

ACE Game Club Newsletter

Minutes of the Meeting of September 7, 2003

Tracy Johnson opened the meeting with a report of the double-blind Axis and Allies game that was played at the all-nighter on August 30. The Axis got points for taking territory, but did not hold it. The Allies started taking back points as the game was called at 3:00 AM. The players were new, and no interesting tactics like last year's German-fleet-in-the-Pacific occurred.

Jim Destromp conducted the locker review. Those not present to pay were Tony, Jimbo, and little Tony. Greg was present to pay. Locker 83 was open. Those who were not present but were paid up were Terry, Zack, and Walt. Jessie owes since May. Lockers are available to club members for \$1 per month. Locker fees can only be paid during the monthly meeting.

The finances of the club were reviewed. While the treasury is currently healthy, most of it will go when a gross of club T-shirts is ordered.

Jim Destromp expressed the club's appreciation for the outstanding September issue. Dave thanked Tracy Johnson and Jens Knudsen II for providing the excellent content. Dave was very grateful to Scot Alsop for taking the meeting minutes last month. Dave also reported that he had looked over the club's sneak preview copy of Decipher's .hack//ENEMY card game.



Hurricane Isabel damage on Poquoson Avenue included many downed trees.

Jim told the members that President Jim Thorpe was unable to make it today. Jim went on to ask the members about the possibility of mounting a TV on the game room wall to show Thursday night movies. The idea was to show import movies that have not been released in the U.S. as well as Anime. The project would entail the purchase of a TV and hardware to mount it over the game room doorway, a VCR, and a DVD player, plus an inexpensive stereo to provide cheap "theatre" sound. It goes without saying that the remote will require more security than is currently used for the locker key. Twelve of the seventeen members that signed in voted in favor of spending club funds for the proposed equipment. Jim agreed to go ahead with the mounting hardware installation, and told the members to be on the lookout for a posted movie schedule once everything was set up. Dave offered to dig up some interesting titles, such as Zu Warriors or .hack//DUSK. The club will even spring for popcorn on movie nights.

Jim opened the floor for nominations for the position of club president. Nominations and seconds were offered for Dougie, Walt, Jens II, Noel, Enio, J.T, Jerry, Ray, and Ed Tillman. Further nominations and the election of the club's President, Treasurer, and Scribe will be held at the October 5 meeting.

The members were informed by Eric Knudsen that Shon plans to run a BattleTech campaign set during the beginning of the First Succession Wars. It will include strategic-level and role-playing elements at the Battalion level. This campaign is tentatively scheduled for Saturdays at 2:00 PM.

Enio Lopez told the members that he plans to run Make Knight Faction Wars events. Only 650 venues have been approved for these events nation-wide. The prizes will be pairs of limited edition figures from two years ago. Dave Peterson asked Enio or some other club member to consider running .hack//ENEMY tournaments. Decipher will provide prize support for these events.

Jens Knudsen II conducted a membership review. Those members that the database showed being due for renewal in September were Robert Underwood,

Randy Dilday, and C. Jenkins. Those who were due or past due in August were Jim Schmidt, Greg Higdon and two sons, Chaz Shultz, Marion Johnson, Becca Rich (paid), John Boger (paid), and Jenny (paid). Those past due from July were Eric Lumpkin, Jeremere Jackson, Frank Hanson, Steve Deerhart, Wayne Huggins, Leo Bruno, Shawn Goodway, Brain Tarhand, Charlie Brown, Damon Orff, Andreas Goddard, TJ Goldard, Francis (paid), Frank DuVall, Jessie Bach, Pat Damsey, Chris Holly, and Judith Teway. The current club membership roll is 111 members, with 11 additions and 14 losses.



A house on Poquoson Avenue receives a direct hit.

Dave Peterson conducted the calendar review. Mondays are currently open, with the Warhammer 40,000 crowd having gone back to school. Tuesdays are Jim Destromp's Hackmaster campaign. Wednesdays are Dave Saunders' Third Edition D&D campaign. Wednesday Yu-Gi-Oh CCG tournaments ended with the start of school. Thursdays are open. Thursdays are slated to become Movie Night at the Bijou. Fridays are Noel More's Hackmaster campaign, non-club Magic the Gathering CCG. Friday Warhammer 40,000 ended with the start of the college term. Saturdays are Doug's Yu-Gi-Oh tournaments at 2:00 PM, Mechwarrior Dark Age at 2:00 PM, Warhammer 40,000 open gaming, Shon's forth-coming BattleTech Succession Wars campaign at 2:00 PM, and Anton's Third Edition D&D campaign. Sunday's are Doug's Yu-Gi-Oh CCG, Enio's Mage Knight at 12:00 PM, Enio's Hero Clix at 4:00 PM, and Walt's Third Edition D&D campaign or Tracy's board games at 1:00 PM. The next club meeting will be October 5 at 1:00 PM. A possible Columbus Day weekend all-nighter on October 11 will be discussed at the October meeting.

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. Doc Brown won the gift certificate. He was wearing his club T-shirt, so his gift certificate was doubled to \$20.

Jim announced that he is looking for members with woodworking skills to help with the shelf for the TV. Seeing no further business, Jim adjourned the meeting.

5th Fleet September Summary, by Tracy Johnson

The month of September was sporadic due to both my being out of town and hurricane Isabel aftermath affecting access to materials. Neither will I be present for the club meeting.

Most of the month's duration was occupied by the Jihad Brotherhood (JB) terrorist faction making their initial attacks. This week's move has been taken up taken up by U.S. & Allies organizing their next surface move.

JB Details: The JB claims responsibility for a Truck Bomb going off at Bombay Air Base, injuring or killing enough personnel to lower the effectiveness of the base to a "Damage 1".

No further attacks were reported to the press, but a Gulfstream V was reported missing in the vicinity of the Red Sea near Aden.

Allied Details: An ASW attack was executed on a detected Chinese submarine 1 hex west of the Omani Port of Raysut but it failed on a roll of 0.

As of press time, incoming SSMS are due to strike an Indian TF just SW of Bandar Khomeini.

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Stray Bullets, by Dave Peterson

Welcome to our special Disaster issue. I hope that you and your family came through hurricane Isabel in good shape. I have spent the last two weeks trying to repair my house. Jim Destromp reported that Atomic Comics made it through the storm with no apparent damage. However, when the rain came down two days after the hurricane he found that the roof had in fact been peeled off over the games area. Rainwater poured in and caused lots of trouble. Jim and Masako told me that they did not have water damage at home.

October has been a busy month for releases as well as for repairs. The Yu Yu Hakusho card game has been generating the most excitement. It came in during the weekend after the hurricane, and sold out immediately. Game table action on it has been hot.

The ACE Game Club Newsletter review team has been playing the Initial D card game, which is expected to be released in October. Initial D is a hot Anime series about street racing that has run for at least three seasons in Japan. It is being released on DVD in the U.S. this fall. The new CCG is intended to accompany the DVD release. As part of our review we have been watching the first season of the Anime. It is excellent and features a great Techno soundtrack. In the CCG two players battle their way through a street racing course. The course consists of three or four stages of varying types (curves, straight, or obstacles). The players begin by pulling their car and the modifications (mods) they will use out of their decks. They then duel by playing maneuvers from a hand of seven cards to determine who is the winner of the current race stage. The winner is the last one to be able to play a maneuver; the loser of the stage discards his hand and the winner draws up to seven. Play continues with the next stage. Victory is achieved by winning two stages in a row, or by winning the final stage. I managed to beat my son, Ian, in two successive stages using the seemingly under-powered 86 sample deck, just like Tak in the series. Ian was not amused.



Ian and Megan battle it out in Wizkids' new Creepy Freaks.

Another new October release is Wizkid's Creepy Freaks collectible miniatures game. The first series consists of 56 figures and is packaged in starter sets and boosters. Wizkids is very serious about making Creepy Freaks not just a success but a phenomenon. They have taken very expensive ads on Cartoon Network and Nickelodeon and full-page ads in trade mags. The DVD includes a demo game and a cartoon episode (which really does not have much more snort than your average Nickelodeon weekday line-up). The game was a hit with my kids. Megan eagerly taught her friend to play it the next day. The kids all liked the figures and have no trouble with the relatively simple rules. Although play is a bit chess-like, there seems to be enough depth of strategy to keep it interesting. Ian beat me in this one; he has a knack for positioning is freaks so that they always have multiple targets. Ian and Megan played a game for a newsletter battle report. By turn three Megan would not play with Ian any more because he was calling her stupid. At any rate, the future looks good for Creepy Freaks, assuming it is not blind-sided by Yu Yu Hakusho or Neopets. Creating a phenomenon is a tough and unpredictable business.

The ACE Game Club Newsletter review staff has been playing .hack//ENEMY heavily this month. Ian and Megan both love it (they have seen both .hack//SIGN and .hack//DUSK, so they understand the world and characters better than most). The design is a little odd compared with other Decipher games I have tried. In order to play a more powerful attack you have to "spot" a large number of different sorts of cards on the table-top. This puts pressure on you to deploy more and more creatures. Then it becomes a balancing act and things start to get interesting. I usually don't get this far because Ian stomps me into the ground before then.

We are now in the pre-Christmas release season, so there are lots of new products coming out. Wizkids is adding card buildings and artifacts to the Mage Knight

system to liven up its flagship product. The card buildings have stats printed on them and are designed to break down for storage. Artifacts will add something mostly missing from Mage Knight to the system: cheese. Artifacts are super-powerful, legendary weapons that can be added to unique figures (which are designed to accept them in Mage Knight 2.0). So you will not want to be the last on the block to be stomping around with three or four hammers of the gods in your warband. Or maybe a Spirit Sword Monster Beast Donut?!!

Don't forget to mark your calendar for Marscon 2004, January 23-25, in Williamsburg. The whole zany crew will be there for a relax-a-con weekend of gaming and other goodies. The Con hotel is the Clarion Hotel, formerly Ramada Inn Historic, formerly The George Washington Inn, at 500 Merimac Trail. The Marscon room rate is \$56 per night. Weekend admission is \$20 if you pre-register by January 1. Complete details can be obtained at <http://www.marscon.net/>.

Games Day 2003 Photo Album, by Jens Knudsen II



Special thanks go to Jens Knudsen II, who was kind enough to share his Games Day pictures with us.

Jens and Eric in action at Games Day!



Eric defending against the Chaos onslaught.



A Tau Hero Class CA.



A Titan with urban cammo.



An Eldar Craftworld scratch-built using Cylon Base Star models.