



Issue 43

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QUAD THE MAGAZINE

First of all I would like to say thanks to all players monsters and referees, old and new for keeping the club lively and exciting.

Our continued gratitude goes out to Paul Evans for all his work and efforts in producing quad over the last few years.

The idea of quad is to keep everyone informed as to what is going on in the Heroquest world, both in and out of character. Details of forthcoming adventures, reports on adventures that have already happened, rules updates and clarifications, campaign information, letters and other contributions from all of you out there. If there is anything you would like to see included in quad just let me know and I will make sure it is put in.

I plan to produce quad every 5 or 6 adventures.

It would be really helpful if a player from each adventure would write a **ONE PAGE** report to be included in the next quad magazine. It should include the characters names, where you went, what you did and whom you met. This way everyone in Heroquest will know what has been going on in the world and if necessary can seek out one of the characters from a particular mission and gain further knowledge.

I now have my new computer and scanner and as each quad is produced so will the quality increase (I hope).

All contributions to quad are rewarded, 5 gests per article, please remember to try and keep your articles to 1 page maximum.

HEROQUEST IN 2000

Heroquest is run primarily by Mark Roberts and any questions bookings letters etc should be sent to

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Barnwood
Gloucester
GL4 3JJ**

Please remember to include a stamped addressed envelope with all letters, this will ensure a prompt reply.

Or e-mail on **Mark@orinrakatha.freemove.co.uk**

I can also be reached on the **Phone 01452 546871**
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As you can see I now have a mobile phone to go on adventures. If, for any reason you are going to be late or are not going to get to an adventure, please ring me so we do not delay the start of the adventure.

Adventure Prices

Heroquest usually run the following length adventures with the relevant prices -

Adventure length	Payment 8 days	Payment Not
	In Advance	In Advance
8 hour	£20	£25
Theme	£40	£50
36 hour	£60	£75

Other longer adventures are priced individually, such as Heroquests etc.
Membership for 2000 is 30 pounds and expires on 31-12- 2000

Note the above price is only applicable to members; non-members pay an additional 20% on top of these prices.

The charge for cancellation is 50 % if canceling within 7 days of the event.

Youth Hostels - there is a £7.50 a night charge where youth hostels are used, from October - March. From April - September this charge will increase as hostels, etc, cost more to rent. I will confirm before each adventure.

Monsterring

The following credits are available (cumulative) to Monsters who have paid their membership for the year.

8 hour	£4
36 hour	£10
72 hour	£20

Themes - you can monster the Saturday daytime of a theme and play in the evenings for half the normal price and your character will get half the points for the theme (15).

On occasion monsters will be asked to contribute to hostel fees, monsters on themes will not be asked for any contribution although there are no credits for Monsterring on themes.

HEROQUEST 2000

This years Heroquest will be run in August 2000.

The suggested date at the moment is Wednesday 16th - Sunday 20th.

It is a Wolfhold sponsored mission, although any tower member may participate as long as they are prepared to follow the orders of Wolfhold!!!!

Characters or monsters wishing to do adventures leading up to the Heroquest should book onto 1 or more of the following adventures:

The party is now full but we are looking for some more monsters if anyone would like to come along for some or all of the events below.

May 12th-14th, 36 hour high level.

July 7th-9th, summer theme.

July 21st-23rd, 36-hour pre Heroquest high level.

For full details of the above events see the forthcoming events page at the end of quad.

If you would like to take part or require more information please contact me ASAP.

Mark Roberts (SFB)

CAMPAIGN NEWS

Troubles with the Celestial Beurocracy

In increasing number of reports have come in of encounters with said tower, all of which have led to combat.

Morgothian activity

Contrary to expectations the banishment of the Aspect of Morgoth from Orin Rakatha (which was achieved by a joint Halamdon's Heights- White Retreat force using the Sword of Law) does not seem to have had the dramatic impact expected on Morgothian activity. Current scouting information suggests that infact the Morgothians have managed to maintain ownership of the Tower previously called the Palace of the Four Winds. Rumours indicate that this was gained after the Aspect of Morgoth slew the previous Tower leader, Sandaster.

Whilst Morgothian activity is no longer the massing focused force that it was under Morgoth it still appears that increased numbers of extremely aggressive patrols are being encountered.

Lazarus Steel of the Pathfinders Guild said that it is his belief that these new patrols show reflect a change in tactics and possibly an attempt to further establish themselves on Orin Rakatha something which they have seemed reluctant loath to do before.

Baron Ulthar of the Council of Ten stated that they appeared to be merely exercising the same rights as other Tower holders and that he will be contacting them in an attempt to reduce tension between our Towers and theirs.

Dai Fah Dyne Sultan 'inconvenienced'.

Lord Arak Vembassa, Exulted Sultan of the Ruling Crescent, Master of the Southern Marches has been reported to be 'inconvenienced' of late. Rumours abound concerning his investigation of the Brown Magic anomalies at the time of the Grand Conjunction around the area of the World Window and his possible disappearance/death.

Vizier Amal of the Dai Fah Dynes has been keen to point out that Lord Vembassa is only one of two Sultans whose responsibility the Valley falls under and that with the coming of age of Lady Mohad Imhraine, Exulted Sultan of the Ruling Crescent and Mistress of the Western Marches it is only fitting that he

enjoy a well earned rest.

Meanwhile the migration of Azard An guards from their old patrol areas to areas around the Dai Fah Dyne tower continues. Lord Rednow Ffuts of the Valley Mercantile Guild has reported that Reader merchant activity is currently much reduced but he hopes it will pick up when the Valdemar Kalid Legion are more fully used to taking over the guard duties for the Reader.

White Retreat sources suggest that the number of Valley- Azard An hostile encounters is currently rising and ask that all Valley Alliance members treat the Azard An guards with particular courtesy whilst the political adjustment from their long time allies is achieved.

Host of undead sighted.

The host of free willed undead, who lost their tower at last years Time of Reckoning, have been sighted in the Matted Brakes. The White Retreat are advising that all scouting groups stay well clear of the area unless vitally important as we have already taken significant losses. Seeker scouts have been dispatched by Taraman to establish the size and components of the force with the aim being to establish its intentions.

Humacti High priests are to hold a council with other Sects to see what can be done should the host move towards the Valley on mass, and to consider how to break up this group in the longer term.

Mian of the Council of Ten has expressed an interest in negotiating with the leaders of the undead to see if a more constructive outcome can be achieved. If any person learns the identity of the leaders then both Sects would be interested to know.

Sir Loren de Hal has stated that a group of individuals has come to his attention called 'the Sleepers'. He believes they are located close to the undead group and is offering a 100 Gest reward for anybody persuading a representative of this group to meet him.

RULES CLARIFICATIONS

This is a message from SFB, Rick Jackson and Steve Barnes about campaign style.

We wanted to explain our view on the way that the political world of the Valley Alliance Towers (all three) works. We hold a belief that the lifestyles in each of the Towers are different reflecting the natures of the people involved.

In the White Retreat:

benevolent (if sometimes strict) leadership occurs and fundamentally they will go out of their way to help (hence free armour etc.) They will also seek themselves to identify and recognize merit and thus spells and other rewards will come as you strive. White Retreat NPC's are impressed by people helping others.

The Valley Alliance Tower:

is more neutral and thus the leaders there are concerned more with mutual benefit i.e. they will help you, if you help them, a sort of co-operative. You will get spells etc. as you rise in rank and complete quests of importance (i.e. particularly mini campaigns or longer dungeons). The neutral leaders expect you to report your successes and will then consider a reward to match your efforts for the Valley as a whole.

Wolfhold:

on the other hand is every man climb on the backs of others to get to the top. Leaders require manipulation, blackmail, bribery and the twisting of events to ones agenda. We don't envisage that this will mean that players kill each other but certainly the leaders of that tower will only help people if there seems to be something in it for them and this particularly applies the higher rank you get. Our principle is that we will provide situations for you and it is up to you to turn them to your advantage. For example to get level 10 spells from the Black School of Magic it is a tradition that they will only be given when the Sorcerer brings a gift of direct benefit to the School back and even then it is only possible depending on the importance of the gift. A gift will not turn up; you must find something and present it.

Fundamentally we are suggesting that the struggle to get appreciation at higher ranks in Wolfhold achieves two things; first it reflects the environment in an 'evil' tower and thus is a downside to being selfish, secondly it allows for a different and challenging style of play where success and promotion is by now means guaranteed by longevity and personal initiative is encouraged. The downside is that your character will not necessarily be treated 'fairly' and if you make a mistake or back a loser you will pay for it. This is not everyone's flavour, if it is not yours then there is still plenty of adventures to be had in the White Retreat or the Valley Alliance. We believe that people who wish to play 'evil' characters must understand what it means to make this selection.

Whatever Tower you chose to join we wish you all interesting times, and happy adventuring!

ADVENTURE REPORTS

I left the Dai-Fah-Dyne tower to meet Blaze, and soon our number was swelled to 14. Daedelus Ebonheart, Green Wizard and Secundus of the Mnemosyne Flick the warrior, Valgard the warrior, Tanis the drow crossbowman and scout, Kail the Elven Ranger, Mekket the scout, Ogrinach the half Elven, half Orc warrior, Toggle, singer, flautist and sprite, Shy the Healer, Blaze the red mage and Watcher, Tullan, mage, Mishrack, black mage, Canapi the Red mage and myself, Roeland Krop of the Rangers and secundus of the Mnemosyne.

Blaze asked us to join him on a trip to Sethenia, in response to a request from Sethan. We were distressed when we got to the site for the gate to be made and found it staked out by Shadowsfall, who asked for someone called the bearer, and soon did what Shadowsfall do best, trying to kill us off.

The gate separated us, and I found myself in the dark, which soon proved to be a room, shared with Valgard. He lead out of the door, and saw six drow, who told him to surrender or die, so he surrendered, and I following him out realized I best do the same. I was questioned about being part of the resistance, but gave them no useful information. Over time Kail, a paralyzed Flick, and a wounded toggle were brought in, and eventually we overpowered our guard, at which point Daedelus and Mecket joined us from their hiding places in other rooms, and we stormed out of the building to join our friends outside. Then on mass we took the building, putting the drow to the sword.

A Sethenian guardsman and a strange trickster called Lord Fool joined us soon. They told us that the drow had been guards of Lord Teleron who had taken the building for a meeting between the Empire, the drow, and the Mer. Lord Fool, and the rest disguised four others and me as drow as Empire troops. In the meantime Lady Jezabella's creature came amongst us and gave a message to Mecket, at which he and Daedelus, and perhaps one more went off. Unknown to the rest of us, they came upon Lord Teleron and two bodyguards, who they killed, with Mekket taking Lord Telerons place. The key players at the meeting were Lord Teleron (Mekket), Bladestorm, an empire man called number 3, his Dymwan ally, coincidentally named Daedelus and a representative of lord Sith of the Mer. In the meeting the alliance between Empire drow and Dymwan became clear, and the Mir were persuaded to allow the Garou and drow through their lands, although they

would not provide arms. We heard all the plans for attack.

The meeting ended with Sethan, with a little bell but no Psyche, driving them out, without force. He told us we could do as we wished, but he would rather we went to Lord Slith to persuade him to come and talk with Sethan (as they were estranged- and our neutrality might help).

In the morning we agreed to head for Lord Sith. As we traveled we had problems with the Wilder elves, and then a Dymwan arrived with two rank five-warrior zombies. We met the Mer by their breeding pools. They told us to leave, we gave them the message, they went off, and came back with a mass slow for us all, after which a furious battle ensued. The battle had started turning our way when Lord Slith arrived offering peace to us, and Daedelus managed to calm the blood lust of our side.

We talked with Slith, and eventually he was persuaded to come with us, helped by an offer of our protection. The journey back to the Way station was easy, however when we got back we found it taken by empire troops and had to kill them all to regain it. I was surprised when a group of clearly possessed Sethenian guards arrived in the building (having duped our door guards) but as I would not let them advance on Lord Slith and Daedelus a long fight ensued. Later Sethan arrived, and with Ogrinach as Lord Slith's man and Blaze for Sethan, a parlay was had. A key point was the reading of Grey's fourth quatrain, which Slith had, and Sethan had not heard before. Slith agreed that he would not allow the Empire and their allies the drow through his lands, and the meeting was over, with Sethan off to fulfill his part in Grey's fourth quatrain.

Sethenian guards who had been around went off on patrol, talking with fear of werewolves. Soon we were attacked by two spiders, six drow and their Leader, the werewolf Lord Teleron, whose mortal form we had killed earlier. Eventually we killed them all and surrounded the werewolf, striking a deal that he would withdraw with his troops. However we found to our distress that Tanis had been killed in the fight.

Later more Sethenian guards arrived and we heard tell of the fate of the attacks on the city. Later in the evening two Wilder elves arrived telling us of the destruction of the drow and Garou, by the Wilder elves aided by Mer with their whirling silver swords. There was great eating competitions between us and the Wilder, seeing who could get the most wheat rusks in their mouth at once, and many grosser things, such that I soon went to bed.

While cooking breakfast an Empire attack occurred. For me it was a trivial battle, but all were not so lucky, for Flick had his leg hacked off, and was to hobble for the rest of the day. We headed off to a site where Blaze could create a gate back to Orin Rakatha. Unfortunately a force of ten blocked us, led by an Empire Knight in superior chain mail, who was hard to damage and did mighty blows. There was also a powerful Dymwan priest who hit me with five power hammer fours, and paralyzed me three times with his embodied ghoul. An empire priest tried a couple of cause mortals on me, but fortunately suffered much disruption from Tanis and Valgard. It was an awful fight, and not midway through Shy's focus exploded and she slumped to the floor. I was dealt some nasty blows while paralyzed and needed an elixir to move again. Soon afterwards a miraculous mass cure helped me get moving, and eventually the battle swung our way, but not without the sad death of Mishrack. The gate was built in a hurry, and we stumbled back in to Sethenia.

Roeland Krop

Searching for Dymwan Experiments

Training Group: Torranul of the White Path, Kadwallador the Bowman, Akbar a Scout, Torstan Vosh a warrior, Dr Hook a Humacti, Jim a strangely accented warrior, Spec a warrior, Mortis a warrior, Verrick, Bethen a hospitaller, and Lorethan an elven warrior.

The Valley Alliance had received information about an area that was used as a Dymwan research base during the war.

My group was on a training exercise and we had orders to travel to a temporary way station on the edge of the Dragur Forest near to the river Calix. For most of us it was the first time we had been so far from our tower. We arrived at this place several days south of a Dymwan tower where after routing a few hordelings we met our mission leader Lowbrin Denard, a Wizard of the Black School. As many of Wolfhold are want to do he spoke to us in a very condescending manner, though I expect that he was just used to talking to others of his tower who are not as wise as those in the White Retreat. At least his assistant Lady Miranda a priestess of the Grey Wardens was civil.

He informed us that the mission here was to discover the location of the base and nature of the Dymwan experiments.

Throughout the evening we met three other groups who were also searching for the base, the first was a group from Wolfhold, lead by Ambassador Chirak, the second was a VAT group led by Jarid, Priest of the grey Gauntlet and lastly a group from the White Retreat led by Lucian, Veteran of the Order of King Michael. In there usual friendly fashion the White Retreat group soon discovered our inexperience and offered us a Resurrection Potion, just in case.

The evening ended with many very weak hordling attacks and a totally unnecessary fight with Drakken, of the Kalid Earthwarp Pulse Sect, who attacked us with little provocation? When will people learn that peace is the way things are achieved?

The morning dawned with the Wolfhold group returning from a night mission, they had failed to find the base, and Ambassador Chirak reported that a Power Ward prevented the crossing of the Calix. A seer within her group had identified the ward as a Status Ward and so Denard sent us off to investigate.

The area was crawling with hordelings and we know now that these were the remains of the once vast Dymwan undead army. After fighting our way through the Status Ward, we encountered a lone Shadowsfall who told us to turn back, even though I tried my hardest to prevent bloodshed, even going as far as healing her, soon she was dead. We recovered an armband that was revealed to be a key allowing free passage through the ward.

We continued, and soon we encountered drow from house Tumdurgal, we tried so very hard to avoid bloodshed, only bad came come of our towers fighting but after a lengthy fight 8 Wolfhold members lay dead and all of our power and magic's depleted. I use my power for good and healing and still felt bad; the spheres only know how our warriors felt after this senseless fight.

Stopping to rest and meditate an Elfar named Leken approached, he was saddened by our actions and stated that there were no reasons to ever cause harm to another. This attitude whilst very commendable cannot work in the lands outside of the towers, it had also got his children taken from him, it seemed that he was a shaman and that the drow that we had fought had previously taken four of his people to a stone table. Dr Hook negotiated with his for aid, and in exchange for magical protection and healing we agreed to free the four Elfar and foolishly in my and many of our groups opinion to deal peacefully with the drow that were there.

Briefly put pacifism was not to win this day and we fought, disrupting in the process a ritual we were later to find out was being used to utilize the power of a Shadow Node. This ritual was an evil thing; the drow had sacrificed the four Elfar and even one of their own, a woman bearing the jewels of a Sorcerer who could cast the highest level of arcane magics. A scroll clutched in the Sorceress's hand said the following.

"Whence the Opening of the Portal has been consummated. All scions shall each take but one of the binding charms and the words of control space and only the will the DUNPARAPET be lowered and the CIMMERII allowed to cross over."

"Whence the CIMMERII are assumed, those that remain shall be imbued and will release the binding charms to the bodies of the failed kin whence the failen will be banished to the nether shadows"

This meant nothing and still means so now. The dead Elfar were returned to Leken who told us of a building he had seen. The drow body was taken from the shadow node and items from the Ritual taken to be later returned to the Black School of Magic.

Searching for another hour we came upon the building Leken spoke of, two groups of Drow, both from Wolfhold were fighting and we chose not to interfere until attacked by the larger group for no obvious reason. After the fighting was over a scroll was discovered on the leader of the larger group it was a warrant, and stated that Nassic Ferine Azreal, 17th Assassin of House Tumdurgal was awaiting trail and that no attempt should be made to hinder his arrest. Atalante Darkstar, 1st Assassin of House Tumdurgal, signed this warrant. We discovered our error after Nassic was attacked by his own man, to whom we had shown the warrant. After a brief discussion Nassic traded a Book he had found in the building and a cure mortal potion for the warrant and status key, he then left.

The book identified the building as the residence of the Dymwan leader 'Algrim Faintheart' who commanded over this area during the war, the book was his diary and revealed the true madness of Necromancy. The two things of note were references to an Unranked Barrow White Lord called the Protector of the Secret of Karn 'Ak Zol-alain and the instructions to allow us access to a Stasis Chamber. The stasis Chamber was guarded by a puzzle and a Spirit of Fear that was quickly dispatched by the Good Sphere. Within the Chamber there was a box containing money, potions and a map with references to the Darkwind upon it.

As soon as the Chamber was emptied we left returning through the ward back to the Waystation. More hordelings hindered our journey back.

Our return was not what we expected, Denard was dead, killed by a Shadowsfall named Karanhigh. We were quickly disarmed and though we had valley colours and passes they proceeded to disarm, bind, rob and question us in a very hostile manner. Things looked very bad as once finished with us they took us one by one into the woods unarmed, asleep and surrounded by hordelings. The good sphere did indeed shine upon us, fortunately one of Sir Lucians men a pathfinder named Able, found us and with the help of two other Micheliners we devised a plan to get what was ours back from the Shadowsfall. Karanhigh fled but we succeeded. And after a long day the rest of Sir Lucians men turned up and agreed to stand guard for us.

Morning dawned and with the departure of Sir Lucian's men we left as well, the evil revenge of the Drow struck us hard though, a drow scout arrived and stated that we had meddled in Wolfhold business for the last time. His group had attacked a group of Kalid and had led them straight to us. The battle was bloody and many of us fell including myself, fortunately the potions including some elixirs from the Stasis Chamber saved the day, and all I can really say about the battle is that without them our group would now all be dead. May the light of the Good Sphere always shine upon you.

Verrick of the White Path

I am Ygarl Misinthius, a member of the Assassin's Guild in the Wolfhold Tower. During a mission on All Hallows Eve a lull in proceedings allowed me to notice a small journal poking its corner out of the pack of a certain Barbarian warrior in our party by the name of Jem Gwynedd. Being an inquisitive sort, I thought I'd have a look... Besides - I needed the practice! All it took was just a little thing like an almost invincible monster attacking to distract her long enough for me to get a hold of this work to have a look. I did not realise she was from another plane, and that she was such a clear and incisive writer - so much for ignorant Barbarians! I found it an interesting and difficult-to-put-down commentary on Orin Rakatha from an outsider's view. I reproduce it here in its entirety as it was written...

"Being only a recent visitor to Orin Rakatha, it has quickly become apparent that I have entered a plane not too dissimilar in appearance to my own homeland of Dackri.

It seemed to me, when I first arrived, that I had been sent out from the Motherhouse on another fruitless mission. My Chiefs sent me here to find out about the encroachment of some Empire, but to be honest I was just dying to get out of the Motherhouse to satisfy my wanderlust.

"When I reached the borders of this new land. I asked around to see if there was somewhere to stay. I'm not bothered about staying outside, but being a stranger in a new land I thought it better to do that, then to be killed by some unknown entity on my first night. Having been pointed in the direction of the Valley Alliance Tower, I reach the gates just before nightfall and was allowed to stay. I was told that I had just made it in time as the mists were forming. It turns out that my decision not to stay outside was a good one, as I was quickly informed that being caught in the mists is not the best thing for someone's health. That was lesson one.

"Having spent a bit of time in the tower, I soon learnt that there were other towers within this land. From what I could understand, the Valley Tower was at war with a few of them, and the people within the Towers were asked to go out from time to time on Tower business. When I was asked to go out on business I jumped at the chance. Although I had not been there long, I could feel the restraints of staying in one place closing in on me and I had to get out. The lands beyond the Tower were becoming increasingly interesting and I had to find out more.

"Politics has never been one of my strong points. Where I come from we tend to hit first and asked questions later. That has in the past got me in all sorts of trouble but it has also saved my skin a few times as well. I took some comfort in the fact that I was not the only one, who was unsure about the true meaning of this first mission, but I had taken a liking to some of the party members and we decided that it was in all our interests to stick together. It was on this first trip that I discovered something completely alien to me. Some of the other party members had encountered it before and they told me that it was 'magic'. I was brought up with the belief that the way you fought someone was at relatively close quarters with a weapon like a sword or a war hammer, but this mode of fighting confused me greatly and I was not sure if I liked it. I was being attacked by things that flew out of nowhere - what kind of fighting do you call this?!!!!. It was also on this mission that I started to learn a bit about some of the politics of the land, and that was just as confusing as the magic. "What had I got myself into?" I was beginning to wonder.

"I had lot of thinking to do when I returned after that first short trip, after all I had a report to make to my Chiefs and I did not have a clue what to tell them. How do you explain things jumping out of thin air and attacking you? I felt sure that they were going to say that I had gone completely out of my mind. I must admit that I was beginning to wonder about my sanity at this point, so I decided to delay my report until I had found out more. Maybe I might find some explanation for all of this.

"My second trip out was slightly longer, but no less confusing. I encountered new things almost hourly and the tangled politics went straight over my head. How can people operate in such chaos? One thing I had learnt was that some people were fiercely loyal to their respective towers and expected others to feel the same. But it is difficult to show loyalty for something when you have no idea what's going on. I cannot commit to a tower, as my commitment is already taken. Any short-term commitments I make are to the people I fight with irrespective of their background. Who knows? - One day they might save your life and it is not wise to restrict your options. I'd be the first to admit that I do not agree with what some people practice, but no doubt they feel the same about me so I guess the feelings mutual.

"It looks like it is going to take me a long time to work out what is going on here. The only way I can do that is to go out on more missions, listen to people who have been here longer, and try to not make myself look too much of a fool by asking questions which may have obvious answers. Most of the people I have met have been very informative, but a good old-fashioned punch-up comes as a great relief to me.

I still have no idea what I am going to tell my Chiefs when I get round to making my report. I cannot leave it much longer otherwise they might think that I have died. That's one thing I have not done yet, but I have been told that I have come close to it a few times!"

Well, that's all that was in there at that point. I think I'll have a look later on - but meanwhile I'd better get this back into her bag before she finds out it's missing and comes after me with her big black sword! She warned me once that even cheating by using my magic and casting Plate Self she would still be able to win... She can wait 15 minutes!

Ygarl Misinthius, called The Black

This report made by Mortimer Black, Seer and secundus of the Mnemosyne.

The contents of this report focus on the trials and tribulations of a certain group of hopefuls from the Valley who traveled to the Brocklands firstly on a 'routine patrol' and then on a fact-finding mission to discover what had occurred to the original owner of a certain way station that had been recently attacked. The names of the group on that journey are as follows; Lal Tu fan; Warrior and good shield man, Kwai; A Monk knowledgeable in the ways of Ki, Freiya; A young barbarian maiden, stout of heart and fearsome of temperament to our foes, Robin; pathfinder of honour, Sarius; the Druid who brought us ever closer to nature, Crion, Ice elf warrior, Rialthan; Drow pathfinder - a solid and dependable chap, Daedelus; Elven Mage, Secundus of Mnemosyne and fellow seeker of knowledge, and finally myself Mortimer Black.

Our travels began one balmy evening after we had been in the Brocklands a few days already and found little to explain the problems encountered by the way station. We had however met up Hike Rangeworthy, a scout of some repute and ability it seemed, and who was to be our guide for the next two days as we explored the Brocklands. And my what a strange (but wonderful) place they turned out to be.

Our first night had a rather portentous start given the nature of our group as we met a couple of SALDORIAN Monks on the path, who I think would have liked to fight us, but we who managed to parlay with and avoid. They themselves had no explanation for what they were doing in the Brocklands in the middle of the night but we told them nothing either.

Among others that night we met creatures of the wizards concillium and a few forest denizens. Some we had problems with, other we did not, but obviously something was afoot.

We returned to our camp and made ready our watch. We were just finishing out mead when a group of Ogra were spotted in the woods and we made ready. The Ogra however did not wish to fight and although they challenged us to various contents of strength they wished to ask us for help in their own sort of way. In exchange they had some interesting information about the happenings that had been occurring in the woods recently.

They told us of the people who lived in the Brocklands before they had come and the fact that they and other creatures had become much more common here in the last two moons since the Ogra's witch-doctor had been killed by a particularly powerful elemental of some sort.

It turned out that Sarius and Robin had been with the party that had come to the Brocklands before and even knew Broken Bone the Shaman who spoke for the Ogra. 'Speaks with Thunder', their witch-doctor now dead they feared for their survival but lacked the spear necessary to initiate a new witch-doctor, 'Here come Clouds'. We agreed to find the spear for the Ogra.

DAY 2. After being attacked by elementals somehow connected to the Minotaurs and The labyrinth of Xenon we left camp (my breakfast was spread all over the place anyway) and headed north with Hike guiding us. Soon we came across a cat creature which Sarius seemed to be extremely perturbed by since he had had a nasty encounter with one before and we elected to take the diplomatic route by telling it of some skulls that it might find down the track from us (it was collecting these).

Our best lead so far was to head for the cave of the witch-doctor, which Hike thought might be down in the valley below us. I made copious notes of the interesting flora and fauna of the area before we finally met some green sprite-like creatures calling themselves 'The people'. Intrigued as to their reason for being there and remembering the comments from Broken Bone the night before we talked to them for some time. They told us that they had seen a minotaur and that some other of their kind had captured it. Again we avoided trouble, which was probably just as well due to the other things that were in store for us.

Not long after leaving the green people our scouts spied what looked a likely candidate for the witch-doctors home up on a bluff and we duly dragged ourselves, sweating and panting to the top where we found another group of the so called 'people' in a cave, this time a bunch of women. Harpies they were, I'm sure of it, for they tried to lure us in and have their wicked ways with us. We managed to discover that this was indeed the witch-doctors cave and certain of his spell items and focuses still remained. We investigated what we could with the women prattling on around us but suddenly they attempted to abduct me (they only take the best looking ones) and a fight ensued to get me back. Thank the spheres they did for I doubt I would have lasted the night in the embraces of those over-enthusiastic horrors.

Further up the trail from the cave, still having no clear direction of where we were going except to try and locate the spear, we encountered a small band of Kalid, carrying a tabard of a pathfinder from the valley alliance. We debated whether to attack them but they didn't seem malicious and in the end we convinced them to hand over the tabard and we parted ways.

Hike Rangeworthy seemed to be keen to attack them for having it all which I considered foolish and just as well for I consulted the spirits of night and they told me the Kaild group was not directly responsible for the death of the scout. Just goes to show, don't trust everything pathfinders say, most are just as witless as warriors. What we did discover was that the Kalid had themselves seen a group of the people with a minotaur. It seemed the strange little fellows was not so delusory after all.

Continuing on our way we met with some Dai-fah-Dyne, who although the most tedious of fellows most times, proved to be slightly helpful by trading an elixir with us, although I doubted their bargaining skills. Perhaps they were new from their tower or drunk. One of the two for sure.

We decided to return to camp, for we tired from the long walk and heat. As we walked through the long grove-ways of the Brockland woods we were set upon by barbarians who had the markings of the people but simply attacked us. They wore strange glyphs on their arms and torso where our weapons had no effect so we hit them in the legs, slew them and didn't think it too much. Finally returning to camp we met up with a pathfinder, 'no 36' who explained he and his other two compatriots had been caught up in a battle between a force of Kalid and Sardorian Brotherhood of steel. The plot thickened. He also told us of a group of Drow frequenting the woods (this much Daedalus and I suspected).

We made our preparations and set out early evening from the camp. Not long up the trail, amongst the smell of lavender and feeling a cool evening breeze on our faces we met the minotaur itself, accompanied by a group of people who seemed frustrated by our presence and wanted nothing more than for us to leave. We began a parlay although they seemed unwilling to negotiate and in the end the situation was forced by Rialthon, who killed one of them from behind.

At this point all hell broke loose and, so it happened, did the minotaur itself. Now minotaurs are renowned for being ferocious beasts and this one was no exception. In the following route Daedalus and myself were taken to the gates of the otherworld and only quick intervention from Kwai on my part (who niftily caught the elixir he was thrown over a group of our enemies who tried to catch it themselves. We were forced to retreat and yet again the minotaur attacked, killing Freya with a mighty blow, which cut her nearly in half. We escaped into the woods and licked our wounds, Hike bringing Freya back to us by way of a resurrection scroll.

Perhaps we should have considered a different approach but when you are in that type of situation with a giant beast amongst you dealing death from a huge axe sometimes you don't think straight.

With the birds beginning to roost we planned another attack and prepared ourselves with skins and magical weapons. We sent out our scouts and soon found the trail - which was hardly difficult, even for our scouts - towards the foot of a hill. This time the plan worked well and we were able to dispatch our enemies. Some complained it was too easy and that we had wasted power and mana. Personally I was glad to be alive.

We cut open the minotaur and sure enough out popped the spear we had been searching for. Some of the party wanted to return to camp but we had had word of a drow encampment to the west and in the end we decided to investigate.

By this time night was falling and the strange sounds that accompany night in the Brocklands came with it.

As we made our way to where the drow had been seen we met another group of Kalid, this time a bit more inquisitive than the one before. We would have got away scot-free had Robin not had such an unruly tongue. He made a comment about their Lady (a capable warrior by her scars) and we were forced to accept a duel between Robin and her champion. Robin lost, although he yielded, and his life spared. Not a bad encounter with a bunch of hardened, arrogant and dangerous criminals like the Kalid.

Traveling further on we came across a couple of elemental things. We killed them. Finally as night reached it's darkest part (isn't it always the way?) we came across a strange building in the woods. As we approached it we saw that it was warded in a number of different ways and that rituals had been performed recently.

We investigated but we overcome by a particularly severe bout of stupidity and we triggered one of the wards knocking out three quarters of the party (Thanks the spheres for Pathfinders sticking their noses in elsewhere...).

When we came round it was to my alarm that we found a particularly nasty group of Drow, not that I have anything against them of course, it's just that the woman leader was an ugly one and the rest we thick as two short staffs. Anyway to cut a long story short the Priestess, whose name was Shad Firequake 4th Sorceress of the 12th house or something first wanted to parlay with us and then said "I want the key, and in the same breath "kill them" to her cronies. She walked off and we didn't find her after.

We killed her cronies, although it was tough and go and I was forced to use most of my remaining power. Robin was particularly impressive with his throat cutting skill. I do enjoy the look on an enemy's faces when they have their throat cut and realize there's no healer nearby and they're going to die. Most amusing. Some further investigation revealed that this place was the Grey node of magic. An exciting discovery although one which we had to leave all-too-soon. I shall return some day to examine the place further. We returned to camp and slept like the dead.

Day 3. We awoke to try and find the Broken Bone and no sooner than we left our camp we had. We presented our spear him and he seemed very happy but just as we were doing so a group of Saldorians appeared and demanded we hand over the spear. Off it kicked and we fought for a good twenty minutes in the heat of the day.

They had priests, they had warriors, they had mages and they caused us a few problems to say the least but in the end we prevailed and left the Brocklands with our lives and the stories the Ogra told us of the strange goings on of the elementals.

Frolics with the Goblin King : The First Goblympics.

At the end of last year a large number of Valley members were gathered together for the Goblin Kings first winter Goblympics. A mixed group made up of all towers and races within the alliance were ordered by our various guilds to take part in a number of events in order to develop team skills and to provide enjoyment for the Goblin King, a strange but affable character with enormous power but little direction. Rather than tell the entire story of every event I would like to share some of my personal highlights from this strange and confusing time.

The first battle with the Toymasters creations was certainly a humiliating experience. Fully prepared for combat myself and my group (made up primarily of drow with a reaper and a couple of warriors added in for good measure) we fell upon the cackling clowns dropping all within the circle with well aimed arrows, shocking grasps, cause grievous wounds and mighty blows from the warriors. Shocked we were then when the clowns fell only to reappear at the edge of the circle and proceed to attack us with the very attacks we had lain upon them. I myself fell when I received a shocking grasp from a clown appearing behind me, the others of the group faring little better as the clowns united with our own strength to fell all of us bar two.

My brother Polariad needed an elixir to save his life after being almost cut in two by a clown with the strength of a mighty half orc warrior (which by ironic coincidence was his bodyguard).

The clowns again provided what as perhaps the most entertaining event of the mission. The second round of clown combat consisted of a smaller number of clowns that crippled a limb with every blow. Bright the Sprite provided a huge number of laughs as first his arms, and then a leg was crippled and he hopped after the clowns trying to fell them by nibbling their ears. Then a clown with a good grasp of showmanship toyed with the hapless sprite before crippling his remaining leg to the cheers of the gathered valley members (and I thought torture of the weak would be something I left on my home plane after all the talk about teamwork and the valley alliance).

The untimely death (and I mean that very tenuously) of Spite the Sprite was a shame however at least one of his deaths was meaningful. During the mission we were rudely interrupted by the appearance of a large number of warriors from the Kalid legions they barged into the hostel and proceeded to bark orders around until Spite the Sprite decided to leap in shouting defiance and shocking grasped the opposing leader. Unfortunately the other Valley Members (and I count myself here although I was bottled into an entry way) failed to back him up quick enough and he was cut down. The fight went well however and the Kalid were slain with only two losses, both Spite! who was resurrected during the fight and managed to get killed by the last remaining living Kalid!

Aside from these few excerpts there was a serious fact that arose from this mission. That is that an entity known as the Toymaster was involved in controlling, or at least attempting to control, Valley Members. Throughout the mission we began to find strings appear around wrists, ankles and necks. These strings recognized as either power or magic and were apparently part of a larger ritual to control the spirits in a body essentially turning them into marionettes. It appears the Kalid were dealing with the Toymaster in order to purchase their "puppet army". I therefore warn all Valley members to be on their guard against the Kalid and the Toymaster, who, while I believe he was slain during this mission, may arise again. I realize this report is brief however beyond the Kalid/Toymaster threat little of value arose from this mission aside from excellent food, a sense of teamwork and an enjoyable time by all, even Spite who it appears wanted to die!

May you be Guided by the Spider Queen, *Raelfan D'Narkin*.

I will not describe the main events at the Dai-Fah-Dyne tower here, as I am sure someone more senior and better informed will do the job. I will restrict myself to the area where I was a player, the Setinian strand. Only a few of us were there from before, Mekket the scout, Daedelus Ebonheart, Green Wizard and Secundus of the Mnemosyne, Mortimer Black, Priest of the Cult of Seers and Secundus of the Mnemosyne, Angelus of the Gray Gauntlet, Blaze the fire mage and myself, Roeland Krop warrior and secundus of the Mnemosyne.

It started with Uncle Mortimer acting strangely, not that we knew it was starting then. He disappeared from plain sight, which I took hard, leaving me not to trust our hosts. When he returned he talked of a vision of Sethan and Lady Jezebella (about whom I have written). He found it hard to remember all the details, but took notes in Mecket's book. He was not sure if it was a vision of past or future.

Soran Hi, who had forced us to Sethenia in the first place, came to ask our forgiveness, and at Mecket's urging, paid us compensation. He told me much of Sethenia, and trained Blaze. Later he was arrested as a spy by his order, the Micheliners. Next of interest was Myriel Bladestorm, a drow, the deputy head of the university of Hydromancy in Sethenia, run by the Lady Jezebella. He came to tell us that Sethan should not be trusted, and told us that if we followed his directions for the morrow, we could see with our own eyes. Soran Hi told us that it was a trap, that Sethan was to be trusted, but while not trusting Bladestorm we agreed to go. Independently a party of drow arrived, and asking for Blaze, they tried to murder him. They failed and were killed off. I am told that Soran Hi showed great anger and cast a fire bolt on a captured drow to death.

We were further told of the historical time when the drow under Bladestorm's grandfather (of the same name) warred against Sethan, and he killed all (said to be twenty times five score), with an eruption of magma.

On the morrow we set off, with Daedelus Ebonheart of the Mnemosyne, Mortimer Black, Angelus, Flick the warrior, Valgard the warrior, Rook the

warrior in his splendid leather plate armour, Jem the barbarian, Ygarl the assassin, Tanis the drow crossbowman and scout, Lan the Drow bodyguard, a basic who's name escapes me, Canapé the Red mage and myself, Roeland Krop. And perhaps some more, whom I have forgotten, mages I would expect.

A scout, hired to direct us, led us. First we met three or so hordelings, more magical than most. Then we came across four from the Wizards Concillium, with two elementals. In tense negotiations with Daedelus our leader, they gave us a silver box for Sethan, but still made us fight the two elementals to go on. Down the trail we came to a cave with a Dai-Fah-Dyne merchant and a Reader merchant, negotiating with a drow, who fled in to the caves at our approach. Uncle Mortimer opened the box during the talking, and fell asleep. I sent Angelus to look after him, and he too fell asleep. The box contained a note to Sethan, Grey's fourth quatrain, a Legend Lore scroll, and another smaller box. In time they awoke. As we investigated the cave the drow sent giant spiders to attack us, which was not fun. The merchants gave up on their business, and we pushed through the caves fighting heavy drow resistance. Ygarl and Tanis were both quite effective in this environment, and my new helm protected my head on many occasions.

On leaving the cave we were met by a Sethenian city guardsman (apparently), who promised to take us to a meeting, deep in a big cave. It was of course a trap, and the disguised drow of Sethenia, with Shadowsfall help, tried to slaughter us. Many went down, and a mass slow caused us great problems. Daedelus was taken down with a bolt, but luckily did not die. We won in the end, but many elixirs were used. On the way back through the darkness we met more drow resistance, but having survived the trap in the cave, we were not about to loose.

We had learned that Bladestorm and the Sethenian drow were our enemy, and the enemies of Sethan.

FORTHCOMING ADVENTURES

APRIL

29 & 30 2 x low level 8 hours

2 adventures for starting or low level characters.

May 12-14 high level 36 hour Duntisbourne Abbots

Part of this years Heroquest plot.

26-28 Kinver 36 hour

A low- mid level adventure run by Pat and Darrell.

June 9-11 kinver 36 hour

A low level campaign adventure ideal for new players.

23 - 25 36 hour ystrafeltde

A low level adventure, our only use of this excellent site for this year.

July 7-9 summer theme - kinver

A campaign theme for all levels.

21-23 Pre Heroquest 36 hour

Enough said.

August 4-6 low level 36 hour kinver.

A lighthearted adventure for those with a sense of humour.

16-20 Heroquest

September 1st-3rd 36 hour mid-level Kinver

The next installment in the Sethanian campaign, Pat + Darrell.

15th-17th 36 hour Dimmingsdale

Mid level adventure, Barry + Paul.

29th- 1st 36 hour Dimmingsdale

Low level , Pete Sutton.

October 13-15th 36 hour Shining cliff.

Low-mid level Mike F.

25-29 5 day Rhongyr Isaf

Mid level 5 day Pat+Darrell.

November 10-12 Halloween theme.

24-26 36 hour

December 8-10 Xmas theme