

Title: CLOSED - Mystara
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From: TSR Inc
Date: 95-02-17 18:44:10 EDT
Re: Message from Roger Moore

I have a message from Roger Moore. Replies by mail can be sent to TSR Inc. Otherwise, go ahead and reply by posting. I'll be printing out messages for Roger and others, so he'll see them.

Rob Repp
Manager, Digital Projects Group
TSR, Inc.

FOR MYSTARA MESSAGE FORUM

Title: Roger Moore says hello (part 4)

Hi, there. I'm Roger Moore, the creative director in charge of the MYSTARA(TM), RED STEEL(TM), and BIRTHRIGHT(TM) game lines. I've left "hellos" in the other forums (particularly the BIRTHRIGHT game one), so I'll skip all the usual intro stuff.

If anyone has any comments about the MYSTARA line, I'd love to hear from you. I'll get back into this forum next week and read over the mail. I won't be able to drop by very often, but I'll do what I can. Cheers!

Roger E. Moore
TSR, Inc.

From: AndonJAM
Date: 95-02-17 18:58:44 EDT
Re: Re:Message from Roger Moore

Well, one of the things I would like to see done up is the Isle of Ochalea; perhaps it could be used to revitalize the AD&D Oriental Adventures segment. The info on the Isle has been fairly scanty in the past, and as Red Steel shows, history and details can change. I think it would be advantageous for both the Mystara line as well as the Core AD&D line (Lots of opportunities for new sourcebooks, new MM's, etc.). I would also like to see the Isle of Dread done up again; the neatest way to work it would be as a box set billed for use with both Ravenloft and Mystara. Make the Kopru more of an active evil force in the Sea of Dread. Thanks for listening!

From: CesarJL
Date: 95-02-18 03:03:15 EDT
Re: ShadowElves?

Hi,
Only four questions:

Are there drow in Mystara or do the shadow elves replace drow? Will info on the shadow elves come out soon? I remember the old Gazetteers had a whole book on the subject, but I can't find a copy of one.

Will there be more expansions like the old Gazetteers (small and cheap) or will the expansions all be expensive box sets like Karamaikos?

Is the world still hollow?

Thanks,
CesarJL
p.s. The look of the new Mystara stuff is great!

From: Sir Vesper
Date: 95-02-18 17:12:10 EDT
Re: Re:ShadowElves?

Why is everyone crazy about Drow, they're just evil elves. Why does anyone want to play an evil character? I don't know.
But, to answer your question, Shadow elves replace Drow as the evil elven influence in the world.

From: Outlands
Date: 95-02-19 00:48:54 EDT
Re: Re:ShadowElves?

Shadow elves aren't evil, are they?

From: Cynwellyn
Date: 95-02-19 02:59:05 EDT
Re: Re:ShadowElves?

I agree. Even though many people like drow such as Drizzt Do'Urden, that does not mean ALL drows are like him. So I don't know why everybody is so infatuated with drows. I have seen so many screen names taken from Drizzt and people who say their friends always play drow in a campaign. I am not saying that those things are wrong, but the drow and shadow elves are created as a formidable foes for the PCs, as least they are supposed to be, and not as the PC themselves. Anyone agree or disagree with me?

-Harper

From: JoShMaYnAr
Date: 95-02-19 04:26:23 EDT
Re: Re:ShadowElves?

In my campaign world I went one step further. I decided to have both shadow elves and drow. While the drow have the spell like abilities, the shadow elves are highly psionic. The shadow elves are so evil that they instantly get a -8 reaction adjustment for all races except elves whom they receive a -11. Their culture is very oriental based.

If anybody has any questions about them then drop me a line.

Josh

From: Cynwellyn
Date: 95-02-19 16:38:16 EDT
Re: Re:ShadowElves?

I have not been in this RPG game for long and I am wondering which stats do you use when you roll for reaction. I have searched PH and I cannot find just how do you determine a player's reaction number. Do you use Wisdom or Charisma, or something else? And do you have to roll the number greater or lesser than the number indicated? If anyone can answer my question it will be much appreciated.

-Harper

From: JoShMaYnAr
Date: 95-02-20 21:01:49 EDT
Re: Re:ShadowElves?

There is a chart on page 103 in the DMG. You use the character's reaction adjustment based on the character's charisma. If there is a plus then you subtract it from the number rolled, if it is a minus then you add it to the die roll (kinda strange, huh?).

One question: What about the optional rule under charisma on page 18 in the PHB. It says to look on page 20 after the races are described, the whole problem is on page 20 there is no mention of anything pertaining to this. HELP!!!!!!!!!!!!

From: RPGA Kevin
Date: 95-02-20 22:19:22 EDT
Re: PHB tables

This problem is being corrected in this year's reprinting of the new and improved Player's Handbook.

From: Gilak
Date: 95-02-21 03:28:59 EDT
Re: Specialty Priests?

I was wondering if Mystara was going to have specialty priests, preferably of the sort in FR Adventures, or were there simply going to be rules for using the different priesthoods if the kit given in Karameikos (Philosopher Cleric?). If there are going to be true SP's then could you possibly give us a preview, and an idea when and where they will be released. The immortals list in Karameikos all look very interesting, and it would be good to be able to give my players the option of SP,s. If Karameikos addressed this and I missed it please forgive me for wasting you time.

Thanks in advance,

Gilak

From: CesarJL
Date: 95-02-21 23:05:24 EDT
Re: Shadow Elves Again

The question was not about Shadowelves as PC's but rather as NPCs. As a DM, I like to know as much about the major bad guys as I know about the PCs. I need to know more about the culture of the Shadowelves to keep foes interesting. I guess I should have been more clear in the earlier posting.

CesarJL

From: Fyrie
Date: 95-02-21 23:55:01 EDT
Re: Hail the Heroes

This weekend I got to play The Hail the Heroes CD module. All in all I would have to say that it was pretty fun and interesting. The first CD module I played in was The one I think comes in the Box set, but I am not sure. Anyways the first one was cool, but very limiting to to the character voices supplied by the CD. Hail the heroes, on the other hand, did not have supplied PC voices, and it was very fun. The sound FX were really good, but I would have to say that I liked the Music better on the first one. Has anyone else out there have any input?

-Fyrie

From: TSR Inc
Date: 95-03-02 18:12:01 EDT
Re: Message from Roger Moore!

Roger asked me to post the following message. Reply here, if you like. He (and most of R&D) are seeing these messages every day or so.

Rob Repp
Manager, Digital Projects Group
TSR, Inc.

I notice that there are quite a few Shadow Elf fans on this board. The basic reference that everyone seems to be looking for is the D&D(R) game Gazetteer GAZ13 <The Shadow Elves>, by Carl Sargent and Gary Thomas. It was published in 1990, so it might be hard to find now. Yearly updates on the realm of Aengmor appear in the three Poor Wizard's Almanacs.

What questions do you have about Shadow Elves? I'll see if we can upload some text for you if there are some specific things you'd like to see. How many people like playing them as characters in AD&D(R) games, and why do you like them? What makes them special to you? What more would you like to see about them?

Fans of the MYSTARA(R) campaign should also know that we will be releasing the GLANTRI(TM): Kingdom of Magic boxed set in April. How many of you run adventures in which most or all the characters are wizards? Would you like more material on playing all-wizard campaigns? If you've tried playing in an all-wizard campaign, how did it work out?

Consider this a sort of "focus group" on these topics. Thanks! Roger Moore,
TSR, Inc.

From: Timhuntley
Date: 95-03-05 03:19:39 EDT
Re: Mystara

I have been DM'ing on Mystara since the Dungeons and Dragons Rules Cyclopedia was published. I love the world. In my Mystara, Drow have replaced shadow elves. I have a mage whose wood-elf mother was raped by a drow, birthing him, a wood-elf that looks like a drow (dark skin, white hair, etc.) I chose drow over shadow elves because we had been playing AD&D for some time and were used to them (not to mention the lack of info on shadow elves at that time).

My Mystara has changed alot since then. Iriendi is totally different from TSR's conception, but I think that is perfectly OK, and probably encouraged to

get some originality into each individual campaign.

Now for a plug: I run an internet e-mail based Mystaran 2nd edition AD&D game. If any of you are interested in playing, please e-mail either timhuntley@aol.com or thuntley@kofax.com. I hate to sound exclusive, but I have 3 players now and want to limit it to 5-8 players. It is a 3rd-5th level campaign.

Roger Moore, keep up the good work. The Karameikos setting was excellent - I hope to see alot more. With that type of effort, I think Mystara could quickly exceed Forgotten Realms or Dragonlance in popularity.

Thanks,

Tim Huntley
Chino, CA.

From: GSalomon
Date: 95-03-06 02:17:35 EDT
Re: Hutaakans

I would like to see some more on the Hutaakans of the old Traladaran region (Karameikos). They brought the Traldar out of the stone age. I've seen the write-up in the MC Mystara, but this doesn't say much. Only that there was a disaster that caused the downfall of their race. I'm also curious about Nithians. I just started a Karameikos campaign after years of inventing my own worlds. I need some cultural background for the ruins my players will be exploring.

Thanks,
FL DM

From: Kaviyd
Date: 95-03-06 20:24:55 EDT
Re: Re:Hutaakans

The best sources that I have seen for the Hutaakans and Nithians are the following:

- 1) The Hollow World Boxed Set
- 2) The "Gazetteer" for the Nithians in the Hollow World setting (HWR2, I think)
- 3) The "Basic/Expert Transition" module B10, "Night's Dark Terror", which includes the Hutaakans and Traldar in a hidden valley in Karameikos.

From: Joe G K
Date: 95-03-08 01:11:48 EDT
Re: Re:Message from Roger Moore!

Hey Roger, how about having the Mystara books be available without the freaking CD? No insult intended, but I don't want the CD, don't need it, and find that thus far, a lot of the Mystara core material is just updated versions of the old D&D stuff. Joe G K

From: Secoh
Date: 95-03-08 19:00:38 EDT
Re: immortals

Are PCs still going to be able to become immortal?

From: Orion44
Date: 95-03-09 02:23:37 EDT
Re: Hutaakans and Pegataurs

Dear Sirs,

I recently submitted to the upload section a write up for Pegataur and Hutaakan Humanoid Player Characters, based upon the AD&D Complete Book of Humanoids. I included both Word 6.0 and text file versions. But have not yet seen them added to the Rules Additions Dowload Sections. What is the delay? I'm sure everyone who likes Mystara would enjoy playing these new humanoid player charcaters.

Later,
Orion44

Also, Check out the Knights of Aran, Knights of the Wood, and Knights of the Crescent player classes which I wrote up.

From: Chimera657
Date: 95-03-11 14:48:21 EDT
Re: Churches

In mystara is there like a Great Overbearing God Controlling the others? I've seen the name Odin used retaining to an Imortal.

From: Wordsin
Date: 95-03-11 19:12:24 EDT
Re: Rakastas !

I have a 11th level character Rakasta Samurai...and I am wondering if anyone knows if a Rakasta handbook will be made?

From: RPGA Kevin

Date: 95-03-11 21:12:12 EDT
Re: Re:Rakastas !

<<I am wondering if anyone knows if a Rakasta handbook will be made?>>

Most likely no. Sorry

From: Orion44
Date: 95-03-12 03:22:16 EDT
Re: Pegataur & Hutaakan

I was wondering, has anyone downloaded my Pegataur and Hutaakan write ups. I'm anxious to hear your comments on them either here or in E-mail.

Later,
Orion44

From: Wordsin
Date: 95-03-18 13:57:27 EDT
Re: Re:Rakastas !

Why not ? I know at least three hundred people who want one in all my campaign groups.

From: Wordsin
Date: 95-03-18 13:58:46 EDT
Re: Re: Churches

Odin is the name of the god that savages or northerners pray to. I don't think there is actually one supreme immortal.

From: Cabin42boy
Date: 95-03-18 22:07:55 EDT
Re: Re:ShadowElves?

Oh god no of course not. In order to understand a Shadow Elves state of mind you have to look at their history. Being a big fan of the Mystarian world when it was still only D&D I studied the Shadow Elves a great deal. Thousands of years ago Shortly after the time of Blackmoors destruction a group of elves found one of Blackmoors old relics. They had already fled from their homeland after the destruction when they came across it. They detonated the device which laid waste to a huge tract of land now known as the broken lands. This event drove the underground. Eventually they came across a sizable cavern. They made their home there and began to worship the immortal known as Atzanteotl. Atzanteotl demanded sacrifices and other evil things. Eventually displeased with their rate of birth Atzanteotl flooded the cavern with lava.

Later he had a tribe of humanoids conveniently find it and they took up his religion. The Shadow Elves continued underground where they eventually found another cavern and another immortal. To make a long story shorter. They took up the worship of Rafiel and through his rather rigid (my opinion) doctrines they prospered they still face constant humanoid raids and were rejected by the surface elves of Alfheim when they finally came in contact with them. So they're not even just paranoid and isolationist.

From: Cabin42boy
Date: 95-03-18 22:09:33 EDT
Re: Re:Shadow Elves Again

Shadow elves are not bad guys!!!!

From: Genian
Date: 95-03-19 16:01:36 EDT
Re: Re:Shadow Elves Again

I agree, I have traveled with a Shadow Elf player for many years they are not evil.

From: Genian
Date: 95-03-19 16:02:41 EDT
Re: Rakasta's.....

Do the Rakasta's from Myoshima have any type of air ships ?

From: Hawksblade
Date: 95-03-22 18:25:52 EDT
Re: Mystara

Greetings, one and all!

I have been gaming for nearly a decade now (mostly in worlds of my group's own devising {a little Forgotten Realms, Dragonlance, Greyhawk, and Ravenloft, too}) and our group has become interested in the Mystara campaign setting. We were wondering; if anyone could give some ideas of what it like (before we go and invest some \$50 for the box sets w/ CD).

All responses are welcomed.
I thank thee,
Sir Arthur Hawksblade

From: Krhonos
Date: 95-03-23 10:12:51 EDT

Re: Requested Material

Hello all. I'm searching for Gazeteer #1: The Grand Duchy. Does anyone have an extra for sale and if so, how much are you asking for it. Thanks.

Krhonos

From: B1Bard
Date: 95-03-25 14:15:22 EDT
Re: Re:Message from Roger Moore!

Any way to get the old B10 module re-released for Mystara... this was, without a doubt, the best module TSR EVER produced... I'd even be willing to buy it with (ugh!) AD&D stats, I'd just like to have it intact.

The great thing about this module was that it introduced the history and mythology of the module as you find it. It was a great module that combined the best of epic fantasy, dungeon crawling, wilderness wandering, a great cast of characters, and awesome maps. It NEEDS to be brought back. The best way to introduce people to Mystara is by letting them campaign in it and experience it at the ground level and this was the absolute best module for doing that, in part because it covered so much ground. It took my group over 3 months of steady play to finish it, but it never once got boring or old.

BRING BACK B10!

B1Bard

From: B1Bard
Date: 95-03-30 21:12:32 EDT
Re: HEY!

HEY! there's also a Mystara board in the sci-f/fantasy gaming board

KEYWORD: Sci-fi
go to the gaming folder and post away!

From: B1Bard
Date: 95-03-30 21:15:17 EDT
Re: AD&D?!?!?!?

I just noticed today that this folder is supposedly for the discussion of the AD&D Mystara campaign setting....

So, does that mean that us D&D players are left out in the cold... Why is there so much talk about the Shadow Elves when that was a D&D supplement and this is an AD&D folder?

Good thing we've got another Mystara folder for us old-fashioned, out-of-date, abandoned, desolate and unloved D&D fans left out in the cold by TSR...

B1Bard

p.s. can you guess which system I'm a fan of? 8)

From: Sir Vesper
Date: 95-04-03 21:12:43 EDT
Re: Re:AD&D?!?!?!?

If a world is transported to the AD&D world, that doesn't mean that a whole race of evil elves does not come with it. I think that many of the posters here know of these elves from playing the D&D game and then moving on to the AD&D game. I think that D&D is a great game, but some of us like the complexity of AD&D better. The fact that a favorite world of all us former D&D players has been translated for us into AD&D is both a great thing but a bad thing. It is great because we will all get to return to our favorite world, but it is bad because it means almost certain doom for the D&D counter part of it.

Don't blame us for discussing a characteristic of our favorite world, be it AD&D or D&D.

From: VPasc
Date: 95-04-04 15:46:07 EDT
Re: shadow elves

I'm new here, what are the shadow elves? Are they the Drow of Mystara?

From: B1Bard
Date: 95-04-04 21:26:48 EDT
Re: Re:shadow elves

<I'm new here, what are the shadow elves? Are they the Drow of Mystara?>

NEGATIVE! Though many people will instantly want to classify them as such because they are elves who live underground and don't like the light, they are very different... just check out the Gazetteer, and you'll see that they aren't just the "drow of Mystara."

In fact, if you read the Drow of the Underdark side-by-side with the Shadow Elves you'll probably agree that the Shadow Elves are far cooler...

8)
B1Bard

From: TSR Inc
Date: 95-04-07 15:57:39 EDT
Re: Roger on Mystara

Hi, there. Well, GLANTRI(TM): Kingdom of Magic is about to pop into your local hobby stores. If you want a preview of the joys to come, look for GLANTRI.TSR in one of the file libraries. It contains some excerpts from the campaign expansion boxed set. Please give the material a look, and check out the boxed set when it appears; this gives wizard-lovers a country they can really sink their spells into. You could run a wizard-only campaign here for years. I hope to have a download on the July-release boxed adventure for the GLANTRI set, <Mark of Amber>, before too long.

I'm exploring the possibility of putting some large file downloads on this system for players of the MYSTARA(TM) campaign (yes, and some for those of you who use the "Known World" D&D(R) game setting version!). One set of files I'd like to put here would be those for GAZ13, the one on those popular Shadow Elves, but I'm not sure how successful my computer search will be. (Old files are hard to find.) Some past DRAGON(R) Magazine articles might also appear here. Got any particular favorites you'd like to see? I'll do what I can from here if so. Moore later, and my best to everyone here. Roger

From: TSR Inc
Date: 95-04-07 16:19:17 EDT
Re: Re:Roger on Mystara

The file Roger's referring to in the previous message is in the Miscellaneous Treasures section of the Library.

Rob Repp
Manager, Digital Projects Group
TSR, Inc.

From: JimRP2
Date: 95-04-07 18:02:18 EDT
Re: Re:Roger on Mystara

Roger,

I wouldlove to see files uploaded with more information on Mystara or anything else.. I appreciate the ones you have done so far.

Jim

From: Silky Doll

Date: 95-04-08 17:55:00 EDT
Re: Re:Roger on Mystara

would love to see the rules and gameboard/markers (as a gif file) for Emperor's Treasure loaded onto the net!

also, if you're going to reprint Dragon articles, the Tarot article from #77, and the old english name generator (I forgot which issue it was in) that used percentile dice to create old norse/saxon names...

From: CHURCH X
Date: 95-04-09 02:17:01 EDT
Re: Re:Roger on Mystara

Mr. Moore,

Thanks for your ear. I wanted to let you know that I believe the Mystara juggernaut is taking a wrong turn.

I much rather enjoy the Known world descriptions circa 1981 Basic sets.

It seems that this world is attempting to "please" far too many peoples.

Can anything be done or has the monster gotten out of control?

I don't expect a personal reply but i know others feel likewise and want to plant this seed of disapproval in the most fertile soil.

P.S. please see what you can do to RePrint GAZ 5. Although it's obsolete, no one can obtain a copy anywhere and it's the only gaz my players haven't experienced!

From: CHURCH X
Date: 95-04-09 02:20:58 EDT
Re: Re:AD&D?!?!?!?

Boy, does that some it up or what!!!

Basic or AD&D? That's what EVERY SINGLE ONE OF MY PLAYERS ask me when i tell them about the "next" gaming session. For some reason, these gamers (since 1981) prefer the Basic Rules anymore.

And what about Greyhawk? And the old Dragon articles about troop movements in Greyhawk and intrigues and everything... are they extinct as well? O for the good ol' days...

From: B1Bard
Date: 95-04-10 23:16:52 EDT
Re: Re:Roger on Mystara

HERE! HERE!

From: Nuyen Nick
Date: 95-04-15 01:36:40 EDT
Re: dracologist -Fang Dragon

The fang dragon does not get a breath weapon, so what would a dracologist of the Fang Dragon get at third circle? Are the hit points gained from the second circle power dragon tooth permanent, as with the Fang Dragon?

From: Orion44
Date: 95-04-17 22:37:21 EDT
Re: Shadow Elf PC

In TSR feedback it was said to me that you TSR reps were going to write up the Guidelines for player character shadow elves. Where will this appear in a post here or in the download file section?

From: ME OMealey
Date: 95-04-18 17:49:26 EDT
Re: My thoughts

As a long-time fan of Mystara, I bought the Karameikos box last year. Unfortunately, I didn't find anything to make it worth having. The Explorer's Guide was just a rehash of the Gazeteer that had been "updated" to take into account events portrayed in the Wrath of the Immortals box set. Since I own the original Gazeteer, the Wrath of the Immortals box, and all the Poor Wizard's Almanacs, I didn't find anything really new. The CD adventures are probably the justification (cause) of the high price tag, but are practically worthless to experienced DMs and players (prerecorded PC dialogue!?!) and there is very little replay value to them. What do you do with a nearly indestructible CD after playing the two adventures? Maybe TSR should consider making these adventures on cassette tape to take the cost down a peg.

I bought the Player's and DM's Survival Guides, again, because I'm such a Mystara junkie. Again, I found them to be of little value. It appears that these two products were originally destined to be a single box supplement, but somehow the decision was made to make two products out of the contents of a single box. There are some things, like Character sheets, in the DM SG that clearly should have been in the Player's SG and vice versa. Apparently, the contents was arbitrarily divided between the two. There are pages of written material printed on parchment-like paper that it would have been better to include in the booklet. Once again, this appears to have been done only to balance the number of parchment-like pages in each package. The adventure logs are something that most people won't want to use, but newer players and DMs might get some ideas of the types of notes they should be taking. All in all, there is not much to recommend these two products.

I did not see any reason to buy either of the CD adventures put out last year, although I have been told they are better than the ones in the Karameikos box. I am probably not going to buy the Glantri box (as much as I might like to) because I fear that it will be too much like the Karameikos box (updated Gazeteer and two CD adventures aimed at 1st level characters). I will gladly

download any information that is made available before reaching a final decision since the back of the box and the entry in the TSR catalog don't provide enough information.

Even though I have not been pleased with what has been released thus far, I still think that Mystara should get more support. In addition to the Survival Guides and Glantri box, there is only one CD adventure and Joshuan's Almanac on the schedule for this year. Compare this with the schedule for Forgotten Realms which has some kind of product out just about every month and supports a variety of levels. I find this to be mildly irritating. Since one of TSR's oldest, fully developed game worlds has finally been brought to the AD&D game system, I would think TSR would be pushing Mystara as a "classic" game setting. Instead, it's targeted at beginners who need the CD as a crutch to make up for lack of imagination on either the DM's or Players' parts. Veterans of the AD&D system who are unfamiliar with Mystara have no incentive to visit this culture rich world. Rightly viewing themselves as neither beginners, nor in need of expensive CD based adventures, many AD&Ders will just pass this product line by. There is nothing for the faithful followers of Mystaran history or modules to support higher level campaigns. There is little incentive for people like me who have all the old D&D stuff to buy the new Mystara boxes for the reasons outlined above, yet there is nothing NEW for us either. I'd hate to see support for Mystara end altogether when TSR decides that not enough people are buying into this format. They've already dropped Al-Qadim, Spelljammer, and Greyhawk. Are Mystara's days numbered?

Continued next post

From: ME OMealey
Date: 95-04-18 17:49:56 EDT
Re: My thoughts - part duex

I know I sound pretty negative, but it's because I'm so devoted to this game setting and I think TSR is letting it go to waste. I wish TSR would fully support this setting, with modules and accessories aimed at all levels of play. Take the CD adventures out of the "settings" boxes. If you have to include a CD at all, one filled with mood music a la Red Steel would be preferable to adventures. Continue to produce CD adventures if you want, but produce traditional modules set in Mystara as well, especially ones for higher level PCs. Better yet, make the CD adventures generic rather than tied to Mystara so Mystara doesn't get labeled as a "beginner's" product that older AD&D fans will shun. Don't cheapen this great game world by reducing it to an introductory product that players will quickly abandon for other settings once they get a little experience under their belts.

A Mystara Fanatic
Mark

From: ME OMealey

Date: 95-04-18 17:50:25 EDT

Re: Questionz

And now for a few questions.

Will Rad make a return in the new CD adventure due out in June? He disappeared during the climax of Wrath of the Immortals, but last year's Poor Wizard's Almanac had several people in Glantri claiming to have seen his human aspect and all the d'Ambervilles felt compelled to return to the Chateau. I'm dying to find out what happened to him after he was spirited off by one of the mysterious Old Ones. For that matter, I'm dying to find out more about the Old Ones. Are they Mystara's original, true gods?

Will Joshuan's Almanac continue to provide an entire year's worth of info on Mystara or has TSR decided to "freeze" time again so all new Mystara products can be set in the same game year? The ever evolving storyline of events was the main reason to buy the Almanacs after the first one as the rest of the info was basically the same from one Almanac to the next. I don't need a travel guide to Mystara, so if that's all it is, I'll pass. I'm also interested in finding out the answer to question 1 without having to buy the CD adventure and hope this will be the way to do it.

Will TSR ever produce anything (other than an Almanac entry) for the HOLLOW WORLD setting? Now that more surface people are aware of its existence, a campaign where the PCs move back and forth between the two settings is quite possible. Before, you were basically limited to running either an entire HOLLOW WORLD campaign or a one-time adventure.

Why isn't Red Steel part of the Mystara line? I realize that Mystara is being aimed at beginners and Red Steel at more advanced players, but was it really necessary to split the two product lines? After all, Forgotten Realms and other TSR settings cater to all levels of play, why can't Mystara?

Is there any possibility of a link being established between Mystara and the PLANESCAPE setting? This would be way cool! Are all of Mystara's Immortals trapped in the Prime Material plane since they are not true gods or can they be given Realms in the Outer Planes and on the Great Ring?

Always hungry for info on Mystara

Mark

From: Kaviyd

Date: 95-04-18 20:20:16 EDT

Re: Re:Questionz

>Are all of Mystara's Immortals trapped in the Prime Material plane since they are not

>>true gods or can they be given Realms in the Outer Planes and on the Great Ring?

Mystara's Immortals certainly are not confined to the Prime Material plane!

If Mystara retains any of its old D&D planar theory (doubtful, given what I have seen of the AD&D line so far), the Immortals have an infinite number of Outer Planes to play with. The "Great Ring" is actually too little for them, as far as I am concerned!

From: Orion44
Date: 95-04-20 01:35:52 EDT
Re: Re:Questionz

Mark,

If you purchased any of the PLANESCAPE stuff, in particular the planescape boxed set (not law or choas), you would realize that planescape can tie in with any of the AD&D campaign settings.

Later,
Orion44

From: ME OMealey
Date: 95-04-20 21:11:43 EDT
Re: Re:Questionz

I have the PLANESCAPE box. I realize that I can locate realms for any Mystara Immortals on the Great Ring myself. I was just wondering if TSR had any plans to do so. Likewise, will we start seeing some NPCs from Mystara and not just Toril and Oerth?

From: Orion44
Date: 95-04-21 23:17:41 EDT
Re: Shadow Elf PC Again

I'm still waiting for the Shadow Elf PC write that you guys from TSR feedback promised to post for me. I hope to see it soon.

Later,
Orion44

From: Orion44
Date: 95-04-21 23:19:50 EDT
Re: Champions of Mystara/PrincessArk

What is the Champions of Mystara boxed set, what does it contain, and is it worth buying? I know it deals with the old Princess Ark stuff from

Gazeteer, but what exact aspect of that does it deal with?

Later,
Orion44

From: B1Bard
Date: 95-04-23 22:23:27 EDT
Re: My ramble (GO MYSTARA!)

I agree with Mark (above) wholeheartedly. The popular party line is that FRealms gets more support because it's more popular, but could it be the other way around. When there's more stuff to buy, it's inevitably going to sell better.

Mystara seems to me to be just another example of TSR ignoring their roots and abandoning longtime fans in an attempt to try to jump on what's hot. There is no single game company alive now that has ignored so many of their traditionally strong products as TSR. T&T has managed to stay in print, so has Runequest, and even Traveller is still around. Of the old "Big 4," only TSR regularly abandons their more famous adventures to the netherregions of the secondary market. The bottom line here is that Mystara is CLASSIC material and it's not just classic material because it's old. It's survived this long by being OUTSTANDING. Wherefore Spelljammer? Dragonquest? Conan the Barbarian? Gangbusters? Indiana Jones? Whether these games died because of bad concepts or bad support is still debateable, but the bottom line is that despite killing off - nay, downright MURDERING - the D&D system that so many of us knew and loved, Mystara lived on, because people want to buy the products, people want to read what's being written, and people want to play the game.

Read that last sentence again: "...people want to play the game." They don't want a CD to play it for them. CDs are great and neat and all but we got along just fine before CD technology, so let's not just jump on the bandwagon and throw CDs into gameboxes because we can - let's put them there for a reason, and outside of the Worst Quest box and the Red Steel box, they have been irrelevant price-hikers. Dump them NOW!

just a few thoughts from a gamer starting his second 15 years of playing...

8)
B1Bard

From: TSR Inc
Date: 95-04-26 13:51:14 EDT
Re: Roger Moore Note

While Roger is in the UK for EuroGENCON this week, he's asked me to post the following note. The file he refers to is in the "Misc Treasures" section of the Library.

Rob Repp

Manager, Digital Projects Group
TSR, Inc.

Just time for a quick note: I have uploaded a list of all TSR game products dealing with the D&D(R) game's Known World, which later became the AD&D(R) game's MYSTARA(R) and RED STEEL(TM) campaigns--materials for which are also listed. Rob Repp has put the listing in one of the game libraries as KNOWNW.TSR (for "Known World"). I hope this bibliography helps you compile materials you need for your campaigns.

Also, Monte Cooke and I are preparing the Shadow Elf files for both the D&D and AD&D games; player-character files come first, then Dungeon Master files later. (Not sure how we'll handle the maps, if at all.) The first of these files might take another two weeks or so, thanks to our work schedules, but they should be worth the wait. Be warned: The files will be large!

What other Known World or MYSTARA materials would you like? I'd like to start making a list so we can work on getting those files to you (those that we are allowed to post, of course). Cheers! Roger

From: B1Bard
Date: 95-04-26 21:22:21 EDT
Re: Re:Roger Moore - Known World

I'd dearly love to see files on the Known World for the further reaches of the map published inside the cover of the Companions' set... The map was later disavowed into the Princess Ark series, but if those things aren't there, then WHAT IS?! I'm talking about the far eastern end of the the main continent and the southern continents in particular. I'd also like to see A LOT more on the Hollow World. The Milenian Scepter was pretty good, but I want more info on the country introduced in HW3. I'd also like to see much more detail on the sub-human races of the Hollow World.

Last but not least - I'd LOVE to see them all in D&D stats! I'm thrilled to learn that D&D lives online, and I really want to see it all come back.

Thanks for taking the time to listen (er... read?)

8)
B1Bard

From: Orion44
Date: 95-04-27 01:27:19 EDT
Re: Re:Roger Moore - Known World

Roger thanks for the response on the Shadow Elves. As far as things I'd

like to see for AD&D 2nd ed. are a boxed set or supplement or on-line file for the following:

- 1.) Wendar - The new elven homeland in Mystara since the fall of Alfhiem.
- 2.) The Heldannic Territories - More on Heldannic knights, etc. would be useful.
- 3.) Sind - The Western Most province of Mystara, is it another arabic culture or something else?
- 4.) Do minotaurs live anywhere in particular in Mystara?, I love to play minotaur PC's, where is there homeland in Mystara?

Thanks.

Later,
Orion44

From: Joe G K
Date: 95-04-27 21:16:51 EDT
Re: Re:Roger Moore - Known World

How about a general world book like the most other TSR campaigns have? I mean Ravenloft, Forgotten Realms, Dragonlance, and even Grey Hawk have general world books that tell you a little about the over all shape of the world. JGK

From: ME OMealey
Date: 95-04-28 03:48:38 EDT
Re: Re:Roger Moore - Known World

The Poor Wizard's Almanacs have done a pretty good job of giving a basic overview of the people and places of Mystara. I'd only consider buying a hardback World Book if it greatly expanded on (rather than just duplicated) what the PWAs have already done.

As for seeing anything done in D&D stats---forget it. TSR has made it pretty clear that they will no longer be supporting this product. After all, they've adapted the Known World for AD&D already (or at least parts of it) and they are "stealing" the better parts of the "advanced" D&D rules to include in the Options hardbacks planned for later this year.

Normally, you can't play races not covered in the PH and the new books (what are we going to refer to them as anyway, new printings?) strongly discourage allowing players to take other races or monsters as PCs. I guess if your DM allows it, you can be a minotaur, but there is no specific minotaur homeland in Mystara like there is in the Dragonlance setting.

The question about a minotaur homeland brings up another interesting question. For years Mystara has been a D&D product. There are parts of the history and

makup of the countries tied to the D&D rule system. For instance, Elves are a PC class, not just a race. Consequently, when making the conversion to AD&D which allows Elves to play several classes and combinations of classes, what's a poor DM to do? Do you restrict demihuman PCs to those classes associated with their D&D counterparts? Players might cry "foul" at this option. Is it fair to say that the majority of Elves are Fighter/Mages, although a few exceptional ones (like PCs) might take other classes? What about NPCs? If Elven thieves (for example) were more common, wouldn't there have been at least one memorable character that got noted in the pages of history? There isn't because prior to the conversion to AD&D, elves couldn't be thieves. Short of revising all known history, I think it's odd that suddenly, after about 3 or 4 thousand years of development, elven thieves start popping out of the woodwork.

Unlike AD&D Elves which are split into High, Wood, Grey, etc., Mystara Elves have no such distinction; however, they are culturally split. Elves of Wendar, Belcadiz of Glantri, Callarii and Vyalia elves in Karameikos, and Alheim refugees are all different culturally even if they are the same stat-wise. This should make a difference in how a PC is roleplayed due to vastly different world-views. Are AD&D Shadow Elves a different race or just Elves with a different world-view than the other Elven cultures?

Alignment is another problem. D&D only has L, N, and C. When translating creatures and races to AD&D stats, how was it decided what alignment to assign them? Monsters that exist in AD&D already just pop on over, but who decided the alignment of unique creatures? A race like the Shadow Elves is a case in point. Comparing the D&D stats of 3 Shadow Elf personalities in Poor Wizard's Almanac II with the same personalities' AD&D stats as presented in Poor Wizard's Almanac III reveals the following:

L ---> LE N ---> CN N ---> LN
Elf -->F/M/T Elf --> F/M Elf --> F/M

While some may say that it's a simple matter to transfer alignment for personalities based on what has been written about them in the past, what about the average Shadow Elf NPC?

I guess this is the type of information that could go into a World book, if TSR ever decides to do one. We'll be lucky if we get anything other than a "Player's Primer to Mystara" CD.

From: WPMartin
Date: 95-04-28 06:34:33 EDT
Re: Re:Specialty Priests?

Using an Idea from the Compete Priests Handbooks in my Mystara Campaign the Immortals don't grant spells at all instead they are more symbols of what an individual of a race can become. Instead for priests I use the rules for forces and philosophies. This way the Immortals can still mettle in the affairs of mortals but they are not true gods. Comments?

WP

From: ME OMealey
Date: 95-04-28 17:16:50 EDT
Re: Re:Specialty Priests?

Heh, that's pretty good. Now can you explain why Mystara has no gods or why they chose to ignore Mystara and let the Immortals get away with so much meddling?

From: WPMartin
Date: 95-04-28 18:31:37 EDT
Re: Re:Specialty Priests?

Because of the following of philosophies or forces and the fact that that is the only true worship, that coupled with the fact that I relate a gods powers with number of and devoutness of worshippers, the gods on Mystara would have no power to influence the people. But the gods are trying to move in on the people of Mystara all though it is rather slowly. The Norse gods are posing as Imortals who can give powers to those who worship them unlike the true Imortals who really can only be role modles.

WP :)

From: Kaviyd
Date: 95-04-29 00:49:15 EDT
Re: Mystara has no gods?

The "Old Ones" mentioned in "Wrath of the Immortals" and earlier material would seem to correspond to the gods of other AD&D worlds. Although very little has been revealed about these "Old Ones", they obviously prefer to stay out of mere mortal (or even Immortal) affairs and only intervene when things get out of hand, as they did in "Wrath of the Immortals".

Also, considering that the "Old Ones" removed Rad from the scene a while back, the upcoming "Amber" set should shed some new light on them (unless the folks at TSR chuck continuity out the window again).

From: B1Bard
Date: 95-04-30 16:28:13 EDT
Re: CONTINUITY?!

CONTINUITY?! T\$R?! you're kidding, right...

but seriously... I think ME has a few good points about the history and continuity of the world, but that shuldn't stop them from rewriting the history

of the world... I mean, they rewrote the history of their company to downplay first Dave Arneson and then Gary Gygax...

As far as D&D stats go, I don't have much hope of ever seeing them in print again - but ONLINE? I thin if enough of us stage a MAIL-IN to ol' Roger Moore, we could get him to at least post D&D stats if they won't publish them anymore...

whaddaya think?

8)

B1Bard

From: Orion44
Date: 95-05-01 01:18:28 EDT
Re: Re:CONTINUITY?!

Personally, guys I like the 2nd Edition stats they're giving now. But, I don't see why they could not print both D&D and AD&D stats in their sourcebooks and boxed sets for mystara in the future. As far as the history of the world goes, fill in the blanks for yourself. For example, in My Mystara campaign instead of the Khanates of Ethengar, I replaced this province with my own of Caladon, where the Knights of the Crescent (Magic weilding knights) come from, along with their history. And for the Atraughin Clans, I replaced that province with the province of Valenwood where the Knights of the Wood (Druidic knights) come from, along with their history. The desert of sind is ruled by a noble efreeti in my Mystara. What happened to everyone's imagination, does it always have to be printed in black & white. If minotaurs have no homeland in Mystara, then my idea is that Thyatis will be my minotaur homeland, they will worship Greek gods and follow a greek type life style. I kind of hated the old history of Thyatis. Just a few thoughts.

Later,
Orion44

From: Kaviyd
Date: 95-05-02 00:04:25 EDT
Re: Re:CONTINUITY?!

One of Bruce Heard's last contributions to the Known World was a description of the avian races of the "Arm of the Immortals". Among the races he described were -- Winged Minotaurs! Now all we need is a homeland for the wingless Minotaurs....

From: ME OMealey
Date: 95-05-02 13:45:20 EDT
Re: Re:Mystara has no gods?

I liken the Old Ones of Mystara to the Over-Powers of Toril. It has been proven that the Powers (or gods) of the Forgotten Realms are not the ultimate powers in their universe, now Mystara's Powers (Immortals) are learning that they aren't the be-all and end-all either. But Toril's Powers are featured in Planscape, whereas Mystara's Immortals aren't. I know that this is because Mystara used to be a D&D product, but will that situation be rectified now that it is part of the AD&D system?

From: ME OMealey
Date: 95-05-02 13:49:17 EDT
Re: Re:AD&D 2nd edition stats

As far as 2nd edition stats go, I hated to see many prominent NPCs lose their Weapon Mastery abilities. Since I expect that system to find its way into the Player's Option book later this year, hopefully their Weapon Mastery skill can be reintroduced.

From: Lostboy103
Date: 95-05-03 01:17:27 EDT
Re: Re:Roger Moore - Known World

Good sir,
there be one last Minotaur in Karameikos. He abodes in the borderlands and is so feared that a nearby fortress will NOT hunt him down.
Good hunting.

From: B1Bard
Date: 95-05-07 03:01:30 EDT
Re: Mystara

I'd really like to see a few more trail maps. Maybe the far southern continents, or even Blackmoor, since the maps in the DA modules weren't particularly stunning...

Anybody else out there miss the Trail Maps?

8)
B1Bard

From: Furyondy
Date: 95-05-07 22:22:25 EDT
Re: Re:CONTINUITY?!

Orion has a great idea.
I plan on altering my first edition Mystara campaign to rid it of the PC Ogre and the Real World Cultures Goblin and plug in some Original countries that

don't make my players think that I'm playing "Guess which Society this nation is supposed to represent?"

Great Tip!

From: GKrieshok
Date: 95-05-08 14:28:27 EDT
Re: Re:Message from Roger Moore

Roger, I was wondering if you could help speed Mystara's set's up.

From: GKrieshok
Date: 95-05-08 14:33:15 EDT
Re: Re:Hutaakans

In my campaign, my friends want a pet such as a war dog or falcon. I'm a little confused on how to set stats for these animals. If you could give me an answer please E-mail me at "GKrieshok".

From: JCdot
Date: 95-05-10 03:30:31 EDT
Re: Re:Specialty Priests?

I like the Immortals in Mystara, I just wish they would get more detailed than just a few lines. Is there or will there be more detailed information on all of the Immortals? Any replys would be helpful.

-J

From: JCdot
Date: 95-05-10 03:34:59 EDT
Re: Re:Hail the Heroes

I myself haven't ran a group in the Hail the Heroes, but I didn't like the first CD either. So, when I ran the first adventure, I listened to the whole CD, and picked out only the ones where the dialogue was already done, and only used the others.....(Not many were left!!)....and it went a lot better.

I am looking forward to doing Hail the Heroes soon.

I like that CD alot better.

Just thought I'd say that!

--J

From: JCdot
Date: 95-05-10 03:41:07 EDT
Re: Re:Message from Roger Moore!

~~~Glantri is Awesome!!~~~

I read the whole set , and am ready to DM the 'Test of Darkness' adventure.

But I just wanted to say that I think my characters are gonna hate me after that adventure. (4 of 7 players will be running mages. And I'm hoping that one of my players will play a dwarf, just so I could have fun with him!! )

:)

I especially like the Canalmaster!

~~J

From: Psihunter  
Date: 95-05-10 19:53:47 EDT  
Re: Re:Specialty Priests?

JCdot,

The "Wrath of the Immortals" boxed set for basic has write ups on most of the Immortals of Mystara. You can still find copies of it around too. :) The stuff from the Karameikos boxed set is pretty much taken straight from there.

\*\*\*>>> Larry <<<\*\*\*

From: Orion44  
Date: 95-05-12 03:22:02 EDT  
Re: Re:Specialty Priests?

There really is no need to use Mystaran Immortals, if you don't have the supplements try this combo, Norse gods for Dwarves and Northern Reaches, Egyptian Gods for desert territories, Greek Gods for all coastal and forested territories. Just a thought.

Later,  
Orion44

From: Kaviyd  
Date: 95-05-12 22:17:04 EDT  
Re: Re:Specialty Priests?

For Ylaruam (the main desert region), it might be better to use Al-Qadim if available. Its priests make more sense than the Egyptian gods, who disappeared from the Known World with the Nithian Empire.

From: Fyrewings  
Date: 95-05-13 20:41:52 EDT  
Re: Re:Hail the Heroes

I am about to DM Hail the Heroes and have read through the book. It sounds like a lot of fun,

From: B1Bard  
Date: 95-05-14 16:37:00 EDT  
Re: Favorite Campaign

I know a lot of people **\*\*LOVE\*\*** the Shadow Elves, but excluding them, what's your favorite setting/module/campaign in Mystara?

Personally, I really dug the Northern Reaches, once we got involved with it. It was almost a frontier/wild-west style pioneer feeling in the mountains. Our DM did a very good job with it. We also had a really fun campaign as members of the Krugel Horde in the Hollow World.

My all-time favorite, though, was the Eastern Karamaikos campaign we ran out of B10, with some help from Dungeon Magazine and the B1-9 book. We all started as 1st level wannabes, and worked ourselves up every step of the way to 5th level, criss-crossing the (then)Grand Duchy until we knew it better than our own hometown.

I'm sure everyone has a favorite campaign - share your thoughts!

8)  
B1Bard

From: Fyrewings  
Date: 95-05-16 18:50:00 EDT  
Re: Re:Questionz

I have a question. I thought that the Mystara setting was new. Well, that's what I thought when I saw ads and bought the boxes. But I guess this is an old thing, huh? Do you really need the older ones to make it more fun or anything like that?

From: Fyrewings  
Date: 95-05-16 18:53:44 EDT  
Re: HELP.

I'm confused. Is the Mystara campaign old and you'd probably have to get the older ones to completely understand and have it be more fun? If so, where could I get these non-cd adventures?

From: Kaviyd  
Date: 95-05-16 23:41:53 EDT  
Re: Mystara discontinued?

There is a rumor circulating on the Usenet that TSR is planning to cancel the Mystara setting. To anyone from TSR: please, say it ain't so!

From: B1Bard  
Date: 95-05-17 00:45:08 EDT  
Re: Re:Fyrewings

The older boxes are pretty much available at most good game stores. They are, for the most part, out of print, but game stores seem to have a way of getting their hands on things like that. Roger Moore uploaded a complete list of everything that was produced for the Known World.

Do you need them? ABSOLUTELY NOT! Do they help - most definitely. I would rush right to my local games store and demand a copy of the "Wrath of the Immortals" boxed set for a grand campaign and a great deal of history on Mystara. Also, B10 - if you can find it - is a great campaign set in Karamaikos.

If you need any other help, just post it or email it - there's a few dozen of us regulars who'd be glad to help out...

8)  
B1Bard

From: B1Bard  
Date: 95-05-17 00:50:24 EDT  
Re: Re:Mystara discontinued?

Boy, let's hope not!

I mean, they've already "discontinued" the founders of the game, the original game system, 4 different logos, and many good writers (Frank Mentzer comes to mind immediately) - let's hope they don't terminate the original game world, too!

I'll run out and buy 10 copies of everything if it'll help keep Mystara alive!

One suggestion for TSR, though - publish more good modules and supplements like Thunder Rift, B modules 4-12, the X-series of Modules, the Hollow World modules, Champions of Mystara, and Wrath of the Immortals. DX the CDs - they're not helpful enough to justify the cost, and for God's sake DON'T PUT OUT SOMETHING AS STUPID AS THE PLAYERS' SURVIVAL GUIDE (what a waste of brainpower, paper, time, money, and promotions...)

From: B1Bard  
Date: 95-05-17 01:04:23 EDT  
Re: TSR's Responsibility?

this ought to spark some debate:

Does TSR, as the granddaddy of game companies, have a responsibility to preserve and keep in print the games, books, modules, etc. that were the foundation on which the hobby was built? Or is it their prerogative to do what they want with their properties?

Mystara was the original D&D world (yes, Temple of the Frog predates Greyhawk), and here are rumors of its imminent cancellation. Greyhawk has been canned, Gary Gygax is gone, and the original D&D is even out of print now. Is this a reckless disregard for the history of the company and the hobby of Fantasy Role-playing? Or is TSR merely a mindless economic machine whose sole guiding light is the bottom line?

Basically, should TSR invest its resources in preserving a part of the gaming heritage, or are they perfectly within their moral boundaries to dump these pieces of history?

B1Bard

From: Cirwell  
Date: 95-05-17 08:00:44 EDT  
Re: Re:Mystara discontinued?

Yep. Mystara is toast. Got it from a TSR guy the other night (name withheld intentionally).  
cirwell

From: JCdot  
Date: 95-05-19 09:30:31 EDT  
Re: Re:Specialty Priests?(Orion)

Yes!

But, 'Tis a cool thought!

J

From: JCdot  
Date: 95-05-19 09:52:19 EDT  
Re: Re:TSR's Responsibility?(B1Bard)

B1,

I've read all you said, and all I can say is, Damn Right!!  
Everything's business these days, money=success. I can't stand it.

I have just recently started as a Mystaran Dm. And I love the world. But all I have is Karameikos, and Glantri box sets, and the two newer adventures (Hail the Heroes, Night of ...) and I must say, I really love the world! But those are the only two parts of Mystara that I have a good knowledge of everything. Now, I have learned a lot from the book, with Thelvyn as the Dragonlord, and a lot from the newest Poor Wizard's Almanac. And I really want to know about the Old One too, but I don't know where to go, so, can someone answer me on that?

But all in all, I suppose if they do can the world, I'll just keep Dm'ing from what I do have now, and what past things that I can still buy.

Let's hope there's still some in Florida!

'cuz if it's out there, I'm going to find it!

-J

From: Lobster CO  
Date: 95-05-19 15:15:49 EDT  
Re: Re:Hail the Heroes

Recently, I played night of the Vampire. It is the second CD adventure for the Mystara Campaign. if you do play, I have one suggestion, do not play the first track to the PC's in the begining, and cover up the part of the map that says Night of the Vampire, it adds the suspense of not knowing there is a vampire. The player know there is a Vampire and suspect even the people that will help them. Also there is a New Darokin CD boxed adventure/campaigne. It is very interesting, although I havent started playing it. Have fun.....

From: Lobster CO  
Date: 95-05-19 15:17:46 EDT  
Re: Re:AD&D?!?!?!?

You should really invest in the AD&D 2nd edition settings, and books. It deepens the fealing and you get MUCH MUCH more out of the game. Just a suggestion.

From: Silveras  
Date: 95-05-19 17:44:40 EDT  
Re: End of Mystara

Some thoughts.....

TSR should take a hard look at their present policies. The D&D Known World was an interesting, vibrant setting. The Gazetteer series did a fine job of expanding the the D&D rules to provide unique challenges and atmospheres for each of the areas covered. The Hollow World materials expanded that concept even further. Everything seemed to be going fairly well (from my perspective as an individual customer).

Then some editorial decisions were made. D&D was to become the introduction to AD&D. The Known World was to become Mystara, the newest AD&D

setting. The new Mystara material would be pitched primarily at new gamers. The new Mystara material would include a prize in every box (like children's cereal): a CD of sounds to show the new players how to play.

I had some qualms about the first and third of those decisions; the fourth left me feeling somewhat more dubious. I liked the notion of the second decision. However, over the last two to two-and-a-half years, I and my retailer have discussed the gradual slippage of TSR's understanding of their audience.

What we have here is an example of that failure. The Known World was successful enough that TSR's marketing people decided it could fly as an AD&D setting. That assessment (probably) had merit; it was the execution, and the other editorial decisions mentioned above, that killed it.

In its execution of the conversion, TSR started treating "new" gamers as children. By and large, the people playing role-playing games tend to be a little bit more inquisitive, imaginative, and (yes) intelligent. Role-playing games are an exercise of mental energy, and the people drawn to them tend to be more "mentally" active. That means that TSR's effort to provide support to "new" gamers came off as an insult to most of their audience. I know some 14 year olds (and a few 10 year olds) who can not only *act* better than the people on the sound tracks provided on the CD, but they could also have scripted the tracks better as well. Observation: "Young", "new", and "inexperienced" do not mean "simple-minded".

On the other hand, a slightly more sophisticated approach was taken with the Red Steel material. That line seems (since it has not yet been announced as canceled) to be doing better. Perhaps it is because there is a less simplistic approach taken.

So, as we bid a fond farewell to Mystara (as seems official), I hope TSR gives some thought to what has been said many times on the Greyhawk board, and what has seemingly been proven true here: "Abandoning the experienced gamers is the surest way to scuttle a successful line. "

Silveras

From: B1Bard  
Date: 95-05-19 20:42:07 EDT  
Re: Re:AD&D-lobster CO

been there  
done that  
got the t-shirt  
want a refund

I'll take the D&D system any day of the week and twice on Sundays

From: B1Bard  
Date: 95-05-19 20:56:57 EDT  
Re: Re: End of Mystara

Somehow, I'd like to be idealistic enough to believe that TSR is actually going to read and listen to all of these comments, and act accordingly.

Unfortunately, I have that sinking feeling in the pit of my stomach that the only other thing tying me to D&D (and really, FRPGs in general) is about to get axed.

In the old days (say, 4 years ago) - I knew EXACTLY what day the TSR shipments were getting to Foundation's Edge. Rick would hold all the new D&D stuff for me, especially Mystara, knowing that I was going to jump on it as soon as I knew it was there and have it halfway read before I was out the door. I bought all of the D&D products naively thinking that my blind support of their products would keep them coming.

Then I got word that D&D was being cancelled. I still bought the Classic Dungeons & Dragons (what a waste of money) and mourned my loss.

I heard that Mystara was being revived in the AD&D rules setting, and I reluctantly bought it. Oh well, I said - I don't like the rules, but I can still live out my games in the best fantasy world ever. The products did not disappoint. Disregarding the CDs, which were best described by a friend of mine as "too bad to keep and too expensive to use for whale bait," these were among the finest Mystara products TSR produced. Considering Mystara's humble beginnings, it had become one of the greatest treasures in gaming. I stopped buying any other products but Mystara.

Now it's being cancelled, too. I know I'm not the first one to feel like this - Greyhawk got canned, too, and so did Spelljammer, and one day so will Ravenloft, Dark Sun and Birthright. They won't be trendy and cool anymore. Everyone will run off and buy the latest Infiniti Q35 and leave the reliable old Ford Escorts in the junkyard.

I guess I'll never again get that feeling of opening a product and diving in as if looking through a lost family album and I guess I'll never act like a little kid again over a role-playing game but hey - we must all grow up, and I guess this is TSR's way of giving us that kick in the but, to tell us that no matter how much we like our fantasy the reality is the bottom line, and TSR kowtows to it at every turn.

The biggest shame in all of this is that TSR won't ever sell the rights to Mystara to another game company who would undoubtedly, prove them wrong by turning it into a winner.

weeping at my loss

B1Bard

From: Orion44

Date: 95-05-19 23:25:22 EDT

Re: Re: End of Mystara

Whats the Name of the new Darokin boxed set and when was it released?

From: ESilv

Date: 95-05-20 05:10:37 EDT

Re: Mystara = Greyhawk



As a reader of the Mystara line, I too must express a twinge of regret at the cancellation of the line. I had begun using select Mystara material as inspiration for my Greyhawk campaign...Talk about snake bitten!!

Again, I think that this indicates the general mind set of TSR: cater to the lowest common denominator. Not a foolish marketing concept in general business...But not really a winner in the adventure gaming industry.

What we, as gamers, are left with are hard choices. Do we support a company whose primary product line <Realms> is geared for the mentally challenged invertebrae among us? Or do we seek solace in Ravenloft or Dark Sun? Desiring, as we do, well written game products that help US run better games, do we resort to trying to adapt adventures and supplements seemingly designed to help us "choose our own adventure"...

For my part, I will keep telling TSR that I am a mature gamer with a nice discretionary income. I would like to support Greyhawk, I would like to support Mystara and thereby give TSR my money. I will not support a line that is infantile and inconsistent...I will not blithely spend my money out of some sense of nostalgia...

Meet my needs as a mature gamer. Give me an excuse. There are too many other good systems, good worlds, mature worlds, for me to settle for less...

ESilv

I didn't want to leave, but they tore down the house...

From: Lobster CO  
Date: 95-05-22 15:27:17 EDT  
Re: Re:End of Mystara

i think you are brutally wrong. For the inexperienced gamers the new Mystara setting is a way to get into the game. The first quest is another way, but to say they are abandoning us experienced gamers! I will tell you I have seen many new products for mystara, I think it will be here for a while.

But.....for us experienced gamers they have the new boxes with cards for various spells, and the like. They speed up game time and the new expansions on old settings revive the fire. The brown books that are coming out are still of great quality and use.

SO....I think you should re-evaluate your point of view!

From: DebPce  
Date: 95-05-22 19:29:46 EDT  
Re: Re:TSR's Repsonsibility?

Doesn't mean to rain on your parade but AD&D is better than D&D. And it should replace it

From: Silveras

Date: 95-05-22 21:25:15 EDT

Re: Re:End of Mystara

LobsterCo,

My point was that while it is good to support new players, TSR had gone too far in that direction, and had also seriously misunderstood its market. You mentioned the brown books series; I \*loved\* the first few -- expanded combat rules and techniques, a better explanation for adjudicating illusions, detailed and customized priesthoods, a decent psionics system, etc. However, I thought they started going off-track with the Elves. I \*love\* Elves; they're my favorite fantasy race. But even I would not give them half of the abilities heaped on them in the Elves Handbook. Also, the Dwarves Handbook presented variant proficiency tables for the Dwarves, and racial proficiencies so that every Dwarf would not necessarily have the same abilities. These would be fine systems, if they integrated with the whole AD&D system; but the \*other\* Complete Races handbooks did not follow suit. It was like each book was developed without a complete vision of the whole. By not supporting the variations started in the Dwarves handbook, TSR compelled me to decide "is this worth my time to bring over to Elves, and Gnomes, and Halflings?"-- I have better ways to spend my time, so these optional rules are no longer a viable option. Later books were, IMHO, even more badly off-center -- the abilities granted in the kits became more overblown with each, and the penalties either nonexistent or crippling.

I guess my point boils down to this: The experienced games expect better attention to detail and more coordination. By condescending to us, and treating us (and new players) as unable to connect the pieces of the puzzle, TSR alienates us and kills potentially lucrative product lines.

Does that make my point clearer ?

From: B1Bard

Date: 95-05-23 23:52:32 EDT

Re: Re:DebPce (D&D vs. AD&D)

Who decides what is "better"? or what should be replaced? and what should replace it?

the answer seems to be the obvious: TSR

I happen to like D&D better than AD&D, and I think it is a superior system. You don't agree. Thank goodness... if everyone started agreeing with me, I might let it go to my head ;)

But to say that one should replace the other seems to me to be going a little too far. What do you propose to do with those of us who have tried D&D and AD&D and find D&D more to our liking? Is your answer to simply cut us off? Let us meander about in search of a system we like, or continue to milk our beloved D&D for years?

Please don't take this wrong... I'm not trying to make you answer these questions. I guess I'm just trying to find someone to give me the answers

since TSR seems reluctant to talk back to us (see my previous post about their reply).

Until then, I guess I'll just watch another of my favorite game products drift away into obscurity.

B1Bard

p.s. If the new 2Ed of AD&D is supposed to be the new entry-level game (by way of First Quest), and D&D is now gone, why do we still call the introductory game ADVANCED Dungeons & Dragons?

From: B1Bard  
Date: 95-05-24 22:30:49 EDT  
Re: TSR's Reply

I had a similar post to this earlier, but TSR pulled it because I copied private email into the folder.

Basically, I have been copying our posts about Mystara cancelling and the end D&D, etc. and sending them directly to TSR via the FEEDBACK department.

the only reply they graced us with said basically:  
(and I paraphrase):

thanks for telling us, but we really don't care enough about what you're telling us to grace your email or the folder with a legitimate explanation or reply because we're in charge and your not, so we'll do what we want without your approval.  
(they did it in far fewer words, though)

B1Bard

From: Kaviyd  
Date: 95-05-24 22:44:14 EDT  
Re: Re:TSR's Reply

Does anybody from TSR plan to make any sort of statement about the future of Mystara? So far all information has been second hand and therefore of dubious reliability.

There are many of us for whom Mystara has been the favorite fantasy setting of all. Most of the best material for that setting is out of print, and the newer material has been disappointing (costs more, provides less information). I hope that TSR is not discontinuing this line. However, if they are rethinking their approach to it, that would be a very good idea.

From: BluSponge  
Date: 95-05-25 01:25:11 EDT  
Re: Re:TSR's Reply

Sounds like Jim Ward to me.

Tom  
via the Greyhawk Council

From: Orion44  
Date: 95-05-25 03:36:44 EDT  
Re: Re:TSR's Reply

We demand a statement from the TSR rep, where's Roger Moore now? No comment Roger? We the public demand an answer! We as supporters of D&D and AD&D should be given this information as a courtesy!

Later,  
Orion44

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-05-25 16:23:24 EDT  
Re: To die or not to die?

Ah, yes. Mystara -- to die or not to die?

I'd say NOT. It's neither dead nor dying (much less undead). Okay, it's got a few bruises from its change to the AD&D(R) game, but that doesn't mean it's departed to the land of the Immortals. Our present plan is to focus on the Red Steel(TM) Campaign which is a part of Mystara, as much as the Known World and the Hollow World. We'd love to be able to produce new cool stuff for all these places, and then some, but Mystara just isn't alone. There are many other projects that make up TSR's yearly releases and many other people who also want their world to get support as well. The present focus on the Savage Coast doesn't mean that Karamaikos, Glantri, Thyatis, et al. will disappear. Much to the contrary -- we plan on solidifying links between the Known World and Savage Coast as much as possible.

For example, how do you think the lupins of Renardy ended up becoming a French-speaking nation? Their nomadic ancestors had visited Glantri, following rumors that it was becoming a werewolf hot point. Lupins quietly infiltrated New-Averoigne and fought a private little guerilla war, nearly unnoticed by the common folk. They didn't win but nevertheless enjoyed the local culture and copied it to the best of their canine abilities. Of course, Glantrian wizards had always kept an amused eye on these furry nomads. The wizards' interest suddenly peaked when they heard about the magical curse affecting the land into which the lupins had later moved. Of particular concern were the special magical abilities the curse

conferred. No Glantrian wizard could resist the urge to investigate such tantalizing magical bait (any wisdom being purely optional, of course). It wasn't long until some Glantrians set up teleportation portals to easily go back & forth between Louvines and Glantri (concealing that fact from all known Glantrian werewolf sympathizers, naturally). Alas, hiding secrets in Mystara has always been a tough job. Glantrian werewolves and their pals would do their best to terminate portals and their creators. Likewise, every well informed spell-caster worth his/her salt soon followed suit, and created similar portals to areas with which they had more affinities. Expect then Karamaikos links with Slagovich, Wendar with Eusdrian elves, Heldannic Knights with Eusdrian and Narvaez clerical counterparts, Alphatian survivors with Herathian nobles (without necessarily knowing of Herath's dark little secret), and yes, you can bet on it, a Shadow Elf connection with the despicable manscorpions of Nimmur. Welcome to Mystara's teleportation superhighway!

Of course, there is no way to say at present how things will go with Mystara. We in the creative spheres of TSR are trying our best NOT to let that world die and disappear. Perhaps there could be a way of bringing back a series of Known World products that would satisfy everyone -- the new folks, the original supporters of the original D&D(R) Game MYSTARA(R) Setting, our creative staff, and TSR's needs as a viable and manageable business. There are many different issues involved that don't have to do exclusively with dollars and cents. Hey, we're still talking here, so please hang in there. While the RED STEEL Setting is available, we hope you'll enjoy it, and we'll try real hard to find solutions.

Bruce Heard  
TSR, Inc.

From: JCdot  
Date: 95-05-25 16:51:26 EDT  
Re: Re:To die or not to die?

I am, I suppose a newer Dm to Mystara, and recently discovered that all of the reg. D&D material existed. And am presently buying all of the older things in addition to all of the newer boxes coming out. So, the Red Steel campaign is also a part of Mystara? If this is true, then I have even more things to buy. But it's buying things I Don't mind! I am totally hypnotized by this campaign setting. I'm just glad to know that, I guess, Mystara is still alive and kicking, so TSR will definitely be getting more of my money.

So, one thing I would like to say to TSR is, Don't bother worrying about all of the Cd's and Player and DM survival guides. I mean, I love having the Cd's, except when they try to plan out all of the conversations for you. What I know that MY players would like is more sound effects like on the Hail the Heroes Cd. I've even used some of the background effects like the water dripping in the caves, in my own dungeons, and the players love it! Just don't try and

plan out what the PC's are gonna do, cause 9 times out of 10, they're going to do the exact opposite. At least that's been my experience.

But Mystara is a wonderful world, and I can't wait to see what's coming out next, so, until then, I'll be buying all of the Gazeteer's and such.  
Until then, see ya

-J

From: B1Bard  
Date: 95-05-25 22:21:16 EDT  
Re: Let Rejoicing Begin!

MYSTARA IS SAVED! I'd love to think that all of our ranting and raving made a difference, but apparently TSR never planned to cancel it...

(boy, do I feel sheepish)

Actually, I'm glad that Mystara is being saved even if it is mainly the Red Steel stuff fro now, but I'm going to love seeing the connections w/ the Heldannic Knights, Wendar, and others as we go. If all of Bruce's info (see above) pans out, then Mystara may once again reign in my book....

The one product I would love to see - one of my favorite products of all time, and a very cool thing if you newer guys can find 'em - THE TRAIL MAPS! Bring 'em back, and put out new ones for the North, the South, the Savage Coast, the Hollow World... heck, do the Polar Icecaps! Trail Maps can make anything interesting, and they're one of THE reasons a lot of us are even in gaming.

THANK YOU TSR FOR SAVING MYSTARA!

party on  
8)  
B1Bard

From: Silveras  
Date: 95-05-25 22:26:59 EDT  
Re: Re:Let Rejoicing Begin!

If Bruce's post means that the tone of the future Mystara products will be closer to Red Steel's than the recent Mystara stuff, the line may well be saved.

I also second the motion for the Trail Maps. I still have my old ones. My favorite feature was the odd information tucked into the sides - travel times between cities, calendars, etc.

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-05-26 15:50:08 EDT

Re: Re:Immortals/Gods/Old Ones

Answering some of ME OMealey "questionz" of 95-04-18

When the MYSTARA(TM) Setting was a feature of the D&D(R) Game, it could have been treated as a separate dimension or alternate reality, preventing most gods and Immortals from crossing over.

The Mystara world is now a feature of the AD&D(R) Game. It is only logical to assume that -- 1. Mystara is now enclosed in a crystal sphere (probably a very large one including the whole planetary system), and 2. it is connected to the outer planes (thus the link with the PLANESCAPE(TM) Campaign Setting). So far, no problem.

It gets interesting when an Immortal meets a god. There are big differences between the two. If my understanding of the AD&D Game is correct, you simply can't beat a god -- why would anyone try? Immortals, however, can be destroyed. Gods were just "born" that way. Immortals originally were living beings who, through heroic or truly monstrous deeds, reached the limits of what mortal creatures could possibly accomplish, and attained immortality. Immortals also grow in power and, for example, can create entire worlds and races. The extent of their powers is also very clearly explained in Wrath of the Immortals, a boxed set that was published for the D&D Game (#1082, Copyright 1992). It describes a system of levels ranking immortals, and power points they can use to create temporary or permanent effects on themselves and others. The rules listed there aren't too difficult to translate for the AD&D Game. Also included are Immortal-level spells, immortal monsters, and a Sigil-like city offering neutral grounds for Immortals and mortals meeting there.

Either way, gods and Immortals are parallel divine or near-divine beings. They would probably treat each other with great respect. No doubt a powerful Immortal or a fellowship of Immortals could prove more trouble than gods would wish to bother with. There is also the question of the Old Ones, mysterious beings that presumably are as far removed from the Immortals as the latter are from mortal kind. There is one case where Old Ones abducted a powerful Immortal gone out of control (in Wrath of the Immortals). No doubt these mysterious beings would have a word to say if Immortals got in trouble with true gods. Gods would know that. So would Immortals. Since neither god nor Immortal really know the true nature and power of the Old Ones, bad manners and rash behavior remain rare. One thing is true however, most gods would probably consider Immortals intriguing mortal-born upstarts suddenly impinging on their divine turfs. The discovery of the Mystara world, so far unknown to them, is equally bizarre... Perhaps was that the Old Ones' doing.

Things get even weirder when realizing there is an Immortal called Odin (along with Frey, Freya, Thor, Hel, and ...Orcus). Are they the same or merely impostors? For the D&D Game it didn't matter, but it does become an issue now. If they are the same, then obviously these gods had managed to find a way into the alternate D&D Game's Mystaran reality and were "transformed" into Immortal equivalents

when visiting that dimension! These gods would later revert to their former godly selves when returning (this is another effect of the Old Ones' power). Otherwise, these Immortals could be simple impostors - but then of course, one would still have to explain how they had even heard of the original divine alter-egos and why they decided to emulate them on the first place. That's really left to anyone's imagination. As a result of this, Odin-god meeting Odin-Immortal could get very entertaining indeed!

Continued in the next Post...

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-05-26 15:51:24 EDT  
Re: Re:Immortals... Part II

There are more than 50 Immortals described in Wrath of the Immortals, plus many more unidentified minor Immortals. That's not to mention the myriad of alternate Immortal identities, especially among the cultures described in the present RED STEEL(TM) Setting. A single Immortal there often has four or five different aliases and appearances that are honored in (occasionally rival) temples. In the original D&D Game, Immortals were "honored" by their followers (as opposed to being "worshipped"), and there weren't any "religions" but "philosophies" instead... This is all semantics now. Though, it makes sense to point out that Mystaran priests could effectively "honor" a non-specific "philosophy" that wasn't tied to any identifiable Immortal. It still allowed them to receive their spells normally and all other usual benefits. For example, three different Immortals share the Church of Traladara's clergy (see the AD&D Game Karamaikos(TM) Setting). Anyone can honor the precepts of that church, or any of its individual Immortals, as long as the followers aren't evil. This could be another legacy of the Old Ones -- who knows?

Bruce Heard  
TSR, Inc.☐

From: B1Bard  
Date: 95-05-26 18:34:29 EDT  
Re: Re:Immortals... Part II

I've got a VERY simple solution to the problem of Immortals with the same name as AD&D Gods and Goddesses:

**BRING BACK THE D&D GAME AND RETURN MYSTARA TO IT!**

seems to make sense to me :)

party on



8)  
B1Bard

From: Kaviyd  
Date: 95-05-26 22:27:37 EDT  
Re: Re:Immortals/Gods/Old Ones

Bruce Heard wrote:

>The extent of their powers is also very clearly explained in Wrath of the Immortals, a boxed set that was published for the D&D Game (#1082, Copyright 1992)... The rules listed there aren't too difficult to translate for the AD&D Game.<

I had considerable problems trying to convert Immortals to AD&D terms, primarily in terms of stats (it was tough to work out the correlations between the 1-100 D&D scale and the 1-25 AD&D scale). Is there any chance that you or somebody else could post some conversion notes for us?

From: GHprof  
Date: 95-05-27 05:01:35 EDT  
Re: Re:Immortals/Gods/Old Ones

hmm if the d&d scale for immortals goes from 1-100 and the aD&D goes from 1-25...I would think that a simple division (or multiplication) of 4 should do the trick. <g>... If not then a percentage should work also  
cirwell

From: Silveras  
Date: 95-05-27 12:29:21 EDT  
Re: Re:Immortals/Gods/Old Ones(Cirw)

Unfortunately, as I recall, 1-18 is about the same in \*both\* scales, so simple division won't work.

From: Kaviyd  
Date: 95-05-27 14:10:01 EDT  
Re: Re:Immortals/Gods/Old Ones(Cirw)

The other problem is that, in D&D, no mortal character (even a Sea Giant) can have an ability score greater than 18, whereas in AD&D a beginning character can have an ability score of 19 and aging may increase intelligence and wisdom further. The range of "super-human" ability scores in AD&D seems to be much smaller than in D&D.

From: Cirwell  
Date: 95-05-28 01:18:22 EDT  
Re: Re:Immortals/Gods/Old Ones(Cirw)

A 19 in any attribute is a rare occurrence and aging bonuses do not increase this further.

If a simple division will not work, how about arriving at a percentage. Heck if the ratio is 1-25 vs 1-18 a quick look should get you close...which should be good enough for gods after all :)  
cirwell

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-05-30 17:01:59 EDT  
Re: Converting Immortals Stats

About Kaviyd's comments on Immortals ability scores. He said:

>>I had considerable problems trying to convert Immortals to AD&D terms, primarily in terms of stats (it was tough to work out the correlations between the 1-100 D&D scale and the 1-25 AD&D scale). Is there any chance that you or somebody else could post some conversion notes for us?<<

#### Converting Immortals' Ability Scores

For all creatures that are described in the AD&D(R) Game, standard monsters in particular, simply use the ability scores given in the AD&D Game (don't bother with conversions there). For all the others various conversion systems are possible. One is a simple math conversion of the abilities, regardless of the adjustments they imply. The other, far more complicated, involves rough comparisons between the effects of ability adjustments of the two games.

STRAIGHT SCORE CONVERSION: Simply assume that scores of 1-18 are the same in both games. That leaves 19-25 for the remainder of the D&D Game ability scores, as follows:

|    |       |
|----|-------|
| 19 | 19-30 |
| 20 | 31-42 |
| 21 | 43-54 |
| 22 | 55-66 |
| 23 | 67-78 |
| 24 | 79-89 |
| 25 | 90-00 |

Of course the problem with this is that an Immortal with a Strength of 100 used to have a +20 adjustment to both attack and damage scores (not the +7/+14 adjustments of the AD&D

Game's maximum Strength of 25).

For your typical PC or monster, this probably doesn't matter much, but if you plan on using the Immortals system with the AD&D Game, these ratings won't work.

**AJUSTMENT CONVERSION:** In this case, you have to come up with separate conversion tables for each set of ability scores since the AD&D Game offers completely different adjustments for each one.

For Strength, you'd need to average out attack/damage adjustments and compare them to the D&D Game's standard ability adjustment. For Dexterity, you could average out missile attack and defensive adjustments and use that as a basis for the comparison, etc.

For example, the AD&D Game Strength Table shows a +7/+14 for a Strength of 25. The D&D Game offers instead single adjustments ranging from +7 to +14 for various Strength scores. I'd hit that one in the middle and consider the D&D Game equivalent adjustment to be +10. So a Strength rating of 25 in the AD&D Game would be equivalent to a rating of 46-53 in the D&D Game.

Beyond this score, we end up with creatures stronger than gods in the AD&D Game. There's no way to avoid that. For scores that would end up above the AD&D Game's maximum of 25, use a new rating, much like fighters with Strengths in the upper 18's! Having established that conversion milestone, we can now develop the first conversion table, as follows:

| Strength    |            |
|-------------|------------|
| AD&D Rating | D&D Rating |
| 1           | 1          |
| 2           | 2-3        |
| 3           | 4-5        |
| 5           | 6-7        |
| 6-7         | 8          |
| 8-9         | 9          |
| 10-11       | 10         |
| 12-13       | 11         |
| 14-15       | 12         |
| 16          | 13         |
| 17          | 14-15      |
| 18          | 16         |
| 18/01-50    | 17         |
| 18/51-75    | 18         |
| 18/76-90    | 19         |
| 18/91-99    | 20         |
| 18/00       | 21         |
| 19          | 22         |
| 20          | 23         |
| 21          | 24-27      |

|          |       |
|----------|-------|
| 22       | 28-32 |
| 23       | 33-38 |
| 24       | 39-45 |
| 25       | 46-53 |
| 25/01-25 | 54-62 |
| 25/26-45 | 63-70 |
| 25/46-60 | 71-77 |
| 25/61-72 | 78-83 |
| 25/73-82 | 84-88 |
| 25/83-89 | 89-93 |
| 25/90-94 | 94-96 |
| 25/95-97 | 97-98 |
| 25/97-99 | 99    |
| 25/00    | 100   |

Bruce Heard  
TSR, Inc.

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-05-30 17:07:11 EDT  
Re: Immortal Words...

As the writers of "Duckman" said: "Maybe we're all just molecules in the fingernail of some really immense being, driving around in little molecule cars."

... Think about it!

(A tip of the hat to Karen Boomgarden, Immortal Goddess of the MYSTARA(R) Setting in our Creative Services for coming up with that one).

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-05-30 17:17:43 EDT  
Re: About Old Ones, PT1

The question always comes up about who -- or what -- the Old Ones are. We know very little about them, other than vague references in the original D&D Immortals boxed set. That's it. Nothing more.

If we know that the Old Ones are as far removed from the Immortals as the latter are from their mortal kin, then their powers must be absolute and without limit. The question is, who could wield such power... and why? Even now that the World of Mystara is a part of the AD&D Game's universe, the question remains. Admittedly, traditional AD&D Game gods are more powerful than Immortals in several ways, but their power is neither absolute nor limitless.

Simply put, the only creature I can think capable of achieving such unfathomable power over all mortal and divine beings of all the planes of existence and their infinite universes is... well, me. "That's it," you think. "Bruce has finally lost his wits! He's fallen off the deep end, forever discarding all remaining shreds of humility and given in with reckless abandon to the ultimate manifestation of his ego!" <smile>

Well, not quite. Yet. <smile again>

Along with any DM and the players who constantly mold the imaginary universe in which their heroes dwell, I share the unlimited power of the Old Ones. In that regards, can I or any DM create entire universes? Indeed! I am omnipotent? Of course! Can I, in a blink of eye, destroy billions of mortals and their gods? Yes, for I am the very substance of all energy, thought, matter, time, and entropy in all the worlds of which I dream. They are mere figments of my imagination! I think, therefore they are. <smile once more>.

Now that we've tied the existence of real life DMs with the cosmogony of Mystara, let's see how that could impact the philosophies of the mortals and the Immortals' understanding of their world.

Virtually no one in the Mystaran universe would truly know who the Old Ones are. It'd be frightening to discover that you and your entire universe were all an illusion, a part of someone else's dream. You don't exist and your every-day thoughts and acts are actually controlled by someone else. No one on Mystara would certainly believe it. Instead those who had ever heard of the Old Ones could believe they created the universe and that they observe quietly. Immortals still would be the driving force behind churches and temples, but any belief of the Old Ones' existence would somewhat overshadow the Immortals' power.

The Immortals would have no reason to believe otherwise. They would probably endeavor to uncover any information about the Old Ones, like Rad did (Etienne d'Amberville's Immortal alter-ego) in Wrath of the Immortals. Their assumption is that perhaps Immortals could themselves grow to become Old Ones. Eventually, Rad was "abducted" by the Old Ones at the climax of the adventure for finding out about just that. In other words, Rad was pulled out of the campaign world after having discovered the existence of his DM!

As far as some of the Old Ones were concerned (a few others and myself), Rad had gotten out of control and it became necessary to alter that character. Etienne was originally created as a lawful (read lawful-good) character. He was later made to become the Immortal Rad and to tangle up in Mystara's endless intrigues. As a result of the plot behind Wrath of the Immortals, Rad either became insane (Immortals going insane?), or shifted alignments. Either way, Glantri without Rad lost some of its color, thus Rad's "abduction" and later return to Mystara.

See next posting.

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-05-30 17:19:27 EDT  
Re: Old Ones, Pt. 2

Continued from the previous posting:

What would Rad remember of all this? He'd recall nothing at all if we wished it so (it's good to be the DM, isn't it?) or perhaps this:

"The Immortal stood on a huge wooden plateau, staring around him at a new and bizarre universe. Strewn about were oddly shaped, multicolored objects with numbers on them. Statues of painted lead lay about, silent parodies of heroes brandishing their swords at unseen dangers. A large crystal cylinder stood incongruously in the distance, filled with a bubbly, black ichor. The Immortal visitor had a moment of panick when, suddenly, a gigantic mountain in the distance shifted on its base, seemingly leaning forward.

"But a mountain it wasn't. There, behind a colossal wall showing scenes of dragons, lizardmen, and warriors, appeared an insanely huge person. Pointing a gargantuan finger at the Immortal, he thundered: "I liked you better before. I shall keep you out of Mystara until things calm down, and then, I shall send you back with the thought that you only are a reflection of my dreams. You shall meditate about this when you are not fighting the forces of darkness in Glantri. Yes, I think that will be fine."

"The Immortal attempted to utter the words of a spell, but his mouth wouldn't move. He struggled to raise his arms, without success. He conjured from within him all the storms of magical Immortal power he had ever unleashed, but to no avail. He stood there, puny and utterly helpless, staring back at the Old One. Only then did Rad discover that he too was a statue of lead, hopelessly paralyzed and mute. All things then vanished, and as Rad tumbled into oblivion, he knew then that he had learned one very obvious thing. There was such a thing as Humility for Immortals."

Bruce Heard  
TSR, Inc.

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-05-30 17:22:04 EDT  
Re: Converting Immortals Stats, Pt 2

I had omitted the last paragraph after the Strength Table, as follows:

Of course, this does mean that you should check all the AD&D Game's greater gods with ability scores of 25. Whenever they come into play, I would suggest rolling percentile dice to find out how far up the 25's these abilities really get. Incidentally, this would really help differentiating lesser from greater gods. Of course, nothing prevents anyone from counting a score of 25/01-25 as a "26", and 25/26-45 as "27" instead -- and so forth all the way up to "35". But at least, the percentile system allows you to quickly roll up stats if you ever need them.

Now all you need to do is follow a comparable route for the other five ability tables!

Nuff said. . .

From: Silveras  
Date: 95-05-30 17:32:19 EDT  
Re: Re:Converting Immortals Stats/Br

Of course, who said you have to convert the Immortal stats and adopt the AD&D standard tables? The gods/deities/Powers are equivalent to the Immortals in the other campaign worlds, and they are supposed to be nearly omnipotent when encountered on their home planes. Adopting the Immortals rules as a method of describing \*all\* Immortals/deities/Powers/ gods strikes me as the most practical way of integrating the two systems.

Of course, that's just my opinion.....

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-05-31 18:55:35 EDT  
Re: Shadow Elves

Did you people ever get the AD&D Game writeup for the shadow elves?

I know the material has been generated in-house, but I haven't found the posting anywhere. If you still want it -- and it is truly missing -- please let me know. Thanks.

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-06-01 14:00:15 EDT  
Re: Shadow Elves

Shadow Elf PCs for the AD&D(R) Game will be part of the upcoming Download of the Month, along with a big file from Roger. It'll provide a lot of the original Shadow Elf Gazetteer written for the D&D(R) Game.

From: Psihunter  
Date: 95-06-04 01:39:00 EDT  
Re: Re:Let Rejoicing Begin!

I loved the TRAIL MAPS myself. I still use mine for my Mystara game. I would love to see updated versions released. I'd also like to see some of The Savage Coast too. They're alot easier than having to pull out all the different maps and put them together (a lot of times they don't match up).

\*\*\*>>> Larry <<<\*\*\*

From: JMunro8986  
Date: 95-06-04 17:14:08 EDT  
Re: wendar

Could somebody tell me the reigions north of wendar I read the description of Denagoth and wendar in the poor wizard's almanacs but I remember reading some where about a nation in the region called erussia.

From: TSR Steve  
Date: 95-06-04 20:08:11 EDT  
Re: Re:wendar

Wendar and Denagoth are also featured in the classic D&D module X11: "The Saga of the Shadowlord."

The module formed the basis for 2 years worth of 9-12 hour game sessions for me. :) I have reams and reams of material for these areas in my personal campaign,. but TSR has not released much information on either region (and, frankly, the "Wizard Almanac" material doesn't really jibe with the material I invented.

But that's neither here nor there...

Essuria is a region in Denagoth. I believe it was the location of the Shadowlord's original capitol city, which still exists as a ruin, deep in oldgrowth forests. (Again, I've played with this region so much as a DM that maybe I'm mixing "my" version of the Known World with TSR's "official" version. In my campaign, since my copy of X11 is far, far away. :) )

Steve Miller  
TSR, Inc.

From: TSR Bruce



Date: 95-06-04 22:32:54 EDT

Re: Re:Wendar

That's right Steve,

You've got the location of Essuria right. It's part of the "official" Denagoth territory.

Bruce Heard

From: B1Bard

Date: 95-06-06 20:36:09 EDT

Re: Hollow World

What's the fate of the Hollow World going to be, now that everything's been converted to AD&D?

I'd really like to see a Gazetteer for the India-based culture introduced in HWA3. I'd also like to see some more info on the Merry Pirates. We've been using the Fallen Stars pirates as a stand-in, but I really don't think it's quite the same.

I also think the Melenians could stand quite a bit more detail. You could play for years just in that empire.

How about Trail Maps for the Hollow World? Or better yet, how about Trail Maps for EVERYTHING?! ;)

party on

8)

B1Bard

From: TSR Bruce

Date: 95-06-07 09:23:11 EDT

Re: Re:HOLLOW WORLD(R) Setting

The HOLLOW WORLD(R) Setting is still a part of the MYSTARA(R) Setting. It could hardly be removed considering the number of ties, physical or otherwise, with the surface world. There won't be any support products at least for the moment.

I agree entirely with you, B1Bard, that many of the settings described in HW are really cool. I just wished that more people would know about them. Using the inside of a planet as the Immortals' museum of past cultures from the surface is fascinating. It does allow many things without compromising logic and plausibility. There was a good deal of implausible issues with the Know World -- for example Ylaruam's oven-like desert sitting next to the nordic Jarldoms, right?

Sind would also make a possible alternate to a gazetteer on the East Indian setting described in the HW. Likewise, the area south of the Serpent Peninsula would work as a reflection of the Ancient Milenians. The problem with settings like Sind, however, is the tendency to stick very close to the historical

model, thus pulling in material closely inspired from the Hindu religion (presently active). This is a no-no at TSR. It's as bad as using unchanged Judeo-Christian or Muslim religions as a basis to a game accessory. Even using extinct religions as a basis for fantasy gaming occasionally causes problems. Just a word of caution here.

I remember the difficulties we had when dealing with the Aztecs, whose "philosophy" was inspired from the Aztec religion. At the end, we had all references to bloodletting and sacrifices removed from the original text. Sorry, can't do that, even if it's historically correct. After all we're dealing with fantasy worlds, so there should be ways of avoiding the more unsavory ways of the real world.

Yes, I do like the Trail Maps too. Everytime I say the name of that product, some of the old timers at TSR shudder in fear and stare back at me as if I had uttered some profanity. Yes, Trail Maps are tough to produce -- really tough in technical terms (at keyline level). Plus, believe or not, the simple process of folding them is more expensive than all other costs involved! We discovered that when the first Trail Maps reached the printer. I mean "EXPENSIVE" to the point retail price would have to be jacked up more than I think would be reasonable. If we could sell as many of these as Rand McNally sells of their's, we could get over the problem. I guess there's room for growth here! That's just one of the reasons why there haven't been more Trail Maps out there after the initial bunch. Don't despair though. Modern technology might yet allow new solutions. I'd still like to see some new Trail Maps for the western areas of the MYSTARA(R) Setting. Keep hoping!

Please pardon the pesky trademarks but -- noblesse oblige!

Bruce Heard  
Creative Services  
TSR, Inc.

From: Ghostgames  
Date: 95-06-07 22:15:08 EDT  
Re: Hi, There!

I just thought some of you might like to know -- I'm here on AOL, and I've been reading your posts about Mystara. (I've just been too busy to do much posting myself.) Anyhow, if anyone has any questions about the Almanac series, or "Champion of Mystara" (including Sind), or "Night Howlers," feel free to post them here. I cruise by here once or twice a week, so be patient -- I may not be able to put my .02cents worth in right away, but I'll respond to anything flagged to my attention.

Best regards,

Ann Dupuis  
(e-mail to Wildmule or Ghostgames is welcome)

From: TSR Bruce

Date: 95-06-08 08:46:13 EDT  
Re: Re:Ghostgames

Hi Ann!

It's nice to have you on AOL! Your .02 cents worth will be very appreciated indeed! Ann is one of the authors of the Almanac series (both for the D&D(R) and AD&D(R) Games), Night Howlers, Champions of Mystara, Night Howlers, and together with Liz Tornabene, the author of the Almanac's latest version called Joshuan's Almanac (coming up soon). Hope to see more from you in the future!!!

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Dave  
Date: 95-06-08 08:58:51 EDT  
Re: Howdy!

Hi, Ann! I love your work on the Almanacs and am eagerly awaiting the new one. Welcome to the board!

From: JCdot  
Date: 95-06-08 13:44:48 EDT  
Re: Trail Maps?!?!

Can someone please let me know how or where to get ahold of the Trail maps? I've heard them mentioned before by B1Bard, but haven't seen them in my local hobby shop. Can they be specially ordered? Or am I just out of luck? I really hope they are still available!

--J

From: Renlock101  
Date: 95-06-08 16:29:36 EDT  
Re: Mystara/a pleseant surprise

Well..well..well.. years of gaming come down to this, TSR went and did the unthinkable.

Originally thats how i took to the revamp of mystie... being a D&D starter back in 82' mystara was simple. I worked my way up to AD&D in a few months....still fond memories of Duke Steffan in my head soon replaced by my mentor Ren'o'the stars (meanwhile as a DM my favorite mod was x1 isle of dread, tied it into evreything, spicifically far south greyhawk). in 87' switched to the realms for a while...but still liked King Ericall, looked at his C-series mods dug em'! went back to greyhawk in the 90ies..checked out my little

brothers PWA1&2 loved the ANN YOUR"E WONDERFULL THANK YOU...and was actually playing ad&d there till the pc's got hissie wanting elminster... and then i saw the update.

I screamed, because of some of the recent FR products that i frowned on..and recent TSR ventures in general...

" no no not the good king Ericall, not Anton Radu, The hollow world will surely be done away with...the poor bloody alphasians!!!!

But to my surprise my little brother gave me his Karamekos big box to look at, he said it was good. O.K. I thought let me check it out not judge too quickly, and whoa OK KING Steffan...not to shabby, I think i can handle that...ohhh so there still is a hollow world...alphatia is still of the map..its the year ac 1012....Mirros instead of specularum..thats takking some time ill get there with it though.

What i found was a great box(except the cd thing)! Usefull stuff in the book not to rule oriented which is cool...and when i play i get to use my old D&D books as GREAT refrance (im th dm). The old D7D stuff was fabulous. I trully feel as if i wasted time playing AD&D. The whole world is so simple and then again not at all( i love it). All the settings modeled after earths own..and then some, coexisting simalteanously on a hollow planet. Conceptually wonderfull for a dm who loves all the diffrent settings, and all within reasonable grasp for even a low level pc.

Thanks for a good job not to hard to swallow  
Renlock

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-06-08 18:37:41 EDT  
Re: Re: Pleasant Surprise

Thanks for the pat on the back, Renlock.

As far as TSR creatives are concerned, as little as possible will get dropped from the original MYSTARA(R) Setting. Its hollowness will remain, its moons will persist, and so will the Known World's flavor. We're not letting anything go.

And Mirros? Oh yeah... Well, the name change had to do with several of our editors who invariably cringed at the sound of the word "SPECULARUM". Mirros just sounded like a kinder, gentler name for a place to begin one's first adventure.

Bruce Heard :)

From: Kaviyd  
Date: 95-06-08 19:12:02 EDT  
Re: Trail Maps

Is there another method of packaging the trail maps that might be cheaper than folding them? For example, would rolling up the maps and putting them in a huge cardboard tube be a better or worse method in terms of expense?

From: B1Bard  
Date: 95-06-08 22:28:28 EDT  
Re: Trail Maps suggestion

howsabout just taking what would be the trail maps for the Serpent Peninsula, the Savage Coast, Alphatia, the Arm of the Immortals, etc. and SCANNING them instead. With all of the fuss about packaging, why not put them all online and let US figure out how to print them out to use them.

just a thought  
8)  
B1Bard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-06-08 22:40:10 EDT  
Re: Re:Trail Maps

Actually, yes. Rolling up the mapsheet is just about as bad as folding it (gotta have a machine that can do it AND that can also handle such large sheets as the Trail Maps). Perhaps many little elves with rolled up sleeves and a sense of humor could help, especially after the first few paper cuts! The other nightmare is the shipping and merchandizing of such bulky tubes. A Trail Map would require a very long tube to fit in. Where would the retailers put these tubes? These tubes wouldn't fit most shelves out there. The additional cardboard tube would have an impact on the price too (all that extra cardboard doesn't come cheap). Plus, I doubt we would package that in brown cardboard -- my guess is that it would also have to be color printed. Unfortunately, text on long narrow tubes would be difficult to read (etc, etc, etc.)

Not so easy, eh?

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-06-08 23:02:47 EDT  
Re: Re:Trail Maps suggestion

If such Trail Maps existed, B1Bard, we'd love to download them -- unfortunately they do not exist. Besides, I suspect the kind of memory and hardware necessary for such HUGE files would make it impossible for most people but a very small elite to handle these documents, much less print them on their own. That is of course, if the whole Trail Map was created electronically. I don't believe TSR even has the kind of electronic equipment to create maps that size. You'd probably end up with a series of separate scans of dubious quality (scanning a chromalin may give a fuzzy result).

We try to keep everyone happy but this one's a bit of a stretch. Hey, I wasn't kidding when I said people at TSR shudder at the mere mention of Trail Maps. They are tough cookies. I'm still hoping for some technological improvements that would help getting around both the electronic design and the packaging problems. Keep suggesting -- we'll keep watching too.

Thanks.

Bruce Heard

From: MoszBro  
Date: 95-06-10 01:25:17 EDT  
Re: Re:Shadow Elf PC

They do have rules for Roleplaying Shadow elves... It's in the Basic D&D Gazetteer 13: Shadow Elves (odd title huh? :) You can buy off the Catalog. I saw it a few minutes ago.

From: MoszBro  
Date: 95-06-10 01:27:19 EDT  
Re: Re:Champions of Mystara/Princess

Yes it's worth it. It covers the lands between the Known World and the Red Steel Lands... Yes Red Steel is set in Mystara.

From: MoszBro  
Date: 95-06-10 01:29:10 EDT  
Re: Re:Mystara Trail Maps

Aaaahhhh... Trail; Maps. I loved em. For Blackmoor trail maps though you'd have to go 3,000 yrs before the crowning of the first emperor of Thyatis I do believe.

From: Kaviyd  
Date: 95-06-11 01:37:08 EDT  
Re: Re:Shadow Elf PC

BTW, when will we be seeing the AD&D Shadow Elf description that Mr. Heard promised?

From: WereRatt  
Date: 95-06-11 15:29:24 EDT  
Re: Re:Shadow Elf PC

Kaviyd is right about the Shadow Elf description, whens it comin`?

--WereRatt

From: Renlock101  
Date: 95-06-11 18:22:18 EDT  
Re: Red Steel???...huh.

Due to limmited spending, I've had to ignore several recent D&D products( i.e. Red Steel). Is this a product that fits in to the Mystara line. If so where is it geographically on Mystara. Also if any of you out there own the product explain to me what it contains, and if its worth while.

Renlock

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-06-11 19:10:45 EDT  
Re: Re:Shadow Elf PC

Sorry for the delay, guys. I spoke with Roger Moore last Friday about that. He gave Rob Repp a large file to upload. It should be part of the download of the month. Actually, I'm surprised it isn't here yet. You might want to E-Mail Rob to remind him about Roger's newest big file. It should contain the Shadow Elf PC description for the AD&D(R) Game, along with original files from the D&D(R) Game Shadow Elf Gazetteer, and probably some other stuff too.

And please, call me Bruce. I'm not too comfortable with this "Mr Heard" stuff!  
:)

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-06-11 19:22:53 EDT  
Re: Re:Red Steel/Renlock

RED STEEL(R) Products are for use with the MYSTARA(R) Setting. It describes a region called the Savage Coast, which lies west of the Known World -- past Sind and the Great Waste. The Savage Coast is just south of Great Hule (remember the Master of the Desert Nomads?), and stretches all the way to the Arm of the Immortals.

You can find more about the original D&D(R) Game's RED STEEL Setting in older issues of the DRAGON(R) Magazine, published about two years ago. The present version of the RED STEEL Setting is for use with the AD&D(R) Game.

The Savage Coast is a land that suffers from a curse. This curse diminishes the natives' health and intellectual abilities -- but, they all get a special, magical ability. In order to neutralize the negative effects of the curse, one needs to wear a metal called cinnabryl. The problem with cinnabryl is that it depletes when worn. As a result, those who can afford it must constantly compete to find new sources of the metal. There is a lot more about the

setting, but you might want to dig into the earlier files Roger Moore posted in the RED STEEL folder.

Of course, I think it's a great setting -- but again, I'm very, very biased!

Bruce Heard  
TSR, Inc.

From: Kaviyd  
Date: 95-06-12 00:26:29 EDT  
Re: Norse gods and Mystara

I have a theory to propose in regard to deities from the Norse mythos in AD&D in regard to how to reconcile the Norse Immortals of Mystara with the Norse gods elsewhere. My theory is that only the Immortals exist.

There is considerable evidence in mythology that the Norse gods are not true "gods" in the sense used in Legends and Lore. The evidence is of two types:

1) Their dishonesty. The Norse myths contain many stories in which the Norse gods lie and deceive lesser beings. Given that and the fact that no one else was around at their births, I would take any tale that they tell about their own origins with a grain of salt.

2) Their mortality. If you read the tale of Ragnarok, most of the gods are killed by beings of equal or lesser divine stature. According to Legends and Lore, gods can be destroyed only by divine beings of greater stature. So, the Norse gods are not deities but "mere" Immortals.

Comments, anybody?

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-06-12 08:19:39 EDT  
Re: Re:Norse gods and Mystara

Not that I would disagree with you, but I suspect some entrenched AD&D(R) Game players would frown at the concept. It would certainly explain a few things though. In the mean time, I'll take the fifth on that one!

Bruce Heard :)

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-06-12 11:29:47 EDT  
Re: Chronomancer

Here's a word from Roger Moore on the Chronomancers' background for the MYSTARA(R)MSetting. Chronomancer is a new product about time travel soon to be released in the AD&D(R) Game line. I thought I'd post Roger's note since it



could be played with the MYSTARA(R) Setting.

>>Chronomancy was known to the wizards of Alphatia, but all Alphatian chronomancers were destroyed by an unknown Immortal after they attempted to make contact with the long-lost techno-magical empire of Blackmoor. One investigator of this disaster believes the Immortal Rafiel and possibly Rad (a.k.a. Etienne d'Amberville) are defending a prehistoric secret somehow connected to the Radiance of Glantri. Rumors sometimes pass through Glantri of a local wizard who has rediscovered the lost secrets of chronomancy, but this has never been proven. No Guardians-like group is known here.

Unobtrusive chronomancers have considerable freedom; furthermore, they might gain the cautious notice of Immortals from Energy or Time (particularly Ixion), who might be bribed at tremendous expense to reveal other secrets of chronomancy or Mystaran history. Immortals of Time take pains to carefully shunt chronomancers "around" critical events in history, so that all attempts to reach those times are missed by days, months, or years. Time travellers perceived as dangerously hostile to Mystaran history are located and destroyed without ceremony or delays.<<

Note: the "prehistoric" secret is the artifact under Glantri City, the Nucleus of the Spheres producing the Radiance. It can only be destroyed through time travel. In effect, one has to travel to an ear BEFORE before the nucleus became an artifact, and destroy one or more of its main components. Of course, such an attempt would definitely attract Rafiel's attention -- and Rad's too, if he's back from detention by the Old Ones!

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Inc  
Date: 95-06-12 23:53:57 EDT  
Re: MYSTARA info from Roger Moore!

A special note to everyone here: In the "Download of the Month" section are two items of interest to everyone who uses the MYSTARA(R) or RED STEEL(R) campaigns and also loves shadow elves. The first file gives the official AD&D(R) game statistics for shadow elves; more files on shadow elves will follow. This material is not available anywhere else. The second file is a preview of an AD&D product that will appear in September: <Chronomancer>. This accessory details wizards who can time-travel; the download describes how the school of chronomancy can be integrated into the various official AD&D campaign worlds (including Mystara). More downloads are yet to come! Post your reactions here, if you can, so I can pick them up later. Cheers! Roger E. Moore, TSR, Inc.

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-06-13 00:06:51 EDT

Re: Re:MYSTARA info from Roger Moore

Aaaah, at last! Thanks Roger, thanks Rob!

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-06-13 00:12:29 EDT  
Re: NiteScreed/JediGirrl

Hey guys, looks like there's some interesting stuff going on in the FR folder -- some talk about the MYSTARA(R) Setting and the RED STEEL(R) campaign (check postings dated 6/11 & 6/12). You might have to look around for them. There has been some 80+ messages there in just a couple of days. The tone gets a tad outrageous, but nevertheless the exchanges remain entertaining!

From: Kaviyd  
Date: 95-06-13 01:35:31 EDT  
Re: Re:Norse gods and Mystara

I guess that I have betrayed myself as an OD&D fan who wants to impose OD&D ideas on the AD&D realm rather than accept the reverse.

But the introduction of Mystara to the AD&D universe raises many interesting questions, such as, what happens when folks from Greyhawk, the Forgotten Realms, etc., start questing for Immortality? When word gets out in the Realms about the Immortals, high level characters will definitely change their plans!

From: Kaviyd  
Date: 95-06-13 01:49:26 EDT  
Re: Shadow Elves

We're still waiting....

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-06-13 08:27:13 EDT  
Re: Re:Norse gods and Mystara

DMs ultimately have the last word on that issue! If Immortals aren't desirable in other game worlds, then the PCs/NPCs just haven't heard about them -- OR -- it wouldn't matter how hard they tried to reach immortality, they would fail to get the Immortals attention.

If they are desirable elsewhere, then we get into a situation where Immortals and gods start competing on the same turf. That's up to you if you want this to happen. Could get interesting. Obviously, this means that gods would then mess with the MYSTARA(R) Setting as well. Are you really ready to open the Pandora's Box?

Bruce Heard

From: Silveras  
Date: 95-06-13 17:28:27 EDT  
Re: Re:Norse gods and Mystara

Personally, for my own campaign I have always assumed that there were really two types of divine entities: the Elder gods, who were there at the beginning and shaped all that is; and the Younger gods, who are ascended (former) mortals. The two types have an uneasy truce, since the Elder are marginally more powerful, but the Younger are more numerous.

One way to reconcile the dichotomy would be to use a consistent set of rules; either convert Immortals to AD&D deities and assume that they really are the same entities, or convert all AD&D deities to Immortals rules, and assume that they really are the same entities. The differences would result from the different understandings of the various mortals who worship them.

This is, of course, most important for Planescape users, where the question will \*really\* come to a head.

Just musing aloud....

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-06-13 18:11:51 EDT  
Re: Re: Of Gods & Immortals

Silveras -- your approach is certainly a valid one. If in truth the minor/younger gods draw their origins to mortal kind, and the greater/older gods are those who never have been mortals, well then yes, it would be possible to split gods among Immortals and deities. Likewise, some of the existing Immortals could be recast as true gods, considering how powerful they are. A single set of rules linking all these super(natural)-powers would be a plus. Perhaps something like that could come through the PLANESCAPE(R) Setting. This possibility hadn't escaped some of us here. Then again, there is the issue of the mysterious Old Ones...

Bruce Heard

From: Silveras  
Date: 95-06-13 20:52:32 EDT  
Re: Re: Of Gods & Immortals

TSR Bruce -

In my cosmology, I play with the question of multiple of "gods" with the same portfolio. Most pantheons have deities of sun, magic, fertility, etc. The question becomes, are they actually the same being taking different form to satisfy the expectations of worshippers from whom they draw power - or - are they \*different\* beings who are, in some ways, rivals?

Part of the fun comes in when you treat portions of the prime like Spelljammer spheres - if a different Power controls 'your' patron's portfolio in a geographic area, you must make some adjustment. So, if a world had both the Greek and the Norse mythoi present, some areas would be controlled by Zeus and others by Odin. The fun would start when a Priest of Odin "went South" and discovered Zeus. If they were truly the same entity, imagine the scene: the interloper priest senses something familiar about the strange altar, but finds the image of Zeus with two eyes completely wrong.

It gets better when you start adding the notion of avatars. Just how independent are they ? Could the one 'Lord of the gods' have avatars with consciousnesses separate enough that they went to war over followers on the same world ? If Zeus and Odin are merely separate avatars of some primal ruling god, how would they interact when they met ?

Just some fuel for the fire.....

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-06-13 23:02:14 EDT  
Re: Re: Of Gods & Immortals

Silveras --

Roar! Roar! The immortal fire rages on! :-)

>>So, if a world had both the Greek and the Norse mythoi present, some areas would be controlled by Zeus and others by Odin. The fun would start when a Priest of Odin "went South" and discovered Zeus. If they were truly the same entity, imagine the scene: the interloper priest senses something familiar about the strange altar, but finds the image of Zeus with two eyes completely wrong.<<

That's one way of handling it. I prefer thinking that Immortals really don't "control" anyone or any geographic area per se. In fact they kind of all compete for the same things: love & affection (just kidding) -- actually yes, "love & affection" being the faith of their mortal followers! ;-)

The Immortals that I am used to maintain multiple alter-egos -- the same Immortal being honored under separate identities in different places, with dissimilar rites and magical powers for priests and their followers. These alter-egos aren't separate "creatures". If they had to appear to their followers, they would remain mere reflections the same Immortal seen from different angles and with a different light. Immortals are obviously "smart" enough to be able to run multiple alter-egos simultaneously, communicate in the expected ways with their respective priests, etc. They would really be puppets with divine powers, but whose minds and thoughts remain linked to the Immortal.

It's clear the alter-egos wouldn't run into each other, unless the Immortal was plotting some bizarre scheme to mislead followers of a rival Immortal, fool other Immortals, or conveniently arrange an "alliance" among two groups of followers honoring different reflections of the same Immortal. This would explain why temples dedicated to such alter-egos would naturally find ways to

either ally or hate each other.

Bruce Heard

From: Kaviyd  
Date: 95-06-14 00:51:46 EDT  
Re: Re: Of Gods & Immortals

In the real world, the Romans identified the gods of other cultures with their gods, sometimes with bizarre results. For example, they identified the Germanic gods Odin/Woden and Thor with Mercury/Hermes and Jupiter/Jupiter, respectively. So which god gives orders to the other? Which one is father and which is son? Only the gods themselves know!

Also, the distinction of "true" gods from "ascended" gods is an interesting one. Since Immortals in a Mystara campaign can assume mortal identities, what is to stop the mysterious "Old Ones" from assuming immortal identities?

From: Kaviyd  
Date: 95-06-14 00:55:13 EDT  
Re: Gareth

BTW, when will we know the full scoop about the Immortal Gareth?

From: Ghostgames  
Date: 95-06-14 18:25:28 EDT  
Re: Re:Gareth

Kaviyd asked:

"BTW, when will we know the full scoop about the Immortal Gareth?"

The "Almanac" author's reply:

Why do you need to know the "full scoop?"

I've been purposefully keeping all mention of Gareth vague and actually had no intentions of ever revealing the "truth" about this new Immortal--or whatever he/she/it truly is! Sitara Rohini and Anand Brishnapur don't demand to know the "full scoop!" They accept Gareth as a matter of faith, without needing to know any more than that Gareth comes to them in their dreams, has shown them a path to follow and a goal to strive for, and has aided them numerous times in their quest to make the world a better place.

(If you're really dying to know what was going on in my head when I introduced Gareth, feel free to e-mail me. But be forewarned -- you may have to decide who/what Gareth is on your own!)

--Ann Dupuis

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-06-15 14:02:13 EDT  
Re: Switching Over to AD&D(R) Game

Forwarded message:  
Subject: Greyhawk  
Date: 95-06-15 13:26:24 EDT  
From: 76503.3465@CompuServe.COM (alex kanous)  
To: tsrjim@aol.com

I've been wondering for some time now, why did TSR make Mystara an AD&D campaign setting. It can't be because sales weren't high enough when it was a D&D setting. It was often quoted that the Gazeeters were the highest selling products ever. I would like to know what the reason was for this change. When it occurred, I almost stopped playing D&D for good and I still haven't bought a new TSR product since then.

Alex Kanous

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-06-15 14:39:16 EDT  
Re: Re:Switching Over

It had become clear several years ago that there was a need for TSR to streamline its product structure. The AD&D Game and its D&D Game counterpart were looked at very closely -- and this is what came out, more or less.

The original mission statement of the D&D(R) Game was to offer novice players a potential doorway to the AD&D(R) Game. Unfortunately, the D&D Game had become a tad too complex to properly handle that task, and showed some conversion problems too. In fact it provided a number of features that were more sophisticated than the AD&D Game. It had grown into a complete product line of its own, thus competing with the AD&D Game rather than supporting it. D&D Game players were satisfied enough with it that many did not feel the need to move on to the AD&D Game.

The decision was then made to replace the D&D Game with the simpler AD&D Introductory Game that would accomplish the task in an easier and cleaner fashion. As a result, the MYSTARA(R) Setting got caught in a crossfire. The option was to drop it entirely, or rewrite it for the AD&D Game. No hesitation here.

Unfortunately, the Mystara product carried a "beginners" connotation, and for the right or wrong reasons, it was then linked to the new Intro box... and its CD.

You know the rest.

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-06-15 22:35:14 EDT  
Re: Brave New Dragon

I've posted info about a cool dragon on the RED STEEL board. It can easily be used (just ignore the legacies descriptions and the info about cinnabryl). It still makes a fearsome foe to spice up any campaign. (Check New, New Pyre Pt. 1-3 postings, dated 06/15/95).

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-06-18 10:15:18 EDT  
Re: Beyond the RED STEEL(R) Setting

Hi folks -- one more question:

If TSR were to continue the development of the World of Mystara beyond the Savage Coast and the Know World, what direction would you prefer, and why?

Bruce Heard

From: JMunro8986  
Date: 95-06-18 19:28:55 EDT  
Re: Re:Beyond the RED STEEL(R) Setti

I'd like to see the area covered in the first 6 parts of the Voyage of the Princess Ark(Cestia,Aprryt,Vulture Peninsula,ect...)or central Brun developed.Also where did where did Mystara get its name from ?

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-06-18 20:35:31 EDT  
Re: Origins of "Mystara"

>>Also where did where did Mystara get its name from?<<

Mystara = Mystery Star

For years the planet on which the original "Known World" was developed had no name. Original creators of the D&D(R) Game's Know World had neglected that detail. It was only late in the 1980's that we gave it its final name. For the remainder of the AD&D(R) Game's world, Mystara truly is a mystery, wouldn't you think?

Bruce Heard

From: Kaviyd  
Date: 95-06-19 00:04:24 EDT  
Re: Re:Beyond the RED STEEL(R) Setti

Another possibility (tying in Mystara with the "Chronomancy" supplement) is to redo Blackmoor. Before TSR released material that contradicted this notion, I thought that the Known World was Oerth (the Greyhawk world) several thousand years in the future. Why? Oerth had a (current) region called Blackmoor; the Known World had vague memories of Blackmoor.

Subsequent material has invalidated not only that notion but much of the material in the Blackmoor modules (for example, I recall humanoids as random encounters, even though the Beastmen were not yet breeding true as orcs, ogres, etc.). In addition, that set of modules promised a climactic conclusion that never reached the market.

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-06-19 13:38:56 EDT  
Re: Glantrian Gourmets

While reading through the editor's present draft of Joshuan's Almanac (due late this year), I found a wonderful pearl. Thanks to Ann Dupuis and Liz Tornabene for their refreshing contribution to Glantrian cuisine!

"Our esteemed Editor, Joshuan, has requested that his correspondents send him recipes of dishes served in their homelands, particularly those dishes usually reserved for the most traditional and festive holidays. It is with great reluctance that I humbly bow to this, my duty, and offer the Haggis, traditionally served in Klantyre upon turning of the new year. I also wish to humbly apologize to the reader that I was not born in a land more thoughtful of the human palate.

#### The Haggis

Take a stomach bag and the heart, liver, and lights -- among the common folk of Klantyre, these last three items are quaintly called the "pluck" -- of a sheep, and thoroughly wash in cold water. Turn the stomach bag inside out, scald it, scrape it lightly with a knife, then soak it overnight in cold salt water.

In the morning, wash the pluck, making sure to leave the windpipe hanging over the side of the bowl to let out any, shall we say, impurities. Cover the offal with cold water, add a pinch of salt, bring the lot to a boil, then skim. Simmer the pluck for about two hours -- first making sure the kitchen is well ventilated, for the sent of simmering internal organs, at least in my home Principality, has been known to attract unwanted orcs that had been passing by.

While waiting for the pluck to simmer, the cook should chop two onions



coarsely and toast one pound of finely ground oatmeal. These will soon be stuffed into the Haggis and will help to cut its nasty taste.

Next, drain the pluck, making sure to cut away the windpipe and all gristle. Mince the heart and lights and half the liver, then add two handfuls of shredded suet, the chopped onions, and the toasted oatmeal. It may become necessary to add to this mixture some of the water in which the pluck was boiled in order to soften it and prevent it from turning prematurely to a type of concrete.

Keeping the rough surface of the stomach bag to the outside, fill it half full, then sew the opening shut with a trussing needle and a fine string. Prick the stomach bag several times with the trussing needle. My cook (who was hired by my esteemed Mater, and who no doubt regularly reports to Mater regarding my lifestyle here in Glantri) has told me in no uncertain terms that an exploded haggis is very difficult to remove from the sides of an oven -- I believe his exact words were "me laddie, it dries up lak cement, ye'll never scrape it awa' until the end o' the world shall burn it awa' with the fiery flame o' its apocalypse!"

Set the Haggis into a pan, cover it with water, and cook it for about three hours, adding water as necessary to keep the sausage covered.

A traditional vegetable accompaniment to the Haggis is mashed potatoes and mashed turnips, quaintly called "tatties 'n neeps."

A note for the brave soul about to try the Haggis for the first time: Rumor has it that Klantyre Spirits were developed primarily to give the hapless guest enough fortitude to face his host's Haggis upon the New Year holiday.

From: MoszBro  
Date: 95-06-20 18:22:01 EDT  
Re: Re:Beyond the RED STEEL(R) Setti

Tough choice. I've been playing OD&D since 1989 and have all but two of the original Gazetteers (Karamaikos and Alfheim). I love the whole world in general but there are two places that have constantly been talked about but not dug into: The arm of the Immortals and more importantly the Southern Continent. The Arm, just by the name, is a place of incredible power and I'd like to see what toys you could put in there. The SC is where the elves, Thyatians, and some other races come from. What's been happening down there? No one knows.

Oh, and if you put either into a box set, please label it as a Mystara setting unlike the Red Steel stuff you did.

From: MoszBro  
Date: 95-06-20 18:33:52 EDT  
Re: Questions, Answers, & Babbal

In Wrath of the Immortals, It mentions (somewhere) that some of the Immortals chose their names from other beings in other planes if I remeber correctly.

If the Immortals have the powers to move the Planes and such, wouldn't that mess with PLANESCAPE? (I don't have the setting, so I don't know how it would

work)

It seems that the next Boxed set for Mystara to come will be DAROKIN: Kingdom of Gold. True? If so, good. Darokin has always been my favorite Gazetteer setting.

Has TSR totally given up, on Basic D&D or should I should I stop dreaming now?

Hollow World: Is that gonna be AD&D also? Please no. Please no. (I'm a die-hard-I've-spent-too-darn-much-in-it-to-convert-now Basic D&Der)

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-06-22 14:27:20 EDT  
Re: Re:Beyond the RED STEEL(R) Set

>> I love the whole world in general but there are two places that have  
>> constantly been talked about but not dug into: The arm of the  
>> Immortals and more importantly the Southern Continent. The Arm,  
>> just by the name, is a place of incredible power and I'd like to see  
>> what toys you could put in there.

A part of the Arm of the Immortals was originally handled in the Known World Grimoire (DRAGON(R) Magazine), back around December 1993. It described two races, the flying-elves called the Ee'aar, and the Enduks, flying-minotaurs. The Arm was described as a place where flying creatures of all sorts thrived.

It would be easy to see a mad and ultra-powerful wizard conducting magical experiments to create new flying breeds of old creatures (flying-rakasta, -lupin, -lizardkin, -ogre, -wemic, bullette... No wait!)

The Arm is a place favored by some Immortals, thus its name. But why? We have an idea -- but we can't really reveal it quite yet. If our plans hold together, the Arm will be covered in the RED STEEL Setting. But don't let that stop you from posting ideas on this board!

The Southern Continent -- Davania -- is truly huge. It would be a major endeavor to cover it at some point. So far, we haven't finished exploring the main continent (Brun), on which both the Savage Coast and the Know World are located.

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-06-22 14:29:20 EDT  
Re: Re: Q&A & Babbal

MoszBro -- you might want to scroll through some of the earlier postings in both the Mystara & Red Steel folders (see the past couple of weeks). You'll find some of the answers you are looking for re. the D&D(R) Game & Immortals. :-)

Bruce Heard

From: Psihunter  
Date: 95-06-25 01:26:10 EDT  
Re: Beyond the RED STEEL(R) Setting

I'd like to see more on the Heldannic Lands. I still like the original areas better than the RED STEEL Savage Baronies. If possible I'd like to see both the settings get equal billing instead of concentrating on the RED STEEL setting.

\*\*\*>>> Larry <<<\*\*\*

From: MoszBro  
Date: 95-06-26 12:49:38 EDT  
Re: Re:CONTINUITY?!

Where can I find that Winged Minotaur stuff?

From: B1Bard  
Date: 95-06-26 13:26:56 EDT  
Re: Hey everybody (many ???s)

So... I've inally seen the new Glantri stuff...

tres cool, but please DITCH THE CDs!

they're annoying, non-helpful, and they jack the price up WAY too high. I'd almost be willing to pay NOT to have them in there. Or better yet but it on cassette - at least then we could tape over them.

I can't wait for the return of Castle Amber. It was always a fun module back when it was X2. I look forward to this one.  
By the way, will there ever be a return to the old module format with the soft cover that doubles as a map screen? Or will everything now be boxed? I know boxes are sturdier, but I've had a few of them break on me, and it was annoying.

When will the next seet of Mystara novels be out? I was sorely disappointed with the last ones, but I remain hopeful that I will see some good ones soon.

hope everyone's still gaming away!  
party on  
8)  
B1Bard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-06-26 13:34:02 EDT

Re: Winged Minotaurs

>>Where can I find that Winged Minotaur stuff?<<

Winged minotaurs were originally developed in the DRAGON(R) Magazine's version of the Savage Coast (see issue #200). Else, they will be included in upcoming RED STEEL(R) products. I'll see if I can upload some of the material re. winged minotaurs in the TSR Library.

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-06-26 13:45:56 EDT  
Re: Re: Many ???s

Castle Amber should be hitting the shelves anytime now. I believe this is the last of the CD projects for the MYSTARA(R) Setting. Its audio CD only provides boxed copy with sound effects for the major encounters. You won't hear "PCs" talking on that one. The adventure itself is pretty cool. Basically, it's a return to grand ole' Castle Amber. You'll have to discover the rest for yourself! :o)

Future products in that general category (adventures and other traditional accessories) should not require a box unless multiple loose components (other than CDs) are required. If things go as we are presently planning, there should more accessories in the style/format of the older D&D(R) Gazetteers and fewer boxes.

The next MYSTARA(R) Novel, Dragonking of Mystara, should reach general distribution sometime early August '95. The next set is then due to come sometime in 1996.

From: MMonagle  
Date: 95-06-26 20:26:37 EDT  
Re: Mystara's future

I would absolutely love the Mystara campaign to cover everything, everywhere. Of course that's a dream so I will be reasonable.

I find the idea of setting Mystara's focus on the Savage Coast to be an interesting one. That area of the world has always been interesting, especially after the Princess Ark series. Thus, I cautiously say "go for it", having the countries, people, and histories of this area revealed sounds like a good one.

However, I am skeptical that the Mystara campaign can support two centers of activity at the same time (it has already failed once as the Hollow World is all but in storage). So let me make one request: No matter how much you (TSR) cut back on the Mystara setting, please, please, please, always run the yearly almanac (with its focus on the Known World area). This will let us gamers

explore a whole new part to our world while we will still keep in touch with the goings on at our roots.

(continues with next post)

From: MMonagle  
Date: 95-06-26 20:44:08 EDT  
Re: Mystara's future (cont.)

I would like to make one more request: leave the old world out of the new one. What I am trying to say by this is that I do not like the "teleportation highway" idea. The Savage Coast has so much potential to be successful on its own. It has new and unique cultures (rakasta, lupins, etc.), villians (Herath), and a truely unique atmosphere (cinnabar and red steel). Let this area of the world develop on its own.

If you start bringing in Glantarians, Alphatians, Karameikans, Shadow Elves, etc., why not leave the focus on Mystara where those cultures are already alive and well? Don't transport them over deserts, seas, and thousands of leagues to a new setting. Let this one develop its own identity. I do think that a little interaction would be good (that's a natural development of culture) but not a lot. There already have been several side-references to the Minrothad Guilds having a trading route to Slagovich. Perhaps this would be a good way to introduce the almanac every year. A major Minrothadian convoy docks in Slagovich every December so transplanted Mystaran adventurers get to here news and rumors about what's going on back at home. Maybe Karameikos could send out an expedition to explore (just like the Princess Ark once did).

At any rate, a teleportation highway to the Savage Coast would cheapen it in my mind. The area would become a quick road-stop. You could pop-in, walk around, and pop-out. Make the Savage Coast more than that. Make it a mysterious place with its own background (like it is already). One where adventurers have to really travel to get there and then stay to take in its riches.

If you're going to make the Red Steel area a campaign setting, then do so. This is what I would like to see. Two successful campaigns on Mystara with a little interaction between them to allow a determined group of hearty adventurers see the world if they truely wish to do so.

From: MMonagle  
Date: 95-06-26 20:56:08 EDT  
Re: Elsewhere on Mystara...

If TSR is really considering going to yet another part of the Mystara world, PLEASE let it go northwest of Glantri. The campaign has already gone north (Norwold), east/northeast/southeast (Dawn of the Emperors), and west/southwest (Champions of Mystara and Red Steel).

We now have the prospect of crossing an ocean to go further south, another ocean to get further east, or we can climb the plateau in Glantri and see what's there. At present, the true Known World (or should I say the mapped

world) is like a big L or U that is hugging the continent of Brun. Let's fill in that U! It's so close and yet we still know hardly anything about it. I would love to find out.

From: Kaviyd  
Date: 95-06-26 22:34:28 EDT  
Re: Re:Elsewhere on Mystara...

Of course, one question that must be answered if you introduce the lands northwest of Glantri (an excellent idea, BTW) is why there has been so little interaction between that region and Glantri. Surely some of the inhabitants of the plateau must have come down to check out Glantri. It would be even easier for the Glantrian wizards to use their magic to reach to plateau. Why have we read nothing of this? Surely that plateau conceals a great mystery -- one so stupendous that a world war involving many of the Immortals did not uncover it.

From: Huma106796  
Date: 95-06-27 03:22:26 EDT  
Re: Re:Questionz

Enough with all the questions. If you have so many questions about Mystara read the books

Huma

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-06-27 08:41:30 EDT  
Re: Re:Questionz

Not everyone has all the books or all the answers. If anything, this is the right place for questions. :o)

Please keep asking! We'll do our best answering them.

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-06-27 13:34:48 EDT  
Re: Teleporting Highways

>>I would like to make one request: leave the old world out of the new one. What I am trying to say by this is that I do not like the "teleportation highway" idea.<<

Anyone else has that feeling?

As a note -- teleportation could only remain available to those who know about it or those who can afford it. This makes it easy to manage unwanted connections.

There is so much magic in Mystara that information can travel very easily. You KNOW that all well informed powers in the Know World and beyond would be aware of the strange curse affecting the Savage Coast. It only makes sense that they would have some connection to it, either through ambassadors, traders, spies, and "official" explorers just to learn more. Anything mysterious is bound to attract attention and suggest there might be wealth there to be made. Likewise, secrets might be unveiled (magic ones as well) which might translate into more power to those who acquire them. This info should obviously leak to adventurers. If wizards have the power to build such devices as teleporters, they might just as well use them. To assume everyone will stay in his/her corner of the world is also to ignore the very human character that led to the discovery of the Americas in the real world.

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-06-27 13:39:19 EDT  
Re: Re:Elsewhere on Mystara...

>>BTW, why has there been so little interaction between [the northwest of Brun] and Glantri?<<

I guess the answer can fit into the "retroactive world design" category! There is so much designers can invent all at once and still do a good job. The original Known World had been created for the Basic D&D(R) Game. Very little had been considered at that time. When the Gazetteers came about, the huge task of detailing all the existing nations built up very quickly. Little time was left to even think about the far regions of the northwest. The original Glantri Gazetteer portrayed that region as a vast, mostly uninhabited wasteland. Figure various barbarian tribes live there -- a minor concern for Glantri.

If a development of the World of Mystara were to take place up there, it would have to be at some reasonable distance away from the Know World region. This would help explain why there hasn't been much interaction between some developed civilization and Glantri (too far away, too many barbarians in the way, etc). The climate also becomes a problem. Much higher north from Glantri, the climate could get very cold, preventing substantial development.

Why didn't the Glantrians set up teleportation devices to the plateaux? Maybe some did. It was never talked about because there were other important issues to deal with at the time. It may also be wise not to cover too much too soon either. Isn't it better anyway to concentrate on a limited area and do a great job with it, rather than developing a huge region and do a lousy job as a result? This could also prevent some great new idea from being introduced to the game world at a later time. Finally, it seems to me that discovering an unknown, and potentially scary neighbor is better than trying to introduce everything all at once. It's like revealing the plot to someone who's about to

reach the end of a novel.

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-06-27 13:41:12 EDT  
Re: Options...

So far, we seem to have a vote for ancient Blackmoor, one for Skothar/Tangor, one for Davania, one for some further development of the Arm of the Immortals, and a couple more for northwest Brun more or less.

Any more options? Here are some possibilities.

- 1) North on Brun
- 2) South to Davania
- 3) West to eastern Skothar
- 4) East to western Skothar
- 5) Down into the underworld
- 6) WAY-down into the Hollow World
- 7) Up into the wild, blue yonder
- 8) WAY-up into outer space (the moons & beyond)
- 9) Into the past (Blackmoor)
- 10) Into the future (?)
- 11) The planes connection with the PLANESCAPE(TM) Setting
- 12) Any bright, new ideas!?:o)

Bruce Heard

From: MMonagle  
Date: 95-06-27 16:08:33 EDT  
Re: New Products

I have been hearing about some new Mystara products that I didn't read about in the 1995 TSR catalog.

Let me first of all state that which I do know is listed in the catalog:

July: Mark of Amber (Glantrian CD adventure)  
Dragonking of Mystara (book)  
Nov: Dark Knight of Karameikos (book)  
Dec: Joshuan's Almanac  
Red Steel: Campaign Themes

The first new product I heard of was here. What is the story about a boxed set for Darokin: Kingdom of Gold? I like the idea of getting more on this country if it's true.

I have also read about a product due out in September called: Mighty Argos Audio CD. It is advertised as being for Mystara with a price of \$18.00 and



product #2515. I haven't seen it anywhere else though, not in the 1995 TSR product release catalog or on this area of AOL for TSR. (I did check the online catalog).

There is a description for this product too that I will put in a post following this one.

My main question is: Are these products really coming out? If so, why weren't they listed in the to-be-released catalog? Not that I'm complaining mind you, I'm just curious.

From: MMonagle  
Date: 95-06-27 16:14:02 EDT  
Re: Mighty Argos Description

Mighty Argos Audio CD

A CD Adventure! Great Mystara adventure pitting heroes against Argosyl's forces combined with the "sounds" of the surroundings, foes and battle, etc. In the eastern reaches of Karamaikos lies the savage forest of Dymrak, home of goblins and other fierce humanoids. Here too lurks Argosyl, the great green dragon. Striking from the shadows, he is the secret lord of Dymrak Forest, and the master of trickery and stealth. This audio CD adventure pits heroes against Argosyl's forces and features a thrilling expose on the dragons of Mystara. Comes with a 64-page booklet, a poster map, 8 sheets, and an audio CD in jewelcase.

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-06-27 18:22:32 EDT  
Re: Re:New Products

...and curious you should be! :o)

Unfortunately, plans for Darokin and Mighty Argos have been shelved, which explains why they weren't listed in the '95 catalog. On the other hand, a new Darokin treatment would no longer require the audio CD. This should make some of you happy.

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-06-27 18:27:08 EDT  
Re: Shadow Elves

Just took a trip to the Download of the Month and saw the Shadow Elves DM's book was finally available there. Have fun guys!

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-06-27 20:10:40 EDT  
Re: More Questions

Here's something TSR JIM fished out of the Internet and forwarded us:

Subject: Mystara Questions for TSRJIM  
From: Bruce Pierpont <pierpont>  
Date: 23 Jun 1995 13:14:34 GMT  
Message-ID: <3seenq\$51k@linus.mitre.org>

Actually anyone can answer these if they can, but I'd prefer an official response.

1) In the Mystara MC appendix it says that Golds are the only metallics on Mystara. Same as in OD&D, and since I've run Mystara that way since OD&D I kept this ruling. But in the Glantri Boxed Set it mentions Silver and Bronze dragons living in the mountains to the north. Is this an error? Do other metallics really exist? Or have the Glantrians been misinformed (they're really gem dragons, mystaran drakes, etc.)?

2) In the Karameikos Boxed set it mentions a Nosferatu on the encounter tables and says this creature is in the Mystara MC appendix. Its not. Is there such a creature? If so where can I find its stats? Or was some one just playing too much Vampire and its supposed to refer to another creature?

3) I heard a rumor Mystara was being dropped? Is it true? Why?

4) Any hints as to upcoming material? Assuming (3) is not true. I'd love to see a reprint of the old Mystic class into AD&D2. And specialty priests for the Immortals, the old Wrath of the Immortals boxed set described the Immortals themselves and listed one granted power for each type of cleric, but I'd love to see a list of spheres for each Immortal as well as granted powers.

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-06-27 20:49:38 EDT  
Re: Murphy the Gremlin

1) About Metallic Dragons: the MYSTARA(R) Setting only has gold dragons (no silvers or bronzes as of yet). The quote in GLANTRI(TM) Kingdom of Adventure is a glitch. Mystaran drakes or gem dragons mistaken for the silvers or bronzes are a good suggestion.

2) About Nosferatus: the original D&D(R) Game Karameikos Gazetteer did mention the existence of the nosferatu, a vampire variant that doesn't drain levels (it only drinks blood). The nosferatu retains the class, level, and ability of the former living character. It can also survive direct sunlight.

Mr. Feratu is a very handy version of the traditional vampire which DMs can more easily be fit as a long-lasting villain into an on-going campaign. It

should have been included in the MC (it is guaranteed to show up again in the RED STEEL(R) Setting's Eastern City States).

We'll post an updated AD&D(R) Game version of the nosferatu ASAP in AOL's Downloads of the Month. If you've never played in this setting, just assume these are normal vampires, else... well you probably already have the stats from the earlier version. Sorry for the glitches (I did tell Jim not to bring that cage of gremlins at work!) :o)

3) Kown World material is on hiatus for the moment, since we're focusing on the Savage Coast region, further west.

4) The original D&D Game's Mystic class was replaced with the closest AD&D Game equivalent (fighting monk) for the sake of simplicity. Anyone having a problem with that?

Immortals may eventually receive a complete treatment for use with the AD&D Game. It's too early to say at this point how the issue of specialty priest powers will be handled (as well as that of their followers). No doubt the list of corresponding spheres would be part of a new treatment. This, actually could easily be posted in AOL's Download of the Month. Anyone interested?

Bruce Heard

From: Kaviyd  
Date: 95-06-28 02:13:55 EDT  
Re: Re:Murphy the Gremlin

>>4) The original D&D Game's Mystic class was replaced with the closest AD&D Game equivalent (fighting monk) for the sake of simplicity. Anyone having a problem with that?<<

Yes! I suspect that very few of us are satisfied with the "Fighting Monk" as a substitute for the D&D Mystic or the AD&D Monk. An updated version of the Monk/Mystic would be highly desirable.

From: Kaviyd  
Date: 95-06-28 02:21:52 EDT  
Re: Polling

It is generally considered bad form to post a message saying no more than "I agree with <whoever>", so the fact that only one person posted a particular idea about how Mystara should develop is not particularly meaningful.

What you may want to do is set up a screen name for the sole purpose of accepting answers to polls. Then, we could send e-mail to that address giving our "votes" and you would have a more accurate idea of how popular certain ideas are.

Personally, I think Mystara has become a victim of its own creative success.

When Bruce Heard asked the question of "should we develop Mystara in.... (12+ options given)....", my answer is "Yes!" Whether you provide totally new information or give new insights into areas that we thought we knew, I eagerly anticipate the next development. Just make sure that others give that setting the same respect that you have and not treat it as a "beginner's setting" from which "mature" players will eventually graduate. To me, Mystara is in many ways the most "mature" of TSR's game worlds.

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-06-28 08:29:19 EDT  
Re: Fighting Monk

Of course you're not satisfied. Why am I asking? <GRIN>  
Okay, we'll toss that one on the pile. Someday we'll have an update for the D&D(R) Game's Mystic, rewritten a la AD&D(R) Game style. HaYAH!

BTW -- I keep reading about OD&D in people's posts. What does the "O" stand for???

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-06-28 08:41:21 EDT  
Re: Re:Polling

E-Mailing me directly for polling purposes is OK. I'll send flares through this message board if it gets out of hand of when I need to end a poll and start another. I suspect this may be a slow process, but you're welcome.

On the other hand, posting personal views on this message board is highly desirable too. It certainly provides TSR with insights as to how you feel, with logical reasons to do or not to do something, and with at very least, some potentially excellent ideas. So please, feel free to do both.

And I certainly agree with you, Kavyid, that the MYSTARA(R) Setting presents many mature features, despite generally light-hearted overtones. Well at least the RED STEEL(R) Setting is/will remain a campaign for experienced players with higher level characters than average. Because of their tone and the style, Savage Coast adventures are probably suitable for a generally mature audience.

Bruce Heard

From: Gnomeboy  
Date: 95-06-28 13:46:12 EDT  
Re: Immortals

Where can I find information on immortals and the special benefits that come as a cleric that worships one?

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-06-28 16:24:41 EDT  
Re: Re:Immortals

Info on Immortals & special cleric powers is given in the Wrath of the Immortals boxed set (1992 D&D(R) Game release). If you can't find it at your usual hobby shop, please try TSR's Mail Order Hobby Shop. I think you can also order directly from AOL). :o)

Bruce Heard

From: Silveras  
Date: 95-06-28 18:00:48 EDT  
Re: Re:OD&D

Well, I don't use it myself, but I'd guess you could consider the O in OD&D to be either 'Original' or 'Old'; I lean toward the 'Original' myself.

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-06-28 18:23:44 EDT  
Re: Re:OD&D

Oh, yes -- of course.... DUH! :o)

(Thanks!)

From: Gnomeboy  
Date: 95-06-28 23:34:06 EDT  
Re: Re:Immortals

Thanks you very much. Is there any of it online or going to uploaded? Thanks again.

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-06-29 08:37:52 EDT  
Re: Re:Immortals

>>Is there any of [Immortal info] online or going to uploaded?<<

Not presently, although we might be able to upload the list of Immortals and their related spheres of influence.

Bruce Heard

From: MMonagle  
Date: 95-06-29 21:27:20 EDT  
Re: Clarification needed

I guess I'm still a little confused by all of the Mystaran campaign getting canceled. As I understand it, Mystara is NOT getting canceled; the focus is simply getting shifted to the Red Steel campaign. If this is so, does this mean that the Mystara area (formerly the Known World) will not have any products for it next year? (That's in zero, nil, nada?)

From: MMonagle  
Date: 95-06-29 21:38:41 EDT  
Re: Teleportation highways

I would like to clarify a statement I made earlier. I cast a vote against the teleportation highway. I did this because I believe that it will bring major involvement of Mystaran countries into the Red Steel area. Why is this bad? Let me try to explain this by referring back to two episodes of the Princess Ark when she traveled this area.

The first was when Prince Haldemar impersonated the Heldannic envoy. This seemed to be just what I was thinking of for interaction between the two worlds. The Heldannic Order sent over their people to plan and plot with Hule. They did it the hard way (by airship) and they negotiated as equals.

The second was the incident in the Kingdom of Eusdria. This surprised me. The Heldannic Order (which Haldemar had referred to as a second rate clerical order (or words to that effect)) had (has) a major presence in this country. If this were to happen to more countries in the Savage Coast, I feel that some of its flavor would be lost.

I feel that this is what a teleportation highway would do. It would allow foreign powers to export sizable quantities of men and material to this area. Before long, they could be pulling the strings.

I do think that some interaction would be good, even healthy for Mystara; just don't over do it.

Finally, I would like to say that I am by no means criticizing the Princess Ark series. I loved it more than any other set of articles that Dragon Magazine has run.

Mike

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-06-30 09:55:52 EDT  
Re: Re:Clarification needed

You're right, there won't be any products for the Know World in 1996 other than novels.

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-06-30 10:17:53 EDT  
Re: Re:Teleportation highways

Ok, you're right on the issue that bringing masses of men and materiel from the Known World into the Savage Coast would be a mistake that would damage the setting's uniqueness. On the other hand, it never was our intention to do this. If you read my posts, you'll see that I mentioned people like ambassadors, spies, adventurers, and traders -- not armies.

Teleporting an army would come at a prohibitive price. An army sailing this far away is likely to end up like the Spanish Armada or become the victim of disease and exhaustion. Besides, no sane nation on the way would allow the invasion force to land (it may wreck the local economy as it forages for food, or simply take the country over by force). The coastal terrain separating the Known World from the Savage Coast isn't exactly idyllic either (desert or jungle). The attrition such an army would face could be devastating.

Flying contraptions could help, but the only nation that would have enough airships, Alphatia, is now down under, in the Hollow World. Not much of a risk here.

As far as the Heldannic Knights are concerned, the best they could ever achieve is the acquisition of a few fortresses spread out along the Savage Coast (much like the Teutonic Knights or the Templars) through diplomatic channels or through simple purchase deals. They could then spend their time fostering agitation from these bridgeheads. But my guess is they would remain a bunch of bad guys, limited in number, and easily defeated if a nation really decided to get on their case (basically fun targets for PCs to pounce on).

Finally, the locals have enough armies to defeat whatever might get through in the way of an invasion force. The fleets defending the Eastern City States, Texeiras, and Vilaverde would probably be more than match to an invasion fleet that managed to round the Serpent Peninsula. Besides, as a DM, you can easily prevent such events from ever taking place. Remember, you might be an Old One yourself! :o)

Bruce Heard

From: Wolfbane13  
Date: 95-07-01 00:05:33 EDT  
Re: Re:Teleportation highways

AD&D Bruce,

True Alphatia has been mystically transported to Hollow World. But, many Alphatian wizards are now in Karamaikos. Why couldn't they help in the production of flying ships?

\*\*\*>>> Larry <<<\*\*\*

From: Galwylin  
Date: 95-07-01 15:43:52 EDT  
Re: Re:Clarification needed

Welp, I've read all the messages in this folder...

Mystara has been a favorite of mine for many years. What I can't understand is why TSR simply doesn't provide the Known World in AD&D format instead of focusing on Red Steel. Granted RS is new and exciting but you've given us only two areas of the Known World and that's why we buy Mystara products.. for the Known World. And to have it supported like the FR would be a dream. Face your mistakes TSR. We're a forgiving folk if you'll treat us like intelligent consumers and not pigs your carrying to market... and stop turning your backs on us.

I've got all the Gazeteers and have enjoyed reading them as much as playing in them. Now I find out no new Mystara products for '96 except RS. Perhaps we should all just try to find the original Gazeteers and let TSR publish what they like while we expand and enhance the jewels that are now out of print.

Just my opinion ;/

Galwylin

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-01 23:13:01 EDT  
Re: Re:Teleportation highways

>>(...) many Alphatian wizards are now in Karameikos. Why couldn't they help in the production of flying ships?<<

My guess is that the cost to produce and maintain flying ships may wreck the local economy. At the very least, the expense might be far more than what King Stephan would want to spend anyway. A flying ship is of course a valuable convenience and a symbol of great prestige, but building highways and bridges, feeding the poor, maintaining armies, buying off nobles, etc, may be far more valuable to a ruler. Skyships fitted for the transportation or the entertainment of the utterly wealthy and idle remain a superfluous luxury that only great wizard empire would want to afford.

A simple kingdom might simply find skyships embarrassing as the natives find them somewhat ludicrous. Worse, neighboring realms would perhaps become suspicious about their potential military use. Flying ships ruling the skies exist as a threatening symbol of military might an imperialist power might use to intimidate a weaker realm.

Finally, Alphatian wizards may hesitate to reveal so much of their know-how to these Karameikan provincial "upstarts", especially if these wizards happened



to know that their legitimate empire survived in the Hollow World. Just a few thoughts.

Bruce Heard

From: MMonagle  
Date: 95-07-02 00:36:21 EDT  
Re: In truth...

Let's be honest then, Mystara is actually getting canceled. The Red Steel campaign will simply live on. (In hindsight, is that why the Red Steel campaign was given a different name? Was there already talk of dropping Mystara at the time so someone came up with the idea to continue the products for this area of the world under a different campaign name? I've been wondering why the Red Steel products were never listed under the Mystara campaign...it makes a little more sense now.)

From: MMonagle  
Date: 95-07-02 00:39:48 EDT  
Re: Post manuscript please

Since the 'Might Argos CD adventure' is not going to see the light of day on a printing press, would it be at all possible to have its manuscript posted to AOL; sort of like what TSR did with the Ivid sourcebook for Greyhawk. If so, would it also be possible to somehow get any maps for it posted as well? I would truly love it if such a thing could be done.

Also, how about the same for the Darokin, Kingdom of Gold boxed set?

From: MMonagle  
Date: 95-07-02 00:52:32 EDT  
Re: Major Map Debacle

I have been a long-timer gamer for the Mystaran world. I started off with the OD&D set and used the map found in module X1 as a guide to the Known World. That map has been used (either as a whole or in clips) in other modules; like X3, X10, X11.

So you can imagine my surprise (and shock, brief amusement, and then dismay) when I went out and purchased the Wrath of the Immortals. It contains a map of this area of the world as well. However, when I took a close look at it, I began to notice some problems with it. I hope that these problems can somehow be addressed.

One was with the borders for Karameikos...they were wrong! Either they traded land (two hexes worth) with Thyatis and let Ylaruam annex some... or someone goofed.

Other mistakes were with the Atruaghin/Darokin border, the Vestland/Heldannic border, Rockhome/Darokin border, and more.

Also, the borders for Aengmor are different than those of the former elven

kingdom of Alfheim. At first, I thought that maybe the Shadow Elves had gotten there magic on the trees to expand outward beyond the old elven border limits. However, with all of the other mistakes that I noticed, I now believe that it is simply incorrect as well.

(continued next post)

From: MMonagle  
Date: 95-07-02 01:09:31 EDT  
Re: Major Map Debacle II

Unfortunately, TSR choose to use this same map again when it published the Karameikos boxed set. So this means that anyone starting with these two products would think that the world does conform to these borders. (Again) as a long time gamer of this campaign, such a thought makes me want to rip my hair out. I can't believe that I would have been using the wrong map for nearly 13 years.

I believe that someone can come up with a simple explanation for all of these discrepancies by saying: a bunch of border wars broke out that were too brief to mention. I would like to present two reasons why I would not like this kind of an explanation.

1) I think that it would be a cheap cover up for a mistake.

2) The other map produced in the Karameikos boxed set conforms almost identically with the one in the GAZ1 Karameikos Gazetteer. (This is the one that shows the layout of that country). Since the Gazetteer line modules had their maps based on the map in X1/X10, I would think that the identical borders of these two maps shows that the international boundaries have, in fact, NOT changed as dramatically as suggested by Wrath of the Immortals.

I realize that there may be no official way to correct for this oversight (as no further products are expected for this area of the world) but I would certainly rest easier knowing that it has been resolved in one way or another.

(How would you feel if the Rand/McNally released their yearly maps and you noticed that the latest edition now had the U.S. states boundaries in slightly different places?)

(Perhaps we could blame the problem on some disoriented Alphatians rediscovering the outer world and making mistakes as they went along.)

From: TSR Steve  
Date: 95-07-02 01:20:07 EDT  
Re: Re:Major Map Debacle II

Bruce is expert, of course, but I think the borders you're referring to changed in the wake of the Thyatian/Alphatian war. [Remember the Ylarii conflicts mentioned?]

Steve Miller  
TSR, Inc.  
(and long-time Known World fan/DM)

From: MMonagle  
Date: 95-07-02 01:33:54 EDT  
Re: Re:Major Map Debacle II

I do realize that a lot of conflicts did take place during these wars. However, for the ones that would have to have occurred to make the Wrath map accurate, then various allied nations would have to have fought some wars with each other.

I really can't imagine Karameikos and Thyatis getting involved in a border war that would involve a redrawn national border. Thyatis had a much bigger threat to worry about (Alphatia) and they actually asked Karameikos for assistance to fight her. (Not something you would want to do if you had just fought a minor war with them). Karameikos on the other hand, exported a lot of his troops to fight in Darokin.

As for the others, maybe Darokin would snatch some land from the Atruaghin Clans (the Tiger Clan rules that area and they're bad people). Perhaps Rockhome did war on Darokin (there is actually a bunch of trolls in the area they would have fought with and then annexed).

BUT, why was there no mention of these skirmishes. (A lack of publication space does not do this situation justice).

Plus, there are actually a lot of differences in the borders other than these.

(And before anyone mentions it, yes, I do realize that the impact of the great meteor did drastically change the Glantri/Darokin/Broken Lands border.)

From: Railian1  
Date: 95-07-02 02:43:05 EDT  
Re: Maps...maps...maps

Do you think that there's any way of uploading maps of the known world? You know, a map for Darokin, or Ethengar? And some of the islands south of Karameikos? I would love to be able to have maps available on my PC. Not large maps, just condensed versions of the different kingdoms? Just a thought.

~~J~~

From: Gnomeboy  
Date: 95-07-02 17:58:06 EDT  
Re: Re:Immortals

If you could upload it please, it would be very helpful. By the way Mark of

Amber is a good adventure, and i was wondering if there is going to be anything more on TheOld Ones?

Thanks

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-02 23:52:53 EDT  
Re: Re:In truth...

No. The MYSTARA(R) Setting is not truly dead. Its current status is "on hiatus" -- which means we may be able to continue it at some point. Obviously, there needs to be some thinking on how that can be done successfully.

As a matter of fact many of you gamers out there seem to ignore the reality of a gamer publisher's day to day business. You see, before we can sell anything to you, the gamer, we have to first convince all of our distributors to buy the product, and then later on, all of the retailers to do the same. That's an awful lot of different people. If any of these two major links decide they feel uncomfortable with a product, they aren't buying it, period. This means that product simply won't even reach the shelves, despite how much you and I would like to see that happen.

TSR does not control distribution in the industry, much less retail shops. Many more time than you might suspect, TSR stands between the proverbial rock and the hard place. TSR isn't always calling the shots, far from that! As matter of fact, this can be said of most game publishers out there. No distribution, no products. And believe me, distributors aren't gamers. They have a totally different point of view of what works for them and what doesn't. It often has little to do with whether you or I happen to like a particular setting. Unfortunate, but true. This aspect of the business sometimes is the reason why TSR has to make certain decisions. This is how important it is.

Conclusion -- if we can find a way to solve the MYSTARA Setting's current problems and change how distributors and retailers perceive them, then perhaps there is good hope for that setting. Time sometimes help. Different approaches sometimes help too (etc). Either way, we at TSR need to do a lot of thinking to get that product line to appeal to our business partners, and to you, our faithful supporters, and also to new customers who know nothing of that product. All these pieces form part of the final equation. If we can figure it out, then yes, the MYSTARA Setting will live on, else it'll be truly dead.

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Roger  
Date: 95-07-02 23:55:05 EDT  
Re: A Mystara Moment...

I've read the last month's worth of postings here. As the former creative director for the MYSTARA(R) campaign, I do want to point out that, regarding map errors, we did have some problems coordinating the masses of information that have grown up about the kingdoms of the Known World. The errors were irksome but we did our best to catch and correct as many as possible. In some

cases, we had two or three groups of designers and editors working on slightly overlapping projects (e.g., the GLANTRI(TM) boxed set and Joshuan's Alamanc), and I believe I could have tried harder to coordinate the information. I will cover my eyes and take the blame for that much, anyway.

If we can compile a list of the particular questionable areas, we can take some time to set the record straight here, at least. I'm not in a good position to do the errata coordination, but Bruce (hey, BRUUUUCE!) Heard might be able to talk with Karen Boomgarden and work something out there. And, hey, maybe we didn't goof up after all!

I saw a message earlier (posted 06-07) from Bruce about the hot desert of Ylaruam being right next to the nordic Jarldoms--but this has happened on two other TSR worlds, so I'd hesitate to call it "implausible" from a magic-world viewpoint. Look at the GREYHAWK(R) campaign's placement of the warmer-than-usual Dramidj Ocean in a northern latitude of the Flanaess (on the same line as the Ice/Snow/Frost Barbarians to the east), and the FORGOTTEN REALMS(R) campaign's placement of the Great Desert of the A-word next to the Great Glacier, just east of the Savage North. Looks like the gods like to mix their hot-and-cold landscapes fairly often. Mystara has nothing to worry about regarding "implausibility."

I am pleased as punch to see Ann Dupuis here, as she is brilliant, trustworthy, and just wonderful throughout. But I don't know anything about this Immortal Gareth business. Hmm.

The Blackmoor of the Flanaess and the Blackmoor of ancient Mystara actually developed (in real life) because Dave Arneson's campaign was called Blackmoor. I've generally thought that the GREYHAWK world's Blackmoor was colonized by plane-shifting or spelljamming Blackmoorians from Mystara, ages ago, then just deteriorated into a big cold swamp with ruins nobody wants to visit, not even luz. I'm still intrigued by the possibility of a BLACKMOOR(TM) campaign, redone and brought up to the land's final years, as a new AD&D(R) setting. It could be cool.

Note for Bruce: You mentioned putting some "Princess Ark" files here. I'd like to see the ones about Myoshima, the little invisible moon of Mystara, and the rakasta cultures that populate the moon. could you set all that up as a download, with information on rolling up Oriental-style rakasta as player characters. What does everyone else think? Wanna see Oriental rakasta PC info, table, charts, kits, etc. from Bruce? I sure would.

Oh, one last note: The MYSTARA setting is not dead. We've shifted the focus, but the world lives on. You never know what will appear next around here. Stay tuned....

Roger Moore, TSR, Inc. (writing from home)

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-03 00:06:14 EDT

Re: Re:In truth, Pt 2

>> Was there already talk of dropping Mystara at the time someone came up with the idea to continue the products for this area of the world under a different campaign name? <<

No. I originally came up with the idea of creating the RED STEEL(R) Setting as a way to develop the lands west of the Known World. This was back in the early 1990's. There certainly wasn't a scheme to drop the MYSTARA(R) Setting in favor of the Savage Coast. We at TSR do not have a magical crystal ball to see into the future. Sometimes it is hard to predict how things will go. We just do our best to make sure we follow what we think is the best path.

Do you really believe that back then we knew what would happen in 1996???

Would you, today, be able to predict for sure what will happen on the hobby market in the year 2000? Hey, get real pal!

Either way, it took years for me to create the Savage Coast and get it published through the DRAGON(R) Magazine. If TSR had such a grip on the future, do you really believe that TSR's management would have wanted to take so long to develop a new setting, much less let little me get that stuff out there, all that at the whim of the magazine's ability to save some space for my column on a monthly basis? (See Know World Grimoire & Princess Ark). No crystal ball there either.

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-03 00:16:01 EDT  
Re: Re:In truth... Pt. 3

>> I've been wondering why the Red Steel products were never listed under the Mystara campaign. <<

There was some fear that labelling RED STEEL(R) products with the MYSTARA(R) Setting's logo would have created confusion among the "beginners" market to whom the new AD&D(R) Game's version of the Know World was directed. The two campaign settings came out the same year. This is why the Savage Coast ended up being a separate product line, a bit like the AL QADIM(TM) Setting wasn't clearly labelled with the FORGOTTEN REALMS(R) product logo (if I remember well).

Of course, if the MYSTARA Setting returned as a regular product line, I don't think there would be a reason why RED STEEL products couldn't then be marked as such. This does presume that the MYSTARA Setting would return as product that is no longer geared toward "beginners".

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-03 00:18:06 EDT  
Re: Re:Post manuscript please

Mighty Argos and Darokin were never written as a result of the decision not to publish them. Therefore, I regret to announce that manuscripts on either of these two titles are not available for AOL downloads.

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-03 00:36:23 EDT  
Re: Map Debacle... NOT!

It's quite possible that mistakes were made with borders. Perhaps they have to do with the conversion from 24-mile hexes to 8-mile hexes, or to 72-mile hexes (etc). The conversion is a difficult and time consuming process especially for people who've never done it before. Have you tried?

In general, these mistakes are trivial if not outright obscure. The question is "Do they really affect the game?" I suspect they don't. Then why lose sleep over them? Considering how many maps were published for the Known World, and their complexity, I doubt there would be a way to get them absolutely right every single time.

The maps published for the Known World have always been seen as some of the best in all available game worlds. They have received a lot of praise out there, and still do today. I think we did a pretty good job so far, despite the occasional glitches. (A debacle? I don't think so.)

There may have been change as a result of the clashes depicted in Wrath of the Immortals -- I don't remember off hand. Wrath of the Immortals was packed with info and there was no way of including more material on possible micro-clashes. If anything, you could consider these glitches adventure hooks. Come on, show some imagination!

No, we obviously aren't Rand McNally in that we don't depict true world nations. So whether a hex is missing here or there is probably not a world-shattering issue. I think you're comparing apples and oranges here. After all, we're only a role-playing game publisher! :o)

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-03 00:40:09 EDT  
Re: Re:Maps...maps...maps

>>Do you think that there's any way of uploading maps of the known world?<<

The color mapsheets are not scannable on a computer and they would require too much memory and time to download. The smaller B/W maps don't seem to be a problem otherwise. Is there one you are looking for in particular? Else we wouldn't create new maps for the sole purpose of making them available on AOL -- not at this moment anyway. Sorry.

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-03 00:41:38 EDT  
Re: Re:Immortals

Gnomeboy, you might want to scroll back to May posts. There was a lot of talk back then about Immortals and Old Ones.

Bruce Heard

From: Gnomeboy  
Date: 95-07-03 01:24:19 EDT  
Re: Re:Immortals

Just gonna say thanks again.

From: Gnomeboy  
Date: 95-07-03 02:02:50 EDT  
Re: Re: Immortals

I went back and read everything. I agree on your thoughts of Old Ones and Immortals. Are you actually in the dark about stuff like the Old Ones?

From: B1Bard  
Date: 95-07-03 02:36:08 EDT  
Re: Hey Bruce

It seems that everyone's been jumping on Bruce's case a lot lately. LEAVE HIM ALONE! Even I've been know to jump on TSR at regular intervals, but I try very hard not to attack the messenger, but it seems that some others aren't so kind.

Bruce is doing an outstanding job of feeding us Mystara junkies in a day and age when this is the only info we get. Without him we're cut off and that would truly suck. So don't get mad at him for TSR's policies or ideas, at least he's taking the time and effort to explain them.

Thanks Bruce, you've made a "world" of difference!

8)  
B1Bard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-03 08:15:00 EDT  
Re: Re: Hey Bruce



Thanks B1, I appreciate your looking out for me! Very kind of you. :o)

On the other hand, many of the questions asked on this board are legitimate ones. I guess I would also be tempted to ask such questions if I were in your shoes. Hope I was able to shed some light on what had been going on here.

Bruce "Don't Shoot the Messenger" Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-03 08:19:29 EDT  
Re: Re: Old Ones

Info on the Old Ones had been left deliberately vague back when Frank Mentzer created the Immortals Set for the D&D(R) Game. We now have a range of possibilities for what we could do with the Old Ones. I guess no decision will be made until we really have to. Old Ones aren't exactly an omnipresent concern -- they rarely affect the game or the campaign setting. For now then, Old Ones are left up to any DM's imagination.

Bruce Heard

From: MMonagle  
Date: 95-07-03 11:58:39 EDT  
Re: Messenger killer

I would like to take a moment and say a very heartfelt THANKYOU to Bruce Heard. Bruce, you have done a wonderful job at stimulating interest in the Mystara setting and have added a multitude of wonderful cultures, campaign hooks, and characters to this world.

The Princess Ark/Known World Grimore articles in Dragon magazine were fantastic. As a player of this world, I had people ask me about it because they saw your articles and became interested. I ended up DMing a 2nd campaign because of it. I can also remember how my heart sank when I saw each article come to a close. It was wonderful to get each issue and read about new places and happenings in other parts of that world.

I do appreciate all of the time that you (Bruce) put into that series of articles and I imagine that you have put a lot of time into your postings on this and the Red Steel board. It is great to see that makers of AD&D are willing to rub elbows with us and read our reviews, hopes, and suggestions.

I have posted some complaints but I feel that they were legitimate (the maps for the known world were consistent until the Wrath box). Is this not what the point of this Message board is for? Questions, complaints, and solutions? I certainly hope so because I have truly enjoyed getting responses from Bruce and others on what I post.

Mike

From: MMonagle  
Date: 95-07-03 12:09:22 EDT  
Re: Crystal Balls

to TSR Bruce: I did not mean to suggest that you were using a crystal ball back in 1990. Back then, I had felt that the Princess Ark articles were being printed solely with the Mystara campaign setting in mind. Red Steel did not get released until the last year. At this time, it may have been possible to see that the Mystara campaign was having a little difficulty and perhaps would come under scrutiny. Beginning a second campaign on this world may have been a way to ensure that material on Mystara would continue (it would be hard to kill two at once I should hope).

As for Mystara, I guess that reports of its death were greatly exaggerated. I hope that whatever problems were encountered with it are overcome and we can see new material some day. In the meantime, I have enjoyed the releases for the Red Steel campaign and am looking forward to many more.

Mike

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-03 12:32:38 EDT  
Re: Re:Crystal Balls

>> Red Steel did not get released until the last year. At this time, it may have been possible to see that the Mystara campaign was having a little difficulty and perhaps would come under scrutiny. <<

There was no real way of knowing how well the release of the new AD&D(R) game's version of the MYSTARA(R) Setting would do. It takes literally an entire year if not more from the moment we begin making decisions about launching a major new campaign world and the day it actually hits the shelves. By the time a major project reaches the customer, it usually is too late to make major changes to that project.

Whether it was or wasn't possible to foresee one thing or other is already water under the bridge at this point. Perhaps it is time to turn around and look forward to what else we can do. The RED STEEL(R) Setting is one of several possible alternatives. We could otherwise keep belaboring that point until blue in the face, but I don't think that would really help much.

Bruce Heard

From: Kaviyd  
Date: 95-07-03 22:01:49 EDT  
Re: Reviving Mystara

It appears that "Mystara" as a product line is a failure. Fine. Let's accept that. However, renaming it once again should not be out of the question. For

years I played in the "Known World" with no idea that it would eventually be renamed Mystara. It should not be too much of a problem to put out a new product line called "the Known World", "Darokin" (after the most centrally located nation in the Known World), or whatever else sounds good. You need not pretend to be introducing a new setting, but the change of name would indicate a shift in emphasis (from beginners to more mature players).

However, the world itself should be considered a success, as "Red Steel" seems to be doing well and Bruce Heard's D&D columns ("Princess Ark" and "Known World Grimoire") were among the best material in that magazine. I still keep the magazines containing those columns in a special pile, and I am eagerly looking forward to a new series on Mystara/the Known World.

Finally, rather than setting aside certain worlds for beginners, why not designate certain regions of each world as areas for beginners? In every world there is generally some isolated area that has little contact with the rest of the world. Magical forces keep the most powerful monsters and adventurers out and keep things nice and orderly for younger folks. Any adventurer who reaches tenth level or so is magically ejected from that region, never to return. Note that only a small proportion of adventurers would begin their careers in such areas; most would start out in more "normal" regions. Would an idea like this possibly work?

From: Silveras  
Date: 95-07-04 01:00:07 EDT  
Re: Re:Reviving Mystara

A few thoughts....

"It appears that "Mystara" as a product line is a failure. Fine. Let's accept that. However, renaming it once again should not be out of the question."

I'd advocate "The UnKnown World", with an emphasis on exploring new areas. New players could then "expand" from the presently published "Beginner" settings into more advanced areas (a la the old shift from Basic to Expert to Companion etc.).

"Finally, rather than setting aside certain worlds for beginners, why not designate certain regions of each world as areas for beginners? "

Karameikos serves this purpose admirably - as the most traditionally "European" setting, it is the most familiar for "western" players to start with and offers the broadest base for reference. Also, I like the idea of "neophytes" starting in the middle of a civilized land -- a strong realm with secure borders is less of a stretch for the beginner than a secluded valley with mystical wards.

Generally, while I recognize that "beginners" need a place to start. I think the biggest problem with the Mystara line was that it focused on the "beginners" to the exclusion of any growth. Remember, the original Basic rules

covered 1st-3rd level Characters only (and were rapidly outgrown); premising a whole line on beginners-remaining-beginners strikes me as foolish.

But these are just a few random thoughts....

From: Galwylin  
Date: 95-07-04 02:29:09 EDT  
Re: Re:Reviving Mystara

I hope my comments weren't taken as an attack on Bruce. He's given too much pleasure for me to ever do that.

My problem is with TSRs intended direction for Mystara. As others have said, Mystara using the D&D rules and supplements was more complex and diverse than AD&D. I just don't understand how anyone comes to the idea that you take something that complex with such a great foundation and make it for beginners without allowing it to grow beyond that.

When I first heard that Mystara would be for beginners till they \*matured\* into a more \*sophisticated\* world (Forgotten Realms(?), Ravenloft, Dark Sun, etc), it sounded to me like that \*cute\* idea they had for D&D with the Thunder Rift stuff. Apparently, we were just lucky that we were born able to play in a game that clearly tells us to change the rules to make it more enjoyable. Now, TSR has decided to take on that role for us. Why am I not impressed? ;/

Galwylin

BTW, I love the Forgotten Realms but Mystara (I prefer the Known World) has always been my favorite.

A(nother)BTW.. any chance of having some of the early Known World Grimores upload. Not been able to find all those back issues ;)

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-04 17:52:35 EDT  
Re: Re:Reviving Mystara

Oh my! All these good ideas! :o)

>> However, renaming it once again should not be out of the question. For years I played in the "Known World" with no idea that it would eventually be renamed Mystara. It should not be too much of a problem to put out a new product line called "the Known World", "Darokin" (after the most centrally located nation in the Known World), or whatever else sounds good.<<

I wouldn't be surprised if something like that were involved. I doubt that TSR could market new MYSTARA(R) products under their latest AD&D(R) Game name and logo. Of course, a series of new products would have to show a clear shift in

direction, one that would appeal and make sense to all parts of the industry involved in our business. Because of the present perception of the MYSTARA products in the industry, a new series would have to work twice as hard as any other new game line to convince everyone that this one will be a winner again.

>>Finally, rather than setting aside certain worlds for beginners, why not designate certain regions of each world as areas for beginners?<<

Actually, this is how it was done in the original D&D(R) Game Gazetteers. We had tacitly designated the Karamaikos setting as the entry point for "beginners". More particularly, the little village of Threshold stood out as the obvious first step into the Know World. If we had a new series, I would certainly lobby heavily in favor of this approach because it worked.

There also are different perceived "levels of experience", depending on the region of the Know World -- Glantri and Aengmor would sit pretty high up on the list of the Tough & Mighty! Meanwhile, the Five Shires and Ierendi strike me as settings that can be made "easier" for rooky players, all the while keeping the game interesting.

>>Magical forces keep the most powerful monsters and adventurers out and keep things nice and orderly for younger folks. Any adventurer who reaches tenth level or so is magically ejected from that region, never to return.<<

Hey, that's interesting! It sounds like something Immortals would do to "groom" successful adventurers in following one of the paths to Immortality. It would be a way of "graduating" a good student from one realm (class) to the next toughest. Cute.

The problem is that rulers and major villains in "entry-level" kingdoms would be stuck at 9th level, else they'd also be unceremoniously dumped over the border. Of course, this does brighten the prospects for the heir next in line for the succession. Then again, an (un)fortunate encounter with a level-draining monster could really complicate everything, as the recently "level-drained" ex-King can now return home. ("Oh yes, claw me, bite me! Make me King again!") Sorry, I'm getting facetious! :o)

I think the emigration of upper-level characters from a quiet region to another more dangerous (and thus one offering more potential) can remain a natural process. It kinda happens with players and DMs who grow restless after a while being in the same place. Sometimes the emigration is deliberate (heroes seeking greater fame and fortune), sometimes it isn't (upon hearing some truly scary rumors, 15,000 peasants come after a powerful wizard -- there goes the neighborhood; time to go!)

Finally, if we implemented such a mechanism, I suspect we'd see many more posts from people adding little dollar signs to TSR's logo. Some gamers would probably complain about TSR's latest scheme to force them to buy more accessories so their characters can keep gaining new levels. Some people are never happy. On the other hand, now that you mention this... :o)

Bruce "Dollar-Bill" Heard

PS. Actually, French-Francs would be appropriate too. But that's okay, I do

take plastic!

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-04 18:04:58 EDT  
Re: Re:Reviving Mystara

>>Karamaikos serves this purpose [an entry-level setting] admirably - as the most traditionally "European" setting, it is the most familiar for "western" players to start with and offers the broadest base for reference. Also, I like the idea of "neophytes" starting in the middle of a civilized land -- a strong realm with secure borders is less of a stretch for the beginner than a secluded valley with mystical wards.<<

Absolutely. That's why Karamaikos had been originally chosen. I can't really see any other way of accomodating new players. There has to be a spot that's clearly identifiable as the entrance. Beginners, by definition, don't remain so for very long. They will need to move on.

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-04 18:15:55 EDT  
Re: Re: Galwylin

No, I'm not taking your comments personally. But I do have a question for you, however. What did you mean by:

>>Perhaps we should all just try to find the original Gazetteers and let TSR publish what they like while we expand and enhance the jewels that are now out of print.<< ???

Just being curious! :o)

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-04 18:19:20 EDT  
Re: Hey Roger!

Roger's getting married! Roger's getting married!

Quick, everyone, let's ALL E-Mail him our congratulations!

(No need to thank me, Roger!) Your pal,

Bruce :-D

From: Galwylin  
Date: 95-07-05 02:41:22 EDT  
Re: Re: Galwylin

Glad to answer the question, Bruce ;)

I was saying that the out-of-print Gazeteers are probably the best and most competent works that have been published for the Known World, er.. Mystara ;)

If TSR continues to try and \*determine\* who should play which setting then we should just convert the original works to AD&D (if desired). TSR has published enough about the converting (Rules Cyclopedia for one) that Mystara will live on in gaming groups of D&D and AD&D players.

I'd like to see more information about the different nations (and newer ones never covered in the northern part of Brun) and their current status but I don't like being talked to like I should grow out of the Known World soon. Like I said before, I believe the MYSTARA line was meant to get new gamers but for them to move on to other lines later. I love the Known World too much to ever want to leave if for FR or such.

Just the nation of Karameikos has such great history and background you'd never have to leave it. Just because you start in one world doesn't mean you should have to leave it because its been decide that it's for beginners only.

I agree with what someone said earlier.. you can never go broke underestimating your audience but role-playing is an entirely different horse ;)

Gal

From: Galwylin  
Date: 95-07-05 02:43:58 EDT  
Re: Re: Galwylin

Btw, Bruce...

I'd like to thank you for the great reading and enhancements you provide the Known World (suppliments, Dragon articles, etc) If you use all the great information for Mystara (D&D), I think AD&D would be the step you take before moving on to the REAL advanced system... D&D! ;D

Gal

From: Galwylin  
Date: 95-07-05 02:57:14 EDT  
Re: Re: Galwylin

Hmm.. seems I thought of something else ;x

I've heard alot of people using D&D rule suppliments for AD&D (Night Howlers for one). Doesn't that say something about the benefit D&D gave gamers and TSR? I'm not against Mystara going AD&D. It's a popular system and I like certain things about it (elves with classes) but I think D&D shouldn't have been dropped like it was. It was an easy system to learn (I still use it when gaming with never-played-a-role-playing-game gamers) and offers even more depth as the players become more comfortable with it.

Just a thought and the last one tonight ;D

Gal

From: Railian1  
Date: 95-07-05 05:11:50 EDT  
Re: Re:Maps...maps...maps

Any maps uploaded at all would be a great help. I want to know every crevice of Brun like I live there. Thanks again, Bruce.

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-05 13:57:26 EDT  
Re: Mystaran Nosferatu

The AD&D(R) Game's version of the Karameikos nosferatu should appear in the download of the month sometime this week. It will be a design draft (probably needs an editor to go through it someday) -- so before that happens, please feel free to E-Mail me with you comments about the conversion. Thanks.

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-05 14:12:43 EDT  
Re: Re: Galwylin

>>I'm not against Mystara going AD&D. It's a popular system and I like certain things about it (elves with classes) but I think D&D shouldn't have been dropped like it was. <<

Unfortunately, that's one of the cases where you either do it or don't. If the plan is to streamline TSR's fantasy product, and replace the D&D(R) Game with one that can better deal with the true beginner, then there is little point in supporting the D&D game. The MYSTARA(R) Setting's "transfer" to the AD&D(R) Game is a consequence of that decision, not the other way around. You may want to scroll back to my June 15 post in this folder about this decision to switch to the AD&D(R) Game.



Bruce Heard

From: Galwylin  
Date: 95-07-06 18:55:19 EDT  
Re: Re: Galwylin

Bruce..

Yes, I remember how Mystara was bumped up to AD&D because of the decision to drop D&D. The dropping of D&D was the bad decision... Mystara to AD&D was a great idea to me. AD&D was more supported and I thought Mystara would finally get the recognition it deserved. I just didn't like how Mystara was pushed as the \*beginner's\* world (though I purchased every Mystara product produced). Then when these beginner's didn't buy, Mystara is the loser and us, the lovers of the Known World. No more AD&D Mystara and now D&D is gone so it has no where to go ;/ Why couldn't they have presented the world as it was in D&D and let the gamers decide what would be a good beginner's world? I think that's where TSR kinda messed up I think.

The material presented in the Karameikos boxed set is almost the same as the Grand Duchy of Karameikos (update mainly but better art by far ;) The reason it didn't succeed was from the corporation decisions not the material. Least that's the way I see it.

Gal

Gee, I'm starting to feel special ;D

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-06 20:04:38 EDT  
Re: Re: Opinions

>>The material presented in the Karameikos boxed set is almost the same as the Grand Duchy of Karameikos (update mainly but better art by far ;) The reason it didn't succeed was from the corporation decisions not the material. Least that's the way I see it.<<

I don't think anybody will disagree with you, Galwylin. Thanks for the good word though! I do hope that someday the MYSTARA(R) Setting gets another chance, and if so that it would retain the new graphics used in the Karameikos box.

There was a lot of work that went into that box -- and the credit goes to the creative team (co-author J. Grubb, editor T. Reid, project manager A. Hayday who put humpty-dumpty together, and A. Allston whose original material made up a great part of the box), but also graphics contributors (Dee Barnett who came up with the page design, and Angie Lokotz who made the text work in it). It wasn't easy, but it sure looks good now! :o)

The color maps look a bit different from the original "wargame-style"

Gazetteer mapsheets. I'm curious to hear everyone's opinion on that issue. Any comments?

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-06 20:56:00 EDT  
Re: Re:Princess Ark/Grimoire

>> [...] any chance of having some of the early Known World Grimoires upload.  
Not been able to find all those back issues<<

Well, you can have it two ways. Either I upload the "original" stuff (unedited, 100% complete with Bruce's creative typos) which I proudly handed over to Roger years ago -- :o) -- or I manage to convince someone at DRAGON(R) Magazine to look for their files (backed up somewhere in TSR's mainframe -- in which case we need to promote that someone to Electronic Archaeologist). I've been agonizing between the two courses of action.

The earlier black & white maps won't be a problem to upload, but then I'm not sure what to do about the color maps that followed a year after beginning the series. These will be hard to scan. You might just have to buy your own copy of the RED STEEL(R) Campaign Set to get your hands on the maps <<BIG GRIN>>

Bruce Heard

From: Galwylin  
Date: 95-07-06 22:55:44 EDT  
Re: Re: Opinions

Maps...

I like em! ;) And thank you to who ever decided to put them on paper you can actually touch (thinks of FR 2nd Ed box set maps... sheesh)

Glad the hexes are not so prominent and cities, towns, etc look like cities, towns, etc. Though on the whole Known World map, didn't those rivers grow? ;>

Gal

From: Galwylin  
Date: 95-07-06 22:59:16 EDT  
Re: Re:Princess Ark/Grimoire

Bruce's creative typos??? Is there such a beast? ;D I'd appreciate either one... The Ark series was my favorite and that's the ones I'm missing the most of.

Gal

From: Galwylin  
Date: 95-07-06 23:01:15 EDT  
Re: Re: Opinions

Just remembered a great plus for the maps of Karameikos... the movement and encounter tables are on them too! Love not having to look in the books for every table I need ;)

Gal

From: ME OMealey  
Date: 95-07-06 23:53:26 EDT  
Re: Re: Death of Mystara

Woe is me!

Have been out of touch for a while as I've been in the process of completing a move from MS to VA. I just spent all evening reading (most of) the message posted here. I'm so sorry to hear that TSR has decided to put Mystara on hiatus, but I can clearly see why it is happening (from a business standpoint). I won't fan the flames by rehashing prior posts (others as well as my own) about scope, content, focus, or direction of the product. I am interested in the possibility of a "new" product line aimed at "experienced" players and DMs that further develops the old Known World. As a proud owner of every D&D Gazetteer, I'm more interested in new material than reprints on the existing nations. However, I do realize that TSR would feel the need to update and produce that material for players and DMs new to the setting, so I have an idea.

The all-new, revised, 2nd edition MYSTARA Campaign setting boxed set. This set includes maps; some loose-leaf play aids; and 2-3 big books containing a condensed history of Mystara, and brief, updated entries on many of the countries located in the Known World. This is the definitive resource that brings all of the Mystara setting up to date (1012 AC) and fully into the AD&D game system. New players will find everything they need to start adventuring in Mystara (even a mini-adventure to get 'em going) and old-timers like myself will buy it for the updates, maps, etc.

Following this would be new Gazetteers expanding on the info in the basic box for players new to the setting (and old-timers that want the revised AD&D stats, updated info, etc.) AS WELL as Expansion boxes/Gazeteers detailing the previously uncharted portions of Mystara (such as the Heldannic Freeholds, which have figured prominently in the "storylines" of the last several years, but which never got the Gazetteer treatment).

Emphasis here is on introducing Mystara as a full-fledged, fully supported campaign world that ALL level of players can adventure in. Adventure modules

could be released targeting the different segments. Beginner modules set in Karamaikos, a huge dungeon crawl set in the Darokin crater/Broken Lands, higher level adventures for more experienced players, strategic/tactical adventures for the kingdom builder set, etc. No need to target the entire campaign setting at a specific segment of the AD&D gamer market. It worked (and continues to work) for FR, why not Mystara?

And if the retailers/distributors have a problem with the Mystara name, change it. Us old-timers aren't particularly fond of the the current tag either. What we ARE fond of, and demand to see more of, is our favorite campaign world setting, whatever name it goes by. Don't worry, we'll recognize it when we see it.

From: MMonagle  
Date: 95-07-07 12:29:11 EDT  
Re: Re: Death of Mystara

What exactly was the hang-up with Mystara. Did its products have a hard time selling so dealers refused to continue to carry its products?

From: MoszBro  
Date: 95-07-07 15:40:52 EDT  
Re: Q&A&B

1) I agree with ME O (I think that's who said it), I think that the Mystara revamp should have been handled in a FR like manner: One boxed set with Gazetteer reprints/revisions.

2) Question: has the Intro to AD&D boxed set done any better than Basic D&D?

3) When did TSR say that Basic's function was to lure folks to AD&D and why did they let it get so "out of control" with the optional rules and such if it was "just an introduction?"

4) What the frag does it take to break into gaming?

5) Thank you for your support.

6) Congrats Rog... no... really....

From: Galwylin  
Date: 95-07-07 18:59:03 EDT  
Re: Re: Death of Mystara

That's exactly the kind of treatment I'd like to see for Mystara, ME! :)

WoG, FR, Ravenloft and Dark Sun becoming so popular using that format, why not try it for the Known World? Bruce, what do you think? ;)

Gal

From: Galwylin  
Date: 95-07-07 19:02:11 EDT  
Re: Re:Q&A&B

>> When did TSR say that Basic's function was to lure folks to AD&D and why did they let it get so "out of control" with the optional rules and such if it was "just an introduction?"<<

I don't think this was intended till the introduction of AD&D but TSR clearly wanted gamers to switch systems when AD&D found it's footing.

Gal

From: Kaviyd  
Date: 95-07-07 22:30:27 EDT  
Re: Nosferatu

A slightly sick thought occurred to me as I was reading the "Nosferatu" file -- a Nosferatu of lower or middle class origins would be well advised to work in a slaughterhouse (preferably alone). He would have more blood than he could drink, and his only risk of detection would be from the occasional visitor who notices that the place is a bit too clean....

From: Anodaewyn1  
Date: 95-07-08 08:45:05 EDT  
Re: I need your advice...

I have a group of PC's that,(hopefully), will adventure for many years to come. But I've been having an idea lately about a recurring NPC for that group. Now, I'm open for any and all suggestions, but I've been thinking, maybe a vampire, or a dragon. But do these seem to cliché? I'm not really to sure. I'd love to anyones advice on this. Thanks.

Love, luck and lollipops,  
~~J~~

From: Anodaewyn1  
Date: 95-07-08 08:56:36 EDT  
Re: ME OMealey's new product's

Someone at TSR needs to hire ME OMealey! I'm telling you right now, I'll buy everything that was listed in his post! I would just love to have all of that info. at my fingertips. The only down side to that box set, is that it would go for about \$50-60. But I would pay it in a heartbeat!

~~J~~

From: Anodaewyn1  
Date: 95-07-08 09:00:54 EDT  
Re: Re:ME OMealey's new product's

Dontcha hate it when it posts things twice?

~~j~~

From: Furyondy  
Date: 95-07-08 23:45:07 EDT  
Re: Re:I need your advice...

THE ONLY SOLUTION:

An altruistic Doppelganger with a vital interest in what the characters are doing/ striving for...

This monster could also explain why SOME of the "characters" have been acting funny lately.... hmmm.

From: Furyondy  
Date: 95-07-08 23:49:06 EDT  
Re: ME and Mystara

ME is correct. Sounds GREAT.

And the name Mystara?? Trash it. Nice try but too... hmm...Fluffy?  
And now that Greyhawk has reared its beautiful head -- WHY does ANY milieu need to be 'cancelled?' Just put it on hold with no further ventures pending... To 'cancel' it means No One Profits. -Mike

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-09 18:02:46 EDT  
Re: Re: New Map Styles

>>Though on the whole Known World map, didn't those rivers grow? <<

How do you mean? In terms of width?

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce

Date: 95-07-09 18:07:15 EDT  
Re: Re:CreativeTypos (Gal)

Yes, my typos can get quite creative (I heard some of my editors LOL occasionally!) English isn't my native language -- close, but not really. So once in a while I'll switch two words that kind of mean the same to me, often with interesting results (if unexpected) :o)

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-09 18:23:07 EDT  
Re: Re: Ideas (O'Mealey)

I think a lot of what you say would find its way in a new product line. It makes sense to me. I really like the idea of the super dungeon-crawl under the Great Crater or in Aengmor. This could be real cool.

A "kingdom-builder" makes sense for Mystara, since the old Companion Rules originally focused on this way before any other game worlds ever even paid attention to the concept. It couldn't be developed more at that time because after all the D&D(R) Game was supposed to remain relatively simple. I suspect, however, that this topic may cause some problems as it would cause the MYSTARA(R) Setting to compete directly with the BIRTHRIGHT(TM) Setting. The latter now addresses this subject very specifically (sigh).

The term "Mystara" certainly isn't holy. I doubt replacing it with something different to be an issue, all things considered. Feel free to come up with cool new names! :o)

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-09 18:33:30 EDT  
Re: Re: New Gamers (MoszBro)

>>What the frag does it take to break into gaming?<<

Well, if you're not involved with any game group and you have no idea how RPG's work, the learning process can be a real headache. In TSR's successive attempts at bringing in new gamers, it's become painfully obvious how tough the game really is (that's both the D&D(R) Game and the AD&D(R) Game).

Sure, it's easy to break someone into gaming -- WHEN A GROUP A OF PLAYERS HELP TEACH THE GAME. If not, it's a nightmare. Judging from the mail and the complaints we've received, there were a lot of people out there who just had no clue what was going on, and who eventually dropped the game altogether.

It's no secret that TSR's later attempts at intro games did a far better job at what they were supposed to do than the good old D&D(R) Game. Your game, with all of its bells & whistles, may seem easy like pie to you, but it's just not so with true rookies.

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-09 18:49:16 EDT  
Re: Re:Nosferatu (Kaviyd)

Drinking animal blood? That's not what Nosferatu really likes.

Human/humanoid blood is just so much more tasteful. Aaah, the joy of the hunt! Nothing compares to the lust and exhilaration of the bite, the sweetest of rewards as the prey surrenders at last to Nosferatu's superior will! The udead has the power of life and death in its hands. It chooses whether the prey lives on for another hunt, returns as a faithful servant, or dies forever.

Compared to this, a tied-up cow in a slaughterhouse seems so much of a letdown, even bestial. What a cowardly act! Nosferatu is so much more than this! Beside, wouldn't you agree that a charmed cow would be so embarrassing to Nosferatu if it somehow survived! "Wait for me, my beloved Master. Moo!" :o)

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-09 18:56:01 EDT  
Re: Re:Wog (Furyondy)

>>WHY does ANY milieu need to be 'cancelled?' Just put it on hold with no further ventures pending... To 'cancel' it means No One Profits.<<

You never know. Nothing is really dead until everyone stops speaking about it. We may yet find a way of getting that one back to the market in some fashion.

Bruce Heard

From: Lostboy103  
Date: 95-07-09 23:41:59 EDT  
Re: Re:Wog (Furyondy)

NOW \*THAT\* IS THE SPIRIT.

I hereby take back any derogatory remarks made about TSR's close mindedness !  
Thanks.

From: Lostboy103  
Date: 95-07-09 23:52:23 EDT  
Re: Re:Map Debacle... NOT!



Mr. Heard,

Now wait a minute. This issue raises the question of Quality. Back in the '70s and '80s, quality was slim but the information was rarely outright Wrong. I think the consumer (s) deserve more. I think we all know what happened i.e. someone goofed. Does that person(s) still work for TSR? If so, do they realize their mistake? Apples & Oranges, yes, to a point. But this particular instance was clearly avoidable. ACTUALLY, all I need is a "Won't happen again" from TSR. ===even if we all know it probably will :)

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-10 00:46:19 EDT  
Re: Re:Map Debacle... NOT!

>>Apples & Oranges, yes, to a point. But this particular instance was clearly avoidable. ACTUALLY, all I need is a "Won't happen again" from TSR. ===even if we all know it probably will.<<

Nothing is as "clearly avoidable" as you think. If it were, then mistakes would be avoided every time. (I'm still not sure which mistakes these are, but I disagree). Obviously the "won't happen again" comment can't be guaranteed. There are just too many people involved in the production of new accessories, maps included. To err is human... and we're all human. This doesn't mean we won't keep trying.

Bruce Heard

From: Galwylin  
Date: 95-07-10 00:49:39 EDT  
Re: Re: New Map Styles

>>How do you mean? In terms of width?<<

Yes but I only meant that as a joke ;>

Gal

From: B1Bard  
Date: 95-07-10 01:12:42 EDT  
Re: Advice & Proposals

Here's some advice I'd like to throw into the ring regarding Mystara. Some of this may seem like a bit of a rehash to the "old-timers" on this board, but I'll run it anyway.

1) Post Mystara info like all hell in every archive you can find. Someone

take a few hours a type in all of the tables from the margins of the Trail Maps; someone else create a political family for the Thyatian power play politics; another person start mapping that massive dungeon under the crater that someone mentioned up above. The reason TSR can't convince distributors to carry Mystara is that the dist. don't think anyone'll buy it. If TSR suddenly sees the boards swelling with Mystara info, maybe they'll realize what they have on their hands here.

2) TSR needs something a bit more scientific in their methods of determining what the public wants. It's not always fool-proof (remember SPI?), but I'd much rather TSR ASK me what my preferences are (as a 13-year game vet) than try to TELL me what my preferences should be. I've never once been solicited by TSR for any info, despite having mailed in every consumer response card I ever got.

3) Support Bruce! He's the man with the, er... well... the plan (I guess)... Anyway, he's the source of our info, and without him, we're screwed, so give him all the help you can.

4) Introduce new gamers to Mystara. Not just people new to role-playing but vets who've never played in Mystara.

5) Let's start compiling a net book of Mystara stuff, much like the old Arduin Grimoires. Everyone pitch in an article or two, or even just a favorite character. We can compile it all, and keep Mystara alive on our own, if that's what it takes. Run it all past Bruce to check consistency, and go from there. Heck, if there's enough support for that idea, I'd even be willing to take the time to do the compiling (esp. if I could get Bruce to jump in behind it...)

I'm not going to argue about the format of stuff that TSR should publish, it's been done ad nauseum in this forum already. What I will do is encourage everyone to buy every piece of Mystara they can find on the shelves, regardless of format, in the hopes of encouraging TSR to continue the line somehow, someday.

B1Bard

From: Kaviyd  
Date: 95-07-10 02:34:22 EDT  
Re: Re:Nosferatu

Thanks, Bruce. Your mention that Nosferatu preferred human or humanoid blood fits in better with my conceptions of such creatures. The only reason that I made my proposal about the slaughterhouse was that nothing in the monster description seemed to preclude it.

So now the nosferatu nobleman who drinks the blood of the goblins who threaten to invade his domain makes a lot more sense.

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-10 08:28:12 EDT  
Re: Re: Wide Rivers

I guess that deserves a BROAD smile!!! :o)

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-10 08:46:04 EDT  
Re: Re: Old Moo-Fangs

OK Kaviyd. Drinking non-human/humanoid blood, although possible, remains a temporary remedy to Nosferatu's pain. I guess that the drinking of goblin blood would provide a cheap source of servants to oppose raiding tribes. It would also create fear among the living goblins, especially if their shamans and warchiefs were the first victims, thus steering them away from Nosferatu's domain.

Although I wonder what would happen if Nosferatu released that loving, vampiric cow among the goblins... (Believe or not, but I did see a random encounter with a "flesh-eating cow" listed in a RAVENLOFT(R) product not long ago). Now, if your PC sees a real big bat with a bovine air to it, be afraid. Be very afraid, for it might be that old moo-fangs again! <Grin>

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-10 14:41:17 EDT  
Re: Re:Advice etc. (B1Bard)

All this is great stuff. Thanks!

1. BBS Activities. Yes, definitely make sure renewed activity continues on this board. This is a good indication interest exists out there for the topic. So, for everyone reading this: DON'T FEEL SHY! Jump in and posts your ideas. All contributions are obviously welcome on this board or in the Library.
2. Scientific Methods. Maybe. Sometimes "scientific methods" to figure out what the public want backfire big time. I prefer mail and personal assessments. But that's just me! :o)
3. Support Bruce. Hmmm. Sure! I'll take whatever support I can get in this day and age where most of the attention focuses on bigger, greater products! By "support", I mean your constructive criticism, new ideas, uploads of adventure plots and other neat DM support material in the Library, possible micro-developments of the game world, and other feedback -- worshippers not welcome though! ;-)
4. Introduce the Know World to vets. That's a tough one. Many people out there still think the Known World to be sort of an intro product (because of the

D&D(R) Game and the latest releases for the AD&D(R) Game). Word of mouth usually helps at your level. Running adventures during conventions can help too. TSR (much less I) can't be everywhere -- so that's another place where your help becomes invaluable.

5. Mystaran Cyclopedia. Eeep. That really looks like a big pile of work. I just hope my wife won't hide the modem when she hears about that one. The idea of course does support the previous points. I'll do what I can.

I have a few ideas which I will be submitting to TSR's upper management re. the Know World and possibly some other oldies elsewhere. These are options on how to proceed from here on. I can't really tell much more about that quite yet. Keep posting your thoughts though. These are important and now's the time to do it.

Many thanks to everyone! :-D

Bruce Heard

From: Kaviyd  
Date: 95-07-11 00:02:33 EDT  
Re: Re: Old Moo-Fangs

I can't respond to that one; I am ROTFLMAO, as the saying goes....

From: MoszBro  
Date: 95-07-11 14:42:17 EDT  
Re: Re: New Gamers (MoszBro)

Nonononononono... I meant:

How does one get into the companies and write games and stuff.

From: MoszBro  
Date: 95-07-11 14:48:53 EDT  
Re: B1Bard

You want that info in Basic or Advanced info... a cn and a lbs is a little different.

P.S. I have the two trail maps and some AC and PC stuff if that'll help.

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-11 15:38:07 EDT  
Re: Re: Getting Hired (MoszBro)

About freelance -- Creative Services (Games) does not accept unsolicited

submissions, but the Books Dept. and Periodicals do. If you're interested in working primarily with Creative Services, and you've never been published before, try DUNGEON(R) Magazine or DRAGON(R) Magazine first. The magazines will allow you to acquire some writing experience and name recognition. It's a long process. Be sure to call them and ask for their writer's guidelines.

Freelance is available from the Creative Services, BUT, that field is pretty much saturated with established contributors. This means it will take a long time before you can get through the crowd and start contributing game products, even if you already are a published author. If you are, please send me or E-Mail me your resume. The least I can do is keep you on file (I am the acquisitions manager for games). Reminder: please DO NOT SEND submissions -- only your resumes.

Trying to join TSR's Creative Services full-time is an even tougher shot. For design we tend to look first among our pool of professional freelancers, professionals in other game companies, and magazine contributors. For editors, we primarily look for professional editors with gaming and computer experience. Obviously, this means you'd have to move to Lake Geneva (sorry, can't work from home).

Some of TSR's early designers and editors have very diverse professional backgrounds. Designers often came from any background (and still do), as long as their command of English and their talent as creatives was good enough. Editors should really have a degree in English and Creative Writing. Creative Services hasn't hired anyone recently without at least a couple years of professional experience in appropriate fields. Hope this answers your questions.

Bruce Heard

From: Nimmurian  
Date: 95-07-11 22:38:04 EDT  
Re: Glantri's Wastelands

I noticed in the Glantri box that the lands to the northwest are marked as claimed by Hule. How is it possible? I thought Hule was part of the Savage Coast.

From: Nimmurian  
Date: 95-07-11 23:01:54 EDT  
Re: Nosferatus

I just read the nosferatu's description given in the download section. Wouldn't it make more sense if the nosferatus were able to retain their pre-undead levels? As described, they are shoe-horned at 8-9th. Normal AD&D vampires can have any spell-casting levels. Why the limitation for the nosferatus then?

From: B1Bard  
Date: 95-07-12 02:03:51 EDT  
Re: Net Book of Mystara

OK, here's the scoop:

I'll compile a net book of Mystara stuff for all us Mystarans out here (anybody got a suggestion for what we call ourselves).

I will compile the stuff about every week or two, depending on the feedback we get, and upload it together as a folder in the TSR area. (note to Bruce... where should I upload these? Misc. Treasures? Download of the month?)

I will also try like heck to get hard copies printed to send to people. I only ask that you send an SASE and some change to cover the printing costs... I'll know exactly how much later. Maybe, if this thing gets enough support, we can turn it into something prominent, and get TSR to pay attention.

Send the info to me, preferably formatted as follows:

text files (AOL text, preferably)

- > do not try to type in charts and tables, send them as gifs
- > keep it to 12 paragraphs, or we'll split it as a multi-part thing
- > I will proofread everything and run it through my spell-checker, and lend a bit of editing if it's needed (that was my college major)

gif files

- > all charts, tables, maps, etc. as gifs
- > if you send a color map, send a B&W one, too, so we can use it on the hard copies

game info

- > D&D stats, please. Use the Rules Cyclopedia, but deep-6 the Mystic if there's enough demand, maybe we'll start including stuff for AD&D stats, but for now let's keep it simple
- > encumbrance in cn wieghts
- > if you use any special rules from the GAZ series, make sure you reference them so others can go back and find them

That's what I got for now... send you fav. characters to start a rogues' gallery, and your favorite town to start populating the place. I want magic guilds, trade companies, joust rules, and adventures. I want to see all levels covered, and every possible Mystaran interest catered to, but I can only do it if you send me stuff.

send everything to  
B1Bard

and I'll get to work on it ASAP!  
let's hope this works

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-12 22:33:48 EDT  
Re: Re:Glantri's Wastelands

Hule is located exactly west from this part of the wastelands, many hundred miles away. It's possible Hule has indeed claimed that piece of land, but I suspect it's only a claim with little to back it up. It's pretty much wilderness and without settlements, an army couldn't last very long out there. The Glantrian have done nothing about the claim since they probably find it equally preposterous.

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-12 22:37:51 EDT  
Re: Re: Nosferatu's Levels

Good idea. It makes sense to allow any spellcasting level for Nosferatu. The reason I had originally limited Nosferatu's levels is because it had been designed that way for the D&D(R) Game. Nothing that a little redesign couldn't fix!

Keep sending your comments, either on this board or through E-Mail. An "updated" version could become available in the Download of the Month, sometime in the future. Thanks.

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-12 22:52:27 EDT  
Re: Re:Net Book of Mystara

>>I will compile the stuff about every week or two, depending on the feedback we get, and upload it together as a folder in the TSR area. (note to Bruce... where should I upload these? Misc. Treasures? Download of the month?)<<

For now, try uploading all that into the library's Miscellaneous Treasures. If I can get the material routed through TSR for proofing, I might be able to provide it later in the DotM.

>>I will also try like heck to get hard copies printed to send to people. I only ask that you send an SASE and some change to cover the printing costs... I'll know exactly how much later.<<

Actually, if I were you, I would wait before doing something like that. I think the process of printing and mailing the material may cause some legal problems

on TSR's end. It's the trademark thing again. I think uploading the material on AOL will be more than sufficient for now.

>>D&D stats, please. Use the Rules Cyclopedia, but deep-6 the Mystic<<

Using D&D Game rules are up to you, but I wonder if that's the best move at this point. If you're doing this to support some possible future venture by TSR with the MYSTARA(R) Setting, you KNOW it'll be written for the AD&D(R) Game. I can guarantee you this much. I know most of you in this folder would rather have the D&D Game version, but I'm wondering if you're not shooting yourself in the foot here. BTW, why drop the Mystic?

Anyway, I wanted to salute your gallant effort and your will to volunteer all that work! Thanks B1!

Bruce Heard

From: Kaviyd  
Date: 95-07-13 02:05:38 EDT  
Re: Re: Nosferatu's Levels

Of course nosferatu should be allowed to reach any levels. Isn't Prince Morphail of Boldavia in Glantri of much higher level than the monster description indicates? And I know of one rather nasty Nosferatu who lives (or used to live) in the Broken lands -- he should be of fairly high level.

From: Kaviyd  
Date: 95-07-13 02:13:50 EDT  
Re: Re:Net Book of Mystara

We should definitely keep the Mystic (either as given in the D&D Rules Cyclopedia, or as a revival of the Monk from the 1st edition AD&D rules).

As for D&D vs. AD&D, we should try to keep the best of both, as seems to be the approach with the new "Player's Option" books in regard to such D&D goodies as weapon specialization. Any D&D rules that we would like to keep in preference to their AD&D counterparts should be presented as world-specific features (for example, in Mystara a "Wish" spell does not age the caster -- in fact, some Mystaran wizards have used this spell to stay young for centuries).

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-13 08:29:11 EDT  
Re: Re: Nosferatu's Levels

Actually, I believe Morphail was described as a vampire ( not as a Nosferatu).

Bruce Heard



From: Kaviyd  
Date: 95-07-14 01:30:30 EDT  
Re: Re: Nosferatu's Levels

This is interesting. Morphail was a nosferatu (since 720 AC) according to Gaz 3.  
In the "Glantri" boxed set, he became a vampire. So now you know which source I was using....

From: MMonagle  
Date: 95-07-14 02:06:37 EDT  
Re: WOW! (Amber review)

I just bought and read 'Mark of Amber' and loved it. If you haven't gotten it yet, I strongly urge you to do so. You get tons of history on the d' Ambrevilles, Etienne and his situation, plus a map of the new castle, as well as the stats and descriptions for the entire family others of note to the family. Did I forget to mention that there's an adventure as well? I can't wait to try it out with my group.

From: MMonagle  
Date: 95-07-14 02:17:11 EDT  
Re: Glantri's future

I have watched the recent events unfolding in Glantri for some time and have been wondering how things were going to look when the dust settled. Now that Glantri will not have any future products, I was wondering what the people at TSR (Bruce?, Ann?) had been planning.

I guess I'm most curious about the Radiance. It's now sucking power out of Entropy. What does this change in its power source mean? Is Etienne destined to become an Immortal of this sphere? Is the Radiance's change the cause in the increase of chaos and evil that is spreading throughout Glantri (Synn and a humanoid dominion)? I would really like to hear what was planned.

From: AKanous  
Date: 95-07-14 11:27:35 EDT  
Re: Re:Message from Roger Moore

I've been a D&D gamer for 7 years now. That entire time has been set in the Mystara/Hollow World setting, the only we have. Now you go and take the entire world and transplant it to the AD&D setting. Doesn't AD&D have enough worlds? So what is supposed to happen to people like me. We just get left out in the cold while those supposedly advanced players get brand new info on all the lands that were originally part of D&D. Am I ever going to see another D&D Mystara resource book or adventure, or am I just expected to become an AD&D

player. And besides taking away the world that I used, at almost the same time you cancel Spelljammer. Spelljammer was the only AD&D setting I used and I only used it because it fit in so naturally with Mr. Heard's Voyage of the Princess Ark articles(which was the greatest continuing article Dragon ever had). So basically, TSR has taken away everything I loved about the game.

P.S. I noticed that the Shadow Elve's gazeteer was put online. That's cool, but I was wondering if you could do the same with The Five Shire's. That's the only gazeteer I don't have. Also, are you going to continue posting D&D Mystara articles? If so, I might decide to keep my campaign going.

Alex Kanous  
A D&D gamer to the end

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-14 13:36:39 EDT  
Re: Switching Over (Alex)

Alex, I suggest you read my earlier posts of 06/15/95 "Switching Over..." and 07/02/95 "In Truth", and the series of posts re. "Reviving Mystara". I think they'll give you several answers to your questions. This topic has been discussed at length on this board for the past 1-2 months so far. Or have you already read them?

Uploading the Shires. I suppose this is only a question of time. "HEY ROGER! ARE YOU READING THIS? You did such a great job uploading the Shadow Elves. How about the Shires now, huh?" :-D

Articles. Hmmm. I'd love to -- the only difficulty is that my involvement on AOL is purely voluntary (I do have a real job at TSR, which unfortunately doesn't involve AOL). As a result, I provide material in the AOL library when I can afford the time to do so. You probably shouldn't expect anything like the Princess Ark or the Grimoire from me. Sorry.

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-14 14:05:12 EDT  
Re: Re:Glantri's future

>>I guess I'm most curious about the Radiance. It's now sucking power out of Entropy. What does this change in its power source mean? Is Etienne destined to become an Immortal of this sphere? Is the Radiance's change the cause in the increase of chaos and evil that is spreading throughout Glantri (Synn and a humanoid dominion)?<<

What the Nucleus of the Spheres does now is draw its strength from entropic origins. The Radiance functions the same way except that it is now evil in

nature. There are no mechanics for that, but one should assume that over a period of time, it could affect the alignment of the users (debatable though, in light of what follows). Furthermore, it must be drawing negative energy from truly evil areas or creatures -- which isn't so bad if you think about it. This could inflict actual damage to all undead-types within a certain a certain radius. For example, all undead permanently lose 1 hp per HD until the Nucleus of the Spheres reverts to its original power source. Glantrian nosferatu could have a real conflict of interest here! Likewise, minor evil spirits (those lurking by haunted graves) could be sucked into the Nucleus as some form of energy. If you really think this one through, you could end up with very weird effects -- since it drains entropic energy, the Nucleus could occasionally prevent entropy from affecting the other forms of existence. In other words, entropy would be unable to cause aging, death, disease, digesting, pain, lies, treachery, etc.

In the long run, instead of draining magical energy from Mystara, the Nucleus drains away the world's negative energy. One could believe that magical energy comes in a finite amount in each world, judging from the days without magic on Mystara. I wouldn't say the same of entropic energy, however, since it is created from the "end" of every other form of existence. Since there always is an end to all things, there will always be negative energy. The only way or truly getting rid of entropy is to first get rid of all other forms of existence (thought, matter, energy, & time). If drained entirely, entropic energy is bound to suddenly return to fill the vacuum, like a wave of water suddenly crashing against a rocky shore. Scary enough?

Other than that, Etienne is not supposed to become an entropic Immortal. However, this could all help explain why evil seems to have been spreading throughout Glantri. No doubt the most evil creatures would seek to return the Nucleus to its original purpose, thus providing a very odd adventure hook for (good aligned) PCs with the same goal.

Bruce Heard

From: Kaviyd  
Date: 95-07-14 18:17:35 EDT  
Re: A Boldavian ritual

There is a ritual that I imagine Prince Morphail performs every few years:

Prince Morphail has not been seen by his subjects for several months. Rumors begin to circulate through Boldavia that Prince Morphail stays out of the sun because he is a vampire. Then, on a bright and sunny summer day, Prince Morphail emerges, dressed in bright colors, and revels in the light and warmth. The Boldavians realize that they must have been mistaken in thinking such sinister thoughts of their Prince.

Morphail, of course, retreats to safety before his "Protection from Sunlight" spell wears off....

Although I am sure that Morphail had to have discovered a spell of this nature, I have not worked out its game details. Any ideas?

From: Kaviyd  
Date: 95-07-14 18:21:51 EDT  
Re: Princess Ark/Known World?

What are the current prospects for a "Mystara" or "Known World" series of articles in \_Dragon\_ magazine? What would it take to persuade TSR to pay you to write some more of those articles (for either game system)?

From: Par Thanar  
Date: 95-07-15 13:27:45 EDT  
Re: Mystaran Differences

I thought I'd start this little discussion on the differences of Mystaran compared to other AD&D worlds.

Now, I believe I'm correct in stating that there are no half-elves on Mystara, right? Is this because that elven history followed a different path than on Toril or Oerth? Also would explain why drows are not found on Mystara (both of these ideas I agree with btw)

Now, I've got problems with the Immortal idea. I've always thought of them as Mystaran 'gods' Not sure if I'd like to discover that the gods have been hiding all along while the Immortals almost destroyed Mystara during their 'Wrath'

But one of my favorite differences is the fact that Mystara is practically unexplored. What has been looked at closely is relatively a small part of a larger continent. Things like the desert land of Ylaruam beside the Northern Reaches might not have been the best thing but the explanation fits well with Mystara's magic-rich makeup. Instead of seeing new countries (although I do want too), how about colonies being set up around the globe. If you look at our world's history, Europe (small compared to the whole earth) controlled the destinies of quite a few lands (USA being one). I'd like to see that carried on with Mystara.

Par  
aka Galwylin

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-16 13:36:34 EDT  
Re: Re:Princess Ark/Known World?

>>What would it take to persuade TSR to pay you to write some more of those

articles <<

I suppose lots of kind letters from eager consumers (YOU) addressed to the editor in chief would help. But please bear in mind that's only half the problem. It's not that TSR doesn't want to pay me (that's really not an issue). It's probably more like me having little time to devote to this kind of activity (even paid).

Writing an on-going column, especially one as developed as the old Grimoire or the Princess Ark is very demanding. Obviously, this isn't done during work hours. Presently, my job takes anywhere from 8-12 hours a day. By the time I get back home, I'm beat, and on weekends family life generally takes over.

Please, don't get me wrong. I'd love to contribute to the Known World or other regions in the DRAGON(R) Magazine, but if I did, I suspect it would be in a sporadic way. The issue of such a new column keeps coming up at TSR, along with familiar questions -- should it be centered on the Know World, should it develop new regions, should it be written exclusively for the D&D(R) Game or the AD&D(R) Game, or both, etc.

Please feel free to post your opinions on this board or in your letters to the Editor in Chief. These kinds of requests do have an impact, even if they don't get an individual answer. Thanks.

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-16 14:08:22 EDT  
Re: Re:Mystaran Differences

>> Instead of seeing new countries (although I do want too), how about colonies being set up around the globe. If you look at our world's history, Europe (small compared to the whole earth) controlled the destinies of quite a few lands (USA being one). I'd like to see that carried on with Mystara.<<

I agree with this entirely. It only makes sense to me that sea-faring nations would try to establish trading posts elsewhere on the planet. They could either conquer small pieces of land or islands from savage cultures (strategic locations), or purchase enough to build a port, a settlement, and fortification of some sort, etc. Actually, this parallels a post that appeared earlier in the Q&A folder for the RED STEEL(R) Seeting, as follows:

>>Apparently, some merchants were able to sail from the Known World to the Savage Coast and back. Have some of the merchants from Texeiras or the city states been able to do the same and reach the Sea of Dread? Is there a possibility that some could purchase or lease land from kingdoms in the Known World to establish trading concessions?

I'm thinking about something like Hong Kong (an agreement with a fixed time limit). Perhaps Thyatis, in their present state of economical decay, would be tempted to "rent" a few coastal villages and collect the yearly leases. That would allow temporary foreign "colonies" to crop up here and there in an otherwise familiar setting.

Surely, that would be more lucrative than whatever meager taxes Thyatis could extort from the impoverished local population. This would also allow greater ties between the Known World and the Savage Coast.<<

It does work both ways and it does add to the color and realism of a living, thriving game world. The first to follow this approach would be merchants or adventurers from Thyatis (more for political or diplomatic needs), the Guilds of Minrothad (for wealth and exploration), Ostland (for piracy), Heldannic Knights (for glory and the desire for military conquests).

A few more might follow to protect their own commercial interest, either independently or as part of various commercial leagues -- Karamaikos/Five Shires/Ierendi (for the adventurous at heart), Ylaruam/Thothia (they looked like a natural for alliances), Ochalea (to please these OA-lovers out there), the Kingdom of Alpha and neighboring Norwold powers (just because everybody else does it, and they sure wouldn't want to look as if they were backward realms -- which they really are!). Last but not least, add Glantri to the list of enlightened colonizers (no ships, but they've got darn good teleporters) <GRIN>

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-16 14:21:09 EDT  
Re: Re:Mystaran Differences

>>I believe I'm correct in stating that there are no half-elves on Mystara, right? Is this because that elven history followed a different path than on Toril or Oerth? Also would explain why drows are not found on Mystara (both of these ideas I agree with btw).<<

Actually it's because the MYSTARA(R) Setting found its origins in the Basic D&D(R) Game which had no provisions for half-elves or half-anything. Likewise the absence of psionics and a whole list of monsters (certain metallic dragons -- ahem -- mind flayers, drow, thri-kreens, etc.)

Of course, I'm the first to have broken this unspoken rule, by writing a short article for the RPGA about how a hapless mind-flayer "discovered" Mystara and decided to pay a visit to... Glantri. Boy, was that a mistake (a moment of silence for that brave creature). Of course, no other mind-flayer followed since.

Personally, I'd rather keep psionics out of Mystara because the setting wasn't designed with psionics in mind (pun intended). Other monsters that did not exist on Mystara before could show up eventually -- but then there should be a reason for them to appear there. They could find some transportation there, either as "merchandise", as invaders with their own transportation, or as they accidentally stumble upon some forgotten Glantrian teleporter (these darn Glantrians again), or again as that poor mind-flayer did...

Bruce Heard

From: Kaviyd  
Date: 95-07-16 15:16:06 EDT  
Re: Half-Elves

In the D&D (vice AD&D) version of Mystara, Half-Elves as such were found only along the Savage Coast; in the Known World, the offspring of matings between Humans and Elves were Humans who looked somewhat Elvish or Elves who looked somewhat Human.

In the AD&D version of Mystara, I would suggest that Half-Elves do exist but are generally referred to as "Humans" (except in places like Ylaruam, where they are burned at the stake along with pure-blooded Elves). Unlike the Dark Sun world, where Half-Elves are considered outcasts, Mystaran Half-Elves can get along anywhere that both Humans and Elves are accepted (which is over 90% of the civilized world).

From: Par Thanar  
Date: 95-07-16 17:01:53 EDT  
Re: Re:Half-Elves

Well the way I see half-elves treated on Mystara is humans with elven qualities or vice versa. The race of half-elf need not exist though those who are the product of elf and human are half-elves. In game terms, I still prefer they either be human or elf. Mainly to keep Mystara as different as possible from the \*standard\* game worlds.

Par

From: Par Thanar  
Date: 95-07-16 17:07:56 EDT  
Re: Re:Mystaran Differences

Since Mystara is now AD&D that means AD&D spells are available. I'd like to keep those name spells (ie Bigby's Interposing Hand) out, though Mystaran wizards could discover a variation of those spells.

Maybe a powerful mage will emerge from the world to rival Elminster and Mordenkainen. I'm thinking Terari would fit nicely in that role.

Par

From: Par Thanar  
Date: 95-07-16 17:10:35 EDT  
Re: Re:Mystaran Differences

Anyone know where I could find more information about Ochalea. I'd love to put

the Kara-Tur box set to use somewhere ;> Course being the avid lover of Mystara I may have all the information and there's just not much published.

Par

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-16 17:38:11 EDT  
Re: Re:Ochalea

>> Anyone know where I could find more information about Ochalea. <<

Most of it is included in the Thyatis/Alphatia Gazetteer boxed set, although some miscellaneous info may also come from the various almanacs.

Bruce Heard

From: B1Bard  
Date: 95-07-16 17:48:32 EDT  
Re: NET BOOK INFO

OK, the first net book should be up within a few days, look for it in the "Misc Treasures", and following Bruce's advice, we'll hold off on the hard copies.

This first installment will be in D&D stats, and no one even submitted anything about Mystics, so that argument is now irrelevant.  
Howsabout in the future submit things in either D&D or AD&D stats, and I'll try to offer appropriate conversions in one of the files I upload with the net book.

B1Bard

From: B1Bard  
Date: 95-07-16 17:55:12 EDT  
Re: WANTED: NET SUBMISSIONS

No, I don't want everyone on the net to kowtow to me, I want you to submit articles to me for the net book of Mystara.

\*\*\* Suggestions for articles and ideas \*\*\*

NPCs - your favorite character is your alter ego, but could be someone else's great NPC. If we start a consistent gallery of characters, it should lend a bit more of a hometown feeling to Mystara.

Short Adventures - "Retrieve the treasure map from the thieves' guild," or "get this ship to its new port intact..." If they're short & sweet, they should be pretty good for people.

Places - email in your favorite castle, bar, port, small town, whatever!



Somebody start mapping out the southern continents and let's see about those.

Magic - Magic that is tied into Mystara's legends and history would be an outstanding thing to see. There's a wand that's tied to Rad coming up in the first net book, so check it out!

Etc... hey, right now it's small, but growing. The more stuff you guys send, the better this will be, and the better it will look to everyone.

thanks muchly  
email everything (including your parents' credit card #s) to:  
B1Bard

From: Par Thanar  
Date: 95-07-16 18:58:32 EDT  
Re: Re:Ochalea

Just as I thought... I already have the information on Ochalea ;D

Par

From: Par Thanar  
Date: 95-07-16 19:00:10 EDT  
Re: Re:NET BOOK INFO

I think we should include D&D and AD&D stats ;) We want the information useful to as many as possible. I'm working on a tavern with some (hopefully) interesting characters. Think CHEERS ;D

Par

From: Nimmurian  
Date: 95-07-16 22:28:39 EDT  
Re: Re:A Boldavian ritual

In your post you wrote: "Morphail, of course, retreats to safety before his "Protection from Sunlight" spell wears off...."

I applaud the idea of the new spell with my two hands and my six legs!!! As hinted by my screen name, some of my favorite bad guys are the manscorpions in Red Steel's far western reaches (Nimmur). These guys must paint their bodies in thick sun-repellent paint to protect themselves from the sun. Sunrays make them blow up and catch fire instantly.

I want that spell. Please. Perty please, batting my manscorpion eyes...

I bet other people besides vampires would like it too (spell-casting shadows?) I'm thinking about the drow in other worlds (would the spell also apply to drow equipment?) Is this a wizard's spell or a clerical spell? Morphail is a glantrian wizard, but it would be nice if clerics had a way of using that spell too. That would be possible if it was a variant of the darkness spell. Can the spell be used in super-hot deserts to prevent dehydration and heat-strokes?

From: Nimmurian  
Date: 95-07-16 22:37:08 EDT  
Re: Re:Mystaran Differences

I agree 100% with the idea of setting up colonies around the globe. But not only Known World kingdoms conquering other lands. It could be the other way around, with other faraway realms acquiring some land in the Known World.

How about some Nimmurian manscorpions setting up shop in the Known World (he, he, he). That protection from sunlight spell would sure come in handy here. We'll trade some of that precious red steel for a steady supply of tasty little halflings. Yum! Nimmur likes the Shires, the breadbasket of the underworld!

I click my pincers at that thought!

From: Nimmurian  
Date: 95-07-16 22:43:30 EDT  
Re: Re:Half-Elves

Re: [[in the AD&D version of Mystara, I would suggest that Half-Elves do exist but are generally referred to as "Humans"]]

I agree with the idea that half-elves should be included in the Known World and on the Savage Coast. Now that the AD&D rules are used, we might just as well. There are plenty of useful classes for half-elves and I think it's a mistake not to use them.

And they taste just as good as halflings, except they are skinnier.

From: Anodaewyn1  
Date: 95-07-17 07:36:08 EDT  
Re: How about this idea?

How about with the net book, we all submit articles on Mystara(history,stories,etc.) for an online Mystara Newsletter? Unless one already exists....that I don't know about. I would be more than willing to help on any aspect of this at all? What's everyone think?

From: Kaviyd  
Date: 95-07-18 00:51:32 EDT  
Re: Re:A Boldavian ritual

The main reason that I devised that story about Morphail was to explain how he could have been a vampire or nosferatu for nearly 300 years without his subjects being sure of what he was. A relatively straightforward Wizard spell (note that its name is rather dull by Glantrian standards) takes care of the problem.

As for the manscorpions, that depends on what rules you use for Priest spell research. From what I know of their Immortals, their new patrons would rather have them hate Ixion and the sunlight rather than do anything to mitigate their curse. But maybe somebody else sees help for them.

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-18 13:38:40 EDT  
Re: Re:A Boldavian ritual

>>rom what I know of their Immortals, their new patrons would rather have them hate Ixion and the sunlight rather than do anything to mitigate their curse.<<

That could be interpreted either way. Some of the Immortal patrons of the manscorpions may not allow the spell, but other could (gotta keep those PCs on their toes). After all, it could be seen as a personal insult to Ixion to allow such a spell.

Bruce Heard

From: TPHatch  
Date: 95-07-18 23:14:38 EDT  
Re: D&D Rules Check

Hi, Well I have a Question about Dungeons & Dragons, not AD&D. Can a character or NPC move his encounter speed (the one in parenthesis) and still make an attack?

The black box (beginners set) says on page 25 that you have to move one round, and attack the next.

The Cyclopedia on page 103 says you can attack after your move.

I believe in the second one, and use it, but I was just wondering which is correct. Thanx. Please email me with a comment.

From: TPHatch  
Date: 95-07-18 23:17:42 EDT  
Re: Original Known World

What is wrong (was wrong?) with the Mystara of D&D and Gazeteer fame? Why did

you go and change it and try and make me buy all new materials? Why can't you just have fixed up the old Gazeteers and made the original (you wouldn't be here if it weren't for this) game even better, but no, now I have to adapt everything, and all my efforts to collect all the Gazeteers are useless because they are becoming too hard to find and the MYSTARA campaign is changing everything to AD&D. Sheeesh. No respect for the original and best.

From: Lostboy103  
Date: 95-07-18 23:42:21 EDT  
Re: Re:WANTED

Right!

And what about the maps? What CAD format? i.e. extension format?  
\*dwg is the ideal format but how many drafting programs are out there?

Suggestions?

From: Dale Coper  
Date: 95-07-19 22:51:01 EDT  
Re: i need players

I run a Mystrara Campaign for Serious gamers. I live in St. Clair shores MI. if you are interested e-mail me!

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-19 23:32:29 EDT  
Re: Re:i need players

Have you tried to locate players through the RPGA network?

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-20 00:24:31 EDT  
Re: Re:D&D Rules Check

The rules in "black box" had to be simplified for people learning the game. I would suggest you follow the rules listed in the Cyclopedia.

Bruce Heard

From: B1Bard  
Date: 95-07-20 00:25:54 EDT  
Re: Re:Anodaewyn

that's a helluva name to try and spell from memory.

The net book was conceived as something a bit more like a newsletter. I plan to try and upload one monthly at the very least and more often if enough people email me submissions.

The first book will go up this weekend. I had a meltdown at work this week and lost two nights of work on the computer to the god of the almighty paycheck.

please send everything and anything!

B1Bard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-20 00:28:01 EDT  
Re: Re: Switching Over (TPHatch)

TP, please read my earlier posts of 06/15/95 "Switching Over..." and 07/02/95 "In Truth", and the series of posts re. "Reviving Mystara". Sorry for the inconvenience.

Bruce Heard

From: B1Bard  
Date: 95-07-20 00:29:16 EDT  
Re: Net Book (lostboy)

The first book will go up this weekend. I had a meltdown at work this week and lost two nights of work on the computer to the god of the almighty paycheck.

Look forward to several characters to start our Hiring Hall, a homestead from the Northern Reaches, a magic item associated with Rad, and a few other things.

Maps should be submitted in GIF format, and if you send a color one, send a black&white one, too, so that our stone-age brethren are not ignored.

Articles should be submitted in AOL text format, and if they are too long, I will break them up into a serial across several net books.

Pul-eeze send in some stuff!

B1Bard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-20 00:49:24 EDT  
Re: GenCon Demos

Just a quick word to announce there should be a game demonstration for the MYSTARA(R) Setting at GenCon. It should be located at the TSR Castle and may

involve a monster hunt through the sewers of Mirros or the canals of Glantri (more later on this).

There should also be a RED STEEL(R) Setting demo. We're looking for ideas for a simple set of game mechanics for swashbucklers. If you are interested, please check my post in the Red Steel Q&A folder. Thanks.

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-20 00:53:33 EDT  
Re: Re:Net Book (everyone)

Sure, come on folks! Send B1 your best stuff! I'll try a few things myself. I need some opinions on the post re. Arypt & Izondia in the RED STEEL Q&A folder. If some of you are interested, please post your suggestions there. I might be able to put something together on these two places for the net book. Deal?

Bruce Heard

From: Anodaewyn1  
Date: 95-07-20 01:54:38 EDT  
Re: Re:B1

Sorry 'bout the name...just my elven scout from Greyhawk...

I also have access to a scanner, to help out...anything I CAN scan, I will,..but I only have access to Karameikos, Glantri, and the Republic of Darokin at the present time... I plan on scanning the picture of King Halav, and the King of the Beast-men from the Karameikos box...anyone want this gif? Lemme know...

~j~

From: Anodaewyn1  
Date: 95-07-20 02:06:50 EDT  
Re: Mirros...?

Does anyone have a detailed map of Mirros? I'm wanting to know the names of streets and such... Really, I'm looking for maps of all of the cities in the whole world to keep on file on my Pc. Can anyone help me here?

~j~

From: DragonRMM  
Date: 95-07-20 22:47:34 EDT  
Re: Re: Original Known World

I don't mind the fact that D&D has been converted to AD&D. What annoys me is that now if I want to find out about Glantri ( or some other country ), I have to buy a whole \$30 boxed set when I used to be able to get everything I wanted in a cheap \$12 Gazeteer.  
The prices are getting ridiculous.

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-21 08:42:51 EDT  
Re: Re: Original Known World

>> have to buy a whole \$30 boxed set when I used to be able to get everything I wanted in a cheap \$12 Gazeteer.  
The prices are getting ridiculous.<<

Granted, \$30 isn't cheap -- but I doubt it qualifies as ridiculous considering what you're getting for that price. If you figure the audio CD accounts for roughly \$9.00 of the retail price, the rest buys you the two booklets, the two poster maps, and the cards -- all in color.

One more thing to keep in mind too is the cost of paper these days. So far, it has skyrocketed (more than doubled). TSR has tried to keep prices down nevertheless. I'm just wondering how long that's going to remain possible. If anything, don't expect prices to go down for traditional paper components. Of course, the whole thing could be printed 9pt type B/W on newspaper stock. You could buy that probably for a lot less, but I don't think this would appeal to the majority of our customers.

But that's water under the bridge at this point, since the MYSTARA(R) Setting is on hiatus. I suspect future products in that line wouldn't follow this approach anyway. There are too many areas in the Know World alone to cover them in a package this big and at this price range.

Bruce Heard

From: MoszBro  
Date: 95-07-21 14:53:08 EDT  
Re: Q&A&B

- 1) Ax the CD. That is \$9.00 I can use to buy more Mystara products
- 2) I would not mind a bit of newsprint-type paper in my boxed set. As long as everything gets printed, is legible, and cheap, you can print it on toilette paper for all I care!
- 3) I'm working on Mystara net stuff.

-AA-

From: Swif1  
Date: 95-07-21 15:47:09 EDT  
Re: Re:Hail the Heroes

Yes, I have used this module. First I would like to say that the voices that came with the CD in the boxed set do not dictate what the characters really say. They have these voices again in "Night of the Vampire". But the PCs I played with, for the most part, did as you said, let the voices do all the talking. I reminded them many times that the voices should not play the roll for them. Therefore I have come to the conclusion (from my DMing) that it is not the voices that limit, but the people you play with. Personally I enjoyed "Night of the Vampire" best. Especially when one of the people I was gaming with cut the head off of the heroin, when she was turned into a vampire by Andru. I am presently trying to figure out how much an entire vampire is worth in gold to the School of Magecraft. If you would like to comment on this, look up "Vampire- value" in the DM's corner.

From: Sequitur X  
Date: 95-07-22 00:32:39 EDT  
Re: Re: Original Known (bruce)

Mr. Heard,

I disagree with you on this point. The price IS ridiculous. I know the days of the \$6 module are gone but asking kids to pay over \$12 for a supplement is unacceptable.

The argument that CD's cost \$9 is also humorous when they cost cents, literally, to mass produce. Maybe the younger fans bought that statement but I know better.

I feel that TSR did its best business when it provided low cost, solid-quality products, as opposed to high-cost, highly glossed, medium-quality books/boxes of late.

I hope this tirade sounded objective, it isn't personal. ;)

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-22 03:12:32 EDT  
Re: Re: About CD (Sequitur)

Everyone is free to have an opinion here -- however, there is a difference between disliking a product and saying that a price is ridiculous. That's not quite the same thing.

Now your statement that an audio CD costs just cents to produce IS ridiculous. Likewise your assumption that they are "mass-produced". Define "mass-produced", please. (Do you honestly believe TSR produces audio CDs in numbers comparable to the music industry's?) And I never said compact discs COST \$9 to produce either. A CD and its packaging do end up with a retail price of approximately \$9. Again, that's not the same thing. Most of the CDs I buy run \$12-\$15.



As a business, TSR obviously cannot sell at, or below cost. After that come distributors, retailers, and then the taxman. They all get a substantial share of that \$9 -- that's business as usual, folks. People working in the distribution business do have salaries like most of you I hope, shipping has to be paid, and so forth. Retailers have to make some money too -- that's why they open shops on the first place. Sure, no one likes having to pay for all that, but without it there wouldn't be retailers, there wouldn't be publishers, and there wouldn't be any games to play either, other than throwing sticks and stones at each other. Is this so difficult to understand?

You might want to browse through late June posts in the Q&A folder for RED STEEL(R) Products regarding that topic precisely. We can indeed argue the pricing issue until blue in the face -- I doubt that will accomplish much. I think your point is more about your dislike of the CDs and of nicely presented products.

I personally think that the MYSTARA(R) Products look just great, and they certainly do not deserve your "medium quality" label. Someone else recently expressed a wish in this Q&A folder for products printed on toilet paper to get them really cheap. My question is: bought any trashy-looking product lately? Did you enjoy it? How much did you save, compared to a TSR product in the same category? (Thanks, but I'd rather read a nice-looking book than a roll of toilet-paper).

Your statement "asking kids to pay over \$12 for a supplement is unacceptable" prompts the following question: would you really be satisfied with an endless stream of 64-96 pg booklets that all look alike? No boxed sets anymore? Look at what the majority of people out there are buying these days, not just from TSR but the whole game industry. What does that tell you? Judging from the success of products like the new BIRTHRIGHT(TM) Setting or the PLANESCAPE(R) Setting (both glossy, wonderfully-looking products), it seems the majority of gamers disagree with your statement. If they didn't like them, they wouldn't buy them.

Nevertheless, nice of you to enlighten the "young fans" in this folder. I'm just glad I could contribute to that endeavor as well.

Bruce Heard

From: Anodaewyn1  
Date: 95-07-22 09:32:50 EDT  
Re: Cd's and stuff..

First of all, I think that none of the prices, are Bruce's idea...so don't blame him... I'm sure that if he had his way....the Boxes would cost less. We've been across the Cd thing a couple months ago. I think the general consensus, was that most DMs, and I can genuinely only speak for me, but, I would like to see the Cd's themselves..booted. Or just put sound tracks on them. For example, last week, while I was Dming, I put on a Cd with a classical guitar player on, while the PC's were in a tavern, and they loved it. Or, tracks, when a monster attacks the group, would be cool as well. Sound effects, is what I look for....anything that will add to the PC's experience is for me. My players, told me, that they didn't like their conversations already

planned out for them. So, what I did, was scanned through the CD, and just wrote down what I would like to hear if I was playing. And that worked out better. For the NPC's, I would learn the basis of what they were to know, and just role play the rest. Personally, I like some parts of the CD, and hate others. That's life, though I suppose....taking the good as well as the bad.... well, 'nuff said.

~~j~~

From: JBaichtal  
Date: 95-07-22 10:26:40 EDT  
Re: Re:Price of gaming products

I do think that TSR has a tendency to go "over the top" when it comes to products. While it is nice to have high value products, it is sometimes nice to have inexpensive ones. I think part of the reason Al-Qadim didn't do so well was that with the exception of the Monstrous Compendium, every AQ product cost \$18 or more. Even as an adult I pick and chose among the products to find one that is inexpensive while providing the most value. If TSR had published some \$7 modules for AQ, maybe it would be around today...

Sometimes the boxed set thing works -- look at the Planescape basic set. This is, hands down, the highest quality piece of gaming writing and packaging I've ever seen. The Menzoberannzan set is another example of excellent quality. I would (and did!) pay \$30 for these sets with pleasure. Then you have Dragon Mountain or the Astromundi Cluster. Those were sets which did not meet TSR's usual level of excellence (DM's Origins award notwithstanding). I was royally pissed when I delved into those boxed sets -- I felt I was cheated.

What I'm trying to say is that there should be a broad range of sizes and prices -- in my opinion.

From: TPHatch  
Date: 95-07-22 13:20:46 EDT  
Re: Thanx, but \$ is 2 High

I just wanted to thank everyone for their responce to my questions.  
Thanx.

& I wanted to add that the prices are getting a bit large, especially in the miniature/war game section. Paying 6.50 for two pieces of lead (wait, they aren't lead anymore) is getting ridiculous, especially if you want to play with around 40 figures like a good army needs! I think all of the corporate heads of all the industries should sit back and try an support their gaming hobby, whether role playing or miniatures, on what the average teen or college student makes. If you can do it, and still have time to play the games you worked so hard at McDonalds to buy, then let me know. Cause I could use the Advice. If you can't seem to support your hobby on what little money I make, I suggest you consider reducing prices so you don't scare me and the millions like me away.

Anymore than you already have. Thanx.

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-22 15:54:54 EDT  
Re: Re:Prices (JBaichtal)

I think you are right on many points, JB. Here are some issues at hand:

>> While it is nice to have high value products, it is sometimes nice to have inexpensive ones. <<

I agree entirely with this one. I believe that a successful product line needs to have the full range of product types and prices. Maybe this is just me, but I prefer having one boxed release a year (\$20-\$30, depending on the scope of its theme), with several "satellite" accessories ranging from \$8.95 (2-3) to \$18.00 (1-2, max). The 32-page modules just don't do anything for me -- not sure why though. Anyway, I've put a lot of pressure on the Mystara group to reduce the size/format of '96 products expected for the Savage Coast, in order to follow the approach described above. Many people at TSR agreed with this direction too.

>> I think part of the reason Al-Qadim didn't do so well was that with the exception of the Monstrous Compendium, every AQ product cost \$18 or more.<<

Think again. The AL-QADIM(TM) Setting actually did well. The only reason TSR decided to end the line was at the request of the creative staff. It had been created as a line with a limited life span -- and for a good reason. By the time it was ended, that setting was running out of classical Arabian themes. The creative staff felt that quality would have dropped if this had been pursued further. It had nothing to do with merchandizing or pricing.

>>Sometimes the boxed set thing works -- look at the Planescape basic set.<<

My point exactly. TSR publishes these kind of products because there is a demand for them. If too few people bought them, do you think TSR would continue printing them? Of course not. But they do -- that's important to remember. Sure, sometimes they don't come up to expectations. You can't win every time, although we try pretty darn hard. You'd be surprized how much time creative staff spends at trying to fit in that extra little bit of component, or color, or text, and still match production budgets corresponding to the product's sales price. I think a lot of credit goes to our Purchasing staff too for finding ways of acquiring paper and printing services at decent prices -- and still hit the shipping date. Paper and printing costs out there sometimes are plain outrageous (TSR, like many other publishers, owns neither printing presses nor paper mills). Believe me, that's a tough business.

Bruce Heard

From: Kaviyd  
Date: 95-07-22 21:28:11 EDT  
Re: Re:Prices (JBaichtal)

There should be a middle ground between the expensively produced boxed sets with CDs and "modules printed on toilet paper". I definitely would not buy the latter, while the former are not generally a good value (with rare exceptions such as \_Mark of Amber\_).

\_Dragon\_ magazine itself is a good example of this middle ground. It contains a lot of information given its price, and the physical quality is excellent. It should be possible to pack at least as much information into such a format as you get in one of the boxed sets (minus the CD, of course). This "magazine special" could be sold for ten dollars or less and TSR would come out of it quite well (between increased sales and reduced production costs).

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-23 10:38:57 EDT  
Re: Re:Prices (Kaviyd)

Don't forget that modules print runs come nowhere near magazine print runs for magazines. As a result, modules cannot be priced like magazines. For the same amount of material (pages), your module will end up costing a lot more than your magazine.

Bruce Heard

From: Dale Coper  
Date: 95-07-23 14:30:10 EDT  
Re: Re:i need players

Actully I haven't.

From: DragonRMM  
Date: 95-07-23 15:57:18 EDT  
Re: Re: About CD (Sequitur)

I agree that the Mystara boxed sets are of excellent quality. What bothers me though is that it now costs \$30 to learn about each country in the Known World. I'm wondering if TSR is going to continue to put out another \$30 boxed set for each new country in the Known World. It seems like a too high price to pay for information on only one country. I don't mind paying about, say, \$15 for a one, but \$30 for each country??

This is getting ridiculous.

Also, whatever happened to that idea of combining three Gazateers into one boxed set? I would gladly pay 30 - 35 dollars for a set telling about three different countries, but paying that much for just one country seems ludicrous.

From: B1Bard  
Date: 95-07-23 20:43:48 EDT  
Re: NET BOOK AGAIN

first, a minor comment -

Let's discuss Mystara here, and leave the price wars arguments to another folder. We're not advancing our cause of the return of Mystara to the ranks of the living by whining about how much things cost.

That said:

The first Net Book is up. It features the first two installments of the Hiring Hall, a Northern Reaches homestead, a new magic item belonging to Rad, and a set of cut-out markers for games. Not much, but it's there. I'd like to see a lot of downloads of this (even if you think it sucks) so that the TSR people will realize that people actually care about Mystara.

it's in the Misc treasures archive. GO GET IT!

8)  
B1Bard

next net book (tentatively) AUG6.

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-24 09:00:29 EDT  
Re: Re: About CD (Sequitur)

>>What bothers me though is that it now costs \$30 to learn about each country in the Known World.<<

Well I guess for now the point is moot. With the MYSTARA(R) Setting on hiatus, obviously nothing at all will be forthcoming in the near future. I doubt however that this trend would have continued much beyond the first few major nations of the Know World. I also doubt that future products in this series will follow the \$30 format; if anything, nation-oriented accessories would probably look more like the old Gazetteers than the large boxed sets.

Bruce Heard

From: Kaunas0000  
Date: 95-07-24 09:01:42 EDT  
Re: AD&D Online.

Lets set up a chat room and a certain time evry so often to play Mystara. The computer has the dice and someone can put up the adventure and I can gain more

knowledge on DMing. Just a thought

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-24 09:03:00 EDT  
Re: Re:NET BOOK AGAIN

>>The first Net Book is up.<<

Hurray! :-D

Bruce Heard

From: Anodaewyn1  
Date: 95-07-24 09:20:16 EDT  
Re: Re:NET BOOK AGAIN

I may be nuts, or maybe I looked over it three times...but I couldn't find the netbook. hmmm...wonder why I can't get it?

J

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-07-24 12:31:24 EDT  
Re: Re:NET BOOK AGAIN

Perhaps B1 uploaded the material over the week end, but it won't appear in the Library until it's gone through TSR's scrutiny first (for AOL's TOS concerns). I know that's how it works for TSR's downloads of the month so I'm assuming that it may be the same with the library. Just a guess on my part.

Bruce Heard

From: B1Bard  
Date: 95-07-25 00:40:58 EDT  
Re: Re:Re:NET BOOK AGAIN

I uploaded on Sunday evening...

waiting for it to appear in the library

B1Bard

From: Lostboy103  
Date: 95-07-25 23:58:55 EDT

Re: Re: About CD (Sequitur)

Oh, Bruce,

Isn't this really an Email post ? Spare us your tirade. If you're really so soft-skinned, you wouldn't be working for a company like TSR, now would you ?

I have to disagree with nearly all your points. I pay \$10 for a CD, too. That CD has something enjoyable on it, though. But that's the subjective issue...

No boxed sets for \$12 ?? Just about every boxed set I've ever purchased was right in between the \$10-18 range. Has it been that long?

>>an audio CD costs cents to produce IS ridiculous.<< Umm. Nope. That's reality, Bruce. Ask the folks at the CD club. You are correct that TSR can't produce them on a comparable level, but I, for one, would be interested in knowing the actual cost to TSR, now that the cat is out of this bag.

Finally, sticks and stones to throw at each other ?? Bruce, you're hanging yourself here, along with your company. Doesn't anyone proof your statements before they go out ? That's just sloppy.

Comments, pro & con, are welcome Email or otherwise.

p.s. I, by the way, do NOT (as Bruce recalls :-> ) want to buy Toilet Paper based games ! LOL. I like the high end quality! (Since I'm paying one way or another...)

From: Lostboy103  
Date: 95-07-26 00:02:38 EDT  
Re: Re: Cd's and stuff..

Hear! Hear!

I like the idea of period music on disc, or whatever!  
The dialogues are predictable, but what a concept, fair Music!

Does anyone recommend any specific CDs that are easily locatable?

I don't want to bugger the SCA for a tape recording if I don't have to !

From: MoszBro  
Date: 95-07-27 14:14:07 EDT  
Re: Ooops

I was just talltalein' it when I said toilette paper. Just kidding. A joke. A funny. He he. It did however have a purpose:  
I don't like selling my relatives into slavery for a MYSTARA Box and

I would be willing to accept a degrade in paper quality for a lower price. The Gazeteers did fine without the mirror-like paper.

What exactly would it take to get MYSTARA out of Hiatus? and is Hiatus closer to the Merry Pirates or Skothar? :)

-AA-

From: CHURCH X  
Date: 95-07-27 23:40:32 EDT  
Re: What's in a name?

I would like to add that, as someone touched on earlier, the very name "Mystara" was always a little \*fluffy.\*

I forward the motion that we return to The Known World, so to speak. It's kinda bulky, but so is "America Online."

- Church

From: Swoozanne  
Date: 95-07-28 01:47:58 EDT  
Re: NET BOOK (B1Bard)

The Bard here - (wife's screen name...)

The NET BOOK IS UP!

Somehow, though, it ended up in STORIES & JOURNALS instead of Misc Treasures. (Bruce, can you help us...!)  
It also says its only text, when there are several GIFs in there, too.

This one's pretty crude, but I expect they'll get better as we go along.

Send submissions to B1Bard

party on  
8)  
B1Bard

From: Swoozanne  
Date: 95-07-28 01:49:13 EDT  
Re: THE NET BOOK IS UP

it is in the STORIES & JOURNALS section of the Library....

party on  
8)



B1Bard

(I'm using my wife's screen name)

From: Sequitur X

Date: 95-07-29 02:04:00 EDT

Re: Re: About CD (Sequitur)

Well, Dragon Magazine came out today and indicated that they would still publish articles on product lines that have been axed.

I suppose this is an improvement over last month's issue. Let's give 'em another chance, shall we ?

From: Gr8kan

Date: 95-07-31 03:20:00 EDT

Re: Ochalean Population

This question is primarily directed toward Ann Dupuis (Ghostgames), as it concerns the Ochalean population figure quoted in the Almanacs (I, II and III). Therein it is stated that the population of The Isle is 125,000, including the 50,000 in the city of Beitung. However, referring back to Dawn of the Emperors p. 77 of book 1, the population of \*Beitung\* is stated as being "50,000 (City of Beitung), plus 75,000 (surrounding territory)". These numbers have never rung true, especially as the gazetteer also stated that "Ochalea provided a lot of grain and livestock to the Alphatian Empire...". Granted, this was in the era BC, when the Alphatian Empire had a lower population than the current 5,000,000 plus, but then so too did The Isle. This discrepancy means one of two things. Either 1) the population figure is wrong; or 2) the Ochaleans have developed some really \*incredible\* farming techniques (given the continued existence of zsonga and the large number of mages and clerics in Alphatia, this actually is not as impossible as it seems). I feel, however, that the population numbers have been erroneously reported; not by the authors Dupuis and Allston, but rather by the Ochalean Bureaucracy itself! Never satisfied with their status as a subject of the Thyatian Empire, the Ochaleans have for centuries done everything in their power to bamboozle the Thyatians into thinking that the isle was little more than a minor farm and fishing territory (using the powers of the clergy, the few friendly wu-jen and the various Ninja clans to sway those who would investigate the seeming discrepancy when such bright minded fellows came along). Now if you read the original gazetteer entry as stating that the population of \*Beitung\* is 50,000, with another 75,000 urban population throughout the islands (the 6 major towns, Wutang Dong Ha, etc.), the Urban population of Ochalea can be understood as being set at 125,000. The Rural population (villages included) can then be extrapolated from the Urban population (using Bruce Heard's economics articles from Dragon). Therefore, the Rural population can be calculated at  $125,000 = x/5$ ; or, 625,000. Thus, the total population of Ochalea would be 750,000. This shifts the size of Ochalean armed forces dramatically, helping to assure the continued sovereignty of The Isle; on that note, there is also some argument for adjusting the

Ochalean "Level of Civilization" to at least Medieval, if not Renaissance (while the upper classes revere Koryis in all his aspects of peace, they have also had over 1500 years to develop ways to make up for their deficiency in magic use vs. the Alphatians, which includes the Warrior Caste, the "Fighting-Monk" Monasteries and the Ninja Clans).

Well, anyway, if you can't tell, I'm a big fan of The Isle. Any chance we'll see it ("Officially") developed any further (perhaps as a tie-in to a "Complete Oriental Adventures Handbook")?

From: B1Bard  
Date: 95-08-01 01:54:04 EDT  
Re: Problems

I've heard there are problems w/ the net book...

Anyone who wanted the info but couldn't read it from the download should email me, and I'll take every email I've got by Sunday night and send the files out to everyone separately.

Hope that clears things up some...

I still need submissions for the next net book, due to go up the wknd. of 18 August. The lag time is due to me being in the field with the military.

party on all  
8)  
B1Bard

From: Ghostgames  
Date: 95-08-01 08:42:02 EDT  
Re: Re:Ochalean Population

>>the Ochalean population figure quoted in the Almanacs (I, II and III). Therein it is stated that the population of The Isle is 125,000, including the 50,000 in the city of Beitung. However, referring back to Dawn of the Emperors p. 77 of book 1, the population of \*Beitung\* is stated as being "50,000 (City of Beitung), plus 75,000 (surrounding territory)". These numbers have never rung true, especially as the gazetteer also stated that "Ochalea provided a lot of grain and livestock to the Alphatian Empire...". >>

I can't tell you how much of a headache all the population figures in the Almanacs caused! :-)

Even when population figures were "right" (i.e., matched those printed previously in Gazetteers or adventures, etc.), they were often "wrong" (i.e. made no sense in reality). I don't remember any specifics, but I seem to recall things like a desert nomad population of far greater than 1/square mile (which

is what it would likely be in "real" life), population densities in Medieval-like cities greater than that of downtown Boston in 1989 (I calculated something like 89 people per residence in one city, where the map showed nice individual houses -- and these \*weren't\* tenement houses), and vast stretches of productive land that, like Ochalea, apparently had no one to farm it. And, of course, ratios like 2/3rds of the people living in cities (rather than a closer-to-reality ratio of 8 rural inhabitants to support 2 urban inhabitants).

So I'm not surprised the Ochalean population figures seem wrong. I tried to fix most of the worst offenders in the Almanacs -- I guess I missed Ochalea.

I like your explanation:

>>Never satisfied with their status as a subject of the Thyatian Empire, the Ochaleans have for centuries done everything in their power to bamboozle the Thyatians into thinking that the isle was little more than a minor farm and fishing territory (using the powers of the clergy, the few friendly wu-jen and the various Ninja clans to sway those who would investigate the seeming discrepancy when such bright minded fellows came along). Now if you read the original gazetteer entry as stating that the population of \*Beitung\* is 50,000, with another 75,000 urban population throughout the islands (the 6 major towns, Wutang Dong Ha, etc.), the Urban population of Ochalea can be understood as being set at 125,000. The Rural population (villages included) can then be extrapolated from the Urban population (using Bruce Heard's economics articles

from Dragon. Therefore, the Rural population can be calculated at  $125,000 = x/5$ ; or, 625,000. Thus, the total population of Ochalea would be 750,000. <<

With a land mass listed as 190,054 square miles, this would give Ochalea an average population density of about 4 people per square mile -- just about perfect for the culture. (There's even room for more, if you account for magic assistance in agriculture, irrigation, sanitation, etc.)

Good job!

--Ann Dupuis

From: MMonagle  
Date: 95-08-01 18:41:52 EDT  
Re: How did it end?

Why was Mystara put on hiatus? I've read why it was changed over to AD&D but I don't think anyone has said why TSR has shelved the game world? What was it? Shadowelf infiltrators? Rogue Alphas taking over the TSR office? Failed TSR investments in Thyatis? WHAT???

I just would like to know why it was done. Maybe in the future (with its revival) we can avoid the same mistakes.

From: MMonagle  
Date: 95-08-01 18:53:51 EDT  
Re: Fluffy names

What is the wrap against the name 'Mystara'. I do not have a problem with it. I was actually quite pleased when the game world was finally given its own name. 'The Known World of D&D' just seems too generic to me. Now, gamers can refer to 'Mystara' rather than that long, cumbersome, generic title. In a way, I felt that it helped establish the campaign setting as its own unique world rather than a simple, generic springboard for beginners to try.

Some people have said that the name is too fluffy. For those who feel that way, may I suggest transferring to the Ravenloft campaign; there's absolutely NO fluffiness there.

I do not have a problem with the name, leave it alone in fact. I feel that we have more important issues to deal with (like getting the campaign revived most importantly).

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-08-02 22:21:42 EDT  
Re: Re:Ochalean Population

>> The Rural population (villages included) can then be extrapolated from the Urban population (using Bruce Heard's economics articles from Dragon. Therefore, the Rural population can be calculated at  $125,000 = x/5$ ; or, 625,000. Thus, the total population of Ochalea would be 750,000. <<

>>With a land mass listed as 190,054 square miles, this would give Ochalea an average population density of about 4 people per square mile -- just about perfect for the culture. (There's even room for more, if you account for magic assistance in agriculture, irrigation, sanitation, etc.)<<

If only we'd had that article on economics back in 1984 when we started putting the Gazetteers together... Never even thought about it back then!

Bang, bang, bang... (sound of my forehead hitting the desk). Ouch.

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-08-02 22:29:54 EDT  
Re: Potential MC

BTW, we're looking at the possibility of putting together a MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM(R) Appendix -- faithfully bowing to our legal eagles :-)) -- for the RED STEEL(R) Setting (bowing once more). I'm looking around for some neat ideas for new monsters. These can be either monsters for use anywhere in the MYSTARA(R) Setting (I need a back rub now), or others that are specific to the Savage Coast and its curse. Any ideas out there?

Bruce Heard

From: Gr8kan  
Date: 95-08-03 21:43:55 EDT  
Re: Re:Potential MC

I feel that any MC produced for the AD&D game should be as applicable to \*any\* campaign as to the setting at hand; thus, while the MC would be geared toward the Savage Coast, an attempt should be made to allow the creatures usable in any other setting with minimal change to the creatures abilities or traits. This could be done by describing the creatures in their "Standard" format as well as in their "Cursed" format. This could be done with maybe half the creatures; 1/4 of the creatures would be found only in the "Cursed" format, and thus specific only to the Savage Coast setting; and 1/4 of the creatures would be found only in the "Standard" format, thus applicable anywhere on Mystara, or even in any other setting. Of those found in the "Cursed" format, some could well be normal creatures from the MM or other MC's that have been so warped by the Curse as to be nearly unrecognizable. Also, it would be neat to see a few "Unique" creatures, as was done with an MC from Ravenloft some while back; if nothing else, there should at least be a Savage Coast version of the Tarrasque! Hopefully you can also include encounter charts by specific territory, as was done in the Blackmoor series of modules. Well, there are a few ideas...

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-08-03 22:11:46 EDT  
Re: Re:Potential MC

Gr8Khan, thanks. Actually we were thinking of something like that already: a mix of easily-transferrable creatures and others specific to the Savage Coast. The latter, for the most part, could easily be modified, so their special abilities can read like magical powers rather than just legacies. Not all the monsters would have to come from the cursed regions either. The Eastern City States and the Arm of the Immortals lie clearly outside the curse's realm.

Each nation and its native race would be looked at to see if a creature could be invented or adapted to fit a local niche -- for example, it would be nice if the lupins of Renardy had mounts equivalent to the rakasta felequines -- something like a canequine (dog-horse) or a lupasus (flying wolf-horse). These two are pretty obvious possibilities. Then there could be the creatures that exploit a nifty legacy (fungi that expel clouds of vermeil as a way to imitate the effect of detonating smokepowder).

Your idea of taking already existing creatures from the Monstrous Manual and adapting it or twisting it to the N-th degree as a result of the curse seems great. Hadn't thought about that one <grin>. OK folks, who's gonna come up with the best monster idea? As a matter of fact, see next post.

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-08-03 22:15:25 EDT  
Re: Free Almanac!

RE POTENTIAL MC MONSTER IDEAS (see previous post)

I'm willing to send a free Joshuan's Almanac when it comes out later this year to the person who does come up with a truly remarkable idea for a new Savage Coast monster (the Mystara creative group at TSR will conduct the vote). I'd like to see about a dozen posts on this folder or on the Red Steel to validate the offer. Want to help out good old Mystara? Go right ahead! Don't be shy! Even what seems like a wimpy idea can spark a better one elsewhere. :-D

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-08-04 11:02:00 EDT  
Re: Re:Potential MC

We could also break the MC mold and allow space for legends, anecdotes, maps, and other color-related material. This would play havoc with the usual one-page format though. Could be fun...

Bruce Heard

From: Anodaewyn1  
Date: 95-08-04 18:13:08 EDT  
Re: gifs and jpegs.

I've scanned some photos from the Karamaikos and Glantri boxed set, if anyone is interested in a list...I'll put one together....

~~j~~

From: MoszBro  
Date: 95-08-05 01:56:27 EDT  
Re: Q&A&B

- 1) A contest eh? Hmm... Well then... <digging out old creature crucibles, the creature catalog, and the rule cyclopedia> Lesse what we can do here...
- 2) Mystara, fluffy or not, is a name and I'm just glad that my gaming world has a name!
- 3) Why was the Poor Wizard's Almanac name changed? I thought PWA was kinda clever.

- 4) Who the frag is Joshuan (sp) anyhow?
- 5) How about coming out with a Clarnisa's (sp) Travels to the Center of the World almanac for Hollow world?

From: Lostboy103  
Date: 95-08-05 20:33:48 EDT  
Re: Fate of Basic D&D

Just a quick post:

I believe that BASIC D&D's demise (my perspective) is bad for gamers, and for TSR in the long run. Sure, it was overly simple, but that was it's strength. I enjoyed my 1981 books because they allowed players on a tight schedule to create enjoyable characters and set off adventuring within 30 minutes of pouring out the dice. Try that with all the kits/weapon proficiencies/specializations/etc...

Of course, these newer rules can be optional, but that isn't solving the problem, that's just slapping a bandaid on it. THE SOLUTION? -glad you asked - Begin again. Reintroduce the BASIC RULES, with limited arms/armor, elves as a class, not a race (it doesn't HAVE to make sense, this is fantasy), and no sub-classes. This allows new players to understand and grasp the gaming mechanics VERY QUICKLY, and allows Quick-start game sessions. The old way was better for the industry, in my humble opinion. Now, it is TOO much, TOO soon. It is TOO overwhelming, and had I been introduced to the game now rather than in 1981, I would very likely not have become the avid gamer I am today.

I propose the new version of basic be called Introductory Dungeons & Dragons, or some such, since BASIC has some stigma attached (to some.) Comments are begged for. ;)

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-08-07 15:15:23 EDT  
Re: Re:Fate of Basic D&D

You need to go back and check the June 15 posts re. the fate of the D&D(R) Game (switching over) and a number of others. I think that will answer a number of your questions.

Bruce Heard

From: Terari  
Date: 95-08-07 23:12:33 EDT  
Re: Mark of Amber

I'd like to share with you a story that happened to our Mystara game group. Our group has a ranger in it whose player lives in a foster home. He was

removed from his own home because of an abusive father, and thus is very sensitive about child abuse matters.

When I read through the Mark of Amber adventure, I saw the part about Etienne being whipped by his father, and knew I'd have to take it out. When I ran the adventure, lo and behold, I hadn't, and didn't realize it until I was halfway through the encounter. But, rather than being upset by it, the player said his ranger was jumping in front of the whip. He stayed there through the entire fight, shielding and comforting young Etienne.

One week later, I picked that player up from his psychiatrist (I recently acquired my driver's license). The man, whoknew me as his patient's best friend, took me aside and told me that the boy had made significant progress in the past week, and asked if there had been any events in his life to make that happen. I shook my head no. Only later did I realize that it was possible that the game could have been that event. I guess maybe he felt he had done something to fight back against the abuse he had had to endure.

Just though I'd share.

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-08-08 18:15:37 EDT  
Re: Re:Mark of Amber

That was nice! A new vocation for RPGs. That's not the first time though that I hear this. There's a lot that can be said about the social benefits of role-playing. That was perhaps one of the them. I wish this sort of information would get more attention among the anti-RPG crowds.

Bruce Heard

From: Sequitur X  
Date: 95-08-08 23:25:59 EDT  
Re: Re:Fate of Basic D&D

What the...?

Are Newcomers not allowed to post in this folder?? If anyone repeats a topic that was discussed 2 MONTHS ago, will they be ignored?

By the way, what is the time limit on posts? 3 months? 6 months? oops, not that far back... Is there an answer?

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-08-08 23:40:27 EDT  
Re: Re:Fate of Basic D&D

Gee sorry, Seq, but I just didn't feel like recopying the same posts all over again. Hey, otherwise, all newcomers are welcome! Where did you get the idea they weren't anyway? :-)



Bruce Heard

From: MMonagle  
Date: 95-08-09 02:17:11 EDT  
Re: Lost Ring

I just read about a Mystara product that was scheduled for release in November called 'Iron Ring Audio CD'. However, since it's not listed in the 1995 TSR product release catalog, I suspect that it will not see the light of day (similar to the Mighty Argos CD adventure, scroll back and see posts on 6/27). For those of you who are haven't heard of the Iron Ring, it is an evil organization that used to run its schemes out of the Black Eagle Barony in Karameikos; I believe the organization was first introduced in the module B10. If you want to read about what you might have been able to get, then see below:

#### Iron Ring Audio CD

A CD Adventure! Clues, sounds, confrontation-Iron Ring beware! In a test of wits and stealth, heroes confront the Iron Ring, one of the most notorious criminal gangs in all of Mystara! This audio CD adventure features thrilling sound effects and clues on compact disc. The package comes with an added bonus: a detailed dossier exposing secrets of the Iron Ring. Includes a poster-sized map, 8 sheets, and a 64-page booklet. (#2516) CD.....\$18.00

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-08-09 09:59:11 EDT  
Re: Re:Lost Ring

This product was removed several months ago from the list of '95 releases. Sorry.

Bruce Heard

From: TSRO Tank  
Date: 95-08-09 18:05:22 EDT  
Re: Re:Fate of Basic D&D

>>By the way, what is the time limit on posts? 3 months? 6 months? oops, not that far back... Is there an answer?<<

Of COURSE there's an answer! :D

The posts in here will remain in here until the folder fills, at which point the folder will be archived.

In other words, any post that does not violate the Terms of Service will remain here indefinitely.

--TSRO Tank  
Message Board Host  
TSR Online

From: Anodaewyn1  
Date: 95-08-10 09:17:19 EDT  
Re: Re:Lost Ring

The Iron Ring, is soo easy to bring into play as an ongoing enemy. I started the adventure in the Karemeikos boxed set, and, since my PC's were already introduced into being followed, and stalked by members of the Ring, all I had to do was come up with a plot... So, I used the Bargle the Infamous wanted poster, and told the PC's he's been rumored to have joined the Iron Ring, and is taking it over. And, bring up Bargle against a low level group of adventurers, and, they start setting their sights high... to take out Bargle, thus, destroying the Iron Ring (yeah, right.) So, I was looking forward to the CD, and wish that it was coming out, but, since its not, I'm not really all too worried about that.

From: Swelt  
Date: 95-08-10 11:10:55 EDT  
Re: Mystara into FR?

Is Mystara set into the FR setting? I've heard that Mystara's modules are much better in quality than FR's modules, which I find extremely lacking

Scott

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-08-11 00:10:32 EDT  
Re: Re:Mystara into FR?

>>Is Mystara set into the FR setting?<<

>>No. Mystara is set in the Known World. The only other setting that uses the Known World is Red Steel (along the "Savage Coast")<<

Um, not quite. Mystara is the name of the planet. The Know World is just a little corner of the continent of Brun, set on Mystara. Likewise, the Savage Coast is set on the same continent, just west of the Known World. -- Close though :-)

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce

Date: 95-08-11 00:14:37 EDT  
Re: Re:Mystara into FR?

>>I've heard that Mystara's modules are much better in quality than FR's modules, which I find extremely lacking<<

What you refer to as "Mystara" modules are probably the old D&D(R) Game Gazetteers which were quite good indeed -- yes, I am totally biased, but hey... ;-)  
The bad news is that these are mostly out of print. If you find some, grab them since they should become collector items at this rate. Later MYSTARA(R) products were written for the AD&D(R) Game and weren't too bad either, that is if you like audio CDs.

Bruce Heard

From: TSRO Tank  
Date: 95-08-11 17:42:06 EDT  
Re: Re:Mystara into FR?

>>Mystara is the name of the planet. The Know World is just a little corner of the continent of Brun, set on Mystara. Likewise, the Savage Coast is set on the same continent, just west of the Known World. -- Close though :-)  
--<<

ACK! :/+

:: rearranging a topic or two ::

Thanks for the clarification. (hid my original to avoid confusion)

--Tank

From: AgSquid  
Date: 95-08-13 18:55:05 EDT  
Re: DEATH of Classic D&D.

By converting our favorite world into AD&D format, TSR alienated many die-hard classic fans, and we left the hobby in droves.

When this all began, AD&D already had dozens of worlds, and this was our last holdout. We were receiving fewer adventures and supplements for a long time, and then suddenly - light at the end of the tunnel! The rules cyclopedia was released and Dragon began its Princess Ark series. We found the Hollow World and the Immortals spent their Wrath on a world gone mad. We even had a annual yearbook! Something no AD&D game could boast about. And there was still much left uncovered, undiscovered for creative DMs to exploit and wild players to explore. Something must have gone wrong. Maybe it wasn't selling as well as TSR had hoped, or they just figured they could make more, but the dream died. The Known World officially became MYSTARA. Just another AD&D world. No longer

unique or unusual. It was doomed to become the training ground for novice players who could not play the game and thus received basic training manuals with nothing of the rich creative history of the old game. Rad himself could not drain the magic so thoroughly from Mystara as this! The new Gazetteers came in gaudy expensive wrapping with corny, digitized CDs to try and boost sales. It slowed and died. Classic D&Ders hated translating the AD&D stats over - they had been doing it for years with FR or DL products, now they had to do it with their own campaign - so they left. The new players didn't know what to make of the whole game, so they went to "the real game," (I honestly heard someone say this) "in the Forgotten Realms.", or they went to the well-publicized Dragon Lance world. MYSTARA was left by the wayside - a lost and discarded planet. I only hope that TSR will return it to its rightful D&D owners. We will be glad to have the real thing back. Rich in history - and now with a new chapter.

THE AgSquid

Any other classic D&D fans out there? E-Mail or post me - we'll share old war stories/adventure ideas...

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-08-14 17:43:49 EDT  
Re: Re:DEATH of Classic D&D.

Thanks for the tirade, Squid, but it doesn't seem to say much more than what had already been discussed here at length. I suggest to you, like I've suggested to others before, that you read some of the earlier posts re. "Switching over to AD&D" dated mid-June 1995 in this folder. These should answer several of your questions or assumptions.

For the record -- TSR was \*NOT\* trying to make more money by switching the Known World to the AD&D(R) Game. For reasons clearly explained in these earlier posts (q.v.) it had become obvious that the D&D(R) Game's days were numbered. The choice was to let it go -- along with its game world -- or salvage the latter. In other words, there was going to be \*NO\* Known World at all, or an AD&D Game version of it.

It turned out to be labelled or presented as "suggested for beginners" (or something to that effect) although the contents were pretty much the same as the original D&D Game material. It seems some of you out there were more offended by that label than the true contents of the product. Frankly, if that label would have meant a better chance for the Known World to survive among other AD&D Game worlds, then such a little price could have been ignored altogether. This was more a problem of perception and cosmetics than one of actual substance.

A very large proportion of people who bought the original Known World material were regular players of the AD&D(R) Game. I'm not trying to insult anyone here, but that's just a fact. From GAZ1 on, they had been quietly converting Known

World material to fit their AD&D Campaigns. In addition to the above, many players of the D&D(R) Game also used the advanced rules. People who played the D&D Game \*exclusively\* represented the smallest proportion of the overall community of people supporting the Known World. Switching over the Known World to the AD&D Game certainly wasn't meant as a slap in anyone's face, but it seemed like it didn't represent such a huge problem for the majority of Known World supporters, especially if that meant life or death of that game world. It's not a question of "fairness" or "who has more game worlds" (etc). It's just reality.

Finally, the Known World accessories ended up with audio CDs (please see June 15 posts for explanations on this). Some of you didn't like them and as a result I doubt you will see many more audio CDs anywhere. Too bad though, since some of them were quite good. If you have a chance to borrow CDs from RED STEEL(TM) products, the Castle Amber adventure, or the PLANESCAPE(R) accessory, please do. The first two are pretty much all background music. The third provides narrations (boxed text that the DM normally reads). The fourth, if I'm not mistaken, is supposed to be an artifact that reveals information to players about the outer planes. Of all these, the first two and the last one are reusable on a regular basis, which makes them even more attractive.

But of course, it seems many people refuse to go along with change. That's OK. You're totally free to buy or ignore new products. Of course, as a result of this TSR is just as free as you are to publish or not to publish. If something just isn't working out for TSR, why should they keep doing it? TSR isn't a public service. TSR would rather prefer pleasing customers of course, but not if that becomes self-defeating. If you can't understand that, it's really too bad because you're setting yourself up for many more disappointments with other companies.

Sure, it's possible you have legitimate reasons not to like "New-Mystara". But I doubt very much that TSR would re-release the original D&D Game version. Even if TSR tried, distributors in the industry wouldn't go along with the attempt -- the product wouldn't even leave TSR's warehouses. TSR doesn't work in a void, remember? Savage Coast products are all that's left of possible future Mystara releases. If these fail to come up to your expectation next year, then I'm afraid no further Mystara products should be expected at all.

Bruce Heard

From: Sequitur X  
Date: 95-08-14 23:04:17 EDT  
Re: Re:DEATH of Classic D&D.

Gosh.

Thanks, Bruce, for the anti-tirade tirade. Where have I heard this defense before?

One question: >>For the record - TSR was \*NOT\* trying to make more money by switching the Know World to the AD&D(R) Game.<< but >>People who played the D&D Game \*exclusively\* represented the smallest proportion of the overall community of people supporting the Known World.<< Ohh, i get it.

I hate to disagree with a TSR employee, but I think TSR \*SHOULD\* re-issue the Basic Game. Saying that the Game was dying because it wasn't changing is not altogether true. It lost followers because of competing (AD&D and other) games and non-competitive pricing. But you know where I stand on these issues.

I think we all understand the how the market works. I don't think it is as valid a defense as some (later D&D writers especially) would like for it to be. Nobody knows the whole story. I do know that we're here and this is now, and a tremendous market is being passed by because no one wants to claim responsibility for the FAILURE of D&D. C'mon, TSR, give it another chance. If you build it (the way it was meant to be), they will come.

Your pal,  
Seq

From: Cyber541  
Date: 95-08-15 00:17:00 EDT  
Re: Re:ShadowElves?

I've heard others make reference to something called HOLLOW WORLD(R) that's part of the Mystara setting. Any intel on this?  
--Cyber  
PS Email me with answers

From: Cyber541  
Date: 95-08-15 00:25:21 EDT  
Re: Re:AD&D?!?!?

<flame>ORIGINAL D&D IS DEAD! LET'S JUST BURY IT!!!!!!</flame>

From: Cyber541  
Date: 95-08-15 00:55:27 EDT  
Re: Immortals/Gods

Here's a thought: What if Gods are just Immortals who hide the fact that they were once mortal?

From: Gr8kan  
Date: 95-08-15 03:09:41 EDT  
Re: Joshuan's Almanac

Will this still be published, or has this also been dropped?

And if it has, could some of the information be "published" in the download section (especially the events for 1013)?

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-08-15 09:07:03 EDT  
Re: Re:DEATH of Classic D&D.

Yes Seq, I thought you would appreciate the anti-tirade tirade!

I'll repeat the same thing again, however -- TSR's primary goal in switching Known World over to the AD&D(R) Game was to save it from the end of the D&D(R) Game.

That was the true reason. If it hadn't been for several people at TSR (one of whom I happen to be), there wouldn't be any Known World at all, period. The whole thing would have been canned along with the D&D Game a long time ago.

>>>>One question: >>For the record - TSR was \*NOT\* trying to make more money by switching the Know World to the AD&D(R) Game.<< but >>People who played the D&D Game \*exclusively\* represented the smallest proportion of the overall community of people supporting the Known World.<< Ohh, i get it.<<<<

No, you really don't get it, Seq. You're taking this comment out of context. This was a measure of how many people among established supporters (i.e., people ALREADY buying Known World products) would be incomedated by the switchover. How could that make more money? It was clear to everyone at TSR that the switch would not be an easy thing and that not everyone would necessarily follow. TSR was only trying to support a setting that would have otherwise been cancelled. What you say doesn't make sense.

Unfortunately, there always seem to be people like you who will try to twist everything around thanks to their paranoia. I work at TSR. I know TSR. I see what happens at TSR every day. You don't. Worse, when I try to explain the reasons why some things happens, you turn around and say you "disagree". Excuse me? Sure, you're totally free to thoroughly dislike some of the decisions made at TSR, but that doesn't mean I tell "stories". Of course, if you've just decided to be angry and to disregard everything that's said regardless, then there really isn't any point in continuing the discussion, isn't there? A lot of people come on this board to ask questions -- I try to answer them. That's all.

You say TSR should try to re-issue basic D&D. This shows you have no understanding on how the market works. It seems you didn't read what I posted on this topic. BTW, I am one of the staunchest supporters of the D&D Game and the Known World setting at TSR. My personal interest in the product is what makes me appear on this board, not kindness to TSR or my status as a "TSR employee" as you pointed out.

If there were a reasonable way to get the stuff back, believe me I would know. I suppose you'll come up with another snide comment about this. Be my guest. So far, you've accomplished very little here, other than stirring bad feelings (and getting me to post new tirades).

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-08-15 13:21:39 EDT  
Re: Re:ShadowElves?

Shadow elves were originally described in the Elves of Alfheim gazetteer and later in the Shadow Elves gazetteer. They were published several years ago as part of the D&D(R) Game. The text for the Shadow Elves is presently available in the Download of the Month section of AOL. Shadow Elves are related to another tribe dwelling in the Hollow World, a separate world inside Mystara. Material for the Hollow World was also published as D&D products. Most that is now out of print.

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-08-15 13:28:38 EDT  
Re: Re:Immortals/Gods

>>Here's a thought: What if Gods are just Immortals who hide the fact that they were once mortal?<<

Well, that's more or less what they are. The rules dealing with "Immortals" are just different from what's presently available in the AD&D(R) Game to run gods. Original rules on Immortals were last published as part of another D&D(R) product called Wrath of the Immortals. You might still be able to find that one.

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-08-15 13:30:34 EDT  
Re: Re:Joshuan's Almanac

Joshuan's Almanac is due for release sometime before Xmas (late November, early December) this year. That should be the last one unless Mystara's status changes in 1997.

Bruce Heard



From: TSRO Bocob  
Date: 95-08-15 17:23:37 EDT  
Re: MYSTARA Trivia Night!!!!

Stay tuned here for further details, but we here in TSR Online will be hosting a MYSTARA trivia night. The date is yet to be set, but we will post it here when finalized. Though there is no registration required for this event, I would like to get an idea of the number of members that would attend when the night is offered. The Trivia Night will be held on a Sunday, starting at 10pm Eastern time. There are 2 games of trivia, each lasting approximately 45 minutes, with a prize going to the winner of each game. There is also a prize question offered during each game for an instant prize, bringing to the total of 4 prizes. We hold trivia nights as a regular feature (though erratic of late due to various problems) where we ask general TSR Product related questions, these questions can be anything from AD&D or D&D to Novels or even Gamma World or Top Secret, the majority of questions are on AD&D. We are also going to schedule theme nights for trivia, such as this for MYSTARA. Please show your support for this land by sending e-mail (do not post here) to me (TSRO Bocob). Watch the NEW area under UPCOMING EVENTS for the Trivia dates.

Many thanks Bruce for the questions, when the date is finalized I hope to see you there.

Bocob

From: MMonagle  
Date: 95-08-15 17:33:04 EDT  
Re: Re:Joshuan's Almanac

Instead of ending Joshuan's Almanac this year, how about having him wander over to the Savage Coast and have him start putting out a yearly almanac on this place? I believe that the Joshuan idea was inspired by the Marco Volo FR products (is that correct?). Didn't he wander around the FR putting out various source guides? Why not have Joshuan do something similar. I would love to see how the nations of the Savage Coast interact as a year would go by. The previous almanacs were wonderful for providing insights into political interactions of Mystara, let's do the same for the Savage Coast.

From: Mswing  
Date: 95-08-15 17:39:27 EDT  
Re: Re:Immortals/Gods

> Here's a thought: What if Gods are just Immortals who hide the fact that they were once mortal?

In my view, it is sort of the other way around. When a character starts an immortality quest, his patron immortal discreetly contacts another deity (who he is allied with). Then, once the mortal succeeds, his essence merges with

the other deity, who then has access to Mystara. The mortal gains immortality (his consciousness is both separate and merged - its a deity thing, we mortals can't understand :), and the immortal gains access and knowledge of the world.

This prevents the difficult-to-work idea that some of the gods (like Loki) are less than a few thousand years old. It also preserves everything about the immortal quest, and gives a reason why some of the immortals are similar (or identical) to gods of our own world

mwing

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-08-15 18:29:52 EDT  
Re: Re:MYSTARA Trivia Night!!!!

I'll try my best to be there (hope I didn't get any of the answers wrong!)  
This ought to be fun!

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-08-15 18:43:33 EDT  
Re: Re:Joshuan's Almanac

>>Instead of ending Joshuan's Almanac this year, how about having him wander over to the Savage Coast and have him start putting out a yearly almanac on this place?<<

Not bad idea. Although I doubt we'll be able to get that product on the schedule before 1997 at this point. That's the first pot hole. The second one is the number of titles planned for Savage Coast, which remains limited so far -- in other words a Savage Coast Almanac would probably take the place of another product.

Here are some new questions. Would you rather have a Gazetteer-syle accessory or an Almanac? If you went for an Almanac, would you rather drop the first half of the book in favor of "historical" events only? Would you include background material on new areas (such as the Savage Coast) for the first year, and then drop it during the second year? Should it include the rest of the Known World, and the Hollow World, or be specific to Savage Coast only (feasability would probably determine the answer to the latter question though). Options...

Bruce Heard

From: ALMIGHTY X  
Date: 95-08-15 23:11:09 EDT

Re: Re:DEATH of BRUCE

Hmmm,

I will agree with brother "X" <G>. No serious gamer seems to be enthused about the new setup. Of course, the serious gamers only seemed to be enthused about it until that ill-fated edition came out in the late 80's. "Bargle?" What kind of name was that? I've heard of candy bars with more creative names... but I digress.

I think TSR needs a quick fix for gamers who are bound by time, or who are trying to explain the game to the inexperienced. Whether it is Basic Revisited or something else is up to the consumer ( I hope.) I hope the attitudes clean up though. The TSR egos vs. the Old Guard egos was interesting at first, but time passes by so fast when you have to pay for it.

I generally ignore rude postings unless they have some merit. Mr. Heard's latest attack comes dangerously close. If someone talks to me like that over the phone, they are in serious trouble within the hour. At least, Bruce, you are giving us something of a picture as to how TSR is run. Heck, I'd pay a dollar to tour the offices <G>.

Someone, a while back, maybe it was me, posted that prices were getting exclusive. I would like to reinforce that point, too, because Christmas is coming and my nephews are beginning to get interested in all those 'funny books' i have in the library. But that's just me being selfish. I'm sure that kids today are having to scrape to afford the price tags on those slick looking hardbacks I've been seeing at the mall.

ENOUGH OF MY CRYING! I'll get off this soapbox and hand it over to the next viewpoint.

-Almighty

From: ALMIGHTY X  
Date: 95-08-15 23:16:10 EDT  
Re: Re:Joshuan's Almanac

Mr. Heard and other posters,

I would like to cast my vote for more GAZETEERS. I own two of the almanacs and they just don't live up to the GAZ ambience. I would go so far as to say that I would rather own ONE gaz than two almanacs. It's better to err on the side of in-depth coverage than topical trivia. This is oversimplifying, i realize, but you asked! ;)

-Almighty

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-08-15 23:21:30 EDT  
Re: Re:DEATH of ALMIGHTY?

Cute...

>>I generally ignore rude postings unless they have some merit. Mr. Heard's latest attack comes dangerously close. If someone talks to me like that over the phone, they are in serious trouble within the hour.<<

So far, the balance on rudeness has been heavily on the side of users rather than TSR's, just check the earlier postings. BTW, what you call an attack on my part has been merely a response to a posting that was rude to begin with.

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-08-15 23:25:15 EDT  
Re: Re:Joshuan's Almanac

>> I would go so far as to say that I would rather own ONE gaz than two almanacs. It's better to err on the side of in-depth coverage than topical trivia. This is oversimplifying, i realize, but you asked!<<

Yep. No problem. I like the Gazetteers too. :-)

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-08-16 08:41:03 EDT  
Re: Re:ShadowElves?

Shadow elves in the Hollow World are called Schattentalfen.

Bruce Heard

From: Terari  
Date: 95-08-16 22:58:19 EDT  
Re: Re:Gazateers

If it's possible they'll see the light of day, I'd rather have gazateers. However, if an almanac is published, I'd prefer the Poor wizard's style. From what I've heard, the Joshuan's has more flavor, but less substance.

Terari.

From: Anodaewyn1

Date: 95-08-17 00:45:57 EDT  
Re: Re:Gazateers

Ah yes...the Gazeteer sounds nice...If not though, I too, would like to have the Poor Wizards style. That would definitely be cool.

Anodaewyn

From: MMonagle  
Date: 95-08-17 03:31:41 EDT  
Re: Re:Gazateers

I too would like to cast a vote in favor of Gazatteer style game material. However, if an almanac eventually gets published, I liked Bruce's idea of the first one being chalked full of details and then the following ones having more yearly info. Of the first three Poor Wizard's Almanacs, there is a lot of repeated material (I still enjoyed them however).

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-08-17 08:47:40 EDT  
Re: Re:Gazetteers

I'm glad you're all in favor of the old Gazetteer style. BTW, if our plans hold together, 1996 Savage Coast releases should include one or more Gazetteer-style products.

Bruce Heard

From: Psychlops  
Date: 95-08-17 22:52:32 EDT  
Re: Classic D&D questions

Bruce,

I, like you, am a fan of the Classic D&D game. The Cyclopedia was probably the best value of any TSR product: an entire fantasy game in one hardbound volume. I was very sorry to see the D&D line discontinued, but I do understand the reasons; I'm just surprised it didn't happen sooner.

That being said, I still have to ask what the "mission" of the D&D game is at present. I believe it will always be produced, if not supported, for trademark reasons if nothing else. Everybody may play the AD&D game, but it's the simple name "Dungeons & Dragons" that has a hold on the popular imagination. So, my question is not why, but what now?

Does D&D work as an introduction to AD&D, as it was intended to in the late 70's? Or, is it primarily there to preserve the trademark? If the latter, couldn't production of whatever boxed set is current alternate with production

of the Rules Cyclopedia? That way the entire game would still be available, while protecting the trademark. If D&D really \*is\* intended to introduce role-playing, and lead into AD&D, will it ever be re-designed to be truly compatible?

As far as Gazetteers are concerned, they were the other great values that TSR produced. They were fun, full of useful ideas, and inexpensive. They were unpretentious, and seemed to encourage DM participation and expansion -- not all AD&D products do that. Mystara as a whole has never been my chosen campaign, but the Gazetteers (and Creature Crucibles) always presented something useful for almost any campaign. I think all this, not bells and whistles, is what made them so popular.

Just a thought,

Psychlops

From: Sequitur X  
Date: 95-08-17 23:14:22 EDT  
Re: Re:Classic D&D questions

Amen!

Psy makes a point and his criticism is constructive to boot.

The gazeteers are favored over the almanacs. Is this the consensus?

-Seq

p.s. TSR Bruce, is there anyone else from TSR back there we could talk to? No offense, but your quips are becoming as predictable as mine. ;)

From: Sir Vesper  
Date: 95-08-17 23:55:09 EDT  
Re: Re:Classic D&D questions

Another adventurer who prefers the Gazetteer is throwing his opinion in here!

I only had the oppurtunity to see a few of the Gazetteers myself, but each one was just stuffed full of information. If these were reprinted to give the base material, then the Almanacs would follow yearly to give an update with no need to redescribe the lands.

See ya Online,

Sir Vesper, FOG Mistreach Coordinator

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-08-18 09:15:20 EDT  
Re: Re:Classic D&D questions

>>TSR Bruce, is there anyone else from TSR back there we could talk to? No offense, but your quips are becoming as predictable as mine. ;)<<

Sure -- your next best bet is probably Roger Moore (although he's probably going to be out of touch with AOL for another couple of weeks). Other than Roger, interest level for the D&D(R) Game in Creative Services/Periodicals/RPGA remains pretty low -- not out of contempt but simply because everyone is working on AD&D(R) products mostly and time is awfully short. Ditto the Known World. The Savage Coast has some following here, among whom Meneldir (AOL screen name) and a number of other people whom I not sure have connections with AOL.

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-08-18 18:35:29 EDT  
Re: Re:Classic D&D questions

>>Does D&D work as an introduction to AD&D, as it was intended to in the late 70's? Or, is it primarily there to preserve the trademark?<<

You got me on that one!!! Indeed, there is a "basic" D&D(R) Game box still on the catalog, but as far as I know, the box called "Introduction to the AD&D(R) Game" is the one supposed to do the job. I'll have to get back to you on that one (he answers, scratching his head)! :-)

As far as Gazetteers go, I sure hope we can revive them in one setting or the other. They always were fun projects to work on! Back then, the graphics-end on these projects occasionally turned into real head aches, but I suspect with the means we now have, they would be far more manageable. I still remember a statement one of the R&D directors made years ago -- "These 96-pagers are monsters, they are really tough to produce."

(sigh)

Bruce Heard

From: Mystaros  
Date: 95-08-18 21:36:52 EDT  
Re: Re:Roger Moore

>>Sure -- your next best bet is probably Roger Moore (although he's probably going to be out of touch with AOL for another couple of weeks).<<

Is he on a mission? (Oog.. that's an old, old joke...)

From: B1Bard  
Date: 95-08-20 01:55:20 EDT  
Re: GAZ's

I've been playing for over 13 years, and I'd definitely have to say that the gazeteers were among the absolute best values TSR ever produced. I'd be willing to pay \$10-15 for everything that got packed into those babies and I often only had to pay \$7.95!

BRING 'EM BACK!

8)  
B1Bard

From: B1Bard  
Date: 95-08-20 01:59:10 EDT  
Re: LIFE TO BRUCE

Hey -

(I think I've said all of this before)  
LEAVE BRUCE ALONE!

you can disagree with his opinion, and you can find faults with TSR - lord knows I've done both in to the extreme), but personal attacks on Bruce his job and his credibility are way out of line. He is going out of his way, and taking his own personal time to nuture what remains of the Mystara gaming community (those of us online anyway) and is fighting for us at TSR. He is our only connection to the guys that can make a difference in whether or not we see the products we love. Insulting and attacking him serves no purpose whatsoever, and only makes him less willing to help us.

That's not what we need, and that's not what we want.

'nuff said

B1Bard

From: AgSquid  
Date: 95-08-20 14:01:43 EDT  
Re: My Apologies, Bruce

>>Something must have gone wrong. Maybe it wasn't selling as well as TSR had hoped, or they just figured they could make more money<< (AgSquid)



>>For the record -- TSR was \*NOT\* trying to make more money by switching the Know World to the AD&D(R) Game. For reasons clearly explained in these earlier posts (q.v.) it had become obvious that the D&D(R) Game's days were numbered. The choice was to let it go -- along with its game world -- or salvage the latter. In other words, there was going to be \*NO\* Known World at all, or an AD&D Game version of it.<< (Bruce Heard)

At the time of my last posting, I realized that I was only repeating the sentiments of many who had gone before, but I felt that they were important enough to merit rediscussion.

I had not realized that D&D faced cancellation and total demise.

In this new light, I would have to thank the TSR folks for trying to save something that was, and always will be one of the greatest games ever written for the mind to play. Even if it was changed to a simpler format (Don't tell me that these new boxed sets can hold a candle to the Gazetteers, and the adventures...), the attempt to save the game was meritable.

I would agree with B1Bard. Do not insult/slander/knock/alienate Bruce Heard, the new Guru of D&D Classic. He has done more in recent years to rejuvenate the game than most, and deserves praise, not pain. This is his creation that is dying too.

With any luck and/or hope, we can expect to find on-line downloads of our favorite game here in the future - if Luz the Evil can find a home here, so can King Stephan. The important point is that someone will have to write them. TSR folks may not have the time to do this - they are a company, and a company must make money. This involves it's employees writing products that people buy. The downloads found here are works of love. So, fellow players and D&D Classic lovers, the torch has been passed to us.

>><flame>ORIGINAL D&D IS DEAD! LET'S JUST BURY IT!!!!!!</flame><< (Cyber451)

Not a polite or original way of phrasing the words, but an appropriate comment nonetheless. If D&D had no hope, and then it's AD&D incarnation failed, it is dead. Only we can keep its spirit alive - another ghost to haunt Radlebb keep. We can do this by posting new monsters, campaign ideas and political/social developments in the lives of the characters that are so important to the Mystaran ethos. Bruce did it and built us the Savage Coast to play in. Can we do it for the rest of the Known World, including a revisitation to places we have already been? I think so. Does anyone else?

From: AgSquid  
Date: 95-08-20 14:24:44 EDT  
Re: Gaz/Almanac/Josh

I'm all for a return of the Gazetteers. Those little booklets had more info packed into them than a CD with jewel case. The maps were wonderful (speaking

of which, will there ever be more trail maps, or trail maps for the other worlds?), the art was fantastic, and the writing was literature. There were all kinds of plot hooks and links to be exploited from them.

The Almanac was also a worthy endeavor. A completely detailed look at the world w/multiple storylines to follow. It detailed numbers and stats and days and holidays and the Day of Magic. A useful calendar of sorts. The War Machine Armies list for the world wasn't really so useful, and should only have been printed once. There can be a thing as too much detail. One could have simply gone back to the previous year's book for info - something to think about in the future - a space saving mechanism.

Where the Poor Wizard's was a numbers catalogue, Josh's Almanac was a viewbook with a glossy smile at the physical structures of the world. It held detail of physical descriptions, and attempted to give a roleplayer's look at the world, giving flesh to the bones of the PWA. It didn't cover nearly as much as it could have though...

So, if we see a return of the gazeteers, I suggest that they are statless, or at least very general - this way everybody can play w/o having to convert dwarven paladin/mage kits to D&D stats and vice-versa. You could describe someone as strong and intelligent - in true roleplaying, the stats aren't all that important anyway. With these description type stats, other non-TSR game systems could also use the books w/o the pain of translation. (Hmm. Translation from game system to system is actually kind of fun. You should see my RIFTS campaign - a character from every major gaming company) I would love to see the maps again too. Now that TSR is using Mac publications, the art should be something truly spectacular.

From: Gnomeboy  
Date: 95-08-20 15:50:58 EDT  
Re: Re:LIFE TO BRUCE

Right on Bard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-08-20 16:42:22 EDT  
Re: LET THERE BE LIFE!

Thanks for the votes of confidence! :-D

If Savage Coast happens in 1996 as planned, the Gazetteer format will be a definite go (he says, rubbing his hands)!

Trailmaps (if well-done, that is) can offer great value for your money. I personally loved the ones we published for the Known World. The real difficulty with such large size maps is the printing. The last time we produced them, we

had problems with pre-press and paper folding stages. Finding vendors capable of handling such huge chromalins, and printers capable of handling such huge sheets of paper seriously limited production options that were cost-effective. I don't think these issues have been resolved yet, although I'll have another look at what new services are now available to TSR in that area (TSR doesn't own any printing companies). It's been a few years since the last Trail Maps, but one can hope technology improved since.

There is the issue that Trail Maps cannot be used during play. They are essentially a DM's tool or a "decoration" item to hang on your wall. Some people have complained about that, and TSR's traditional "gotta-have-a-mapsheet" approach to accessories. I'm kind of straddling the line on this issue. I like the poster maps, but I also enjoy the pocket atlas approach with a bunch of small color maps one can quickly flip through during play. They both have their advantages and inconvenients.

What if we released a new Savage Coast book (a bit like the AL QADIM(R) Campaign Book) that did NOT have some in-bound mapsheet, but instead, a series of color plates inside the book? We attempted that with the Rules Cyclopedia. It would have to be an improvement from the latter book however (people had problems visualizing the whole thing and locating the right maps). There are plenty of pocket atlases and street-locators we can look at for better examples on how to do this.

Other accessories, especially the Gazetteers, would be offering a more detailed mapsheet, with the traditional boxed diagrams and miscellaneous items on the sides.

For the sake of continuity with older Trail Maps, I'm assuming we'd have to use the old hex size and icons. This would allow owners of the Known World Trail Maps to overlap them with the Savage Coast Trail Maps. I'm not sure the 8-mile/hex scale will allow that approach, however. The desert separating the Known World from the Savage Coast is quite large and devoid of detail -- does this part warrant a Trail Map? I'm not sure. Finally, the shape of the Savage Coast would require the next Trail Map to use an east-west "landscape" format. Even then, I'm not sure it could all fit on a single sheet. Then the Arm of the Immortal goes back the other way, a long, narrow north-south peninsula. The scale to accomplish this would probably determine whether we could link up all the Trail Maps, new and old.

Most of us don't have enough wall-space anyway (although, if your landlord permitted you to wrap the extra Trail Maps around into the outside hallway...)  
:-)

Comments are most welcome on the above issues. Please check earlier posts re. Trail Maps, back around June 08 1995 in this folder. Thanks again.

Bruce Heard

From: B1Bard  
Date: 95-08-21 00:45:12 EDT  
Re: Re:Trail Maps

I think one of the best things about the trail maps was the marginal information. Not that it was marginal in quality, just located in the margin ;)

If there could be some way to include that information, I would love to see it bound into a book in the same format as the Almanac.

Combine detailed maps of the area, both w/ the 8miles/hex grid and normal topographic maps, as well adventurers' trasure maps and sketches, and then short descriptions of the areas to go with the (formerly) marginal information, and you'd have a winning product. If you wanted to add a limited or scaled-down version of the calendar of events, I'm sure that no one would complain.

whaddaya think?

I'll be back in 2 weeks to check it all out (the army is calling me to the field again...)

I'll also be compiling the next Net Book, which (I hope) will not suffer from the formatting problems of the last one. We have some neat stuff this time, but we could still use some NPC characters, artwork, and adventure ideas. email them to me, and I'll do what I can w/ them over Labor Day...

party on  
8)  
B1Bard

From: B1Bard  
Date: 95-08-21 00:46:17 EDT  
Re: More Net Book

I'll be compiling the next Net Book, which (I hope) will not suffer from the formatting problems of the last one. We have some neat stuff this time, but we could still use some NPC characters, artwork, and adventure ideas. email them to me, and I'll do what I can w/ them over Labor Day...

I'll be back in 2 weeks; the army is calling me to the field again...

party on  
8)  
B1Bard

From: Anodaewyn1  
Date: 95-08-21 16:11:48 EDT  
Re: Trail Maps

I've asked this question before, with no avail, so, I'll try again...

Does anyone know of, or have any of the trail maps that I keep hearing so much about? I myself, have not seen one, and they just sound so completely awesome! So, if anyone has any info, please, drop me an E-mail, or post them in here for sale...

Thanks!!

~~j

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-08-21 17:09:13 EDT  
Re: Re:Trail Maps

Have you tried Product Exchange in the General Info folder?

From: Mystaros  
Date: 95-08-21 21:14:37 EDT  
Re: Re: Trail Maps

If my calculations are correct, each of the trail maps covers approximately 700 miles from east to west; if the new maps would be a continuation of the old maps to the west (i.e., Sind and the Great Waste), 2 maps would cover an area from around the eastern end of the territories of the AtruaghinClans (which were not portrayed in the original trail maps) to a point just east of the territory claimed by Slagovich. 3 more maps focused on the Savage Coast would cover the area from just east of Slagovich nearly to The Horn, not quite including the entirety of Orc's Head Peninsula. The breakdown: 1st map is from east of Slagovich to just west of Estado de Guadalante; the 2nd map then covers the area to the border between Renardy and Bellayne; and the 3rd to The Horn. A fourth map would cover the area from The Horn to about the middle of the mountains dominating the Arm of the Immortals. Altogether, 6 new maps to cover the entire area, not including the parts north and south (because of the near "marginal" material, there is some play in this area; however, almost all of the Serpent Peninsula would be out of the picture). This would not be a terrible problem, as the map could be dropped down a few hundred miles south, as much of the region north of the Savage Coast and Sind is, as yet, underdeveloped in an "official" manner.

Another inquiry regarding Trail Maps: Would it ever be possible that the Isle of Alphatia would be developed on such a scale? I've always felt that Alphatia got a real raw deal in the development of Mystara, especially with the events that transpired in "Wrath of the Immortals"; as a floating continent, Alphatia would make the neatest "one-shot" expansion (much like "Council of Worms"), as it could be dropped into nearly any campaign world...

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-08-21 22:00:34 EDT  
Re: Re: Trail Maps/Mystaros

Six Trail Maps just for the Savage Coast? Hmm... seems like overkill to me.  
:-)

I'm assuming you calculated the number of Trail Maps based upon a "portrait" format (upright rectangles) -- right? I suspect that two Trail Maps would work better if they were designed in a "landscape" format (sideways), with insert boxes to display areas running out of bounds. We might be able to do the job with only two maps then, skipping all of Sind and the Great Waste. Based upon past experience, I also suspect we'd be very lucky if just one Trail Map for the Savage Coast was ever approved. Since we would need the two to complete the job, this might be a moot point entirely. We'll see where this one goes...

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-08-22 20:36:14 EDT  
Re: About Gazetteers

Format question about Gazetteers:

Would you rather see booklets included in a Gazetteer split:

- 1) DM & Adventure Booklet vs Player Booklet?
- 2) Adventures vs. General Background Info?
- 3) No split -- one single booklet?
- 4) No split -- one single booklet w/4-page pull-out section for players?

Bruce Heard

From: OldGuard 1  
Date: 95-08-22 22:03:51 EDT  
Re: Re:LIFE TO BRUCE

Hmmm,

I, for one, have never seen Bard and Bruce in the same room.... hmmm!  
;)

And don't worry, bard, no one is making it personal, yet.

From: OldGuard 1  
Date: 95-08-22 22:08:01 EDT  
Re: Re:My Apologies, Bruce

Cyber451's flame is laughable.

Did he think by making an odd statement like that would kill interest in Basic?  
I agree with Agsquid... WE will make it last.

I nominate Bruce to do all the writing though !!! ;)

From: JHarnois  
Date: 95-08-24 13:48:47 EDT  
Re: Mystara/Known World/Greyhawk/...

Two Things:

First, in my own campaign, my world is very large. I have the following settings: Al-Quadim, Forgotten Realms, Ravenloft, Greyhawk, Mystara (D&D Known World), Oriental Adventures and Maztica. Also Planescape is there. I do not use (or own) Dark Sun or Dragonlance or Birthright. There is something for everybody. I patiently wait for new releases in all of these areas. Hopefully some day they will come.??

Second: What bothers me the most is that TSR never finishes what they start. Greyhawk (Oerth) was never expanded beyond "The World of Greyhawk". The whole rest of the planet was never fleshed out. Same with Known World/Mystara. TSR kills off the world before it is even finished, leaving everybody hanging and wanting more. The Forgotten Realms is the most complete world that TSR has. Instead of creating new "realms" finish what you have already started!!!

P.S. I still enjoy all of the worlds I play on.  
Other comments on this subject would be appreciated.

From: Joe G K  
Date: 95-08-24 18:44:48 EDT  
Re: Re: DEATH of Classic D&D.

I think the major problem with the Audio CD is that you didn't give players a choice. Either pay the extra \$15 bucks for this CD, or you don't get the book. If TSR had made two copies, one with the CD and one without it, they would have had a better idea of what their customers wanted. Indeed, now with the AOL, and Internet services, TSR should have a much better idea of what players want. However, TSR should also do mailings to their mailing list, and give a survey of what players want (and have it postage paid) if they really want to know what players will buy.

From: Joe G K  
Date: 95-08-24 18:48:08 EDT  
Re: Re: DEATH of Classic D&D.

I think another reason that AD&D failed to catch on with the Mystara setting is that the novels were not forthcoming. Let's face it, without the novels,

Dragonlance would be nowhere, and without Drizzt, the Forgotten Realms would lose a major portion of its popularity. The same thing happened with Greyhawk, although in that case, there should have been no novels. Gary Gygax's Gord novels weren't bad, but seemed to be a copy of Moorcock's eternal champion, and Rose Estes novels were very bad with the character's name switching from Mika, to Mike every other line.

From: Joe G K  
Date: 95-08-24 18:50:51 EDT  
Re: Re:Joshuan's Almanac

If the quality was equal to the old Gazetteers, yes, a Gazetteer type of publication would be excellent. So many old D&D things never made it up to AD&D (like the Pegatars as a player race, the old immortals, etc...) JGK

From: Joe G K  
Date: 95-08-24 18:56:53 EDT  
Re: Re:LET THERE BE LIFE!

I enjoyed the Trail Maps just because they allowed you to see everything! I was always a bit disappointed that TSR never did one for Greyhawk though. (And indeed, now they have Birthright, and Dark Sun, and the Savage Coast) and whatever happened to Blackmoor? How about a source book, module updating that old favorite? JGK

From: MoszBro  
Date: 95-08-25 10:49:44 EDT  
Re: Okay...

Hey Bruce,

In all my Gaz.s, I remember distinctly disliking the entire adventures section of the book. I also hated the Gaz.s with a dm and player book. Granted, the latter covered the information I needed better and I didn't have to let either book collect dust on my shelf, but for some reason, it didn't tickle me to look through two books to find the info I needed. For a Gaz. format, I suggest one book with either a different colored section for the player's guide or one book with part of it specifically included for character creation.

Also... I, like you, am a \$400.00+ fan of Basic D&D. And I would like to thank you for your efforts to keep my favorite gaming world alive and published (even if I am inconvenienced for conversions.) Thanx.

MoszBro

From: MoszBro  
Date: 95-08-25 10:53:54 EDT  
Re: Oh yeah....



Um... Who the Frag is Joshuan  
How come HE gets to travel around the world  
And Why not let him become the new source for the Gaz. Any guy who gets around  
enough to write an almanac can surely write a comprehensive \$10 book on any  
part of the known world.

MoszBro

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-08-25 13:31:11 EDT  
Re: Re:Mystara/Known World...

>>What bothers me the most is that TSR never finishes what  
they start. Greyhawk (Oerth) was never expanded beyond "The World  
of Greyhawk". The whole rest of the planet was never fleshed out.  
Same with Known World/Mystara.<<

You're not the only one this bothers, but consider this -- back when TSR  
published the D&D(R) Gazetteers, we used to number them GAZ1, GAZ2, GAZ3, etc.  
We then noticed that sales regularly dropped with each new release. Meanwhile,  
series that remained in the low digits did very well every time. We observed  
this in just about every game line.

It seemed the longer a series lasted, the less interest it drew. I'm not sure  
this lack of interest came entirely from gamers, however, but it is possible  
that such a trend existed. As a result, it is possible that retailers and  
distributors, anticipating the trend, made it much worse by ordering fewer  
products every time. That's not something that TSR could control.

The only fix I saw since then was the removal of the old series numbers from  
the covers. It's easier to see now why some game worlds never could be totally  
treated with long-lasting series. Reaching close to 15 releases is a tribute to  
the old Gazetteers' popularity.

Finally, considering the scale the Gazetteers were using, many hundreds of them  
would have been needed to cover the rest of the planet -- enough for you, your  
children, and the children of your children! Considering the trend, I suspect  
by then TSR would be paying people to take them! ;-)

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-08-25 13:39:32 EDT  
Re: Re: Audio CDs (Joe G K)

I think you just answered your own post -- cool! ;-)

AOL is a great way for consumers to convey their likes and dislikes. Forget about this mailing list -- I think it's too slow and too difficult to interpret.

I agree with you, however. I think future CDs, if any, should be sold separately. I personally prefer the ones that offer music, ambience, and reusable sound effects. Other than that, as long as the CD provides material that's not putting words in the PCs' mouths (i.e. material that the DM can use instead), then CDs are an acceptable gaming tool. Again, that's just me (not an official TSR opinion).

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-08-25 13:43:54 EDT  
Re: Re: Novels (Joe G K)

>>I think another reason that AD&D failed to catch on with the Mystara setting is that the novels were not forthcoming. <<

Perhaps I misunderstood your statement, but MYSTARA(R) Novels *did* come forth. The first novel was published on the same month as the two first MYSTARA(R) products. Two more followed the next year. Did I miss something?

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-08-25 13:55:55 EDT  
Re: More for Joe G K

>>So many old D&D things never made it up to AD&D<<

Well, with only 9 or 10 releases for the AD&D(R) MYSTARA(R) Setting, it was pretty hard to include some 10 years-worth of its D&D(R) Game version. The original intention was to re-publish some of the older settings to allow AD&D Game players who knew nothing of the Known World to set up their campaign properly. Then, it would have been possible to move on with some truly new material and please new and older fans.

Picture wily coyote (canis carnivorus) doing that great leap of faith... and suddenly realizing he just did it over the edge of a huge cliff (bummerus maximus). :-)

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-08-25 13:59:32 EDT  
Re: Re: Gaz Formats

Thanks for your answer MozBro. I'll count that as a vote for Option #4.

Repeating the question for the others:

Would you rather see booklets included in a Gazetteer split:

- 1) DM & Adventure Booklet vs Player Booklet?
- 2) Adventures vs. General Background Info?
- 3) No split -- one single booklet?
- 4) No split -- one single booklet w/4-page pull-out section for players?

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-08-25 14:01:49 EDT  
Re: Re: Joshuan

>>Who the Frag is Joshuan<<

Joshuan was created as a persona making comments and narratives in the upcoming Joshuan's Almanac. Don't tell Jeff Grubb though, but Joshuan's was modelled after him (we just never told him). ;-)

Bruce Heard

From: TSR Bruce  
Date: 95-08-25 14:10:47 EDT  
Re: Firearms & Swashbucklers

Just a note to say that I'll be posting some questions to debate in the Red Steel folder, hopefully today. This has to do with adapting a campaign setting to firearms and swashbucklers. In general this affects the use of firearms vs. armor, and secret fencing passes favoring skilled swordsmen with rapiers and main gauche. I'm just looking for comments and opinions. Thanks.

Bruce Heard

From: TSRO Tank

Date: 95-08-25 14:38:16 EDT

Re: \* Folder Closed

This folder is reaching capacity and should no longer be used to receive new posts or replies

Please use the Mystara (2) folder instead.

TSRO Tank

Message Board Host

TSR Online