

the characters, working out 'victory points' and so on than the 'normal' module, though this will be of little more than passing interest unless you are intending them for tournament use. Both are based on the original rules plus *Greyhawk*.

The Dragon Crown is suitable for 6 characters of experience level 1st-4th. It is quite a short, straightforward single-dungeon-level adventure which should be capable of completion in 4-5 hours play. The quest is the recovery of a crown belonging to a Red Dragon which threatens the players with promises of breakfast (of which they are the main course) if they fail.

There are 26 rooms in the dungeon, each given a brief description and keyed as usual. Their occupants are mainly Kobolds — in one sense a good idea to stock rooms with the same types of monster since in a tournament the teams could go in different ways to their objective, but this will make for dull repetitive play in other contexts.

Though the presentation is pretty good, there are quite a lot of spelling/printing errors which are annoying, and a few odd 'rules' with which I would take issue. First we have the old hoary fireball business — the damage handed out is divided by the number of recipients; so take that cage of white mice with you. Then we have the concept of hits being cured by bandaging, which seems a trifle odd. To open a secret door, a roll is made against the character's intelligence; I could grant this for finding it, but once you have found a secret door, the fact that you have found it and identified it as such means you already have an idea how to open it, and brute strength is probably all that is required from then on. Also, to detect nature of traps, characters roll against wisdom; surely intelligence?? Well, you don't have to adopt these 'rules'.

Of Skulls and Scrapfaggot Green is a much larger affair, an adventure in three sections — first in a town then in a dungeon and finally in a wilderness setting. Players have to find a key in the town which they will use to enter the wizard's tower, then in the tower they have to find a skull, then they must journey through the Forbidden Lands, directed by the skull, and perform the final act of the quest at their wilderness destination.

The adventure is suitable for 10-12 characters of experience level 3rd-6th. The rules contain 'promotions' for the characters as they proceed from town to tower to wilderness.

Although the format of *Skulls* is the same as that of *Dragon Crown*, the former is a much more impressive publication. The adventure details 'read' well and convey something of the atmosphere. The adventure itself is well planned and carefully designed, though there are a number of parts of *Skulls* which are of no direct relevance to the adventure, and players could waste a lot of time in them (a curious design for a tournament; it doesn't say how long the tournament teams were allowed, but I doubt if the entire adventure could be played in much less than a full weekend). A particularly useful feature for tournament use is that monsters' attacks are pre-rolled.

Inevitably there are curiosities such as appear in almost every *Judges Guild* publication of this sort. A pendant called Akbeth's Sigil, a necessary part of the parties' equipment if they are to get anywhere at all, is mentioned in the introduction but, search as I might, I can't find it anywhere in the text. There is a tractor beam in the dungeon which smacks of technology entirely inappropriate to the setting. Level 6½ room 3 carries in the explanatory text mention of a diagram, but the diagram itself is absent. The dungeon levels are numbered 3½, 4½, 6½ despite the fact that there is no level 4 or level 6 (or 2 or 5, come to that) and the plans of the dungeon levels change orientation from one to another, so 'north' moves round and if you don't spot this it could be very confusing. Finally the word 'errata' is wrongly spelled — about the last word which should contain an error! Most of these are trivial annoyances but they do indicate an incautious approach to the publication which *TSR*, for one, appear to have eradicated. Neither of these products are up to the standard of the *TSR* modules, either in design quality or presentation. However they are by no means of poor quality, and *Skulls* in particular provides an interesting and absorbing adventure. At the price, they represent reasonable value for money.

Overall: *Dragon Crown* 5
of *Skulls and Scrapfaggot Green* 7 Don Turnbull



Molten Magic takes a look at some of the new science fiction and fantasy figures which are becoming available. The code letters and numbers shown on the photographs are purely for identification purposes and not those used by the manufacturers. The manufacturers' codes are shown in brackets after the title of individual figures.

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| <p>A. Greenwood & Bell
1. Dwarf with Spear and Shield (SS120)
2. Adventurer with Two-handed Sword (SS112)
3. Cleric with Club and Shield (SS110)
4. Adventurer with Two-handed Axe (SS111)</p> <p>B. Argard Miniatures
1. Cleric (DA31)
2. Magic User (DA33)
3. Fighter (DA41)</p> <p>C. Fantasy Figures Unlimited
1. Armored Gorgon (G1)</p> <p>D. Miniature Figurines
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2. Skeleton with Barrel (VPW110)
3. Skeleton holding Lantern (VPW120)</p> <p>E. Grenadier Models
1. Gargoyle (WS8)
2. Dwarf (IG8)</p> <p>F. Archon Miniatures
1. Samurai (A02)</p> | <p>G. Martian Metals
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3. Hobbogoblin (FF7) (15mm)</p> <p>H. Real Partha
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3. Minotaur (FF13)
4. Giant Scorpion (FF50)
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6. Saruman Warrior with Pike (FF43)
7. Great Fire Dragon (FF33)
8. Bard with Sword and Lute (FA6)
9. Paladin with Sword (FA10)
10. Illusionist (FA11)
11. Dwarf with Two-handed Hammer (FA18)
12. Hero's Armour Hanging on Pole (FS26)
13. Naked Girl in Stocks (FS20)
14. Victim in Iron Cage hanging from Gibbet (FS22)</p> |
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