

ACE Game Club Newsletter

Minutes of the Meeting of July 6, 2003

Jim Thorpe called the meeting to order in the midst of confusion. Jim Destromp said that he told several members during the week that the July club meeting would be held on July 13 because of the July 4th holiday. Dave Peterson said that it was important to meet if sufficient members were present so that no one would go away disappointed.

Jim Destromp conducted the locker review. Many members were not present to pay, including Jerry and Rich. Frankie was out in front. Walt was present to pay for two lockers. Doc said he wanted a locker. It was assumed that several lockers would be paid up next weekend.

Scot Alsop asked Jim about setting up an Outrider to come following the July 6 meeting. Jim said he had not heard from said Outrider. Jim added that the big news was that Wizkids was bought out by the Topps card company. For those of you who don't know, Topps is really a Canadian confectionery company. This is likely to have significant impact on the hobby. Expect clicks games to be mass-produced and go to zero collectibility, possibly with a Sports Clix format game, or even Star Wars. Expect them to be shipped by the pallet to every Kmart, Wal-Mart, and Target. And the regular BattleTech line has been sold off again, by precisely the same guy who bought it back after selling it off at FASA.

Jim Destromp said that he would try to find out the show time for League of Extraordinary Gentlemen. Sign-ups are being taken at the front counter. If there are not enough we will scrub the outing. Our group rate has been raised a quarter to \$4.75 per ticket. Remember that members have to sign up and pay for the tickets in advance. It looks like LXG will be a good movie. We will also start taking money for Tomb Raider 2 on July 25. Apparently T3 is actually good. It is surprising that the club decided not to go.

Dave Peterson suggested that the club hold a drawing for the six new core rulebooks for D&D version 3.5. He thought that it might generate a good bit of interest, and that the club could easily afford the \$180 that it would cost. The subject was discussed, but there was not enough interest to bring it to a vote.

Enio Lopez showed the members his sample figures from the new Wizkids Shadowrun action figure game. Each figure comes with a custom ruler, weapons, and dice. The different colors of dice used are listed on the base. Game play is a little different from other Wizkids games, and is lots of fun. It has the feel of Shadowrun role-playing. Each figure is about \$15. There have been six or seven new books released for Shadowrun by Wizkids in the recent past as well.



Brad DeCais warms up the Games Day crowd in Baltimore for the Big Game (photo from Games Workshop web site).

Tracy Johnson briefed the group on the outcome of Walt's June proposal to do some classic multi-player board game playing. At the first scheduled meeting Tracy ran Junta. At the second meeting there were no players until the card games broke up. Then he ran Nuclear War. On the big board on the wall, a.k.a. 5th Fleet, India's flotilla got attacked last month. The HMS Ark Royal was damaged and returned to port. The Chinese are about to launch cruise missiles at the Americans and the U.K. You can see the counters at the top of the board representing sunk units belonging to the Kuwaitis and the Americans.

Jens Knudsen II shared his experiences at Games Day in Baltimore. Jens went to Games Day on both Friday and Saturday with his sons. It was \$20 for the ticket plus an extra \$20 for the shirt per person. There were lots of people and the hall was full. It was not as well run as some past Games Days. Jens played on the Warhammer 40,000 tables. Several east coast clubs brought their own tables. There were professional-grade terrain tables for 40K, BattleFleet Gothic, and Lord of the Rings. Some Pennsylvania guys cut dungeon corridors out of foam, and then covered each individual room with its own tile so it could be revealed when it was entered during the Lord of the Rings game. Players in this game had to face those really tough cave trolls. The GW store was okay, with the new lizardmen models being out in strength. They have nice heads but, compared with the old models, the bodies seem small and anemic. The new Kroxigors are only half as big as the old ones. GW wants \$10 to \$12 for the new models. The new Carnosaurs are nice and are of a decent size. It can be an HQ choice and costs \$45. This year's store had better

logistics for the bitz sale, with prices being about .20 per gram. You can make out on the shoulder pads and small bitz. If you have seen the Battlewagon recently, you have seen the selection that was brought to Games Day. There were lots of demo games, but the scenarios were usually too long for the available time. There was lots of space for bring-and-battle games. Tournament registration was \$2. BattleFleet Gothic was only run at Baltimore.

Jens rated it an okay experience, and worth doing once to see if you like it. It didn't cost him much because he had a free place to sleep and he ate across the street at Burger King (though it is a short walk to the Inner Harbor for Hooters). You can park next door at Camden Yard if there are no scheduled ball games. Jimbo added that you can go downtown on the train and get your hotel farther out to save money. Enio mentioned that he is looking for community help for an up-coming Game Fest somewhere near Baltimore in September. Meanwhile Games Workshop has expanded to three Games Days and plans to open twenty-five new mall stores per year in the U.S. This will include a location in Chesterfield north of Richmond. The result is fewer staff, spread thinner, at Games Day and more staffing by Outriders.



Hordes of participants crowd around the Eye of Terror Mega-Game tables at Games Day (photo from Games Workshop web site).

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Jim Thorpe conducted the calendar review. Mondays are Rich's BattleTech

Jim Thorpe, seeing no further business, adjourned the meeting. The next club



Classic campaign. Tuesdays are Jim Destromp's Hackmaster campaign. Wednesdays are Magic Arena CCG, Noe's Warhammer 40,000, Doug's Yu-Gi-Oh CCG during the afternoon, and Dave Saunders' Third Edition D&D campaign. Thursdays will soon be back to Rich's game. Fridays are Noel More's Hackmaster campaign, Magic CCG, and Warhammer 40,000 open gaming. Saturdays are Magic Arena CCG, random instances of Anton's Third Edition D&D campaign, Doug's Yu-Gi-Oh CCG, and Mechwarrior Dark Age Sanctioned tournaments at 2:00 pm. Sundays are Enio's Hero Clix tournaments, Warhammer 40,000, and Yu-Gi-Oh CCG. Tracy's multi-player board game group will meet July 6 and July 20. Next month's club meeting will be on August 3.

Enio griped about people putting their miniatures cases on the gaming tables, soaking up valuable real estate. There are a large number of games scheduled, so please try to use as little space as possible. No one wants to chuck your boxes off the table, but we will if we have to. Scot added that it is important that everyone realize that space is at a premium. The miniatures tables are not to be tied up with card playing. Card playing can be at the RPG table in the game room, and otherwise should be moved out front or maybe squeezed in using just a corner of one of the large tables. And no one appreciates it when the younger members are not receptive to being corrected.

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. Frankie Fields won the gift certificate. He was wearing his club T-shirt, so his gift certificate was doubled to \$20. A \$7.50 gift certificate was awarded to Jens Knudsen II for calling and e-mailing expired members during the previous month.

Jim Destromp suggested that the club needs to reorder shirts. The supply has dwindled and so far no suitable vendor has been found. The last contest we had for artwork was also a bust: only one artist entered.

meeting will be the official July meeting on Sunday the 13th.

Min Feast your eyes on the Forge World sneak-preview shelf from Games Day. You may have to take out a second mortgage to buy some of these limited edition beauties, but it would be worth it!

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Jim Destromp reminded the members about the July 25 Tomb Raider 2 movie night. So far eight people are signed up. If you want to go sign up and pay today. Members are \$2. ACE is not a venue for movie tickets. Jim does not want people wandering in on the day of the movie asking for tickets. The club gets a group rate because we purchase tickets well in advance of the movie. Scot Alsop suggested that ACE could become a TicketMaster location. Jim thought the extra \$5 per ticket service charge did not sound too good.

Tony McVay said that he brought in some chairs. They need painting before they can be used because the primer will rub off on your clothes. The members

thanked Tony for the chairs and his work. Tony said that his Dad's business is evicting people, and that there might be an opportunity to get more chairs soon. Tony said that he will only get quality chairs.

Jim Destromp let everyone know that ACE has received the new Hackmaster Player's Mats, Fighter's Handbook, the Hackmaster version of Gods and Demi-Gods, and four adventure modules. On the other hand, Jim added, he will not be ordering from GW direct because he chose not to sign their new retailer contract. All new GW products will be available on request as special orders.

Jim reminded the members that they receive 15% off at the register. However, the discount will be less if you choose to whip out your plastic. The economy is driving down the store's profit margin, so there is less of a deal that can be passed on to the members.

Several members expressed an interest in doing some board gaming. Jimbo said that the double-blind Axis and Allies game that Tracy ran at an all-nighter was a big hit. Giving this another try will be discussed at the August meeting.

Dave Peterson said that he had seen some interesting movie trailers. While the preview for Shaolin Soccer got a few chuckles in the theatre, his kids liked the movie very much. If it gets less than a PG-13 rating it will have been cleaned up for U.S. release. Shaolin Soccer will be released in August. Zu Warriors, released outside the U.S. in 2002 as Legend of Zu, also looked good. The special effects team on it is the same as for The Matrix and Crouching Tiger.

Dave Peterson asked for suggestions for special gaming events that the club could run. Some of the past tournaments the club has done received heavy participation and were lots of fun. The Space Hulk tournament was played on all four game tables by 30 players. The board had rooms, hallways, and passageways and was littered with pogs representing Genestealers. Jim suggested that many BattleTech and Mechwarrior tournaments have gone well. Jimbo's BattleTech Mercenaries campaign was also a hit. It was agreed that some sort of special event would be discussed at the August meeting.

Jim Destromp reported that Wizkids has been bought out by Topps. The members speculated that this might lead to a Sports Clix game where figures have special abilities like beating up the mascot, punching the ref, or renegotiating their contract. It might even be as popular as Wizards of the Coast's Major League Baseball CCG was.

Enio Lopez reported that he has had problems with kids in the game room claiming to be members who are not. A current member list needs to be posted each month to help with this. Ninety percent of the non-members, who are in the game room, however, are invited by members. This is not acceptable and everyone knows it. There are no weekend passes for \$2 or anything of the sort. If someone wants to play, it is \$15 for a membership. Period. Jim reported that he has been sending updates to the membership list to Jens, and he needs to bring the complete list to each club meeting. Dave agreed to let Jens know his assistance is needed.

Dave let the members know that he will be at Cub Scout camp with his son in August and will therefore miss the August 3 meeting. He promised to make arrangements to that the August meeting will go smoothly.

Jim reminded the members that the club needs a new supply of shirts and a new design. Enio said that he would see if he could come up with any leads on a shirt vendor. Jim said that he drop-kicked the last vendor after they wanted \$250 to replace the silk screen they lost. The club needs a good vendor with good prices, but does not want to go to seconds.

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. Brenda Hall won the gift certificate. She was wearing her club T-shirt, so her gift certificate was doubled to \$20. After some discussion it was decided that there would be two August drawings, one from each of the July meeting attendance sheets. In addition, you will get a \$10 bonus if you were present at both meetings.

Seeing no further business, Jim Thorpe said, "yeah we're done."

5th Fleet PBEM Month-End Summary, by Tracy Johnson

++++ THIS IS A GAME ++++

The month of July was a productive month for unrestricted submarine warfare for this game for two sides.

H.M.S. Ark Royal and her Task Force attempted to take refuge in the Port of Raysut in Oman in the prior segment, but was two movement points short. As a result, it was susceptible to torpedo attack.

Certainly enough, when the Indo/Chinese submarine segment came around, there were two Chinese submarine attacks in succession. The first attack was a dismal failure, with a single torpedo seeming going astray at H.M.S. Cumberland, which was also missed. The second attack was on target, sinking H.M.S. Ark Royal with all hands.

More Chinese submarines launched cruise missiles at Karachi Air Base, Pakistan and missed on 4 separate occasions, mainly due to air cover provided by deployed U.S. F-15's on air cover.

The U.S. and her Allied submarines were next. Not to be outdone, the U.S. launched cruise missiles were Rajkot Air Base, India. Having been damaged earlier in the turn, Rajkot was totally destroyed, by 2 successful hits out of 3, also eliminating two air squadrons on the ground. (This was a manual roll, not using a dice server, so signatures were obtained by witnesses and scanned.) Additionally another single U.S. Cruise Missile attack was launched at Cochin Air Base, India and missed.

As of press time, The 3rd alliance of Players called the Jihad Brotherhood, representing terrorists, were plotting their next move.

Stray Bullets, by Dave Peterson

Well, it's a pretty slow month here at HQ. As you know, game manufacturers always roll out their new material at Gencon (or at least promise to). As Gencon was in July, there is not much to report for August.

This one is just for Walt. Believe it or not, Gamma World is back. A new version of the classic TSR RPG will be released as a Player's Handbook based on d20 Modern in October. Rules for D&D 3.5 conversions will be included at no extra cost.

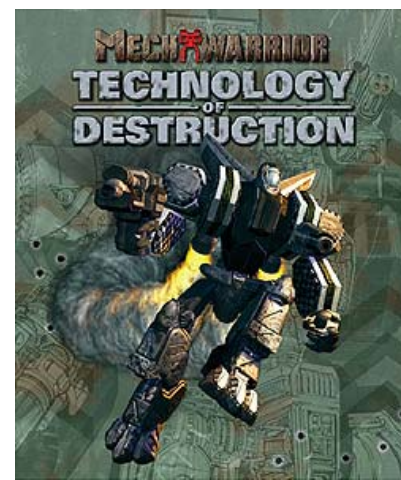
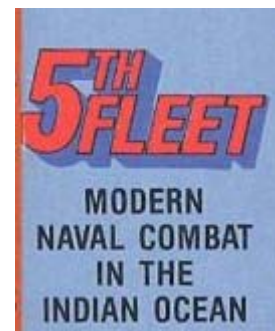
Also due in October is Crimson Skies Squadron Pack #5, the Black Swans. Don't miss these four new planes for the Crimson Clix system that you can add to your collection!

Series two for the Shadowrun Duels action figure game will be released in October. The six new figures are called Draven, Karkhov, Kross, Midnight, Natokah, and Wolf Nev. All are fully articulated and include weapons, armor, dice, and a custom ruler.

Are you ready for Frosty the Snotman? The world of Clix goes disgusting with the release of Creepy Freaks, the "gross-out 3D trading game" from Wizkids. The first series of 56 models will be released in September. All players will need the starter set to play. It includes the board, dice, stickers, figures, and even a DVD with a cartoon and how-to-play training video. If you have been wondering what will shove Yu-Gi-Oh aside this fall, now you know.

Is it nostalgia, too much heat, or just good sense that is driving people back to board games? Be sure to get your copy of Talisman while you can. We don't expect this title to be available for long. Also, board gamers will want to know about the new WarCraft Board Game. It features an expandable, geomorphic board and seeks to emulate the real-time action of the computer game. It will be released in October.

If you want to plunk down your dough on something totally untried, here are a few suggestions. A new collectible card game based on the Initial D anime and manga series will be released in September. The card game will be based on the high-speed racing in the anime series. Also coming out in September is the Yu-



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Yu Hakusho CCG. ACE has this one on advance order. Keep an eye out for .hack//ENEMY, the CCG based on the .hack//SIGN and .hack//DUSK anime series. In ENEMY players portray ciphers battling their opponents in the multi-player on-line game, "The World."

Mechwarrior Dark Age fans will want to keep an eye out for the new book, Mechwarrior: Technology of Destruction. It features the technology, history, and background of the Inner Sphere and includes computer-generated images of mechs and weapons. This appears to be a resource book, not a rules expansion.



The dreaded Aurora-class DropShip, coming soon to ACE!

Mechwarrior Dark Age Tournament Update, by Jim Destromp

July saw continued Mechwarrior Dark Age campaign games on Saturday afternoons. Jim Destromp was the presiding Battlemaster. The July 5 game was won by Frankie Fields. The Fellowship winner was Don Gonzalas. The July 12 scenario was won by Frankie Fields, with Drew Goddard winning the Fellowship award. The July 19 scenario was won by Frankie Fields, with Matt winning the Fellowship award. The July 26 scenario was won by Ernie Forni, with Sir Not to be Named in this Film winning the Fellowship award. We had some really fun and enjoyable games this month. Congratulations to our winners!

Coming soon: ACE has ordered a Mechwarrior Aurora-class DropShip. This model is so huge that it has working mech bays and will be delivered on a flat-bed truck! Will it be a tournament objective, a part of a special scenario, or a tournament prize? Stay tuned....



Magic Tenth Anniversary Tournament Results, by Jim Destromp

Atomic Comics was a DCI-Sanctioned venue for the official Magic Tenth Anniversary Tournament on July 26. Our Magic anniversary celebration was part of this world-wide event. Though as many as 24 players wanted to participate, this special event was limited to only 20 players. The event featured special sealed-deck packages and exclusive Rukh Egg Promo Cards. As you can imagine, the competition was hotter than a comic shop with no air-conditioning. Chad Harmon won the First Place prize. The Second Place winner was Chris Bartlett.



The Games Day crowd floods the hall as the doors open!



Gamers wait their turn for a look at the Golden Demon competitors.



Shoppers check out the bitz center at the Games Day store.



There were plenty of tables and opponents squaring off at Games Day! (All photos from Games Workshop web site coverage of Games Day.)