

Designer's Notes

DragonQuest Update

By the time you read this, **Enchanted Wood** will be at the printer, if not already shipped to the stores. All the design and development work has been done, and the typesetting is about half finished at this writing. So, you will be seeing it soon, if you haven't seen it already.

Arcane Wisdom is almost finished.

Most of it is written and typeset, with many changes due to be implemented now that I have creative control. Many strange decisions were made by the authors of the material already written, most of which arose from the fact that they did not play *DQ* very much (if at all). They seemed to feel that the *DragonQuest* audience would accept any material, even if it had not been playtested and carefully integrated into the system. I have extensively tested all the material in *Arcane Wisdom*, and need to add and subtract information from the text as it now exists.

Presently, it contains three new colleges of magic (Lesser Summonings, Rune Magics, and Shaping Magics), a system for new spell creation and research, a list of many famous magical items from mythology, a list of herbs and gems and their uses, and examples of the creation of magic items. A decision still must be reached as to the addition of three more Colleges still in the design state — Wizardry, White Magics, and Faerie Magics. Blindest copies have gone out and we are awaiting the results.

World Generation is being delayed until Origins '82. This is to allow the *DQ2nd Edition* to get out there into your eager hands. Steve Jackson's massive work is complete and will be marketed as a hard or softbound book, approximately 128 pages in length.

DragonQuest 2nd Edition is currently at the printer and will be in the stores by mid-November. It will be sold in two configurations: one is a 160-page hardbound book, the other is a 2" box version and will include the new *DQ* screen, dice, and *The Blade of Allectus*. In this version the rules will come as a 160-page softbound book that will be three-ring hole punched for convenience. The hard-bound book will sell for \$14.00 and includes an introductory adventure (*The Camp of A-i-la Akabari*); the boxed version will sell for \$20.

Both games contain the new hand-to-hand combat system, which, hopefully, combines the detail and completeness of the original but without the cumbersome procedures and systems of the original. I have made an effort to de-gamify the rules in the combat section as much as possible, for while the game sells well to SPI fans it still has yet to make a great dent in the general role-playing market. This may partly be due to our rules' style. Wargamers appreciate *DQ*'s completeness, but role-players are turned off by the case numbers, the jargon, and the verbose nature. Time will tell whether or not I succeeded.

Playtesters report that the new system takes 50% to 75% less time to play through a typical combat, and the playtest groups include veteran *DQ* players as well as *D&D*ers. Interestingly, while all groups report overall favorable results (with many being highly enthusiastic), the best reaction came from the *D&D*ers, which, if nothing else, proves that the ideas had merit but were being resisted slightly by the veterans. Whether these *D&D*ers will switch to *DQ* or not remains to be seen (some indicated they might). There may be hope for them yet.

Beyond these projects the future remains hazy. I want very much to do another Alusia map, a fully developed city project, and a skills supplement. Which of these will see the light of day is uncertain. At every office meeting I campaign for more *DQ* material, and I believe my pleas are beginning to be heard.

On the outside, Judges Guild has been licensed to produce *DQ* adventures, and their first product will be on the market before Christmas.

Gerry Klug

