

Day 1 First RPG played this year

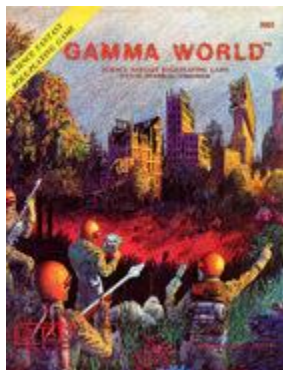
That would be [Our Better Angels – Coal and Iron](#) on January 14th. The game is the creation of my friend Craig who decided he wanted a game that relies on a character's better nature. The characters, who are mostly related, are defined by a series of (mostly) mental and a few physical words we can use to overcome difficulties. If you use one word, temporarily – sleep usually restores them, you can roll 3D6 to hit a target number. If you use two words you can roll 5D6 and if you use three words, the maximum, you can roll 6D6. Your fellow PCs can use words as well to help you with each word used adding a straight 6 points. And this can happen after the initial roll. The system is simple yet elegant and works quite well. Between adventures we can gift words to other players to increase our arsenal. We live in two settlements along a river called Coal and Iron. One produces Coal and the other produces Cheese, no Iron. There are at least two other sentient species sharing the world with us. Our ancestors seem to have been introduced to this world to be the slaves of a race we call the Elder. The few we've encountered have been sleeping and we're defending ourselves from a seemingly incorporeal race called the Mizrhan. This [link](#) is to a write-up of the session totally from my character's viewpoint.

Day 2 First RPG Gamemaster

Um, that would have been someone in high school. I think we were playing Tunnels and Trolls? Let's forget about that as I seem to. The first RPG gamemaster that I remember is the same person I mentioned in yesterday's post, Craig R. The year was 1981 and I was in first year university. The game was SPI's Universe and I joined an established crew. I don't remember a lot about the campaign other than the one incident that sticks in the mind of everyone who played in that game. I got bored and with the collusion of the ship's owner the infamous Patrick van der Graf we decided to shake down some poor humans in a lost colony. Sticking some tentacles on a robot we approached these backward innocents and pretended we were gods. For some reason we or probably I demanded a human sacrifice every time the sun was at its highest point. The tiny population were of course appalled that the gods would want them to sacrifice someone every noon. The first point to make here is why in the world would I ask for something as horrific as this in the first place? And secondly it's kind of sad that you can be in first year university and not know how the summer solstice works? (And yes I just looked it up again. Very sad, good thing I was an Arts major). And none of this was Craig's fault. He's just an enabler.

Day 3 First RPG Bought (this year)

The first RPG I bought this year was Free League's [Mörk Borg](#). It's a solid little game of doom and gloom which is the first game I've encountered where you can generate characters, monsters and dungeons all online! As described by the publisher it "...is a pitch-black apocalyptic fantasy RPG about lost souls and fools seeking redemption, forgiveness or the last remaining riches in a bleak and dying world. Who are you? The tomb-robber with silver glittering between cracked fingernails? The mystic who would bend the world's heart away from its inevitable end? Confront power-draining necromancers, skulking skeletal warriors and backstabbing wickheads. Wander the Valley of the Unfortunate Undead, the catacombs beneath the Bergen Chrypt or the bedevilled Sarkash forest. But leave hope behind – the world's cruel fate is sealed, and all your vain heroic efforts are destined to end in death and dismay. Or are they?" It's got a lot of style and great art but it is very bleak. I've ran one scenario and thought it was fun.

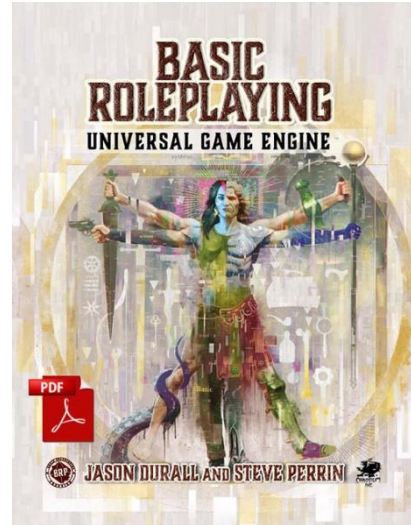


Now the first complete game I ever bought was the first edition of TSR's Gamma World purchased NIB sometime in the late 70's or early 80's. I have never played it but I did buy a box of the Grenadier miniatures as well. A lot of the RPG stuff I've bought has gone that way. I'm sure it will all be a valuable inheritance some day 😊

Day 4 Most Recent Game Bought

The most recent complete game I purchased was Basic Roleplaying from Chaosium. I had big ambitions to create my own game based on an idea I'd played around with a few years back of a post-apocalypse Glorantha with the Lunars playing the role of the British circa the Napoleonic war period with flying ships. It's probably not going anywhere.

This is the basis of my favourite RPGs, Call of Cthulhu and Runequest. I've also ran Elfquest, Elric/Stormbringer and Superworld using it and played some Runequest and Ringworld. It's a good system.



Day 5 Oldest game you've played

I started roleplaying in September or October 1981. Since I did play some AD&D that would have to be the oldest game I've played since it started in 1977. Close contenders would be:

- Runequest 2nd edition (1978)
- Dragonquest (1980)
- Universe (1981)
- Call of Cthulhu (1981)
- Stormbringer (1981)
- Champions (1981)

I also played a bit of Tunnels & Trolls (1975) and The Fantasy Trip (1977)

Day 6 Favorite Game You Never Get to Play

I dunno. You can break down my 42 years or so of gaming as follows:

1981-1987 – university at the beginning mostly playing but quickly started running stuff. The games I played in were AD&D, Champions, Universe and Dragonquest. I don't feel nostalgia for any of those games. The campaigns and the players? Sure. What was I running? Call of Cthulhu, Runequest, Powers and Perils, Elfquest, Paranoia, Elric/Stormbringer, etc.

1988-1991 – no RPGs. Other stuff took priority.

1992-2020 – mostly running with very little playing, just the occasional con and a bit of Call of Cthulhu run by a friend. I ran Runequest mostly with the odd diversion into The Laundry, and a bunch of other short lived campaigns.

2020-now 50/50ish running and playing.

I would say I've run more than I've played.

Honestly, I prefer running to playing and it's the person running and the people you're playing with that really matter.

Day 7 Smartest RPG You've Played

Smartest RPG? Seems like an odd adjective to apply to an RPG. No idea.

Day 8 Favourite Character

That would be Wilhemina "Willy" Haber a great niece of Fritz Haber's¹ I played in a GURPS campaign my friend Craig ran. There were three players and we were all scientists that had been recruited to travel to the dawn of time to try and save the human race from a dire enemy. We were supposed to hasten human progress so we could thwart this enemy. Our minds were sent all the way back to Ur to inhabit local bodies. I was a frail person with total eidetic memory. A strong breeze could have knocked me over but I was an agronomist, veterinarian, geneticist, and a physician who made jewellery and played the viola. I endeared myself to the military caste by using my medical knowledge to treat them while another of the scientists introduced fishing nets and another clean water. My proudest moment was introducing the musical as a means of building community spirit. It was quite a show, with fireworks on the steps of the ziggurat! We also introduced the alphabet, the concept of zero, iron smelting, hand grenades, cannons, vaccinations, heavy camelry and much to my chagrin failed to introduce trebuchets. (The death toll was sickening). We also introduced the quarantine and made allies of the Indus River civilization. They were going on a round the world journey of discovery and refused our weapons. They did accept vaccinations though and took my lectures on the dangers of introducing things like rats and mice seriously. While we managed to boost humanity's advancement our minds were eventually rejected by our bodies and we died. Fun stuff.

Day 9 Favourite Dice

This one struck me at first as goofy as the one about the smartest RPG I've played. After some thought I decided that perhaps it wasn't that goofy. I like real dice, even when using Roll20 I don't tend to use the die roller. I also like solid dice, these days the bigger the better, especially the numbers. I also prefer that any D4 I use has the value on the base of the side not the point. Heresy! A friend recently bought me some skew dice from [The Dice Lab](#), the pipped D6 and

¹ I lived my life as a rejection of Haber's development of poison gases before World War I and emphasized the positive side of science.

some numbered D12. They're amusing and solid. I'm also fond of the D6 that our local gaming con, Prairiecon gives out as freebies to the attendees. They're a nice souvenir. For the 30th Prairiecon they gave out D30s instead which are pretty useless honestly.

Day 10. Favourite Tie-in Fiction

There's quite a lot of this stuff out there. I've enjoyed the Dragonlance novels and there's quite a lot of Warhammer and 40K fiction. I own a series of novels written for the Torg game that were pretty good.

My favourite thing when inspired is to write my own fiction. I wrote a lot of myths and the like for Runequest.

<https://oliverbernuetz.neocities.org/stories>

More recently I really enjoyed writing for my Superworld campaign set in an alternate 1930s Winnipeg.

<https://oliverbernuetz.neocities.org/Assiniboia/Greetings>

Day 11 Weirdest Game you've Played

Hmm, it's all imagination isn't it? My son just started his first campaign using the Call of Cthulhu rules. The game is set in an alternate world, Carthos, the City of Man with mostly 1920s era technology. Three of the players are playing police officers, one a civilian consultant and the other two penitents, supposedly criminals looking to reform themselves. The penitents were masks as a punishment. I play Sister Mary-Margaret, a penitent who joined the squad for the opportunity to cause mayhem and murder. Weirdest character I've ever played anyway.

Day 12 Old Game you Still Play

The main games I play are Call of Cthulhu (1981) and Runequest (1978). But we're playing them using the most recent versions 2014 and 2018. Other than that I did play some 3rd edition GURPS (2004) so that might be the oldest game I've played recently.

Day 13 Most Memorable Character Demise

Well there was my Dragonquest character that didn't catch the belt pouch containing the vials of universal solvent. More recently there was my Call of Cthulhu character who along with the rest of party blew up the house they were holed up in rather than risk capture by Mi-go. That was a big Ka-boom. They shouldn't have given us all those hand grenades and dynamite.

Day 14 Favourite Convention Purchase

Nothing comes to mind. Don't tend to buy stuff when I attend cons.

Day 15 Favourite Con Module

That would be The Comet Kids, which I played with friends at Prairiecon sometime in the 80's or 90's. It was run by my friend Craig R. and was a superhero game using either GURPS or Superworld rules. The six of us all had identical abilities (with one exception). It had three parts run over two days if I remember. The first part was set around the real world crash of a bomber into the Empire State building while we were adolescents. Then we battled Nazis during WW II and finally the last part was set in the nursing home where five of us had ended up as we aged and our powers diminished. Yes the five of us because the sixth Comet Kid had been gifted with immortality and eternal youth and was swanning around with super models while the rest of us were slowly dying and wearing adult diapers. The last scene of the game was him standing on the Moon after we'd all died. I don't remember a lot of details but I can still feel the indignation and the feeling of injustice.

Day 16 Game you wished you owned

Nope. I'm good with the ones I own. Thanks anyway.

Day 17 Funniest Game you've played

Well it was something I ran rather than payed. On of the first drelb games I ever ran at Wingames back in the early 80's. The Drelb games originally used a rules lite version of Call of Cthulhu (because I was too lazy to create a proper scenario). Details escape me but it was a two party game set in Arkham with a party of cannibal backwooders versus a party of Mi-go disguised as humans. Much of the game was made up on the fly but the results were hilarious. The Mi-go engineered a break out of a lobster tank at a restaurant to free their lost kin. The other GM, my late friend Doug Sh. and I kept running back to keep each other updated on the insanity. The laughs were frequent and loud. Subsequent drelb insanity included:

- Drelbs in Aspic where the action took place on a very phallic generations ship embedded in aspic for some reason.
- Dogs versus Cats where the two parties competed to win a scavenger hunt in a 1970s Canadian split level ranch.

Very silly and very fun.

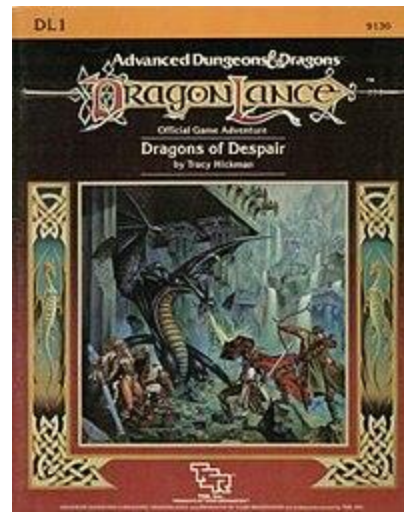
Day 18 Favourite game System

All of the games that use the Basic Roleplaying System (BRP) from Chaosium. I suspect I've played and/or run in pretty much all of them. Good times.

Games I've Run	Games I've Played
Call of Cthulhu (various editions)	Call of Cthulhu (various editions)
Elfquest	Ringworld
Elric/Stormbringer	Runequest (2 nd edition)
Runequest (various editions)	
Superworld	

Day 19 Favourite Published Adventure

Easy choice, Dragons of Despair the first Dragonlance adventure released in 1984. Despite the fact that I really haven't played that much AD&D I bought the first six Dragonlance adventures second hand in a book store. I just love the dungeon in this module and I've used it in two quite different campaigns over the years. The first was a Powers and Perils campaign I ran in university. P&P was a zany game with lots of rules and an abundance of tables. One of the possibilities when you rolled up a character was to roll the special advantage of being superhuman. I think 5 of the 6 players were physically superhuman so they were enormous specimens. (The sixth player only rolled mental superhumanness. He only had a huge brain). One of the quirks of P&P was that when you generated your character you also created a food quota you needed to eat every day. Of course these physical superhuman specimens needed to eat a lot to keep going. Also of course P&P had a table that assigned how much energy you got out of specific foods. The characters quickly realized that cheese gave the best bang for the buck and weight. So part of their equipment was an oxen drawn wagon full of cheese. They joked that they could always eat the oxen when the cheese ran out. One of the elements of the dungeon in Dragons of Despair was a sunken temple which featured an elevator that descended in a large open area. An NPC who was helping the party and who was also physically superhuman fell out of the elevator when it was at the top and fell all the way to the ground. I misread the rules and thought the damage was such that her chain armour disintegrated on contact but she survived. In reality she would have died too. But it was funny as done.



The second time I've run this scenario was in my high level RQ campaign that continued the campaign I'd started in the 90's. The temple was situated in the wastes east of Prax and the party managed to stay in the elevator this time. They were chasing the Alliance of Evil that had

teamed up against them. It included one bad guy from Snakepipe Hollow, someone from the Old Sun Dome Temple and one other.

I am definitely going to be using this scenario again.

Day 20 Will Still Play 20 Years from Now.

Probably the same games with hopefully the same people. Fingers crossed!

Day 21 Favourite Licensed RPG

So I had originally posted the following:

Hmm. I guess Call of Cthulhu isn't really a licensed game. I really like the Avatar cartoons, etc. so I supported the Kickstarter. I do not like the system used for the games mechanics so while it's a beautiful looking game with great components I certainly can't say it's a favourite. So I guess I don't have one.

But on prompting from a friend I realize that the answer is of course The Laundry for Basic Role-Playing/Call of Cthulhu. Based on the masterful [novels](#) by Charles Stross it's a fun combination of eldritch horror, bureaucracy and espionage! So much fun that I created my own Canadian

version, Upper Canada Investigations. This is the business card for one of the three avatars of William Lyon Mackenzie King.



Day 22 Best Second hand RPG Purchase

Has to be the Dragonlance modules. I've got a lot of them though I've only ever used the first one for gaming. (See Day 19)

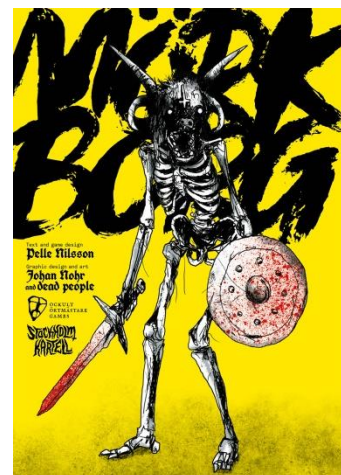
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dragonlance>

Day 23 Coolest looking RPG product

Pretty much anything associated Mork Borg is the coolest looking RPG product. They've really got a theme going and stick to it.

Day 24 Simplest RPG you Play

My friend Craig's Our Better Angels. The game is the creation of my friend Craig who decided he wanted a game that relies on a



character's better nature. The characters, who are mostly related, are defined by a series of (mostly) mental and a few physical words we can use to overcome difficulties. If you use one word, temporarily – sleep usually restores them, you can roll 3D6 to hit a target number. If you use two words you can roll 5D6 and if you use three words, the maximum, you can roll 6D6. Your fellow PCs can use words as well to help you with each word used adding a straight 6 points. And this can happen after the initial roll. The system is simple yet elegant and works quite well. Between adventures we can gift words to other players to increase our arsenal.

Day 25 Unplayed RPG You Own

Oh man, this is a rude question. This is 40+ years of accumulation...and quite a few were second hand acquisitions.

Aftermath

Beast Hunters

Celtic Legends

Chronica Feudalis

Conan: Roleplaying Game

Supernatural

Cyberpunk: the roleplaying game of the dark

The Doctor Who Roleplaying Games

Dream Park: the Roleplaying Game

Apocalypse Prevention Inc.

Element Masters

Grimm

Trail of Cthulhu

It Came From the Late, Late, Late Show

Skyrealms of Jorune

Man, Myth & Magic

Masterbook

Shatterzone

The World of Bloodshadows

Maze Masters Guide

Nephilim

Palladium Role-Playing Game

Pathfinder

King Arthur Pendragon

Avatar Legends: the Roleplaying Game

Renaissance SRD (Clockwork & Chivalry)

RIFTS

Space Opera

Star Trek Roleplaying Game – Corebook

Star Trek: the Role Playing Game

Vampire: the Masquerade

Tales from the Floating Vagabond

The Arcanum: Fantasy Role-Thieves Guild

The Valley of the Pharaohs

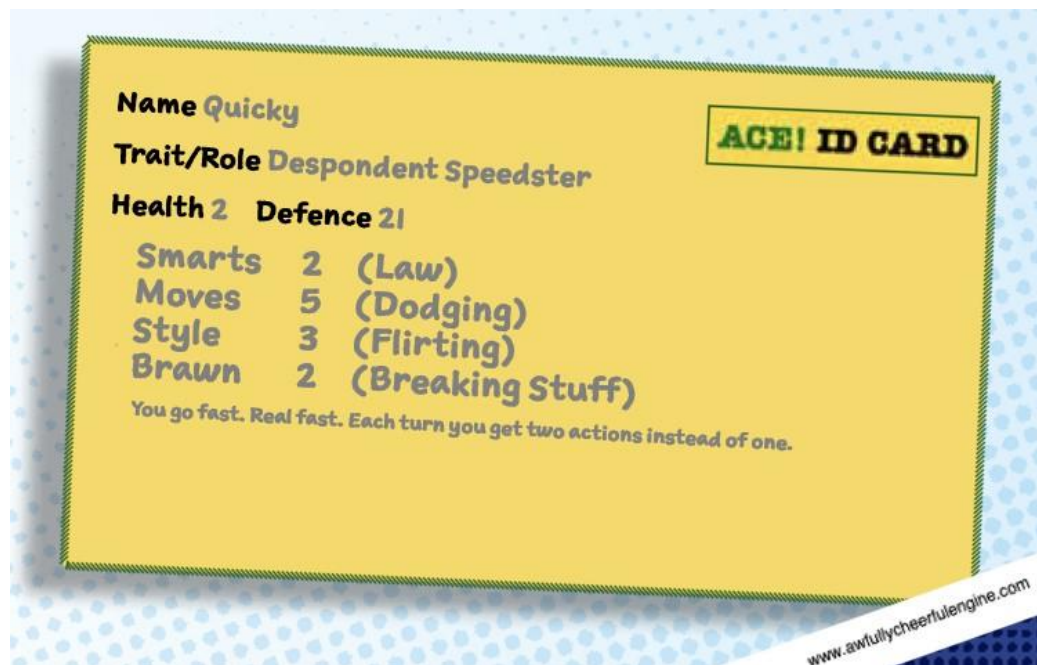
Torg Eternity

Mercenaries, Spies and Private Eyes

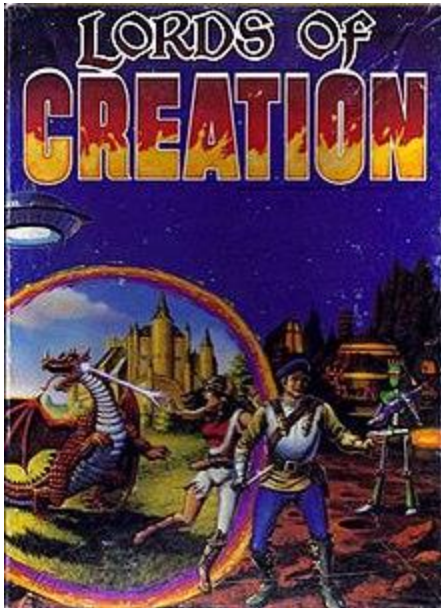
Tales from the Loop

Day 26 Favourite Character Sheet

Well you can't get much easier than the ones used in ACE!, the Awfully Cheerful Engine. Nice and simple!



Day 27 Game You'd Like a New Edition Of



A lot of the games I like have already had new editions, Runequest, Call of Cthulhu, Torg but maybe Lords of Creation. I really liked the premise and we had fun playing it.

Day 28 Scariest Game You've Ever Played

Hmm, nothing I've ever played struck me as that scary. Maybe I'm too resistant to immersive gaming experiences...

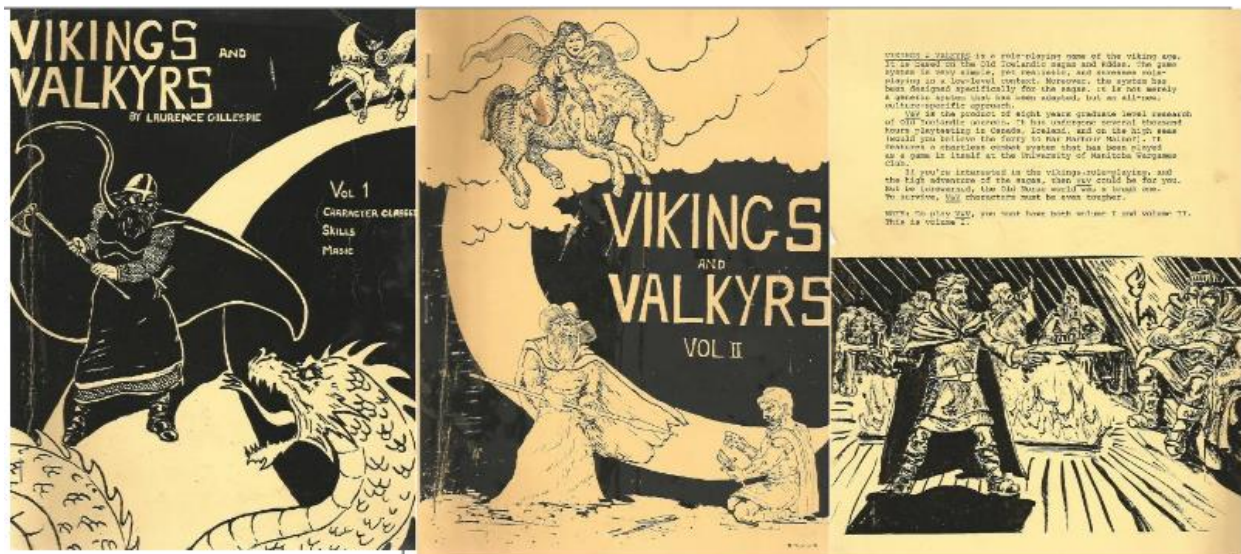
Day 29 Most Memorable Encounter

Ooh irony! Can't think of any.

Day 30 Obscure RPG you've played

That'd be Our Better Angels a game my friend Craig invented (see days 1 and 24). If you've never played in a game run by Craig you have not played it. I may have played a session or two of Vikings and Valkyries which another friend Laurence created. Laurence even got to the point of publication!

<https://rpggeek.com/thread/818932/thorough-and-objective-review-vikings-and-valkyrs?fbclid=IwAR0XtGPe7B3cdHYHg8-QWJqKhyAi2kMrdg5pg-Aohvz7RrDbLHgXo3LFx5c>



Day 31 Favourite RPG of all time

That would be Runequest. I've probably ran it more than other system in various editions, 2nd. 3rd (might hold the record for the most used), a bit of Mongoose's two editions and a tiny bit of the game that turned into Mythras. And a couple of years of the latest edition, Runequest: Roleplaying in Glorantha. The only edition I've played much myself was the 2nd edition.

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