Credits

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Introduction

It's done! ***Basic Action Super Heroes! Ultimate Edition*** (or BASH! UE as it is being called online these days) is finished! It is available now as a pdf from rpgnow.com, drivethrurpg.com, and pigames.net. As of right now, the pre-orders on the hardcopy books have nearly sold out. It is for the hard work that went into this that this issue of BAM! Is so long coming. I hope it was worth the wait.

Because it is a brand new Super Heroic edition of BASH!, I thought it best that this issue focus on introducing that book to those who may not be familiar. BASH! has undergone some changes over the years, with updates in Megapolis and BAM! and we have incorporated many of these into a single rules set. In addition to an expanded, revised version of the game, you will also find a lot of content has been added (it has 100 more pages than the original). This added content includes advice for running campaigns for Narrators, updated and optional rules, and a host of settings for you to run your campaign in.

These settings run the gamut from Pulp era Mystery Men, to Golden Age Superheroes, through the Silver, Bronze, and Iron Ages of comics. They also deal with varying levels of power from Super Teens just discovering their powers to Cosmic Heroes who fight to defend the universe. This issue we give attention to the latter: a preview of the Cosmic Heroes section of *BASH! Ultimate Edition*.

Ben Norman has also contributed an article called "*BASHing Out an Origin*" which allows you to make a random back-story for your character, which is really quite fun to use, and works with any edition of the game (or any superheroes game for that matter). Hopefully in the near future, fans will be able to submit some new articles and ideas for BASH! UE for these pages. For more information about ***BASH! Ultimate Edition*** or how you can contribute to BAM!, please check out the last page of this issue, or check out our website or Facebook page "Basic Action Games".

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With Cosmic Power...

While most superhero stories focus on saving the city, or the world, the very universe might hang in the balance of a Cosmic campaign. Cosmic Heroes can travel across the galaxy, move planets, and even survive inside a black hole. The Cosmic Setting actually also takes place along-side one of the other settings. The Narrator should decide if the game takes place alongside a Silver Age, Iron Age, or Fantasy setting, for example. Cosmic settings obviously have a lot in common with Science Fiction campaigns, as space travel is such a major component.

What follows are some selections from the Cosmic setting material from BASH! Ultimate Edition. We would have loved to put it all in, but it's just too big.

Scale: Cosmic is not only a Setting for BASH! it is also a Scale of play- naturally the Cosmic Scale (60+ pts) works best here! For information on special rules, see "Cosmic Scale" below. On occasion, mere mortals do play pivotal roles in cosmic events, but these cases are rare.

Who should play Cosmic? Groups that want to play gods, Cosmic Beings, or their agents, in battles for the entire universe!

Recommended Reading & Viewing: Marvel's™ *Silver Surfer* and *Captain Mar-Vell* and DC's™ *Green Lantern* and various *New Gods* stories are all good examples of Cosmic setting.

Tropes

All Powerful Beings

Cosmic campaigns are filled with entities that can best be described as "Cosmic Beings". These entities are often living embodiments of concepts such as death, life, entropy, time, space, good, evil, order, chaos, etc, as old as the universe itself. Others might better be described as gods, forces of nature, or simply as aliens. Such entities are so powerful, that the Narrator should not really worry about counting the points used to build them (or even skip building the creature and simply run it as a plot device). Power-wise, these beings can do whatever they want.

For as powerful as they are, however, these beings often behave according to some strict guidelines-the more powerful the creature, the stricter the rules, or more predictable the behavior. For a creature that can do anything- it is important to know what they won't. Here are some examples:

An Ancient Pact: The being has made a pact, treaty, bargain, or other agreement with various other beings which it dare not violate. It is thus prevented from directly intervening in the affairs of mortals (for good or ill), or is limited to "its side" of the universe. Often, such beings will be forced to use go-betweens, or subtle manipulation to achieve their aims, rather than direct application of power.

Compulsion: The being must act in a certain way and cannot help itself. Perhaps it is driven by the basic need to sustain itself, or maybe it must focus its attention upon a certain task that the universe requires. As a result, the being does not utilize much of its great power for anything other than satisfying its own compulsion. Indeed, even getting its attention may prove difficult (and disastrous).

Limited Window: Perhaps the being can only use its powers in its own dimension, only use them in a certain way, or can only use its powers for a limited period of time. Such a being might be a cosmic trickster who forces Heroes to complete its bazaar tasks before the sand runs out of a giant hourglass, or a lord of ultimate evil that can only use its powers on a mortal at their own request.

Aloof: The being is completely indifferent to the affairs of "lesser beings" and simply doesn't want to interfere, much as we would be indifferent to the affairs of an ant. However, if the lesser being became enough of a nuisance to get the entity's attention, it might be smote.

Saving the Universe

Just as Heroes on Earth fight to save the city from injustice, or save the world from domination, Cosmic superheroes save many worlds, entire galaxies, and on occasion, the universe from being destroyed. Doing this is more about the way in which the story is told than the powers of the characters. Instead of defusing a bomb that could

destroy the city, Cosmic Heroes might need to assemble an ultimate equation that will stop the universe from imploding. Mechanically, these tasks are the same- the characters work to stop a calamity before the time runs out- the difference is the story. When thinking of Cosmic challenges to throw at the players, consider the sort of challenge you'd throw at any other superheroes and make them Cosmic. A chase scene might take place across the entire galaxy. Heroes may battle to stop a creature the size of a planet. Villains may try to hold up the Galactic Banking Federation.

In addition, Cosmic games often involve situations when the direct approach is beyond their abilities and must be resolved through puzzle solving, mysteries, and politics. An infinity character-point entity is unlikely to be cowed by Heroes- or even notice them- in a straight up fight. If the Heroes could give (or deny) it something it wants, however, or get other entities of similar power to ally against it- it might back off. For situations like this, the Narrator should enable the Heroes to figure out how they can best thwart such a mighty foe. If a straight fight is impossible- the players should know it.

Inter-Planetary Conflict: One of the greatest problems that Cosmic characters have to deal with is war- wars between planets (or galaxies) that have lasted for thousands (or even millions) of years. It is inevitable that many innocent worlds (like the Earth) get caught in the crossfire. Protecting these worlds, or ending the conflict altogether is a common goal for Cosmic Heroes.

This will often pit these characters against other cosmic forces that back one side in the war, or against entire fleets of starships involved. While Cosmic Heroes may have the power to routinely smash these fleets, they cannot do so forever- if there is to be any solution, the Heroes must find a way to stop it beyond escalating the conflict. Cosmic Heroes might take on a quest to get "the one thing" that would stop the war, and bring the enemies to forge a truce.

Running Cosmic Scale Games

Obviously, using characters with the power to juggle planets can seem like a daunting task. BASH! Ultimate Edition makes it easy, however.

Cosmic Math: Multipliers Beyond 10: With unlimited potential for increase, you would think that Cosmic powers would become extremely math-heavy (and be a pain to calculate at the table). Not so- if anything the math gets easier. At

the Cosmic scale, any "multiplier" over 10 becomes a Dice Bonus instead. Rather than rolling x14, you would roll x10 with a +4 Dice Bonus, a x11 would become x10 with a +1 Dice Bonus, etc. Since multiplying by 10 is as simple as placing a "0" after the result of the roll, Cosmic scale remains mathematically simple to run.

Example: Infinity Knight does x13 damage with his cosmic blast. He rolls the dice and gets a "7"+3 = 10x10 = 100 damage.

Cosmic Stats: Cosmic characters purchase stats the same as any other character up to 5 at 2 Character Points per level in a stat. However, there are Cosmic powers that allow a character to increase their effective multiplier with a stat beyond 5. Like all Cosmic powers, these are bought in 5 level increments. Thus, you may see a cosmic character with Brawn 5 (8). This means that the character has 15 levels in Cosmic Might in addition to a base of 5 Brawn.

The Beyond Rating: Many Cosmic entities have stats or powers that cannot be measured, or may even be infinite. These stats or powers are simply rated "Beyond" indicating that they are immeasurable. Whenever a character with a Beyond rating goes against someone without it, the Beyond rating will automatically win- no dice rolls are necessary. When two entities are in a conflict using abilities with Beyond ratings, the result is usually a stalemate, unless the plot has affected the conflict. Often, the shift in this balance is the work of Heroes or Villains.

Example: The Cosmic Beings, Alpha and Omega face off pitting their Beyond rating attacks against the other's Beyond rating soak. In a straight up fight, they can trade blows for eons with no clear victor- but if Alpha has discovered (or been given) some secret that gives it an advantage, then it will win.

Beyond Rating is usually only used by the Narrator as part of some plot device. Cosmic Beings with Beyond ratings are often plot devices in themselves. Dealing with them should always have some work-around- part of some puzzle, intrigue, or mystery, rather than a straight fight. Some beings have only one or two Beyond ratings- this might be for something that they represent in the universe. A being representing time itself, for instance, might have the Time power at Beyond rating, but other abilities with actual numbers. In this case, the being is vulnerable in some ways, but all-powerful in another. Use of this Beyond ability should be used sparingly as a plot device as well.

Hero Points & Setbacks: At the Cosmic scale, the ability to add +1 to the total of a roll for one Hero point is only useful on occasion- but Hero Dice remain very useful. Thus, in the Cosmic Scale, Hero Points should be awarded in batches of 5 for good play, etc, rather than one at a time. But with Cosmic power, comes Cosmic responsibility, and so Setbacks should also be awarded in batches of 5 at a time [enabling the Narrator to use Villain Dice more often].

In addition, the limitation of 1 Hero Die per roll is altered. A character may gain the benefit of only one Hero die- but may roll several at once and keep the best result. This greatly increases the chance of dice exploding, and may even give you your choice of exploding dice.

Example: Infinity Knight rolls a 5 (a 3 and a 2)... but he needed a 10 to save the planet! He picks up 3 Hero Dice and rolls them, getting a 2, 3, and 1. The 2 and 3 will explode because they match dice in his original roll. He rolls for them and the 2 yields a 5, and the 3 yields a 1. He keeps the 2+5 and adds it to his roll of 5 for 12, enabling him to save the world!

Cosmic Difficulty: Just as Cosmic characters may wield powers beyond that of any World Class superhero, they also take on challenges beyond them as well. The following difficulties are added to Cosmic Scale games:

Value	Difficulty
80	Impossible
120	Beyond Impossible
160	Beyond Belief
200	Beyond Imagination

Cosmic Distance, Range, Size, and Area: Range and Area are different on the Cosmic scale. In space, or in vast empty dimensions resembling space, instead of "squares" areas are measured in "grids" with each representing an area of many miles (this figure is deliberately left vague for the Narrator to use as she wishes). For this reason, hundreds of characters could all be within a single grid. To make it easier to function at this scale, the Space enhancement (see Cosmic Powers below) allows you to move, and use ranged abilities in grids. This works at a ratio of 5 squares to 1 grid.

Without it, a character with Flight moves far slower- 1 grid per minute per 5 squares of Flight. So a character with Flight 25 would move only 5 grids per minute. This would allow the character to get around- even able to fly around the Earth- but it would take a while. To make a hand-to-hand

attack, you must obviously be in the same grid as your opponent, and also have some way to reach them (as two characters in the same grid may be miles apart).

Large bodies, like planets, some spaceships, or Cosmic Beings might also be measured in grids. Some beings may be so large they hold entire planets or star systems in their hands. In general, you might use grids to define the smaller of these objects if they are tactically relevant (maybe an asteroid or gigantic starship takes up 1 grid, a moon takes up 2x2, a planet takes up 6x6 to 20x20) but beyond this, you should just use description to explain how big something is. Telling a player that an entity is 10,000 grids tall is less informative than saying that it is the size of a solar system.

Cosmic Knock-Back: Any attack that has the Annihilation enhancement, or attacks made with Cosmic Might, do Cosmic Knock-Back, which is measured in Grids. Ordinary knock-back is ignored in a grid-scale battle, as it is irrelevant. The amount of grids the target is knocked back is 1 Grid per full 50 damage, -1 Grid of knock-back per Grid/side that the target has. So if the target (a 3x3 Grid object) takes 250 damage, it gets knocked back 2 Grids (250/50 = 5-3 = 2). Brawn has no effect on resisting Cosmic Knock-Back (you have nothing to stand on) but mass does.

Because there is no gravity or friction in space, the object keeps moving at this same rate of speed until it is stopped. If it is a character capable of moving in Grids, it can slow itself down or stop and turn around on its next panel.

Cosmic Collateral Damage: One of the common tropes of Cosmic campaigns is the ability to destroy a planet. These celestial bodies, along with stars, moons, asteroids, gigantic space ships, etc, use the collateral damage rules just as any object on Earth would use. For every Grid the object is across, it has 50 Soak and 100 Hits. So an object that is 4x4 Grids has 200 Soak and 400 Hits. Also, attacking an object 1 Grid or larger in size, there is a -5DM penalty to the damage roll (thus preventing a lower scale Hero from accidentally destroying the moon by rolling really high). The Annihilation enhancement gives Cosmic attacks the ability to do double Collateral Damage and ignores the -5DM penalty.

Example: Infinity Knight sees an Asteroid hurtling towards the planet of the peaceful plant people. This gigantic 2x2 grid Asteroid has 100 Soak and 200 hits. Infinity Knight's cosmic blast does x13 damage, and would only do x8 vs. such a large

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object normally. Infinity Knight uses some Omnipotence to add the Annihilation enhancement and increase his damage to x15. Against the asteroid, he now does x30 damage (2d6+20)10. He rolls the dice and gets 10+20 = 30*10 =300 damage- blasting the asteroid to smithereens.

When Worlds Collide... Sometimes, celestial bodies collide as well. To determine what happens, the Narrator needs to figure the collision speed in Grids. Two objects, one moving 4, the other moving 6 grids towards each other would have a collision speed of 10. An object moving 6 grids slamming into one moving 4 grids from behind would only have a collision speed of 2, since they were traveling the same direction. The DM each object does to the other is its size in grids across times the collision speed. Notice that if the objects are different sizes, the larger will do more damage to the smaller. Dice are not rolled, instead using "10" in the place of a dice roll for both objects. Note- these rules are only used when objects with size measured in Grids crash into one another- not when a planet "crashes" into a Hero (they'd just land on the planet).

Example: Planet R is colliding with Planet X! Planet X was moving 0 grids, and Planet R crashed moving 10 grids, giving a crash speed of 10. Planet R is a small 6x6 grid planet, and Planet X is a much larger 10x10 grid planet. Planet R does x60 damage to Planet X, and Planet X does x100 damage to Planet R. Planet R does 60x10 = 600 damage to Planet X causing horrendous damage, boiling its oceans, shattering mountains, etc, but the planet is still in one piece. Planet X does 100x10 =1,000 damage to Planet R, destroying it entirely.

If an inhabited planet is struck by a celestial body, the results are catastrophic. The loss of life is proportional to double the fraction of Hits the planet lost in the crash. This means it is impossible to wipe out all life on a planet without destroying it (you only have to reduce it to half its Hits). So if a planet with 1,000 Hits took 100 damage after soaking, it would mean that one-fifth of all life on that planet was destroyed! If a celestial body crashes into another and all of the damage is soaked, it still means horrible loss of life, but the damage will be concentrated in one area rather than a large fraction of all life.

Moving A Planet: To move a planet, you need Cosmic Might, or need Telekinesis or Push with the Annihilation enhancement. Every 5 levels in the power lets you affect a body with sides equal to 1 Grid (double this for Push). So to affect a 2x2 grid moon, you'd need 10 levels of Cosmic Might. The

distance you can move the object each page is 1 grid for every 5 levels you have beyond the minimum to affect it. So in the above example, if you had 20 levels, you could move that moon 2 grids in a page. If you don't have levels beyond the minimum to affect the object, all you can do is slow it down, or move it in squares (not worth measuring at cosmic scale). However, sometimes being able to move a moon a few feet might be enough to save it.

If an object is already moving in grids, the character might increase its rate of movement by pushing with it, or slow it down by pushing against it. An object would have to be slowed down to 0 grids before its course can be reversed, but orbits can be altered inward or outward without stopping the forward momentum.

You can stop the rotation of a planet if you can affect double the planet's size in Grids. So 20 pts of Cosmic Might is enough to stop a 2x2 Grid moon's rotation.

Note- it is possible for some planets to be exceptionally dense or light. Simply double or halve its effective grid size for the purposes of how hard it is to move.

Cosmic Powers

One thing that the Cosmic setting is known for is blowing the lid off what the reader thought was possible- even for other superheroes. Cosmic characters not only smash through walls, they can smash through planets.

To this end, the rules for powers need to be adjusted to function at the Cosmic level. For starters, there is no "ceiling" to Cosmic powers. Powers can go well beyond 5 levels. For many powers, it is simply a matter of following the power's description, using bigger numbers. So a Special Attack 8 could be used to do +8DM for example.

Other powers need to have special rules for how they function beyond 5 levels. There are also entirely new powers that are made to be used at the Cosmic scale.

Scaling Powers: Any power that can extend to 5pts can be scaled up to Cosmic levels. Powers that have fixed point costs, or that extend to less than 5pts cannot be scaled up to Cosmic levels. Any power that can be used with a range or area, however, can be used with the Space enhancement, and attack powers can be bought with the Annihilation enhancement.

Example: Super Running can be scaled up to Cosmic levels, because it has a point cost of 1-5pts. Armor, however, cannot be scaled up to Cosmic levels, as it has a listed cost of 1-3pts. Likewise, Super Speed cannot be scaled to Cosmic levels, as it has a fixed cost of 3 or 5pts.

Most powers that are scalable to Cosmic levels, you simply continue applying the existing rules beyond 5 levels. The following powers require certain adjustments (See BASH! Ultimate Edition for details): *Push*, *Scan*, *Telekinesis*, *Duplication*, *Growing*, *Shrinking*, *Stretching*

Recommended Powers: Immunity is a very important power in any cosmic campaign that will deal with space or extra-dimensional travel. A common power for space-faring beings is Immunity 4: Cold, Radiation, Suffocation, and Starvation.

Flight or Teleportation is absolutely necessary unless you want characters to be dependent on vehicles or to remain on a single world. The Space Enhancement makes Flight useful even at the Grid scale.

Finally, the character should have something from the Cosmic category of powers.

Cosmic Power Enhancements

Annihilation (5pts): This enhancement is added to attack powers to make possible such feats as the destruction of planets (or moving them). Any power with this enhancement does double collateral damage and ignores the -5DM penalty applied to attacking objects with a size in Grids. It is also possible to use Push and Telekinesis to move objects in Grid size, but you'd need the Space enhancement as well on those powers to move them in Grids.

Space (1pt): This is an Enhancement to the Flight power, and to any powers using range or area. This enhancement is necessary for a character to leave or enter an atmosphere with Flight. While in space, Instead of measuring distance in squares, this power is measured in Grids (every 5 squares of Flight becomes 1 Grid of Space Flight). Without this Enhancement, any battle where Grids are being used as measurement, the character can only interact within a single Grid.

In addition, the speed per hour that you can move with Space Flight is far greater than what you can do within an atmosphere; essentially like a "warp drive". A distance that is one level less can be crossed in 10 minutes, and a distance that is one level more can be crossed in 10 hours. A distance two levels less can be crossed in 1 minute, and a

distance that is two levels greater can be crossed in a week. A distance three levels less (or fewer) can be crossed in 10 seconds and a distance three levels greater can be crossed in a year. The apparent incongruity of these figures is the result of time dilation (the faster you go, time slows down).

Level	Distance	Speed per Hour
1	1 Grid	several hundred miles
2	2 Grids	several thousand miles
3	3 Grids	Orbit the Earth (tens of thousands of miles)*
4	4 Grids	To the moon (hundreds of thousands of miles)
5	5 Grids	Anywhere in the star system (millions of miles)
6	6 Grids	Between star systems (tens of light-years)
7	7 Grids	To a distant star system (several thousand light-years)
8	8 Grids	Across the Galaxy (hundreds of parsecs)
9	9 Grids	Beyond the Galaxy, (immeasurable)
10	10 Grids	Across the Universe

Cosmic Power Category

In addition to augmenting existing powers, there are some powers that only fit within the Cosmic scale. These powers "The Cosmic Category" cannot be placed in a multi-power, and are bought in 5 level increments. Enhancements and Limitations affect the point cost of these powers at a rate of 1/5th the power's level, instead of +1/-1 point. Because all the Cosmic powers are bought in 5 level increments, this should be easy. So a level 20 Cosmic power with an Enhancement costs 24 points, and a level 20 power with a Limitation would cost 16 points. A level 20 power with one Limitation and two Enhancements would cost 24 points (20/5 = 4. 20-4+4+4 = 24). As normal, you only get a break in the point cost from a single Limitation.

As an option, the Narrator may allow characters in another scale to take powers from the Cosmic category, but should be wary of doing so, and limit how much can be taken (maybe even to 5 levels). These powers do often appear in lower scaled settings, however, these are usually as some plot device- a cloning machine, or one that grants powers, a character being brought back to life- are extraordinary things, even for superheroes.