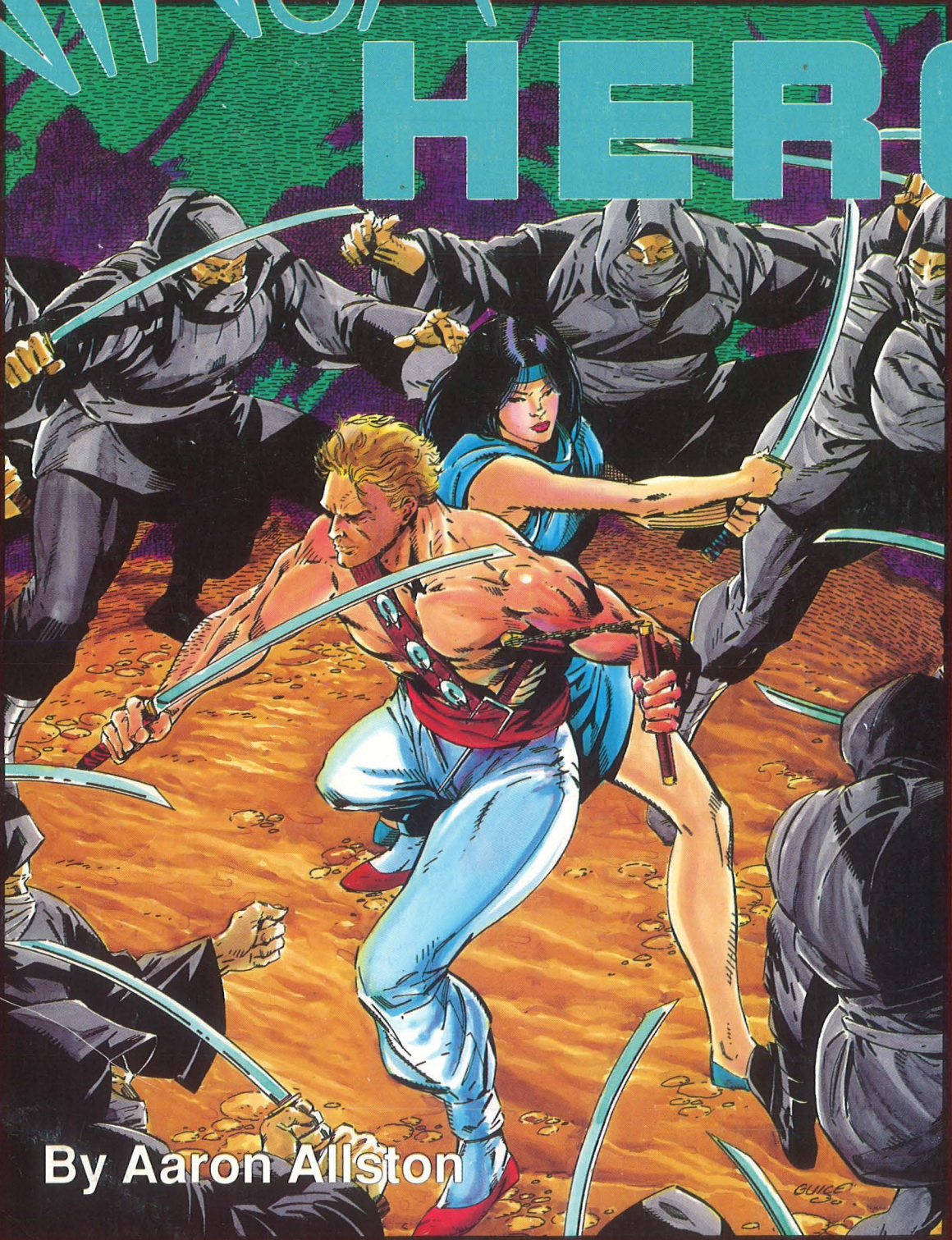


NINJA HERO



By Aaron Allston

消えたのか？ 第二紀の終わりの大いなる戦いでサウロンが打ち倒されたときに、打ち壊さ
 のか？ それとも、大河アンドウインに落ちて海に流されたのか？ それとも「話に熱がこもつ
 て、サルーマンはいつのまにか身を乗り出し、君の腕に手をのばすと、指を一本、また一本と食

またある者は、また中つ国のどこにあるときさやいておる、力強いエルタールの王たちが身
 けておるとな。わしもまだあると思っている。古文書によれば、ケレブリンボールはエルフの指輪を
 人で鍛え上げ、指輪の呪縛を解き、その手借りておらんだ。そうすることによって、ケレブリンボールは一つ
 た。足元は森の都だ。二つの塔に門が静かに巨大なマ、エルフのべき者がんだ白い貴
 のではあるまいか。実際エルフの指輪所持者たちは反抗し、そのためにかの者
 上に住んで再び止まらざるに急に明るい門が、まられてい行く手まるでな明した。緑の丘端には大中で一番についてやるのでアルダだ。私はこの衛兵

NINJA HERO™

A MARTIAL ARTS CAMPAIGN BOOK FOR THE HERO SYSTEM AND CHAMPIONS

by
Aaron Allston

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Printed in U.S.A., First Printing 1990

Produced & Distributed by Iron Crown Enterprises, Inc., the exclusive manufacturer of Hero Games.

STOCK #: 501
ISBN 1-55806-095-2

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INTRODUCTION

David Li stood before the garish, carved jade throne and looked impassively on the face of his enemy — at last, at last. “It is time to put all tricks and deceptions behind us,” he said coolly. “All your hirelings, all your lieutenants, all your elegant traps have not served to keep me away. You killed my father and my sister... you betrayed every teaching of our family... and now you will die for it, Uncle.”

Li Haifeng, drug king of Hong Kong, could not keep from his face the anger and frustration he felt. David and his friends had cut a bloody swath through Haifeng's hired hatchet-men, his hardy soldiers, his exquisitely-trained bodyguards. Haifeng's past had just caught up with him.

The drug lord rose, his jade silk tunic sliding across his catlike muscles. “You will die as your father died,” he scoffed. “He could not stand before my Ribbon-Hand technique. You, too, will fall before it...”

He struck faster than the eye could see, but David caught the incoming blow with the X of his crossed forearms, saw the amazed widening of his uncle's eyes, and executed a lightning-fast counterpunch that rocked Haifeng back on his heels. “I've learned something since last we met,” David shot back. “Such as the weaknesses of the Ribbon Hand. Master Chen sends his regards.” He followed through with a spinning legsweep that turned into a snap-kick mere inches before it connected; his heel cracked into Haifeng's inner knee, hurling the older man to the foot of his throne.

So far, so good — but Haifeng was still strong, still canny, and still dangerous...

Welcome to *Ninja Hero*, the *Hero System* supplement of martial arts adventures.

SO, WHAT IS NINJA HERO, REALLY?

Ninja Hero is the first *Hero System* Campaign Book; that means it's a stand-alone genre book supplementing the *Hero System Rulesbook*. But it's also a *Champions* campaign book, adding detail and options to a *Champions* superheroic campaign.

Players and GMs who like heroic-level campaigns, with two-fisted but very human adventurer-heroes, will find a wealth of material here to expand the combat horizons of their campaigns. The same is true of players and GMs who prefer four-color *Champions* campaigns. The martial arts rules from the *HERO System Rulesbook* may, basically, do all the things you want your comic-book martial arts to do... but we're going to show you how to do more than that.

Regardless of the power level you play in your own campaign, *Ninja Hero* can add something to your campaign, something which is made possible by the universal nature of the *HERO System* rules.

You probably already know the basic rules for martial arts construction and combat from the *HERO System Rulesbook*; this supplement builds on that foundation to let you simulate just about everything you see in martial arts movies, comic books, and fiction.

ARRANGEMENT OF THE RULEBOOK

Ninja Hero is arranged this way:

Chapter One is *Character Creation*. In this chapter, you'll learn all you need to know about creating a martial artist character for a *HERO System* campaign. Included in this chapter are rules for Character Conceptions, Martial Arts, other Skills, Perks, Talents, Powers, Disadvantages, Package Deals... and optional rules for designing your own martial arts maneuvers. This chapter is primarily for players, but the GM should be familiar with it as well.

Chapter Two is *Combat Rules*. This chapter discusses interpretations, modifications, and variants for the *HERO System* to allow you to showcase martial arts action. In this chapter, we talk about clarifications to the existing combat rules, interesting new ways to use old maneuvers, special combat situations, and tactics. We also provide a number of optional rules you can use to customize your martial arts campaign. This chapter is for players and GM alike.

Chapter Three is the *Sourcebook*. It's a handy resource of useful information. Most of the chapter is taken up with gadgets and weapons — especially weapons appropriate to a martial arts adventure. Also included are facts about real-world martial arts terminology and outfits, and lists of oriental names for players to use in naming their eastern characters. This chapter is for players and GM alike.

Chapter Four is *Game-mastering*. The first section in the chapter deals with Campaigning: How to create a campaign and its NPCs, how to work up martial arts adventures, handy ways to simulate classic bits from martial arts fiction. Also included are numerous adventures and NPCs which can be used in a variety of martial arts campaigns. This chapter is for the GM's eyes only; the GM may allow his players to read the Campaigning section, but the players must not read the *Adventures* and *Non-Player Characters* sections.

HOW TO USE NINJA HERO

Ninja Hero hasn't been written just for martial arts campaigns, or for superheroic campaigns, or for heroic campaigns, or for any special sort of campaign; it's useful to *any* sort of campaign.

If you don't want the martial arts to be any more intrusive in your campaign than they already are, then just plunder this rulebook for its weapons and NPCs.

If you want to increase the number of martial arts in your existing campaign, then use the Martial Arts from the *Character Creation* chapter. If you want to design new arts for use in your campaign, and the GM allows it, then use the *Designing Martial Arts* rules from the same chapter.

If you'd like to take a break from your usual campaign and start a high-kicking campaign devoted to martial arts action, *Ninja Hero* will tell you how to do that, too.

Whatever you want to use this supplement for, the first thing you need to do is to read it. Players will need to read the *Character Creation* chapter, and may wish to read the *Combat Rules* and *Sourcebook* chapters. The GM will need to read the entire book.

Once he's read through the book, the GM will need to decide how much of it he wants to incorporate into his game. Among the many things to choose from are the rulebook's weapons and gadgets, optional rules, and martial arts design guidelines. The *Campaigning* section of the *Game-mastering* chapter, especially, provides advice on this subject, but the final decision belongs to each individual GM.

When he's made his decision, the GM should let his players know which sections and elements of this supplement he's using, and which he's forbidding; he also needs to tell his players whether he's starting a new campaign, or incorporating *Ninja Hero* material into his existing campaign, or both.

That's all it takes to get started. Once you have started, you should be able to continue using *Ninja Hero* for quite some time to come.

A SHORT GLOSSARY

To avoid a certain amount of confusion, we need to define some of the more common terms you'll find in *Ninja Hero*. These terms include:

Ch'i: The quasi-mystical source of energy which the martial artist learns to channel through training and proper breath control.

Dojo: Japanese word for a martial arts school or training hall.

Heroic Campaign: A campaign in which the characters all have the Normal Characteristic Maxima disadvantage (worth 0 points), are built on fewer Character Points than a superhero, and can carry around equipment and weapons of normal technology without spending points for them.

Ninja: A feudal-era Japanese spy and reconnaissance expert, often considered an assassin; or, a modern-day practitioner of the *ninjutsu* martial art.

Sensei: Japanese term for teacher or master.

Style: A particular form of martial art. In *Ninja Hero*, this refers to the collection of maneuvers, skills, special style elements, and disadvantages which comprise a particular form of martial art.

Superheroic Campaign: A campaign in which the characters are all superhuman beings built on far more Character Points than normal people (even heroic normal people), where the characters routinely exceed the Normal Characteristic Maxima which ordinary people adhere to, and where they must spend their own Character Points on all items of equipment and weapons they routinely carry.

A WORD OF CAUTION

Readers — especially those who are practitioners of martial arts in real life — need to note that *Ninja Hero* is first, foremost, a supplement of *movie-style* martial arts action. It's not that we have any disrespect for the martial arts as they are practiced in the real world; but the drive to improve one's health and character, and the search for personal enlightenment, that go hand-in-hand with real-world martial arts are not what we're trying to simulate.

Ninja Hero is for the admirers of grim, brilliantly-executed comic books with martial arts protagonists; it's for the admirers of Hong Kong kung fu movies, Japanese *chambara* films, and their American martial arts film relatives. It's for players who want to role-play Bruce Lee or Jackie Chan, Toshiro Mifune or Sonny Chiba, Chuck Norris or Jean Claude van Damme, Lone Wolf and Cub or practically anyone drawn by Frank Miller.

It's time to begin. Gentlemen, start your *nunchaku*...

NINJA HERO™

Haifeng, drug lord of Hong Kong, rose, and his silk tunic slid across his catlike muscles. "You will die as your father died," he scoffed. "He could not stand before my Ribbon-Hand technique. You too will fall before it..."

He struck faster than the eye could see, but David caught the incoming blow in the X of his crossed forearms, saw the widening of his opponent's eyes, and then executed a lightning-fast counterpunch that rocked Haifeng back on his heels. "I've learned something since we last met," David shot back. "Such as the weaknesses of the Ribbon-Hand. Master Chen sends his regards." David followed through with a spinning legsweep that cracked into the Haifeng's inner knee, hurling the older man to the ground.

So far, so good — but Haifeng was still strong, still canny, and still dangerous ...



Ninja Hero™ is the martial arts sourcebook for the HERO System™, and is equally useful for heroic and superheroic campaigns. It includes martial arts from Aikido to Wrestling — and everything in between. Extensive guidelines help you simulate the *feel* of martial arts movies and comics. Use **Ninja Hero** to spice up the martial arts in an existing game, or provide the background for an entire campaign based on martial arts.

Ninja Hero contains:

- Dozens of new martial arts types, including Thai Kick-boxing, Kenjutsu, and 13 different styles of Kung Fu
- Extensive guidelines and optional rules for designing new martial arts styles
- Rules for special martial arts maneuvers, including the dread *Dim Mak* (delayed death touch)
- 60 martial arts weapons, from the butterfly knife to the war fan. These weapons are defined for heroic and superheroic campaigns
- Descriptions and statistics for martial arts armor and special weapons
- Extensive advice and guidelines for martial arts adventures
- Numerous NPCs and package deals
- Several ready-to-run adventures

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