

1983
2019



Gulf of
Korea

S E A
O F

J A P A N

H O N D O

P A C I F I C

Y E Z O
(HOKKAIDO)

T s u b a r u
S t r.

H O N S H I U

H O N S H I U

P A C I F I C

K I U S H I U

V a n D i e n
S t r.
(O -Kaikyo)

MERCENARIES

SPIES
&

PRIVATE EYES

COMBINED EDITION

KUCIARESKI '83

MERCENARIES

SPIES

&

PRIVATE EYES™

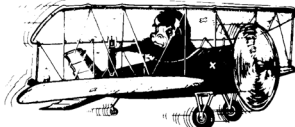
The Combined Edition

**A Role-Playing Game of
Pulp adventures for the
Early Industrial, Victorian
Modern and Near Future Eras**

written by
Michael A. Stackpole

edited by
Liz Danforth

illustrations by
Brian Hamilton
Michael Kucharski
Steven S. Crompton
Liz Danforth



Flying Buffalo Inc.

Dedication



*To Jacques Futrelle:
Lost on April 15, 1912
but not forgotten.
Rest pleased with the happiness you have given others.*

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A “lost” MSPE illustration by Liz Danforth that was only used in Sorcerer’s Apprentice magazine. It was part of an advertisement that announced the team-up between MSPE and Espionage RPGs. For a time, both games products had stats for each other’s rpgs in their adventures.

Welcome to MSPE: the Combined Edition

by Steve Crompton, MSPE Reprint Editor/Art Director

I remember working on this book back in 1982-83. It was right after the huge success of the first Indiana Jones movie, and we were all excited about the idea of having RPG adventures in a Pulp adventure or Spy setting. (*At the time it was a brand new concept!*) Michael Stackpole was a huge fan of that genre, and he spent an enormous amount of time developing Flying Buffalo's next RPG, which ended up being called *Mercenaries, Spies & Private Eyes*.

I designed the MSPE logos (which were inspired by the *Raiders of the Lost Ark* film) and was assigned the task of drawing the guns and any additional illustrations (illos) needed to fill in the gaps in the layout that Kucharski's art didn't. I also did some of the paste-up along with Niki Canotas. Liz Danforth was the art director and editor. When it came out, we were all very proud and felt like we had reached a new pinnacle of quality in gaming design and graphics with MSPE.

Eventually, there were two different editions of *Mercenaries Spies & Private Eyes*. The first edition was published in 1983 by Blade (then a division of Flying Buffalo.) The second edition was published by Sleuth Publications in 1986.



Sleuth Publications

Over the years MSPE grew a steady following of T&T and Pulp fiction fans who appreciated what MSPE was. They played and adapted it to suit their own gaming needs - which is exactly how *Mercenaries, Spies & Private Eyes* was meant to be. The release of *Deluxe Tunnels & Trolls* in 2015 brought more interest and demand for MSPE, so we have put together this reprinting of the classic RPG.

As I started compiling this 2019 reprinting of MSPE, I soon discovered that there were things in the Blade version that aren't in the Sleuth version and visa versa. (You can easily tell which book is which, by the cover; the Blade version has a beautiful full-color painting on it, while the Sleuth edition has just a black and white cover.

But inside are other differences: For example: The Blade edition had a section called *Tunnels & Thompsons*, which helps explain how to use MSPE with T&T. Since Sleuth Publications didn't sell T&T, they



One of Michael Kucharski's illos that was used in the Blade Edition, but not in the Sleuth edition.

removed that from their edition and inserted other information. There were also a few places where illos from the first edition were replaced with more appropriate illustrations to better match the text.

The Sleuth edition had a section on aging rules, pre-rolled characters (illustrated by Liz Danforth), a special MSPE Character folder, and some character portraits you can cut out and use on the character folder. (*These did not appear in the Blade edition.*)

At first, I was in a quandary over which edition to scan. In the end, we decided that you fans would most enjoy having ALL those things in one book, so we added it all in and then I renumbered the pages.

I also fixed some typos and errors that fans had found over the years. (*No guarantee I got them all!*) Added an illo or two in blank places where there were no illos, and we added new short pieces about using MSPE in sci-fi or pulp settings, to expand upon playing in that genre. And of course the new articles and expansion rules from Mike Stackpole himself.

We want to extend a special thanks to you fans out there who helped make the Kickstarter for this reprint such a great success. Your support and suggestions have made this book far better than we had thought possible - so thanks from all of us!

So you are now holding in your hands not just a reprint, but a 3rd edition of MSPE. We call it the **Combined Edition**. And we hope you'll enjoy this new, enhanced version of our classic RPG. ◆

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*denotes new or expanded content from previous editions
 ▽ denotes content that was only in Sleuth edition.

