

Champions World Wide

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The Review:

Reviewed By Gordon Feiner

The Upside:

Champions World Wide covers both superheroes and supervillains who operate in places outside the United States, which has been the main focus of the Champions Universe so far.

The introduction of the book presents the information contained in it as a report from UNTIL (the Champions Universe UN superhuman organization) regarding superhuman activity around the world. It makes for some good flavor text and helps set the tone of the book.

Each of the sections covers how the various regions react to Superhumans, any laws they have regarding them (specifically outlining Superhuman Registration laws throughout the world). A section covering prominent Superteams and heroes in the regions. As well as information on the activities of evil organizations like DEMON and VIPER plus local threats to the area like gangs, crime lords and other organizations that don't operate globally. Finally, each section provides "Five Places For A Fight Scene" which briefly outlines five locations famous to the area to have a good solid superfight around.

Chapter One - Europe. Not including the United Kingdom (which Hero has stated will be covered under a future release by itself), this section covers Western Europe up to Russia and the former USSR satellite states. There are six superheroes presented here, two from France (one a street level hero, another a standard superhero), A trick-archer German hero, a mystical Portuguese brick, a young heroine in Hungary, and a Polish heroine with a love of death metal. A good presentation of various power levels and types of powers are presented.

Chapter Two - Russia. Only four heroes are given for Russia and the surrounding countries. A powerful mystic, a powered armor hero working with the new Russian government, a tragic hero operating along the waters and coasts of Russia, and a young heroine representing the new generation of heroes in Russia since the fall of Communism.

Chapter Three - The Middle East. A moderately detailed account of the Iraq War is given here, containing itself to what part Superheroes took part in during the initial invasion and subsequent rebuilding. Three heroes are presented as well. A street level hero in Saudi Arabia. An Iranian patriot, and an Israeli patriot. The Iranian patriot is a good example of a Hero who may end up opposing western heroes based on ideology instead of criminal intent, which can lead to interesting role-playing situations.

Chapter Four - Africa. Only three heroes are presented for such a large continent. A physical

manifestation of the Egyptian Goddess Ma'at. A speedster operating in South Africa. And a semi-retired hero who can manipulate metal in Nigeria. The chapter does state that in the Champions Universe almost all of Africa's superhuman activity is confined to either Egypt or South Africa.

Chapter Five - India. Only three heroes are presented here. One of the most powerful mystics in the world. An overly enthusiastic Indian patriot, and a big fan of Western heroes. And a no-nonsense duplicator working for the Indian government as a super soldier.

Chapter Six - East Asia. The largest collection of superheroes is in this chapter. One of the notable factors is the widely varied treatment of Superhumans in this part of the world. Japan has no registration act, while China has strictly enforced and harsh laws regarding superhumans which has created the worlds largest officially endorsed government Superteam. From China there is a street-level martial artist, and a pro-democracy teleporter, both operating outside China's laws. From Japan we have three heroes, a boy genius gadgeteer, one of the world's most powerful powered-armor heroes and a teen-celebrity flying brick heroine. From South Korea we have a telekinetic heroine who has taken up the name of her fallen mentor. And from Singapore an energy projector who works closely both the government and UNTIL.

Chapter Seven - Australia And Oceania. All three of the heroes in this chapter are from Australia. A celebrity brick hero. A low-powered heroine working for the secret service. And a mystic hero that walks the entire continent helping people.

Chapter Eight - Central And South America. This section comes with the story of a Superhero Team turned bad. Not all the members, but many within the Mexican government sponsored team fell to corruption. Some of the former members of the now defunct team are still heroes. Two of them are presented in this chapter, a strait forward brick and an ancient Aztec warrior who is out of his time. There are two other superheroes presented. A street level hero from Brazil, and an empathic manipulator fighting crime in Barbados.

Chapter Nine - The GMs Vault. This chapter contains GM information on the previous eight chapters, which rumors are false or true, and other behind the scenes information. It also provides villains for each of the areas of the world from the first half of the book. Within each section are three plot seeds for the heroes presented earlier, and "Five Crimes To Commit" for each part of the world, providing ideas for GMs to involve the locals if not the villains and heroes contained in the book.

To quickly go over the villains, the GMs Vault provides forty-three new villains from around the world. Seven from Europe, five Russian, seven from the Middle East, four from Africa, Five Indian, eight from East Asia, three from Australia, and four from South America. The power and personality levels are nice and varied. There are low powered villains, third tier master villains, villains that are pure evil, redeemable villains, and a few extremely powerful ones.

Aside from providing a number of new characters, both good and bad, the books high points are the "Five Places For A Superfight" and "Five Crimes To Commit" sections for each region. The inclusion of those elements goes a long way to helping a GM bring the world to life and get a few sessions outside of the PCs hometown. If your game is already a globetrotting game this is an excellent addition to get some local villains and heroes involved in events.

The Downside:

There's no Summary Table of the heroes or the villains, which is an always useful item to help GMs find just right the right Superhuman quickly and easily.

Also, maps are provided for some of the areas of the world in the book, two regions to a page. But only four of the eight regions provide maps showing all the countries involved. Of those missing Central and South America, including the many islands off the coasts, and Oceania would have been very useful. Why only four of the eight regions had country maps provided I don't know. But it gave the impression the job was only half-heartedly done.

The Otherside: Between the varied character personalities and the "Five Locations" sections this book has a good amount of stuff to offer up to non-Hero gamers. And those into converting have seventy-seven new characters to convert to their system of choice.

Overall, this is a pretty good book and a helpful addition to anyone's collection who wants to take their game to a global scale while keeping various locations full of cultural differences. Forty-three new villains, thirty-four potential allies and a host of information to get the PCs in trouble around the world.

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