

* * * * * RACK & RUNE * * * * *

RACK & RUNE #5: THE PLUS-FIVE SWORD OF GOD

Copyright © 1/1992 Peter Maranci / 81 Washington St., #2 Malden, MA 02148 / (617) 397-7958

Things have been busy since the last Rack & Rune. The Arisia convention, a new game system, several new campaigns...it seems that new things come with the new year. Let's hope it's a good one.

MOMENT OF TRUTH: The ARISIA Con Report

The prospects for Arisia were not bright. Since I mentioned the con lastish, there were a number of ominous omens: Of the many people I knew who were going to the con, only one had received a pre-registration packet. I myself had sent in for a membership months ago, and received nothing—not even acknowledgement of my payment. There were rumors of nervous breakdowns on the con committee, of the entire mailing list being lost. Other anecdotes of the disorganization of Arisia were endemic. More than a few people predicted that this would be the last Arisia, if it wasn't cancelled outright.

I should mention that Arisia '90 was the first con I had been to. Though I have been to other cons since, Arisia has been *the* event of the year among the people I know, since so many of us attend. In other words, I was looking forward eagerly to the con, and had reserved a quad hotel room (\$79 a night—not bad at all).

Con day arrived. When I arrived at the Boston Park Plaza hotel at around 3:00 PM on Friday, I found two lines: one very long (between 40-80 people long) and one very short (2). Surprise! The **long** line was for preregistered people—the **short** line was for those buying memberships at the door! So much for the convenience of preregistration. It took over 35 minutes to get my badge (incidentally, I was informed by a gopher that the registration people were the rudest he'd ever encountered). Administration of pre-reg was very poorly organized, for a reason I discovered later—their administrator had just had her purse stolen by a professional thief who was visiting the con. A sad situation. A curse on all thieves!

Registration completed, we proceeded to our room.

It was somewhat small, but had two bathrooms—a nice touch. Though it was not an ultramodern chrome-and-glitz hotel, it had an abundance of character, and the staff and management proved quite accommodating. Stowing our gear, I began my first mission: to find the IFGS table.

* INTERMISSION * INTERMISSION *
* INTERMISSION * INTERMISSION *

THE IFGS

I had intended to write about the IFGS—the International Fantasy Gaming Society—elsewhere. However, a proper report on the con is impossible without first explaining the IFGS. It is a live roleplaying organization with chapters throughout the U.S.. The NE chapter (of which I was an original member) is relatively new and small. Games are held about every month. The more common outdoor games resemble standard one-day roleplaying scenarios: groups of player characters set off on a trek through the woods, overcoming NPC monsters and obstacles to attain their goal. Combat is done with impressively-crafted boffers, some with metallic-cloth blade coverings. It is closely refereed, safety being the paramount concern—no one has ever been hurt in a NEIFGS combat, so far as I know. Different character classes are available for play, including fighters, thieves, magic-users and others. PCs gain experience points and levels from game to game. There are indoor games as well, which often include the opportunity to buy pizza at a tavern.

One advantage the IFGS possesses over larger organizations is openness and flexibility. There is a real need for new scenarios. Newcomers who write or enjoy dramatic roleplaying are eagerly welcomed.

In case the above did not make it painfully obvious, I am the Minister of Propaganda for the New England IFGS. I'll include a flyer at the end, if Mark doesn't mind.

AND NOW BACK TO OUR REGULAR FEATURE

We had been incredibly fortunate in the placement of the table. Throughout Friday afternoon and

The IFGS...

evening, people came up, believing us to be Con Registration. Many returned to try our most interesting prop: a treasure box locked with a standard IFGS lock. This was an eight inch length of heavy wire protruding from the front of a gold box. The object was to move a small loop of wire all the way down the length of the wire without touching the wire. A touch closed a circuit, causing a one-second beep indicating failure. Those who successfully “picked” the lock gained the treasure: gold chocolate coins.

The treasure box was incredibly successful. We had to put out a second box as well, an experimental one designed by Walt Freitag. This operated by probing through an actual keyhole with a length of wire. Rather than sounding a buzzer, failure was indicated by a red light on the front. Success was gained by lighting a green light. It was more difficult, but more than a few people were successful. On Friday night alone, almost fifty people signed up to receive our newsletter Thud and Blunder. By the end of the con, we had nearly eighty people signed up—a damned good response for a convention with 1200 members, particularly since the IFGS table had been a somewhat impromptu affair.

There was one other event of note concerning the IFGS at the con. A rival (if that is the correct word) organization was also in attendance: NERO, the New England Roleplaying Organization. This is considerably larger than the local IFGS branch, but has some distinctive differences. NERO events are generally set in a local camp, which is converted into a medieval “town” for the weekend. Smaller adventures take place there, but the bulk of the action seems to be player interaction set in the preexisting world background. New player characters, being nonentities in the hierarchy, are fair game—in fact, players may receive experience points for killing other PCs! Combats are fought without referees or safety officers—many NEROids told of being seriously bruised in combat (this may also be related to the construction of their weapons: duct tape over open-celled foam over PVC core. IFGS weapons are ornamental cloth cover over closed-cell foam over Tonkin bamboo core, though for weapons other than staves the use of hollow fiberglass cores is being encouraged).

Looking over the last paragraph, I see that I seem to be running down the competition. In fairness, let me say that I have not tried NERO myself. Everything I know about it is second hand information. I will probably attend a NERO event in the

... at Arisia

upcoming year, and will report on it then. There is one more thing that I can relate however: NERO is said by many players to be monolithic. It is run by single man, who seems to own it—a talented man, needless to say! The IFGS, however, is run along considerably more democratic lines. Officers are elected, and can be replaced. Furthermore, there is not even a *de facto* in-group—a good thing, in my opinion.

One last thing, and then I'll finish with the IFGS: at one point, I stopped in front of the IFGS table, looking at the flyers which I had designed. There was no one manning the table at the time. Someone saw me, said “No, no, don't take those”, and ran up to me. He put a flyer in my hand and many more on the IFGS table. It was, of course, the NERO flyer (no, I didn't say anything).

FILKING

The Official Filker Straitjacketing was held on Friday evening. After the ceremonies, the crazed would-be songbirds were dragged to their sound-proofed room. Gags were omitted this year, in response to a threatened ASPCA lawsuit. Instead, emergency earplugs were issued to all Con members. :-)

LASER SHOW

Friday evening there was a laser show in the Grand Ballroom. I had been looking forward to this, as the previous year there had been a round-the-clock laser room which had been simply magical: opening the door was like entering another universe. Unfortunately, the new laser show was a good example of the futility of technical expertise without artistic ability. Endless boring patterns, headaches as the lasers fused our retinas...we left early. What a waste.

GAMING

The gaming rooms were rather chaotic; I advertised, but no one was playing Runequest. Cosmic Encounter and Star Fleet Battles were the order of the day, with interspersions of AD&D and Champions. Not my style. In any case, it would be hard to justify spending much time gaming during the con.

COSTUMES/MASQUERADE

There were many interesting costumes, including one guy with a Gizmonic logo from Mystery Science

Arisia Events

Theater 3000. I myself got a few compliments on my padded IFGS wizard's staff, a seven-footer in black with blood-red cord wrappings and an inscribed red eye. The Masquerade Costume Contest was held on Saturday night; rather than trying to squeeze into the Grand Ballroom, I watched it from my room. The live feed to all rooms was a great convenience, though the sound cut out several times during the Masquerade itself. The costumes were quite impressive.

VIDEO ROOM

The video room was excellent. The screen was the largest I've ever seen, maybe as much as twenty-five feet across with an exceptionally clear image. I caught the SIGGRAPH computer animation festival there, and I must say that they do some truly amazing stuff. What will they do next? I can't imagine.

HUCKSTERS

The huckster situation was unusual. Rather than a single large room, there was a row of large rooms on a separate floor. In addition, there was Dealer's Row, where individual hucksters had taken rooms and were open all night. There was a lot of stuff... but I didn't do much shopping. Annoyingly, the two items I most wanted, the new GURPS Magic and the Amber Diceless Roleplaying System, were both unavailable (I picked them up Monday). I did pick up a few things:

Lead Runequest figures (too bad I can't paint worth a damn)

The Star Wars RPG (not very impressive, and pretty skimpy for the money—it didn't even include NPC stats for the movie characters. I expected more from a fellow Armenian)

A long russet cloak and hood, with clasp, for IFGS events. It looks great, even on me.

THE HUNT FOR THE HUNT

I had the pleasure of meeting George Phillies on Saturday night, and had a long & interesting conversation. I was told that someone else from the Hunt had been looking for me, but don't know who it was; whoever you are, sorry!

SIL/ILF Oz

I have deliberately refrained from writing about my experiences with the Foundation & Destiny Live

RPG at Arisia '91, and the Coronation game at Arisia '90. Let me just say that it left me and others determined to never play again. Still, we did decide to look in on the end of the Oz game on Sunday. It was, not surprisingly, much smaller than the previous games. What was surprising was that it seemed to be a much...nicer experience. Infighting, petty arrogance, mindless widgethunting, and vicious 'clique-ism' were simply not evident this time. In a way, that makes it more annoying, as it shows that the previous outrages were not necessary. Oh well!

THE AMATEUR VIDEO CONTEST

Despite previous experiences with the Arisia Amateur Video Contest, a friend had once again entered. As the con progressed, we experienced the expected difficulties: there were too few entries, no one was sure who was in charge, when would it be held...but when the time came,

SURPRISE!

They pulled it off. Against all odds, the Amateur Video Contest was held at six o'clock Saturday evening, just before ST:NG. The attendance was the largest ever, and prizes were graciously awarded. We were even given a certificate for last year's entry (although only Lois's name was written on it). Still it was far more than I had imagined possible. I am strongly tempted to put an entry in next year. Guess it's a cold day in the Abyss after all.

ARISIA OVERALL

To sum up, I'd say that against all odds this Arisia was the best ever. Everyone I talked to enjoyed it, although a few wished that some national game companies had been represented. Apart from that minor complaint, most agreed that it was and excellent con. Incidentally, I hear that the odds are good that Arisia '93 will be held at the Park Plaza again. Perhaps science fiction cons will no longer be *persona non grata* at good Boston hotels. It's about time.

**YOUNG GOODMAN MARANCI:
A TALE FROM THE CORPORATE
BACKWOODS OF NEW ENGLAND**

Scene: the copy center of a large corporate law firm. Young Goodman Maranci is working nearby. Beside a Kodak 300 Duplicator rests a copy of The Wild Hunt #168, face up. A Junior Corporate Personnel Flunky approaches.

A Play (of sorts), Comments

Flunky (sees cover, registers dismay, and says, in a high whining nasal voice): “Oh dear. What is this?” Picking up the offending ‘zine, she opens it to the front page. After several seconds of incomprehension, she closes it again and looks askance at the cover. “I’m just going to turn this over.” (turns it over. back cover is revealed) “Oh dear. This is just as bad.” (pauses) “I’m just going to cover this up. It’s too much for here.”

MY CONGRATULATIONS TO THE ARTISTS. NOW HOW DO I GET MY JOB BACK? (JUST KIDDING.)

COMMENTS #168

Swanson: As a young gamer, the idea of cross-gender roleplaying repulsed me. That was a long time ago, though, and somewhere along the line I was it for what it really was: a great roleplaying challenge. As such, I think it broadened me (no pun intended). My first female character was far more interesting than her male predecessor, though one player found her seriously disturbing (leading to a Horror Story I’ll recount eventually). Before long I found that often a female character was simply the better dramatic option. At one point I played a shapeshifting character with three forms: one male, one neuter, and one female. Against my expectations, the female personality dominated.

I would estimate that about 30 to 40 percent of the characters I play are female. Of course, many of the NPCs I use as a GM are female. I feel that my portrayal of them has been improved by my experience in playing females in other games.

In general I do not feel that “tales of lust” are appropriate for an RPG. Unfortunately, they seem impossible to avoid. The stories I could tell about the prototype for “The Sexist Pig” from the GM’s Hall of Shame... I’ll spare you the details. I’m afraid that many gamers simply do not have the maturity to handle that theme without getting sophomoric.

On some levels, Romance is an essential ingredient for a good roleplaying experience. In the more narrow male-female connection, the problems are similar to those of lust: the smirk factor is usually rather high. It does sound as if Lace and Steel may encourage a better handling of the subject than other systems. If so, good.

Derryberry: The average gamer (if there is such an animal) seems to take character death rather lightly. The reaction is similar to that of a wargamer

suffering a minor but significant setback. On the other hand, I’ve seen deep roleplayers hit hard by character death—hell, I’ve seen people deeply shaken by the death of an NPC.

As a GM, I have two views of character death, each specific to a particular kind of game. For my serious games, such as Nereyon, character death is simply not appropriate. Player investment of time simply to create the character is too massive to make replacement feasible. Also, since players are encouraged to strongly identify and empathize with their characters, death can be too upsetting. Disfigurement, imprisonment, or threats to loved ones are often more effective threats.

In my more casual games, PC death is more common. However, I have never killed a character in any game of mine without a bit of a wrench. Also, it is arguable that death has too distancing an effect on the player; having had a ‘self’ die makes it that much harder to identify with and enjoy the replacement.


No serious character of mine has died during game time. Many casual ones have. My usual reaction is disappointment and sometimes anger, depending on the circumstances. Though a good death does ameliorate this, I usually feel like taking a break from roleplaying for a few weeks. I have not had this experience in quite a while, however, and now that I think of it, this only happens when I am playing AD&D (something to be avoided at all costs).

If death has a place in a good roleplaying campaign, it should not be casual. It must be the direct result of a major character mistake, and should involve the crux of the campaign.

One final point about death: in my first game, the one with the GM who killed 3 PCs per player per session, there was one hard and fast rule: If a character committed suicide, the *player* was out of the game forever. Period. I’m not sure why this was, save that the GM might have been afraid that we players would beat him to it.

* * *

In regard to campaign writeups, I do not have much experience with them. However, I have heard that a number of authors use game writeups to produce their works. Interesting. I may try it myself one day. Jon Mitzman’s enclosed writeup is an interesting example, I think. By the way, keep the Greentech coming.

Comments, Evil on the Air


Erlandsen: I suspect that the phenomenon of “rating” gamers derives from the wargaming roots of roleplaying. In any case, I have no use for it. In point of fact, I have yet to see a roleplaying organization which had any real merit (as opposed to a live roleplaying organization, which is necessary to play :-)).

I have never played any sort of tournament RPG, and so really can't say much about it. I have to wonder whether real character development is possible in such a short span. I suppose with great players and a great GM, it might be possible.

Why won't you be playing fantasy? Several friends have expressed the same feeling, but I'm not clear on their reasons. I can understand being bored with the stale old fighter/magic-user/thief shtick, but the realm of fantasy is so much wider than that...

Wouldn't stainless steel dice tarnish? What would be preferable about them?

The question of division of power between the players and the GM is a thorny one. I have noticed that players possess considerably more power in games where option cards are used, such as Torg. However, games of that sort that I have seen seem to be less directly experiential—less real. I suppose that it's a trade-off, that the division of power could be represented by a spectrum of possibilities, from which the individual(s) must choose what pleases them.

Plamondon: Read and enjoyed your article about casting figures very much. Unfortunately I can't put it into practice, as I would undoubtedly end up gilding myself with molten lead. I rarely use figures anyway, since for painting purposes my Dex is 3. Still, your article made what is an uninteresting subject for me very amusing. Thanks.

I'm afraid that I can't match your mathematical expertise. However, I still must disagree with you about the skill structure of Runequest. That an inexperienced person finds gaining skill difficult does not seem unreasonable; nor does it seem unreasonable that the knowledge to be gained could reach a plateau. I wonder if there have been any real-world psychological studies on this?

I also have to say that seven hit locations seems to me to be an excellent division. In practical terms, a limb is incapacitated or not, and blows to the head, chest, or abdomen are separately recorded. These seem to me to be the crucial factors, immensely

superior to the single hit location method. If you were to get much more detailed, on the other hand, the paperwork would bog down the game. What alternatives would you suggest?

Apart from that, I agree with most of your comments. Let's hope some of them are actualized.


THE PLUS-FIVE SWORD OF GOD (or, JESUS, HELP ME MAKE MY SAVING THROW)

A few weeks ago I was flipping through TV channels when my attention was caught by the words “Dungeons & Dragons”. Pausing, I found that Pat Robertson's 700 Club was about to do a sizzlin' expose on the game personally endorsed by Satan. So I taped it.

The revelations were astonishing. Apparently, gamers are overly intelligent, socially maladjusted nerds who frequently go insane and murder their parents. Pat was astonished to hear that this lure of the Devil is played at colleges, by adults as well as children. A guest author described a boy who arranged the murder of his parents for money to buy drugs and play D&D. He sent his friends to kill them, as if they were “playing out a D&D scenario.” They used several different weapons, apparently as part of some “oc-cult ceremony”. Pat seemed disappointed that there was no blood drinking or Black Mass. The clues that were found (the writer declared) were left deliberately because “if you leave evidence and get away with it, you get to a higher level in the game” (huh?).

A young Aryan ex-gamer revealed that gaming takes over your life, and destroys your sense of reality. Now that he'd found Jesus, however, he felt like he could walk on water, leap tall buildings, and outrun a speeding locomotive.

Great. Now he's really in touch with reality.



In keeping with Christian tradition, the young Aryan decided to remove the influence of Evil by burning his game books, with the help of his church counselor. What was shown in the fire, however, was a Battletech box with an AD&D Player's Handbook in it. Booklets about this evil game were then advertised.


Finally, Pat Robertson revealed that roleplaying characters are actually cases of demonic possession. He invited all gamers to fall to their knees before the screen and pray to Jesus to rid them of

Amber Review

the Satanic influence of Dungeons & Dragons. Since I had already done that years ago, when I switched to Runequest, I decided not to repeat the experience.

After the report, I was amused to see a commercial in which two knights battled for the fate of the modern world. The Black Knight, with red glowing eyes, was Satan; the pure white knight was, of course, Jesus. Needles to say, Jesus kicked Satan's butt in a truly Biblical fashion. Turn the other cheek, indeed... so much for the evils of fantasy. The hypocrisy these people displayed was astounding.

I sometimes think that this is the most common template for standard-fantasy religion.


If anyone would like a copy of the tape, send me a VHS tape with at least 20 minutes of blank space on it (return postage would be nice, too). If you're in the Boston area, give me a call instead. 

* * *

Incidentally, that gives me an idea for a game scenario: Pat Robertson is elected President in '96. He proceeds to ban all un-Christian games, and gamers immediately become a persecuted minority. The PCs must go on a quest to:

- Find and retrieve a copy of the Fineous Fingers collection before it is burned
- Go on the run to avoid "spiritual healing"
- Find a gamemaster
- Design a game that will pass the Church censors and still be interesting
- Listen to President Pat preach without laughing hysterically
- Other. Any ideas?


RACK AND RUNE GUEST COLUMNIST

Following Rack & Rune proper is a guest column by Jon Mitzman—Robert in my Nereyon game. The fiction piece included is from a game that I am not involved in. 

AMBER REVIEW

As I mentioned above, I recently picked up a copy of the Amber RPG. I read it straight through, without stopping, and can only say that it is by far the most impressive thing I've seen since Runequest. I

suspect that many of the Hunt are already acquainted with it, so I won't go into detail; I understand that the system has been around in some form since 1985, and that Ambercons have been held since 1989.

The manner in which the diceless game mechanics are handled impresses the hell out of me. Strangely enough, most of the concepts used strongly resemble ideas that I and others used to kick around back in college. This is what gaming should be, I think. This is the next evolution of gaming, a near-total break with the wargaming roots which have made good roleplaying so hard to find. Awesome. 

The Amber background itself is very well presented. Though I wasn't an *enormous* fan of the series, I immediately went back and read the whole thing, all nine books. It works.

There are only two obvious flaws in the book:

- 1) Typos. There are quite a few.
- 2) The main attributes are auctioned off among player characters. Final points spent establish the benchmarks for the PCs. In other words, if #1 spent 37 points for first place, and #2 spent 24 points for second place, it is impossible for characters to later spend any amount between 24 and 37. The previous amounts **must be matched**, and even then the later player would not be quite as good as the person who established the benchmark.

While this sounds neat, and appeals to gamers, there is a problem. Attributes are expressed *only* as relationships between the PCs, the new Amber generation. One is best at Warfare, one at Psyche, one at Endurance, and one at Strength. So how do you relate this to other NPCs? How do you relate the PCs to elder Amberites, unusual creatures, or natural forces?

The obvious answer is that the matter is left to the judgement of the GM. This makes the good judgement of the GM perhaps more crucial than in any other game. That is not necessarily a bad thing, but when I think of the GMs I've known, I shudder.

It seems clear that the Amber diceless system could be used for other backgrounds. The Attribute Action is well suited to Amber, but would probably need to be replaced for campaigns with less-godlike PCs. This would not be difficult, and gamers would do well to check out what is certainly the most state-of-the-art system I've seen.

STAR TREK: A SICKENING NEW GENERATION

In regard to the most recent episode of Star Trek: The Next Generation, all I can say is BLECCHH! For those who mercifully missed it, here's the plot in a nutshell: Whorf's insufferably cute and totally human-behaving (though putatively Klingon) young son becomes part of the permanent cast. He is played, or rather *not* played (well) by Brian Bonsall, who couldn't act in Family Ties and hasn't learned anything since. He has managed to lose his annoying lisp; as a result his complete inability to act is more pathetically revealed.

It figures. Just as the show was getting good, the producers had to add an Ewok crossed with Wesley Crusher.

GARGOYLES

For those who are interested in interesting and unusual props and objects of art, I've discovered a great source: a store called Gargoyles, Grotesques and Chimeras. It's on Newbury street in Boston, and specializes in recreations of medieval gargoyles and Celtic gods and such. I picked up a pair of stone skulls the size of large oranges, beautifully detailed and finished. They look like smooth yellowed bone, with dark hollowed eyesockets and cracks. Each has a cylindrical hole in the top, and they come with black or green candles. At \$26 for the pair, they were a steal.

The store itself is bizarre, well worth visiting. You enter a small hall, a large room opening up to the right. The room is dark, cold and filled with dead leaves. On old worktables, reproductions of all sorts of medieval stone art are piled high, so you can barely get around them. Gregorian chants play in the background. There are no price tags, and there is no cash register—just a person with a calculator and some brown paper bags. The prices are surprisingly low, particularly for Newbury Street. It's definitely worth checking out.

There is also a store called "Gods" across the street; I haven't been there myself, but have been told that it is similar, with an emphasis on idols of ancient—you guessed—gods.

AN IFGS CHARACTER HISTORY

THE LIFE AND BAD TIMES OF BASTARD PRINCE CHARLIE,

KNOWN TO THE WORLD AS ZANZIBAR THE MAGE

In the early late years of his life, King Gordin the Weak and Somewhat Ineffectual, Lord of the Unpronounceable Kingdom, suffered what came to be known by sages of latter days as a "Midden-Life Crisis". He chose the form of release traditionally favored by politicians, and so, nine months later Agnes the Semi-Attractive Barmaid gave birth to a truly Royal Bastard. Her energies exhausted by this Herculean task, she proceeded to conveniently expire.

In this the Fates were kind, for her son was not destined to lead a happy life...

No record exists of the means by which young Charles was adopted by the kindly Mages of the Ivory Tower. Half-burned scrolls from that venerable institution, however, do note that the young Charles discovered a commendable aptitude for the Mystic Arts. A footnote to these records notes that the Infant Charles entered the Tower with but one possession: a cheap silver medallion, inscribed with the Royal Unpronounceable Cipher.

Time passed. The young Charles grew and thrived in knowledge. In the autumn of his seventeenth year, Charles crafted his first Spell of Power, and was welcomed as an Adept of the Tower. As was the custom at the time, his was given a new name to signify his Adept status: Zanzibar.

He did not know it at the time, but he would come to be known as the Last Mage of the Ivory Tower.

In the winter of Zanzibar's nineteenth year, the malice of the Eibon Tower descended upon the Mages of the Ivory Tower. As plundering hordes of the Northern Horse Barbarians swept over the lands of the Tower, Spells of Eibon Unmade the Ivory Foundations. The grieving Zanzibar believed himself to be the only survivor. Shouldering his pack of belongings, he left the ruins to search for the only thing he had left in the world: his father.

Years later, Bastard Prince Charlie strode angrily out of King Gordin's throne room, ears burning with shame at his father's offensive, senile maunderings. Only one thing had stopped him from burning the old fool down where he sat.

"Damn those palace guards!" Zanzibar thought, "Why couldn't they mind their own business?"

Determined to forge a new life for himself he went



on the road, seeking wealth and knowledge. The knowledge he gained was ultimately this: the Road is hard, and uncomfortable to sleep on. A thief showed him why thieves are untrustworthy, and a cleric showed him the meaning of Life by charging him for healing after Zanzibar had saved his village. So now Zanzibar wanders the world, looking for revenge on his father, and for death to all thieves. He trusts not in Clerics, and is dubious about Druids. The Gods alone know how he has survived.

(From Thud & Blunder, the New England IFGS newsletter)



NEXTISH

The Nereyon writeup continued, some character writeups, another gaming horror story, and other stuff. —>PM





WARRIORS! WIZARDS, AND THIEVES

(ALSO CLERICS, KNIGHTS, MONKS, ETC.):

Live the Dream

WITH THE

International

Fantasy


Gaming Society

Where Live Roleplaying

Lives!

Call 623-XXXX for details...





The New England Chapter of the IFGS is the **ONLY** New England live role-playing organization that offers *all* of the following:

- **Outdoor live-action role playing adventure!** Quest for treasures or for glory; battle monsters and fiends; master the arts of sword and spell; match wits with sorcerers and kings—all in the beautiful natural settings of New England's woods and hills.
- **Inexpensive one-day games!** Prices range from ten to twenty dollars, with membership discounts available. Games are run monthly.
- **Indoor mini-games and special events!** Get acquainted, develop your character, work on weapons and costumes, and hone your skills at informal meetings and indoor games.
- **Safe, non-bruising combat!** Hits are based on touches, not blows. Lightweight, soft weapons are built for speed, agility, safety, and beauty.
- **Character development based on roleplaying!** Your success is not limited by any real-life skill or ability. Whether you choose to be a fighter, thief, or spellcaster, your powers and abilities will always improve with experience.
- **Fantasy, not Feudalism!** We won't make you start your character at the bottom of an entrenched hierarchy. Invent your own loyalties, or call no one your master.
- **Open to game designers!** Bring your best role-playing scenarios to life. We'll help you write and run your own games, and our world is wide open for your creative involvement.
- **Friendly atmosphere!** The "bad guys" you meet are NPC actors, not other player-characters, so there's no nasty infighting. Gain experience without risk by being part of an NPC cast.
- **Affiliated with a national fantasy gaming organization!** Your character will be welcomed and recognized in games produced by IFGS chapters in all parts of the county.

Come to our introductory game *THE HAVEN*

All first-time players receive a discount.

For more information call (617) 623-XXXX

or write

**Barbara Lanza
Somerville, MA 02144**

