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by Steven E. Schend

THE MARVEL[®]-PHILE

Be careful what you wish for

This month, "The MARVEL[®]-Phile" takes a look at the newest hero on the block: Darkhawk. He is the latest of Marvel's inner-city heroes, taking on local crime lords for justice (and just a little revenge). He's attracted the attention of the Hobgoblin and Spider-Man with his powers and deeds, and both are trying to decide which side he's on. Darkhawk's a mystery to the citizens and law enforcers of New York, but he's just as much a mystery to himself!

DARKHAWK[™]

**Chris Powell/
Darkhawk**

F	PR (4)/TY (6)	Health: 22/96
A	TY (6)/RM (30)	
S	TY (6)/RM (30)	Karma: 30
E	TY (6)/RM (30)	
R	PR (4)/PR (4)	Resc.: GD (10)
I	TY (6)/TY (6)	
P	EX (20)/EX (20)	Pop.: 0

POWERS: Chris Powell has no super powers, but his alter ego Darkhawk does.

Alter Ego: When Chris Powell grasps his mysterious amulet and wills it, his body transforms into a super-powered alter ego, Darkhawk. The two bodies seem wholly distinct and separate, as one body can be injured while the other is unharmed, but both bodies have the mind of Chris Powell. Darkhawk's costume seems to be part of his body, and the amulet becomes a chest emblem, though various costume parts (such as his helmet and his retractable glider wings) can be removed. At present, Chris Powell has just recently seen Darkhawk's face under the helmet, but what lies under the helmet, however shocking, is yet a mystery to readers. The powers that follow are for Chris's Darkhawk persona.

—**Power Blasts:** Darkhawk has the ability to fire Remarkable (30) strength blue force blasts from the amulet on his chest. The beam presently has a wide focus and affects a one-quarter-area-diameter cone with a two-area range. With a Yellow Psyche FEAT roll, Darkhawk should be able to limit the blasts to one particular



target. He cannot fire blasts while his shield is functioning.

—**Force Field:** When Darkhawk wishes for protection, a red energy shield emerges from the amulet. The shield offers Incredible (40) physical protection and Remarkable (30) energy protection. It can affect only one area, and it exclusively protects Darkhawk's front. A Psyche FEAT must be made every round to maintain this protective shield. It cannot be maintained if Darkhawk fires a force blast.

—**Gliding:** Darkhawk has Typical (6) air speed when his glider wings are extended, allowing him up to six areas per round of gliding.

—**Grappling Hook:** On Darkhawk's right wrist is mounted a grappling hook and firing mechanism. Darkhawk can fire this with Incredible (40) accuracy (see "Talents"), and its clawlike hook can inflict Good (10) Edged damage. It can grasp small objects or entangle larger objects on an Agility FEAT roll. The hidden mecha-

nisms within Darkhawk's forearm housing allow the hook to be fired at will, and it can rewind itself almost immediately.

—**Elongation:** The grappling hook can stretch its cable to allow Poor (4) elongation, granting Darkhawk a range of two areas with his grappling hook.

—**Telescopic Vision:** Darkhawk has exhibited a Good (10) range Enhanced Vision power that he has used in targeting his claw-cable (+1CS to attacks and grapples). It allows him to fire his hook without range penalties. For other purposes, consider this power to allow him to see objects or people two areas closer than they truly are (e.g., Darkhawk could see a person three areas away as if the person were only one area distant, and could see an open book two areas away as if he were holding it in his hand).

—**Regeneration:** When Darkhawk transforms back into Chris Powell, a hidden regeneration power activates, healing any injuries to his body with Incredible ability. Within three rounds, Darkhawk's body is healed of any injuries sustained during combat. This ability apparently does not apply to Chris Powell's body while in Darkhawk form, nor does it occur while Darkhawk is active.

TALENTS: Darkhawk has the Marksman talent with his grappling hook (Incredible (40) accuracy with the hook). No further talents have been revealed for either form.

HISTORY: Darkhawk's history begins recently when Christopher Powell, the eldest son of an attorney and a policeman, was in the abandoned funhouse of the Wonderland Amusement Park in Queens, New York, searching for his two little brothers. The three of them discovered their policeman father receiving money from Phillippe Bazin, a local criminal. The boys rushed to protect their father after he was beaten by Bazin's goons, and they quickly became targets, too.

Fleeing the goons, Chris secured the boys in a closet and delayed Bazin's hitmen with by throwing everything he could find at them. While clearing away shelves, he came across a diamond-shaped amulet. Grasping the amulet, he thought of needing "an edge" and the power to defeat the hoods. Suddenly, Chris transformed into the form now known as Darkhawk.

He speedily defeated Bazin's men, though one of them died when the goon attempted to electrocute Darkhawk but

the electrical cable he was holding came into contact with the voltage box. Chris got his little brothers out safely, but his father left abruptly after being caught "on the take."

In his short career, Darkhawk has made some very powerful enemies. After his first encounter with the hit men, Darkhawk has shadowed many of Bazin's illegal operations, doing everything he can to destroy the man's criminal empire. Darkhawk has even personally threatened Bazin and doesn't seem to care about the consequences.

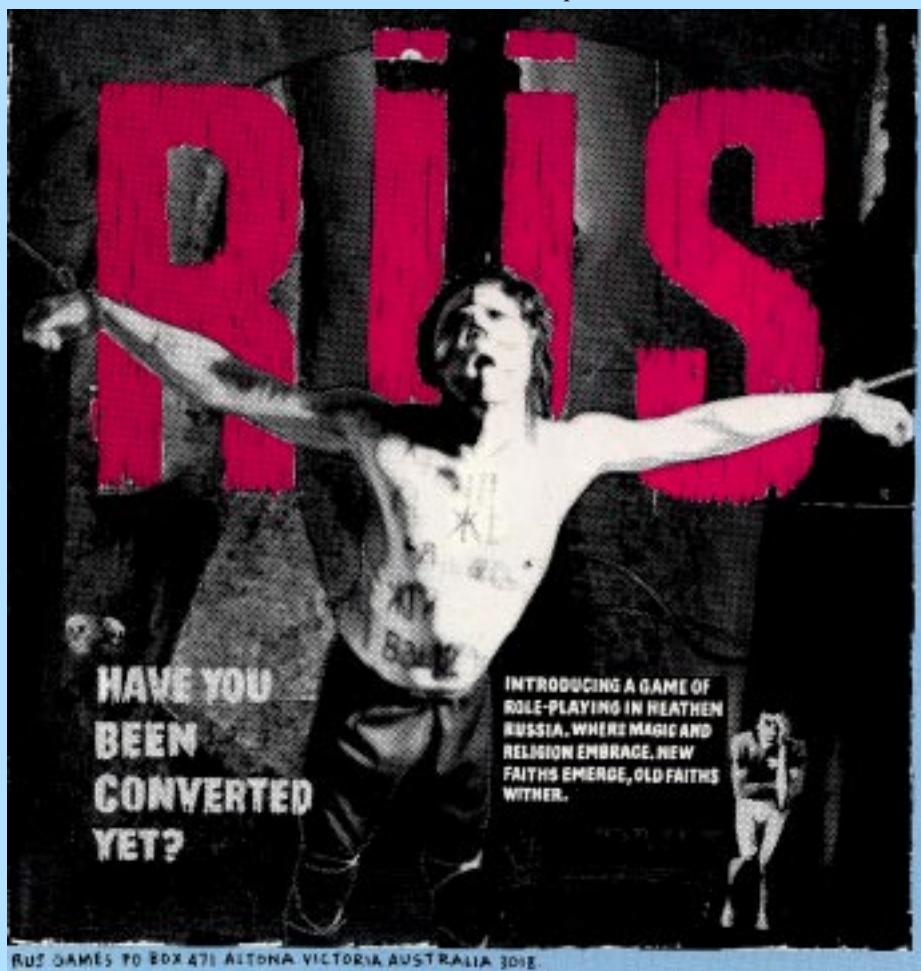
Darkhawk's most deadly foe is the Hobgoblin, the demonic mercenary currently on Bazin's payroll. Hobgoblin is searching for an "object of power," and he believes Darkhawk's amulet to be it. They have clashed twice, but Spider-Man has interfered in both fights, and the confrontations ended in stalemates. Darkhawk nearly choked Hobgoblin to death with his claw-cable in their last encounter, but Spider-Man let Hobgoblin get away alive and rebuked Darkhawk for using such unnecessary force.

Chris is now worried about his use of force, since he lost his temper against Savage Steel, an armored vigilante working with some policemen. Chris is trying to control himself when in his alter ego, but he has not shared his secret identity with anyone yet.

Christopher Powell was a normal teenager, raised with a strong belief in the law and the feeling that the forces of good needed an edge against crime. When he gained the power of the Darkhawk, his wish for an edge came true. Unfortunately, the power came with costs. Chris has alienated his friends and is now much more short-tempered. His nerves are further stretched by the threats of the Bazin mob and by ominous phone calls and notes that indicate someone knows his secret identity and wants him to retire Darkhawk quickly.

Finally, there are the appearances of Saint Johnny, a homeless man, around the old Wonderland property; he was around the first night Chris became Darkhawk and actually suggested the name to him—Chris had initially introduced himself as the Edge-Man, but luckily abandoned this name quickly. The vagrant seems to know more about Darkhawk than Chris does, though his connection is unrevealed.

ROLE-PLAYING NOTES: Chris Powell is a typical New York adolescent in a very atypical situation. He is brave and a quick thinker under pressure, but he is prone to making rash and sometimes careless decisions. After seeing his policeman father on the payroll of a local criminal, Chris is disheartened by the law enforcement and



legal system and works as a vigilante. He strongly believes in the fight of justice against criminals (his most common phrase is "Justice needs a razor-sharp edge"), but he is unsure as to where the line between justice and vengeance is drawn. Darkhawk tends to use excessive force, but Chris is trying to keep his temper and thirst for revenge in check.

Darkhawk could appear in your campaign while trailing Bazin or some of his men. Your heroes could intercede in a conflict between them and would then have to decide who is the villain: a normal-looking man or the dark-costumed man roughing him up. If the Hobgoblin is in your campaign, perhaps Darkhawk comes hunting for him, or perhaps the Hobgoblin captures Darkhawk in an attempt to wrest the amulet from him. If your heroes are well respected (have high Popularity scores), perhaps Darkhawk will come to them for training and help in controlling his temper.

MARVEL BULLETIN BOX

Puck

Alpha Flight's dwarf gymnast has new powers due to the genetic manipulations of the Master. Puck now has Remarkable (30) Strength, Amazing (50) Endurance, and Excellent (20) strength Body Armor vs. physical damage.

Super-errors

Two errors crept into "The MARVEL®-Phile" in DRAGON® issue #169. In the first paragraph of the Ghost's History section, there's a sentence that begins, "Pax hoped that..." In that sentence, the words "weaken" and "damage" were reversed. The sentence should read, "Pax hoped that the damage the Ghost did would further *weaken* Accutech's financial standing, making it more amenable to Roxxon's next offer of purchase."

Also, the word "not" was dropped from a sentence in the first paragraph of the

"Role-playing Notes" section of Ghost Rider's entry. The sentence that begins, "It is interesting to speculate..." should read, "It is interesting to speculate on whether or not Ghost Rider would appear, for example, to get a kitten out of a tree—something most heroes would *not* be reluctant to perform."

Now you can put away your red pens and get back to enjoying the magazine.

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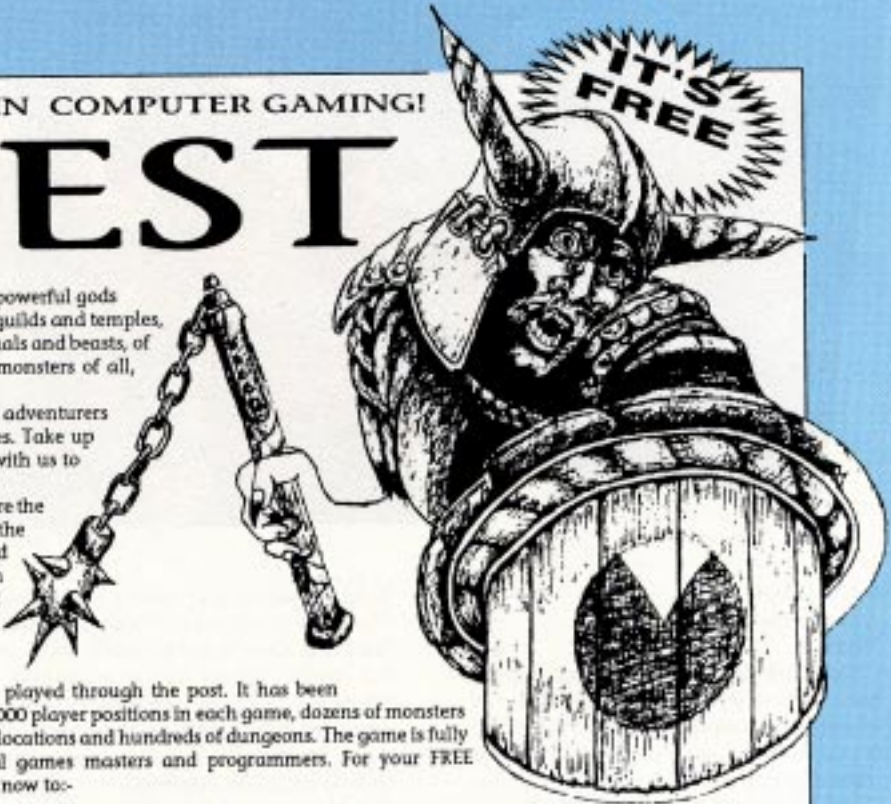
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