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VOLUME 3, ISSUE 9

SEPTEMBER, 2010

YOTTA NEWS

YOTTAQUEST
FANTASY GAMING

A LOTTA YOTTA : STORE NEWS

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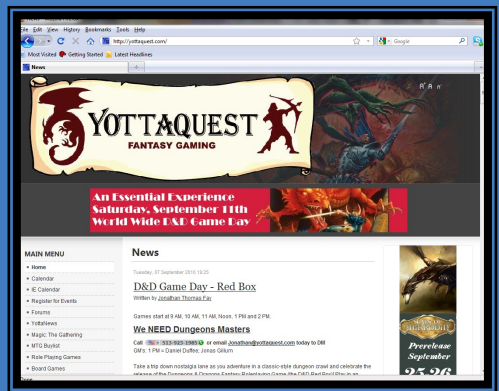
YOTTA NEWS
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So how many of you have checked out the new and improved Yottaquest.com? If you haven't I'd suggest you head over there and take a look around. Don't worry, I'll wait for you. Alright, great to have you back. So what did you think?

It's pretty awesome in my own personal opinion but I'm just slightly bi-ased. Probably my favorite thing about our new website is how easy it is for us to generate new content. From now on, you'll be able to go to Yottaquest.com to find reviews of the newest board games and RPG's, deck-lists and tournament reports from your favorite CCG's, and updates on upcoming products to see what's new and exciting in the gaming world.



I know some of you are even more passionate about your favorite games than we are and because of our awesome new website, you can take that passion and share it with other gamers. We are always looking for members from the Yottaquest community to write articles for not only our website but also for this newsletter. If you have something to share, we're willing to listen.

Another great aspect of our new website is our Event Manager System which gives you the ability to register for any of our events. Want to play in the upcoming Worldwide D&D game day Sept 11th? Go ahead and register on our website for exactly which time slot you'd like to play in to reserve your spot. Feel like trying out Pathfinder Society? Each game is listed with a synopsis of the module to be played and you can sign up for the group you want to be in.

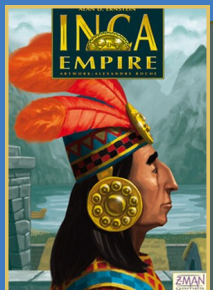


But most importantly, we did all of this to make Yottaquest better for you, and we are always looking for ways to make it even more awesome. So if you ever have an idea, suggestion, criticism, or even just a compliment, we want to hear it. And not just about the website, about anything and everything we do, we want to hear it. Thanks for being a part of this community.

Good gaming,
 Matthew D. Fay

WELCOME A BOARD BOARD GAMING

Coming from Z-Man Games is a new historical, territory building board game *Inca Empire*. Three to four players take on the role of "Apus" or leaders that proceed to build and conquer to win favor of the Emperor. The game is recommended for ages 12 and up and can usually be played in about 90 minutes.



Following in the footsteps of *Castle Ravenloft* comes a new cooperative board game from WotC entitled *Wrath of Ashardalon*. The game boasts multiple scenarios which put the players in an underground maze full of monsters and a red dragon. The game will be released in November and comes with plastic miniatures, dungeon tiles, cards, a 20-sided die and scenario book.

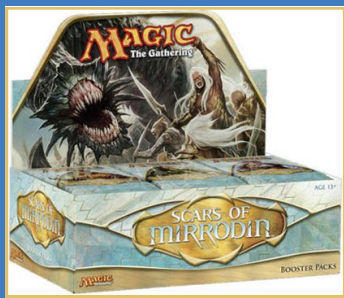


Atlantis by Mayfair Games has been awarded the "Spiel der Spiele" or "Game of Games" by the Vienna Games Academy. Over 1,200 games were submitted and 13 were honored, including Ken Folett's *World Without End*.



IT'S IN THE CARDS CARD GAMES

This month Yottaquest will host a prerelease event for *Magic The Gathering: Scars of Mirrodin* on September 25th and 26th. The official release date is October 1st. This begins a brand new block for MTG and will dismiss the *Shards* block and *MTG 2010* from Standard play. The new set revisits the world of Mirrodin and it will be followed by *Mirrodin Beseiged* on February 4th, 2011.



The *World of Warcraft Trading Card Game* will see 2 new expansions this fall. First, in September, is *Icecrown* which will finish off *The Wrath of the Lich King* block and will include a new master hero, you guessed it, the Lich King himself. Then, in November, *The Worldbreaker* expansion is to be released. The 270-card expansion will have Worgen and Goblin heroes as well as new Loot cards.



...And the new *Munchkin* core game will be... *Munchkin Zombies*. The full color, 168-card game is for 3-6 players and typically takes about an hour to 90 minutes to play. The players are the zombies going after humans and the game will be compatible with other *Munchkin* sets.



NEWS OF THE REALM INDUSTRY NEWS

ACD Games Day took place in August. The convention, which is held in Madison, Wisconsin, is for game retailers and this year's event hosted over 90 separate organizations, up 16% from last year. A new venue allowed for more space for exhibitors and there were several seminars offered.



Charles S. Roberts, founder of Avalon Hill Co., passed away on August 20th at the age of 80. Known more for his Railroad background, Mr. Roberts started up Avalon Hill in 1958 in Baltimore. Avalon Hill was always known for its war strategy games such as *Axis and Allies*.



SEPTEMBER 2010

Every Week:

Mondays

Warhammer Fantasy/
Warhammer 40K
5 PM to Close

MTG Booster Drafts
starting @5 PM \$15

Tuesdays

Board Game Night
6pm to Close

Wednesdays

NEW COMIC DAY

D&D Encounters:

Thursdays

Open Card Gaming
5pm to Close

Warlord 2 @ 6pm

Fridays

Magic The Gathering
Friday Night Magic
Standard @6:30pm \$5
Side Event Drafts \$15

Saturdays

Board Games
6pm to 12am

Sundays

Open Miniature Gaming
All Day

Community Night 6-10

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
29 Open Miniature Gaming All day in Back Room Community Night 6-10 PM	30 Warhammer Fantasy/ Warhammer 40K 5 to Close MTG Booster Drafts starting @5 PM \$15	31 RPG: Chris S. <u>D&D 4E 6-10pm</u> Board Game Night Circus Maximus by Tim Kask	1 RPG: Dave H. D&D 4E 6-10 PM D&D Encounters: Dark Sun New Comic Day	2 RPG: Pathfinder Society 6-10pm Open Card Gaming Warlord 2	3 OWBN LARP Sabbat 7pm Friday Night Magic	4 OWBN LARP Camarilla 7pm Board Game Night
5 Open Miniature Gaming All day in Back Room Community Night 6-10 PM	6 Warhammer Fantasy/ Warhammer 40K 5 PM to Close MTG Booster Drafts starting @5 PM \$15	7 RPG: Chris S. D&D 4E 6-10pm RPG: Jeffrey O. D&D 4E 6-10pm Board Game Night	8 RPG: Dave H. D&D 4E 6-10 PM RPG: Andrew J. Hollow Earth Expedition: 6-10pm RPG: Mike K. Vampire: Dark Ages 6:00-10pm New Comic Day	9 Open Card Gaming Warlord 2	10 Friday Night Magic LARP: Camarilla Geist	11 Worldwide D&D Game Day: Red Box Celebrate Mt. Healthy Board Games
12 Open Miniature Gaming All day in Back Room Community Night 6-10 PM Greater Cincy RPG Meetup	13 Warhammer Fantasy/ Warhammer 40K 5 PM to Close MTG Booster Drafts starting @5 PM \$15	14 RPG: Chris S. D&D 4E 6-10pm Board Game Night	15 RPG: Dave H. D&D 4E 6-10 PM D&D Encounters: Dark Sun New Comic Day	16 RPG: Pathfinder Society 6-10pm Open Card Gaming Warlord 2	17 OWBN LARP Sabbat 7pm Friday Night Magic RPG: Kurt Loy Laundry System	18 OWBN LARP Camarilla 7pm Cincinnati Comic Expo Board Games
19 Open Miniature Gaming All day in Back Room Community Night 6-10 PM	20 Warhammer Fantasy/ Warhammer 40K 5 PM to Close MTG Booster Drafts starting @5 PM \$15	21 RPG: Chris S. <u>D&D 4E 6-10pm</u> Board Game Night RPG: Jeffrey O. D&D 4E 6-10pm	22 RPG: Dave H. D&D 4E 6-10 PM RPG: Andrew J. Hollow Earth Expedition: 6-10pm RPG: Mike K. Vampire: Dark Ages 6:00-10pm New Comic Day	23 Open Card Gaming Warlord 2	24 Friday Night Magic LARP: Camarilla Geist	25 Changeling LARP MTG: Scars of Mirrodin Prerelease #1
26 MTG: Scars of Mirrodin Prerelease #2 Community Night 6-10 PM	27 Warhammer Fantasy/ Warhammer 40K 5 PM to Close MTG Booster Drafts starting @5 PM \$15	28 RPG: Chris S. D&D 4E 6-10pm Board Game Night	29 RPG: Dave H. D&D 4E 6-10 PM D&D Encounters: Keep on the Borderlands New Comic Day	30 RPG: Pathfinder Society 6-10pm Open Card Gaming Warlord 2	1 October OWBN LARP Sabbat 7pm Friday Night Magic	2 OWBN LARP Camarilla 7pm MTG: Scars of Mirrodin Launch Day
3 Open Miniature Gaming All day in Back Room Community Night 6-10 PM	4 Warhammer Fantasy/ Warhammer 40K 5 PM to Close MTG Booster Drafts starting @5 PM \$15	5 RPG: Chris S. <u>D&D 4E 6-10pm</u> Board Game Night RPG: Jeffrey O. D&D 4E 6-10pm	6 D&D 4E 6-10 PM Hollow Earth Expedition: 6-10pm Vampire: Dark Ages 6:00-10pm Uncanny X-Force Games on Demnad	7 RPG: Pathfinder Society 6-10pm Open Card Gaming Warlord 2	8 Friday Night Magic LARP: Camarilla Geist Alliance Open House	9 Pokeman: Battle Roads Board Game Night

DESIGNER'S DEN GAME DESIGN

Douglas Adams once said: "Writing is easy. You only need to stare at a piece of blank paper until your forehead bleeds." I think the same quote applies to game design. I'm sure there are people out there to whom game design is like drawing breath. I'm not one of those people - for me it's hard work...hours and hours of time spent scribbling incoherent notes in composition notebooks only to find that all your really good ideas come to you at 3am when you're sitting on the couch trying **not** to think about your game.

This is the first in a series of articles for Yotta News aimed at those of you who, like me, are interested in game design. I can't claim that I hold any secrets or that I'm better equipped to explain game design than anyone else - there are plenty of professional game designers who will be glad to share their wisdom.

What I hope to bring to the table is my perspective, as someone who is just getting their feet wet and making lots of mistakes in the process. I'm not a professional game designer. I'm a schmuck with a day job who enjoys playing and designing games. Will game design put food on my table? I have no idea. I'd love for people to enjoy the games I design and to be reimbursed for my efforts - but for now I'm just a lifelong game enthusiast with a persistent, nagging desire to make games. My first game, a card-based *chambara* RPG (working title: "Death Frenzy") is well under way. I've been plugging away at it for over six months now and as it continues to take shape I can look back at the process and marvel at all the twists and turns, understanding with hindsight why I went one direction instead of another.

I hope that these columns will encourage your own game design efforts and perhaps avoid some of the pitfalls I encountered along the way.

HOW TO BLOW 8 WEEKS OF YOUR LIFE IN ONE EASY STEP

I hate Mission Statements. Hate them. Seeing pithy Mission Statements tacked to the walls of cubicle farms makes my eyes bleed. Usually they consist of some sort of lame, vanilla promise to provide excellent service and put the client's needs first. Well - fine...those are great principles, but shouldn't those be a given?

When it comes to game design, however, I'm a firm believer in Mission Statements. But since I hate corporate Mission Statements, let's simply revert to the more generic term 'design goal'. When you set out to design a game it is vitally important to have the design goal firmly in mind at all times.

'Easy enough', you say...well let me give you an example from *Death Frenzy* that illustrates how easy it can be to lose sight of your design goal. *Death Frenzy* is a game about *chambara* film. Each player is a character in a Japanese period swordplay film. Naturally, this means that fighting will be one of the game's more important aspects - and this means doing a little bit of research, right?



I already had a handful of books on-hand which shed some light on how samurai actually fought - nothing in-depth, mind you...mostly books about arms and armor and some Osprey books about Sekigahara and other famous military engagements. After turning up very little in the way of concrete mechanics which I could adapt for use in the game, I turned to the internet. As you all know, that's a little like trying to fill a glass with a firehose - but I finally did manage to whittle down my search to the point where I was able to obtain a handful of books on the

matter (if you're interested, send me an email and I'll be glad to send you links). In all, I probably spent more than a hundred hours poring over detailed texts describing the intricacies of Japanese martial arts and the different sword-styles employed by warriors in 15th century Japan.

Given all the information I'd absorbed, it was clear that the combat system had to be quite complex - that it had to embody every nuance of ancient Japanese swordsmanship I'd learned. At one point I mapped out weapon arcs and strike points and determined who would do what in any given match-up. Then I had to take into account different weapons...what happens when someone wielding a yari spear faces an opponent using Miyamoto Musashi's *Niten Ichi-ryū* 'two sword' technique? Who has the advantage?

I explained my problem to a friend, and he told me 'Why are you bothering with all that crap? You're trying to make a game that emulates movies, not real life.'

That was a real kick in the eye.

He was right, of course. I'd been agonizing for weeks trying to create the most realistic combat system I could muster. Pages and pages of scribbled notes had been devoted to a combat system which completely missed the point. The problem with my system wasn't that it wasn't realistic *enough* - it was *too* realistic. I'd lost sight of my design goal. Instead of trying to create game mechanics which supported my game's central concept - samurai movies - I had been wasting time trying to re-create history.

With that in mind I stepped back and began to re-design the game from the ground up. Complex maneuvers were boiled down to three basic moves - attack, counterattack, and guard. Simple and effective. Additional modifier cards add the 'flavor' - cinematic sword techniques like Itto Ogami's *suio* wave-cutting stroke from *Lone Wolf and Cub*, or Zatoichi's ability to strike an unseen opponent. The result is a game which is fast to play and feels very much like a *chambara* film.

If I'd used my design goal as a guiding principle during those early weeks of development, I probably would have saved myself a lot of headaches. Of course, I thought I was adhering to my design goal - it took the advice of a third-party to show me where I went off-course.

The biggest lesson was reinforcement of a key design principle - the mechanics of a game should always support the theme. Sometimes the trick is to truly understand what that theme is.

-Alex Mayo

Alex designs his games via his own publishing label. Check out his site at <http://oneinchpunchgames.com/>



We're on the Web!
<http://yottaquest.com>



Monday, Thursday 10 AM to 10 PM
 Tuesday, Wednesday 10 AM to 11 PM
 Friday 10 AM to 12 AM
 Saturday 9 AM to 12 AM
 Sunday Noon to 10 PM

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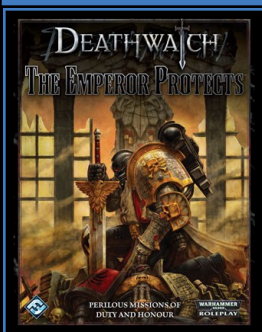
JOIN THE GREATER CINCINNATI
 ROLEPLAYERS MEETUP GROUP AT
<http://www.meetup.com/Yottaquest/>

ON A ROLE

ROLE PLAYING GAMES

Fantasy Flight has 6 new releases slated for its *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay* and *Warhammer 40,000 Roleplay*.

First, the new *Player's Guide* for the *Fantasy Roleplay* set is 304 pages with all of the information needed to play the game. It can actually replace the *Core Set*. This book will be complimented by the *Player's Vault*



with even more tools for players. Not to be left out, GM's will get the new *Game Master's Guide* followed by the *Game Master's Vault*. Also, the *Creature Guide* will be released with all of the bad-dies you need to populate your campaign!

For 40k, *Dark Heresy: Blood of Martyrs* will give plenty of new information on the Adeptus Ministorum, and in *Deathwatch: The Emperor Protects*, players will get 3 stand-alone adventures for their Space Marines.



Gamma World returns...again this October from Wizards of the Coast. This new edition will utilize 4th Edition rules and will be a stand-alone game. The game will come as a boxed set with rulebook, tokens, maps, character sheets and an introductory adventure. More game supplements will be released in November and December.



COMICS CORNER: COMIC BOOKS

Diamond Comics Distributors has finally, officially announced that it will begin day early delivery in January 2011. Retailers will get new shipments on Tuesday to be for sale on Wednesday. The decision is a direct result of a poll of over 1,000 retailers in which over 75% voted for the change. Day early delivery will help the stores stock their shelves prior to opening on Wednesday and avoid the headaches of same-day delivery to shelf.

A "secret shopper" method of enforcement will be in place to insure that no comics are actually on the shelves on Tuesday.



Superman comes to Cincinnati on September 15th! In issue 703, The Man of Steel stops by to say "Hi". The current storyline "Grounded" has him "reconnecting" with people and he is walking from town to town to do jus that. He has already stopped in Philadelphia and Detroit. *Superman* is currently being written by J. Michael Straczynski of *Babylon 5* fame.

Don't forget that October 6th is *Uncanny X-Force Day* to celebrate the launch of *Uncanny X-Force #1*. Marvel will release some commemorative items and has some other fun things in store. Be sure to check it out!

WINNERS' CIRCLE

FRIDAY NIGHT MAGIC

Standard

8/06 Steven Brill
 8/13 Steven Brill
 8/20 Chad Page
 8/27 Adam Tukul

Draft

8/06 Jacob Schnieders
 8/13 Jacob Schnieders
 8/20 Matt McMackin
 8/27 Mark Pflum

Magic 2011 Games Day

Hunter Hersko-Fugitt

Warhammer 40K Summer League

1st Paul Bowles
 2nd Mike Hart
 3rd Chris Hodge
 4th Brian Leugers

Ex-illlis Tournament

1st Will Wolner
 2nd Michael Rosal