

SEAN

per the Mythras rulebook: Initiative determines participants' order of actions during the cycles of a Combat Round. It is rolled at the start of a fight. Unless something occurs to change the situation, such as certain Combat Actions or Special Effects, initiative remains in play until it is forced to be re-rolled.. So yes, it did not change from the Quickstart.

GREG

I'm blown by the Strike rank discussion. I never considered strike rank like that, and I've reviewed the book to understand what I missed.

This is what I have in the Classic reprint of the 2nd edition, and I'm wondering if it's an addition:

LIMIT TO STRIKE RANK PER MELEE TURN No action or combination of actions may be performed in one melee round if the total strike rank necessary adds up to more than 12. This is purposely correlated to the 12 seconds of a melee round, but a slavish "each second equals one strike rank point" policy should be avoided.

MULTIPLE ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE OF MELEE A character not involved in melee can conceivably do a number of things in one round, always keeping in mind that he only has 12 strike rank points to work with. Thus, he could toss a Disruption spell, taking 3 points for a standard DEX character. He could then move 9 meters (3 more points) and take out his bow and arrow (5 points for readying a weapon). He is then stuck because firing the arrow would take another 3 points and there is only 1 left in the melee round.

Actually it's not contradicting what you say. I can see why you say that's how you read it with your filter. I realize it wasn't obvious at all when I've read it and I unconsciously pushed toward the "everything restart" interpretation. I must say that I'm not sure I could have interpreted it as you said if I didn't hear that interpretation before. The text pushes into the the "round restart" when I re-read it, without actually contradicting.

I also like the token ideas. I'll steal that one.

Me: Correct. If you think you see "reboot, clear Strike Rank, start over" in those instructions, it's because you learned it from some other game and it's sitting in your head.

Greg: It's also reinforced by : "No action or combination of actions may be performed in one melee round if the total strike rank necessary adds up to more than 12.", oh, yeah so you can't, you have to "restart" at 1 (no actually, you just do it in the next melee round ... so there is a notion of round, but it just means "the next 1 to 12 counting"), and "He is then stuck because firing the arrow would take another 3 points and there is only 1 left in the melee round.", where I've read "stuck" as "you can't do it", but no, you can read stuck differently.

Lorenzo: Ron's token idea got me thinking about my own design. I'm an interesting case: I've been playing for almost 30 years but I've encountered very little Runequest (at least, as in playing the actual game - I've obviously been exposed to inspired by/influenced by RQ mechanics for all my life).

And the more I read about RQ the more I realise that a lot of my ideas are kind of circular and going back to that school of design (I guess it's something like experiencing the effects and reinterpretations of something, feeling dissatisfied with the current zeitgeist, and thus being influenced in your ideas, that you perceive as original but are actually interiorizations of the seeds of those previous designs experienced indirectly.... I hope this sentence makes some sense).

So one of my ideas is that ordering is handled through a tool I call the Wheel (even if it looks more like a clock). Not going over details here, but it's very close to strike ranks, it has 12 sections, and it's never meant to reset (which eventually lead it to having two tracks, and a lot of rules text to cover all problems). Ron's idea about tokens could help streamline those rules. Instead of having to keep track of who's acted and who didn't on the wheel, you could do it with tokens and simplify the tool itself.

At the same time, the whole point of having a visual tool is to be able to visualise how someone who's already acted in the turn is actually going to be done at 15, so to speak, so he starts the "next turn" at 3, instead of 1, and so on. Tracking how taking two "rank 8" actions in a row may be different than taking a rank 8 and rank 5 one... it fundamentally means removing the "you can't exceed 12" limit. The concept is the same, from what I can see.

Does this have some potential value?

Me: I think it's related to what you were talking about at the Discord server, that when playing Mythras, combat actions were consequential even when they didn't hit, because the overall combat wasn't a grind-down, but a question of who landed a hit, where, and when.

JC

So, I finally got around to listening to this. I'm playing RQG and reading Runequest Classic because of my distaste for the way Canon and Metaplot are centered in the new edition (ugh, another topic entirely).

So my understanding of Strike Ranks is that there is a Reset but within the 12 ranks, people are in motion following through with their stated intent. There are very few ways (if any) to change one's intent within a combat round. It's kind of like a roller coaster.

Combat breaks down like this according to the procedure in either edition.

Statement of Intent -> sets the Strike Ranks starting at 0 -> resolve the action from 0 to 12 -> Book keeping.

Both texts assume you'll go back to the Statement of Intent and repeat the process. Neither spells out what you do next.

This is shown but not explained in the Example of Play in Runequest Classic with Rurik. He attacks on 7, and the following round attacks on the same Strike Rank. If it wrapped around, he'd be attacking on 2 ($7 + 7 = 14$. $14 - 12 = 2$). Runequest Glorantha lacks any examples, but I could've missed those.

So, I'm going to illustrate my understanding of the rules with how I'm playing.

Say, a Storm Bull's intent is to engage a Broo and run it through with a sword. The Broo is going to meet The Storm Bull and try to hack at him with it's Axe.

The Storm Bull would need to move 9m to engage the Broo, which would be 3 Strike Ranks. Since the Broo is also moving to engage, each combatants are only moving 5m or so, I'd rule for the first 2 Strike Ranks both combatants are approaching the other.

The Storm Bull has a 6 SR with his sword, the Broo has 5 SR with its Axe. So for Strike Ranks 3 - 6 both combatants are fighting each other, when SR 7 hits the Broo gets a window of opportunity but it misses. The Storm Bull goes on the next Strike Rank, and lands a hit. We do some bookkeeping, if any. Now, we go back to the Statement of Intent.

I can see how a running Strike Rank system would have more of a fictional flow, and it does sound fun.

In the setup I'm using, I really like locking everything down in a round and seeing what happens. It's kind of nail biting at times as the numbers tick towards 12, then we catch our breath and go again.

Greg: I had the same interpretation. However, as Ron notes, if the Runequest Glorantha rulebook is not clear the reference sheet from the starter set is. You can download the reference sheet there and check page 5, the text in the Strike Rank 12 is very clear. <https://chaosium.itch.io/runequest-starter-set-free-handouts-pack> "if an action takes more than 12 strike rank, subtract 12. It occurs on the remaining strike rank in the next Melee round".

JC: Strike Ranks gets even more vague checking the errata and official explanations. So, depending on which person at Chaosium is answering the questions...

All actions resolve on your total Strike Rank.

Or

Actions outside of melee are tracked discretely and your actions within melee happens on one go (except for characters with an unmodified weapon skill of over 100%, who may add an additional attack - IF it the action doesn't happen after Strike Rank 12).

Or

As above, except ranged attacks and spell casting is always a rolling count...so, if casting a spell, moving, readying your Ranged weapon and loosing your attack pushes a character over SR 12, itll happen next go.

ALSO

sigh Sorcery is always adding 12 SR to the count, so it's always always treated as a rolling count.

- so, no one is right or wrong. Every every group has to come to an understanding that works.

(adds to list of reasons Runequest Roleplaying in Jefflantha contains a great game buried in a baffling book and fan culture)

Me: Heh - it's going to be hard not to say "Jefflantha" by accident in public, going forward.

JC: I coined that term when I learned 1) King of Sartar was revised and expanded to fit into the current metaplot. 2) The Lunars are misled Cthulhu Cultists. 3) oh, did I mention the metaplot? They join Argrath (a single defined person) and Friends in The Hero Wars! (which character creation ensures you'll be an Argrath's follower) 4) the de-politicization of the setting in general, think MCU compared to the old Marvel Comics. 5) going back to May Vary instead of Will Vary. Anyway, the publication and creative direction of the Glorantha IP is another topic.

GORDON

The status for Cosmic Zap is as expected, I guess. As an experience, it nags at me from many angles as so cool, so interesting, and yet also ... unfinished? unsatisfying? not-good-enough playing (by me, by my standards)? So hopefully someday, it'll be available and I'll try using it, or I'll do some vaguely-inspired-by thing of my own.

When I compare what you said about your design approach with my (default, not necessarily best and certainly not only) mental model of developing a creative work, I recognize 100% the fierce ownership of your own creation, and the rejection of a market-first strategy with Likert scale analysis or similar. But I'm also accustomed to a "seek out and consider ALL criticism, even from the perhaps-jerks and the arguably-incompetent" approach, or at least a "phase" of that along the way. Mostly via 80's college fiction/non-fiction/poetry writing seminars, I'd guess. Multiple professors across multiple institutions ran workshop classes that way. Maybe because ... from an instructional standpoint, they wanted/needed commentators to not worry about being jerkish or displaying incompetence, and they trusted themselves to manage the class overall if anyone went TOO far? And/or maybe they knew getting edited/published in "literary" circles at that time WOULD, unquestionably, feel like that? Making it kinda a market-driven strategy, but ... I digress. The "after all, you're in charge, so don't fear what they have to say" remains pretty baked in to my (ideal) attitudes, and that's been valuable.

In game design (mostly the for-our-play decisions that can amount to re-design, or completing an incomplete or non-functional text), I typically HAVE found value in input and discussions that you seem to avoid. But there is certainly a limit! And maybe ... I haven't really put any "from the ground up" design work under scrutiny other than within-play, so the certainty of value (for me) from some/lots of "talky" outside input is less sure to extend there.

Me: The sessions you played were extremely valuable to me, and I can say very certainly that they showed me about twenty ways the game could not be designed and played. Cosmic Zap as delivered to the Chaosium is almost unrecognizable from what you saw and plays quite differently.

Considering the transition from those scattered and ever-changing notes into a working design and (then) manuscript, a chat and review among us at that point would have been counter-productive. Talking about it adds very little and fogs the process with whatever demands or neuroses or expectations the other people have. I do talk about designs with people ... but only a few whom I know well, or, if someone else, only in some specific moment when play has led to a good context for talking. What I can't do any more, and have seen far too many games and designers' will to continue be destroyed by, is exactly the kind of eager committee work you're talking about. Whether it has been positive in isolated cases doesn't concern me - I've been observing active design of RPGs up close for a really long time now, and I am not speaking from preference when I judge it to be a bad, bad idea.

Gordon: I was primarily just noticing (as result of the video answer, so I'm appreciative!) the sort of automatic model I had from long ago. But now you've got me thinking... I'll join the unconcern about particular positive cases. That out of the way, yes, "a chat and review among us" and "eager committee work" do both sound likely BAD, or at best "eh, OK, maybe do that a little, if you want, but be careful, or better - don't do it after all."

And they are also NOT what I meant to describe from 80's classes, either. When I was talking about personal examples finding value for game design, I see now that they fit entirely inside the particular positive case box of the chat/committee stuff. Maybe my experiences helped leave me open to finding positives at times, but that's all. I DON'T have any actual examples of game design inside the box/model that persists from my 20's. There may actually be no real game design equivalent, and the personal insight here is just to notice when my model creeps in and give it no weight.

But engaging some critical/analytical gears rather than just noticing a model ... if there IS a thing (not chat/committee) that can be translated into game design (in a way that creates value for designs and designers), there are a number of necessary preconditions that are NOT met by simply talking to whatever group of designer/non-designer acquaintances/friends/strangers you just played with. I'm intrigued by the possibility of fulfilling the preconditions, but again

- the personal insight is "that monkey is not part of this circus." Until/unless THAT circus ever comes to town, ignore (compassionately, I guess) the impulse.

Oh, and I want to underline agreement with the idea that destruction of the will to continue is a real thing to fight against, always. That's important.

Gordon: Also - I have no fear about a "different" Cosmic Zap. I expect much of what I found/find appealing will be there! Interesting to know a LOT changed, though.