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THE SPACE GAMER

THE MAGAZINE OF ADVENTURE GAMING

"STORM" — ADVENTURE APPROVED
FOR TRAVELLER

THE SHATTERED ALLIANCE
FICTION BY TIMOTHY ZAHN
MINIATURES FOR FANTASY
ROLE PLAYING
ORIGINS BALLOT
AND 11 PAGES OF REVIEWS



CHAMPIONS

THE SPACE GAMER

NUMBER 48 – FEBRUARY, 1982

In This Issue

This issue's cover story is about a great new superhero RPG . . . *Champions*. Denis Loubet's cover shows a scene from our local campaign, featuring the nefarious Overlord.

For *Traveller* fans, we have the second in Marischal Adventures' series of pull-out scenarios: "Storm." Aground on an alien planet, you must answer the simple question: "Where did everybody go?" Also . . . Bill Barton reviews the second edition of *High Guard*.

Fantasy gamers ought to appreciate the return of Conakar and his sword (or should that be "Whehalken and his fighter?"). Timothy Zahn's tale centers around a remarkable new sort of magic sword – which is described fully for game purposes.

Rounding out the issue, we have the Origins ballot; "The Balrog and the Finger of Death"; a comparison of fantasy miniatures lines; a full page of Murphy's Rules; and a "Where We're Going" column with about four months' worth of news.

—Steve Jackson

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WHERE WE'RE GOING

There's so much going on this month that I could easily fill twice the usual space. I'm not even sure what the biggest news is . . . but probably it's the fact that we've just acquired a new magazine.

Fire & Movement

Many of you are already familiar with *Fire & Movement*, which has — up to now — been owned by Baron Publishing. F&M is strictly a historical wargaming magazine, and it's a very good one; for the past three years it's won the Charles Roberts Award for "best magazine covering boardgaming." I've always enjoyed F&M; I was extremely excited when I heard it was for sale, and I'm very pleased to have closed the deal. Baron wanted to sell the magazine, not because it wasn't successful, but because they didn't have the personnel to continue all their present projects. As a result, F&M was usually behind schedule. We'll fix that.

One thing that needs no "fixing" is the excellent *Fire & Movement* editorial staff, under the direction of Dr. Friedrich M. Helfferich. Dr. Helfferich will continue as editor, while Nick Schuessler (publisher of the *Journal of WWII Wargaming*) will join our Austin staff as F&M's managing editor.

If you're strictly interested in fantasy and science fiction gaming, there'll be nothing for you here. But if you are also interested in historical games, *Fire & Movement* has been — and will continue to be — "must" reading. You are now, I hope, wondering how to subscribe . . .

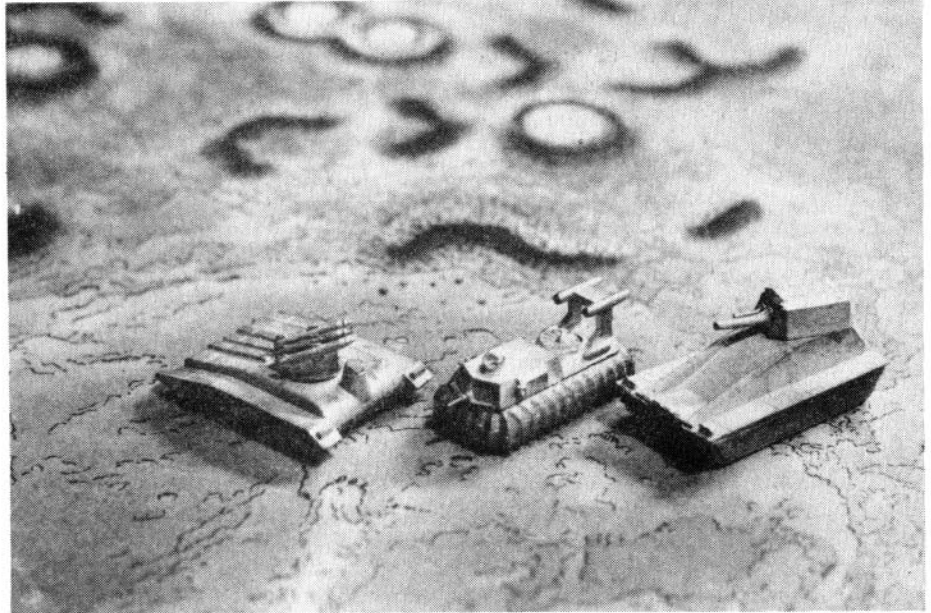
Next Issue

Our March issue will feature a special section of equipment for TRAVELLER;

"The Flinger and the Blob," two new character styles for TFT;

A featured review of the PBM game STARLORD;

And designer's notes for BEYOND THE STELLAR EMPIRE.



Rates will be the same as for TSG: \$21 for 12 issues, \$39 for 24 issues. Initially, F&M will be bimonthly; we will probably try to go monthly fairly soon, so that news and reviews will be timelier. Physically, F&M will continue about the same (that is, very much like TSG). However, F&M usually has more ads than TSG, so it will probably be able to afford a few more pages per issue.

Boxed Games !! ???

In a word, yes. I've been working on this project for several months, without saying anything in this space. In the first place, I didn't want to give any good ideas away . . . and in the second place, if the whole thing fell through, I didn't want to hear questions about it for the next five years. But right now, it looks very good indeed.

Up until now, there have been three ways to package mini-games: plastic bags (like ours and Task Force's); cardboard boxes (like Metagaming's and Heritage's); and transparent plastic casings (like TSR's). None are ideal. Plastic bags are cheap — but they LOOK cheap, too, and eventually tear. Flimsy cardboard boxes are far worse, in my opinion. They look good on the shelves — but collapse quickly under normal wear, leaking counters everywhere. The TSR packaging is far better, but it can still be torn or crushed.

So . . . I started looking for a box that would (a) look good on the shelves, (b) hold up to continued use, and (c) still fit into your pocket. I think we've got one. The only prototype I have to date has five separate problems — but it looks as though they can all be overcome.

This means that the "new look" for all our minigames will be a black plastic box, 4¼" x 7¼" x 5/8" thick. There will be color labels front and back; inside — well protected — will be the game itself. We will ALSO include a ziplock bag to hold the counters.

The slimness and durability of these boxes will mean that you can actually put them in your pockets and take them with you — which suggested the name we're using: Pocket Box. I have some rather silly ideas for an ad campaign; suggestions gratefully appreciated.

The boxes will drive our standard price up to \$5.00. (Actually, some of that is inflation; we're getting it all in one price increase.) But I think it's worth it — which is why I did it. For once, a game company can actually increase the value of a game (NOT just its price) by putting it into a box. We haven't had enough samples yet to test them to destruction; I don't know just how much punishment the Pocket Box will take. But I do know this — it will be orders of magnitude stronger than any cardboard box, and it'll look better, too. My prediction for the new year: By December, the other mini-game makers will have dropped their cardboard packaging and gone into something similar. These are so good, they have to be copied!

We expect Box Day — the arrival of our box and label shipments — around Jan. 30. As of now, you can order our games for either \$3 or \$5. \$3 will get you a game in a plastic bag UNTIL Box Day (whenever that comes). \$3 orders received after that will be returned. \$5 will get you a Pocket Box game, as soon as they're ready. (Note: *Ogre* and *G.E.V.* will be available only in Pocket Box editions.)