

HEX Gauntlet

Draft v. 0.2 - Manowa edition

by LawAnon

Introduction:

You find yourself powerless, reduced to your body mod in a strange realm. Swirling, glowing mists slowly change color in kaleidoscopic fashion, so dense that you can't see the ground beneath your feet - if there is any. Heading in a random direction, the fog begins to thin, and you find yourself in a chaotic landscape, an oasis from the mists, instead filled with strange plants and alien rock formations.

In the center of this jumbled terrain is a single structure - a yawning pit surrounded by various seating accomodations. Within the pit is a strange arena composed of nineteen hexagonal pillars. Atop the pillars, a mismatched pair of strange beings engage in some sort of dance, or ritual - no, more some kind of live-action board game? Constantly moving and casting spells, the patterns of colors atop the hexes change and flow hypnotically. In the seats watching the spectacle and muttering to one another are a variety of strange beings. Your approach is soon noticed by one of the spectators and, as you are pointed out, more and more of those watching the event in the arena turn from the match to size you up, speculation gleaming in their eyes.

Taking a place among them, you watch the match and listen in to the others gathered here, and soon piece together some information: You are in an area carved out from the ethereal space between dimensions by a powerful elemental being. This area is an interdimensionally accorded neutral ground: Violence is magically restricted and effectively impossible here. Wizards and magical beings from across the multiverse convene here to

compete in a game of magic and strategy that they refer to as HEX. It's not hard to guess why you've been dropped here. It looks like to move on in your journeys you'll have to compete in the upcoming HEX league.

You have **0 CP**. Make it count, Jumper!

The Game:

To complete this Gauntlet, you will have to win your way through 120 matches - a single opponentless round in which to get your bearings and do your best to glean some additional Capacity (more on that momentarily) and seventeen sets of seven matches against increasingly difficult opponents. In later sets you will even find yourself facing pairs of opponents!

The hexagonal pillars (the tops of which are referred to as 'hexes') comprising the arena are enchanted to accrue 'flips' when moved over or jumped on. Pillars with accrued 'flips' have darkened sides compared to unflipped pillars. When all of the hexes in a contiguous group of one color have accumulated a flip, they expend a flip and change color, much like a game of Q*Bert. The hexes will cycle through four different colors in a sequence, (green, red, purple, blue, then back to green) and if a hex adjacent to the group is the same as the new color, it becomes 'locked' to the group as well. To win a match is simple: Turn all the hexes in the arena to your assigned color. (Green.) See **tl;dr: Some Examples of Play** for a more visual explanation of all this.

In each match, you and your opponents take turns moving about the arena. Each turn, you will regain a small amount of spent spell energy determined by the number of green hexes in the arena, but lose a small amount of your magical Capacity - the upper limit of your ability to hold spell Energy. (This loss increases in higher sets, making them much more arduous.) You will also have the opportunity to expend spell energy to cast a spell, and also to make a move. A move is typically a single hop to the same or an unoccupied adjacent hex, accruing a single flip to that hex, but a number of spells will change that option significantly. Swift, precise, and efficient strategies for clearing a board are key, as the Capacity drain carries over from match to match. Conservation of spell Energy is also important, as current Energy is also carried over between matches.

Losing a match is also simple: If all the hexes in the arena are purple, you lose. If all the hexes are blue or red, or you do not win or lose in 100 turns, the match is a draw. Winning a match advances you to the next round and increases your Capacity by 250 or more. (The prize goes up in the higher sets.) Losing a match forces you to beat your previous opponent again before you can attempt a rematch, and also costs you 400 Capacity on top of everything else.

Drawing allows you to rematch immediately. (You will still be down the Capacity lost in the drawn match, so stalling via Draws is inadvisable.) You can fail the Gauntlet in one of two ways - run out of Capacity during or between matches, or somehow lose the very first match.

tl;dr: Some Examples of Play

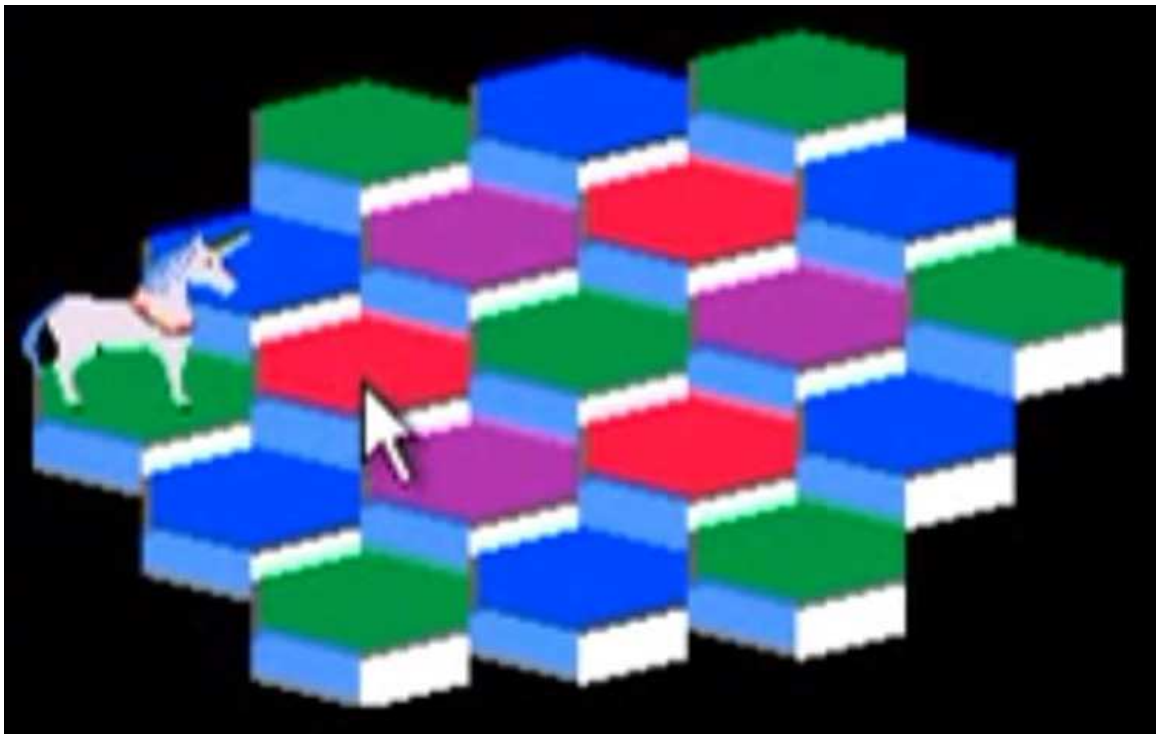


Fig. 1: The tutorial arena layout, as the match starts. Normally, no opponent on this level.

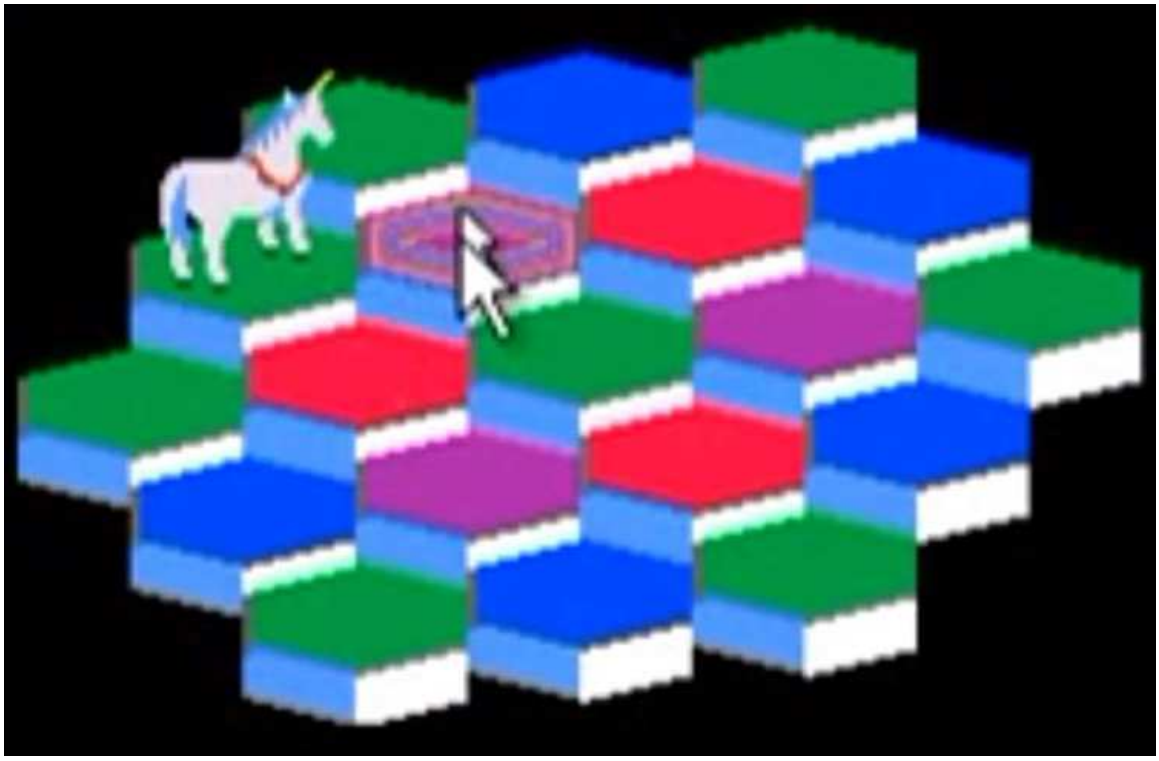


Fig. 2: The player jumps to the hex on his upper right. It accrues a flip, which is immediately spent by changing it from blue to green. Green is good!

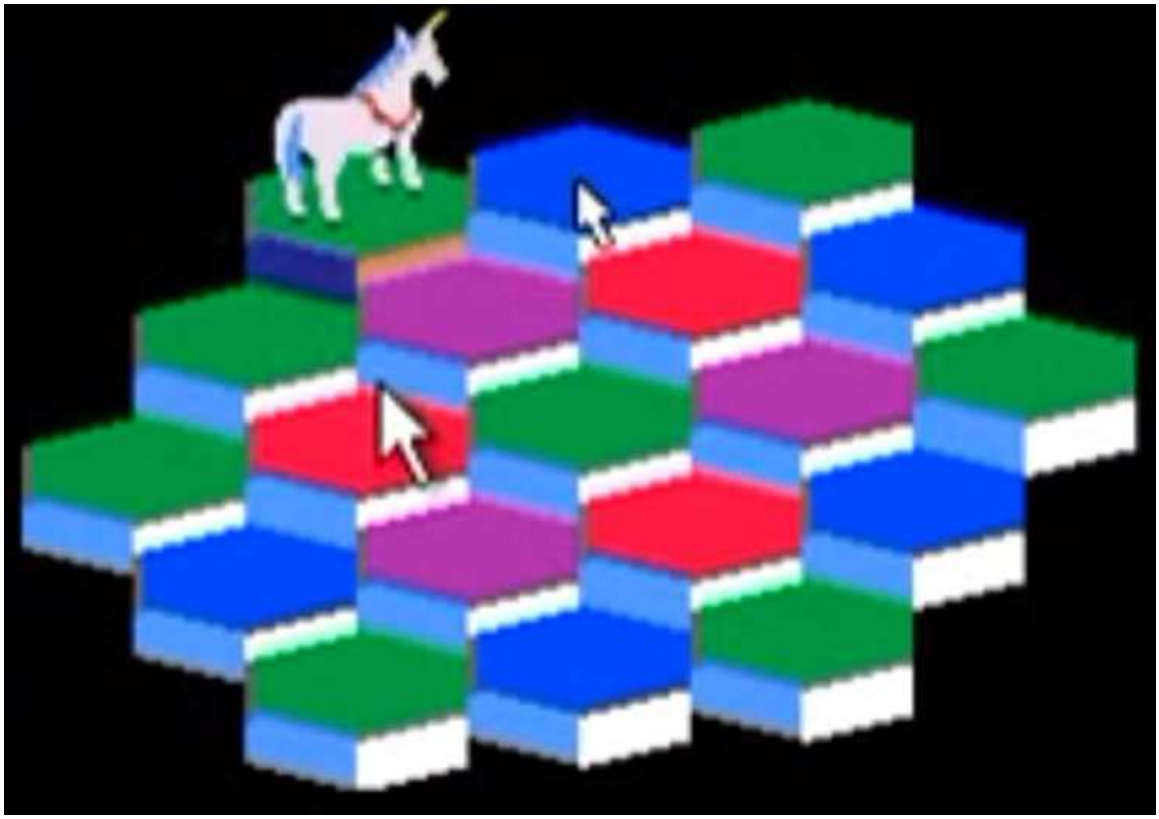


Fig. 3: The player again jumps to the hex on his upper right. This time, the hex accrues a flip, turning its pillar brown. It does not change color, however, because the hex to its lower left is also green and does not have any flips accrued. You do have to move during your turn, even if it's to jump in place, and that will accrue another flip on the hex you're on.

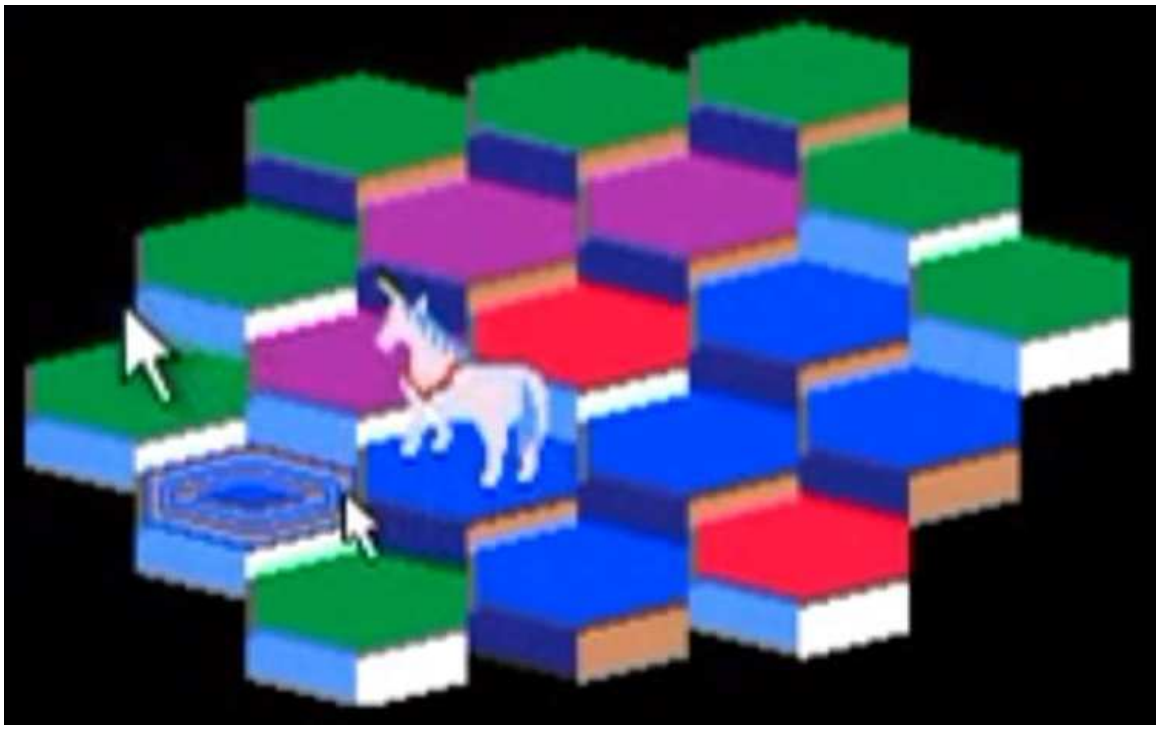


Fig. 4: Several turns later, the player has ammased a large group of blue hexes. All but one have accrued flips. (Some have multiple accrued!) By jumping on the unflipped one to his left...

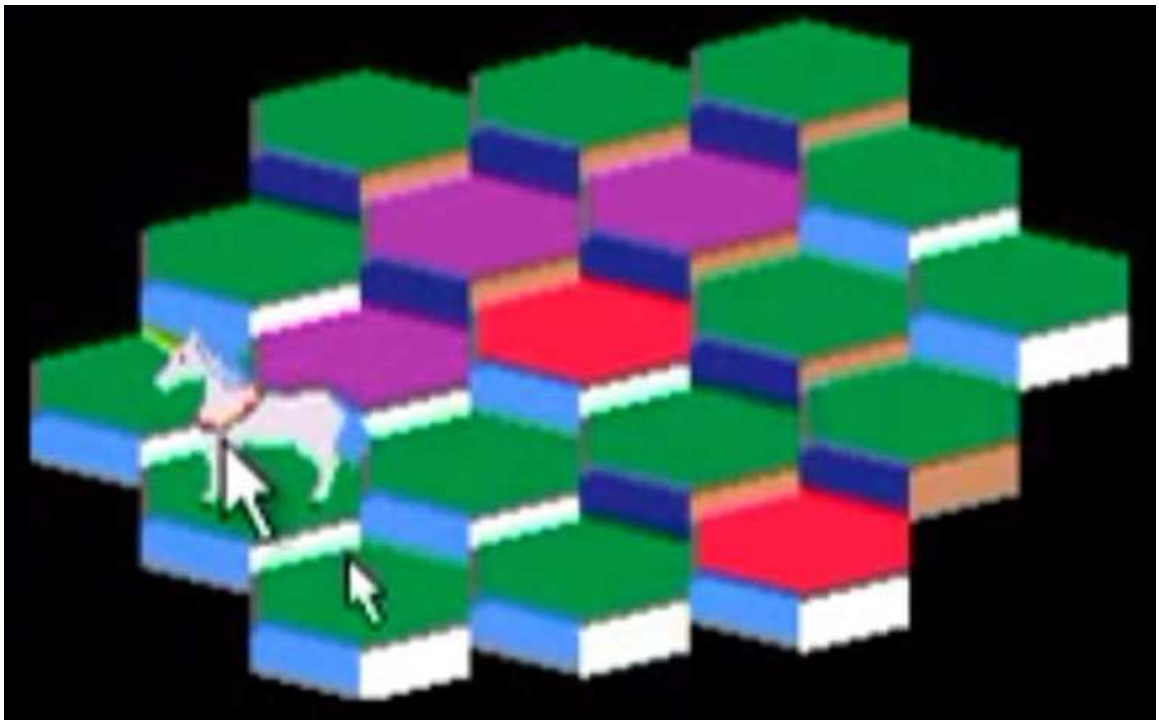


Fig. 5: ...the entire group expends a flip and changes color! The ones that had multiple accrued

flips still have flips left, and their pillars remain brown. The ones which spent their last accrued flip change their sides back to a pristine white.

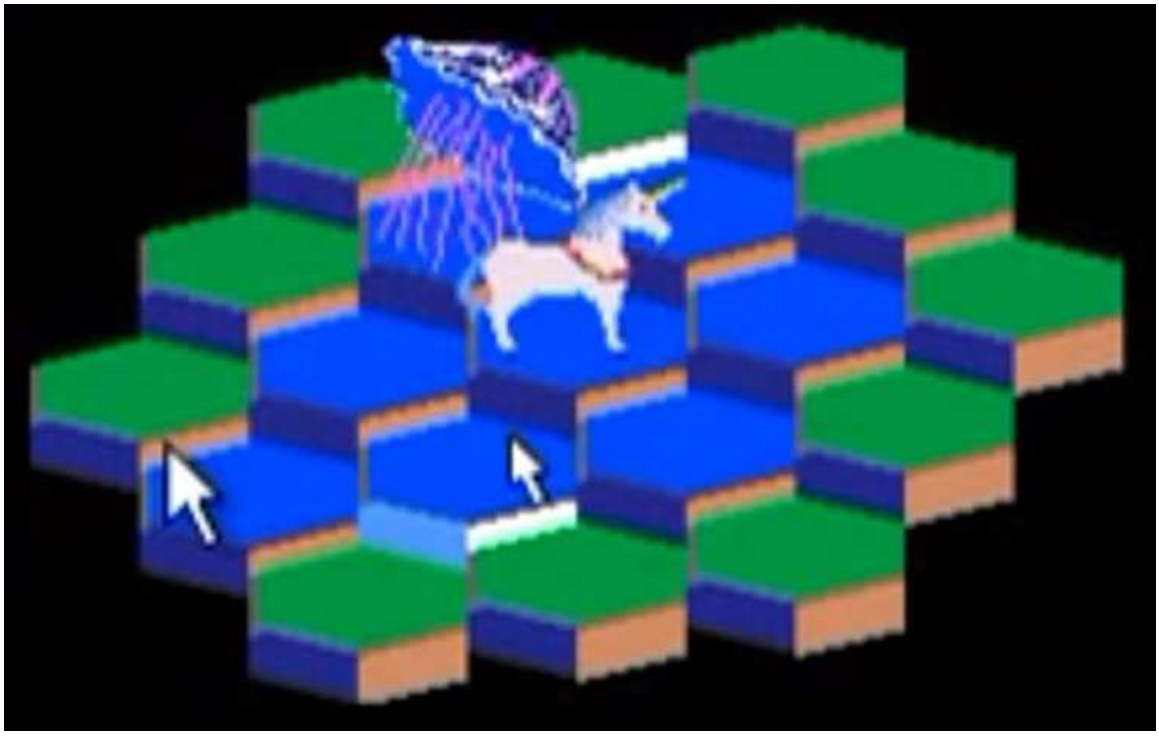


Fig. 6: Here's why camping hexes generally isn't a valid strategy. Manowa here is standing on a blue hex, (and remember, if they aren't moving, then they're jumping in place and accruing flips on their hex for their turn.) and you can't jump on the hex an opponent is on...

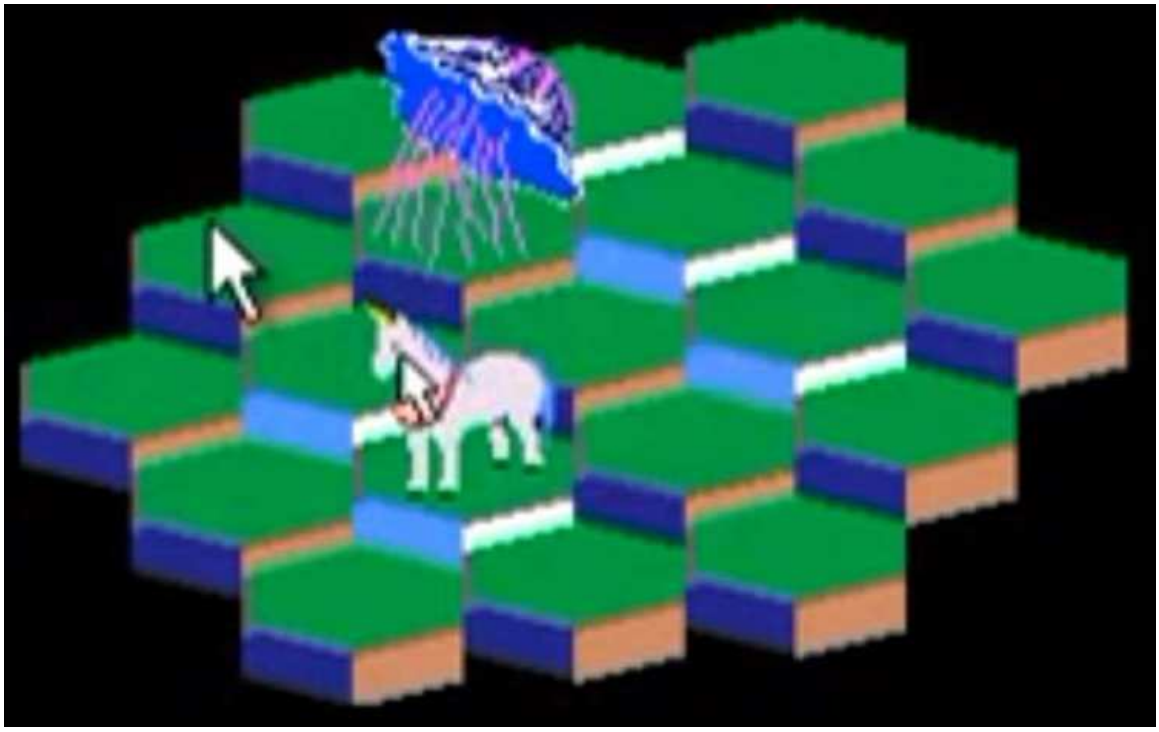


Fig. 7: ...but you can still change the color of the hex they're standing on, right out from under them! The player has just turned the whole arena green, winning the match!

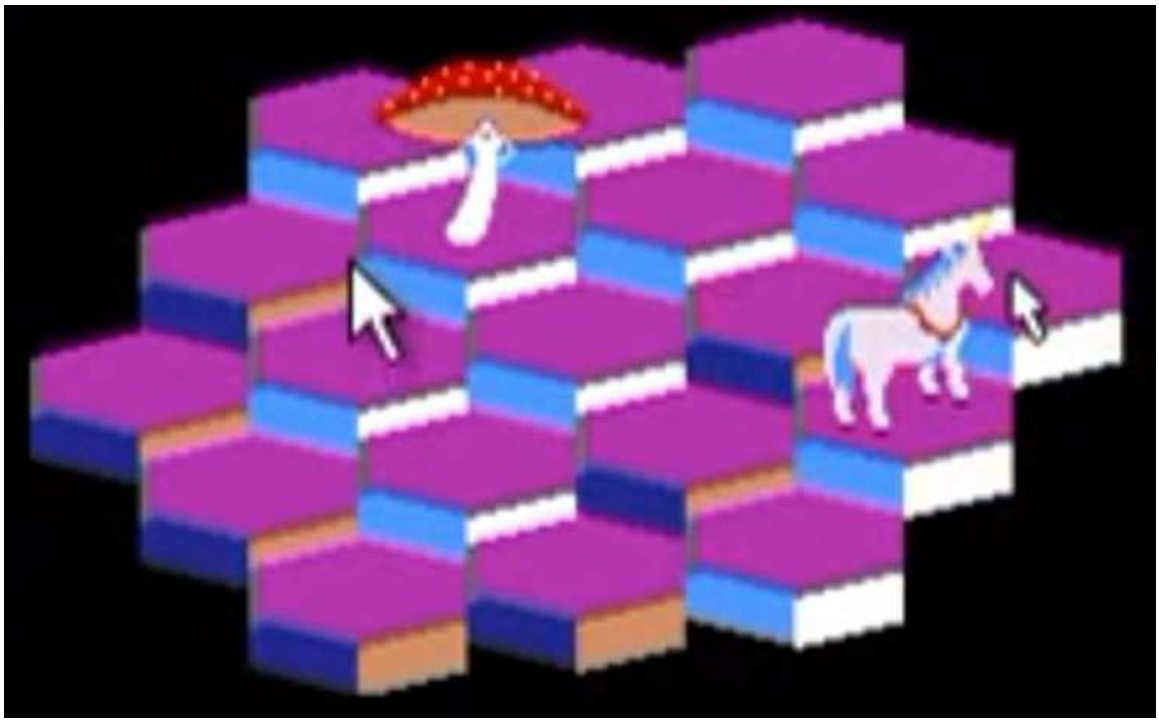


Fig. 8: And vice versa, letting your opponent change the arena purple is a match loss. That'll cost

a hefty amount of Capacity. If you hve enough Capacity you can keep trying from the previous match, but if you run out of Capacity it's Game Over, Gauntlet Lost.

Origin

It's a Gauntlet. You are stripped to your basic Body Mod, with no access to out-of-jump perks, items, abilities, etc. You remain the same relative age, gender, etc. as you were in the previous jump. A time distortion similar to that which affects Fitzroy seems to be preserving you - even if you were so old as to be on death's door at the end of the previous jump, you won't die of old age here.

Perks

HEX Magic: (Free) You now have 5 spell slots. The spells imbued within these slots may be cast as long as you have the Energy to pay their costs, requiring naught but a simple act of will to activate. While you start with only one of these slots filled, (with the unique spell 'Help') you will be able to change that a you receive offerings. Offerings will be made to you at the end of each successful HEX match, in-jump, and will be either a brand-new spell (which you may swap out the contents of one of your slots for) or an Upgrade. An Upgrade will affect either cost, (lowering the cost per turn of the spell) or duration and cost. (Which will lower the cost per turn, but add to the duration, potentially increasing the overall cost of the spell.)

HEX Magic spells do have some restrictions - a spell generally can't have more than 4 components, and some spells can't accept some upgrades. Spells with a duration have a down payment of half their energy cost, with the rest expended over the duration, and are automatically cancelled should you cast a second HEX Magic spell.

Should you pass the Gauntlet, this perk is upgraded substantially - see the rewards for details.

Extra Slot: (100 CP, May be taken multiple times) For each time you purchase this perk, you add an additional slot to the HEX Magic perk, granting you additional versatility.

Thoroughbred: (100 CP, May be taken multiple times) You may not be comfortable about your chances of beating the Gauntlet with the meager 500 Capacity you start with. Each purchase of Thoroughbred grants you an additional 1000 Capacity to start with.

Energy Leech: (200 CP) Without this perk, you would normally regain spent energy during a match in one of two ways: a tithe harvested from the hexes of your color each of your

turns, and an eighth of the energy used by an opponent when casting their own spells. With this perk? It still works that way. And then this perk does it again, doubling your gains from such measures in-jump. Outside this jump, you will still passively draw magic power from territories you control and tithe the expenditures of opponents you face within a decent range, albeit at the normal, non-doubled, rate.

Breadwinner: (200 CP) Whenever you win a prize, whether it be in a lottery, contest, or competition, you recieve double the prize rewards instead. Twice the prize money, two trophies, two lifetime supplies of snack cakes, you get the idea. And here in the HEX arena, winning a match will grant you double the usual Capacity increase.

Scribed Soul: (400 CP) Sometimes you have to make tough choices. Your spell slots are full, and a cool new spell is offered to you, but none of the ones you have are useless or flat-out inferior to the one on offer. If you accept, whichever spell you replace is gone forever, along with any upgrades you've spent on it... Unless you have this perk, that is, in which case you have a sort of permanent record in your soul of all the HEX Magic spells you've learned and later discarded. Given maybe a few hours of time, you can dredge one of these lost spells back into your spell slots, replacing another spell, which itself is recorded in the same fashion. Now you won't need to feel bad about dumping a unique or niche spell like 'Help' for a more useful, but common spell like 'Move 3 Jump 2'...

Energy Spendthrift: (400 CP) Your HEX Magic spells now cost half as much - specifically, you no longer need to pay the initial down payment on a spell of half its cost, meaning there's no disincentive to cancelling a spell early in order to cast another spell. Post-jump, this half-off discount applies to all your magic, so long as that magic requires a divisible amount of a resource.

Canon Companion: (200/400/600 CP, May be taken multiple times) With this option, you can bring one of the other contestants with you on your journey. They're all capable magi with their own styles and specializations, and, naturally, come with the HEX Magic perk. For 200 CP you can choose from among Egbert the dodo, Manowa the man-o'-war, Fitzroy the triceratops, Amy the mushroom girl, Brazz the bee, Sir Jake the nothing knight, Phoebe the centaur, Kirion the ice fae, Kengar the jaguar, or Stephen the wizard. For 400 CP you can bring the dragon Rubicon, who will gain the benefit of Forbidden Combos after the jump, and for 600 CP you can bring the mighty elemental KRAKAWANN who will benefit from Forbidden Combos and 4 copies of Extra Slot. Each time you purchase this, you may select a different character to join your travels. See the Notes section for general information about the characters. One caveat - this is an investment of your CP: It gives you no immediate benefit. The contestants you befriend with this will join you at the end of the gauntlet and no earlier: You won't have the benefit of a second player on your team with this option, nor will you be able to skip playing against the ally you purchased to make the gauntlet easier.

Hex Preserver: (300 CP) Once per match, you may designate a hex of your color to be unaffected by your opponents' actions until your next turn, effectively preventing your opponents from winning the game that turn. In other words, you effectively have a 1-up, which this perk will act as once per 10 years in other jumps.

Forbidden Combos: (600 CP) So, it might technically be possible, but in practice such spells as 'Own Color Arena' simply aren't offered to HEX contestants. They're simply too game-breaking. But with this perk, you might well be offered such awesome power. Expect the energy costs to be prohibitive, with a spell that effectively lets you outright win a match costing several games' worth of winnings, but there are surely times when hitting an "I win" button for a pyrrhic victory is preferable to the alternative...

Companion Import: (600 CP) Import a companion to help you win matches! Technically, it's not even cheating, as you will be facing multiple allied opponents in later rounds, but you certainly should have a much easier time sweeping the early stages! The imported companion gains a copy of the other perks you purchase, including the HEX Magic freebie, and benefits from the gauntlet rewards should you complete the gauntlet, even if they don't make it to the end. A companion who loses all their Capacity loses the game and cannot help you in further matches, but does not cause you to fail the Gauntlet yourself. Due to both the nature of the game of Hex and the fact that this is a gauntlet, even particularly powerful companions are reduced to only using perks from this jump and prevented from using any innate advantages to bypass the rules of the great game. Alternatively, you may instead acquire a brand new Companion should you either have none or simply wish to gain a new one instaed of importing. In that case, the companion you acquire is a magnificent unicorn, who, while still an inexperienced young magic-worker, shows both great potential for growth and talent at the game.

Drawbacks

As this is a Gauntlet, there is no drawback limit. Take what you think you can handle.

The Computer Cheats: (+100 CP) Illusion magic can be a powerful and useful strategy, sending your opponent into wild goose chases, hiding your territory from them, or even tricking them into deconverting their own territories. But here it is less than worthless. Your opponents now seem to have a deeper connection to reality, automatically knowing the true state of the board at all times much like video game characters being controlled by the same computer that keeps track of the game state. Of course, you don't get this connection, and can still be fooled by your opponent's illusionary trickery.

The RNG Cheats: (+200 CP) Some spells are more random than others. Confusion

causes you to move or cast randomly, and spells like Random Flip, Random Color, or Scatter are effectively just pulls on the slot machine as to how useful they can be. But the problem with randomness is that it's quite possible for it to appear, well, *non*-random. Through freak coincidence, a random number generator could randomly generate the same number a million times in a row, for instance. Any number of improbabilities can be summed up as a single, even greater improbability, and no matter how improbable it gets that improbability isn't *impossible*. And you, dear Jumper, have effectively just rolled a natural 1 on that kazillion-sided die.

Your opponents get confused? They will randomly execute exactly the strategy they intended to anyway. You get confused? You will randomly execute exactly the moves that will wreak the most havoc on your own plans. Random Color spells will randomly always convert hexes to your opponent's colors, (unless you actually want that for some reason, in which case they will convert to a color that you don't want) Scatter spells might cluster up their strikes to create an easily-convertible blob right next to your opponent, and so on. And even though this might appear to be inimical, malvolent action, as if the universe has placed its thumb on the scale to bring you down, I assure you, Jumper, that it all truly is just random chance.

Expanded Roster: (+200 CP) Well, this is a multiversal gathering ground of dimension travelers, wizards and supernatural beings, after all. You now have to beat 154 matches to win the Gauntlet, with each of the 17 'sets' of matches being expanded from 7 matches to 9. The additional 2 matches in each set will match you against opponents plucked from previous jumps. One might have you face off against the tactical prowess of the Tiger-Force of the Universe, Darkseid, while another might be against a version of Shiva from Final Fantasy, and a third might have you face off against a team-up of a House Elf and an Oompa-Loompa. If you don't have enough (or any) previous jumps with applicable entities, expect to face off against the likes of Chupacabra, Yuki-Onna, Sasquatch, and other creatures of folklore.

The Swamp: (+300 CP) In later sets, the arena often starts in more and more disadvantageous conditions. Fewer, and more isolated green blocks. Giant blobs of purple blocks. Easy targets for conversion near your opponents, and more difficult configurations closer to you. Taking this makes it even worse. Hexes may start out under the effects of Toggle, or under one of the illusion effects. The arena could start out almost entirely purple, with the only green hex a single turn from your opponent's reach. Things can get blatantly unfair like this. Hopefully you can build an arsenal of spells to counter such jams before they start ruining your day.

Tag Team Challenge: (+400 CP) Normally, you only start encountering pairs of opponents a few sets into the challenge. Now you'll be facing them right out the gate. Every round in the challenge has an additional opponent added to it, meaning that in later rounds you may end up facing three opponents simultaneously, and the only round you'll only encounter one opponent is the very first 'tutorial' round, where you'd normally face an empty arena as a

way to get a feel for the mechanics.

RNG's Revenge: (+400 CP) The mark of a wizard is their spell selection. As such, it behooves you to build up the strongest, most useful, and most versatile collection of spells you can in your HEX Magic slots. Each offering you receive should be carefully evaluated: Would this spell be more useful? Would it be better to replace your Speed 5 spell with 5 cost reduction upgrades with this more powerful but vastly more expensive Speed 7 spell? Would upgrading this Own Flip spell to Own Flip Scatter be worth doing? And so on. Well, you'll need to do so far less now, Jumper. The number of times your offerings are at all useful to you will be reduced to a quarter of the previous rate.

KRAKAWANN Rekindled: (+600 CP) KRAKAWANN, the mighty quad-elemental. Creator of the HEX Arena. Ancient master of the game and its myriad subtleties. Nearly a god incarnate. No longer half-assing things. Expect your matches against this mighty being to be much, *much* more difficult, as he musters up particularly vicious strategies and powerful spells in every battle you face him in. Multiply cloning himself, ridiculous movement buffs, terraforming large chunks of the arena to his own color, locking your own movement and spells for short periods, and more. Often multiple of these strategies in a match in the later levels. And just to cement how potent he is at the game, he effectively gains an additional Extra Slot pre-filled with one of these nasty spells each time you encounter him in the arena, making him an ever-growing threat.

Here Comes A New Challenger!: (+0/+800 CP) A Street Fighter reference? Wha...? Oh, of course. Her. This is an arena where dimension-travelling wizards and godlike beings show off their prowess and hone their mystical strategy, after all. Did you really think your Benefactor wasn't the type to crash the party and flaunt her stuff in such an apropos setting? Well, she is, and she's going to have a match with you at least once this jump, some time when you least expect it. And boy, is she packing heat. The Benefactor is limiting herself to the use of HEX Magic, but she's got access to the kind of stuff found in the Forbidden Combos perk, an unknown number of Extra Slots, and *three* copies of Hex Preserver. Luckily, she prefers to play with her opponents and torment them, and won't get *serious* until she's down to one use of Hex Preserver, at which point the kid gloves come off. On top of this, if you also took Tag Team Challenge, she brings KRAKAWANN with her. I hope you didn't Rekindle him...

At the 0-point level, she's just here to show off. Losing the match with her does not lose you any Capacity and you return to the level of Energy you had before the match, win or lose. It doesn't even count toward the number of matches you need to win to pass the Gauntlet. You cannot fail the Gauntlet this way: The only real prize for winning the match is the sight of your Benefactor's adorable pouting face, and the only penalty for losing is the sight of your Benefactor's adorable smug face.

At the 800-point level, however, your Benefactor apparently feels like bullying you a

little bit, and is issuing you an actual challenge for your magical Capacity: Double or nothing. Win, and your current Capacity is doubled. Lose, and it falls to 0, instantly failing the Gauntlet.

The End

If you lost

No worries, this is a Gauntlet after all! Failure here won't end your chain. Just strip yourself of all the perks you purchased in this jump, take no Rewards, and skip to **The Choice**, below.

Winners, however, get to keep their perks and go right on to this next section:

Rewards

So! You actually won the game and beat the Gauntlet, have you? Amazing! We haven't seen a clean sweep by a newcomer in, well, ever, frankly! Here's a few gifts to commemorate your remarkable time here:

First, the Capacity you've accumulated through your various matches is permanently added to whatever magical energy pool you have that you so choose. Your HEX Magic perk will draw upon that pool as well from now on, of course.

Second, you now have a glorious Unicorn alt-form!



Third, your HEX Magic perk is upgraded to continue offering you new magic to fill your slots even after you leave here. At the end of each Jump/Gauntlet, or every 10 years, (whichever comes first) you will receive a special offering selection, allowing you to choose between a new spell, a duration upgrade, or a cost reduction upgrade instead of randomly being offered one of the three. Moreover, the spells and components on offer will be those appropriate to the universe you're in, (defaulting to HEX spells if the world you're in has no magic) often being modified or spliced into unique variants much as how HEX spells are. For instance, in a D&D 3E setting, you might be offered a Bull's Strength/Cat's Grace/Haste spell that grants all three effects at the same time, or a Fireball/Flesh to Stone spell that petrifies everything in the fireball's radius, or a Cure Moderate Wounds/Rary's Mnemonic Enhancer spell

that combines effects normally respectively exclusive to divine and arcane casting.

- If you have the Forbidden Combos perk, you'll find the offered spells can include much stronger or exclusive components, such as higher-level or specially-enhanced magics or those exclusive to specific bloodlines, and the synergy between the components can often be overwhelming. In the same D&D setting as the previous examples, you might find that you are offered an Epic spell, or a Maximized Quickened Horrid Wilting spell, or a Magic Missile/Fireball combo that makes each undodgeable no-saving throw Missile explode into a Fireball that retains the no-save aspect of the Magic Missile it's combined with.

Finally, you are always welcome to come back and have a match or seven when you have some down time. You may return to the Arena between jumps, whenever you'd like post-Spark, or via the use of dimension-traveling magic or perks. In addition, you may find other entities from the worlds you visited among the contestants, much like the Expanded Roster drawback above, only without extending the number of matches in a set. You're even free to just hang out in the areas outside the Arena and watch others play while conversing with the spectators if you wish. Note that this is effectively a vacation spot, and under a number of protections and restrictions - you're not going to be able to use this place to have any real meaningful interactions with things until post-chain. No trolling for boons from deities, sparring, combat, assassination, power-stealing, etc.

The Choice

Whether you won or lost, you have one final choice to make:

- **Go home:** Eh? Now of all times? Were you just taking this to get a few last perks for the road, or did a crushing defeat crush your will to continue? Well, you're still due a few parting gifts - your chain ends, and you're sent back to your home dimension with all the perks, items, and accumulated abilities you gathered throughout your chain up to this point. You may not have acquired your Spark, but you probably have enough cool powers to make waves when you return! So go get 'em, Tiger! I'm rooting for you! After all, just because I'm not sending you to new worlds anymore doesn't mean I won't be watching to see what you make of yourself and your home.

- **Continue the chain:** That's what I thought! As fun as it was, this was always just meant to be a short diversionary stop on your amazing journey, after all! Now, let's see... where was I going to send you next? Oh yeah! Hold on to your butt, Jumper! 'Cause your next stop is gonna be...!

Notes

Q) What's with all the unicorns? That seems kind of random!

A) The game was made by Mark of the Unicorn games. It's the company mascot. It's also the player character in the original game, who you are effectively taking the place of. Thus, you get a unicorn as an alt-form in the rewards. Taking the Unicorn option in the Companion Import option just means that rather than replacing them you're arriving at the same time and enter a 'rookie alliance' of sorts to climb the ranks as a team. You still get the alt-form if you don't replace them, because company mascot.

The Companion Unicorn's background is almost entirely absent. As the Player in the original game, they're merely noted in the manual as an 'inexperienced young magic-worker' that somehow made it to the Arena, with the other magicians publically scoffing at the newbie, but privately worried about being shown up by an apparently talented newcomer. Any other details like gender or past is entirely up to you to decide when you take the companion option.

Q) Why is the Companion Import so expensive, compared to Canon Companion?

A) As noted in Canon Companion, you aren't getting any help beating this Gauntlet from the Canon Companion purchased. The Companion Import option effectively gives you a Tag Team Challenge buddy of your very own. So the Unicorn may be as expensive as the much more powerful KRAKAWANN, but you're much more likely to win the Gauntlet in the first place if you pick up the Unicorn.

Spell List:

These are the various spells native to HEX magic, and how they work both in and out of the setting:

Help - You start the game with the single spell Help. In-setting, this spell plays it's duration for you: i.e. it takes over your body and plays the game to a certain level of competency until it runs out of duration (which begins at 5 turns/minutes). You remain aware while this occurs, and can watch your own actions to learn basic gameplay, for instance. Outside of the setting, this spell can be used to auto-pilot you through any number of tasks: The spell is always at least professionally competent at whatever skill you need, even if that requires knowledge you lack: You could use it to pick a lock, and it would be a competent lockpick, but if you used it to crack a safe or defuse a bomb it might just casually use the safe's combination or clip the correct wire and skip the rigamarole.

Jump # - allows you to jump to a distant area. 'Jump 3', for example, allows you to leap up to 3 hexes away, flipping only the last hex you land on. When it is in a multi-part spell, Jump takes precedence, allowing you to move to a distant hex before applying the remainder of the spell. Outside of the setting, this continues to do pretty much the same thing, allowing you to leap long distances, with the higher the number attached to the spell conferring a greater leap distance within the same time.

Flip # - controls the number of times you flip a hex when you land on it. Without magic you only flip a hex once when you land on it; with spells, however, you can flip a hex two or three times, or not at all. Flip spells will not always changes the color of a hex becuase they do not negate the effects of locking. Since flipping doesn't really have a counterpart outside of HEX, Flip spells don't really do much of anything at all out-of-jump.

There are also several subspells associated with flipping:

* **Clear Flips** removes stored flips from a hex and turns its pillar light.

* **Random Flip** can flip a hex a random number of times (from 0 to 3), or

clear it.

* **Own Flip** puts the correct number of flips (0-3) on a hex to make it your

color. Own Flip acts like Clear Flips on hexes that are already your color.

Speed # - is a powerful haste effect, allowing you to take multiple actions in the space of a single one. When combined with other components, Speed allows you to perform them all repeatedly during a turn. For example 'Spd3Jmp2Flp2' allows you to leap two hexes and double-flip the hex you land on, three times in a single turn. High levels of Speed can be a tremendously broken ability in HEX, and a cheap, powerful Speed spell is a recommended as a permanent part of the toolset for the jump. Out of jump, this remains a remarkable variant turbohaste effect.

Break Lock - breaks the hex you are flipping out of any locked groups, allowing the hex to change color immediately. Out-of-jump this could be used to separate the area of effect from an effect covering it, such as removing a room from the enchantment that affects an entire house.

Own Color - is like Own Flip except that it always turns the hex to your color independent of locking.

Random Color - is equivalent to Random Flip except that it always turns the hex to a random color independent of locking.

Ray - is only found as a component attached to other spells. This modifies the spell to affect a

straight line of hexes from where you are to the edge of the Arena. Unless they contain a Jump component, spells including Ray prevent you from leaving your spot until you have fired it, only allowing you to rotate in place in order to aim the spell. Ray only affects the hex-affecting parts of a spell - you're not going to find a spell that lets you hit a line of targets with Speed 2, for instance, but you could find a Toggle Ray.

Big Hex - is only found as a component attached to other spells. This modifies the spell to affect the hex you move onto and all adjacent hexes. Effectively, this gives your spells a splash radius of about 4 meters. Like Ray, this only works on hex-affecting spells, and won't be found as a mass ally buff.

Scatter - is only found as a component attached to other spells. This modifies the spell to affect a random number of hexes (one in four, on the average) scattered randomly across the Arena. Scatter does not necessarily affect the hex you jump on. Like Ray, this only works on hex-affecting spells, and won't be found as a mass ally buff.

Group - is only found as a component attached to other spells. This modifies the spell to affect the hex you jump on and all the hexes that are locked to it. Out of jump, this causes the spell to travel over all terrain of a particular type or material. Like Ray, this only works on hex-affecting spells, and won't be found as a mass ally buff.

Arena - is only found as a component attached to other spells. This modifies the spell to affect the entire playing field. Effectively, this gives your spells a splash radius of about 12 meters. Like Ray, this only works on hex-affecting spells, and won't be found as a mass ally buff.

Toggle - turns a swath of terrain into a sort of 'null terrain' - a featureless transparent plane of force that can still be walked on, but otherwise not interacted with. In HEX, a toggled area counts against the arena's size, meaning you only have to convert all untoggled hexes to win a match. Most spells have no effect on toggled land, with the in-universe exceptions of Fakes (which disguise the area as normal) or another Toggle, which restores the area. In HEX it also converts the restored hex to your own color. (Out of jump this secondary effect of Toggling terrain back on won't change the terrain to a different type, but if you have a perk that lets you claim or bond with lands it would activate those.)

Dispel Fake - cancels all illusionary effects such as the various Fake spells within range of sight.

Invisible - causes the affected terrain to appear Toggled. The illusion lasts until the area is entered again or until a Dispel Fake is cast.

Fake Flip - causes the affected hexes to appear to have dark pillars independent of any actual stored flips. The illusion lasts until the area is entered again or until a Dispel Fake is cast. Does very little out of jump.

Fake Color - makes hexes appear to be offset by two colors from their actual color. The illusion lasts until the area is entered again or until a Dispel Fake is cast. Out of jump, this may be used to seemingly alter the terrain type.

Random Fake - causes hexes to appear to be a random color and pillar color. The illusion lasts until the area is entered again or until a Dispel Fake is cast. Out of jump, this may be used to seemingly alter the terrain type to a random type.

Shield Movement - keeps you and your opponents from moving onto the affected area.

Shield Flip - prevents the number of stored flips from changing within the selected area. Effectively useless out of jump.

Shield Color - prevents the selected area from changing color. Out of jump, this has niche use of preventing a claim or bond with the affected land from being created or utilized.

Trade Places - allows you to switch positions with an opponent anywhere within a 12-meter radius before your regular movement.

Freeze Spells - prevents your opponents from casting a spell, and immediately cancels any spell they have in effect. This spell will affect all opponents within a 12-meter radius.

Freeze Movement - prevents your opponents from moving for the duration of the spell. This spell will affect all opponents within a 12-meter radius.

Freeze - Combines the effects of Freeze Spells and Freeze Movement in one convenient package! This spell will affect all opponents within a 12-meter radius.

Confuse Spells - randomizes your opponents' spell selection. This spell will affect all opponents within a 12-meter radius.

Confuse Movement - randomizes your opponents' movement. This spell will affect all opponents within a 12-meter radius.

Confuse - randomizes your opponents' movement and spell selection. This spell will affect all opponents within a 12-meter radius.

Control Spells - lets you control your opponents' spells, including allowing you to force them to dismiss currently running spells. This spell will affect all opponents within a 12-meter radius.

Control Movement - lets you control your opponents' movement. This spell will affect all opponents within a 12-meter radius.

Control - lets you control your opponents' movement *and* spells, including allowing you to force them to dismiss currently running spells. This spell will affect all opponents within a 12-meter

radius.

Phantom Partner - creates an 'ethereal' partner who will hop around the Arena trying to help you turn it your color. Phantom Partners can not use magic, and, for the most part, are not affected by it. For instance, they are totally immune to the Freeze, Confuse, and Control spells above, and are not fooled by Fakes. Out of jump, the Phantom Partner is effectively run by a Help spell, and can be used to perform a large variety of tasks alongside you. This spell is effectively instantaneous, but the Phantom Partner will last up to about 100 minutes. (i.e. you do not have to dispel your Phantom Partner in order to cast another spell.)

Clone - creates a copy of yourself. You control both of you, and you are equivalent in all ways. Both of you may cast spells. You also share the same Energy. This means that your energy and capacity go up or down twice as fast. You and your opponents can create as many as four Clones, so long as there are never more than a total of six creatures on the Arena at one time. This spell is effectively instantaneous, but the Clone will last up to about 100 minutes. (i.e. you do not have to dispel your Clone in order to cast another spell.)

<u>The Other Players:</u> (a.k.a. "What am I getting if I buy Canon Companion?")

Here's their descriptions, straight from the manual:



Egbert - is the last of the Dodoes of Mauritius. When his fellows were going extinct, Egbert suddenly and mysteriously acquired magical power and vanished from the face of the Earth. Since then he has been playing HEX and grazing on the strange flora around the Arena. He still hasn't learned to read or write, but he does wield great power.



Manowa - is a jellyfish of considerable size and intelligence. At first she had trouble getting around on dry land, but this kind of problem can be overcome with persistence... and power! She uses this power with stunning effect as she floats over the HEX Arena.



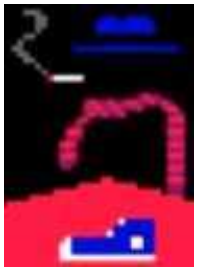
Fitzroy - is a Triceratops from the time of the Great Mesozoic "Extinction." In reality, the majority of the dinosaurs did not die out; they departed for other dimensions. Because of the time distortion involved in dimension travel, Fitzroy is still a baby after 65 million years, but he has quite a stomp!



Amy - is not your average sentient mushroom. She grew up as an orphan in the city of Mascara, surviving by her wits and magic. She relies primarily on illusions and defensive spells. Without even trying to see through her own illusions she can outmaneuver most challengers.



Brazz - is the crown Prince of Mayfair. Like many of the proper nobility, he spends most of his time involved in sports. Due to his easy life he has had a lot of time to practice HEX. Like the simpler bees of Earth he likes to flit heither and yon, and play among bright colors.



Sir Jake - is proper and upstanding, but not exactly British. In fact, he's not exactly anything. He's a lot more like nothing at all. Where Jake came from, nothing is much of anything. He feels very comfortable around nothing, and tries to keep the Arena looking that way.



Phoebe - is one of the seven Shield Maidens of Artemis. When she is not on duty, she seeks out challenges to hone her skills of mind and body. HEX is just such a challenge. Phoebe is strong, fast and smart, and her spells were chosen form her by Artemis herself. Beware of Phoebe's renowned bursts of power.



Kirion - hails from Iceland, where there are still quite a few of the little folk. He prefers not to get involved with outsiders, but Stephen talked him into trying a game of HEX and he has been hooked ever since. His specialty is illusion and he can put up a dazzling display of chicanery.



Kengar - is a wanderer of the dimensions. No one knows where she came from. At times she can be found stalking wumpi on Rigel, or chasing clouds of water through the Enchanted Grove. Sometimes she cannot be found at all. Kengar is fast, very fast. She can outrun a hawk in the mountians! She is also powerful enough to wander freely through the 500 worlds.



Stephen - is an ordinary human being who was granted mystical powers as a result of his friendship with Kirion. Stephen believes that great power brings great responsibility. His life is difficult and dangerous. To relax and calm his nerves he plays HEX. His magical style was developed for more important purposes, but it can be devastating in the Arena as well.



Rubicon - is a strapping young dragon. Her clan considers her to be very promising and already very powerful. She is quite formidable, and when she has learned cunning and subtlety she will be practically invincible. Don't underestimate her power and versatility.



KRAKAWANN - is an elemental force of nature and very nearly a god. Its power and wisdom are

incomprehensible in ordinary terms. KRAKAWANN created the HEX Arena and is familiar with all of its intracacies. The only reason that the other players are willing to enter the Arena with KRAKAWANN is that it puts very little of its attention and will into the game.

Changelog

Version 0.2: Minor updates adding standard Gauntlet rules where they should be mentioned, and added a **tl;dr: Some Examples of Play** section with a hopefully more clear explanation of what you'll be doing this whole jump.

Version 0.1: Initial draft release.