

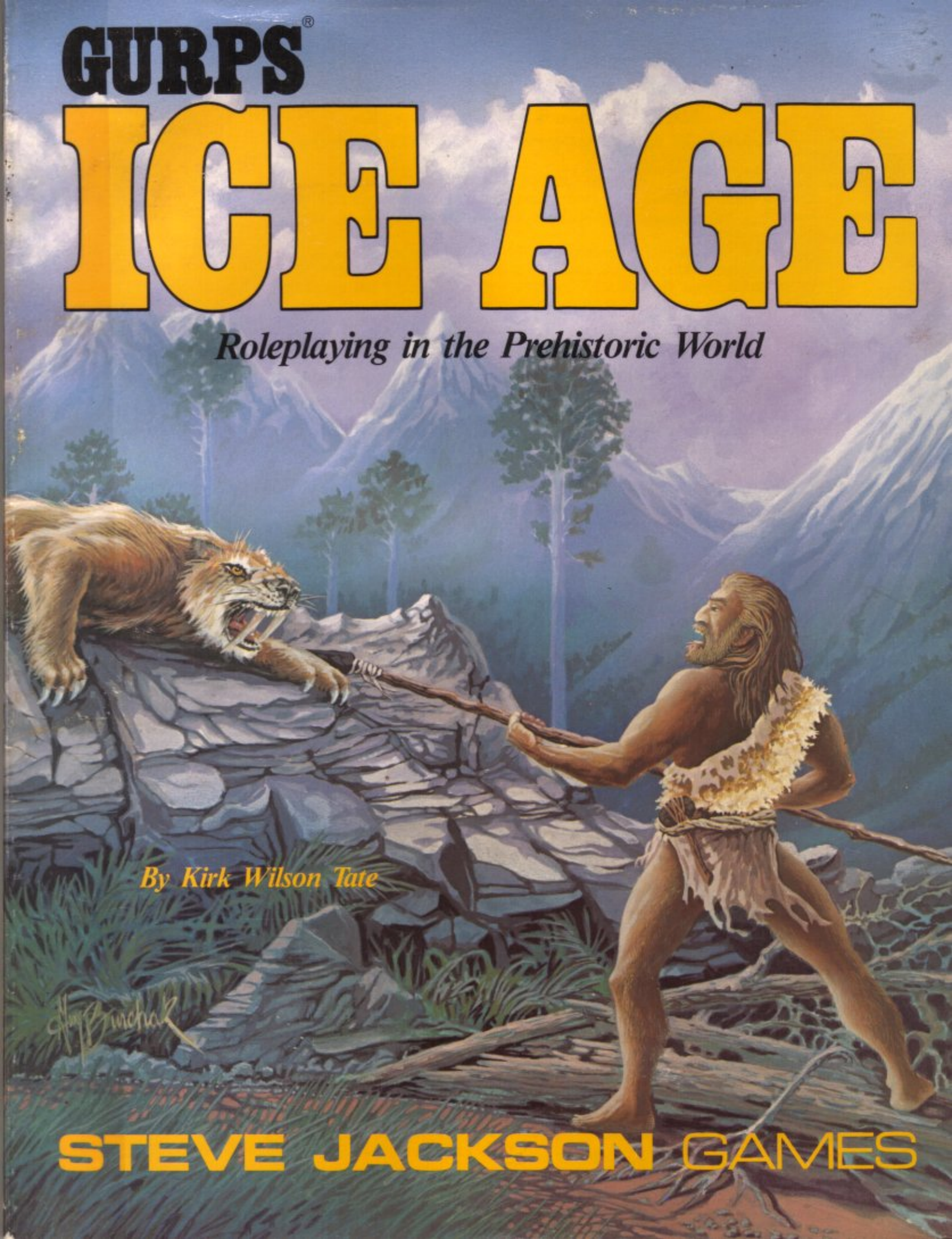
**GURPS<sup>®</sup>**

# ICE AGE

*Roleplaying in the Prehistoric World*

*By Kirk Wilson Tate*

**STEVE JACKSON GAMES**





# GURPS® Ice Age

*Roleplaying in the Prehistoric World*  
*A Generic Universal RolePlaying System Worldbook*

By Kirk Wilson Tate

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— Kirk Tate

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# STEVE JACKSON GAMES



# INTRODUCTION

## About the Author

*GURPS Ice Age* is author Kirk Tate's first professional effort. He has been a roleplayer and GM for over ten years and a wargamer for more years than he cares to recall. He has contributed to *Roleplayer* magazine and playtested both *Illuminati* and the *GURPS Basic Set*. His GM credits include Hexworld at Origins '85 and other Texas conventions. With partner in crime J. David George, he designed and ran a solo roleplaying adventure at Texcon.

Kirk holds a B.A. in history from the University of Texas where his tastes ran from ancient Greece to modern Mexico. In addition to gaming, his interests include rugby and science fiction and fantasy literature. He is currently the GM-by-default of an ongoing fantasy campaign, as none of his friends want the job. Kirk resides in Austin, TX., with his wife and an incredibly ugly couch.

## About GURPS

Steve Jackson Games is committed to full support of the *GURPS* system. Our address is SJ Games, Box 18957-A, Austin, TX 78760. Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) any time you write us! Resources now available include:

**Roleplayer.** This bimonthly newsletter includes questions and answers, new races, rules, beasts, information on upcoming releases, and more. Please write for current subscription information.

**New supplements and adventures.** We're always working on new material. A current catalog is available for an SASE.

**Errata.** Nobody's perfect — but when we make a mistake, we admit it. Up-to-date errata sheets for all *GURPS* releases, including this book, are always available from SJ Games; be sure to include an SASE with your request.

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**BBS.** For those of you who have home computers, SJ Games operates a BBS with discussion areas for several games, including *GURPS*. Much of the playtest feedback for new products comes from the BBS. It's up 24 hours per day at (512) 447-4449, at 300, 1200 or 2400 baud. Call us!

*GURPS Ice Age* is a supplement designed to provide everything you need to roleplay in the world of early man. Here you will find detailed rules for building characters of any species from man's family tree. There are new skills, advantages and disadvantages, and a magic system to simulate shamanism and primitive spiritualism.

You will also find suggestions for setting up campaigns in the stone-age world, as well as "lost worlds," time travel and slapstick campaigns. The *Bestiary* chapter details a selection of Ice-age fauna for use in encounters as opponents and prey. Finally, there is an adventure for beginning characters to help you get the "feel" of roleplaying cavemen.

*Ice Age* is oriented primarily towards Europe during the Pleistocene Epoch, which began about one million years ago. This is the world of the classic cave-men, Neanderthal and Cro-Magnon. There is also more archaeological evidence from this period and region than any other, especially for the last 200,000 years. The giant ice flows which shaped the entire ecosystem of most of the northern hemisphere had virtually no effect south of the Mediterranean.

Despite the European emphasis, *GURPS Ice Age* allows gaming in any period of hominid history. All of the species of genus *Homo* are discussed in detail, and there are even rules for making characters from the genus *Australopithecus*. A few animals of the African savanna are described as well.

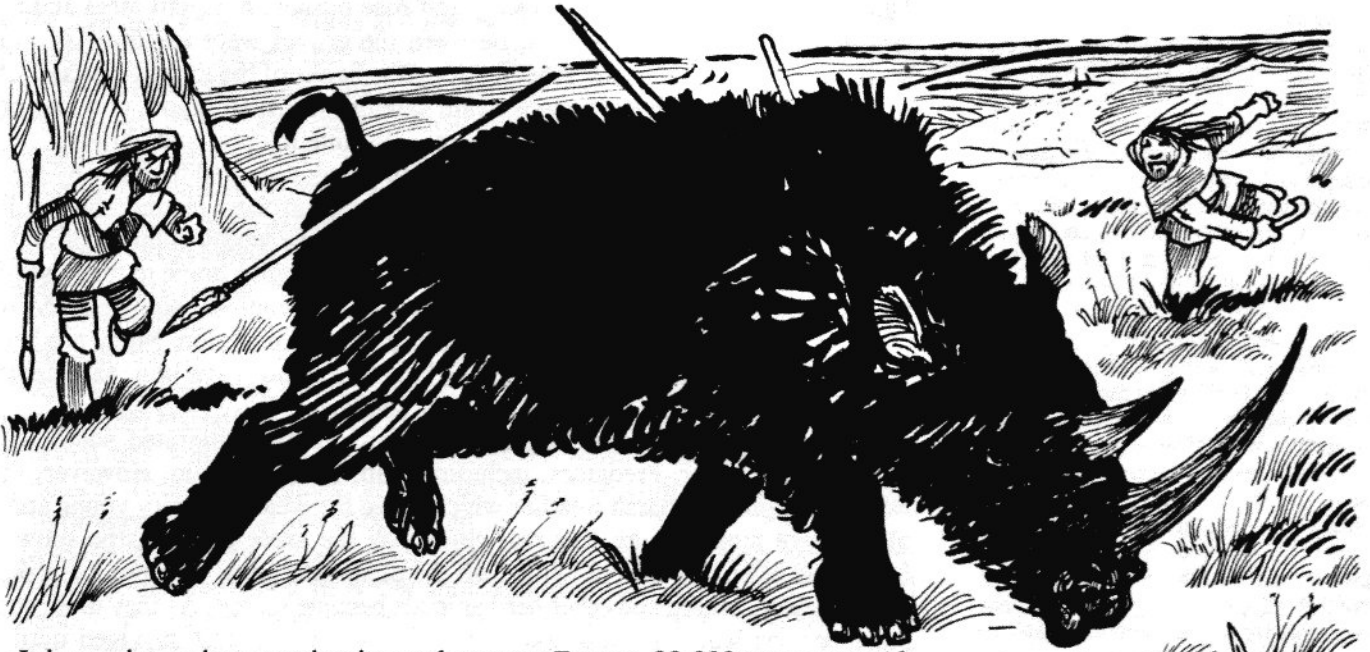
The information provided in this book was gleaned from a wide variety of books and periodicals. The field of anthropology is a rapidly changing one — due to the development of new technologies. Wherever possible the most current and widely accepted view is presented. This does not mean that it is necessarily right, and it may someday be proven wrong. The final consideration in any matter, of course, is playability. If a certain theory didn't, in this author's opinion, make for good gaming, it was changed or omitted.

— Kirk Tate





# THE PLEISTOCENE 1



It is a quiet spring morning in northwestern France, 20,000 years ago. Although the sun has been up for over an hour, the temperature is only a few degrees above freezing. As you walk along a windswept ridge, you can see the glaciers shimmering on the northern horizon — a cold reminder that the relative warmth of summer is a fleeting thing. As you reach the end of the long, finger-like ridge, itself a product of the towering ice, you see your goal in the broad river valley below. You've been tracking the large woolly rhino for two days, ever since it was wounded by a well-thrown spear. From the cover of a stunted pine tree, you can see the broken shaft still protruding from its shoulder. You thank the spirits that you found it before the wolves did. Your tribe needs the meat.

Motioning for your companions to join you, you smear some of the rhino's fresh dung on your clothing to disguise your scent — the beast's eyesight is poor but its nose is keen. After carefully circling downwind of your prey, you and your cousin begin to creep closer. The third hunter, your mate's brother, is waiting on the animal's opposite side, a good distance away. You'll have to surround it to keep it from escaping again.

At thirty paces, you stop to fit a javelin into your spear thrower. As you continue your approach, the rhino brings its head up suddenly and snorts. Seizing the moment you leap out of the grass and hurl your javelin. It strikes the rhino's back and sticks there, but your cousin's spear flies wide. The wounded animal turns to run, but is intercepted by the third hunter, who is shouting at the top of his lungs and waving his spear. The confused beast turns once more and charges toward you. You move quickly sideways but it veers as well, lowering its head to make use of the eighteen-inch horn on its snout. You hear the others shouting, and know they are hurling their weapons at the beast. At the last moment you sidestep and thrust your last spear with all your might. You feel the point bite deep just as the rhino's shoulder strikes you and sends you rolling into a shallow, ice-cold stream.

Dazed and sore, you sit up and take inventory — nothing broken or gashed. You were lucky this time. About ten yards away the wounded rhino is trying to rise, with four spear shafts protruding from its body. As you regain your breath, the others move in quickly and finish the kill. Tonight you'll eat well, and in three days so will the tribe. You smile.





# The Pleistocene World

## Geologic Time

Scientists divide the Earth's history into five *eras*, each lasting millions of years; these are divided into smaller *periods* and even shorter *epochs*. Major changes in climate, plant and animal life, as well as geography mark each point where an older age stops and a new one begins. The dinosaurs, for example, lived in the Mesozoic Era lasting from 225 million to 65 million years ago. This era is divided into three periods: the Triassic, Jurassic and Cretaceous.

The modern era is the Cenozoic; the races dealt with in this book span its two periods — the Tertiary and the Quaternary. More specifically, they existed in the last and the first epoch of these periods respectively, known as the Pliocene and the Pleistocene.

Man's earliest definite ancestor, *Australopithecus afarensis*, first appears in the fossil record during the late Pliocene, about 3.5 million years ago. The Pliocene was a cool, dry time in earth's history, but it was still warmer than today.

The Pleistocene Epoch was ushered in by a significant global cooling which brought on the Quaternary Ice Ages, so named because it was once thought there were four major glaciations during the period. It has since been shown that there have been at least eight and possibly as many as twenty distinct glaciations since the era began in 1.5 million B.C.

The Pleistocene itself is split into three major sections, called the Lower, Middle and Upper Pleistocene, the latter being the most recent. The divisions are based upon the evolutionary and technological milestones in the development of the genus *Homo*, to which modern man belongs. The Pleistocene ended ten thousand years ago, beginning the modern Holocene Epoch, in which we live.

## Page References

Rules and statistics in this book are specifically for the *GURPS Basic Set* (Third Edition). Any page reference that begins with a B refers to a page in the *Basic Set* — e.g., p. B102 means p. 102 of the *Basic Set*, Third Edition. A "BY" page reference means a page in the *GURPS Bestiary*.

Although the world of the Pleistocene Ice Ages was a challenging environment, it was not a barren one. Europe, Asia and North America, where the earth wasn't covered by ice, were forested with tall stands of pine, spruce and fir. During the short summers, raspberry and rose bushes, horsetail ferns and mosses thrived underneath the trees. Between the groves were meadows of grass, wild oats, wheat, clover and alfalfa. Along the banks of the icy streams and lakes grew cattails and rushes; in them swam salmon, trout, sturgeon, cod and pike. And everywhere there were wildflowers — infinite in color and variety.

These fields and woodlands teemed with game, crowded together by the advancing glaciers. Vast herds of reindeer, horses, aurochs, mammoths and ibex thrived, in addition to more solitary animals like the woolly rhinoceros and the herbivorous cave bear. The ice age environment was also home to many smaller animals, including rabbits, lemmings, marmots, porcupines, squirrels and field mice. Numerous waterfowl and other birds were also common. Many predators, large and small, competed for food: the huge dire wolf, cave lion, sabertoothed cat, lynx, eagle, owl, weasel, fox, badger and bear.

When the long winters began, most herd animals migrated south where foraging was easier. Predators, including man, followed them. However, there was no escaping the harsh weather which killed the weak, the very young and the old. Where moist sea air met that chilled by the great glaciers, the snow fell heavy and often. As the cold killed off the plants and snow covered the ground, food for deer, horses and other herd animals became scarce. As they died, so did those species which preyed upon them. Only the strongest survived until the spring thaw, when plains and forests would once again be inundated with plant and animal life.

At first glance, man seems ill equipped to meet the challenges of this harsh world. He lacks the thick fur of the cave bear, the tough hide of the woolly rhinoceros, or the sharp claws and teeth of the lion. To ward off cold and starvation he has only his dexterous hands and his intellect. Yet, while the rest of the animal world could only adapt to the environment, man could — and did — adapt the environment to *him*. He fashioned tools from stone, wood and bone to replace the sharp teeth and claws he lacked. He learned to cure and work the hides from the animals he killed, and made warm clothing and blankets. Nothing went to waste. Eventually he learned to build his own shelters from wood, stone, moss and hides. The tents and huts he constructed eliminated the need to find





caves in which to shelter — the original denizens of which were often dangerous and not disposed to move.

Perhaps most important, man knew how to cooperate as no other animal could. He developed tactics for herding and killing large numbers of animals, so that a few hunters could feed and supply a large tribe.

**Ice Age** man knew the habits and life cycles of the creatures he hunted, and exploited them. He studied the changing of the seasons and discovered the best game during each. He drove migrating reindeer into rivers where the animals were hampered by the deep water. Horse and ibex herds were chased into box canyons where they could be slaughtered. He waited patiently for the annual migrations upstream of Atlantic salmon, and the seals that would follow them. Cooperative effort even extended beyond a single family or tribe; two or more bands would occasionally join forces to tackle a particularly large job, such as hunting an entire mammoth herd.

All of these strategies for survival were passed on from generation to generation through the tribal culture. By listening to stories told around the campfire on long winter nights and watching dances which reenacted the events of a hunt, young children learned about their environment and methods for dealing with it. The social ties which bound the tribe together were reinforced by religious ceremonies. These ceremonies, always involving the entire tribe, emphasized the importance of kinship and cooperation.

Mankind's long climb from unthinking animal to master of adaptive technology was not accomplished in a few thousand years, or even a few hundred thousand — it was a process lasting at least three and a half million years. For much of that time, progress was slow. When confronted with the onslaught of the Pleistocene ice ages, however, he had to develop rapidly if he was to survive.

## Prehistoric Chronology

The following is a brief account of human evolution, examining the major trends and developments. A more concise and specific timeline is located in the sidebars.

### The Australopithecines

The story of mankind's origin begins in earnest around six million years ago. At that time, the evolutionary branch which eventually produced modern man split off from the line which includes the chimpanzee and the gorilla.

This first *hominid* (the term hominid applies to all of the members of the genera *Homo* and *Australopithecus*) was a diminutive creature, standing no more than four feet tall. It walked upright, most likely with a bow-legged, swaying gait, and traveled in small roving bands, living off plants and scavenged meat. Although no fossil remains of this early ancestor of man have been found, it was probably very similar to *Australopithecus afarensis*, a species regarded as ancestral to all later hominids and which lived about 3.5 to 4 million years ago.

*A. afarensis* was a small, nimble inhabitant of the savannas of east Africa. *A. africanus*, which evolved from *afarensis*, was a very similar species which lived primarily in southern Africa. The robust australopithecines — *robustus* and *boisei* — were much larger, perhaps reaching six feet in height. They had massive jaws and barrel chests, and both may have been merely regional variations of a single wide-ranging species.

The australopithecines certainly used twigs to fish for termites and dig for edible roots, and convenient rocks for smashing bones to get at the marrow. Modern chimps display similar tool-using behavior. They did not, however, create stone tools of a regular pattern. They may have made and used simple digging sticks, but no evidence has survived. With brains only a third the size of a modern human's, these hominids were only a fraction above the rest of the animal kingdom in intellect, and were more often prey than predator.



### Timeline of Human Evolution

- 65,000,000 BC — The age of the reptiles ends with the extinction of the dinosaurs. The age of mammals, the Cenozoic Era, begins.
- 25,000,000 BC — The first apes appear.
- 12,000,000 BC — *Ramapithecus*, ancestor to the modern orangutan, diverges from the human evolutionary branch.
- 6,000,000 BC — The line which will eventually produce man branches off from that of the chimpanzee and gorilla.
- 4,000,000 BC — *Australopithecus afarensis*, now thought to be a direct ancestor of modern man and perhaps the first fully bipedal hominid, appears in east Africa.
- 3,000,000 BC — *A. africanus* arises in southern Africa.

*Continued on next page . . .*





### Timeline of Human Evolution (continued)

- 2,500,000 BC — The robust Australopithecines develop — *robustus* in southern Africa, *boisei* in eastern Africa. The first lithic (stone) technology, consisting of pebble tools, is invented.
- 2,300,000 BC — The gracile Australopithecines, *afarensis* and *africanus*, become extinct or evolve into *Homo habilis*.
- 2,000,000 BC — The oldest known *H. habilis* remains are from this time.
- 1,750,000 BC — First bone point is made.
- 1,650,000 BC — *Homo erectus* first appears.
- 1,500,000 BC — *H. habilis* becomes extinct. The Acheulean tool industry begins to develop and the first hand axe is used.
- 1,400,000 BC — First opportunistic use of naturally occurring brush fires occurs.
- 1,000,000 BC — The Pleistocene Epoch begins. *H. erectus* spreads into Europe and Asia. Cooperative hunting among hominids begins. The spear is invented and simple language begins to develop.
- 800,000-700,000 BC — This is the Gunz glacial period in Europe and the beginning of the Middle Pleistocene. First known hearth fires were used at sites in northern China. Fire probably started naturally but was maintained by man. Cooked food and intertribal cooperation begin.
- 550,000-330,000 BC — The Mindel Ice Age in Europe begins. The baton technique of tool making is invented. Man learns to make fire. He makes the first bone tool kit and simple clothing.
- 300,000 BC — The archaic form of *Homo sapiens* appears, *erectus* becomes extinct. The Upper Pleistocene begins.

Continued on next page . . .

## The Genus *Homo*

### *Homo habilis*

*Homo habilis*, the first representative of the genus which includes modern man, became distinct as a species from *A. afarensis* two to two and a half million years ago. Very little is known of *habilis*, since very few fossilized remains have been discovered. Enough evidence has been found to determine that the "handy man" — a rough translation of the Latin scientific designation — was a small, stocky creature that walked upright. He had a low forehead and a strong lower jaw, still well adapted to the life of a vegetarian gatherer. *H. habilis* had a brain capacity half that of modern man, and, for the first time ever, he made stone tools. Many sites of *habilis* remains include pebble tools — chopping instruments made by knocking three or four flakes off of a smooth, round rock, to give it a sharp edge. These tools enabled *habilis* to butcher large animals and include fresh meat as a regular part of his diet.

### *Homo erectus*

Not quite a million years after his appearance, *habilis* was replaced by *Homo erectus*, perhaps the first true man. *H. erectus* was larger, robust in build, and had a prominent brow ridge that distinguished him from men today. But *erectus* was the first creature in earth's history to use and make fire, cook his food, and wear clothing.

Technology advanced rapidly during *erectus*' 1.3-million-year tenure. He learned to make razor-sharp hand axes, invented the spear (and the technique of hardening spear points in a fire), and made the first tools from bone. Many of the advances were responses to a cooling environment — *erectus* was the first hominid to see the mountainous glaciers come marching down from the pole to plunge the northern hemisphere into the Pleistocene Ice Ages.

All of the achievements of *erectus* are directly attributable to his larger, more complex brain. At 1,000 milliliters, it was within the modern human range, though still 25% smaller than the average. For the first time there was an animal capable of truly abstract thought. *H. erectus* could envision an object that would be useful, one that he had never seen and that had never existed, and create it from materials found in his environment. His creativity and ability to look into the future made it possible for him to plan ahead and organize cooperative group hunts. Along with this cooperation came the development of language and, eventually, the beginnings of culture.



### Archaic *Homo sapiens*

Culture came on with a vengeance with the advent of *Homo sapiens*, the "wise man." *H. sapiens* evolved as *erectus* died out, 300 million years ago. By this time, hominids had spread from Africa throughout temperate Europe and Asia, thanks to the development of technologies which allowed them to survive in cooler climates. Now, mankind moved even further north, into the arctic conditions near the great glaciers. The challenges of life in these even more hostile climates were met with new strategies for survival. Culture itself became man's most important adaptive tool.

Archaic *H. sapiens* had a well-ordered society. The trend towards specialization and division of labor which began with *erectus* continued. Each group within a band — adult men, women, adolescents and children — had a specific role to play in the daily fight for survival. Human society began to develop mechanisms to reinforce the social organization which was vital to a tribe's existence. Animistic beliefs, ethics, storytelling and group rituals all probably had their origins with the first *Homo sapiens*. Alongside these, a true spoken language developed.

### Neanderthal Man

When *Homo sapiens neanderthalensis*, Neanderthal Man, appeared in Europe, technological and cultural evolution accelerated. Despite the powerful build, large jaw and beetle brow, the Neanderthal was an intelligent, creative species. He invented new methods of working with stone which resulted in even more efficient tools and weapons. New tools, used only in the manufacture of other items, represented another leap in ability for abstract thought. Now humans could build up complex sequences of cause-and-effect relationships. These relationships were reflected in the culture. More complex religious beliefs are indicated by the first known ritual burials, practiced by Neanderthal. The Neanderthal cared for his fellow man; there are known remains of individuals who survived for years after being completely crippled by disease or injury. Animistic beliefs were probably an integral part of Neanderthal society.

### Cro-Magnon

The last major glaciation of Europe, called the Wurm, saw the advent of modern man, the doubly-wise *Homo sapiens sapiens*. Called Cro-Magnon for the place where his remains were first discovered, he had an advanced technology and a thorough understanding of his environment. The spear thrower, needle, sled, canoe and net were invented by him. He observed the cycles of the moon and the seasons, kept track of them, and related them to the life cycles of the animals on which he depended for survival. And he learned about himself. He found plants that could help cure illnesses, learned how to stitch up wounds, and practiced healing magic.

30,000 years ago, *H. sapiens sapiens* was as culturally sophisticated as men today. He practiced complex animistic and totemic religions; these belief systems explained the world around him, addressed the phenomena of birth and death, and incorporated the social bonds of marriage, kinship and tribalism.

Cro-Magnon expressed himself artistically, creating vast cave paintings, sculpture, engravings and tattoos. He kept an oral history of himself, and revered his ancestors. And, he wondered about where he came from and how he was born — questions still asked today.

## Economy

The economy of an Ice Age tribe is based entirely on barter. Although there is no currency, a measure of the relative value of certain items is helpful. This book discusses the value of items in terms of “\$kins,” represented by a \$. It is not intended that characters should start throwing around rabbit pelts as if they were gold pieces; this would be inaccurate as well as ridiculous. The values are assigned merely for comparison. A list of common items and their relative values is provided (see p. 29). A set of general guidelines for determining values of objects not listed is given below. The GM should use these as he sees fit — if he doesn't want an item to be available to the players, he may disallow it, or increase its value significantly.

In general, a \$skin represents an amount of effort measured in time; one hour is convenient. Thus, a very simple object which required one hour to find or make would be worth one \$skin. A number of other factors have a bearing on an

## Timeline of Human Evolution (Continued)

- 280,000-130,000 BC** — The Riss Ice Age begins in Europe. True spoken language and animistic beliefs begin to develop.
- 200,000 BC** — The theoretical “Eve,” common female ancestor to all modern humans, is born.
- 150,000-125,000 BC** — Neanderthal Man arises in Europe. The Levallois tool making technique is invented and gives rise to Mousterian tool industry. Burial of the dead begins.
- 75,000-10,000 BC** — The Wurm Ice Age occurs in Europe. Heavy clothing and the first spear throwers are made.
- 40,000 BC** — Man migrates over the Bering land bridge to North America. The ancestors of the Aborigines enter Australia.
- 35,000 BC** — The modern subspecies, *Homo sapiens sapiens*, appears; the archaic form disappears. Totemism begins to develop.
- 32,000 BC** — Neanderthal Man disappears, quite suddenly in evolutionary terms.
- 30,000 BC** — The “Age of Art” begins.
- 15,000 BC** — The magnificent cave paintings of Lascaux are created.
- 12,000-10,000 BC** — Glaciers recede. Reindeer, horses, cattle and dogs are domesticated.
- 10,000 BC** — Agriculture is invented. This is the beginning of the modern era — the Holocene.







## Religion

Religious beliefs are unique to *Homo sapiens* in its various forms. Although *Homo erectus* understood symbolism well enough to have a kind of primitive language, he had no real religion. *H. sapiens* did develop religious systems based on animism and, later, totemism. These are described in the sections about each species in the *Hominid Races* chapter.

The most important aspect of early religious practices is their communal nature. All of the rituals fulfill crucial social and practical functions, as well as philosophical ones. A tribe practices its religion together, in public. The religion justifies the social order and defines proper behavior. Primitive man took his religion very seriously, and so should the PCs. Religion is a vital part of the social structure which enhances *Homo sapiens* ability to survive.

## Psionics and Magic

Psionics are not a part of the "cave-man" genre, with the exception of a few latent advantages like Danger Sense (p. B20) and Racial Memory (see p. 24).

Magic, on the other hand, is an important part of the cultures of all modern hunter/gatherer cultures, and this was almost certainly true in the Pleistocene. In general, the practice of magic in stone age societies is called *shamanism*. Shamanism is not specifically religious, but it exists within the world view defined by the religion, and is explained by it.

The powers of a shaman come from his ability to manipulate spirits and act in the spirit world which exists in animistic belief. Whether or not these spirits are real is up to the GM; this in turn determines whether or not shamanistic magic will work. Just because magic doesn't work doesn't mean there won't be shamans. They might be mere charlatans, or skilled herbal healers, or true believers. Of course, the GM need not tell the players how he's chosen to play it . . .

item's value, however. The skill required to make an object, the rarity of the materials, difficulty in making it, market demand, and any danger associated with acquiring it, all play a role. It is up to the GM to determine exactly how much these factors affect the "cost" of an item.

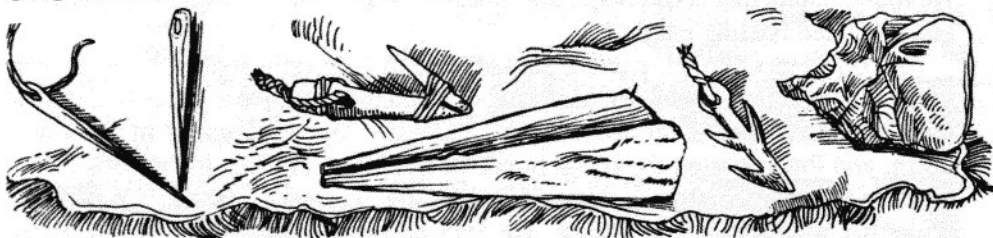
**Example:** A Cro-Magnon PC might want to trade for a spear thrower. An ordinary spear thrower might take three hours to make, and although the skill to make it isn't possessed by just anybody, it's not uncommon among Cro-Magnon tribes. So the average thrower is worth about 4 \$skins. This particular weapon, however, is carved from the femur of an albino cave lion — a rare thing and very hazardous to obtain! So the GM might double or even triple the weapon's value. It is also engraved with images of reindeer, making it worth even more. Thus, the PC might have to trade possessions worth a total of 10 or even 15 \$skins to get the spear thrower — more if he is a poor haggler.

Note that the rarity of an item or the skill to make it will vary with the setting of the campaign. A bone needle would be valuable to Cro-Magnon, priceless to a Neanderthal, and totally worthless to a *habilis* unable to understand its function.

## Technology

The world presented in *Ice Age* is strictly Tech Level 0, stone age. There is no such thing as worked metal, although a shapeless lump of shiny gold ore might be strung on a cord for a necklace. Fire, the lever and tools made from stone, wood and bone represent the extent of traditional technology. For some races, the Tech Level is not even at 0. If there were such a thing, *Homo habilis* would probably have a TL of -1! The specific level of technological achievement for each race is outlined in the *Hominid Races* chapter, pp. 9-23.

The TL of some Ice Age peoples exceeds 0 in medicine. Most anthropologists believe that Neanderthal and Cro-Magnon Man had some knowledge of herbal medicines, and may have practiced rudimentary first aid, including stitching up wounds and very minor surgery. In the area of medical technology these peoples are TL 1.



## Languages

There is no way to guess the form of any language spoken by man's ancestors. It is clear from the fossil evidence that the australopithecines and *habilis* did not have the physical ability to produce more than grunts and howls. For them, communication was probably accomplished through body language and vocal signals, such as those used by chimps.

*Homo erectus* had limited vocal abilities, and was certainly intelligent enough to use language. He probably combined simple monosyllables with gestures to communicate. True spoken language, complete with past and future tenses, passive voice, and a large vocabulary did not develop until the arrival of *H. sapiens*. Even then, gestures, sign language and body language continued to be important.

All the tribes of the same species in a large region speak the same language. Different tribes within a region will speak varying dialects, however. A character's default language skill for a similar dialect would be IQ-1 or 2. The default for the dialect of a tribe living many miles away might be IQ-3. In general, the more contact between two tribes, the more similar their languages. All Pleistocene languages are easy skills.

# HOMINID RACES

# 2

## Character Creation

This section contains specific information about the various hominid races that flourished during the Ice Age — including social structure, technology, culture, religion and physical characteristics — everything the player needs to create a single character or an entire tribe. Which hominid species are acceptable as player character races will depend on the time and type of campaign. Check with your GM before you begin building your character.

PCs for *Ice Age* campaigns should be built on 100 points. Some hominids have natural advantages or limitations which are inherent to the species. These advantages and disadvantages are figured into the point cost for being a member of that race. Such automatic disadvantages and limitations do not count against the 40-point limit for a PC (see p. B26).

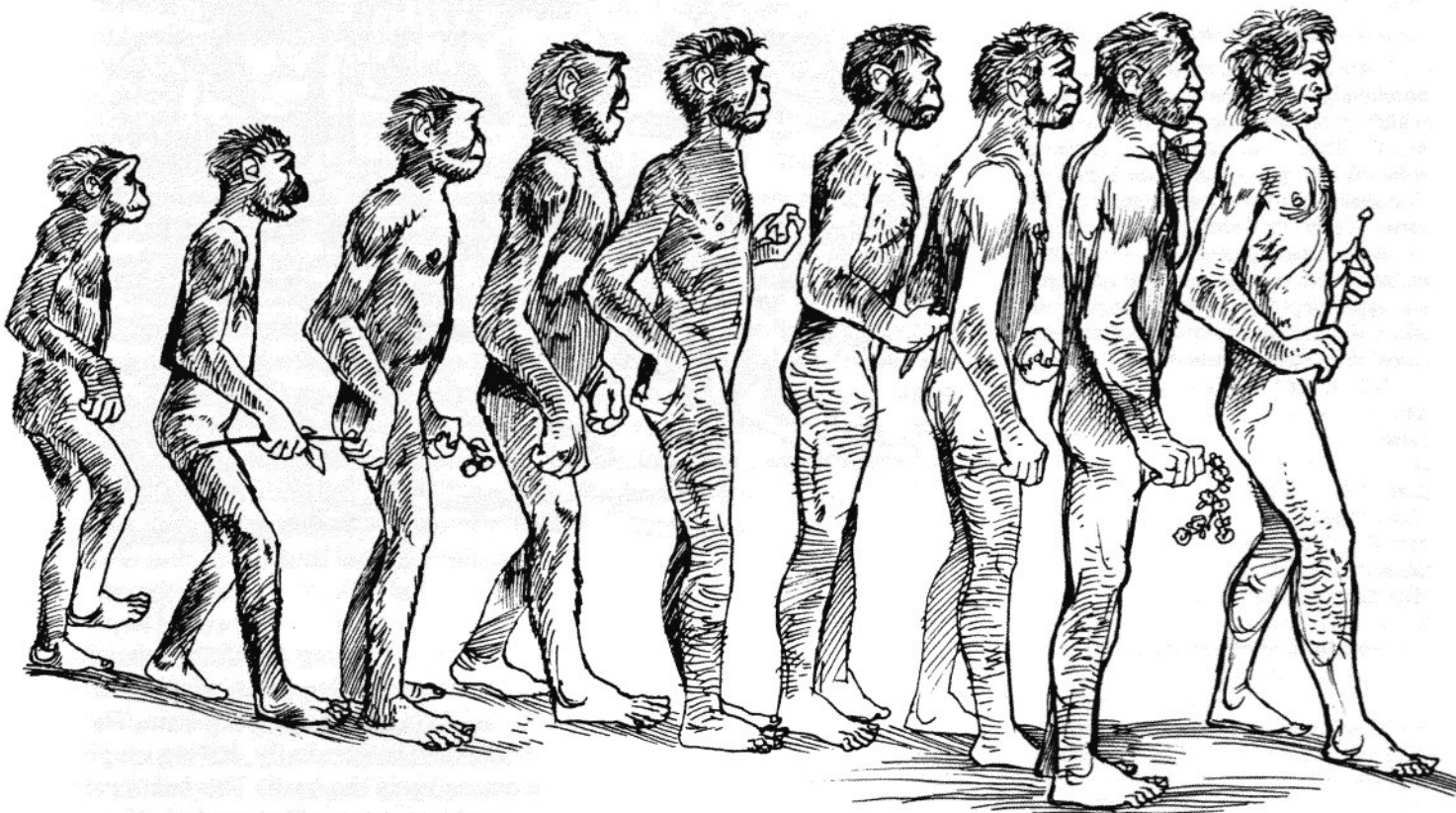
Some skills and advantages are forbidden to certain races — they simply aren't advanced enough. These are listed in the race descriptions. Other skills and advantages aren't available to *any* Ice Age characters; these are listed in the *Characters* chapter. Any skill, tool or cultural development discussed in the text on one race may be presumed to be available or in existence for all subsequent races.

Character stats for all the hominid races are summarized on p. 63.

### *H. habilis* Height and Weight Table

This table works just like the table for humans on p. B13. Height is determined by ST; weight is based on height.

ST	Height	Weight
4 or below	4'8"	90 lbs.
5	4'9"	95 lbs.
6	4'10"	100 lbs.
7	4'11"	105 lbs.
8	4'11"	105 lbs.
9	5'	110 lbs.
10	5'	110 lbs.
11	5'1"	115 lbs.
12	5'1"	115 lbs.
13	5'2"	120 lbs.
14	5'3"	125 lbs.
15 or above	5'4"	130 lbs.





## Homo habilis

-25 points

*Homo habilis* is the oldest representative of the genus *Homo*, to which modern man belongs. *H. habilis* first appeared about 2.3 million years ago, and existed for the better part of a million years. An inhabitant of the arid plains of eastern and southern Africa, *habilis* lived well before the onslaught of the ice ages which gripped Europe during the Pleistocene.

### Height and Weight Modifications

For *habilis* characters who are not of exactly average height and weight for their ST, consult the table below. Always apply modifiers to height first; then determine weight; and then modify the weight.

Die Roll	Modification
2	-4" or -20 lbs.
3	-3" or -15 lbs.
4	-2" or -10 lbs.
5	-1" or -5 lbs.
6-8	no modifications
9	+1" or +5 lbs.
10	+2" or +10 lbs.
11	+3" or +15 lbs.
12	+4" or +20 lbs.

These tables assume that the character is a male. For female *habilis* characters, adjust as for humans — sexual dimorphism is greater for *H. habilis* — by subtracting 2" from average height and 10 lbs. from average weight.

### Australopithecine Characters

There are four different species in the hominid genus *Australopithecus*, all of which probably coexisted with *Homo habilis*. These four, *afarensis*, *africanus*, *robustus* and *boisei*, can make interesting character races for a campaign set in the early Pleistocene Epoch.

For game purposes the Australopithecines fall into two types: the smaller *gracile* type, represented by *africanus* and *afarensis*; and the larger *robust* form, represented by *robustus* and *boisei*.

Both groups live on the savannas of eastern and southern Africa. The *Australopithecines gracile* first appear about 3.75 million years ago, and disappear just as *habilis* comes on the scene. The *robustus* species are from a later period, which began around 2.5 million BC and disappeared around 1.2 million BC after the arrival of *Homo erectus*.

Continued on next page . . .

### Advantages and Disadvantages

A *Homo habilis* character starts with ST-1, DX+2, IQ-3, HT-1 and the advantage of Alertness +1. A *habilis* character may not take the advantages of Mathematical Ability or Magery. Basic survival skills are a necessity. Gesturing is also a good idea. Some skills are inappropriate — the fire-making and religious skills for example — and others, like Stone Knapping (Armoury/TL 0, see p. 25), are practiced only at the basic default level (it doesn't take much intelligence to bang two rocks together until one breaks). Allowable skills should be determined by the GM and the style of campaign he wishes to run.

*H. habilis* matures more quickly and dies younger than modern man. A *habilis* character has normal adult attributes at age 11. A character with the Youth disadvantage must be no more than ten years old. *H. habilis* characters are considered old at age 25, and must begin rolling for attribute loss at that time (see p. B27). At the age of 30, a character must roll for attribute loss every six months, and at 35 every three months.



### Physical Appearance

*Habilis* is smaller than modern humans, averaging five feet in height and weighing a little over 100 pounds (see sidebar, p. 9). As an adaptation to the African savanna environment, he has dark skin and sparse body hair. The body of *Homo habilis* resembles that of modern man anatomically, having roughly the same proportions. The primary differences lie in the head. The *habilis* skull is much flatter than that of *Homo sapiens* and contains a brain only half as large. The lower jaw is proportionally larger, heavily muscled, and supports large

molars. The overall effect gives *habilis* a more apelike face: a low, sloping forehead, prominent cheekbones, a flat nose, heavy jaw and no chin.

### Technology

*Homo habilis* is the first of the hominids to manufacture stone tools. By banging two rocks together, he creates simple tools for cutting and chopping. These tools consist only of the stones themselves, lacking handles or hafts. *H. habilis* also uses tools made from other materials such as bone and wood, especially clubs and digging sticks. He does not construct shelters or wear clothing.

The development of a tool technology allowed *habilis* to become the first hominid to utilize big game as a food source. Since hominids lack the sharp canines and incisors necessary to cut and tear meat, tools are required to butcher large animals before consumption. Still, *habilis* does not hunt large animals on a regular basis. Instead, he drives other predators away from their kills, or scavenges the carcasses of animals which died of natural causes. He also hunts small reptiles, rodents, frogs and birds. All of these supplement a primarily vegetable diet.

*Homo habilis* does not know how to make or control fire. He knows of it, however, since grass and brush fires are frequent in the savanna environment. It is possible that some bands take advantage of such events, ambushing fleeing animals.

### Language

The larynx of *Homo habilis* is not developed enough to allow the full human range of sound. *Habilis* is capable of limited vocal communication, however. Short, one and two syllable "words" — essentially grunts, howls and similar sounds — combined with gestures and a well developed body language, enable him to communicate. Still, *habilis* cannot express ideas in any tense other than the present, or abstract concepts such as mathematics. He can never have language skills higher than 8. This is not due to a deficiency in the "language," but in the *habilis* brain itself. The first *Homo* is simply not that smart.

*Habilis* naming practices are restricted to job titles like hunter, mother, etc. Different persons are indicated by pointing — if the individual is not present, it is impossible to talk about him!

### Society and Culture

*Homo habilis* travels in small bands of 10 to 30 individuals. Each band consists of a number of family groups — one or two adult males, up to three adult females, and one or two children per female — totaling five to ten individuals. When food is scarce, a band will split up into its component groups, which will fend for themselves. The band is organized on a fairly egalitarian basis, with no adult holding significant power over any other. Members of the band cooperate in hunting and food gathering, and the food that is brought in is shared by the entire band. There is not much division of labor — each day the band goes out to hunt live game or scavenge meat, gather edible roots, berries, fruit, nuts, vegetables, and catch insects. A mother carries her infant child with her; older children must walk and keep up on their own. The band is nomadic, and moves every few days to find new food sources.

*Homo habilis'* culture is very limited. They have few religious beliefs, and do not practice magic. They do have at least one taboo, against incest. A specific band might have a few other taboos, usually oriented towards safety, e.g., avoiding a disease-infested swamp or a region of dangerous hot springs and geysers. An individual who violates one of these taboos might be ostracized by the rest of the band for a short period of time. Repeated violations could result in expulsion from the band. The murder of another band member, disease or madness would also result in exile. Given the hostile nature of the environment and the limited toolmaking capacity of *habilis*, this fate will usually mean death unless the exiled individual can find another group to join.



### Australopithecine Characters (continued)

*Australopithecus gracile* have ST-1, DX+2, IQ-4, HT-1 and Alertness+1. Their life is shorter — about 25 years. About the same size as *habilis*, the *Australopithecines gracile* are hairier, and live in similar family groupings. They also have the disadvantage of Short Attention Span, and cannot have Mathematical Ability or Magery. They can never have language skills greater than 8. They have normal adult attributes at age 10 and must be younger to take the youth disadvantage. They are considered old at age 20 and must begin rolling for attribute loss. At age 25, they must make a roll every three months and at 30, every month. Being a *Australopithecine gracile* is worth -45 character points.

*Australopithecus robustus*. Individuals of these species are considerably larger than *habilis*, averaging about 5' 6" in height.

They have normal ST, DX+2, IQ-4, HT-1, and Alertness +1. Like their *gracile* cousins, *Australopithecines robustus* have the Short Attention Span disadvantage. They cannot have Mathematical Ability or Magery. They are almost entirely vegetarian, and have massive jaws and molars. They become adults at age 10 and must be younger to take the youth disadvantage. Robust *Australopithecus* is considered old at age 20 and must begin rolling for attribute loss. Increase rolls to every six months at age 22 and every three months at age 25. The average age of death is 17 years.

Tool use is slightly more advanced; robust *Australopithecines* make crude choppers and digging sticks. Their social organization is similar to that of *habilis*. It is worth -35 points to be an *Australopithecine robustus*.

*Australopithecines* are incapable of true speech. They communicate through grunts, simple gestures, and body language. Their maximum language skill is 8. They do not use individual names.





### Diet and the Place of Women

These two subjects may seem totally unrelated, but in fact the first has a significant influence on the second.

For all hominids prior to Cro-Magnon man, fruits, vegetables, insects and small reptiles account for 70% of the diet. Nuts, roots, berries and other fruits, insects, grubs, lizards and frogs make up the vast majority of meals. Larger game animals and scavenged meat account for the remaining 30% of the daily diet. A band might go several days without fresh meat.

The women of a band or tribe, who do most of the gathering, provide over 2/3 of the group's food. The mighty hunters, on the other hand, contribute a mere 1/3. This situation gives women substantial influence within the group. Their opinions regarding when and where the band should move are respected, as are their preferences when selecting a specific campsite. Since the women must carry and care for the small children, they need to be able to find a variety of foods near the base camp. The men are free to roam great distances in search of prey, however, so the exact location the camp is of less importance to them.

In later periods, this practical influence is carried over into the developing culture. Women are not treated as slaves or second-class citizens. Although they are not leaders — primarily because motherhood restricts their freedom of movement — their advice is taken seriously.

This situation changes as technology makes the hunter more efficient. Cro-Magnon hunters are able to meet a much larger percentage of the tribe's nutritional needs, and the status of women may decline correspondingly. The extent of this change is left up to the GM, and it will probably vary from tribe to tribe.

## Homo erectus

-15 points

Sometimes called the first true man, *Homo erectus* lived on Earth for 1.3 million years. The oldest known specimen of *erectus* was discovered in Kenya in 1984, and dated at an age of 1.6 million years. He spread throughout Europe and Asia; his remains have been found from Spain to Java, and from Johannesburg to Beijing. *H. erectus* was the first hominid species of the Pleistocene Ice Age, and was suitably adapted to more temperate climates than those occupied by *Homo habilis*.

### Advantages and Disadvantages

The following modifiers are applied to all beginning *erectus* characters: DX+1, IQ-2 and normal ST and HT. Magery cannot be taken by *erectus* characters; all other advantages are allowed. As with *Homo habilis*, the list of available skills should be set by the GM, and all skills except shamanistic and religious ones are possible. Gesturing, Sign Language, Stone Knapping and fire-making skills are all good additions to the basics — Survival and Tracking.

*Homo erectus* individuals have a shorter lifespan than do modern humans. *Erectus* characters reach physical maturity at the age of 13, and those with the Youth disadvantage must be twelve or younger. A character is considered old when he reaches 30, and must roll once per year for attribute loss; see p. B27. At 35, he must roll every six months, and every three months if he is 40 or older.

### Physical Appearance

Larger than *habilis*, *Homo erectus* has an even more modern appearance. He is somewhat larger than his predecessor, and is more robust for his height than men of today. To determine height and weight, use the table for humans (p. B13), subtracting 5 inches and adding 10 pounds. Always determine height first, then weight. The head of *erectus* is also more modern, with a cranial capacity approaching that of *Homo sapiens*. The brow ridge, heavy, chinless jaw, and flat face still give *erectus* a distinctly nonhuman visage. His skin and hair are dark, being shades of brown or black depending on the environment.



## Technology

During his 1.3-million-year history, *Homo erectus* perfected the making of stone tools and learned how to make and control fire. These improvements in technology enabled *erectus* to survive in a wider variety of environments and to develop a more sophisticated culture.

Early *Homo erectus* doesn't have a technology much more advanced than that of *Homo habilis*. The Acheulean hand axe — a fist sized rock with sharp edges created by chipping or flaking — is his primary tool/weapon. He does use fire when it occurs naturally, but does not know how to make or maintain it. As a result, food is still eaten uncooked.

Later *erectus* tribes, from a period beginning perhaps one million years ago, are more sophisticated. They maintain permanent hearth fires in their caves and camps, though they cannot create fire. They build crude, lean-to shelters. In addition to an improved hand axe, *erectus* individuals of this era can make simple knives and scrapers with a new flaking technique which employs a hammer of wood or bone (see sidebar, p. 15). Bone and wood are also more common tool materials; spears with fire-hardened points, and bone scrapers and punches have become part of the tool kit of early man.

During the period lasting from about 500,000 years ago to the appearance of *Homo sapiens*, *erectus* has a well developed material culture that exceeds that of some modern-day, stone-age peoples. He has mastered fire, making it by the flint-sparking method, and cooks his food. An improved ability to cure animal hides makes possible simple clothing, blankets and sacks. *Erectus* of this late period possesses better quality tools than his predecessors, as well as fire-making implements. He also has a limited knowledge of first aid and medicinal plants.

## Language

*Homo erectus* still does not have fully developed vocal apparatus, but he can communicate more effectively than the less intelligent *habilis*. He is capable of more complex sounds, and is able to form a small number of true words. Still, gestures, sign and body language are a major part of communication. Simple past and future tense are a part of later *erectus* speech, as is the ability to express more abstract concepts such as cause and effect, simple mathematics, and objects or events removed from the location of the conversation. These developments are essential for storytelling and the preplanning of cooperative efforts such as hunting. His language skill cannot be greater than 9.

Naming practices are somewhat more advanced, and it is possible to distinguish individuals within an occupational category. Names are descriptive in nature, usually referring to some physical feature — Long Arms, Red Hair, Fat Belly — rather than a character trait, skill or deed.

## Society and Culture

The cultural and social organization of early *erectus* is basically identical to that of *H. habilis*. Cultural development increases with the passage of time and improvements in technology. *Erectus* tribes of one million years ago and later have between 20 and 40 individuals, ¼ of which are adult males. The bands are less nomadic than *habilis*, and often occupy a single site for months at a time. A tribe will rarely break up into smaller units, but will migrate if an area becomes hunted out. Most bands have a number of locations which they use repeatedly for base camps. There is a more marked division of labor; the men hunt game while the women gather edible plants, tend the fire, and take care of the children. There might be two or three dominant males, who command respect by virtue of their size, strength and experience. Two neighboring *erectus* bands might occasionally join together and cooperate in the hunting of a herd of reindeer or mammoths.

Cooperation is a crucial aspect of *erectus* society. Failure to cooperate will make an individual unpopular and unlikely to survive. Successful hunting depends on cooperative effort, and large prey such as mammoths can only be



## Technology, Language and Social Development

Technology and language are key factors in the social evolution of hominids during the Pleistocene. They are the manifestation of the ever-increasing ability to think in the abstract and enable hominids to cope with their environment more successfully.

The process of manufacturing a tool involves a complex thought process. The maker must visualize not only a specific problem to be solved, but also an item, which when used in a certain way, will solve the problem. Then the proper materials have to be gathered, and the tool constructed. This same thought process is applied to problems solved by cooperative group effort, manpower being the "tool" and cooperation the method.

Likewise, language is a symbol system which allows a person to express or describe intangibles such as actions, feelings and ideas. It facilitates cooperation, which in turn provides social and intellectual stimulation, increasing language ability. Through language, members of a group can exchange ideas, which may lead to improvements in technology.

Language, technology and cooperative behavior are all cultural adaptations which improve the hominids' ability to survive. At greater levels of technology, less work is required to support a larger population. An increase in free time and population makes it possible for individuals to choose their mates, based on personal preference and compatibility rather than necessity. This freedom of choice is probably the source of the emotion of love and the concept of friendship. Prior to *habilis*, or perhaps *erectus*, this freedom and the things associated with it did not exist. Love and friendship bind the family group and the band together, leading to further socialization, which in turn increases language use, technology, cooperation and emotional development.



## The Eve Theory

In 1987, geneticists at the University of California at Berkeley and Emory University in Atlanta announced the discovery of a woman they dubbed "Eve."

This woman — who probably lived in sub-Saharan Africa about 200,000 years ago — was, according to the scientists, the common ancestor of all living humans today. The unique thing about Eve is that there is no fossil evidence of her; instead we all carry it in our cellular DNA.

Studying samples of mitochondrial DNA from subjects native to Africa, Asia, Europe and North America, the two groups noted the variation in the DNA structure. Since mitochondrial DNA is inherited only from the mother and is altered only by chance mutations, the geneticists were able to calculate how many generations would be necessary to account for the observed variation. The answer was approximately 10,000. This placed Eve as living around 200 millennia ago, at least a million years younger than the most recent common ancestor postulated by paleo-anthropologists. Eve was not the only woman of her generation, simply the most fruitful. The lineages of all the other mothers of her time died out — that is to say, at some point their descendants failed to have daughters.

The new findings could have a major impact on evolutionary theory. Instead of evolving slowly from *H. erectus*, modern *Homo sapiens* may have appeared suddenly, in one place, in one family, and spread across the globe in a mere 200,000 years. The new breed had some special advantage, says the Eve theory, that enabled it to rapidly displace every other hominid species on Earth. According to this theory, Neanderthal and *soloensis* are dead ends, and not ancestral to modern humans at all.

There are holes in the Eve theory. Questions have been raised about the size of the samples — the California study used only 147 individuals and made generalizations about the global population of 5 billion. Some scientists are skeptical about the calculations which produced the date, and others simply can't accept the proposed swiftness of the human "takeover."

The researchers are working to answer these critics, collecting more samples and compiling more data. The controversy isn't likely to be solved soon, but one thing is certain: genetics is destined to become a major force in the study of mankind's origins.

hunted by a group. All food, both vegetable and animal, is shared by the entire band. Refusal to share food endangers the group, and is a very serious transgression. Erectus has a Sense of Duty (-5) to his own tribe. A consistently selfish tribe member had best be very strong and have friends. This, along with incest, murder, madness and endangering the tribe will result in the member being exiled. Every member is expected to help hunt or gather food — slothful persons are punished by withholding food brought in by the rest of the tribe. A lazy *erectus* will eventually get hungry enough to work for his supper. This emphasis on the common good has a grim side, however — an individual who for some reason can no longer contribute, perhaps because of disease, crippling injury or old age, is abandoned. The good of the tribe must come first.

*H. erectus* has little religion, although he does have the intelligence to wonder how the world works. Individuals from the later period might have very simple beliefs regarding the nature of certain animals. The mammoth is associated with prosperity because when killed it can feed the entire band for several weeks. Similarly, a cave lion is noted for its ferocity and power. These simple associations are the precursors of the symbolization necessary for true religion. Shamanism does not exist in *erectus* society.

*H. erectus* bands do engage in social activities. Special celebrations involve reenactments and storytelling. A successful hunt is the most common cause for celebration, but later *erectus* tribes celebrate the coming of spring and the birth of a child as well. The tales usually concern events which occurred within living memory, and contain information about the behavior of animals and the nature of the environment. Reenactments are like very simple plays, with tribe members taking on the roles of animals and people. By watching and listening, children learn the survival skills they will need as adults.

## Archaic Homo sapiens

-5 points

*Homo sapiens*, the modern hominid species, first appeared on Earth about 300,000 years ago. They inhabited all of the regions of their predecessor, *Homo erectus*, and expanded northward as well, occupying Northern Europe and Siberia. The early subspecies, usually referred to as archaic *H. sapiens*, flourished until about 35,000 years ago.

## Advantages and Disadvantages

Archaic *Homo sapiens* is very similar to modern man; a starting character has ST+1, IQ-1, and normal DX and HT. A character may not take more than one level of Magery, but there are no other limitations on skills and advantages. All character types (p. 23) are possible for an archaic *sapiens*.

The lifespan of early humans is slightly longer than that of *H. erectus*, and they mature more slowly. A character must be 15 to start at normal attribute levels, and is old at age 35. Rolls for attribute loss increase to once every six months at 45 and once every three months at 50.

## Technology

The first members of the *Homo sapiens* species have a technology very similar to that of late *erectus*. They can make and control fire and create clothing, shelter, bags and other items out of animal skins, and are skilled at fashioning stone tools. They do not, however, have many items common to the later Neanderthal and Cro-Magnon Man.

The tools of early *sapiens* are still primitive, and consist of the hand axe, wooden spear (with fire-hardened point), flake knives and scrapers, bone points and clubs. The one major development is the hafting of the standard hand axe, made by using leather strips to lash the stone into place. Knives with hilts and stone spearpoints are still unknown. The quality of stone tools is slightly better — mastery of the hammer-flaking method gives cutting tools a sharper edge.

*H. sapiens* has a large array of items made from animal skins and plants. Simple but warm clothing is made by wrapping hides around the body and secur-

ing them with leather strips. A cured hide with a hole cut in it for the head serves as a poncho-style garment. Large furs are also used for blankets, tents and curtain-like doors in cave openings. Various types of containers are made from animal parts, including water bottles from the stomachs of larger creatures. Sewing and thread are *not* known, so pouches and the like are limited to those configurations which occur naturally.

Archaic *sapiens* also invented the bow and palette method of making fire (see p. 26). A faster, surer method than sparking, it is more likely to work with damp materials or in wet conditions. He has also learned to preserve meat by smoking it or leaving it out to freeze when the climate is cold enough.

### Physical Appearance

Archaic *H. sapiens* still retains several primitive features. His brain is as large as that of modern man. He has a larger, heavier jaw, and a slight remnant of the bony brow ridge of *H. erectus*. Also, he is shorter and stockier — use the chart for normal humans, subtracting 3" from height and adding 15 pounds to the weight. Skin and hair color vary considerably, although blond hair and very fair skin are not yet found. Still, you could put a cap and modern clothing on an archaic *H. sapiens* and he could pass unnoticed on any city street.



### Language

Archaic *Homo sapiens* has a fully developed vocal ability, and can produce the full range of sounds found in modern languages. Spoken language itself is still fairly simple, lacking perfect tenses and participles, and using a small vocabulary. Sign language is used in conjunction with speech to allow more expressive communication and while hunting because it is silent. *Sapiens'* greater language ability has led to new activities such as storytelling and singing. His maximum language skill is 10.

Along with a more expressive language, early *sapiens* has more elaborate naming practices. Names are primarily descriptive, but they might also emphasize

### Tool-Making Techniques

Many methods of creating stone tools have been used throughout hominid history. Anthropologists spend a great deal of time and effort classifying tools according to the way they were made. Artifacts are identified as belonging to a certain tool "culture" — tools made with similar construction methods. The various techniques range from very crude to surprisingly complex; each advancement made possible a whole new range of tool types.

#### Oldowan

The Oldowan tool culture derives its name from an alternate spelling of the famous Olduvai (Oldoway) gorge, where it was first identified. Oldowan tools are often referred to as "pebble tools" because they are almost always made from smooth, rounded rocks from stream and river beds. They range from tiny to fist-sized, and can be made with a few sharp blows. Four or five flakes are knocked off one side of a stone by striking it with another rock, producing a short, jagged edge. The opposite side, still smooth and round, provides a firm, comfortable grip.

Oldowan tools may have been made first by *Australopithecus* about 2.5 million years ago, but *H. habilis* was the first hominid to make them in large numbers and of a regular pattern. The Oldowan tool industry lasted until the appearance of *H. erectus* about 1.5 million years ago.

#### Acheulean

Characterized by its famous, teardrop-shaped hand axes, the Acheulean tool culture lasted for over a million years. Acheulean tools display a wide range of complexity, the earliest being only slightly more advanced than pebble tools. Until about 500,000 years ago, Acheulean hand axes and choppers were made by the stone-against-stone method. Later stone knappers often used a hammer or baton of wood or bone to sharpen the tool's edges. All the hand axes from this period have a symmetry lacking in Oldowan tools, demonstrating the greater skill and foresight of their makers.

The Acheulean tool culture encompasses a few other stone tools, such as scrapers and cleavers. A primary characteristic of all Acheulean tools, however, is that only one tool is made from a block of stone. What is left over is discarded.

*Continued on next page . . .*



## Tool-Making Techniques (continued)

### Mousterian

Mousterian tools were made exclusively by *Homo sapiens*, beginning between 200,000 and 100,000 years ago. A new method, known as the Levallois technique, allowed early men to create a much wider variety of stone implements. Rather than the wasteful one rock, one tool method of knapping, the Levallois method employs a prepared stone core from which flakes are struck. These flakes are then fashioned into tools. Five times as much useful cutting edge could be gotten from a single lump of stone. The Levallois technique was mastered by the Neanderthal, who made a wide variety of tools from stone flakes as well as bulkier axes, choppers, etc. These included knives, scrapers, shavers, borers and spearpoints.



### Upper Paleolithic Cultures

The Mousterian tool culture was succeeded by a large number of Cro-Magnon "cultures," each named after a specific place where their tools were discovered and often dated to overlapping time periods. The tools are of very fine workmanship, much sharper and more delicate than previous artifacts. The spearpoints, arrowheads, borers, engravers, knives and other items were all manufactured using a new knapping method called pressure flaking. After a tool was roughly shaped by the baton method, it would be finished using a pointed implement, usually made of wood or bone. By placing the point on the edge to be sharpened and forcing it downward — perpendicular to the edge — a small flake was driven off. This was repeated until the desired shape was achieved.

character traits, deeds or skills as well as physical features. Names might describe *idealized* characteristics rather than real ones. This type of abstract thought is new to the hominid species, and sets *sapiens* apart from his ancestors. Names aren't selected simply for their sound — a distinctly modern phenomenon.

### Society and Culture

*Homo sapiens* live in bands of about 30, like *erectus*. Each band is made up of seven or eight men, about the same number of women, and the rest children and adolescents. Each day the men go out to hunt or scavenge meat, while the women forage in the vicinity of the camp and watch the children. The tribe will have a leader, who is chosen for his good qualities — strength, intelligence, experience — rather than on the basis of heredity. They might also have a part-time shaman or healer. *Sapiens* bands are semi-nomadic, establishing seasonal base camps often situated along the migratory routes of game animals. Sites are often reused year after year.

Culturally, archaic *sapiens* is far more advanced than *Homo erectus*, thanks primarily to his superior intelligence and language ability. Religion, simple decoration, storytelling and a belief in magic are all part of *sapiens* culture.

**Religion.** Early man saw his entire world as being filled with unseen beings, many more powerful than himself. He held the belief that all things in nature, including phenomena such as the wind and the rain, are "animated" by spiritual forces. This most elementary form of religious belief is called *animism*. In the animistic worldview, living plants and animals, the sun, the moon and the stars actually possess spirits or souls, putting them on an equal footing with man. More abstract things — such as the rain, thunder and wind — are not themselves alive, but are *caused* by spirits. Furthermore, virtually every event which does not have an obvious, visible cause — Org is dead because he didn't get out of the way of that charging mammoth, for example — is attributed to the action of spirits. These spirits are generally more powerful than man, but can be manipulated by a skilled person.

In its most primitive aspect animism has very few, if any, ceremonies or rituals. Instead, it is a simple system which explains how the world works, providing answers to such questions as "why does the wind blow" and "what is life." The belief that everything has a living spirit — which continues to exist after the plant, animal or man has died — almost certainly led to formal burial ceremonies, first practiced by *Homo sapiens*. It also provides a band with powerful motivation to care for members who cannot support themselves. Still, such support only extends as far as the group can afford it; in lean times the old and sick will go without so that the healthy have enough to eat.

Archaic *sapiens*' animistic beliefs influence his daily activity. Hunters take care not to offend the spirit of their prey, since that might make the hunt less successful or invite retribution from the spirit later on. They might use particularly fine weapons to honor the spirit of the animal being killed, and strive to make the killing blow quick and clean. Also, weapons made from or adorned with parts of the prey animal — hair, fur, teeth, bone, feathers, or claws, for example — are often thought to have special power or luck when used to hunt that animal.

Taboos are far more common in animistic belief, and the violation of them is thought to anger spiritual forces. For the first time there is a rationale explaining why the violation of a taboo causes bad things to happen. A single tribe may have many taboos, including ones against incest, the killing of certain animals, going to certain places, and eating certain foods. Some tribes may also have social taboos prohibiting women from touching weapons or hunting, or men from witnessing childbirth. There is animistic reasoning behind all taboos, and dire spiritual repercussions if they are broken. Punishment varies with the taboo and the tribe, and ranges from public confession to the "silent treatment" to exile.

**Magic.** The existence of practitioners of animistic magic, or shamanism, occurs in conjunction with the appearance of animism. Among archaic *sapiens*,

shamans practice their art only part-time, spending most of their days hunting and gathering with their fellow clansmen. They know and use only the simplest spells, and concentrate primarily on healing. Often they are herbal healers as well. Charlatans are uncommon among early *sapiens*, since practicing the art does not get the shaman out of any work.

**Art.** Archaic *Homo sapiens* is the first hominid species to deliberately create an object or image, or alter the appearance of an object, for aesthetic purposes. The art of archaic *sapiens* is still very primitive, and consists mainly of coloring tools, clothing and themselves with natural pigments like ochre and ash. The coloring may have symbolic significance, or it may simply be for show.

**Storytelling.** Archaic *Homo sapiens* is also the first of the hominids to create fiction. The fireside tales of early human tribes are still closely tied to the group's daily life, but the specific events are not necessarily factual. Instead, the storyteller might fashion the tale to communicate important information or a moral. A more complex and expressive language also allows him to make the story more interesting. In addition to information about the environment and survival skills, stories now contain social lessons — taboos, the common good and religion (animism) are frequent themes.

## Neanderthal Man

0 points

*Homo sapiens neanderthalensis*, or Neanderthal Man, first appeared in Pleistocene Europe and the Middle East approximately 125,000 years ago. A sub-species of *Homo sapiens*, he is named for the Neander river valley in Germany where his remains were first found. He and his Asian counterpart *soloensis* flourished for almost 100,000 years, in conditions ranging from arctic to tropical, until he was replaced by the modern subspecies, *Homo sapiens sapiens*. The most recent identifiable Neanderthal remains have been dated at about 32,000 years old. European Neanderthal is the classic caveman: powerfully built, living in a glacial environment, and hunting the woolly mammoth and the cave bear.



## The Cave Bear Cult

Speculation concerning the existence of this cult began after the discovery of bear skulls in Drachenloch (Dragon's Lair) cave in Switzerland. Aside from numerous skulls and leg bones piled in a back corner of the cave, a stone-lined compartment in the floor was found to contain seven cave bear skulls, all facing the cave entrance. This "chest" was sealed with a large stone slab laid across the top of it. Another skull was found with the leg bone of a different bear thrust through it, and resting on the leg bones of two other bears.

That Neanderthal hunted cave bears is known from bear remains found at other sites; and some scholars believe that the skulls at Drachenloch are the first known example of man collecting hunting trophies. Others are of the opinion that the bones had been carefully arranged by Neanderthals as part of a religious ceremony.

They postulate a cult of the cave bear, in which the animal had a ritualistic significance. Using bear cults from Siberia and the Ainu of Japan as models, the supporters of the bear cult theory have built an intriguing picture of Neanderthal religious life as it might have been.

It was spring, and the young hunter thought about the annual sacrifice of the great bear that would soon take place. It had been kept all winter in the old cave on the mountainside; its powerful spirit had protected the tribe during the hungry time. Now it was time for it to be released. He and the other young men of the tribe would kill the bear. Then they would eat of its flesh, consuming the bear's power. It would make them strong for the hunting season.

The great bear's bones would then be stripped clean, and the skull kept in the cave with the tribe. The bear's spirit would be angry if they did not honor it. That might mean a poor season's hunting just when the tribe needed food the most. Even worse, they might not be able to find a new protector when the cold returned. He shivered at the thought. The old shaman would guide them through the proper rites, he reminded himself, and the sacrifice would be made. The tribe would prosper.



## What Happened to Neanderthal?

Neanderthal man had flourished in Europe for some 90,000 years when he disappeared from the fossil record and was replaced by the small-jawed Cro-Magnon. In evolutionary terms his demise was quite sudden, and the fate of Neanderthal has been the subject of controversy for many years. The major theories about his disappearance are outlined below.

**Neanderthal Phase Theory.** In this view, Neanderthal man is merely an intermediate form of *Homo sapiens*. He evolved into Cro-Magnon man, just as large-jawed humans gave rise to modern humans in other parts of the world. The absence of fossil evidence for this change in other regions is attributed to lack of research done on the period outside of Europe. Modern racial differentiation is thus explained by the independent development of *H. sapiens sapiens* in various geographic areas.

**Garden of Eden Theory.** In this scenario modern man appeared in one place, and spread out from there to colonize the world. The more primitive large-jawed *sapiens* were pushed into fringe areas where they died out, or were exterminated by their more advanced successors. This theory also advocates the same sort of localized origins for *habilis*, *erectus*, archaic *sapiens*, and Neanderthal, with Africa or the Middle East as the region of origin. This viewpoint has recently been reinforced by evidence from genetic research (see sidebar, p. 14).

**Assimilation Theory.** Espoused by Richard Leakey and others, this is a combination of positions. Modern man did evolve in one or a few small locales, and then began to spread out across the globe. But rather than eliminating Neanderthal completely, the new population absorbed him. The genetic difference between the two sub-species was probably small enough to allow interbreeding, and the large-jawed humans were simply assimilated into the new breed. In this case it is likely that many of us have a Neanderthal gene or two in our hereditary makeup.

## Advantages and Disadvantages

Neanderthal Man is considerably more robust than modern man. Neanderthal characters have ST+2, IQ-1, and normal HT and DX. They have the disadvantage Sense of Duty toward their religious beliefs. They take taboos, rituals, spirits and the instructions of their shaman very seriously. All skills are available to them, but they may have no more than two levels of Magery. As with archaic *sapiens*, all character types (p. 23) are appropriate for Neanderthal characters.

Neanderthals live a little longer on the average than earlier *sapiens* individuals; characters must begin making annual rolls for attribute loss at age 40, increasing in frequency at ages 50 and 60. As with modern humans, Neanderthals have normal beginning stats at the age of 15, but, unlike modern characters, they must be *under* that age if they take the Youth disadvantage — once physically mature a Neanderthal character is considered an adult.

## Physical Appearance

The classic image of Neanderthal as a hulking brute with sloping shoulders, a hunched back and bowed legs is a fallacy. This description was popularized after the discovery of the first complete Neanderthal skeleton — an individual deformed by severe arthritis. Later finds demonstrated that Neanderthal Man was almost identical to modern man except for his exceptionally large jaw and beetle brow. Neanderthals are shorter and stockier than modern humans, and more heavily muscled, but no more so than many amateur weightlifters today. They have fairer hair and skin than their ancestors, the archaic *sapiens*.

## Technology

Neanderthals have a stone technology that is much improved over that of their archaic predecessors. Mastery of the Levallois technique (see sidebar, p. 16) of Stone Knapping makes Neanderthal a much more proficient toolmaker. The Neanderthal tool kit has a wider variety of objects, including stone borers and shavers used to make clothing and other tools. The most important advances are the stone spearhead, first used by Neanderthal, and the hafted stone axe, which he perfected. The spear, axe and club are Neanderthal's primary weapons, replacing the obsolete Acheulean hand axe.

The harsher climatic conditions faced by Neanderthal require better clothing and shelter. Stone borers are used to punch holes through which leather cords can be strung to make tents and garments. Simple bags and similar containers are also made. In addition to tents, Neanderthal builds lean-tos from wood, bone and grasses. These dwellings may have a low wall of dry-stacked stone or mammoth bones encircling them. Caves are still the most common type of shelter, however, especially during winter. Neanderthal man builds his fires in stone-lined pits, where he cooks meat and perhaps even some vegetables, but he has not learned to boil water.

## Language

Neanderthal language is not much more complex than that of archaic *sapiens* (his skill cannot exceed 10), although the vocabulary is somewhat larger. Sign language is still an important part of Neanderthal communication, but is used most often for emphasis rather than as the primary method of conversation.

The naming practices of Neanderthal tribes are also similar to those of earlier humans, and 99% of all names are of a descriptive nature. Additionally, a name may be believed to have power over the person who bears it. Ceremony is often attached to the giving of a name, either at birth or the coming of age.

## Society and Culture

**Social Organization.** Neanderthal lives in larger groups than did earlier hominids; each band may number as many as 70 persons. The limiting factor on the size of a tribe is the environment. A tribe in a particularly harsh climate will be smaller — perhaps 20 or 30 members. A tribe in an area with relatively mild

weather and plentiful game can be much larger. A one-to-one male/female ratio is still maintained, and adults constitute roughly half to 2/3 of the population. They follow the common pattern of dividing labor based on sex: the men hunt, the women gather food and watch the children. Sex roles are incorporated into the social system, with customs and traditions which define proper behavior.

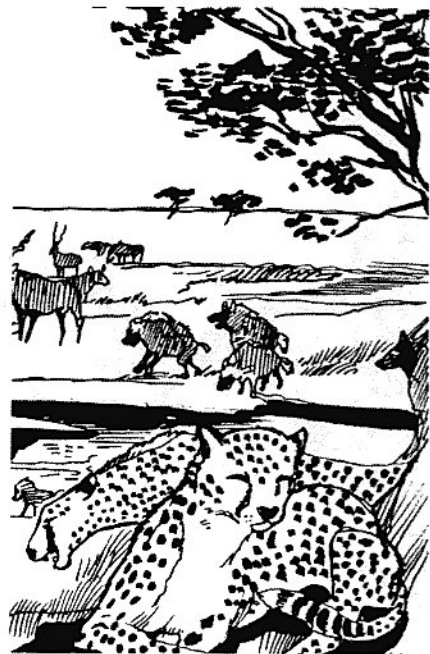
There is a better-defined social hierarchy within Neanderthal tribes than in those of previous races. The vast majority of tribes have a definite leader. Leadership is usually not hereditary, as a chief frequently dies before one of his male offspring matures; the job passes to a chosen successor. In some groups there might be a contest of skills or ritual combat to determine the new leader, especially if the old chief died without choosing an heir, or was exiled for some reason. Next in prestige are the tribe's best hunters and the old men. Members of this group, which may also include the tribal shaman or healer, are respected for their skill and experience, and the chief will rarely make an important decision without consulting them. In fact, if all of these men act unanimously, they can depose a chief they do not like. The rest of the tribe's adults — men and women — are relatively equal in influence and rights, though their responsibilities are different.

**Religion.** Neanderthal man is the first hominid to practice what might be truly called an animistic "religion." The major difference between this and earlier practices is the evolution of ceremonies intended to affect the course of future events. Neanderthal tries to appease or influence spirits in order to assure a good hunt, avert or end bad weather, and cure ailing tribe members. Primitive religion binds the society together, and all of these ceremonies involve the entire band, at least as spectators. Shamans, who specialize in the area of spirits and the spirit world, are very important.

Symbolization, something that was severely limited by the intelligence of earlier hominids, is a vital part of Neanderthal religion. Animals represent abstract traits such as courage, ferocity, intelligence and virility. The spirits of the animals possess these traits, and can confer them on humans. It might be forbidden to hunt certain species, while others might be prized as food for hunters, warriors, or pregnant women and mothers. The simple representation of an animal may possess or invoke the same qualities or powers as the creature itself. Thus, weapons might be engraved with the image of a predator or prey to make them more effective for hunting.

Death has great significance for the Neanderthal. He believes that everyone has a spirit or soul which survives after the body dies. Neanderthal dead are buried with an afterlife in mind, and they are prepared for the journey. Food, tools, weapons, jewelry and magic charms are often interred with the dead person for use in the spirit world. Bodies are frequently buried in the fetal position, or as if they are asleep. They may be decorated with red ochre dyes or even laid to rest on a bed of flowers. The more respected or important a person was in life, the more elaborate their funeral when they die. Occasionally, the head of a deceased person is buried separately from the rest of his body, and encircled with antlers or stones. This is related to the common belief that the spirit of a person resides in his head. Taboos exist among Neanderthals and are identical in function and theory to those of archaic *sapiens*. There are many more of them, however, including those mentioned previously. The GM should develop similar taboos appropriate to his camp.

**Rites of Passage.** What had been simple celebrations at the birth of a child or a young hunter's first kill are for Neanderthal important rituals marking the milestones of human life. These rituals are called *rites of passage*, and are performed at birth, maturity, marriage and death. They are celebrations, but the ceremonies have a greater significance as well. They are a kind of blessing which will insure the health and success of the person during the next phase of his life. Dancing, storytelling, sacrifices, fortune telling and similar activities are performed with the entire tribe in attendance.



### *H. sapiens sapiens in the Tropics*

Cro-Magnon was not the only *sapiens sapiens* Pleistocene culture. Modern man during this period spread to the Americas and Australia, and already existed in southern Asia and Africa. Since North America and Siberia were also largely covered by glaciers during this period, treat the American branch as similar to Cro-Magnon, with a strong dash of Eskimo thrown in for good measure. Populations from warmer climates deserve more attention, however.

Early tribesmen from the tropics will have dark skin and hair, and tend toward a less stocky build. They will live in much larger groups, with tribes numbering perhaps as many as 250! The male/female ratio will be about the same, however.

Technology for Cro-Magnon's tropical cousins is substantially different. Most tools are made from wood rather than stone. Blowguns could be added to the weapon list, as could the Boomerang. Rather than the sledge, the dugout canoe is a major form of transportation in the tropics.

Clothing will be minimal, if worn at all. The type of game that is hunted depends on the environment, jungle, savanna and desert all being possibilities. For good examples of stone-age tribe's adaptations to these habitats check your local library for books about the Aborigines of Australia, the San Bushmen of Africa and the Yanomamo of Brazil. Some helpful sources are listed in the sidebars of the *Campaigns* chapter.





### Domestication of Animals

There is some evidence to suggest that man may have begun to domesticate or at least control animals as long as 30,000 years ago. That Cro-Magnon peoples exerted some control over animal populations in some regions seems probable.

Many sites throughout Europe are superbly located for the herding and manipulation of prey animals, but poorly situated for general hunting. At most of these locations food debris has been found to consist overwhelmingly of one kind of animal remains. In fact, the last 10,000 years or so of the Pleistocene Epoch in Europe has been called the Age of Reindeer. Tribes may have followed the reindeer herds much as some Siberian tribes do today. Large numbers of horse bones found at the base of a cliff in France have been interpreted as the remains of herds trapped there in an annual drive and slaughtered. The elusive ibex may well have been exploited in a similar fashion by the hunters of La Vache in the French Pyrenees.

Perhaps the most important of the rites is that of initiation, signifying an end to adolescence and the beginning of adulthood. These rites involve scarring or other trials to be endured by the initiates. The purpose is to test the young person's readiness for the responsibilities of adulthood. All the boys and girls of appropriate age are initiated together, in one ceremony. Among Neanderthals, this takes place at about thirteen or fourteen years of age.

**Magic.** Like their archaic predecessors, Neanderthal shamans are part-time practitioners, but they have more skill and prestige than those in primitive *sapiens* tribes. They often play a major role in the religious life of the tribe, contacting the spirit world and directing ceremonies and rituals. Their primary activity is healing — by both magical and natural methods. All of the listed spells (pp. 36-37) are available to Neanderthal shamans, though their skill with them is less than that of later casters.

**Art.** In addition to decorating with natural pigments, Neanderthal makes and wears jewelry fashioned from attractive stones, bone, wood, horn and animal teeth. This jewelry is most often strung on a leather thong and worn around the neck, although it may be attached to clothing. Neanderthal scratches crude images on tools, weapons and stones, usually for magical or religious purposes.

### Cro-Magnon Man

0 points

*Homo sapiens sapiens*, the modern subspecies of *H. sapiens*, first appeared about 35,000 years ago. He spread into all of the regions inhabited by Neanderthal, and to Australia and the Americas as well. In Europe he is represented by Cro-Magnon man, who inhabited the continent until the end of the last glaciation 10,000 years ago. This section deals exclusively with this early European branch of modern man, the classic people of the Pleistocene Ice Age.

### Physical Appearance

Physically, Cro-Magnon is nearly identical to humans today, though somewhat shorter and heavier than the average person in the U.S. This may be a



physical adaption to the cold, as exists in Eskimo populations — it reduces the body's total surface area, allowing better heat retention. Cro-Magnon individuals generally have fair hair and skin, and often have extensive facial and body hair. In short, Cro-Magnon man is indistinguishable from someone you might pass on a city street.

### ***Advantages and Disadvantages***

Cro-Magnon characters are built on the same number of points as modern characters. They have no natural advantages or disadvantages, but are smarter and have more points to spend on skills than characters of more primitive races.

The lifespan of Cro-Magnon man approaches that of modern men, but his environment still takes its toll. Cro-Magnon characters must begin rolling for attribute loss at age 40. Rolls increase in frequency at 50 and 60 years of age. As with modern characters, they have normal starting attributes when they are 15; but, like Neanderthals, are considered adults at that age and must be younger in order to have the Youth disadvantage.

### ***Technology***

The level of Cro-Magnon technology is truly astonishing. He is more advanced than most modern hunter/gatherer peoples and is far superior to Neanderthal.

***Tools and Weapons.*** Neanderthal could only kill from a distance by throwing rocks and spears. Cro-Magnon has an entire new class of weapons available to him — ranged ones. He invented the bow, sling and spear thrower, allowing him to kill from large distances with less personal risk. He makes barbed points from bone and horn for arrows, spears and harpoons — as well as fine, leaf-shaped stone points with more penetrating power than those of Neanderthal. Ranged weapons dramatically increase Cro-Magnon's hunting ability.

Weaponry is not the only area of improvement. A skilled stone knapper, Cro-Magnon makes a wide variety of excellent tools. A typical tool kit might include burins — a type of stone engraver — scrapers, borers, cleavers, shavers and knives. Cro-Magnon skill can create stone tools with edges as sharp or sharper than those of many metal blades. The preferred material is flint, but obsidian — if available — makes a sharper edge. Fine axes are made, but knives still lack hilts. One edge is deliberately dulled so that the blade can be safely held.

Bone, wood, ivory and horn are used more frequently by Cro-Magnon than by his predecessors, and are more versatile than stone. Bone needles are used by all Cro-Magnon tribes, and bone fishhooks are used by some. Small oil lamps made from bone or ivory are common. Other items include spear straighteners, awls, hammers and tent stakes.

***Using Animals.*** Cro-Magnon has learned to use every part of the animals he kills, not just the meat. The various bones and antlers are used for tools, weapons and jewelry. Fat is boiled down for oil which can be used in lamps for lighting. Muscle sinews and gut are used as thread for sewing, making jewelry and bowstrings. Skins are stitched together to make warm clothing, watertight bags (lined with bladders from animal stomachs or intestines) and rainproof tents. The clothing of Cro-Magnon is particularly crucial, given the arctic cold he must endure. Boots, mittens, leggings and fur coats with hoods are all necessary items. Water is boiled in bags sewn from animal hides by placing fire-heated rocks in the bag or hanging the bag over a fire. If the water level is kept high enough, water bubbling over the edge and running down the sides of the bag will prevent it from burning.

***Shelter.*** Cro-Magnon man no longer relies primarily on natural shelter such as caves, but constructs several different types of dwellings. In addition to tents made from tanned hides, some tribes build huts of wooden frames covered with moss or, in warmer climes, grass thatching. These buildings may be strengthened by foundation walls of unmortared stone or stacked animal bones.



### ***The Age of Art***

The Cro-Magnon era, 35,000-10,000 years ago, is called by some scholars the Age of Art. During this period there is a virtual explosion of artistic efforts by Cro-Magnon peoples. The most famous of these are in a cave in what is now southern France. Cro-Magnon paintings are almost exclusively of common prey animals such as wild cattle, reindeer, horses, ibex and mammoths. Images of predators and of humans are uncommon.

The paintings are not usually found in caves which serve as living quarters, but are instead located in deep chambers which are relatively inaccessible. The paintings are used for ceremonial, possibly totemic purposes. Animals are often depicted with spears sticking in them, or bleeding from numerous wounds. Another frequent motif is that of the human hand, fingers outstretched. The handprints are often placed in such a manner as to imply a signature, as if to say "I made this."

Portable art is also a trademark of Cro-Magnon man. Small figurines and engraved pieces of bone and antler are most common. Images carved on bone and horn tools may be purely decorative, or serve some magical or religious purpose.

Seasonal compositions are common, usually focusing on spring and the animal life typical of that time of year. These may have a very practical function, since they can be used to teach children about the life cycles of common prey species. One engraving, for example, shows two seals following salmon upstream during the spring mating run, along with a snake and aquatic plants.





### *The Venus Cult*

Ice Age man almost never depicted himself in his art. Many representations of early women have been discovered, however. All across Europe, small figurines of women have been found at Cro-Magnon campsites. Their discovery has led a number of anthropologists to speculate on the existence of a Venus cult.

All of the figurines have several features in common. Each is a female with grossly exaggerated buttocks, thighs, stomach and breasts; the females represented often seem to be pregnant. Also, the figures lack facial features or may be headless. It seems apparent that they do not represent a specific woman, but rather womanhood in general.

It is thought that the figures served some religious function having to do with fertility. They may have been used in rituals at marriage, birth and female initiation. The figures are well worn and obviously were carried about for some time, being small enough to be easily portable. In fact, their wide geographical distribution suggests that they may have been traded from tribe to tribe, so that a single figure might wind up hundreds of miles from the region where it was created.

Cro-Magnon dwellings are located in sheltered places such as valleys, against cliff walls or in groves of trees. They are always near a source of fresh water.

**Transportation.** Sledges and dugout canoes are the first form of transportation other than walking to be used by man. Cro-Magnon and his contemporaries in other regions are the first hominids to build and use these items. The sledge is a large platform with runners which are deliberately coated with ice. It is pulled by a person — animal domestication is as yet unknown — allowing him to move heavy loads across the snow and ice.

**The Environment.** Cro-Magnon knows more about the world he lives in than any hominid before him. He has a complete knowledge of local plant life and any medicinal properties various species might have. He understands and exploits the natural life cycles of animals, enabling him to hunt more efficiently. Most importantly, Cro-Magnon has a clear concept of time. He follows the changing of the seasons, can predict the onset of each one, and keeps track of days by watching the phases of the moon. He is also familiar with typical weather patterns and can accurately guess when storms are brewing.

### *Language*

The languages of Cro-Magnon are as complex as those of today, and he can express himself just as effectively. Regional variation is greater than that for Neanderthal, and groups separated by significant distances will have trouble communicating. Sign language is less important and Gesturing is in more common usage, especially for hunting. Naming practices are the same as for Neanderthal.

### *Society and Culture*

**Social Organization.** Cro-Magnon bands are actually smaller than many Neanderthal groups, due to the terrible cold of late Pleistocene Europe. A Cro-Magnon *tribe* — consisting of several clans which come together only two or three times a year — might be very large, numbering in the hundreds. Individual clans number around thirty persons, half of whom are adults. Because of the arctic conditions, Cro-Magnon relies heavily on meat as a food source, and some tribes may be totally carnivorous. In addition to large game animals, fish, mollusks and seals are part of the Cro-Magnon diet. Women spend more time at the base camp. Activities such as sewing, preparing hides, repairing tents and containers, and cooking leave less time for foraging. The raising of children is still a fact of life for Cro-Magnon women. The men of a tribe hunt regularly, often making extended forays lasting several days. Two or three men will always stay behind to protect the tribe during these expeditions.

The hierarchy of Cro-Magnon clans is very similar to that of Neanderthal groups. Leadership is more institutionalized and a chieftain carries slightly more authority. Hereditary leadership is more common because of Cro-Magnon's greater life expectancy. Older adults still command respect as well, and in a small clan



no chief can ignore the opinions of his fellow clansmen. An entire tribe and its constituent clans are led by all the clan chiefs together. Among the chiefs, the oldest and wealthiest are predominant. Problems which require a decision affecting the entire tribe are rare and always serious. A violent intrusion by another tribe into tribal territory, a plague, famine or extremely severe weather might require tribal action. These situations are usually dealt with through religious ceremonies, often involving the tribal shamans. The ultimate solution, migration, is employed only if all else fails — including open war against invaders or preying upon the neighbors.

**Religion.** Cro-Magnon religion is basically animistic, though much more elaborate than Neanderthal's. Belief in a spirit world and the spiritual nature of elementary natural forces is central. Animal spirits are especially important in the most common version of Cro-Magnon religion — totemism.

Totemism is an advanced form of animistic belief in which a tribe or clan has a symbol, or totem, identified with it. The totem is almost always an animal species, but occasionally is a plant or natural phenomenon. A totem has great religious significance to its tribe. In fact, the tribe and the totem are thought to be related, as if they were part of the same family. A member of the eagle tribe will say "I am an eagle!" — and mean it in a literal sense. The tribe's prosperity is closely associated with the fortunes of the totemic species or phenomenon. If the horses in the territory of the horse clan are decimated by disease or famine, the clan is believed to be in grave danger. If the horse population is thriving, it is a good omen for the clan. The hunting and eating of horses might be forbidden to members of the clan, or allowed only on special occasions. Ceremonies to insure the prosperity of the horse herds would figure prominently in the clan's religious activity.

The totem of a tribe or clan also functions as an identifying badge, similar to a coat of arms in medieval Europe. The men of a tribe will paint the image of the totem on their bodies before important ceremonies or meetings with other tribes. The totem will identify the possessions and homes of the tribe. Thus, a lion skin might be hung from a pole in the center of the lion clan's camp, or above the entrance to a cave they claim as their own. The totem would also be depicted on the tribe's sacred objects, if any, and the image of it would be a part of all ceremonies and rituals.

A tribe's members might actually exhibit the behavior of, and bear a physical resemblance to, their totem. Men in the horse clan may cut their hair to look like a horse's mane or tail. Bear tribesmen who are large and hairy would be considered handsome and virile by their tribe. They would have their choice of mates, and have greater prestige than those with less resemblance to bears. Slowly, the bear-like attributes would be selected for over the generations, and members of the bear tribe could come to resemble their totem more and more.

Cro-Magnon society has a large number of taboos which regulate the behavior of its members. These restrictions are in the same vein as those under archaic *Homo sapiens* (see p. 16). The rise of totemism increases the number of animal, dietary and hunting related taboos drastically, however.

**Rites of Passage.** The same basic events are celebrated by Cro-Magnon as by Neanderthal, and in much the same way. Ceremonies are more complex, involving totemic imagery. The GM should use his imagination.

**Magic.** In Cro-Magnon tribes, the art of shamanism has come into its own. Virtually every clan will have at least a part-time shaman, and every tribe will have a full-time one. Unlike Neanderthal shamans, these men are more than healers or priests, they are sorcerers with unique powers relating to the supernatural and matters spiritual. The tribe relies upon them to mediate with the spirits on their behalf. If a tribe loses its shaman, its very existence is placed in jeopardy. Shamans have great influence within their tribe or clan, and may be wealthy. For more detailed information, see *Shamanism and Magic*, pp. 31-37.





# 3

# CHARACTERS

## Character Types

*Homo sapiens* society is advanced enough to allow specialization among its members, who tend to fall into several distinct character types. These are listed below, along with suggested advantages, disadvantages and skills. Certain types are unlikely or impossible for characters of some races; these restrictions are noted in the section on each species. In some races, character types are more likely to be men. These are only suggestions. Players can create any type of character they want, as long as the GM allows it.

### Herbalist

This character is skilled in herbal healing and the treatment of minor injuries. He may also be a shaman, using magic in conjunction with his mundane skills — this combination is more likely in later periods than earlier ones. In worlds where magic doesn't work, almost every shaman will have this skill — the "magic" is just a show. Herbalists are almost never able to practice their trade full-time, and must have some hunting skills as well.

**Advantages.** Immunity to Disease will help keep an herbalist alive despite frequent contact with sick people. Acute Taste and Smell and Acute Vision can be helpful when identifying and preparing herbs and herbal medicines. Successful, experienced herbal healers may have improved Social Status or Reputation.

**Disadvantages.** Unlucky or unskilled herbalists will have a bad Reputation.

**Skills.** Herbalist (see p. 27) and Naturalist are required for an herbalist.

### Hunter

The hunter is the most likely adventurer in an Ice Age campaign. He is usually self-sufficient, and has the freedom to leave his tribe or clan for days at a time. He will be expected, however, to bring home meat on a reasonably regular basis. Older hunters or those who have been crippled might work primarily as tool and weapon makers.



**Advantages.** All of the Acute Senses, Alertness, Absolute Direction and Toughness are useful to the hunter.

**Disadvantages.** None are necessary, but Duty, Sense of Duty and Overconfidence are appropriate.

**Skills.** Naturalist, Tracking and weapons skills are essential. Also useful are Cooking (for dressing out kills), Survival, Stone Knapping (see p. 26), Sign Language or Gesture, and Stealth.

### Leader

Leaders are most often older, respected hunters, but on rare occasions they might be shamans instead. They lead by virtue of experience, skill, intelligence and popularity, and must be dedicated to the welfare of the tribe. A good chief views his personal welfare as secondary to that of the group he leads. NPC leaders can be built on more than a hundred points, to reflect their greater experience.

**Advantages.** Charisma, Luck and Voice are good leader advantages, as are Common Sense and Intuition. All leaders will have High Social Status (Level 2 or 3), and most will have Wealth.

**Disadvantages.** All tribal leaders have a Duty to the tribe worth 10 or 15 points. Good leaders have Sense of Duty as well. Age, Bully and Overconfidence are possible as well.

**Skills.** In addition to typical hunter skills, leaders may have Diplomacy, Fast-Talk and Tactics. Leadership, of course, is a must.

### Outcast

An outcast is a character without a tribe. He is a loner, perhaps by choice, perhaps not. Such a character may have been exiled for violating a taboo or committing a crime, or he simply might not fit into the close-knit society of the tribe. Outcasts might have any combination of skills, advantages and disadvantages within the limits set by the GM.

**Advantages.** Unusual Background is perfect for outcasts, as are any advantages which enhance their ability to survive alone in the wilderness.

**Disadvantages.** Outcast characters typically have Social Stigma for a disadvantage — outsiders are generally mistrusted by primitive tribesmen. Other disadvantages are often the reasons a character is an outcast.

**Skills.** Anything is possible, as long as it fits in with the character's origin. Survival skill is essential — outcasts without it don't live very long.

### Scout

Scouts are adolescent boys who are physically mature but are not yet fully trained and experienced hunters. A scout hunts small game and helps during group hunting, driving game toward the older men waiting in ambush, or tracking the movements of a nearby herd and reporting back to the tribe. Essentially, they do the leg work, so that the hunters can concentrate on the kill. Scouts eventually become hunters.

**Advantages.** Absolute Direction, Alertness and Acute Senses are useful.

**Disadvantages.** Youth, Overconfidence and Impulsiveness would be appropriate for a scout.

**Skills.** The hunter skills like Survival, Tracking and weapon skills are necessary. Running might also help.

## Shaman

Shamans have magical abilities relating to spirits and the spirit world. They cure illnesses, perform blessings and tell the future, among other things. They are generally well respected and powerful members of their tribes.

Shamans are often herbalists as well, and use herbal medicines both for curing and as part of spell-casting. In fact, where magic doesn't really work, shamans are just flashy herbalists.

**Advantages.** Magical Aptitude is necessary. Voice, Charisma and Empathy are useful. High Social Status (Level 1 or 2) and Wealth are also common.

**Disadvantages.** None are necessary, but Epilepsy, Addic-



tion — to hallucinogens — and Split Personality can be interesting.

**Skills.** Along with his spells, a shaman character would do well to take one or more of the following: Acting, Herbalist, Fast-Talk, Theology, Sleight of Hand and Dancing.

## Storyteller

A storyteller is more than just an entertainer. He is a teacher and tribal historian too. Unless he is particularly old, he will follow another occupation full-time, probably hunting. A storyteller will be respected, but won't usually have any special benefits.

**Advantages.** Voice, Eidetic Memory and Charisma are ideal.

**Skills.** Acting, Bard, Sign Language and Teaching round out a storyteller nicely.

## Advantages, Disadvantages and Skills

This section develops the character creation information already presented in the *GURPS Basic Set*, with notes on special applications to Ice Age campaigning.



## Advantages

### Clerical Investment 5 or 10 points; see p. B19

The character is the accepted religious leader of the tribe. He leads ceremonies, conducts important rituals, and sets certain taboos. His opinion is sought in most spiritual matters, and he is accorded much respect. Only one character in a tribe or clan will have this advantage, and he will often be a shaman as well. Leader characters may also have this advantage. A cleric has a +1 reaction for Reputation among his tribe.

If the cleric can actually exert influence on important spirits — without using shamanistic spells — this advantage is worth 10 points. If the cleric has only social and worldly influence, Investment is only worth 5 points.

### Literacy see p. B17

In the absence of writing, this advantage is irrelevant to Ice Age characters.

### Magical Aptitude see p. B21

This advantage is a necessary prerequisite for shamanistic spell-casting. Some races are not allowed to take this advantage, or are limited in how many levels they may take. See the racial descriptions, pp. 9-23.

### Mathematical Ability see p. B22

As in, "Can you count to six?" The mental capacity of early hominids is such that the ability to count cannot be taken for granted. In *Ice Age*, this advantage allows a character to count higher than the fingers on one hand, and perform simple addition and subtraction.

### Musical Ability see p. B22

Only *H. sapiens* (Archaic homo sapiens, Neanderthal and Cro-Magnon) can make music or take this advantage.

### Patron see p. B24

Patrons do exist in Ice Age societies, and player characters may take a patron as an advantage if the GM allows. Ice Age

patrons are always single individuals; their value is determined normally. A young hunter might have a chieftain as a patron; an apprentice might have the tribal shaman.

### Status see p. B18

Hominid society, like that of most primates, is inherently hierarchical. Even *Homo habilis* bands have dominant and subordinate members. In the case of *H. sapiens*, the social hierarchy is quite complex, and each individual has a specific place in the social order. The Status advantage is appropriate to Ice Age campaigning.

Status works the same way as it does in *GURPS Basic*, except that the range of social levels is smaller. High social status has fewer advantages and disadvantages than it does in the modern world, while particularly low status has a serious effect on a person's chances of survival — outcasts have a tough row to hoe. Status levels for hominid tribes are detailed on p. 28.





## New Advantages

### Racial Memory

15 points

You occasionally get a feeling of *deja vu* about a place, thing, animal, etc. It's not reliable, but when it occurs you "remember" certain feelings or facts about the subject of the memory. On a successful roll against your IQ you get a vague impression — "This cave is evil . . ." A critical success gives a vivid replay of ancient ancestral memories. Nothing happens on a failed roll, and a critical failure results in a *wrong* impression.

This talent is totally passive: a character cannot consciously attempt to access racial memories, they just come upon him. All rolls are made by the GM, in secret, whenever the character encounters something that may have formed a powerful memory in his ancestors.

GMs may prefer not to use this advantage. Check to see if it is appropriate for each campaign.

## Disadvantages

### Addiction

see p. B30

Ice Age man is aware of numerous plants which produce effects similar to many modern drugs. A character may become addicted to one of these plants, which can be consumed raw, in a tea, or burned and the smoke inhaled. The point value of Addiction depends on the rarity of the plant:

If the plant is common: -5 points.

If the plant is relatively uncommon: -10 points.

If the plant is rare: -20 points.

It is up to the GM to determine just how rare a given plant is, based on factors such as growing season, location and preservability. It should be noted that in some tribes hallucinogenic plants are considered to have magical properties, and may be an accepted and important part of the tribe's religious activity. These plants would be considered *legal*. In other tribes, any addiction which interferes with a person's productivity will be looked on very poorly.



### Age

see p. B27

The hominids of the Pleistocene don't live as long as modern humans. See the individual race descriptions for details (pp. 9-23).

### Alcoholism

see p. B30

Alcohol is probably unknown to most hominid tribes, and those who do know of it don't know how to make it (alcohol does occur naturally). As a result, this disadvantage is not appropriate for a primitive character.

### Dyslexia

see p. B33

In the absence of a written language, Dyslexia is not worth any points as a disadvantage.

### Epilepsy

see p. B28

The seizures which are a part of this condition are often given spiritual significance by Pleistocene tribesmen. The epileptic character may be thought to be possessed, or in communication with the spirit world. See sidebar p. 32.

### Social Stigma

see p. B27

See *Social Status and Wealth* on p. 28 for a breakdown of status levels in primitive society. Point values are the same as in the *Basic Set*.

### Youth

see p. B29

As with Age, details concerning this disadvantage are located in the racial descriptions (p. 9-23).

## New Disadvantages

### Short Attention Span

-10 points

You have a problem concentrating on any one object or task for more than a few minutes. It's not that you're not curious, just that every time you find something new it becomes boring shortly thereafter. This disadvantage may cause trouble for you —

fellow tribesmen will get tired of completing your unfinished chores. A successful IQ roll is required for you to maintain interest in something for an extended period. Bonuses may be applied for situations where concentration is very important, e.g., when survival is at stake.

## Skills

Human society during the Ice Age is Tech Level 0, and any skills which are only applicable to higher tech levels — like Guns — are not possible for primitive characters. Borderline cases are discussed below. Some skills have different names at TL0; these are listed in the descriptions below.

### Armoury/TL0 (Stone Knapping)

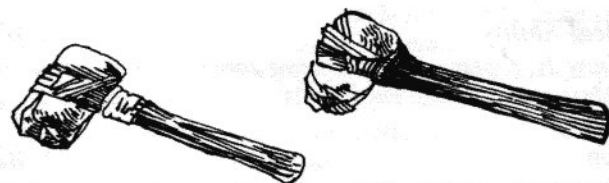
see p. B53

At TL0, this skill is known as Stone Knapping. This is the ability to fashion tools and weapons from stone, wood and bone. It is limited by the relative technology possessed by the character's race. Metal working and armor are unknown.

### Axe/Mace

see p. B49

This is the skill for using hafted stone axes and most clubs — which are unbalanced during this period. It is also necessary for using the hand axe as a melee weapon.



## Axe Throwing

Ice Age axes cannot be thrown effectively.

see p. B49

## Cooking

see p. B53

In addition to preparing food, this skill includes the dressing out and butchering of freshly killed animals. It is also used to skin an animal in such a way as to preserve the hide's usefulness. Most hunters should have it.

## Disguise (Animal Guise)

see p. B65

The TLO version of this skill is Animal Guise, and is used primarily in the stalking of game, though it may be used in religious or magical ceremonies by Cro-Magnon tribesmen. The character wears animal skins, smears his body with musk or dung, and camouflages himself with mud or clay. A disguise requires about fifteen minutes to prepare, assuming you have a skin available. Modifiers: +2 if approaching from downwind; +1 to +3 for a successful Naturalist roll regarding the habits of the animal being imitated;



## New Skills

### Bow and Palette (Physical/Average) Defaults to DX-5

This is a method of fire-making which uses a wooden palette and a slender rod. One end of the rod is set into a hole in the palette and spun rapidly: either by rubbing the hands together with the rod between them, or using a small bow, the string of which is looped once around the rod. Dried leaves, grass or pulped wood fiber is packed around the bottom of the spinning rod, and the heat from the friction produced ignites the packing. It takes from one to five minutes to start a fire this way, under ideal conditions. Modifiers: +3 if two people work together, one gently blowing on the packing while the other spins; -5 if the packing is wet; -3 if the palette and spindle are wet; -1 if the packing is damp.

A character may attempt a default roll for this skill only if he has seen it done before.

### Flint Sparking (Physical/Easy)

Defaults to DX-4

A more primitive method for starting fires, flint sparking takes a long time — anywhere from five minutes to two hours. Two rocks are required: one of which has bits of flint or iron in it; the other must be hard and nonporous. The stones are banged together, creating sparks which will hopefully ignite a small pile of dried grass, leaves, etc. Modifiers: +3 if a partner gently blows on the smoldering kindling; -5 if kindling is wet; -3 if kindling is damp.

-1 for each animal over one of the same type being approached (-1 for every 10 in the case of herd animals); -1 to -3 if the skins are old or in poor condition; and -1 to -3 for a failed Naturalist roll.

Rolls should be made starting at 200 yards from the animals being stalked, and at every 50 yards thereafter. The GM may alter this depending on the acuity of the prey's senses. A relatively blind animal like the woolly rhino can be approached more easily, requiring fewer rolls. The importance of the various elements of the disguise also depends on the animal; this is one reason why a Naturalist roll helps.

## First Aid

see p. B56

This skill is beyond stone age technology; use rules for simple bandaging instead. Also see Herbalist, below.

## Knife Throwing

see p. B51

Ice Age knives cannot be thrown effectively.

## Languages

see p. B54

All Ice Age languages are Mental/Easy skills.

## Meteorology (Weather Sense)

see p. B61

This skill is called Weather Sense at TLO and is used to predict the weather.

## Pottery

see p. B54

Pleistocene peoples have no knowledge of this skill.

## Theology (Rituals and Ceremonies)

see p. B62

Rituals and Ceremonies is the TLO name for this skill. It includes complete knowledge of not only the tribe's religious beliefs, but how to conduct its ceremonies as well. This skill is very useful for shamans, even if they aren't the tribal religious leader.

A default roll to use this skill may only be tried if the character has seen the skill used before.

## Herbalist (Mental/Hard)

Defaults to Naturalist-6

This is actually the TLO version of the Physician skill. Herbalism is the art of making and administering herbal cures and remedies. An herbalist has a thorough knowledge of local plants, their medicinal properties, and how they may be applied. He can also identify and locate them in the wild.

This skill is used in several ways. First, an herbalist can





simply roll against his skill level to find an herb which will be helpful in a given situation. The better the roll, the more helpful the herb. This usage is appropriate for crisis situations during an adventure, when the herbalist doesn't have all day to look about for just the right plant. If the herbalist *does* have all day, he may roll once per hour to find the herb best suited to his current needs, subject to its availability in the local environment. The GM may decide that the herb simply doesn't grow in the particular area, but he doesn't have to tell the player that.

The Herbalist skill is also used to prepare a specific medicine from plants, which enhances their effects (GM's discretion). A successful roll lets the character prepare a known concoction, or invent a new one. In the latter situation, a better roll gives a better medicine.

In the event of a critical failure, a *harmful* herb or medicine will result. How harmful depends on the GM's mercy.

### Mimicry (Physical/Hard)

Defaults to IQ-6

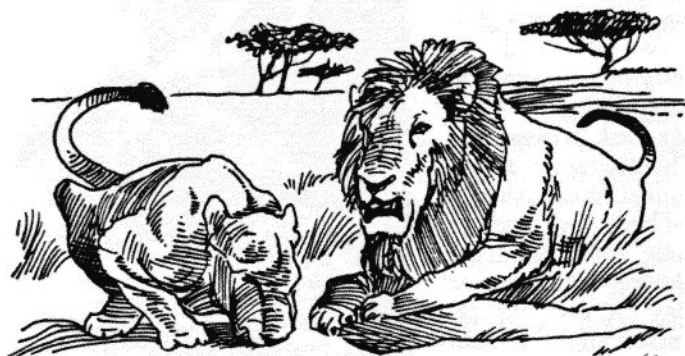
This skill has three areas of specialization: Human Speech, Bird Calls and Animal Sounds. Each one is learned as a separate skill. Bird Calls and Animal Sounds default to each other at Mimicry-6.

Human Speech skill enables the character to imitate hominid or human vocal sounds with a successful skill roll. This does not allow him to converse in a foreign language, but if he has heard

it he can reproduce the *sound* of it. If the character is trying to mimic a specific person there is a -3 modifier, -5 if the person mimicked is well known to those who hear the impersonation.

Bird Calls lets the character reproduce the whistles, chirps and other sounds made by birds. A successful skill roll means that a bird of the species imitated will be fooled, and it will approach the caller to investigate. People are even easier to fool. Roll a quick contest of skills vs. Naturalist -3, or IQ-6.

Animal Sounds works just like Bird Calls. Generally, only animals with a distinctive sound or call can be mimicked. Thus one could imitate a lion's roar, a wolf's howl, or even a frog's croak, but a rabbit or a squirrel would be virtually impossible. A successful roll will attract animals of the type mimicked, if any are in the area.



## Social Status and Wealth

Status and wealth are important factors in the lives of Pleistocene humans, though their significance is diminished for earlier hominids. In a Stone-age tribe, high social status means greater responsibilities along with increased privileges. Individuals with high status are often wealthier than those of lesser status, but not always.

Status levels for a typical Neanderthal or Cro-Magnon tribe

are: outcasts (-3), handicapped persons (-1), adolescents and women (0), hunters (1), shamans and elders (2), and chiefs (3). In general, outcasts will be either Poor or Dead Broke, handicapped individuals are Poor, women and adolescents are Struggling or Average, hunters are Average or Comfortable, and chiefs and shamans are Comfortable or better.

Beginning PCs will usually have Status 1 or 0, and average Wealth. This amounts to starting with about 20 Skins (see Economy, pp. 7-8) with which a character can buy equipment. The exact amount should be set by the GM. Note that many characters will have the skills and time necessary to sit down and make the things that they want, unless the GM involves them in an adventure right away.

### Jobs and Income

Ice Age jobs pretty much coincide with the character types already listed on pp. 24-25. The table below gives monthly incomes for each occupation — remember that the figures represent relative amounts of property and free time, not monetary earnings.

#### Jobs Table

Job	Required Skills	Income (in Skins)
Gatherer	Survival 10+	10
Herbalist	Herbalist 14+	20
Hunter	Tracking 13+, weapon 11+	15
Leader	Leadership 12+, Tracking 12+	30
Mother	Cooking 10+	5
Outcast	Survival, Tracking, weapon 12+	10
Scout	Tracking 11+, weapon 10+	10
Shaman	IQ 12+, Spells or Herbalist	20
Storyteller	Bard 11+, Teaching 11+	10

Success rolls are not provided because failing at your "job" in the Pleistocene usually means death or exile, events which should be played out.



# Equipment

The equipment in *GURPS Ice Age* is all TL1 (at TL0, property is found rather than made). Cost of items reflects the time needed to make them. Objects which require skilled

craftsmanship or uncommon materials are prized, especially since so much time is required just to get food. A dozen needles would be worth a Pleistocene fortune.

<i>Living Quarters</i>	<i>\$skins</i>	<i>Weight</i>
Tent, per occupant	10	6
Hut, per occupant	12	n/a
Dry cave, per occupant	15	n/a

<i>Clothing</i>	<i>\$skins</i>	<i>Weight</i>
Loincloth	2	-
Tunic	5	2
Boots (foot wrappings)	5	2
Leggings	3	2
Mittens	4	-
Cloak (fur)	2	3
Coat with hood	5	6
Sleeping furs	3	8
Jewelry	3 and up	-

<i>Tools and Other Goods</i>	<i>\$skins</i>	<i>Weight</i>
One day's dried rations	8 to 12	3
Borer	3	1
Flint sparker	1	1
Bow and Palette	4	1/2
Burin (engraver)	3	-
Stone scraper	3	1
Portable art object	6+	-
Fishhook or needle	8	-
Thread, 10 yards (sinew)	3	-
Cord, 10 yards	2	1/2
Bowl, wood or bone	3	1
Oil lamp	6	1
Pouch or sack	2+	1/2 and up
Waterskin	4	1
Sledge	12	40
Dugout canoe, 3-man	100	200+

## Weapons Table

This is the complete weapons list for *Ice Age* campaigns; the other weapons from the *Basic Set* are not available unless tribesmen have made contact with a more advanced culture.

In some cases, the statistics given here differ from those for weapons of the same name in the *Basic Set*, because many primitive weapons (e.g., the spear thrower) are less effective.

In terms of breakage, stone blades and points are considered "cheap," while stone axes, and wooden and other weapons, are considered "average." This does not affect price. Note also that even a "cheap" metal weapon from a more advanced culture is superior to a stone point in that a broken metal weapon can be reforged and reshaped, while broken stone is worthless.

## Hand Weapons

<i>Weapon (skill)</i>	<i>Damage Amount Type</i>	<i>Reach</i>	<i>Cost</i>	<i>Weight</i>	<i>Min ST</i>	<i>Notes</i>
Stone knife (Knife)	cut sw-3	C, 1	3	1/2	none	Cannot parry; Max. damage 1d+1.
Hand axe (Knife)	cut sw-1	C	3	1 1/2	6	Cannot parry.
Light club (Club)	cr sw+1	1	1	3	10	
War club (Axe/Mace)	cr sw+2	1	2	4	11	1 turn to ready after use.
Two-handed club, or "maul" (Two-Handed Axe/Mace)	cr sw+4	1, 2	2	12	14	2-handed. 1 turn to ready.
Hafted axe (Axe/Mace)	cut sw+1	1	5	4	12	1 turn to ready after use.
Two-handed axe (Two-Handed Axe/Mace)	cut sw+3	1, 2	10	8	13	2-handed. 1 turn to ready.
Short wooden spear (Spear)	imp thr-1	1	1	2	none	Any spear does +1 damage if it is either used two-handed or thrown.
Fire-hardened spear (Spear)	imp thr	1, 2	2	3	8	
Early stone-tipped spear (Spear)	imp thr+1	1, 2	5	4	9	
Late stone-tipped spear (Spear)	imp thr+2	1, 2	5	4	9	This is the Cro-Magnon weapon.

## Ranged Weapons

<i>Weapon (skill)</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Amt.</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>Acc.</i>	<i>Ranges 1/2 Dam.</i>	<i>Max.</i>	<i>Cost</i>	<i>Wt.</i>	<i>Min ST</i>	<i>Notes</i>
Blowpipe	Special		10	1	—	ST×4	3	1		See p. B49.
Bolas (Bolas)	Special		12	0	—	ST×3	3	2		See p. B49.
Bow (Bow)	imp	thr-1	12	1	ST×5	ST×10	10	2	7	
Arrowhead							2			Stone; likely to break.
Arrow shaft							2			Fletched with feathers.
Sling (Sling)	cr	sw	12	0	ST×6	ST×10	3	1/2		Hurls rocks.
Spear (Spear Throwing)	imp	varies	11	2	ST	ST×1.5	varies		9	Damage depends on type; see above
Spear Thrower (Spear Thrower)	Increases user's effective ST by 3 when throwing a spear.						4	2	9	See p. B52.
Throwing Stick (Throwing Stick)	cr	sw+1	11	2	ST×6	ST×10	10	1	7	See p. 28.



## Armor

During the Pleistocene, people do not deliberately make or wear armor, but the furs they wear do give some incidental protection. One layer of thick fur — bear, for instance — or well tanned leather has a passive defense of 1 and a damage resistance of 1. A single layer of a lighter fur or leather, such as deerskin, gives no PD and a DR of only 1. Layering furs increases DR but does nothing to improve PD.

There are two ways to outfit a character with clothing. The first is to simply assume there are three basic levels of protection: light, medium and heavy furs. These provide a set PD and DR, and are considered to cover the entire body for the sake of convenience. Light furs offer no PD and a DR of 1. They weigh 5 pounds. Medium furs have a PD of 1, a DR of 1 and weigh 9 lbs. Heavy furs provide PD 1, DR 2 and weigh 12 lbs.

Light furs consist of a loincloth, a cloak, and boots. The above, plus a tunic and leggings, make up medium furs. Heavy furs include all of the clothing described below except the cloak or poncho.

The second, more realistic option is to select clothing by the piece, each one covering a specific area. The total level of protection for any one area must be figured separately, taking layering into account (see p. B109 for information on hit locations). The various items of clothing, their protective value, and the areas they cover, are discussed below.

**Loincloth.** This is simply a soft pelt which covers the groin, and is held in place by a leather thong around the waist. It offers a DR of 1 to shots to the belly and groin — area 11 (on the diagram on p. B211). The weight is negligible.

**Cloak or Poncho.** These items are light furs which cover the torso. The cloak has PD and DR 1 from *behind only*, as the wearer can't fight with it wrapped around him. A poncho provides the same protection, but covers areas 9, 10, 11 and 17-18. Either weighs about 3 lbs.

**Boots.** These are not heavy soled footwear, but strips of hide wrapped around the feet and ankles and held on by leather thongs. The wrappings protect the feet (15, 16) with DR 1, but they wear out *very* quickly. Boots weigh 2 lbs.

**Tunic.** A tunic is a sleeveless garment made from light furs or leather. It has a DR of 1, no PD, covers areas 9, 10, possibly 11 and 17-18. It weighs 2 lbs.

**Leggings.** Soft pelts covering the legs are kept on by leather thongs wound over them and around the legs. The PD and DR of leggings are 1, covering areas 12 (right leg), 13-14 (left leg) and weighing 2 lbs.

**Coat.** A coat is made from heavy fur, and covers areas 6, 8, 9, 10 and 17-18. It has a PD and DR of 1 and weighs 6 lbs. It may have a hood attached, protecting areas 3, 4 and 5 (back only).

**Mittens.** These loose wrappings are not likely to be worn if a weapon is being used, since they will cause a -2 penalty to all weapon skill rolls. They do provide a DR of 1, however, covering area 7. The weight is negligible.



# SHAMANISM AND MAGIC

# 4

A “shaman” is a wizard from a primitive society. This chapter will discuss Ice Age shamans and give a rationale behind their powers, along with a set of shamanistic spells. Although magic is not a required element of an *Ice Age* campaign, it adds color and dramatically increases roleplaying possibilities.

## Shamanism

The shaman is the scientist, priest and doctor of early human society. He alone truly understands how the world works — the spiritual forces behind such phenomena as seasons, animal behavior, death and disease. This understanding is derived from the shaman’s unique ability to contact and influence the spirit world. Though a shaman must have inborn ability, most learn their trade and spells from another shaman. Shamanism is an *art*, requiring skills and knowledge, both magical and mundane, which are the exclusive domain of the practitioners. Theology, in an Ice Age campaign, is the professional skill of the shaman.

Most shamans ply their trade for personal benefit, to be sure, but for the good of the tribe as well. Evil shamans do exist, but they are hated and feared, and must either hide their activities or live as outcasts.



## GM-ing Shamanism

Shamanism adds a whole new dimension to roleplaying in the Pleistocene world. The GM of an *Ice Age* campaign which incorporates shamanism will need to be both creative and flexible. He will often be called upon to improvise, creating and describing visions of spirits and the spirit world. Shamans may interact with these spirits to achieve things impossible for normal men. Good players will come up with unexpected uses for the spells listed, and ideas for new spells.

The general rule: Preserve game balance, but make it fun. You can't allow any spell use that short-circuits the whole adventure. But, as much as possible, you should reward creative use of spells.

A GM is not required, however, to use the magic system just because he wants to have shamanism in his campaign. With only one or two exceptions, the spells listed are of an inherently ambiguous nature. The characters could conceivably use them without ever knowing if they really work. The GM need merely make all the die rolls in secret, and then tell the players what their characters perceive. They need not know if the vision of the shaman was real or simply a hallucination brought on by exhaustion. Similarly, a player won't know for sure if his character is blessed, since he can't tell if that arrow should have hit him in the heart, and not the arm. But remember, the *characters* will believe without question that magic works and spirits exist.



## Epilepsy

In most primitive cultures, epilepsy and other disorders which cause seizures are given considerable significance. Often, a person suffering from such a malady is thought to be possessed by demons, in communication with the gods, or to have some special power. Seizures occur when the person is in conflict with a spirit, or when their soul has entered the spirit world. Thus, epileptics may be regarded with a substantial amount of fear or respect — or both.

For game purposes (if the GM wants to incorporate epilepsy into shamanism in his world) an epileptic seizure should be considered as an *involuntary* trance. It will come on suddenly, and last from a few minutes to as long as half an hour. The character can also induce the seizure deliberately (for details see *Epilepsy*, p. B28). The character will be completely unaware of his surroundings, and *nothing* will bring him out of the trance early. He will, however, be completely able to see and act in the spirit world. This means that he can use those spells which can be cast while in a trance state — if he knows them and has the time — and will possibly see spectacular visions.

Upon coming out of the trance, he will suffer 1 die of fatigue damage, which can be recovered normally. This can be dangerous if the shaman used energy to cast spells during the seizure; if he does not have enough ST left to absorb the fatigue damage, he will lose HT as well!

Should the shaman have a seizure — either deliberate or involuntary — in the presence of persons who do not know him, the following reaction modifiers apply:

- +1 if they already knew he was a shaman, and that didn't bother them. Now they know he's for real.

- 1 if the viewers have seen seizures before, but didn't know he was a shaman; they don't trust him.

- 3 if the viewers have never seen seizures *and* didn't know that he was a shaman. On a poor reaction they will flee, but not attack — it's best not to get involved where demons are concerned!

## The Role of the Shaman

Shamans perform many services for their tribes, of such importance that they are accorded great respect by everyone. A shaman may receive compensation in the form of food, tools, hides or other valuables. His abilities include foretelling the future, speaking with the spirits of dead tribe members, and finding lost or stolen objects. A shaman also defends the tribe against spiritual attack, launches such attacks against the tribe's enemies, and negotiates with powerful spirits on the tribe's behalf. In some tribes the shaman is a religious leader as well, presiding over the rites of birth, initiation, marriage and death. Most importantly, however, the shaman is the tribal healer. He is consulted for a large variety of maladies, from simple depression to fatal diseases. Virtually all ailments are considered to have spiritual or magical causes and only a shaman is equipped to deal with them.

In some tribes, shamans are male; in others, female; in others, members of either sex may become shamans.

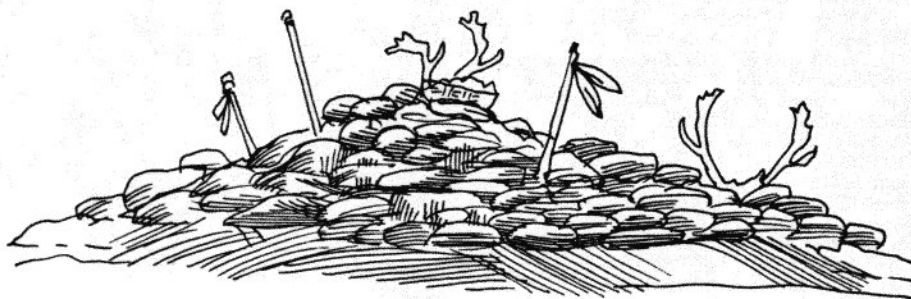
## Causes of Disease

Early man believed disease could be attributed to one of four different causes. Commonly, the patient might have brought the disease on himself by violating a taboo or committing some crime, in which case the shaman will identify the problem and prescribe or conduct some purifying ceremony.

Sometimes the victim has been pierced by a disease-causing object sent by hostile spirits or an evil shaman. In this event, the shaman must remove the object, often a thorn or small animal.

The victim's soul could be lost, either having been stolen or wandered off of its own accord. In this case, the shaman must locate the soul, free it if necessary, and lure it back into the body of the patient.

Or, worst of all, the ailing person may actually be possessed by a hostile spirit, requiring the shaman to exorcise the spirit and then trap it or drive it away to prevent it from re-entering the victim. Possession is serious; the enemy spirit endangers the whole tribe!



## Shamanistic Methods

Shamans also use many non-magical methods to achieve their results. Some of these are merely aids or prerequisites to the casting of magic; others are effective by themselves.

## Trancing

The trance is the shaman's primary method of contacting the spirit world. Some shamanistic spells can only be cast while the caster is in a trance state, and trancing is an important method of gathering information. While in the trance state, a shaman can see spirits normally invisible to humans. He may also see visions of animals, people and places, even ones he has never seen in waking life. The interpretation of these visions provides the shaman with information. Correct interpretation is aided by a successful roll against his Theology skill, with whatever modifiers the GM thinks appropriate. Non-shamans who know

how to achieve a trance state make this roll at a default of IQ-6. The GM describes the vision; the player must interpret it.

**Note:** Trance visions are not intended to replace the Divination spell. Unlike the spell, visions — if any occur — may bear no relation to the questions or problems of the tranced person. These visions are primarily a method by which the GM can introduce information to the characters, or a desperate longshot for a non-shaman who is completely stumped during the course of an adventure. Shamans have more efficient and reliable means of getting information.

For game purposes, the trance is treated as a prolonged period of concentration. The depth of the trance state (the tranced person's awareness of his surroundings and the ease with which the trance can be broken) as well as the length of the trance, depend on the method used.

**Meditation.** This is the simplest way of entering a trance. The shaman secludes himself and concentrates. He may use chanting or breathing exercises to enhance his concentration, or have an assistant beat a drum. A trance will be reached in about 10 minutes, and can last indefinitely, as the shaman wishes. The advantage of this method is that the shaman remains aware of his surroundings. The disadvantage is that the trance is easy to disturb. Any loud noise or physical contact will break the trance unless the shaman makes a Will-3 roll (see pp. B93, B148). If he is injured, an additional -1 is added for every hit taken! Once the trance is broken, the shaman must start all over again.

**Fasting and sleep deprivation.** These two techniques, while effective separately, are usually used in conjunction. The shaman forgoes all food, water and sleep until the trance and its visions are brought on by physical exhaustion. The theory is that by denying physical needs, one's soul is freed to leave the body and enter the spirit world. It will require at least 24 hours for this method to work, and the trance which ensues is very deep. Only extreme pain or the administration of an herbal stimulant will bring the shaman out of it. Even then a roll vs. HT-3 is required. The trance will last until the character is brought out of it by someone else or he becomes unconscious from fatigue. When the trance has ended the shaman will be unconscious for 2d x 6 hours, and will have a ST of 1 upon awakening. The problem with this method is that it saps the shaman's strength for spellcasting. One advantage, however, is that anyone may attempt it; no special knowledge is required.

**Hallucinogens.** Certainly the most spectacular way of trancing is the use of hallucinogenic drugs made from plants. The trance will begin within a short period, determined by the strength of the drug and how it is taken (see *Herbalism*, below). In any case, less than half an hour is required, during which time the shaman is fully alert. When the drug takes effect, however, the shaman will be only vaguely aware of what is happening around him. Duration and other details vary with the drug being used. This method of trancing provides the most numerous and vivid visions, but is limited by the availability of the hallucinogen and the skill to prepare it for use.

### **Herbalism**

Hallucinogens are not the only herbs used by shamans. Stimulants and plants with medicinal value also constitute a major portion of the shaman's art. Many shamans will have the Herbalism skill (p. 27). Medicinal herbs are useful in curing, and a shaman will usually try them before resorting to magic. Also, certain herbs are believed to drive off evil spirits — wolfsbane is one example. Finally, some herbs are imbued with spiritual power, making them useful in spellcasting and other shamanistic rituals.

### **Performance Skills**

It is very important that a shaman be *convincing* when using his abilities before the tribe. His fellow tribesmen cannot see the demons and spirits with which he is speaking and struggling. His reputation may depend on his show-

### **Charlatanry**

Not everyone who claims to be a shaman has magical powers. In fact, a GM might decide that shamans *cannot* use magic, and that all their "casting" and trances are an act. If this is the case, the performance skills are vital to the shaman character. He gives elaborate performances for the sake of his audiences, who *believe* that the spells really work.

Just because shamans don't actually have magical power doesn't mean that they are ineffective. Most anthropologists consider shamans to be primitive psychotherapists. Many of the "diseases" which shamans of modern hunter/gatherer tribes cure do not exist as far as modern medical science is concerned. They are thought to be purely psychosomatic, resulting from the belief on the victim's part that he is possessed, or has sinned, or is under spiritual attack. Since the victim also believes that the shaman has the power to cure him, the cures actually work. Furthermore, all the modern medical techniques in the world will be worse than useless.

Shamans may themselves believe that their powers are real, or they may simply consider themselves more intelligent and less ignorant than their fellows. Either way, the cures usually work.

Even if magic really does exist in your game world, there will still be fakes. These individuals must be talented to survive, and their performing secrets will be closely guarded. They will be very careful choosing cases, accepting only those patients who are likely to recover anyway. Such a person will never be without a ready excuse for failure — "He has violated a taboo and not told me about it" or "The evil thoughts of someone here are preventing the spell from working." If worst comes to worst, a true charlatan can always rely on humility — "I do not know if my meager powers are great enough to drive out such strong evil!"





### **Casting Spells While Entranced**

Some shamanistic spells can only be cast while the caster is in a trance state. This is indicated in the descriptions of those spells. The trance is a necessary part of the casting of these spells, just as rituals are integral to the casting of other shamanistic spells.

In order to cast one of these spells, the caster must take the concentrate maneuver for the entire casting time. This is mental concentration — outwardly the caster may seem unconscious or be babbling incoherently, but inwardly he is focusing his mind and spirit on the casting of the spell. Should someone attempt unsuccessfully to break the caster's trance, treat it as a normal distraction, with a Will roll at -3. If someone succeeds in breaking the trance the spell automatically fails, and the caster loses one point of ST to fatigue.

The caster must remain in a trance for the entire time it takes to cast the spell, and for the entire duration as well. If the caster comes out of the trance naturally before that time there is no additional penalty, but the effects of the spell are negated — any information gained fades from memory within seconds.

Only those spells which require a trance can be cast while in a trance state. Other spells require complex rituals which cannot be performed while entranced.

manship and ability to prove that his magic is real. Thus, virtually every successful shaman has some skill in the art of performing. Acting, Sleight of Hand and Ventriloquism skills (see pp. B62, B67-68) are all very useful to a publicly practicing shaman. Object Removal, for example, is an easy spell to fake. Therefore, a shaman might claim a foreign object to be the problem, rather than something less comprehensible to the tribe.

*Example:* A shaman diagnoses an illness as caused by evil spirits sent by the shaman of a rival tribe. But the family of the patient will want to see proof that the shaman has removed the cause of the disease. Therefore the shaman hides a large thorn on his person. He pretends to suck the thorn from his patient's body during the curing rituals, and presents it as proof that his efforts have been successful. He does not see this as dishonest behavior; he is merely providing tangible proof for those who are unable to see the spirits he knows are causing the illness. Of course, sometimes an object might really be causing the illness. Whenever a shaman uses his powers before the tribe, he is performing as well as casting spells.

## **Learning the Trade**

Confronting the spirit world on a daily basis is a dangerous business. A mistake could bring a horde of angry spirits down on the shaman and his tribe. On the other hand, a skilled shaman could mean the difference between life and death for the tribe. Accordingly, shamans are greatly respected — and feared.

In order to learn shamanistic magic one must be a mage — that is, have the Magical Aptitude advantage. In *Ice Age*, only mages may cast spells. All magic spells, as well as the other shamanistic talents, are learned as skills. The spells have no default level; you *must* be trained in a spell to use it. Spells are Mental/Hard or Mental/Very Hard skills.

### **Finding a Teacher**

Shamanistic skills and spells are taught like any other skills — if you can convince a shaman to instruct you. They guard their secrets jealously, teaching them only to those they think worthy and loyal. It is not in the shaman's interest to create too many rivals; most tribes simply aren't that big. And some shamans will prove to be fakes, having mastered the performing arts only, but lacking in true power. Shamanistic skills cannot be learned without a teacher; there are no books to learn from.

Once you've found a teacher, the training can begin. It won't be easy. Your mentor will require you to perform many menial tasks. The training rituals demand that a student observe a strict diet, avoiding certain foods. Chastity for a certain period, anywhere from a month to a year, might also be mandatory. And the final initiation ceremony could involve ritual scarring and other trials.

### **Spirits**

Spirits are creatures made up entirely of mana. As such, they have numerous powers, the magnitude of which varies greatly from spirit to spirit. Shamanistic magic relies heavily on these spirits for its effectiveness. Powerful evil spirits are called demons, and have the ability to possess the bodies of living persons. They are highly intelligent and can be bargained with by powerful shamans who can command their respect.

Other, lesser spirits, can be controlled by a shaman. These are the type which shamans consult for information, or which the shaman commands or beseeches to watch over a person he has blessed.

## Disease: Diagnosis and Treatment

The various causes of disease in shamanistic belief are discussed on p. 32. Certain spells are designed to eliminate specific causes; in order to know which spells to use the caster must first correctly diagnose the cause.

The *Aura* spell (see p. 36) is used for this purpose. Taboo violation might manifest itself as a dimming or staining of the person's aura, and the shaman may be able to sense feelings of guilt. A disease caused by a foreign object might cause a spot or spots indicating the point of entry. A person who is possessed would have two distinct auras: his own and that of the possessor. And a person whose soul has been stolen would have no aura at all! The most common treatments are listed, by cause, below.

**Physical injury:** The shaman uses the Herbalism skill, first aid, and the Healing spell. The rest is left to fate.

**Taboo violation:** The shaman uses Divination to discover the incident which provoked the disease. The situation is then corrected by a cleansing ceremony, sometimes led by the shaman, and often involving confession by the patient.

**Object intrusion:** If an object of evil origin is causing the disease, the Remove Pestilent Object spell is employed to effect a complete cure.

**Soul loss:** The shaman first enters a trance. Then he uses the Summon Spirit spell to retrieve the patient's soul from wherever it has gone. The soul either resists with its own IQ, or, if it was stolen, the spell is resisted by the stealing spirit.

**Possession:** This is the most difficult cause to treat, and the most serious. First the shaman must cast Exorcism to oust the possessing spirit from the patient's body. Then, if successful, the shaman must use Spirit Trap to capture the spirit. If this second casting is not performed, the spirit will almost immediately possess someone else, perhaps even the shaman himself!

## Magic Items

Magic items in shamanistic magic are not tools manufactured by wizards. Rather, they have inherent magical or spiritual power, affecting anyone who touches or uses them. Such items are very rare, and always natural in origin, though they may have been reshaped by humans. The GM should be very sparing in introducing such objects. A shaman gets an automatic roll vs IQ + Magery to realize an item is magical when he first sees it, and again when he first touches it.

There are three primary effects for magical objects in *Ice Age*:

**Bless:** Some objects confer a Blessing on the possessor. This effect may be specialized. For example, a magic spear point made from the fang of a sabertooth tiger might provide a +1 to skill when attacking herd animals only. The spiritual nature of the tiger defines and limits the item's effect.

**Curse:** These items are uniformly bad for those who go near them. They are imbued with a spiritual force hostile to humans, and to touch them or have one in one's possession will result in being cursed as per the spell. The power of the curse is left up to the GM.

If the nature of such an object is known to a tribe, it and its vicinity will be declared taboo — i.e., absolutely off limits. Violating a taboo may so traumatize a person's soul and anger local spirits that he is afflicted with a disease, in addition to being cursed by contact with the object.

**Power:** Some objects are repositories of extraordinary magical power, or mana. These are very rare and useful to no one but shamans. In order to draw upon this power the shaman must touch the object while casting his spell. If his spell skill roll succeeds, the item provides one or more energy points of the spell's cost — the exact amount of energy supplied is determined by the GM. Should the roll fail, the caster absorbs any energy loss himself; a critical failure will result in a disastrous backfire. The object will either be destroyed by the backfire or become cursed, as above.

## Critical Spell Failure Table

Roll 3 dice. The GM does not have to use this table; he is free to improvise (though improvisations should be appropriate to the spell and the situation). If a result on this table is inappropriate, or if it is the result that caster actually intended, roll again.

- 3 — Spell fails entirely; caster takes 1 die of damage.
- 4 — Spell is cast on spellcaster.
- 5 — Spell is cast on one of the caster's companions (roll randomly).
- 6 — Spell is cast on a nearby foe (roll randomly).
- 7 — Spell annoys spirit; loud moaning is heard.
- 8 — Spell affects someone or something other than its intended target — friend, foe or random object — roll randomly, or GM makes interesting choice.
- 9 — Spell fails entirely; caster takes 1 hit of damage, and caster's trance is broken.
- 10 — Spell fails entirely; caster is stunned (IQ roll to recover) and caster's trance is broken.
- 11 — Spell angers spirits; causes all within sight to have nightmares for 1 night.
- 12 — Spell produces a weak and useless shadow of its intended effect.
- 13 — Spell produces the reverse of the intended effect.
- 14 — Spell produces the reverse of the intended effect, on the wrong target (roll randomly).
- 15 — Spell fails entirely; caster temporarily forgets spell — make an IQ roll after a week, and again each following week, until he remembers. Caster can study the spell during this time, but it is a waste of time.
- 16 — Spell angers spirits; a prized possession is broken (GM's choice).
- 17 — Spell fails entirely; caster's right arm is crippled — 1 week to recover.
- 18 — Spell fails entirely. An angry spirit appears and attacks caster.



# Spell List

This section contains 16 spells appropriate to shamanistic practice in the Pleistocene Epoch. Use the rules in the *Basic Set*, Chapter 19, for spell-casting.

The shamanistic spells are not divided into colleges. Most require considerably longer to cast than their "standard" *Magic* counterparts; shamanistic rituals are time-consuming. The advantage, however, is that they often have fewer prerequisites and may take less energy to cast. However, Magery is a prerequisite for all Shamanistic spells. They can neither be learned nor used by non-mages.

In a campaign which has "standard" wizards side-by-side with shamans, both types of magic work as per their respective descriptions. Either type of mage can learn the other's spells, if taught. Spells of one type can be used as prerequisites for spells of the other, if they have the same name — e.g., Shamanistic Summon Spirit could be used as a prerequisite for wizardly Banishment.

## Aura

### Information

Shows the caster a glowing halo or "aura" around the subject. This aura gives the caster a general insight into the subject's personality — the better the skill roll, the better the insight. In particular, the aura shows whether the subject is a shaman (and about how powerful); whether the subject is possessed or controlled in any way; and whether the subject is in the grip of any violent emotion. All living beings in *Ice Age* have auras, including plants and animals. A given locale — such as a mountain, a cave or a grove of trees — may also have an aura; for example, "the spirit of the mountain is very angry" or "that cave is a place of great power." Simple inanimate objects, like a rock, do not have auras.

**Cost:** 3 (for any size subject).

**Time to cast:** 3 seconds.

## Banish

### Regular; Resisted by spirit's ST+IQ

Will send any spirit or soul back to the spirit world. To succeed, the caster must win a contest between his IQ + spell skill vs. the ST + IQ of the subject. Add or subtract any modifiers for the caster's Strong or Weak Will. If the spirit loses, it immediately disappears, and must stay in the spirit world for one month. This spell may only be cast in the "real" world — if you are in the spirit world, i.e., trancing, you cannot banish yourself back home, but a spirit could banish you. This spell won't work on a spirit already in the spirit world.

**Cost:** Cost is equal to the subject's ST + IQ, divided by 3. Often a caster will not know how much energy the spell will re-



quire, and may fall unconscious or even wound himself casting it.

**Time to Cast:** 10 minutes.

**Prerequisites:** Summon Spirit and IQ 13+.

## Bless

### Regular

A general spell of aid and protection. Must be cast on someone else; you cannot bless yourself. The effect is as follows: All the subject's die rolls are modified favorably by 1 point. This lasts indefinitely until the subject fails some die roll (or a foe makes a good die roll) and the subject is in some serious danger. Then the blessing miraculously averts or reduces the danger — and ends. It is up to the GM to decide when the blessing has its final effect, and what form the protection takes. If an arrow is flying toward your heart, a blessing might move it to your arm.

**Cost:** 8.

**Time to cast:** 1 hour.

**Prerequisites:** Magery 2.

## Curse

### Regular

Exactly the opposite of Bless. All the subject's die rolls are modified unfavorably by 1 point, lasting until he scores some notable success despite the bad rolls — GM's decision as to exactly what this is. Then the success somehow turns to ashes, and the curse is ended.

**Cost:** 3.

**Time to cast:** 2 seconds.

**Prerequisite:** Magery 2.

## Death Vision

### Regular

Subject sees a vivid premonition of his own death. This is sometimes a vision of the future, and sometimes a false vision (from a possible future); but it is always chilling. The subject is "stunned" until he can make an IQ roll to shake off the evil effects of the spell. On the other hand, this spell can be useful to the subject, by pointing out a possible deadly hazard. The caster must be in a trance state in order to cast Death Vision.

**Duration:** 1 second.

**Cost:** 2.

**Time to cast:** 15 minutes.

## Divination

### Information

Gives the caster a vision relevant to his question, or the answer to one yes-or-no question. There are several sorts of divination; each has its own strengths and weaknesses. Those methods which are linked to a particular element or elements will give more detailed answers if the answer has something to do with that element — e.g., haruspication would work better than pyromancy for a question about the upcoming hunt; pyromancy is ideal for predicting the volcano's next eruption; oneiromancy works best for questions relating to the spirit world.

**Haruspication** is divination by examining the entrails of a slaughtered animal (at least 20 lbs. — no pigeons!). Only one question can be asked per animal.

**Pyromancy** is divination by staring into fire. It may produce a vision or a caster may hear a voice in the flames. Small amounts of certain rare herbs (Herbalism skill helps find them)

must be burned. Questions are at -4 unless something pertaining to the question (e.g., the hair of the subject of the divination) is also burned.

**Oneiromancy** is the interpretation of the caster's own dreams. It requires no equipment, but the caster must enter a trance state to insure that dreams occur. The GM tells the caster what he dreamed; the player must interpret it.

In general, the farther removed the subject of the divination is in time and space, the more difficult a casting will be. The GM should assess penalties he feels appropriate. Also, if repeated questions on the same subject are asked in the same day the impressions are muddled; -4 for the second question, -8 for the third, and so on.

**Cost:** 8.

**Time to cast:** 1 hour.

**Prerequisites:** Death Vision, Summon Spirit and Magery 2.

### Exorcism

**Regular; Resisted by possessing spirit's IQ**

Drives out any spirits foreign to the subject, ending any possession or control of subject. Caster must be touching the subject.

**Cost:** 6.

**Time to cast:** 3 hours.

**Prerequisites:** Summon Spirit, Magery 2.



### Healing

**Regular**

Restores up to 3 HT to the subject. It does not eliminate disease, but will cure harm already done by disease. The caster should enter a trance to use this spell: skill is at -2 otherwise.

This spell is risky if used more than once per day by the same caster on the same subject. Skill is at -3 the first repetition, -6 for the second, and so on.

**Duration:** Permanent.

**Cost:** 1 to 3; the same amount is restored to the subject.

**Time to cast:** 10 minutes.

### Pestilence

**Regular**

Infects the subject with a loathsome plague (caster's choice, though the GM can veto an inappropriate selection) by sending a spirit to attack the subject, stealing the subject's soul, or penetrating the subject with a disease-causing object (again,

caster's choice). The caster must enter a trance to cast this spell. The effects are not immediate, but the disease will take its normal course.

**Duration:** Permanent until cured.

**Cost:** 6.

**Time to cast:** 30 minutes.

**Prerequisites:** Healing, Magery 2.

### Remove Curse

**Regular; Resisted by Curse spell**

Nullifies any Curse. If for any reason the skill level of the subject spell is unknown, the GM's assessment is final.

**Duration:** Permanent.

**Cost:** 10.

**Time to cast:** 10 hours.

**Prerequisites:** Bless.

### Remove Pestilent Object

**Regular**

This spell cures any disease caused by an object implanted with the Pestilence spell. The caster can remove the object without making any incisions, usually by sucking. If the spell is successfully cast, the disease is completely cured — assuming such an object was the cause.

**Duration:** Permanent.

**Cost:** 8.

**Time to cast:** 2 hours.

**Prerequisites:** Healing.

### Spirit Trap (VH)

**Regular; Resisted by spirit's IQ**

Lets the caster trap the subject spirit in some object (which must be right there). The spirit is imprisoned until it can possess the body of someone touching the "trap." It does so by winning a Contest of Will with that person, but the spirit rolls at -2. If the trap is destroyed, so is the spirit — permanently.

The wandering soul of a person, living or deceased, may also be imprisoned in this manner.

**Duration:** Permanent.

**Cost:** 6.

**Time to cast:** 1 hour.

**Prerequisites:** Summon Spirit, Magery 2.

### Summon Spirit

**Information; Resisted by spirit's IQ**

Lets the caster talk with the spirit of a dead person. The subject will resist at -5 if he was a friend of the caster in life. The spell may also be used to talk to a non-human, disembodied spirit (as opposed to one currently possessing a living person or animal). If the spell succeeds, the subject will answer one question, to the best of his knowledge (GM's decision), and one more for every minute he remains.

This spell may be used to lure a stolen or lost soul back into the body of an ill person, as well as for speaking with the dead. In either case, the shaman must have met the living or conscious (in the case of soul loss) person. If the soul of a dead person is being summoned, the caster must be at the site of that person's death. Otherwise, he must be in the presence of the patient whose soul is to be recovered. The caster must be in a trance to cast this spell.

**Duration:** 1 minute.

**Cost:** 6/4.

**Time to cast:** 2 hours.

**Prerequisites:** Death Vision, Magery 2.



# 5

# BESTIARY

Most of the following descriptions originally appeared in *GURPS Bestiary*, written by Steffan O'Sullivan. Some have been edited, expanded or slightly altered to tailor them to the specific requirements of this book. For more information on these and many other creatures, *GURPS Bestiary* is highly recommended.

For those who want a thoroughly non-historical campaign, a selection of dinosaur statistics are provided on pp. 42-43.

## Animal Descriptions

Where detailed descriptions of animals are given, they follow the format of the *GURPS Bestiary*. Most of the headings are self-explanatory. Size refers to size in hexes. Habitats are abbreviated as follows:

- A = Arctic
- D = Desert, including all dry areas and scrub woodlands
- F = Forest, including all temperate forests
- FW = Fresh-Water Aquatic
- J = Jungle, including any tropical forest
- M = Mountain
- P = Plains, including all grassland, steppes and so on
- S = Swamp
- Sub = Subterranean
- SW = Salt-Water Aquatic

\* means a special ability or attack — see text

# indicates exceptions to the given entry — see text

- means that the heading does not apply.

## Pleistocene Europe

### Aurochs

ST: 48-60	Speed/Dodge: 8/4	Size: 3
DX: 9	PD/DR: 1/1	Wt: 1,000-2,500 lbs.
IQ: 4	Damage: 1d+2 imp#	Habitats: P, F
HT: 13-16	Reach: C	

The aurochs was the ancestor of modern domestic cattle. Well-known by primitive humans, it was hunted and domesticated extensively. By medieval times, it had become rare, and has been extinct since the 17th century.



Treat aurochs like any other herd herbivore — they will flee if threatened. Males protect the herd — by charging and trampling. Their horns do 1d+2 impaling damage; their trample does 1d+1 crushing damage.



### Bear

#### Bear, Brown

ST: 15-19	Speed/Dodge: 7/6	Size: 2#
DX: 13	PD/DR: 1/1	Wt: 200-700 lbs.
IQ: 5	Damage: 1d cr#	Habitats: F, M, S
HT: 14/16-20	Reach: C	

#### Bear, Cave

ST: 27-33	Speed/Dodge: 7/6	Size: 3#
DX: 12	PD/DR: 1/2	Wt: 1,200-1,600 lbs
IQ: 5	Damage: 2d-2 cr#	Habitats: M, F
HT: 14/24-30	Reach: C,1	

Bears are omnivores which, with the exception of the polar bear, actually eat more plants than animals. They are found the world over. Most bears will get out of your way if they hear you coming, but if surprised can be quite dangerous. Make a reaction roll to determine whether the bear is hungry, aggressive or just gets out of the way. Mother bears are extremely protective of their cubs, reacting at -8.

Bears strike with their claws for crushing damage, or bite for the same amount of cutting damage.

Brown bears are found in the northwestern portion of North America and throughout Europe and Asia. A brown bear walking on all fours is a 2-hex animal. When standing on its rear legs to fight, it occupies only one hex.

Cave bears of the Pleistocene were about the same size as modern polar bears and Kodiaks. They were almost completely vegetarian, and went into caves only during their winter hibernation. It seems early humans hunted them frequently — many cave bear remains show signs of having been eaten by humans.

Treat them as follows: -3 reaction; claw for 2d-2 crushing damage at 1-hex reach; bite 2d-2 cutting damage in close combat. In addition, the cave bear can “bear-hug,” grappling in close combat and then biting. When walking on all fours, they are 3-hex creatures; when standing on two legs, 1-hex creatures.



## Caribou and Reindeer

ST: 20-25	Speed/Dodge: 12/7	Size: 3
DX: 15	PD/DR: 1/2	Wt: 500-700 lbs.
IQ: 4	Damage: 1d+1 imp#	Habitats: A, P
HT: 14/13-16	Reach: C	

Caribou and reindeer belong to the same species. Caribou are found in North America and Siberia, while reindeer are found in Scandinavia and Greenland. Treat the two as being identical.

Caribou are the only members of the deer family in which both sexes have antlers. The largest caribou are about 8 feet long, standing 5 feet at the shoulder. They live in large migratory herds of up to 3,000, and are active during the daylight hours, although they can be active at night during the long Arctic winters. They are shy of humans, but are quite inquisitive. They can be dangerous during the mating season (fall), when the males will attempt to drive off any intruders.

## Cave Lion

ST: 34-42	Speed/Dodge: 9/6	Size: 2
DX: 12	PD/DR: 2/2	Wt: 500-700 lbs.
IQ: 4	Damage: 2d cut	Habitats: M, P
HT: 15/24-30	Reach: C	

These large cats lived during the Pleistocene and were frequently hunted by humans. Little is known about their habits. Assume that they behave similarly to modern lions (p. 42), although it is likely that they do not fear humans.

## Deer

ST: 5-14	Speed/Dodge: 9/7	Size: 2
DX: 15	PD/DR: 0/0	Wt: 70-200 lbs.
IQ: 4	Damage: 1d imp#	Habitats: F, M, J, P
HT: 13/6-8	Reach: C	

There are many types of deer, including the mule, musk, red and white-tailed deer. In most species, the males bear antlers (shed yearly) which are used to fight other males. The deer's primary defence, though, is flight.

Deer will occasionally fight by kicking or trampling (1 die crushing damage), or by butting with the antlers (1 die impaling damage). Attack is most likely during the mating season, or if the deer is brought to bay. Deer are found the world over, and their meat is highly prized.

## Horse

ST: 24-30	Speed/Dodge: 13/6	Size: 2
DX: 10	PD/DR: 0/0	Wt: 500-700 lbs.
IQ: 4	Damage: 1d-2 cr#	Habitat: P
HT: 11-13	Reach: C, 1	

The horses of the Pleistocene were smaller than their modern counterparts, being on a par with ponies. In general, they resemble unstriped zebras, having shorter necks and more bristly manes than modern thoroughbreds. They behave like most herd animals, and will flee from danger with the dominant males hanging back to defend the rest if necessary. Horses can kick into any front or rear hex for the listed damage, or bite in close combat for 2 dice crushing damage.





## Ibex

ST: 8-12      Speed/Dodge: 9/6      Size: 1  
DX: 13      PD/DR: 1/0      Weight: 50-100 lbs.  
IQ: 4      Damage: - #      Habitat: M  
HT: 15/6-10      Reach: C

Medium-sized herbivores, ibex live in craggy hills and mountains of Europe. They were frequent prey of early hunters. Like goats, a whole herd of ibex can live on land that would barely support one cow.

Ibex are extremely wary, and will flee if approached. If brought to bay, an ibex will butt, then flee if there is a way out. Treat the butt as a slam attack for no damage unless the victim rolls a critical failure on his ST roll; in case of a critical failure, he takes 1d-2 crushing damage. Give the ibex +2 ST for determining knockdown.

## Irish Elk

ST: 24-30      Speed/Dodge: 10/7      Size: 3  
DX: 12      PD/DR: 1/1      Wt: 1,000+ lbs.  
IQ: 4      Damage: 1d+2 imp      Habitats: S  
HT: 14/13-16      Reach: C

This giant member of the deer family died out just a few thousand years ago; humans were probably a leading cause of its extinction. It stood six feet at the shoulder and had enormous antlers, with spreads up to ten feet being common.

Like all deer, Irish elk were undoubtedly shy of humans, but may have been dangerous in the fall, their mating season. They tend to be solitary, but often group together during the mating season and winter. They are active both day and night. They can do 1d+2 impaling damage with their antlers, or 1d+1 trampling damage with their hooves.

## Mammoth

ST: 225-275      Speed/Dodge: 8/0      Size: 10  
DX: 12      PD/DR: 2/2      Wt: 4-7 tons  
IQ: 4      Damage: 3d cr      Habitats: P, F, A  
HT: 17/40-50      Reach: C, 1, 2

Mammoths were Ice Age ancestors of the elephant, common to North America, Europe and Asia. Some species were covered



with a thick, wooly hair. Despite the name, they were slightly smaller than modern elephants. They originated some seven million years ago, and were hunted to extinction by humans who used the meat, tusks and hide extensively. There is no evidence that they were ever domesticated.

Mammoths evolved from mastodons, and were larger, with higher skulls, shorter jaws and heavier hair. They also were found in a wider range of habitats. Their hard, high-crowned molars were designed to chew up prairie grasses and other tough vegetation that the mastodon could not eat.

Mammoths attack by trampling for 3d crushing damage.

## Mastodon

ST: 175-200      Speed/Dodge: 8/0      Size: 10  
DX: 12      PD/DR: 2/2      Wt: 3-5 tons  
IQ: 4      Damage: 3d cr#      Habitat: F  
HT: 17/30-40      Reach: C, 1, 2

Mastodons were early ancestors of the mammoth, originating some 25 million years ago and becoming extinct about 8,000 years ago. There were mastodons in North America when the first men crossed over from Asia.

They had long curved tusks and short reddish hair, and browsed the forests of the Pleistocene. They were smaller than mammoths, and also had a more limited habitat. Their teeth were adapted for chewing the soft leaves and twigs of open woodlands, whereas mammoths could deal with the tougher prairie grasses.

Treat mastodons as small mammoths in all other respects.

## Sabertoothed Tiger

ST: 26-32      Speed/Dodge: 8/6      Size: 2  
DX: 12      PD/DR: 1/1      Wt: 400-600 lbs.  
IQ: 4      Damage: 2d+1 imp      Habitats: P, F, D  
HT: 14/20-24      Reach: C

The sabertoothed tiger, known scientifically as the smilodon, did not really resemble a tiger in anything but size. Its skeleton more closely resembles that of a lion, but the stabbing cats diverged from the biting cats so long ago that sabertooths are not closely related to any modern animal.

Sabertooths knew early humans, and were hunted by them. They probably returned the favor — some human skulls have been found with sabertooth-sized holes in them! It is believed that the sabertooth hunted the great mammals; its teeth were adapted for slicing through the thick skin to the jugular.

They are more solitary than lions, and will bite repeatedly rather than biting and holding. Treat them as lions (p. 42) in all other respects not covered here. Their teeth (which sometimes measured 11 inches long) are serrated, and do extra damage for their ST — 2d+1 impaling in close combat.

## Wolf

### Dire Wolf

ST: 13-16      Speed/Dodge: 7/6      Size: 1  
DX: 12      PD/DR: 1/1      Weight: 150-200 lbs.  
IQ: 4      Damage: 1d cut      Habitats: P, M, A, F  
HT: 13-17      Reach: C

### Modern Wolf

ST: 8-10      Speed/Dodge: 9/7      Size: 1  
DX: 14      PD/DR: 1/1      Weight: 70-170 lbs.  
IQ: 5      Damage: 1d-2 cut      Habitats: F, M, A, P  
HT: 11-13      Reach: C

The wolf is a ferocious carnivore, found throughout North America, northern Europe and Asia, and in the Pleistocene was even more wide-spread. Wolves are courageous and intelligent, with great fighting ability and endurance. They are largely nocturnal, though they do hunt in the day. Packs range from 4 to 30 animals; lone wolves can also be encountered. Wolves mate for life and are quite protective of their mates and cubs.

They usually hunt in packs, having a good sense of pack tactics. They attack by biting in close combat for 1d-2 cutting damage. They tend to rush in, bite out a piece of flesh, then dodge out of the way while the same operation is performed by the other wolves. Eventually they prey weakens from shock and loss of blood, and can be dragged down. The odds are good that wolves will not attack humans unless the climate is so severe that other prey is very scarce.

The dire wolf is the sturdy but slow precursor of the modern wolf. Dire wolves are active both day and night, traveling in packs ranging from four to forty animals. Scavengers by nature, dire wolves prey upon animals in distress — the injured, the old, the abandoned young. They often attack animals trapped in mire, rock slides and tar pits. The La Brea tar pits contain more skeletons of dire wolves than of any other mammal.

Dire wolves have no fear of humans. The wolves will attack using pack tactics. They will not be driven off until they have suffered at least 50% casualties.



## Wooly Rhinoceros

ST: 120-150	Speed/Dodge: 13/6	Size: 10
DX: 9	PD/DR: 3/3	Wt: 1-2 tons
IQ: 4	Damage: 2d+1 cr#	Habitats: A, P
HT: 17/40-48	Reach: C	

The woolly rhino was a common figure in prehistoric cave art. It stood about four yards long and six feet at the shoulder, with long shaggy fur. It was a solitary animal, probably active from dusk through dawn. They are near-sighted, but have acute senses of smell and hearing (Vision 9, Smell and Hearing 16).

It will usually flee humans, but occasionally one will charge — especially a mother or wounded animal. Rhinos attack by charging, either impaling with the horn or trampling. The horn does 2d+1 crushing damage, while the trample does 1d+2 crushing damage.

## Pliocene Africa



### Antelope

ST: 15-20	Speed/Dodge: 18/9	Size: 2
DX: 15	PD/DR: 0/0	Wt: 250-350 lbs.
IQ: 4	Damage: 1d+1 imp#	Habitats: P, J, D,
HT: 14-17	Reach: C	M, F, S

Antelopes are ungulates (hoofed animals) vaguely resembling deer, cattle and mountain goats. The category is a loose one, including widely differing species such as bongos, bushbucks, dik-diks, duikers, gazelles, gnus, impalas, kudus, sables, springboks, etc. Most species are African, although some are native to Asia.

In most species of antelope, both males and females have horns. These horns vary from species to species — some are long, others are short, straight, curved or twisted. Antelopes also vary greatly in size. The statistics given are for a middle-sized antelope — the smallest antelopes are rabbit-sized!

Antelopes are diurnal grazing animals. Most species live in large herds of 100 or more animals; others are found in groups of 6 to 20. They are quite edible, though the meat is drier and coarser than that of deer.

They are timid; a herd will flee if approached, with the males lagging behind, staying between the predator and the rest of the herd. If cornered, an antelope will turn and face its attacker, striking with horns and hooves.

Antelopes do either impaling or crushing damage, depending on the type of horns. Hooves do 1d-1 crushing damage, either kicking or trampling.

### Baboon

ST: 9-11	Speed/Dodge: 12/7	Size: 1
DX: 14	PD/DR: 0/0	Wt: 50-90 lbs.
IQ: 6	Damage: 1d-2 cut	Habitats: P, J, F
HT: 16/8-10	Reach: C	

Baboons are the largest and smartest of the monkeys, though neither as smart nor as large as apes. They are diurnal and range throughout Africa. On all fours, they measure about a yard long; standing, they can reach four feet in height.

Baboons have a well-organized social structure; they live in troops of 20 to 50 members. Each troop has a definite territory over which it ranges. Its members never wander far from the rest of the troop. When traveling, the females and young stay in the center of the troop, where they are protected from all sides. When at rest, the troop will post sentries to warn of approaching danger. If threatened, the troop will flee, with the males hanging back to protect the females and young from any pursuers.

Unlike most monkeys, baboons are omnivores, and have been known to attack lone humans. Leopards and lions are their greatest enemies. The troop will seek safety from them in trees and rocks, from which they will bark their defiance. The males are quite courageous and will sometimes turn on their enemies; several are more than a match for any predator.

They attack by grappling and biting in close combat. Their vicious canine teeth do 1d-2 cutting damage.



## Cheetah

ST: 16-20      Speed/Dodge: 30/10      Size: 2  
DX: 14      PD/DR: 0/0      Wt: 110-160 lbs.  
IQ: 4      Damage: 1d cut      Habitats: P, D  
HT: 13-16      Reach: C

Cheetahs are the fastest land animals, averaging speeds of 50-60 miles per hour, but having been clocked at speeds up to an incredible 75 mph. For all practical purposes, they can accelerate instantly from a dead stop to full speed.

They are diurnal cats, native to Africa. They have many dog-like features: long legs made for running, not springing; claws that do not fully retract; trainability; a lack of stalking ability. They hunt by outrunning their prey, knocking it down with a forepaw, then strangling it with their bite. Their claws are blunt by cat standards; treat their swipe as a slam attack doing no damage. They bite in close combat for 1d cutting damage.

## Hyena

ST: 9-18      Speed/Dodge: 16/8      Size: 2  
DX: 13      PD/DR: 1/1      Wt: 100-200 lbs.  
IQ: 4      Damage: 1d cut      Habitats: P, D, J, F  
HT: 12/13-16      Reach: C

Hyenas are dog-like scavengers with large heads and ears, longer front legs than rear legs, and short manes and tails. Their powerful jaws can crack bones easily. They are nocturnal animals, living in pairs or small packs, with the females being larger and more dominant than the males. Most modern species are found in Africa, Asia Minor and India. They were more widespread during the Pleistocene and Pliocene, ranging into Europe and Asia during warmer periods.

Hyenas have a reputation for cowardice, largely undeserved. While they are scavengers, they do hunt their own prey on occasion. When they hunt, they run down prey like dogs. Hyena packs will even chase lions away from their kills.

Hyenas have been known to attack humans, usually sleeping campers or lone unarmed travelers. They will often attack a sleeping person's face, causing disfigurement at the least. If cornered, hyenas will fight viciously, biting in close combat for 1 die cutting damage. Their bites are dirty; anyone bitten must roll against HT for possible infection (p. B116).

## Lion

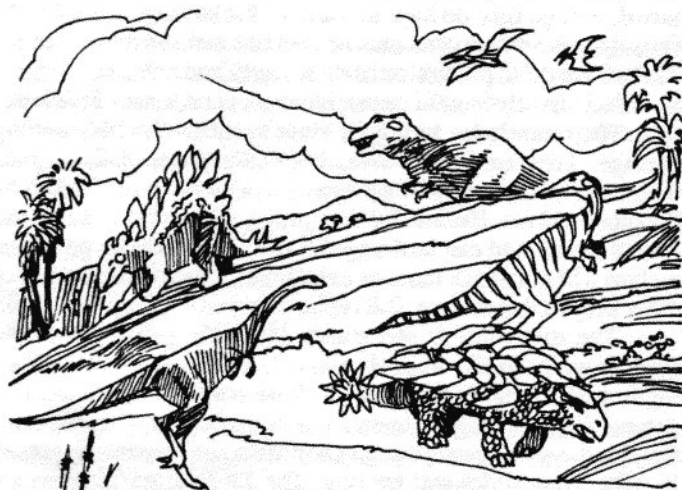
ST: 24-30      Speed/Dodge: 10/6      Size: 2  
DX: 13      PD/DR: 1/1      Wt: 400-600 lbs.  
IQ: 4      Damage: 2d-2 cut      Habitats: P, J, D, M  
HT: 15/16-20      Reach: C

Lions live in groups called prides that number anywhere from three to twenty in size, with four and five being average. Larger prides are common in the more open grasslands.

Lions prefer the plains, but will occasionally venture into desert, mountains and, more rarely, jungle. They often hunt singly, though they are capable of co-operative effort: a lioness or two will lie up in the tall grass, while the males herd the prey in their direction; the whole pride will share in the kill. Lions are more diurnal than most cats, but adapt well to a nocturnal existence if hunted by humans.

Most encounters with humans end with the lions fleeing rapidly. However, if wounded, a lion will charge angrily and attempt to kill anyone in its way. Likewise, running away from one will sometimes spark its instinct to chase. Occasional man-eaters have been reported — generally, old or wounded lions.

Lions attack in close combat, biting and clawing for 2d-2 cutting damage. The actual attack is usually on the neck, strangulation being the most common method of killing.



## Dinosaurs

### Ankylosaurus (Ankylosaur)

ST: 40-50      Speed/Dodge: 4/0      Size: 20+  
DX: 11      PD/DR: 4/6      Wt: 2-4 tons  
IQ: 3      Damage: 3d cr  
HT: 15/40-45      Reach: 1, 2

Ankylosaurs are heavily armored herbivores with spiked or clubbed tails. Their sole means of defense (aside from the armor) is to swing their tails — into any back hex, or any hex adjacent to the back hex — for 3 dice crushing damage. Ankylosaurs are not built for dodging; Dodge is 0.

Ankylosaurus, a typical member of the family, reaches lengths of 25-30 feet, and stands about 5 feet high by 8 feet wide. It is a Cretaceous dinosaur, inhabiting flood plains, river banks and lake shores.

### Brontosaurus (Sauropod)

ST: 300+      Speed/Dodge: 5/0#      Size: 28+  
DX: 9      PD/DR: 2/3      Wt: 15-30 tons  
IQ: 3      Damage: 4d cr  
HT: 17/100+      Reach: 1-8

Brontosaurus is the more commonly-known name for the dinosaur known scientifically as Apatosaurus. It stands on four elephantine legs, has a long neck and tail, and measures 70-80 feet in length. Its primary defense is its sheer size — most carnivores cannot even hope to hurt it. It is common to the Jurassic and Cretaceous periods.

Harmless vegetarians, brontosaurs inhabit flood plains, using their long necks to feed on treetops. They may also be able to rear up onto their back legs, allowing them to feed from the highest trees.

Contrary to popular belief, Brontosaurus is not a swamp dweller — in fact, it probably avoids them. It doesn't bite, although its head and neck have a reach of 8 hexes. Trampling does 6 dice damage, and its tail-whip can also be fatal.

The tail has a reach of 8 hexes and can swing 8 hexes per turn (movement is measured by the tip of the tail). Brontosaurus hits automatically with its tail; anyone within the affected area must make a Dodge roll to avoid being hit. The tail does 4 dice damage; assess knockback as from a slam.

Brontosaurus is so large that it gets no Dodge roll, except for its head, which Dodges at 4.

### Deinonychus (Coelurosaur)

ST: 15-18      Speed/Dodge: 12/7      Size: 2-3  
DX: 14      PD/DR: 1/1      Weight: 100-200 lbs.  
IQ: 3      Damage: 1d+2 imp#  
HT: 13/12-14      Reach: C, 1

The largest coelurosaur, Deinonychus reaches lengths of up to 10 feet. On each foot, it has a large forward-mounted claw used for disembowelling opponents. The forearms are also heavily clawed. Treat the feet as the main weapon, kicking at reach 1 for 1d+2 impaling damage. Deinonychus can also bite and claw in close combat for 1 die cutting damage. Common to the Cretaceous, it inhabits dry flood plains and river banks.

### Duckbill (Ornithomimid)

ST: 8-50      Move/Dodge: 12-16/7      Size: 20+  
DX: 14      PD/DR: 1/1      Weight: 1-3 tons  
IQ: 3      Damage: -#  
HT: 15/7-35      Reach: C, 1

Typical duckbills, or ornithomimids, include Trachodon, Corythosaurus and Parasaurolophus. Many duckbills have hollow crests on their heads, which might be used to produce mating calls. They can stand upright to feed from trees, or can travel on all fours, near-to-the ground, feeding on herbs and bushes.

Duckbills live in herds in swamps and deltas, along lakes and rivers, and on wet flood plains. They range up to 30 or 40 feet in length. Their usual defense is flight, though some species have claws; the latter can claw in close combat for 1d-2 cutting damage.

### Plesiosaur

ST: 14-30      Speed/Dodge: 7/7      Size: 3-30  
DX: 14      PD/DR: 1/1      Wt: 250-2,000 lbs.  
IQ: 3      Damage: 1d+1 imp  
HT: 14/10-25      Reach: C, 1-7

There are many types of plesiosaurs — Cryptocleidus and Elasmosaurus being typical examples. They are air-breathing marine animals, filling the same ecological niche as the killer whale. Some have short necks, others have such long and supple necks that they can reach 7 yards in any direction — ideal for plucking people out of small boats! They range from 10 to at least 40 feet in length, though some authorities claim they reach 60 feet.

### Pteranodon (Pterosaur)

ST: 3-5      Speed/Dodge: 14/7#      Size: 2  
DX: 14      PD/DR: 0/0      Wt: 30-60 lbs.  
IQ: 4      Damage: 1d-3 cr  
HT: 13/5-7      Reach: C

Pteranodon is a winged reptile (not a dinosaur) common to the late Jurassic and the Cretaceous periods. It is the best-known member of the pterosaur family.

Some pterosaurs are as small as chickens, others are larger; Pteranodon has a wing-span of up to 35 feet. Some species eat insects; others eat fish. Some may be carrion eaters.

While it was once thought that pterosaurs flew poorly, using

the wings mainly for gliding, recent evidence shows that they are actually consummate aerialists. Some experts believe that they are also capable of running about on the ground on all fours. If you subscribe to this belief, give pterosaurs Speeds of 3-4 on the ground; otherwise, give them Speeds of 1-2.

### Stegosaurus (Stegosaur)

ST: 75-100      Speed/Dodge: 4/4      Size: 12+  
DX: 8      PD/DR: 2/3      Wt: 2-3 tons  
IQ: 3      Damage: 3d imp  
HT: 15/50-65      Reach: 1, 2

Stegosaurus is a heavy, four-legged dinosaur, measuring 20-30 feet long, with a tiny head and huge plates on its spine. The tail bears large spikes, and is useful as a defensive weapon. Some experts believe that the Stegosaurus can flap the plates on its back as a further defense. If they can flap these plates, anyone within one hex must make a successful Dodge roll each turn to avoid being hit for 1d-2 cutting damage.

In combat, Stegosaurus turns its back to all attackers and swings its tail, which can lash into any back hex, or any hex adjacent to the back hexes, for 3 dice impaling damage. Stegosaurus live in flood plains and along shorelines, and are common to the Jurassic. Their skeletons indicate that they are capable of standing upright to feed from trees.

### Triceratops (Ceratopsian)

ST: 200+      Speed/Dodge: 10/6      Size: 15+  
DX: 12      PD/DR: 2/2#      Wt: 4-6 tons  
IQ: 3      Damage: 5d imp  
HT: 17/50-75      Reach: C

Triceratops was among the last dinosaurs both to have appeared and to have become extinct. It is a four-legged herbivore built along the lines of the rhino, measuring 20-30 feet in length.

It has an amazingly effective horn and skull formation; the bones of the skull flare out to protect the neck, all the way back past the shoulders! Give the head a PD of 4 and a DR of 6. The three horns are long, sharp and angled for disembowelling carnosaurs; Triceratops is capable of charging like a rhino. Treat its attack as a head butt (p. B85) doing 5 dice impaling damage.

Triceratops travels in herds, living in swamps and along river deltas. It is common to the Cretaceous.

### Tyrannosaurus (Carnosaur)

ST: 100-150      Speed/Dodge: 9/7      Size: 19+  
DX: 15      PD/DR: 2/2      Wt: 4-5 tons  
IQ: 3      Damage: 5d+2 imp  
HT: 15/50-75      Reach: C, 1, 2

Tyrannosaurus is the largest meat-eating animal ever to have lived, and no predator has stronger jaws. It measures about 45 feet from head to tail, stands about 20 feet tall, and has a 4-foot head armed with 6-inch teeth. It also has ridiculously small and useless forelimbs.

Despite its great size, it is surprisingly graceful and fast. It has to be; it is going up against the most heavily defended of all dinosaurs — the ankylosaurs and ceratopsians.

Tyrannosaurs attack with a terrible bite, doing 5d+2 impaling damage at up to a 2-hex reach. They do not kick; their hind legs and feet are adapted more for running and dodging to avoid counterattacks from their prey's weapons.

Tyrannosaurus lives on flood plains and in swamp forests, and is common to the Cretaceous.



### Bibliography

The following books and films are suggested for anyone interested in playing in or running an *Ice Age* campaign.

### Selected Non-Fiction

Campbell, Bernard, *Human Evolution*. (1985) This was one of the primary sources for this book. It discusses every aspect of human evolution including detailed chapters on anatomy, technology and culture. It is very technical in places, but contains an excellent glossary.

Durkheim, Emile, *Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. This book is regarded as a true classic in the field of anthropology. It treats animism and totemism in detail, and regards the former as a decayed form of the latter. Not everyone agrees with this view — this author included — and the controversy is far from resolution in the scientific community. The book is invaluable anyway.

Harner, Michael J., *Hallucinogens and Shamanism*. (1973) An enlightening book about the use of hallucinogenic plants among the tribes of the Amazon basin, it even contains first hand accounts of researchers who tried the various drugs. Harner has written a companion book about Shamanistic healing in general.

Leakey, Richard E., *The Making of Mankind*. (1981) This general overview of human evolution and the development of the study of man's origins is by one of the most prominent anthropologists today. It is beautifully illustrated and written in an entertaining, non-technical style easily understood by the layman. Highly recommended.

From a modern perspective, a stone-age tribesman has very limited options. But, an *Ice Age* campaign offers many opportunities for real roleplaying. The PCs will be people of a very different kind. They have different needs and goals, but they're still people. Their interactions with each other and with the rest of the tribe mirror all of modern life, and may even provide players with some new insights about their own behavior! And where else can the players get an excuse to shout "Og kill!" and beat their chests?

This chapter will provide help in running a Pleistocene campaign. But it also includes a discussion of other genres in which cavemen play a role and for which *Ice Age* may be used as a sourcebook even though the PCs may not be cavemen. Also included are suggested campaign themes, tips on useful "period" plot devices, and a bibliography of films and books which have served this author as both reference works and inspiration.

## The Realistic Campaign

The realistic campaign is set on Earth, sometime in its prehistoric past. The creatures which populate the game world really existed at some point during human pre-history, and the peoples, their technology, and their culture are accurately represented. This doesn't mean that this kind of campaign is going to be dull — the film *Quest for Fire* and the novel *Clan of the Cave Bear* prove that Ice Age life can be packed with action and adventure.

The first decision you as a GM must make, obviously, is in what period your campaign will be set. You need not be exact; a time frame of several thousand years will be fine. The factors in this decision are the levels of culture and technology you want your characters to have. Will your characters know how to make fire, be capable of speech and create advanced tools? Do they have a religion? The later the period, the more advanced the society will be. Cro-Magnon man, as the most modern of the hominids, will be easier for your players to identify with and roleplay. It is also easier to maintain an ongoing campaign if it is set in a more recent era. Having your players grunting and gesturing at one another is amusing for a while, but eventually becomes boring.



Another factor you may want to consider is what races you want to have coexisting in your game world. You can always make this decision arbitrarily, ignoring the archaeological evidence. This is just fine. However, you may want to stick to the facts a little more closely. There are two periods during which several hominid species lived side by side in a single region. The first was around 1.5 million years ago, give or take 100,000. During this period it is plausible that *A. robustus* or *boisei*, *H. habilis* and *H. erectus* all coexisted on the African savanna. They would have competed for food, and perhaps even fought over it occasionally. Bands would have undoubtedly staked out their territories and defended them jealously.

The second period occurred between 32,000 and 40,000 years ago in Pleistocene Europe. This was during the height of the Wurm glacial period, and much of northern and central Europe was covered with ice. This short time span saw the arrival of fully modern man, represented by Cro-Magnon, and the disap-

pearance of Neanderthal. And, if the theory that Neanderthal was an evolutionary dead end is true, an archaic form of *Homo sapiens* may have been present as well. Some have theorized that an "invasion" of genocidal Cro-Magnon men wiped out the Neanderthal; others argue that he was assimilated into the new population, and still others that he was driven into less hospitable lands, where he slowly starved. The roleplaying opportunities here should be obvious.

Once you have decided when and where you will set your campaign, fleshing out the world will be relatively easy. The *Bestiary* (pp. 38-43) in this book includes the most common creatures of Pleistocene Europe, and this environment is described in the first chapter. For other locales, use the creatures which exist in that environment today. The *GURPS Bestiary* is invaluable for this.

## Technology and Culture

Perhaps the greatest difficulty in a historically based campaign is that the players will attempt to use their 20th-century knowledge to benefit their characters. As a GM you must keep a firm handle on new inventions, ideas and cultural innovations the players may try to implement. It took millions of years for mankind to reach his current level of development. If the PCs invent the wheel, agriculture, domestication and the sailboat in a few weeks, things are sure to fall apart.

Talk to the players before play begins, and lay down some ground rules. Make sure they understand the social and technical level of the races they are playing, and emphasize that roleplaying is very important. Warn them that there will be stiff penalties to experience earned for someone dropping out of character and using knowledge that his Neanderthal hunter shouldn't have.

Be careful, however, not to discourage the players from being innovative. Being the *Homo erectus* to discover how to make fire is one of the great thrills of roleplaying prehistory. But you must emphasize that these events will come about slowly, *in the context of the game*, and not just as a convenient means to achieving a short term goal. Indeed, discovering the secret of making fire might be the climax of a long-running campaign.

If the players insist on introducing inappropriate technology or behavior, let them. They'll have to pay the consequences, however. Their fellow tribesmen will be unable to comprehend their invention, or will consider their strange ideas and behavior to be sure signs of demonic possession. If the PCs remain stubborn to the end they might even be exiled for their "crimes."

The ultimate rule of thumb for the GM plagued with Renaissance cavemen is: If all else fails, just say "No!"

## Magic and Shamanism

Magic and shamanism can easily be a part of a historical campaign setting.

Among Neanderthal and Cro-Magnon tribes there *were* shamans, and these peoples *believed* in the spirit powers that the shamans claimed to wield. Whether or not the power exists is entirely up to you, and you don't have to tell the players when you make up your mind. If they're good roleplayers, their characters will be believers too. Maybe magic did work back then, but doesn't anymore; or maybe it still does, if you know how to call the spirits to your aid.

Of course, if you'd prefer not to have any magic or shamanism in your campaign, that's all right, too.

## Campaign Themes

The next hurdle is to decide what type of adventures you want to run. There's nothing wrong with a campaign which consists of independent and unrelated episodes, but one built around a central theme is often more satisfying. Below are a number of suggestions for campaigns, which can also serve as the basis for a single adventure. These are by no means the only possibilities, just some of the more obvious ones.







### Selected Non-Fiction (continued)

*National Geographic*, Nov. 1985, Kenneth Weaver, *The Search for Our Ancestors*. This issue is easily recognized by the hologram of an Australopithecine child's skull on the cover. A good introduction to the subject of human evolution, the article is packed with illustrations, photos, maps and diagrams for which this magazine is justly famous.

*National Geographic*, Jan. 1975, Alexander Marshack, *Exploring the Mind of Ice Age Man*. Marshack is still the leading innovator in the study of Ice Age art. In this article he shows how the intelligence and culture of Pleistocene Europeans were reflected in their art. Again, there are spectacular photographs.

Selby, Henry and Garretson, Lucy, *Cultural Anthropology*. (1981) This college text has some useful discussions of shamanism and how hunter/gatherer societies view their world.

*Smithsonian*, Oct. 1986, John E. Pfeiffer, *Cro-Magnon Hunters* . . . This article is notable for the short pieces of fiction used to introduce each section. They give a wonderful picture of life on the edge of the glaciers 13,000 years ago.

### Man Against Nature

This is a catch-all phrase for playing out the daily struggle for survival. The player characters must constantly fight to keep themselves and the tribe alive. They will have to contend with ferocious predators, elusive prey, droughts and blizzards, volcanic eruptions and rival tribes. A single adventure might consist of a mastodon hunt, during which the hunters are attacked by a sabertooth, caught in a storm, and nearly trampled by stampeding bison. Once they've made the kill they'll have to fend off the wolves and hyenas which will quickly gather.

A sub-class of the Man Against Nature campaign is based on following the migrating reindeer herds. The tribe survives by hunting reindeer, which they follow across the arctic plains from the northern glaciers in summer to the southern coastal plains in winter. Of course, they won't be the only predators . . .

The Man Against Nature theme can make an entertaining mini-campaign, or an introduction to the genre as a whole. It is also particularly well suited to the more primitive species which don't have well-developed cultures to provide roleplaying opportunities. Eventually, however, the daily grind will get a bit dull. When this happens, it's time to liven things up with one of the ideas below.

### First Contact

One of the staples of prehistoric adventure is the meeting of other, different tribes. Strangers might be encountered when the tribe moves into a new region, or perhaps they invade the tribe's home territory. Often the strange new tribe is more advanced than the one to which the characters belong. It will always be distinct in some respect.

As a GM, you should emphasize the differences in the two tribes. Play up different customs, religions, totems and technologies. One side may be more advanced, but make sure that both tribes can learn something from one another. You may want to have PCs from each tribe, and let the players roleplay these differences. Don't miss the opportunity to have characters from one tribe give grave insult to members of the other because they don't understand their customs.

The usual plot for the First Contact campaign involves initial conflict, fear and mistrust which must be resolved. Often, the two tribes will be on the verge of open warfare when the characters succeed in bringing everybody together, perhaps to unite against some common threat posed by another tribe or impending natural disaster. There might be one or two truly dastardly NPCs who are sowing seeds of dissent and must be dealt with. The campaign ends with the tribes developing a strong, mutually beneficial, friendship.

Of course, things might *not* work out . . .

### Warring Tribes

The Warring Tribes campaign provides a clear-cut human opponent for the characters to overcome, and lots of straight combat. The Bad Guys are greedy and violent, and the Good Guys noble and justified. Perhaps the evil tribesmen are cannibals or have some other particularly nasty habit. You should warn the players to build characters with an emphasis on combat skills rather than survival skills, or you'll wind up with a lot of corpses — remember, they won't have much in the way of armor.

Some common plot devices are kidnapped children, mates, friends, shaman, leader, etc.; the desecration of holy places; slavery; and cannibalism (either as part of a ritual, or just for food). The first adventure should include a sudden, unexpected attack by the strangers. After fighting them off, the tribe will have to discover the nature of the enemy, rescue any captives (which could get some of the PCs captured), and defeat them utterly to ensure the safety of the tribe. This kind of campaign is ideal for the evil shaman — if your players like battling black magic and witchcraft, here's your chance to let them do it.

In the end, the characters' tribe will almost always win, but make sure the

outcome is enough in doubt that the climactic battle isn't dull. This is a good time for that once-in-a-campaign technological innovation. The invention of the sling might be just the edge the Good Guys need to win. If the players really mess up, however, they might lose anyway.

### Migration

There are a number of reasons why a tribe might decide to migrate from its native territory to find a new home. They may have been driven out by another tribe or by a natural disaster such as an earthquake, flood or volcanic eruption. Or they might have exhausted the game in a their region and starvation is forcing them to move on. The classic reason is the slow, relentless advance of the glaciers forcing them to flee south in search of warmer climes.

Whatever the reason, the migration setting gives your characters an excuse to travel extensively, over different terrains, through different climates. They will encounter numerous other tribes along the way. The ultimate goal is to find an uninhabited region rich in plants and wildlife, with adequate shelter, water supply, etc.

The best thing about this campaign type is that it incorporates all of the above themes, each involving perhaps three or four play sessions. By the time the tribe finds a new home, your PCs will be chieftains, shamans and heroes of legendary proportions, and ready either for retirement or adventures on their own, without the tribe.

### The Quest

If you've seen *Quest for Fire*, then you know what this kind of campaign is all about. The characters are searching for something which is vital to the tribe's survival. Fire is an obvious choice, but it might be something of religious importance or a magical item instead. It could even be a person or persons. The PCs might be searching for their tribe — when they returned from an extended hunting trip the whole clan was missing. Or they might be seeking a new medicine man, shaman or leader.

The key to a quest campaign is to keep the players from losing interest in the object of the quest. Time pressure can increase the drama — perhaps a plague is slowly killing the clan. It should take them several sessions to locate what they're looking for, and then, when the party has almost achieved its goal, have it slip from their grasp once again. Or, when they've succeeded, have it stolen before they can get it back to the tribe. After two or three setbacks of this nature the PCs should finally win out, and feel like they have really accomplished something.

### Outlaws

This campaign revolves around a small group of characters who were cast out of their tribe or tribes for some horrible offense(s). It has several advantages. First, it gives a sound rationale for having characters from more than one tribe or race. Second, the characters have the freedom to be true adventurers in the classic sense — they have no ties binding them to one spot or group. Third, you can make the characters as poor as you want to start out with, and they'll have to rely entirely on themselves since they have no tribe to fall back on.

There are countless adventure possibilities for a group of outcast characters. They can become bandits and prey upon the neighboring tribes. They might have been unfairly exiled and go on a quest to vindicate themselves. Or they might set out into the unknown in hopes of founding a new tribe far away. They can even set out to discover whether any of the tribe's old legends and taboos are real — they've already broken at least one taboo, why hesitate at venturing into the forbidden forest or cave? The outlaw campaign most resembles the classic fantasy campaign in style, and many of the same plots will work.

### Selected Fiction

Alston, Aaron, *Lands of Mystery*. Although this "lost worlds" supplement contains stats for four different systems, *GURPS* isn't one of them — it hadn't been published when this book was written. This is an absolute must for anyone playing a Lost Realms campaign.

Auel, Jean M., *Clan of the Cave Bear* (1981). This novel, which has also been made into a movie, is an excellent example of a fractured history setting. Ms. Auel has done a good job of creating stone age cultures based on fragmentary anthropological evidence. There are two sequels: *The Valley of the Horses*, and *The Mammoth Hunters*.

Burroughs, Edgar Rice, *At the Earth's Core*, *A Princess of Mars*, and others. Burroughs was a master of the Lost Realms tale. His works are a must for anyone playing that type of campaign, or for any roleplayer, period.

Harrison, Harry, *West of Eden* (1984). This novel postulates a world where the dinosaurs never became extinct, but continued to evolve until the appearance of man. The early humans come into conflict with a race of highly advanced saurians, and must fight for the survival of their species.

May, Julian, *The Many-Colored Land*. (1981). The first book in the four-volume *Saga of Pliocene Exile*, it involves a group of time travelers who discover an epoch where an alien race has enslaved the adventurers and exiles who have gone before them.





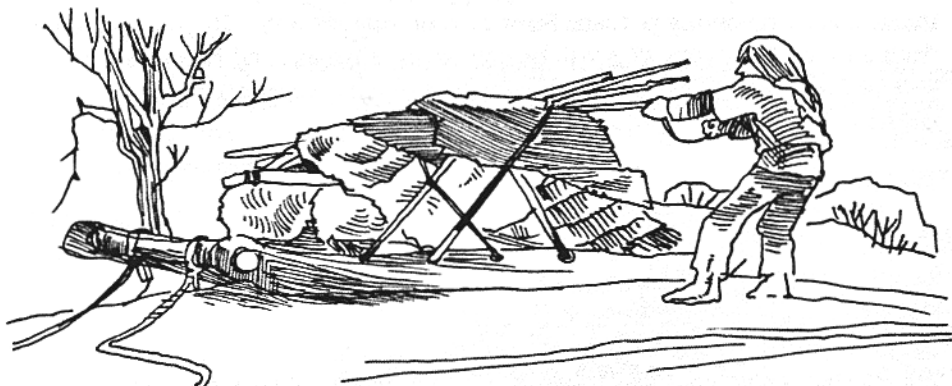
# The Unrealistic Campaign

This section addresses the Compressed History campaign, where creatures and races from different periods are thrown together in the same world, the purely Fictional Setting involving prehistoric characters, and Lost Realms, which are a cross between the other two.

## The Fractured History Setting

This campaign combines all the best elements of various periods in Earth's history into one setting. Although not strictly accurate, it is close enough to *feel* accurate.

In a fractured history setting the geologic timeline is compressed, so that one might find Australopithecine, Neanderthal and Cro-Magnon tribes all living in close proximity with one another. The tribes will have wildly varying levels of technology, even within a single species. And stalking them all may be a saber-tooth tiger — long extinct by Neanderthal times. Any of the campaign themes mentioned above will work fine, and the GM will have more to work with.



## The Fictional Setting

This could be anything. Ancient astronauts, black monoliths, dinosaurs, evil reptile men, and lost civilizations are all fair game. Any type of campaign or adventure is possible, but two particular themes deserve special mention.

**Alien visitors.** Stonehenge is actually a complex observatory, there are spaceship landing strips in the Peruvian desert, and men from outer space first taught man how to make fire. Perhaps humans are actually the descendants of a lost colony that slipped back into barbarism, and the PCs are the last defenders of a high-tech refuge against their half-wild cousins. Maybe the aliens are on Earth to ensure that man evolves a highly advanced civilization, or to see that he *doesn't*. It's possible that there are two groups battling for the right to determine *Homo sapiens'* destiny.

**Dinosaurs.** Suppose the dinosaurs never became extinct, or that the human race is millions of years older than anyone ever suspected. Here is a world where stone age hunters dodge Tyrannosaurs in the jungle and a race of intelligent reptiles vies with mankind for supremacy. A good example is the film *One Million Years B.C.*, starring Raquel Welch — a blond, fair-skinned tribe fights against a nasty, dark, hairy tribe, huge carnosaurs and giant Pterodactyls.

## Lost Realms

A lost realm or world is a place where dinosaurs stalk Pleistocene cavemen through a Mesozoic jungle, and a pulp era safari might stumble upon the remnants of an ancient civilization. In short, it's a world where just about anything can happen and nothing is implausible. A lost realms adventure is a special kind of "unrealistic campaign," romantic in nature and epic in proportion, where the fate of a strange hidden world hangs in the balance. Check out the *Pellucidar* and *John Carter of Mars* novels of Edgar Rice Burroughs for ideas.

## Selected Viewings

**One Million Years B.C.** This film starring Raquel Welch is a good example of how to mix dinosaurs and cavemen in a single adventure.

**2001: A Space Odyssey.** The first ten minutes or so of this film are excellent for GMs who want to set their campaigns in an early period, using Australopithecines as characters.

**Altered States.** A modern scientist, played by William Hurt, experiences his Racial Memories and even transforms into an apeman by using sensory deprivation.

**Caveman.** A funny movie about an inept but smarter than average caveman. This movie features Ringo Starr, Barbara Bach, and a huge John Matuszak, as well as some crazy giant creatures. A good source for slapstick adventures.

**Clan of the Cave Bear.** This is the movie adaptation of the best-selling novel by Jean Auel.

**The Flintstones Cartoons.** These are another major source of inspiration for slapstick campaigns.

**Land of the Lost.** This children's television series focused on a family thrown into a lost world by a great earthquake. There they find dinosaurs and an evil race of lizard creatures, and search endlessly for a way to escape.

**Quest for Fire.** Without a doubt, this is the best film about prehistoric humans ever made. A group viewing would make great start for a historical or fractured-history campaign.

**GURPS Basic Set** includes everything needed to create modern characters, including a list of firearms complete with stats. For more on setting up a pulp style expedition, a GM will find **GURPS Horror** helpful. In order to recreate ancient civilizations check your library (for source material).

There are three classic types of lost realms; each is likely to have slightly different inhabitants. These types are discussed below.

### ***The Hidden Valley***

Or island, or plateau, or whatever. This is a relatively small area somewhere on the surface of the earth. It's usually located high in the Himalayas, deep in the heart of the Amazonian jungle, in Antarctica or in darkest Africa. There, species of men and dinosaurs thought to have been extinct for eons still survive. There may also be a colony of some vanished civilization. Romans, Greeks, Mayans, Incas and Egyptians are all good choices.

This type of lost realm will be fairly small, by necessity, and probably won't do for a lengthy campaign. It is ideal, however, for a three or four session adventure, and requires less effort to set up than the other two types. It also works best if modern characters are involved (such a place is bound to be discovered eventually).

### ***The Hollow Earth***

The campaign is set either inside of an enormous cavern lit by phosphorescent moss or inside the hollow earth where the inner crust is habitable (as in Burroughs' *Pellucidar* novels). As with the hidden valley, the inhabitants of this under/inner world should be drawn mostly from history, although there is room for a few of the GM's own creations as well. It is necessary to have a rationale explaining how the plants and animals of the world survive. They'll need heat, light, rain, etc. It may not seem important to the plot, but it's a sure bet that the players will want to know.

This area should be large enough to accommodate a long-term campaign and just about any amount of exploring. If the PCs are modern, getting to the lost world may require some imagination. Boremobiles, earthquakes and giant whirlpools are all excellent plot mechanisms.

### ***Other Worlds***

Instead of setting a lost worlds campaign somewhere on or in the earth, it can be on another planet entirely. Burroughs' Barsoom, a Counter-Earth traveling in Earth's orbit on the opposite side of the sun, and Yrth are all examples of lost worlds that are actually other planets. A distant period in prehistory, reached via a time machine as in Julian May's *The Many-Colored Land*, also falls in this category. This other world can be reached by spaceships, mystic portals, cross-dimensional rips, or whatever you please.

Supernatural weather phenomenon like the tornado in *The Wizard of Oz* and the Banestorm on Yrth are also good methods of transportation.

An alien world can be populated anyway the GM wants. If the portals allowed creatures from Earth to cross over to the other world periodically then one might find dinosaurs, sabertooths and the like. These may exist side by side with totally alien creatures. The GM can also play with the meteorology, astronomy and physical laws when he creates a lost worlds planet. Multiple suns and moons, weird day and night cycles, different seasonal cycles, weaker or stronger gravity and minerals or energies with strange properties are all appropriate to the genre. The advantage of the alien world setting is that there is complete freedom to mix reality and fantasy. On the other hand, it can require a lot more work to flesh out than other settings.

**Time Travel.** Special considerations need to be taken if the campaign involves time travel back into Earth's real history. There is always the possibility that the time travelers will do something to upset history, with catastrophic results. Correcting or preventing such a mistake may be the very reason the characters

### ***The Lost-Realm Plot***

The classic lost-world tale revolves around a party of 1920s or 1930s explorers who stumble upon a hidden valley, cavern, plateau or city in some remote part of the Earth. Or they might find some method of transportation to another world entirely. There they find dinosaurs, cavemen and perhaps a city of ancient Romans or Egyptians, descended from a lost legion.

There is always a good vs. evil conflict in the lost world, and it falls to the explorers to save the Good Guys from the Bad Guys and their nefarious schemes. Somewhere along the way one of the party, usually the hero, falls in love with a native girl of extraordinary beauty. She, of course, gets kidnapped and rescued several times. You can also add the inevitable native guides, warriors, princesses and evil shamans.

You can play a typical lost realms adventure from the caveman's point of view, too. You still have the safari, the conflict and the romance, but all of the PCs are Neanderthals or Cro-Magnons. It can be quite a challenge to remain in your Stone-Age character when the guy next to you is firing a submachine gun. Just remember that your Stone-Age characters will never be able to understand more than a tiny fraction of the explorers' modern technology. They will regard it as powerful magic to be feared.

### ***After the Holocaust: The Next Ice Age***

Another type of campaign is post-historic rather than prehistoric. The characters are the many-generations-removed descendants of the survivors of an atomic war or other holocaust. As Einstein said: There is no telling what weapons will be used in World War III, but World War IV will be fought with sticks and stones.

The tribesfolk may have legends of the Old Ones who made the world, fought among themselves and then went away, leaving their huge ruined cities and mysterious, dangerous artifacts behind. But it is also possible that the disaster was so long ago that there are no such legends. In that case, the *players* should believe that they are in a prehistoric campaign, and the discovery of an ancient city or weapons cache will be a major turn in the plot.

Characters should be built on the Cro-Magnon pattern. The other hominid races can be used as devolved or mutated humans. And, if war was followed by nuclear winter, the glaciers will certainly be back, and perhaps new versions of mammoths and sabertooths will have evolved!



have for traveling there in the first place. In this kind of adventure, play up the hazards and paradoxes created by time travel.

## Caveman Slapstick

If you loved Ringo Starr in *Caveman*, cracked up at the first ten minutes of *History of the World; Part I*, and never miss the annual rerun of the *B.C. Thanksgiving Special*, then caveman slapstick may be for you. Here you can be as ridiculous as you please. Use bad puns. Use sight gags. Be utterly silly. The whole point of this type of campaign is to have fun.

### Creatures

The world of caveman slapstick is populated with three kinds of animals: dinosaurs, giant insects and domestic creatures. Dinosaurs are there primarily to chase the characters. They should be extraordinarily slow, giving players plenty of time to ham it up and think of truly stupid ways to distract the monster. A common trick is to make the most horrifying of the monsters really a sweet-tempered guy, just trying to make a few friends and maybe strike up a conversation, when everybody starts screaming and running about. Giant bugs, on the other hand, are very rarely friendly. They can range from mosquitos the size of basketballs to spiders the size of semi trucks. They are unbelievably gooey creatures to kill. Green or yellow ichor is likely to spurt from any wound, and the foul-smelling stuff will usually strike someone in the face. The attacker or the person being rescued are the most likely candidates.

### Technology

There are two methods of dealing with technology in a slapstick campaign. The first is to start out with absolutely nothing but clubs and an occasional "Ugh!". During the course of play, however, the characters will discover fire, language, music, the bow and arrow, how to domesticate animals, the wheel and who knows what else. This is one genre where such things *should* happen on a regular basis.

The other method is to have thoroughly modern technology, with a stone age twist. This is where domestic animals come in. A jumbo jet might actually be a huge Pteranodon and a bus a brontosaurus. A radio is a hollow box with a talking bird inside, and a vacuum cleaner is actually a tame, pint-sized wooly mammoth.

These creatures are essentially slave labor. They can often talk, but usually don't let humans hear them. When they do, it's to complain, harass or otherwise annoy the characters. The *Flintstones* cartoons are the ultimate source for items of this nature.

### Slapstick Adventures

This genre is not really suited for an extended campaign, unless the GM and the players have incredible capacities for enduring and thinking up bad jokes and puns.

There are two basic styles of adventures. In a "realistic" adventure, the characters begin with simple stone age technology, and are out to achieve some goal, such as getting the food or beautiful women away from the tribe of Big Brutes. Along the way they will have all kinds of escapades, discovering anything from walking upright to fire to comedy. Eventually they will succeed in achieving their desires, but may find that they were happier as the underdogs after all.

The "unrealistic" adventure has kooky cartoon technology and plots straight out of the syndicated sitcoms. In fact, those sitcoms are an excellent source for plots. Everyone will probably notice, but they'll enjoy playing out their favorite *Gilligan's Island* episode nonetheless.



# WOLF PACK ON BEAR RIVER

# 7

## Introduction

*This introduction should be read to the players, preferably before character creation. The rest of the adventure is for the GM's eyes only.*

It's early spring in the hills of the Massif Central in southeastern France; the sky is clear and daytime temperatures hover just above freezing. The long winter has exhausted the band's food supply. Your tribe — belonging to a race scientists will someday call Neanderthal — is anxiously awaiting the return of the reindeer herds on their spring migration back to the highlands. You are the Wolf People, and you hunt the reindeer herds. For some of you, this will be your first reindeer hunt as grown men.

It is the time for the annual rituals to ensure good spring hunting. The chieftain, Arag-Sa, has led the tribe through the ancient rites, climaxing with a cave lion hunt. It is a yearly bargain struck with the reindeer spirits — the lives saved by the slaying of the lion, in exchange for those taken to feed the tribe. The killing of reindeer is taboo until the lion hunt is finished. This year's hunt began well, and a large male lion was cornered early on. Then the great beast broke free, mauled several men and escaped. When it was finally run down and slain, the lion's body was buried intact as a sign of respect. It would be foolish to anger the lion spirits just to please those of the reindeer!

The conclusion of the hunt is cause for great celebration. Although three of the hunters were seriously injured, they are in the shaman's care and the tribe will soon have food in abundance. Everyone is gathered around a huge bonfire built for the occasion. There will be dancing until dawn; even now several of the young men are reenacting the final slaying, the hunter playing the lion roaring while the others howl realistically. Somewhere, from out of the darkness, comes an even more realistic answer . . .



## Bad Omens

### Wolf Attack!

The celebration is in full swing when ear-splitting howls interrupt the festivities. Suddenly, the camp is surrounded by pairs of glowing eyes. Everyone instinctively huddles closer to the bonfire. With terrifying howls three lean grey forms rush in to attack. Two of the wolves will attack PCs; roll randomly to determine which ones. The other will attack an NPC near one of the characters, a dependent if any of the PCs have one. Any of the characters who are hunters will have one weapon in hand, which they were using as a prop for the reenactment of the earlier hunt. Otherwise they are unarmed and unarmored (only light furs would be worn this close to the bonfire). The party has had sufficient warning not to be surprised.

## About the Adventure

This is a *GURPS Ice Age* adventure designed for three to six 100-point characters. The action is set in France about 35,000 years ago, during a period of extensive glaciation. The characters belong to a relatively advanced Neanderthal tribe, with religious beliefs bordering on true totemism. Technology and social development is appropriate to the period.

## Character Creation

Most of the characters should be Neanderthal, but one or two Cro-Magnon outcasts might make interesting characters (and create new plot twists). It will also be helpful if one of the characters has some shamanistic ability. Such a character might be the shaman's apprentice. The following skills will be useful, and those marked with an \* will be especially useful. The characters may figure some of these out on their own after hearing the introduction; if they don't, you may want to give them some hints.

- Combat skills\*
- Fast-Talk\*
- Gesture
- Herbalist
- Leadership
- Naturalist
- Rituals and Ceremonies\*
- Running
- Stealth\*
- Survival (Forest)\*
- Shamanistic spells\*
- Tracking\*





### Replacement Characters

During the course of the adventure, it is quite possible that one or more of the characters may die. If this happens you may want to allow the bereaved player to create a replacement character, built on 100 points.

The character may be a hunter from the tribe who the party rescues from the strangers (see *If All Else Fails*, p. 56). Or he may be another outcast the party encounters on the way — perhaps a member of the invaders' group who was exiled, and bears a grudge.

The wolves — of the modern variety — will use pack tactics, darting in to bite their target and then retreating as another attacks. However, no more than three wolves will charge the tribesmen on a single turn. A tribesman may attempt to use a ranged attack against one of the animals outside the circle of firelight. Such an attempt is at -6 for bad lighting, and the range will be 10 yards or greater. A successful attack will be signified by a startled yelp of pain and cheers from the tribesmen. A character may also try to hit an attacking wolf with a ranged weapon, but he runs the risk of hitting a friend! Should a character venture out into the dark alone, he will immediately be surrounded by three wolves — these are not the ones rushing the group around the fire — who will bring him down, striking from behind. Any PC pondering this rash action should be given an IQ or Common Sense roll to reconsider.

Let the PCs do the fighting, unless they are losing badly, in which case other tribesmen will help out. As soon as the PCs manage to kill two of the beasts, or injure five, the rest will flee. A concerted charge by several characters with firebrands will also drive off the pack. The chief (see sidebar, p. 54) will shout orders to this effect if things get too far out of hand. This encounter is designed to shake the tribesmen up — not kill them.

### The Shaman

In the wake of the attack there is excited chatter. Wolves have never been known to attack so boldly — an armed group around a bonfire! This is surely a bad omen; the spirits must be very angry indeed. The chief sends a young hunter to fetch the tribal shaman. The shaman is an outsider (see sidebar, p. 54), not Neanderthal. He is tall and thin, with long blond hair and startling blue eyes. He came to the tribe ten summers ago, from the high mountains which are home to the rising sun. He dwells apart, in a cave higher up the slopes. The tribes bring him food in exchange for his magic. He tells no one his name, and is simply called "shaman."

When the shaman arrives he brings more bad news — all three of the wounded men have died, despite his best efforts. Cries of anguish fill the air as he relates how they all expired at the same moment, just as the howling began. This is further proof of spiritual anger, since each of the men had survived worse injuries. Three of the tribe's best hunters are dead, and the season for the reindeer hunts has just begun. Arag commands him to communicate with the spirits and discover the cause of their displeasure. Give the PCs an IQ-4 roll to notice the dark look the shaman casts the chief's way — he doesn't like to be ordered around.

The shaman sits next to the large fire, looks meaningfully around the circle, and pulls a large mushroom from a pouch and eats it. Soon his eyes start to glaze, and he begins mumbling in a language they do not understand. He then falls to the ground in a frothing fit, shouting in a strange tongue (see *Trancing*, p. 32). Tell the players that they have rarely if ever seen such magic, emphasizing that the shaman is actually speaking to creatures in the spirit world. After 10 minutes of this the shaman will fall into a deep sleep.

A half hour later the shaman wakes suddenly, sitting bolt upright. The startled cries of those near him should bring Arag and any characters running. "I have spoken with the spirits of the wolves," he rasps, "and they are very angry. Great dishonor. Someone," he stares meaningfully at each hunter, lingering perhaps on one or two of the PCs, "has offended them. They are shamed that you call yourselves by their name." At this pronouncement there is a heavy silence, which lasts until the chief rises to speak.

"Who has done this thing?" There is no answer. "The tribe must be cleansed. Someone must journey to the sacred cave, and make atonement. And we must learn what was done to anger the spirits. Who will go?" There is an awkward silence. If any of the PCs volunteer they will be accepted, and Arag will wish them luck. If the necessary number of persons — which, of course,

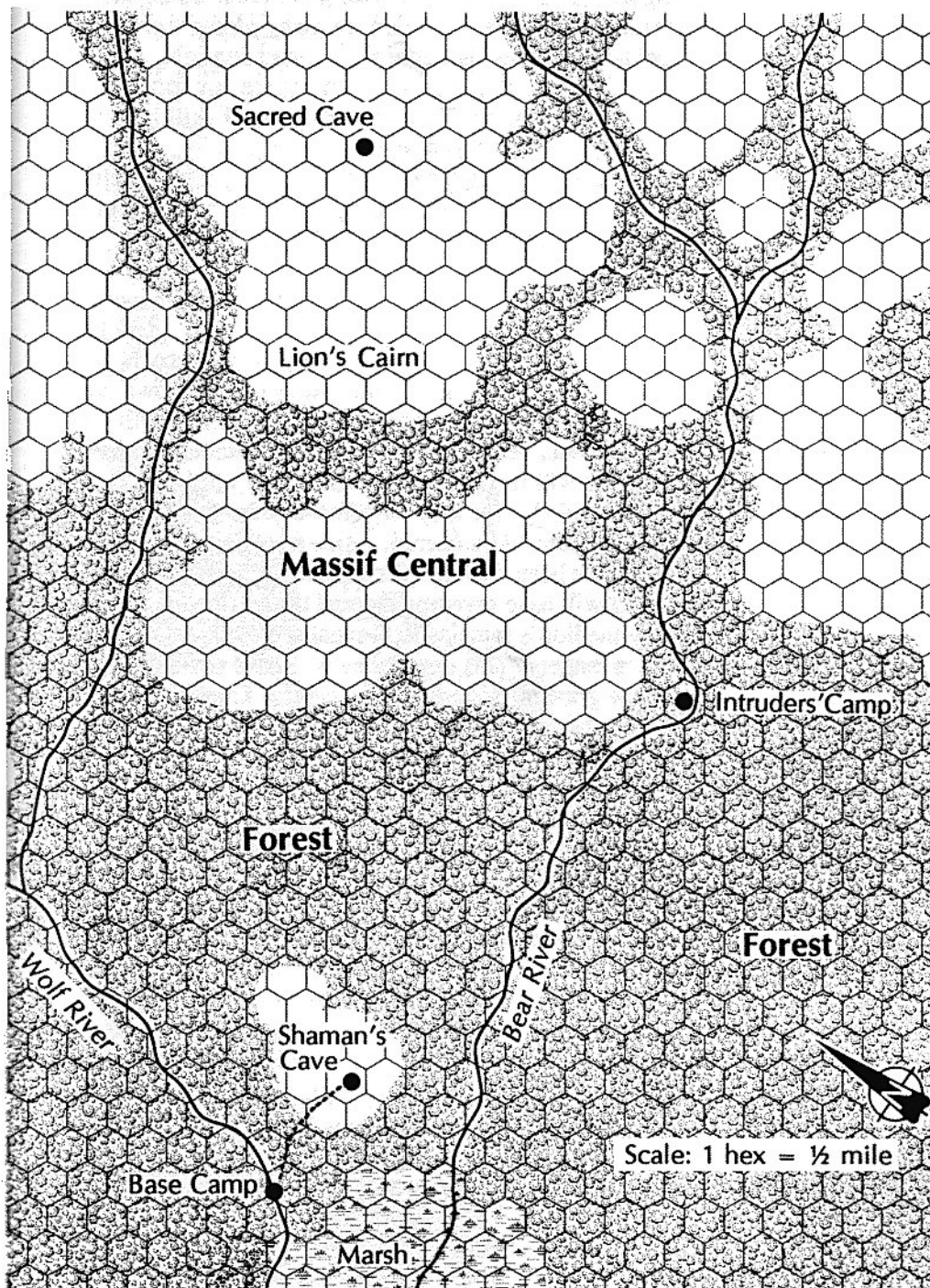
happens to match the number of PCs — does not step forward, Arag will appoint the remainder of the characters to the mission. These will be favored with a suspicious glance, and the good luck wishes will seem less sincere. When the group has been chosen, he will address them: “If any has evil in his heart, the spirits of the cave will know it, and strike him down. The life of the tribe goes with you, do not fail. You must rest now, and leave when the sun returns.”

If any of the characters were wounded in the fight with the wolves, the shaman will attend to their wounds now. Each character will regain up to 3 lost points of HT as a result of the shaman’s spells.

## Sins Uncovered

### The Scene of the Crime

The party should depart at sunrise for the sacred cave. The entire tribe will gather to see them off, and Arag will have a few words for them as they leave.



### Arag-Sa

Neanderthal — Late 40s, dark skin, graying hair, powerfully built; 5'11", 180 lbs. — 200 points.

ST 13, DX 12, IQ 11, HT 13.

Speed 6.25, Move 6.

Dodge 6, Parry 7, Block 0.

Medium furs, PD and DR 1; no encumbrance.

Advantages: Alertness +1; Combat Reflexes; Clerical Investment; Racial Memory; Status 3; Toughness (DR 2); Voice.

Disadvantages: Age; Duty (to look out for the tribe); Overconfidence; Sense of Duty.

Quirks: Makes snap decisions; Expects to be obeyed; Gives short, curt orders.

Skills: Club-13; Bow and Palette-12; Cooking-12; Leadership-16; Rituals and Ceremonies-16; Spear-15; Spear Thrower-14; Spear Throwing-15; Stone Knapping-13; Survival (Forest) -14; Teaching-12; Tracking-14.

Weapons: Early stone-tipped spear: 1d+1 impaling, 1d+2 impaling when thrown; Light club: 2d crushing; Spear Thrower: 1d+3 impaling, 1/2 Dam. at 16 yds, Max = 24 yds.

Arag-Sa — which means Gray Wolf — has been the chieftain of the Wolf People for as long as any of the characters can remember. In addition to his role as chief, Arag is the tribe’s religious leader as well — the shaman is an outsider, and so his role is limited. Despite his age, which is considerable for a Neanderthal, he is still a powerful man. Almost six feet tall, Arag is broad-shouldered and dark-skinned, and his once black hair is now almost entirely gray.

Arag is concerned over the lack of a successor to the chieftainship. He has outlived all of his adult sons. His only surviving boy is many years away from manhood. He feels old, and will soon have to choose someone from the tribe, so that he may initiate them into the secret rituals and ways of the wolf spirits.



## The Shaman

Cro-Magnon — Mid 30s; fair skin, long blond hair, piercing blue eyes, hawkish face; 6' 2", 120 lbs. — 220 points.

ST 11, DX 12, IQ 14, HT 12.

Speed 6; Move 6.

Dodge 6; Parry 6; Block 0.

No armor, no encumbrance.

Advantages: Magery (2 levels); Status 2; Unusual Background; Wealth (Wealthy).

Disadvantages: Greed; Overconfidence; Skinny.

Quirks: Doesn't believe in tribe's religion; Likes to gloat; Prefers not to use real magic in front of tribe; Resents being ordered about by Arag; Thinks he is superior to all Neanderthals.

Skills: Acting-14; Bow and Palette-12; Cooking-14; Fast-Talk-14; Gesture-14; Herbalist-16; Musical Instrument-12 (drum) Naturalist-14; Singing-13; Sling 12; Sleight of Hand-14; Spear-12.

Spells: Aura-16; Banish-14; Bless-14; Curse-18; Divination-16; Exorcism-14; Healing-14; Pestilence-18; Remove Curse-14; Summon Spirit-16.

Languages: Native (Cro-Magnon dialect)-14; Neanderthal (Wolf People dialect)-14.

Weapons: Early stone-tipped spear: 1d impaling; Sling: 1d+1 crushing, SS 12, Acc 0, ½ Dam. at 66 yds., Max 110 yds.

The shaman of the Wolf People is not a Neanderthal. He came wandering out of the wilderness a decade ago, having found an injured hunter and healed him, thus saving his life. The tribe had not had a true shaman before then. The chief had always led the religious rituals, and several older tribesmen had knowledge of medicinal herbs. They did commune with the spirits, but only through complex and lengthy ceremonies.

The shaman had been exiled from his own tribe for practicing black magic on his enemies. Harmful spells are still his area of expertise, although he seldom uses them. He casts healing magic only rarely, and prefers not to use magic at all in the presence of the tribe, relying instead on his Acting and Sleight of Hand skills. He teaches his apprentice only enough magic to avoid suspicion — and competition. He reveals his name to no one.

The magician still resents his exile, and hates living among what he considers to be stupid brutes. He strives constantly to make himself more comfortable, while remaining aloof from tribal life. When he divined the coming of the other Cro-Magnon outcasts he immediately began plotting, and contacted the men as soon as possible. Being men like himself, they quickly agreed to his plan. The shaman plans to kill the outcasts' leader as soon as his scheme bears fruit, and make himself chief of the new tribe.

"You must travel to the great cave on the mountain, where the spirits of the wolf people dwell. There you must ask forgiveness, and make sacrifice. Ask also who offended the spirits, and what was done. That person must be found — and cast out. Do not return until you have done these things. Go."

With this the grizzled leader will point to the craggy heights in the distance, and stare at the characters until they turn to leave.

The party should head more or less directly for the hills where the sacred cave is located, due east of the tribe's base camp. It will require three or four days to make the round trip — a day and a half each way, with a little time at the cave itself. They know this from earlier pilgrimages on ceremonial occasions — such as initiation. Important tribal members, chieftains, shamans, etc., are buried there as well. There is no regular path to the sacred cave, so the characters will have to find the way on their own, using their Area Knowledge of the region and local landmarks. They will have fine weather for the first leg of the journey; the skies are clear and the weather relatively warm. The terrain consists of rocky, craggy hills, lightly forested with pine trees and brush. Small streams carrying the runoff from melting snow are swollen. In many places there is still snow on the ground, especially in spots sheltered from direct sunlight.

The party must hunt on the way, since the tribe can't spare any food to send with them. A successful roll vs. Hunting, Tracking or Survival skill by one of the PCs will mean that everyone is fed and sheltered sufficiently. If no one manages to make this roll successfully, each party member will suffer one die of damage. Instead of having the characters roll, you may want to play out an encounter involving hunting or finding shelter — see sidebar, p. 55. In any event, such an encounter should not do more harm than a failed roll would have. If you decide to just have the players roll, they will find the first day's hike uneventful.

The morning of the second day dawns bright and clear, although a dark bank of clouds can be seen on the northern horizon. The party is now well into the hills, and the march becomes difficult, consisting of scrambling up and down stony ravines, sometimes through knee-deep snow. After about an hour they will come upon a large stone cairn which has been torn open and the contents uncovered. Any characters who are hunters will recognize this as the place where the sacrificial cave lion was buried. To their horror they will find that the lion's body has been dragged from its resting place and butchered. Aside from being skinned and beheaded, the beast's claws have been removed for trophies. The PCs should immediately realize that this act will have severely angered the spirits.

The PCs should rebury the lion's remains to prevent greater indignity being heaped upon its spirit by scavengers. This done, they will have several minutes to look about for signs of the grave's violators. A successful Tracking roll at -3 (the trail is cold) will turn up the footprints of several men leading to the south. A critical success will reveal that there were four of them, and that they must have uncovered the lion very soon after it was buried, since the trail is not fresh. This is important information. The characters would know that four hunters could never sneak away from the rest of the party long enough to do such a thing, especially since three of the hunters had been wounded by the lion already. This means that the atrocity was committed by men of *another tribe*. If the players don't come to this reasoning on their own give each character an IQ roll to figure it out. None of the characters knows of any tribe living in the hills south and east of their own home territory, nor has any idea of who the strangers might be.

While the burying, searching and talking has been going on, a large cave lioness, lean almost to the point of starving, has been slowly stalking the party. She is approaching from the south, downwind, creeping silently through the brush and boulders. Give each of the characters an IQ-3 roll to notice her presence, modified by Acute Hearing or Vision (but not Acute Smell) and Alertness. Any characters who make this roll will not be surprised when the lioness comes leaping out of the brush with a throaty roar. A critical success will give a character time to shout a warning to the others. Roll randomly to determine

which of the characters is attacked first. Characters who failed the roll, and do not have Combat Reflexes, will be partially surprised — assume that the lioness has the initiative. Each surprised character will be mentally stunned until he makes a successful IQ roll to recover (see p. B107). The lioness will fight to the death. She is weak from hunger, however, and her strength is only 24.

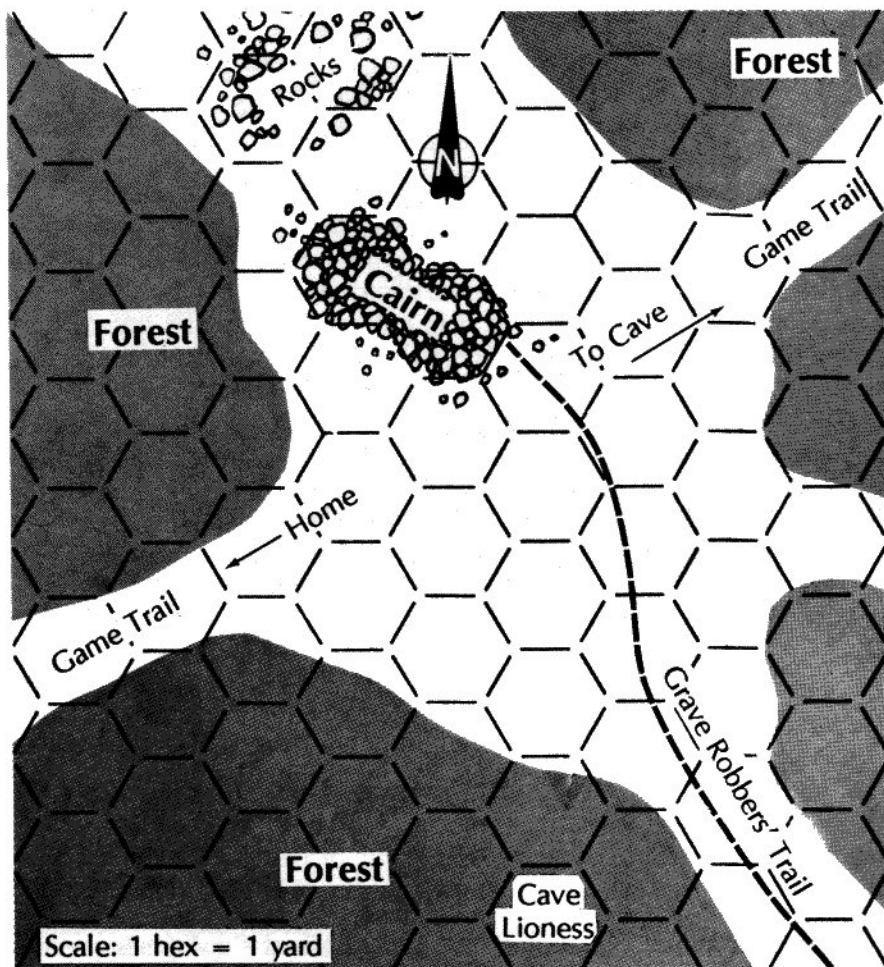
The lioness' attack should be seen as yet another sign of the spirits' displeasure. A particularly cynical PC might note that the animal was obviously on the brink of starvation, and probably desperate enough to attack anything. If the party did not get around to searching for tracks earlier, they will find it much more difficult now. The fight with the lioness has obliterated most of the evidence, and any attempt to pick up the trail of the grave robbers is now at an additional -3.

### The Sacred Cave

After the fight with the lioness, the PCs may decide to follow the tracks south instead of continuing on their way to the sacred cave. If so, see the sidebar *Caught in the Storm*. If the party proceeds directly to the sacred cave they will notice the temperature beginning to drop as the sky becomes overcast. A successful roll vs. Weather Sense or Survival-3 will warn the characters that a severe storm, complete with snow and high winds, is on the way. Such late winter storms are not uncommon in the hills at this time of year.

It will take the party a few hours to reach the shelter of the sacred cave, just as the first snowflakes start to fall.

As they approach the cave make a Racial Memories (see p. 26) roll for each PC who is originally of the Wolf People and has that advantage. If the roll calls for it, take him aside and describe the following. The character will have a sudden vision of being chased up the hillside with others, who he will not recognize but who he knows are fellow tribesmen, fleeing a pack of starving wolves. Upon



### Caught in the Storm

As the party sets out on the trail of the grave-robbers, the clouds sighted on the northern horizon are getting closer. After they have been traveling for about an hour, have each character make a roll vs. Weather Sense or Survival-3. A successful roll means that the character recognizes the signs of an approaching snowstorm — one of the freak blizzards which sometimes occur this time of year. They will have just enough time to reach the shelter of the sacred cave, if they hurry — the winds will be hurling snow in their faces by the time they get there.

If everyone fails their rolls to see it coming, they will notice the drop in temperature an hour later. By then the storm is only 30 minutes away — not enough time to reach a cave or similar shelter. The PCs will have to make do as best they can. This time each character seeking shelter may make a Survival roll at -3. Success means that the party will weather the storm safely, each person taking no serious damage. Failure will result in one die of damage from the cold — the DR of furs and toughness does protect. If the PCs think quickly, and attempt to build a wind break from branches or rocks, huddle together for warmth, or find a thick stand of trees and brush, you may give them a bonus to their Survival rolls. This should vary according to the effectiveness and originality of the measures taken.

The party may decide to press on regardless, and get caught without any shelter when the snow really starts falling. Within a few minutes the storm will build to blizzard conditions, effectively reducing visibility to zero. Each character must now make a Survival roll at -5, or suffer damage as above. There isn't time to search for a good spot to wait it out — they'll just have to put their back to the nearest tree.

A critical failure on the roll means that the character became separated from his friends and is now lost. When the storm is over he may attempt to rejoin his companions. It will take one day to find them, or half a day if he has Absolute Direction — and if they are looking or waiting for him.

Aside from harming the characters, the storm will have completely obliterated any trace of the trail the party was following. They will only know that the tracks led south, and that's it. Even their own tracks coming from the site of the lion's cairn are gone. The party may still go to the sacred cave — they can navigate by familiar landmarks — or they may search blindly southward. It will take a day to find the cave, two to stumble upon the strangers' camp.



### *If All Else Fails*

It is conceivable that the party will miss the tracks at the cairn and offend the spirits of the cave so that they wind up with no clue as to what is going on. Rather than let them flounder around in the wilderness until they die, have them encounter an ambush in progress.

The party trudges dejectedly through the woods, their failures weighing heavily upon their minds. Suddenly, they hear shouts from up ahead. When they get closer they will see one of their fellow tribesmen, a freshly killed ibex at his feet, beset by three blond foes. The attackers bear a striking resemblance to the shaman, being tall and thin, and having blue eyes. They are armed with spears (see sidebar p. 58). It is obvious the lone Neanderthal is doomed unless the characters come to his rescue.

The combat should be relatively short. The PCs will have initiative (see B107), and the blond warriors will be partially surprised. Once they have recovered and are aware that they are outnumbered, they will flee. If one of the PCs has died and a replacement character is needed, then the ambushed tribesman may join the party. If not, then he is mortally wounded by one of his assailants on the last turn of the fight. Either way, he will be able to tell the characters his story. He'd gone out to hunt — the tribe is practically starving — and was jumped by the strange blond men. They spoke in a tongue he did not understand, but it sounded like that used by the shaman when weaving his magic cures.

If the PCs look, they will find the men's tracks leading off through the snow. It is a simple matter to follow them to the strangers' camp a half day away. Unfortunately, the blond intruders will be expecting them. There will be two guards on duty, and the shaman will be nowhere to be seen. If the characters get away from the camp alive and uncaptured to return home, see the sidebar *A Cold Welcome*, p.59.

gaining the shelter of the cave, they turn, only to see the pack sitting on their haunches, watching the men. The wolves then simply turn and trot into the trees. The character will "awaken" to find himself standing in the cave mouth looking out at the forest.

Once inside, the characters will have an opportunity to rest and explore. The cave has a small entrance — an opening in the cliff face about four feet tall and two feet wide — but is quite spacious. The air is dry and slightly warmer than that outside, and there is a definite draft coming from the dark recesses of the cavern, indicating the presence of much deeper chambers. In the vaulted roof of the chamber there is a fissure — six feet long by three inches wide — which admits a small amount of light. Directly underneath this fissure is a rock lined fire pit, the bottom of which is covered with the ashes from hundreds of previous fires. Off the main chamber, several small irregular tunnels lead deeper into the hillside. These lead to sacred burial chambers — to enter them except to inter another body is strictly taboo.

Eventually the characters will have to get down to the business at hand — the appeasing of the spirits and asking them for information. The characters have already discovered one good reason for the spirits' anger, the skinning of the lion, but the questions of who, why and where the enemies are still remain. If the party has a shaman character, he can commune with the spirits. Otherwise the PCs will have to do their best as laymen. They may achieve a trance state through concentration, fasting or sleep deprivation. Any one of these methods will ultimately result in the desired vision/dreams. Or, if none of the characters want to try this, a badly wounded character might swoon, and then dream an encounter with the spirits of the Wolf People. This is a good way to keep a character incapacitated by the lioness involved in the adventure.

Arag also commanded the characters to make a sacrifice to the spirits of the cave. Normally, such a sacrifice consists of food or an animal of some kind. Unless the characters were thinking ahead and brought something appropriate, they will have to find an alternative. The weather outside is far too bad for hunting now. Characters may offer up weapons, tools, jewelry or even their services. No one will be able to contact the spirits until sufficient sacrifice is made. It is up to the GM to decide how much will satisfy the spirits. If the party is weak something small should be adequate.

When someone finally makes contact with the spirits, he will have the following vision. At first there will be total blackness, and then the dreamer will hear the sound of whistling wind. He will be unsure as to whether it is the storm outside or some spiritual wind, but borne upon it are the sounds of wolves howling in the distance. He will see, as if in a dream, family and friends huddled around a sputtering fire, shivering from the cold and crying from hunger. As the howling grows louder and nearer, these sights will be replaced by a bleak tundra landscape. The character will sense that he is standing on a cold, windswept plain which extends as far as the eye can see. The sky, a sullen gray, is completely overcast. Suddenly, he will see sleek gray wolves loping through the air towards him. Their eyes are glowing icy blue and their yellow fangs are clearly visible. Soon they are circling around him, over him, and the air is filled with their mad howling. Then, in the blink of an eye, there is complete silence. The character will find himself encircled by a dozen huge wolves, now on the ground, and quietly regarding him with their uncanny gaze. The largest wolf, directly in front of the character, asks in a startlingly deep human voice "What gives you the courage to summon us, worthless one?"

It is now up to the players to explain themselves, apologize for any offense given, and request any information they might want. Upon hearing about the lion, the spirits will demand that the skin, head and claws be returned to the grave and buried with him, so that the honor of the tribal spirits will be untainted. Otherwise the tribe will continue to suffer. The GM should then make a reaction roll for the wolf spirits, at -3 — they are already angry — to determine

the success of any requests for information. This roll may be modified upward by a particularly good sacrifice, tactful speech on the part of a party member, Charisma, Diplomacy and Fast-Talk. Sex Appeal and good looks will not help — the spirits are not interested in things of such a physical nature. Likewise, ugliness won't hurt. Social Stigmas which would be obvious to the spirits, such as being of a different race, will have a negative effect, but reputations and wealth don't concern them.

If the reaction is neutral or good the spirits will tell them that there is a group of strangers camped on the Bear River to the south. If their reaction is very good, the spirits will reveal that the strangers are not Neanderthal but of the same race as the tribe's shaman, and give their exact number. On an excellent reaction, the spirits will travel to the strangers' camp and return in several minutes with a complete scouting report and offer to guide them there personally. If on the other hand, the spirits react poorly to the characters' overtures, they will fly away, resuming their howling and threatening the characters with terrible lingering deaths. If the characters can come up with an even more tempting sacrifice they may try again, but this time the reaction roll will be at -6! Once the negotiations with the spirits are over, the character(s) will wake suddenly to the whistling of the wind outside the cave entrance. It is dark outside, and the chill of a winter's night has set in.

## Getting the Skin

### The Intruders' Camp

The snowstorm will have subsided by morning, which dawns bright and clear. Several inches of snow have fallen, but the wind has whipped it into drifts two feet deep in some places and swept the ground clean in others. The players will most likely wish to set out for the place where the strangers are camped. If they return to the lion's cairn they will find all the tracks obliterated by the wind and snow.

The trip to the campsite on the Bear River will require a full day and a successful Survival or Tracking roll if they know that it is on the river. If they are being guided by the spirits from the cave the journey will only take half a day and require no rolls. Should the characters have failed with the spirits entirely, and know only that the tracks at the lion's grave led away south, they will need two full days, with Survival and Tracking rolls, before they locate the camp. In the event that the party learned nothing from either the spirits or the site of the cairn, see sidebar p. 56.

When the characters eventually discover the camp of the strange intruders, they will be able to observe it safely from a rocky crag overlooking the river. The camp is well situated on the riverbank where the water arcs out from the hillside in a great loop. Thus, the site is flanked on three sides by swift flowing water, on the fourth by rocks and pine trees which cover the slope. Approaching the camp unnoticed will be difficult, and one of the intruders is on guard watching the hillside at all times.

The camp consists only of men, all fair of hair and skin, and taller and more slender than the Wolf People. Their number depends on the number of characters in the party. If there are three or four surviving PCs, there will be six strangers, plus their leader. If the PCs number five or six, then increase the size of the intruders' group to eight, and the leader. For stats on the strangers see sidebars, pp. 57-58.

The men are well armed with spears, clubs and slings. There are three well made tents pitched around a large fire, over which the leg of some large animal is roasting. As the characters watch, they will see, to their horror, a large man emerge wearing the skin of the cave lion like a cloak. The mane of the beast is clasped around his neck with a bone pin, the forepaws dangle on his chest. He is obviously the group's leader. A successful IQ roll by one of the observers will

### Shaeg, the Outcasts' Leader

Cro-Magnon — Late 20s; tall, fair skin, blond hair, blue eyes, thick beard; 6', 190 lbs. — 215 points

ST 14, DX 13, IQ 11, HT 12.

Speed 6.25; Move 6.

Dodge 6; Parry 8; Block 0.

Medium furs (PD and DR 1), no encumbrance.

Advantages: Charisma +1; Combat Reflexes; Night Vision; Toughness (DR 1).

Disadvantages: Bully; Impulsiveness; Overconfidence; Social Stigma (Outcast).

Quirks: Hates cowardice; Loves the thrill of the chase; Proud; Sensitive about being exiled; Vain about appearance.

Skills: Animal Guise-11; Bow and Palette-15; Brawling-18; Cooking-13; Gesture-10; Leadership-16; Sling-16; Spear-14; Stealth-12; Stone Knapping-13; Survival (Mountain)-14, (Forest)-11 (default from Mountain Survival); Tactics-13; Tracking-14; Two-Handed Axe/Mace 16.

Languages: Native-11 (Cro-Magnon dialect); Neanderthal-10 (Wolf People dialect).

Weapons: Maul; 2d+4 crushing; Late stone-tipped spear: 1d+2 impaling; Sling: 2d crush, SS 12, Acc 0, ½ Dam. at 84 yds., Max 140 yds.

Shaeg was exiled from his tribe for committing murder. He became enraged when another man insulted him in front of the whole tribe. Shaeg pulled the man from his tent that night and beat him to death.

Once in the wilderness, Shaeg did not die, but instead built a following of other exiles from his and nearby tribes. After it became too dangerous to prey upon the tribes in his home region, he and his followers moved west into unknown lands. They had half expected to find no one at all, and they had never expected to be approached by a shaman from their own lands. Shaeg had heard tales of a witch who had been cast out of a neighboring tribe years before, although he had never believed them — until now. The seemingly ageless man had an interesting proposal, and Shaeg looks forward to having his own tribe and many wives.



## Shaeg's Followers

### Outcast I

Cro-Magnon — Young, tall, fair and blond — 70 points.

ST 12, DX 12, IQ 9, HT 11.

Speed 5.75; Move 5.

Dodge 5; Parry 8; Block 0.

Light furs (no PD, DR 1), no encumbrance.

Skills: Club-12; Spear-16, Spear Throwing-14.

Weapons: Late stone-tipped spear: 1d+1 impaling; Thrown spear: 1d+2 impaling; SS 11, Acc 2, ½ Dam. at 12 yds, Max = 18 yds; Light club: 1d+3 crushing.

### Outcast II

Cro-Magnon — Young; tall, fair, and blond — 70 points.

ST 11, DX 12, IQ 10, HT 11.

Speed 5.5; Move 5.

Dodge 5; Parry 6; Block 0.

Light furs (no PD, DR 1), no encumbrance

Skills: Club-12; Sling-15; Spear-13.

Weapons: Late stone-tipped spear: 1d+1 impaling; Sling: 1d+1 crushing, SS 12, Acc 0, ½ Dam. at 66 yds, Max 110 yds; Light club: 1d+2 crushing.

In any encounter which calls for some of the outcasts, split the force evenly between fighters I and II. The first will try to throw his spear if he gets a chance and then close with his club. The second type will prefer to remain at range and use his sling — in close combat he will use his spear.



allow him to notice another man wearing a necklace made from the lion's claws. They will also see the lion's bare skull hanging on a pole in front of the tent of the man wearing the skin.

The party must get the skin, claws and skull back in order to appease the tribal spirits. Hopefully they will realize the situation calls for stealth rather than a frontal assault. If they seem about to pursue a rash course of action, point out to them that the tall strangers are all unwounded, more numerous, and have a guard on duty, contrasted with their own small, battered party. At nightfall the blond men will sit down around their fire to eat and talk. After a while one of them, the fellow wearing the necklace, gets up to relieve the guard, who in turn gets his share of the food. Then they get up one by one and enter the tents, presumably to sleep. The leader takes the lion skin with him — he seems to be the only occupant of his tent.

The PCs have plenty of time to devise a plan. The sky is clear and the moon is full, so there is plenty of light, but there are also long shadows in which one can hide. Of course, they must first take out the guard without arousing the others. Then they may creep up to the tents and take the skull. Getting the skin will be more difficult. The players might hope to catch the leader sleeping and take it out from under his nose, or kill him quickly and run for it. Let them use their imaginations. Remember that the guard is alert for anything unusual, so sneaking up on him will require a Contest of Skill — Stealth vs. Hearing. A simple ruse to distract the guard with a thrown pebble, etc. will work; the fellow is no genius.

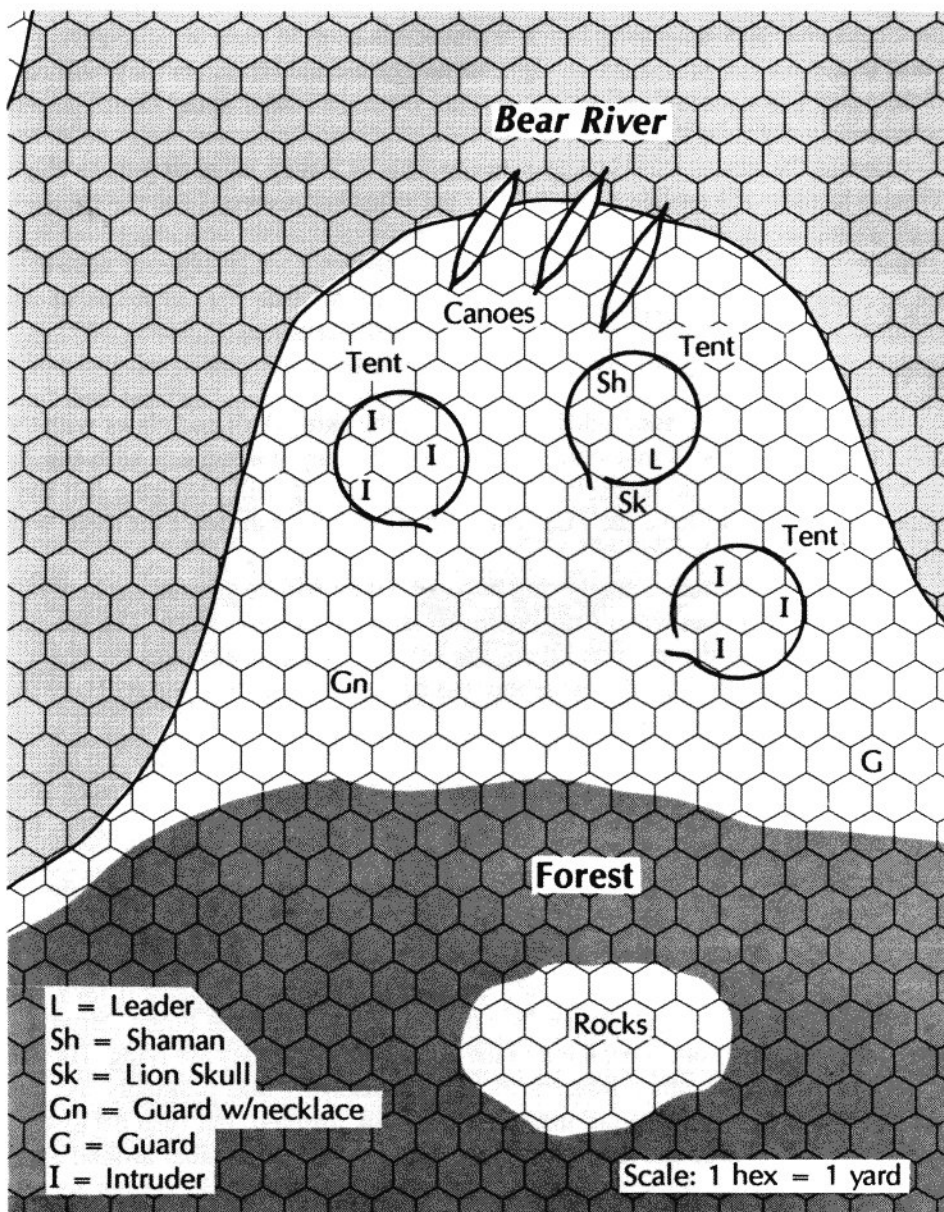
Once the party has gotten past the guard, they may move up to the leader's tent. All of the other strangers are asleep, and small noises won't wake them. The leader, however, is awake. Have the characters make Stealth rolls in order to move through the camp and up to the leader's tent. If successful, there is no problem. A failure means the person made some small noise. The leader will stick his head out of the tent's flap and look around. If any intruders are in line of sight, have them make another Stealth roll to avoid being seen. A critical failure will wake the entire camp!

If someone makes it to the front of the tent without alerting anyone, they will hear two voices in conversation inside. Give each PC an IQ roll to recognize one of them as that of the shaman. The characters will not understand the language being spoken, but may notice (another IQ roll) that it sounds like the "spirit tongue" the shaman uses when casting his magic. If the characters wait long enough, the shaman will eventually emerge and set off toward the tribe's home territory, after which the leader will go to sleep. This will take about an hour. If the players are impatient they will either have to fight the leader, shaman, and perhaps others, or devise a plan to get both of them out of the tent long enough to slip in and steal the skin.

If for any reason there is a fight, whether it is part of the PCs' plan or the result of a blundered stealth roll, the following guidelines will apply:

Half of the strangers will "freeze" for one second, and then begin making IQ rolls to recover. The other half will be unable to act for two seconds before they may begin making rolls. The leader will never freeze, since he has Combat Reflexes, and an initiative roll will be needed whether or not he will be surprised. His skills and advantages give him a +3 on any initiative roll! Note that if the characters can avoid the leader, shaman and guard (if he's still around), they should be able to make a run for it before the rest of the camp is out of bed.

The shaman will attempt to flee if there is a fight at the camp. He will remain hidden in the tent until the battle is fully joined, and then slit the back of the tent and slip out. He will try to escape in one of the canoes (see map) if possible. If the shaman is killed, see the sidebar p. 60. If the shaman recognizes the PCs and escapes, see sidebar p. 59.



### A Cold Welcome

When the characters eventually stagger home after the fight at the invaders' camp, they won't get the welcome they expected. Instead they will be greeted with silence and suspicious glances. Children will run to hide behind their mothers, and one adolescent boy will rush off shouting for Arag. Within a few moments the big chieftain will come striding up with armed hunters at his back. The shaman is there also, with a sly grin on his lean face.

"The spirits accuse you of great evil," Arag-Sa announces. "You are foolish to return here if it is true."

"It is true!" answers the shaman. "I spoke with them, you saw."

The characters are now surrounded by armed men, and they had better talk fast. When they've had their say, the shaman will call them all liars. Roll secretly to determine Arag's reaction, and then, regardless of the roll, he will say "We shall let the spirits decide." The shaman's protests will be curtly overruled and the characters will be allowed to rest until the next morning, when the group will depart for the sacred cave (see *Spirits' Revenge*, p. 61).

At some point during the night, the shaman will sneak close enough to a sleeping character to cast a Pestilence on him. The character will be afflicted with a disease for which the only cure is magical. It will require another shaman or spiritual aid to make the character well. The character will lose one HT and one ST point per day unless he makes a successful HT roll. He must continue to make rolls until the disease is cured, or he dies. A roll of 3 or 4 on the HT roll will allow the character to regain one point of lost HT and ST — the points cannot otherwise be regained until the disease is cured. Symptoms include fatigue, nausea, an ugly rash, and fever, and will appear that morning. All NPCs will react to the character at -3 for the duration of the illness.

After casting the Pestilence, the shaman will attempt to Curse one other party member. The curse functions exactly as described on p. 36. After this the shaman will be too fatigued to do any further casting, and will slip away. The characters are too exhausted to have any chance of waking up while this is going on. If they posted a watch despite being in their own home camp, then the shaman will simply throw the Curse on the guard and leave it at that.

### Back to the Cairn

Unless the party left everyone behind them either asleep or dead, they will be pursued. Any attempt to lose them will require a contest of Tracking skills, the leader against the least skilled PC. If the PC succeeds by more, or is the only one who succeeds, the pursuers will be eluded. If the PC loses the contest, or both men fail, then the chase goes on. A *critical failure* by the PC means that the party is caught, and will have to fight. The leader's roll is at -3 since it is dark. Have the PCs roll once every hour until they are either caught or they lose the pursuers.

The characters may decide to ambush the strangers. The leader will be expecting this — treat it as a partial surprise situation and give the players a +3 to their initiative roll because of their concealed positions. If the leader falls the rest will immediately flee. If the strangers are, at any point, outnumbered by two or more, the leader will reassess the situation and they will flee. It's possible that this will be the situation upon their arrival, in which case they immediately run without exchanging blows.

It will take about three hours of hard marching/running to reach the site of the lion's grave. If the party has lost the strangers by now, they may bury the skin, etc. without being disturbed. Otherwise, their efforts will be interrupted by the arrival of the strangers and their leader. The noise of their crashing through





### ***Killing the Shaman***

If the party manages to kill the shaman at the camp, they had better get proof of the invaders' existence and the shaman's connection to them. The tribe will not be pleased to hear that their healer is dead, and the characters will be asked to justify their actions. If he is pushed on the issue Arag can always ask the spirits himself — a successful Fast-Talk roll and a good reaction should do the trick. Otherwise the PCs will need physical evidence.

If they left surviving outcasts behind them, they and the camp will be gone by the time the party reaches it. There will be signs of the fight — blood, broken weapons, etc. — but no bodies. A thorough search and a successful Tracking roll at -3 will reveal that the corpses were dragged to the river and dumped in. If anyone cares to look, a day of searching will discover most of the bodies scattered along the banks miles downstream. The shaman's body will not be found.

Once Arag has been satisfied that the characters' story is true, the adventure is effectively over, unless the lion's skin hasn't been recovered.

The beaten outcasts won't be returning, so the PCs will have to hunt them down, which might make for yet another adventure.

the brush will give the characters a few seconds to grab their weapons. At this point battle will be joined. If the fight turns against the strangers they will run. If the party was unable to get the lion's skin from the leader at the camp, he will be conveniently wearing it now.

Should the strangers wind up running, the PCs may want to pursue *them*. Treat it just like the earlier chase, except the roles are reversed and the runners' goal is their camp by the river.

## **Skeptics at Home**

### **It Was Right Here!**

Once the party has succeeded in reburying the skin, skull and claws with the rest of the sacrificial lion's corpse, and survived any encounters with the intruders, they should be ready to return home. The trip will require a full day, plus a few hours, so have the PCs make Survival rolls, but don't hit them with any encounters.

When the party comes staggering into camp they will be greeted excitedly by friends and family. But when Arag comes striding up he looks stern. The shaman is at his side. If the shaman was killed, see sidebar. Arag-Sa addresses the characters. "Have you discovered what taboo was broken, and he who did it? Have the spirits been calmed? Answer!"

The PCs now have a chance to tell their story. The shaman will listen intently, and become visibly shaken when they speak of the blond intruders. Arag does not notice. If the characters tell of seeing the shaman at the strangers' camp, but have brought no proof of their story, the shaman will deny all.

"They are lying!" he will screech, "There are no invaders, these men invented that tale to protect themselves, because they are the ones who angered the spirits. I see that now! If their story is true, then why do they bring no proof?"

Arag will look at the characters questioningly, and ask them if they can prove their story to be true. If the PCs offer to show Arag the blond intruders' camp, he will agree, but warn them of the consequences if they are lying. He will shout orders for the other hunters to arm themselves, and pointedly ask the shaman to do likewise. The tall magician will look insulted, but rush off toward his cave to fetch his spear. Once the tribes' hunters — who number around eight or nine including the PCs and Arag — are assembled, they will set out for the campsite on the Bear River, with the PCs leading the way. At this point give each of the PCs an IQ roll to notice that the shaman has not yet joined them. If this is mentioned to Arag he will send a hunter to fetch the tardy shaman, and bid the characters to lead on.

When they reach the site of the camp, several hours later, all trace of it will be gone. The tents have been taken down, even the ashes from the fire have vanished. The shaman will come trotting up about now, out of breath and without the man sent to get him, wearing a gloating smile. "I got lost in the woods, but I see that I haven't missed anything. Or have you destroyed the imaginary invaders already?" His grin gets even wider.

The shaman, of course, warned his friends. He knows the way to the river camp well, having been there numerous times. He ran ahead, beating the party there by nearly an hour. He and the others then quickly dismantled the camp and covered their tracks. They even buried the fire under sand and gravel. The shaman then hid in the trees nearby until the Arag and the characters arrived.

This should rattle the players badly. They may search the area for proof that a camp was once there — a successful Tracking roll at -5 will turn up evidence. The shaman will smile and claim that there are probably many old campsites in the region; this proves nothing.

Arag and the others will take a firmer grip on their weapons and look darkly at the characters. Arag, speaking slowly and in a deep voice, will pass sentence. "I exile you."

The PCs will have to think fast now. They are armed and could make a break for it, and that's just what the treacherous shaman wants. Have each player make an IQ roll, or a roll vs. Rituals and Ceremonies. If they succeed they will remember what Arag said about the sacred cave: If any has evil in his heart, the spirits of the cave will know it, and strike him down. If the PCs bring this up, and make a successful Fast-Talk roll, the hunters will back off. Have the players roleplay this exchange, and make the rolls secretly for them. Whatever the result, Arag will look thoughtful for a moment and then announce that they are marching to the sacred cave. The shaman briefly looks terrified, but quickly masters himself.

"Very well," he says, "but the spirits will tell you nothing. Because of these evil-doers they have abandoned this tribe. Only when we cast the evil out will they return."

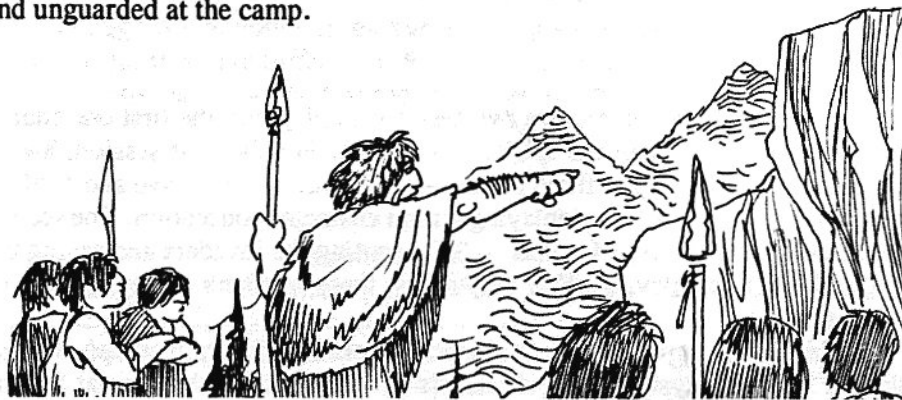
### Spirits' Revenge

About dusk the group reaches the sacred cave. As before, powerful memories are evoked by the site as the party approaches the entrance. Only Arag, the PCs, and the shaman will go inside, and the chieftain instructs them to leave their weapons without. Once within Arag will stare intently into the darkness at the back of the cave, and then shout "O great spirits, we ask for judgement!"

Suddenly, the cave will go completely black, and the air will be filled with the howling of wolves. Then the Arag and the PCs will hear the shaman start screaming amid the sounds of rending flesh. After a few seconds the howling will subside and the last few rays of daylight reflecting down the fissure will illuminate the cave floor. There are the tattered remains of the shaman. Arag stares at the remains for a few moments, and then turns to look at the characters.

"You told the truth; the spirits have shown it. But, if that is so, where are the yellow-hairs you saw?"

The PCs should begin to put things together by now. The sudden death of the three men in the shaman's care, the deliberate provoking of the spirits, the cooperation between the shaman and the strangers, all point to an attempt to harm the Wolf People. Give each person an IQ roll to remember the man sent to fetch the shaman and who did not return. And the women and children are alone and unguarded at the camp.



### A Timely Rescue

If the PCs don't figure out that it's time to get home fast, then Arag will. He'll shout commands at the hunters waiting nervously outside and the group will be trotting down the hillside within a few moments. The party will finally reach the camp at dawn, completely exhausted. They have lost a night's sleep in addition to the strain of the march. No one suggests giving up, however. Reduce everyone's ST by 5 for fatigue purposes. If one of the characters is an herbalist he may be able to find some kind of stimulant. Have him roll vs. his Herbalist skill; if successful, restore two fatigue points to each character, temporarily. They will pay the price, but afterwards, when they can afford it. When the characters reach the campsite they will hear shouting. Shortly they will be able







to see that the tribe has fled onto a rocky outcropping near the camp. There stands the man sent to get the shaman, exhausted and wounded, defending the path against the invaders — who are gathered at the bottom.

One of them, the leader if he is still alive, is shouting up to him in a dialect of the tribe's language. He speaks it poorly, and uses many gestures. "Give women, you live! We take them, this land, for *our* tribe. Fight us and we kill!"

Arag will lead a charge now, unless one of the PCs restrains him in order to implement some other plan. In any case, a Fast-Talk roll will be needed to hold him back. If you deem that the characters are not up for a fight then just tell them that Arag and the hunters charge. The old chieftain is a ferocious fighter, and fells the blond leader quickly. The rest flee. If you like large battles, or the players are spoiling for a fight, have at it. They will fight until half their number has fallen and then try to flee. The hunters of the Wolf People will be too exhausted to give chase, but the survivors won't be back.

## Epilogue

After a few days everyone will be healthy and rested again. The characters will be heroes, and will be treated accordingly, for a while. Defending and providing for the tribe, after all, is their job.

With time to think about it, the plan of the yellow-hairs is clear. They were themselves outcasts, or men without a tribe, and had no women or children. They came into the tribal lands and eventually met the shaman, who was of their race, and perhaps knew them from years before. Together they devised a plan to found a new tribe, using the women of the Wolf People as breeding stock. They would bleed the tribe's strength slowly, turning the spirits against them, spoiling hunts, attacking lone hunters and scouts, etc., until the hunters were few enough and weak enough that they could attack openly. The shaman could not resist the temptation when three wounded hunters were delivered into his care, and he killed them with his magic. He did not anticipate that the characters, whom he regarded as slow, stupid Neanderthal brutes, would discover the plan until too late. Also, he was confident in his ability to influence Arag.

One morning one of the scouts comes rushing into camp; the reindeer herds have been seen less than a day away! It's back to business as usual — the business of survival.

## Experience

This adventure should require two sessions to play out, the first one ending with the negotiations with the spirits of the cave. For the first session, award each of the characters up to three points — 2 for reaching the cave and furthering their mission, and 1 for roleplaying within character conception. The second play session is worth up to 4 points — 3 for routing the invaders and saving the tribe, and 1 for roleplaying. You may adjust these numbers to fit the scale of your campaign.

In addition to improving their characters' skills, players may spend these points in several ways. Outcast characters or characters with a Social Stigma may buy off these disadvantages, since they have now proven their loyalty to the tribe. If one of the characters had shamanistic talents or training he may now become the tribal shaman. This will mean that he must purchase an increase in status, and buy off his Patron disadvantage if he was the old shaman's apprentice. You may let him become the shaman before he has done all of these things, but his future experience points will have to go towards these items. If a character was an untried youth he has now been accepted into the ranks of the adults. If one character stood out as a leader, and has the points, he may add Arag as a patron. That character will become the aging chieftain's chosen successor. As a patron, Arag is worth 10 points — he is a powerful individual who only appears fairly often. This doesn't mean that he won't be *around*, but he's not going to hold his successor's hand either.

## Appendix: Hominid Races Table

This is a quick reference table for the costs and changes for each hominid race. Both the cost and the adjustment to attributes for each race are listed. Thus, -1/-10

means that *Australopithicus Gracile* has a -1 to ST at a cost of -10 character points. Other individual differences and the total values for each race are also listed.

Attribute	<i>Australopithicus Gracile</i>	<i>Australopithicus Robust</i>	<i>Homo Habilis</i>	<i>Homo Erectus</i>	Archaic <i>Homo Sapiens</i>	<i>Neanderthal</i>	<i>Cro-Magnon</i>
ST	-1/-10	0	-1/-10	0	+1/+10	+2/+20	0
DX	+2/+20	+2/+20	+2/+20	+1/+10	0	0	0
IQ	-4/-30	-4/-30	-3/-20	-2/-15	-1/-10	-1/-10	0
HT	-1/-10	-1/-10	-1/-10	0	0	0	0
Alertness	+5	+5	+5	0	0	0	0
No Math or Magery	-2	-2	-2	Math ok -2	0	0	0
Short Attention Span	-10	-10	0	0	0	0	0
Age Quickly	-5	-5	-5	-5	-3	-3	0
Limited Language	-3	-3	-3	-3	-2	-2	0
Sense of Duty	0	0	0	Tribe -5	0	Religion -5	0
Total	-45	-35	-25	-20	-5	0	0

Although all hominid races age more quickly than modern man, there are differences for each race. The first row shows the age at which that race becomes an adult.

Characters must be younger than that age to take the Youth disadvantage. The second row shows the age at which rolls for attribute loss begin. Rolls are accelerated at intervals of 6, 3 or 1 month for various races.

### Aging

Attribute	<i>Australopithicus Gracile</i>	<i>Australopithicus Robust</i>	<i>Homo Habilis</i>	<i>Homo Erectus</i>	Archaic <i>Homo Sapiens</i>	<i>Neanderthal</i>	<i>Cro-Magnon</i>
Adult	10	10	11	13	15	15	15
Begin Aging Rolls (Annually)	20	20	25	30	35	40	40
Roll every 6 months	—	22	30	35	45	50	50
Roll every 3 months	25	25	35	40	50	60	60
Roll every month	30	—	—	—	—	—	—



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