

ACE Game Club Newsletter

Minutes of the Meeting of November 3, 2002

Jim Thorpe called the meeting to order, saying "I guess we'll get this meeting started." A couple new members signed up at the meeting. Jim Destromp reminded the members about the \$75 fee for expired memberships (just kidding).

Jens Knudsen, the club's membership chair, spent ten minutes reading the membership roster to the group, notifying everyone of expirations, near-expirations, and culling out expired information.

Jim Destromp conducted the locker review. Those present to pay were Jimbo, Jessie, Walt, Noel, and Noe. Those not present to pay included Chad, Eric Rasio (phone disconnected), and Frankie. Lockers are available for \$1 per month; the locker fee can only be paid during club meetings.



This image was recorded by forward observation post Tango-Seven-Niner. Further details are currently classified.

Jim Thorpe conducted the calendar review. He asked if anyone wanted to take over typing up the club's calendar from Frank Duval. Greg Higdon volunteered to do the calendar. Mondays are currently open. Tuesdays are Jim Destromp's Hackmaster campaign. Wednesdays are Dave Saunders' Third Edition D&D campaign (players wanted). Thursdays are Lewis Rich's Third Edition D&D campaign. Fridays are Jim Thorpe's Everquest discussion and Mage Knight sanctioned campaign games at 6:00pm. Saturdays are Luke Harpole's D&D campaign, Anton Kronoff's D&D campaign, Magic The Gathering CCG until 9:00pm, and MechWarrior Dark Age sanctioned campaign games at 2:00pm. Due to new store regulations, card playing will cease at 9:00pm on Saturday nights instead of 11:00pm. Sundays are Sanctioned Yu-Gi-Oh CCG and DragonBall Z CCG tournaments. Jens Knudsen II and Luke Harpole will run a demo and training game of BattleFleet Gothic on November 16. Scot Alsop wants to start regular Warhammer Fantasy.

Jim Destromp read a letter from Tom Auler to the club, explaining that he was working at Decipher Con and would be unable to attend the club meeting. He said that he will run the Decipher Deck Exchange at ACE on November 9 from 5:00 to 9:00pm. This means that you can bring in any playable deck from another CCG (not a stack of beat up commons though) and receive a free Lord of the Rings CCG deck and demo. The new LOTR league, Race to Mount Doom, will start in November. There will be rule variants each week to keep things interesting. Decipher has made a LOTR booster draft pack available with an average retail price of \$15. Look for some events using these packs soon, with foil prizes and DCI rankings. Meanwhile at Decipher Con the first prize is a PT Cruiser and \$7,000.

Jim Destromp reviewed the club's finances for the members. The club spent \$586 during the last six months. This leaves a considerable sum in the treasury, in addition to receiving several renewals and new memberships during this meeting. It is expected that the club will spend over \$300 on the upcoming Lord of the Rings movie night. All Lord of the Rings movie reservations must be turned in to Dave Saunders no later than the December 1 club meeting. Tickets are \$2 for members and \$5 for guests.

The next Monday holiday is Veterans Day; this means that the next club all-nighter can be Saturday, November 9. Eighteen members voted in favor of having this event. Sign-up lists for events were established on the white board. Seven people signed up for BattleTech. Anton organized a D&D game, Jens will run BattleFleet Gothic, and Tracy will run board games. This event will start at 9:00pm on November 9, at which time everyone not signed up to participate will leave the premises.

Jim Thorpe informed the members that the club is down to a few T-shirts, which are only size M or XXXL. Anton offered to present a new design for the club T-shirt at the next meeting.

Rich asked if the club might establish lifetime memberships for \$100 or something similar (this might get Jim a PT Cruiser). This was discussed but not approved.

The members asked about re-felting some of the game tables. Rich agreed to take on this project and to try to have it finished before the next all-nighter. The members voted to spend up to \$70 from the treasury on materials for re-felting the tables. One table will be black for space battles.

Dave Peterson conducted the meeting attendance drawing. You must be present to win, and the drawing is based on the previous month's attendance roster. In other words, you must be present at two consecutive meetings to qualify. Walt Kassell won the gift certificate. He was wearing a club T-shirt, so his money was doubled to \$20. Jens Knudsen II was awarded a \$7 gift certificate for his membership efforts during the previous month.

Randy Dilday reminded the members that he would be running a 500-point Mechwarrior Dark Age tournament after the meeting.

Seeing no further business, Jim Thorpe adjourned the meeting.

Tolkien Notes, by Dave Peterson

As you probably know, the ACE Game Club will be attending the opening night of the new Lord of the Rings movie, The Two Towers, in just a few days. Everyone is anticipating that the new movie will be as fabulous as last year's The Fellowship of the Ring was.



Professor J.R.R. Tolkien (1892-1973) filmed during an interview in 1967.

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Most of you have probably have read Tolkien's four main books. Let's just say that I would not want to admit to not having read them in the company of gamers. It would be too embarrassing. But anyway, whether you have read *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* or are a fan of the first movie, you probably have figured out that there is much more to the story. But you probably have not read many of Tolkien's books that fill in the history of Middle Earth. There is a reason for this: the history of the First, Second, and earlier Third ages of Middle Earth exists in notes, history outlines, and brief tales that were unpublished at Tolkien's death. Together with *Unfinished Tales*, *The Silmarillion*, and the appendices to the *Lord of the Rings*, they contain the enormous sweep of history that was the work of J.R.R. Tolkien's entire lifetime. But these books are tough and often tedious reading. *The Silmarillion* is like eating your vegetables; it is great and it is supposed to be good for you, but it is not always easy getting through it. If you want a quick summary of the history of Middle Earth, you might do better to conduct a few keyword searches on the net, focusing on maps and history.

Last night I watched the new *Fellowship of the Ring* Extended Edition DVD. If you have the opportunity, watch it before you see *The Two Towers*. The new Extended Edition DVD really improves and clarifies the first movie. Only about thirty minutes has been added to the movie, but the difference is huge. You spend more time setting the stage for the quest in the Shire, more time in Rivendell, and much more time with the Elves in Lothlorien. The character of Aragorn is developed at length, and the theme of the Elves departing from Middle Earth is emphasized in several scenes. The extra scenes and expanded scenes really made the movie make more sense, especially if you have not read the books. And do consider reading the books while you are waiting for next year's *Return of the King*, as there are plenty of things that did not fit even in the longer version of *The Fellowship of the Ring*, such as the adventure of the Barrow Wights. You owe yourself the pleasure, and doubly so if you are a gamer.



Coming in February 2003: Mechwarrior Fire For Effect Expansion

Be on the lookout for the first expansion to the *Mechwarrior Dark Age* game in February of 2003: *Fire for Effect*. Each booster pack will contain a mech, a vehicle, and two infantry units and have a retail price of \$9.95. Each case will contain a poster of the complete *Fire for Effect* series. The new units in this series will include artillery units, transport vehicles for moving your footsloggers around, and mercenary companies.



Fleet maneuvers at MarsCon: Babylon 5 Wars ships ready to be deployed in the game room.



MarsCon's merry minstrels: the madcap antics of Luna-C are an annual tradition at MarsCon.

Yes, Virginia, it's that time again...

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