

# Dev Diary #11

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Drakensang &ndash; Official Dev Diary #11  
27. 07. 2007: Implementing the TDE Rule Set

May the Twelve Gods bless you!

Today we would like to turn to the implementation of the TDE4 rule set in Drakensang. As you can imagine, this is a very extensive and difficult part of development - especially if you consider the sheer volume and complexity of it.

A short review: At the end of 2001 the [Ed.: German] 4th Edition of the Pen&Paper Roleplaying Game "The Dark Eye" was released. It came in the shape of 4 boxes each containing two more or less thick volumes and creating partly radical changes and very detailed rules compared to the previous sets. A three-tier system of basic, optional and expert rules enabled every TDE-player group to compile their own individual catalogue of rules.

This TDE rule set is the foundation for Drakensang. The team around Lead Programmer Nicolai Pogoczelski stood before a hard-to-survey mountain of (separate) rules that had to be sifted through and checked on playability and feasibility of implementation. Thus one prerequisite for the programers was to have very good knowledge about the rules, preferably from real use on the game table.

The fact of the matter is that a part of the rules of the 4th edition cannot be converted 1:1 for a computer game. In this case we try resorting to older rules from previous versions and use them as alternate templates. If that fails as well we choose a logical and playable approximation as arises from extensive discussions. Let's have a detailed look at some areas of the rules:

There will be a hit zone system which will use the body areas from the rule set (head, arms, chest, back, waist and legs). At every successful attack you roll the dice to determine the zone that has been hit. In the process wounds are caused according to the rules. The chance to hit and the occurrence of wounds are fixed during balancing later on, so that for all intents and purposes deviations can happen here.

While we're discussing fighting, the combat moves come next. As things stand at the moment there will be 34 special skills, some of them being prerequisite for those maneuvers. Amongst them is the "power stroke", a technique that allows the fighter to deal out a particularly heavy blow. The amount of the Difficulty Increase for that (in the TDE rule system the roll against the Attack Value is aggravated then) can be chosen by the player himself (presumably free range). Whether a failed "power stroke" will have, as described in the rules, a negative effect on the subsequent player action is still a subject of discussion.

Another topic is the character generation, a true "bastion" of TDE rules. As has been already revealed in the [Ed.: German] game magazine GameStar (07/2007) there will be a selection of Archetypes and Specializations. The first option, the Standard Mode, consists of picking a character from 27 pre-made models, which will be pre-generated. The range is divided into 11 Archetypes and 16 Professions building upon them (for every Archetype there are two

Specializations, with a few exceptions). With the second option, the Expert Mode, the player will be able to additionally modify the default character values within a certain range and adapt them to his personal taste. The full scale free generation by combining Race, Culture and Profession as in the TDE rules will not be in the game due to the high number of special cases that would have to be considered for that. However there still are a number of true exotics on offer next to the common classics.

A player of Drakensang will barely get in touch with other areas of the TDE rule set, for example when picking locks, as

he will just be presented with the final result. But in the background, a rule compliant Talent Test is being rolled against the three affected Attributes and offset with the Talent Prowess of the character.

As the whole issue of implementing the rules certainly still holds a lot of topics for discussion, I want to conclude with a note: soon a row of essays will be published on the [Ed.: German] TDE fansite [www.dsa4.de](http://www.dsa4.de) which will go into detail on the rule set implementation inside Drakensang. You will soon be able to ask your rule-related questions in the forum, which we will then try to answer.

The respective thread has already been opened in the official [Ed.: German] Drakensang forum:

<http://www.anaconda-game.de/forum/viewtopic.php?p=53204>

Kind Regards

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