

MONSTER ISLAND RULEBOOK

On-line version

Designed & Programmed by Jack B. Everitt

Developed by Jack B. Everitt, Bob Cook, Mike Popolizio

Copyright (c) 1991 by Adventures By Mail, Inc.

All rights reserved

INTRODUCTION

MONSTER ISLAND is a whole new type of Play-by-mail game. It is a strange game, unlike anything you've seen. Throw away any preconceived ideas you may have; MONSTER ISLAND has its own special feel and works in a very intelligent way.

MONSTER ISLAND is a fantasy role-playing game. It is 100% computer-moderated, meaning that the computer makes all the decisions. There are no actions that are evaluated independently by a person. Yet, this game has a Gamemaster who checks all turns, watches for major events, helps players who are confused, and so on. The Gamemaster stays in the background, adding new things and improving existing ones.

MONSTER ISLAND is programmed to anticipate your character's future desires and actions. As you play, you'll find new modules opening before your eyes.

The playing area is enormous: more than three times the size of Australia. The programs that run the game are large and very sophisticated. But everything is specifically designed so that the game is easy to learn and fun to play.

MONSTER ISLAND is constantly growing and improving. There is a tremendous amount of knowledge to be discovered and acquired. For example, this rulebook lists only 19 of the 70+ different orders, and more are being added all the time.

Unlike most games, MONSTER ISLAND has a humorous bent. Some things are even a bit silly. But don't assume for a second that the game isn't taken seriously by the players or the Gamemaster. Humour is in the game because it adds spice and flavour, not to mention the occasional smile or guffaw.

SQUARE ONE

Illudak, a small, unremarkable city and the only seaport on the eastern coast of Ruk Domlak, is where it all began. Two years ago, the now-legendary explorer, Colada No, returned from an historic voyage. Arriving in Illudak, he reported the discovery of a vast land beyond the treacherous Sharktreus Sea.

This discovery stirred up much excitement among the youths. Faced with overcrowding, severe food shortages, and an overflowing sewage system, the elders challenged the youth of Illudak to trek to this land, explore it, and make it their own.

Thousands of young Monsters accepted the challenge and set out in the marginally seaworthy vessels they had built. Due to a general absence of sailing skills, few survived the perilous journey. Most everyone either crashed into rocks, was swamped in the high seas, or had his vessel ripped apart by vicious storms. Many reached the shore of this wondrous island only to succumb to the harsh environment. Yet more than a thousand survived and have found excitement and rewards on MONSTER ISLAND.

Six months ago, Coloda No departed on a second trip and has recently returned. The tales of his new adventures and his Dragonbone Sword (which he proudly wears at all times) have started a wild scramble by young adventurers to secure passage to MONSTER ISLAND.

HOW THIS GAME WORKS

One great feature of this game is that you get to play it by mail, at your convenience. You write your Monster's actions on a turn card and mail (or Email) it to KJC Games. We input your orders into our computer system, process them, and return a printout detailing your results. That's one turn of play! Play is fast - one turn every 8 business days. (This may seem slow but before you pass judgement try it for a few weeks. We think you'll find the speed perfect. If not, you can play a second Monster.)

YOU'RE A MONSTER

No, not Godzilla, Frankenstein, or a politician. Instead, you resemble a human, orc, elf or hobgoblin. You are a member of one of the Seven Monster Races native to the east coast of Ruk Domlak. These races have no real form of government, nor any desire for one.

YOUR MONSTER IS AN ADVENTURER AND EXPLORER. Whether you'll be as successful as Christopher Columbus, Captain Cook, or Piemur of Pern is entirely up to you. You will find all sorts of creatures and treasure during your adventures. You'll also make many new friends.

A MONSTER IS ...

As a member of one of the Seven Monster Races, how do you differ from a human adventurer?

Monsters are bigger, slower, hungrier, less stealthy, better bargainers, thicker-skinned, vastly superior yellers, and they regenerate missing limbs. They can carry lots of treasure and have a great sense of humour. Descriptions of the Seven Monster Races can be found later on in the rules.

DETAILS, DETAILS

MONSTER#: Although several Monsters may have the same (or similar) names, each Monster has a unique Monster number. When you read about the actions of a Monster, you may see the Monster's name followed by his Monster#.

KNOWLEDGE: This is your knowledge of the things on the island, mostly obtained from BLURBS printed on your results printout. The more you know, the better off you are. Some things only briefly covered in this rulebook have a BLURB giving more info. You will acquire many BLURBS. Every item, creature, terrain, spell, new order, structure, terrain hazard, voodoo concoction, ceremonial rite, quest, significant plant, ruin, etc. has a BLURB.

PORTAGE: You have some limits concerning the quantities of items you can carry. In general, you can carry one of each of the larger items, several of each of the smaller items, and an unlimited quantity of the tiniest items. The BLURB describing an item will tell you how many you can carry.

CLOTHES: Your single outfit consists of a combination short-sleeved jumpsuit and haversack: a haversuit. Fashion setter!

WEAPONS: You'll acquire at least one melee weapon right away. This will automatically be equipped as your primary weapon and is the weapon you'll wield in the melee rounds of battle. It is also a good idea to acquire a Missile weapon. A smart Monster like you will probably come up with something quickly.

ARMOUR: You have none. Hope you find or make some! You may not live long if you don't. Fortunately all Monsters are covered with skin and some hair and this does provide some protection. Skin toughness increases very slowly over time; the rigours of living on MONSTER ISLAND have this effect. When this happens your results printout will list this stat (scale of 1-??: most start at 2). An early goal should be to acquire one of each type of armour with which you can be equipped: Body Armour, Defensive Weapon (e.g. a shield), Helm, Gauntlets and Greaves. Some magical charms, amulets, and rings also add protection.

TOUGHNESS: This is how physically tough and big you are. Becoming tougher is gradual and will someday peak. (Scale of 1-300: most start around 45.)

HEALTH: Your goal is to have a Health that equals or exceeds your Toughness. You usually recover some Health by resting between turns. Health can be as high as 110% of your Toughness. Should your Health fall to less than 25% of your Toughness, chances are you're going to die soon. Monsters regenerate lost hands, arms, and legs, but not heads. (Scale of 1-330: most start around 30.)

BADNESS: This is how ugly and dangerous you look and is very important business. You start just mildly bad - not bad enough to scare anyone but yourself. However, the badder you get, the scarier you look to others, and the less likely nasties will mess with you. (Scale of 1-300: most start around 20.)

MUSCLE: Superior muscle has many benefits. Among them are being able to carry certain special items, equip with large shields, and dislodge large boulders. (Scale of 1-300: most start around 20.)

STEALTH: One of the keys to survival in this dangerous land is being seen only when you want to be

seen. Being able to hide well and sneak up on a foe are important skills that are directly related to stealth. (Scale of 1-300: most start around 10.)

APPETITE: Food to a Monster is anything from coconuts to filet of snake. The amount eaten is measured in meals. A Monster who is new to the island likes to eat at least 4 meals a turn.

MONSTERLINESS: This is a comprehensive rating of your Monster's statistics. It is only used to facilitate comparisons between Monsters.

OTHER STATS: The above list, like this rulebook, is just enough to get you started. We keep track of many, many other things, and sooner or later you will grow more aware of them.

BRAINS: There's no stat for intelligence. We insist that you provide the brains for your Monster.

TREASURE

Monsters love treasure! Treasure is anything valuable to a Monster. Every item in the game has **SOME** value. To quote the great philosopher Nada No (brother of Coloda No), "Treasure is where you find it." Finding it is one of the challenges you're about to face.

THE WORLD MAP

When you join the game you will receive a rulebook showing a rough sketch of the western portion of Monster Island and its regions. All monsters wash ashore somewhere on the western coast. Each region farther eastward is progressively more interesting and dangerous.

MAPPING

The island looks like a grid with a zillion squares. North-south it runs between 250 and 400 squares. East-west, it's, well, **VAST!**

With each results printout you receive a detailed map. It shows terrain, creatures, plants, tracks, trails/paths, special terrain features, the odd structure, etc.

In a surprising stroke of realism, you won't find longitude and latitude co-ordinates stencilled into the ground. However, your map is numbered, with square (0,0) being the square in which you washed ashore. You should transfer the mapping info from each printout onto a master map of your own making.

Each square has one predominant terrain type. Because the island is situated mainly in a tropical region, the terrain types are somewhat similar to those of equatorial Pacific islands.

Each square measures roughly five miles across. The size of the island in square miles, is in the millions. It's a monster of an island!

CREATURES

Besides Monsters, the island is inhabited by Creatures. You'll find plenty of reptiles, birds and mammals. Creature carcasses are sometimes valuable not only as food but also for a skin or body part which can be used to make something useful. You'll automatically collect such parts for later use.

Each species of Creature with which you can interact is identified by a Creature#. This is the equivalent of Race# for Monsters.

BATTLE

On MONSTER ISLAND a Monster usually fights only one Monster or Creature at a time. Battles can occur at any time - either between turns or during your turn. You can only do battle with a Monster or Creature that is in the same square.

In general, you should avoid battle with superior opponents. Your Monster can get hurt and even DIE. Use the ATTACK order only if you know what you are getting yourself into. If your Monster thinks that the next blow he receives could be fatal, he will immediately disengage and run for his life. Creatures are sometimes smart enough to flee too.

Try out every weapon you acquire. Each weapon requires a particular weapon skill for effective use. Hitting with a weapon in battle increases weapon skill. Remember, its better to be skilful with an ordinary weapon than incompetent with an exotic one.

ORDER OF BATTLE

Listed below are the five phases of battle. Battle damage is assessed simultaneously. After the five phases are complete and neither side has died or fled, the combatants break off and retreat (perhaps licking their wounds).

1. Defensive Battle Spells are cast (beginning Monsters can't cast spells. Follow a God someday and you'll be on the right path.)
2. Missile fire.
3. Offensive Battle Spells are cast.
4. Melee round 1.
5. Melee round 2.

When a Creature surprises you at close range (like dropping down from a tree onto your head), you'll have to wrestle it instead of doing battle as described above. You receive the wrestling blurb as part of your results after your first wrestling bout. Success at wrestling requires hefty Muscle and wrestling experience. Prodigious body slams, back flips, and bear hugs are what it is all about.

HOW TO GET THINGS DONE

Your Monster can do all sorts of things. The following sections contain a STARTING LIST of orders you can issue. During play, your Monster will learn many more orders. The details can be found in some of the BLURBS that you will receive on your results printout.

Each description gives you a format, and explanation, and an example of how you use the order. Some orders require numbers for specifying a quantity or some other value. If so, the part of the order format shown in parenthesis is this number.

Do not assume that because the order formats are short and simple (concise!), their programming is simplistic. The order formats are short so that you can remember them easily.

ACTION POINTS represent your Monster's endurance. Each Monster has at least 100 Action Pts. Every turn your Monster can expend all of his Action Pts. Some orders use a fixed number of Action Pts. while others allow you to select the number of Action Pts. you wish to expend. Some will have no Action Pt. cost at all.

With any Action Pts. not used during a turn, your Monster will automatically Hunt and Forage in your ending square at the completion of your turn (during "Make Camp").

If you issue an order that requires a specific number of Action Pts and your Monster doesn't have that many left, the order is not attempted. If you issue an order that allows you to specify the number of Action Pts and your Monster doesn't have that many left, the number expended is reduced and the order is attempted.

MOVEMENT ORDERS

There are five MOVEMENT ORDERS. You can move in any direction, including diagonally. A square's terrain does not normally hinder movement. Monsters always move at the same speed: slow but steady.

You may move no more than eight squares per turn. Remember this!

Two of the orders allow you to specify a DIRECTION#. The Direction# is one of the eight compass points: North is Direction #1, northeast is 2, east is 3, southeast is 4, south is 5, southwest is 6, west is 7, and northwest is 8. You'll find this conveniently diagrammed on each turn card.

T (1 or 2 Direction #s)

Travel

This is the simplest movement order. It allows you to specify a move of one or two squares by giving the Direction# to move. This will move you up to two squares in the direction(s) specified, at a cost of 10 Action Pts per square traversed. Indicate two Direction #'s if you wish to move two squares.

Example: T 3 moves you east one square and costs 10 Action Pts. T 66 moves you southwest a square, then southwest again, at a total cost of 20 Action Pts.

H (0, 1, or 2 Direction #'s)

Hunt & Forage

This is the prime method for obtaining food. You'll spend extra time slaying food animals and gathering edible plants. Unlike Creatures, food animals pose no threat to a Monster and are unable to do battle. Any item in your possession that will aid you in hunting food animals will be utilised for this (and need not be equipped).

You can move zero, one or two squares while hunting and foraging. This order uses 30 Action Pts regardless of how many squares are traversed. By specifying zero for Direction#, you'll stay in the square you are in. This is a good idea ONLY if you're in a great hunting and foraging location.

With all movement orders, some hunting and foraging occurs; that is, if an easy opportunity for food comes along, WHOMP!

Example: H 23 uses 30 Action Pts and a-hunting you will go - one square northeast, and one square east.

H 0 uses 30 Action Pts and you will hunt and forage in the square you are currently occupying.

L (Race#, Monster#, or Creature#)

Track:LOCATE

This order has you track a target by moving 0, 1, or 2 squares toward the target, assuming you find tracks to follow. Monsters are pretty good trackers. If you find your target in the square you start in, it costs 6 Action Pts. If you enter 1 square it costs 12 Action Pts. If you enter 2 squares it costs 24 Action Pts.

You can attempt to follow any set of tracks you come across except unidentifiable ones. If tracking a Monster, you can specify a Monster# (if known) or a Race#.

Use the Locate by tracking order if you're not looking for trouble and/or if you wish to CAPTURE (see further below) a Creature. Creatures (other than mounts) don't move from square to square quickly. To find one you previously spotted, return to the square you spotted it in and Track. Most likely you won't leave the square.

Note: if you specify a Monster#, realise that your Monster cannot differentiate between tracks made by different Monsters of the same race. Upon reaching the target, he may be able to determine if he's found the correct target. Don't write a Monster# if you did not find that Monster's Monster# on your last results printout. Specify a Race# instead.

Example: L 101 will have you move up to two squares toward the last Creature #101 you sighted.

S (Race# or Monster#)

Track:SNATCH

This order works exactly like the Locate order above, except that upon locating your target you will attempt to steal items from him. You may still end up in battle, but your goal is to get some booty from it.

Example: S 5 moves you up to two squares toward the last Fatblob (Race#5) you sighted, and should you encounter a Fatblob, you will attempt a SNATCH.

A (Race#, Monster#, or Creature#)

Track: ATTACK

This order works exactly like the LOCATE order, except that upon locating your target you will attempt to enter battle. This is recommended for use against targets that you wish to ...um, kill.

Example: A 144 moves you up to two squares toward Creature #144 to ATTACK Creature# 144.

STANDING ORDERS

The following orders remain in effect until you issue the order again:

C (Creature#)

Capture

Some say this is really an intelligence test. With this order you can attempt to capture a Creature of your choosing. However, are you smart enough to try to capture something you can handle? And once you've got it, what are you going to do with it?

After this order is processed, you will try to capture the Creature specified when you next come across it. Upon a successful capture, this standing order is no longer in effect. Issue this order with a new Creature# to change target. Specify Creature# 0 to cease attempting to Capture a Creature. You can be on the lookout for just one creature.

Example: C 101 has you attempt to capture Creature# 101.

F (Friendliness# and/or Riskiness#)

Friendliness

On a scale of 1-5, this is how friendly you are: 1 is downright nasty, 2 is unfriendly, 3 is slightly unfriendly, 4 is guarded, and 5 is slightly friendly. When you encounter a Creature or Monster, the Friendliness of each is compared to determine how you will interact and what will happen next. Note: Setting your Friendliness to 1 or 2 will likely lead to battles with other Monsters.

Riskiness

This sets your willingness to take risks: 6 is minimal risk, 7 is average, 8 is somewhat risky, and 9 is

heavy risks (which can be foolish).

Example: F 38 sets your Monster's Friendliness to slightly unfriendly and Riskiness to somewhat risky.

N (Race#, Group#, or Monster#)

No Attack

This prevents you from accidentally initiating an ATTACK or SNATCH against either a Race, a Group, or a particular Monster. You begin with a No Attack set for your race, and you can set up to nine such standing orders. To cancel a No Attack, write the same order again.

Examples: N 13033 will prevent you from attacking Monster# 13033. Writing N 1 will prevent you from attacking all Bignoses (Race# 1).

OTHER ORDERS

E (Item#)

Equip

Use this order to change equipped items. Whenever you obtain an item belonging to a category in which you are not currently equipped, you automatically equip it. There are many categories of items with which you can equip. When an equipped item is dropped, transferred, or sold, you will automatically unequip it first. Additionally, you may wish to unequip your missile weapon. This can be done by issuing an EQUIP order using the equipped missile weapon's item#.

Example: E 303 equips Item#303.

J (Action Pts)

Jazzercise Aerobics

This may be a lot of work, but it is a great way to improve your Muscle and your Health. One risk is associated with this action, however. Due to the terrific concentration required (daydreaming of watching Jane Fonda workout tapes on a VCR?), a Creature might surprise you when ordinarily it would not. You may Jazzercise for no more than 50 Action Pts at a time - any more would be masochistic!

Example: J 17 Jazzercizes your bod, expending 17 Action Pts.

M (Item#)

Make Item

As you explore, you'll learn how to make useful items, including weapons, and armour. You must have the appropriate knowledge BLURB in order to be able to make the item. The BLURB indicates the components/ingredients and Action Pts needed to make the item.

Example: M 1 tries to make Item#1.

Q (Action Pts)

Quest for Knowledge

Use this order to think about, grok, study, and search the square you occupy. It can result in a BLURB, a discovery of something in the square, or perhaps nothing! Don't spend more than 30 Action Pts on it. This order's usefulness lessens after 40 turns or so.

Example: Q 21 spends 21 Action Pts poking your nose around the square.

RM

Re-centre Map

Use this order to redesignate your current location as map co-ordinate (0,0). This is NOT something you'll want to do very often.

Example: RM centres the co-ordinates that print on your map to the square you're in when the order is processed.

R (Item#)

Rid

Use this order to drop an item. In most squares, the item will be found by the first Monster who comes along. However, if you drop an item in a square having a certain terrain hazard, the item is dropped into this hazard and is lost permanently.

Example: R 25 leaves behind a coconut.

U (Item#)

Use/Consume Item

Some BLURBS tell you to use or consume an item.

Example: U 25 eats a coconut. Yum!

X (Item#) (Monster#)

Xfer Item

Use this order when you want to transfer an item to another Monster in the same square. You may only transfer one item per order. Yes, this is restrictive, and yes, it is intentional.

Example: X 25 14315 transfers a coconut (Item# 25) to Monster# 14315.

Y (Yell#)

Yell Loudly

Monsters take pride in their tremendous yelling ability. Your yell travels one square in all directions. This improves slowly with successive yells. However, be careful not to yell more than once per turn as the chances are too good that you'll become "yelled out". You will be unable to yell again until you recover from this injury.

Yelling is usually done to let others know that you are nearby. Creatures that hear you react immediately, if they react at all, but Monsters who hear a yell aren't able to react for quite a while.

Here is the starting list of yells. You'll learn more through play.

Yell# What is Yelled

1 (an unintelligible noise)

15 DANGER HERE!

23 I'M WAITING HERE!

31 (a horrible sounding noise)

80 I'M IN THE AREA!

81 I'M IN THE AREA AND HEADING NORTH!

82 I'M IN THE AREA AND HEADING NORTHEAST!

83 I'M IN THE AREA AND HEADING EAST!

84 I'M IN THE AREA AND HEADING SOUTHEAST!

85 I'M IN THE AREA AND HEADING SOUTH!

86 I'M IN THE AREA AND HEADING SOUTHWEST!

87 I'M IN THE AREA AND HEADING WEST!

88 I'M IN THE AREA AND HEADING NORTHWEST!

Example: Y 23 yells "I'M WAITING HERE!". If you think another member of your race is nearby and you wish to meet him, you should arrange to end your movement in the square from which you yelled for the next two turns (so the Monster who heard your yell has time to get to your location.)

PLAYING THE GAME

FILLING IN THE TURN CARD

When you receive a results printout, it is time to complete your next turn card. Start by filling in the Monster#, Account#, and Day Cycle#. They can be found at the top of each results printout. PLEASE DON'T FORGET THIS.

Next, fill in your orders. Orders are processed in the sequence in which you write them. There is enough space for up to 15 orders, which is your limit. Be sure to write your orders in their correct formats. Double-check the turn card, put proper postage on it, and mail it to us. If you wish to submit your turn by Email please use the form on our web site. You'll receive your results printout promptly. Simply repeat this cycle for as long as you wish to play.

INPUT ERROR

If we make a mistake inputting an order, please return your printout with a short note explaining the

problem. We'll correct it immediately.

HOW MUCH YER GONNA PAY

Purchase credits in blocks. Each credit gets you one turn for one monster.

\$200 buys 100 turns

\$100 buys 40 turns

\$50 buys 17 turns

\$40 buys 12 turns

\$20 buys 5 turns

SPECIAL CODES AREA: You can write the following codes in the Special Codes Area of the turn card:

SE (# of cards) - to receive more than one turn card

SU - to receive an Entry Card

RS - to receive a Reference Sheet every turn at a cost of £1 per eight turns. If you don't issue this order you receive a Reference Sheet only once every eight turns.

MONSTER CALENDAR

For those who remember the old 8 day monster calendar, it's history. You can run any monster as often as you like. Once a month, once a week, 3 times a day... It's all good!

When your Monster's turn is processed, no other Monster's turns are being processed. They are camped, almost as if everyone is sleeping except you.

Turn cards are input and processed in the order they are received. If your Monster has already had a turn processed in the current game week, processing will be delayed until the start of the next game week (unless it's a makeup turn).

If you miss having a turn processed in a game week (perhaps you were away wrestling crocodiles at Disney World), you can make them up at a rate of one every three game weeks. A makeup turn is a second turn processed in the same game week. You don't need to note that it is a makeup turn on your turn card; the computer will know.

Each Monster is assigned a Day Cycle# from 1 to 8 upon entry into the game. Monsters with the same Day Cycle# have the same game week dates. Having different Day Cycle#'s does not prevent Monsters from interacting.

HOW TO...

JUSTIFY DEVOTING TIME AND MONEY TO THIS GAME WHEN TALKING TO YOUR MOTHER, DATE, DRILL SERGEANT, OR HAIRDRESSER.

By playing Monster Island you are going to improve yourself. You don't even have a choice in the

matter! You will learn to communicate better, improve your organisational skills (unless you're real lazy), expand your imagination, and sharpen your thought processes. Not to mention that Monster Island will bring to the surface your all-British skills of exploring, building, trading, and butt-kicking. Your mapping skills will drastically improve too.

This can translate into higher-paying jobs, and a discerning eye for quality games.

YOUR GOAL

The ambitious might say, "Become King of the Island," but their grasp of reality isn't rooted in knowledge. The lazy might say, "Phutz around and bash heads at will," but your head might be the one to get bashed. The greedy might say, "Grab everything that's not nailed down," but suppose it's mostly junk? The fun-loving might say, "If it moves, kill it," but suppose you can't? The wise might say, "Learn as much as possible and take advantage of superior knowledge," but who's to say what's worth knowing and what isn't?

Nada No says, "Lead, follow, or get off the island."

TO GROUP

As players meet and become friends, they can join a Group or form one of their own. Groups are allowed to restrict their membership to a particular religion, if they so desire. Most new Groups do so and are referred to as Dark Groups, Light Groups, etc.

Forming a Group: First, assemble at least 8 Monsters in the same square who want to form the group. The Leader submits a Group Setup card with his next turn. This card lists the Group's name, totems, and more. The Monsters perform a CEREMONY OF STRENGTH, and then you have yourself a group. Perform the ceremony in a square having an altar stone or temple to make the Group a religious Group.

How to join an existing Group: First, convince a member of the group to initiate you. Arrange to meet at the same square and issue the JG order. Next, the group member conducts an Initiation Ceremony by issuing the order I (your Monster#).

For example: Monster#3456 is a member of the XYZ group. A new friend of his, Monster# 10123, wishes to join group XYZ. They arrange to be in the same square and Monster#10123 (aspiring member) issues the JG order. Next, Monster #3456 (existing member) issues an I 10123 order, which conducts the Initiation Ceremony.

Benefits of being in a group: There are a bunch. Join one and find out.

Write GS in the Special Codes area of the turn card to receive a group setup card.

...or Not To Group?

That is the question. You do not need to join a group to be successful in this game. Nor do you need to rush into joining one. Join a Group only when you've met the right bunch of people.

The Monster Island Database

This game is humongous. For instance, we keep track of more than 2100 statistics for each Monster and more than 120 statistics for each of the quarter-million+ squares.

The database can store 15,001 monsters. Monsters are assigned a random Monster# as they enter the game. We've reserved numbers 1-50 for races, 100-399 for Creatures, 700-799 for Groups, and 1000-16000 for Monsters. Items are numbered 1-999.

Travel Hints

Remember that your early turns are totally exploratory in nature. You are getting your feet wet and figuring out how things work. Don't worry about making mistakes.

- Try to TRAVEL 6-8 squares in each of your first few turns and, when possible, in varying terrain.
- In general, to get the most interesting results, spread your Action Pts over as many squares as possible.
- COMMUNICATE with other players when you encounter them. This is VERY important because other players are the best sources of information. Additionally, many worthwhile endeavours on Monster Island require several Monsters working together to be successful. There are other benefits, not the least of which is that it makes the game more fun.
- Explore steadily eastward (northeast, east, southeast) for two reasons: There are more sources of water to the east and more interesting places to exploit. Once you've made friends, two (or more) of you can co-ordinate your exploration and scout much more than you could alone.

The Gods of Monster Island

Scattered throughout the island are altar stones to the gods. Upon finding such a stone, there is a possibility that you will learn how to become a Follower of that god. If you choose to follow a god, it is a commitment that the god will take very seriously.

The God of Light, Kabuki, and the Dark God, Shroud, have resumed their conflict after more than a thousand years of peace, and their Followers have begun to attack each other. Deaths have occurred - and they're only getting warmed up.

Other gods do exist but are more difficult to discover.

Birth & Death

Female Monsters can get pregnant (Is this real life or what?) However, it will be quite a while before a baby will be born.

Death is far more complicated than it would seem.

Some Other Races

There are many races in the world besides the Seven Monster Races of eastern Ruk Domlak. Below are the ones you're likely to meet first. The Kwandonians, Zoingots, and Wascodobellians are not

included because their lands are east of Monster Island. The list below is not complete; it is simply a list of the races Coloda No has heard of or met, followed by his comments and impressions. (We cannot guarantee his impressions are correct. Apply grains of salt as needed.)

Knolltir - "Others describe these runty, armed maniacs as "subnormal". All I know is that they like to fight and die. I use 'em to keep my weapons sharp. They're found in all areas except in the Westlands."

Jossmen - "Thank goodness for the Jossmen! It seems that one of their Far structures is always relatively nearby. Residing at each Far structure is a family of Jossmen. Jossmen are friendly as long as you don't attack them. Unfortunately, they're not too talkative. Still, they can give you some very useful information."

"The first Far structure you'll probably encounter is a Far Post (especially if you're smart enough to follow the path or trail leading there). The Trader will provide you with a list of items he trades. In the Jagged Mor region you'll find the first Far Inns. They're wonderful. They even have beds! You'll definitely want to stick around for several weeks to acquire some of the knowledge and training available there. The Innkeepers also pay bounty for certain items that usually come from the corpses of their enemies." (HINT: To acquire the Jossman racial blurb stay at a Far Inn.)

Dragons - "Rulers of the Sky - I still haven't met anyone who's sure he's seen one. But rumours of them are incredibly persistent."

The Seven Monster Races of Eastern Ruk Domlak

Bignoses - (Race#1) - Because they are fairly ugly and above average in size, Bignoses think they are the BEST. And who's to argue? After all, they do seem to be superior at battle, particularly in Sticks terrain. Also, they're quite adept at building muscle. Their prominent proboscises assist them in finding exotic -smelling things and places. The downside? They have a hard time noticing trapped pits, holes, and the like.

Furrcats - (Race#2) - Yes, Furrcats are the coolest. They are the thinnest and the best at hiding behind things. This gives them an advantage when hunting. They are second to none at escaping from "difficult circumstances." They also excel at training a mount. Unfortunately, they are the least muscular of the races; infrequently this might hinder their success.

Mongers - (Race#3) - As expected, Mongers pride themselves on their ugliness. They grow even uglier with time. When you're scary to look at, the nasty creatures stay away. Mongers are superior wrestlers and pick up wrestling tricks much faster than other races. They've become the most independent of all the races and are the least communicative. They seem to have a knack for making things with iron - that's the best thing you can say about them.

Normans - (Race#4) - Normans are distinguished by their red hair. They love to work out and be physically fit. They gain the most from exercising and want to be fantastic athletes. Their weakness is that some Creatures are more likely to attack them than run away because they look tasty. The Normans are the tallest race and tend to be the most skilled at battle. They're the least likely to be affected by a poison.

Fatblobs - (Race#5) - They're the shortest and friendliest race. Sure they're the fattest (pleasantly plump?) and yeah, they don't bathe regularly. So what! While they sleep their fragrant body odour helps keep unfriendlies away. Being crack foragers, they have more to eat. They also fart more often, which

could be valuable. A long term advantage is that they recover Spell Pts somewhat faster than other races. Unfortunately, Fatblobs are not known for their speed, and in cases where it's better to run than fight, they may sit down and have a snack instead!

Mudwalkers - (Race#6) - They are of the riskiest, most sneakiest sort. They pride themselves on their thieving abilities, as they are the best at stealing treasure from other Monsters. Sometimes they get so greedy that they end up in battles they might otherwise have avoided. They're keen trackers too. Their favourite terrain is the Low Hills, where they toss mudpies at passers-by.

Vipers - (Race#7) - They are the toughest, the darkest, and the lowliest. Yes Vipers are the lowest form of scum around. That's why they're the most likely to dabble in voodoo (and that can lead to unimaginable dangers!). Vipers particularly love the Jungle and fight quite well there. They have excellent aim and are pretty good climbers. Vipers love to attack whatever moves. Not surprisingly, Vipers have the most difficult time making friends with members of the other Seven Monster Races.

Rulebook Notes

This rulebook contains everything we want you to know at the start of the game. Sure, we could have told you what happens when you encounter a Creature or how to make a weapon. But the game is designed carefully and thoughtfully so that you learn as you play. That's part of the fun!

By entering Monster Island you agree to abide by all the decisions made by KJC Games that pertain to the game.

Designer's Notes

This game couldn't be designed quickly.

For one thing, when we came up with the idea about 9 years ago (it was my brother Charlie's birthday - March 1, 1985), the computer system that the game would need didn't exist at a price that would allow us to charge £2 per turn. It was going to need a fast '386 computer, a quick 150meg hard drive, and a low cost per page, high speed laser printer. I also didn't know then that I'd need to create my own graphical alphabet to print the map symbols.

When I called Charlie that night to tell him about the game (and... oh yeah, to wish him a Happy Birthday), my ideas were BIG - a monster of a game - with a whole continent to explore and lots of things to find and make and do. It would have adventure and mystery, and it would never end. It would have more players in one game than It's a Crime!. "Crime" had automated 500 players at once; that was impressive - THEN. We eventually decided on 15,000 for Monster Island. Why so many? It's like real life - you never know who you're going to meet on the street... or on the map.

Were I to play my own game I'd choose whatever Monster race was the least popular. I'd exchange map data with anyone, but I wouldn't join a group until I'd met the right bunch of diabolically mad spear-chucking, head-hunting, jungle-snorting, excessively fiendishly adventurers. You know. The group that everyone else hates!

--Jack B Everitt