

# YOTTA NEWS

FEBRUARY, 2011

YOTTAQUEST

7607 Hamilton Ave.  
Cincinnati, OH 45231

VOLUME 4, ISSUE 2

## A LOTTA YOTTA STORE NEWS

January was a fun-packed month with events for everyone. We had this season's *Pokémon City Championship*, which had a great turnout from people near and far.

On the 15<sup>th</sup> we tried out something new and ventured out to a Free Elder Dragon Highlander or Commander Tournament to test the community for it. This great casual environment saw people come out in full force and we had a blast meeting new players.

We saw some futuristic wartorn worlds be destroyed as we held a *Warhammer 40k* 1,750pt tournament, and packed our store. It was nice to get everyone together and share in the

hobby!

The newest *Magic: The Gathering* set had an amazing turnout for the Prerelease, as we had 72 players in the main event on Saturday.

*Dungeons & Dragons* encounters had us finishing up strong. The newest season starts on February 9<sup>th</sup>.

Check out the calendar for some great upcoming events such as a 1500pt Late War *Flames of War* Tournament! I'll see you all around the shop.

-Jonathan Fay

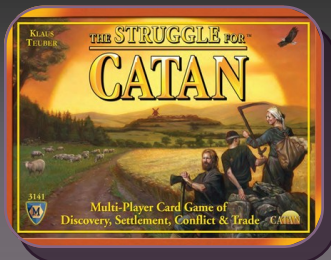


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## IT'S IN THE CARDS CARD GAMES

Coming in April, Fantasy Flight Games will be releasing the *Lord of the Rings* Living Card Game. It will be a co-operative card game in which players take on the role of a hero of Middle Earth and attempt to triumph over Sauron in one of three different scenarios included in the Core Set. Each scenario has different levels of difficulty for re-playability. The game is designed for one or two players but can be played with more with the addition of a second Core Set. FFG plans to release monthly expansions in the form of "Adventure Packs".



Fans of the *Catan* games will enjoy the release of *The Struggle for Catan* multi-player card game coming May 19<sup>th</sup>. Players will recognize many of the same strategies and themes from the board game. It's designed for 2-4 players and should take about 45-60 minutes to play.

### YQ101 Series

Introductory level sessions for games and gaming at YottaQuest

- **Sunday**  
February 6th:  
Game of Thrones and other Living Card Games  
1 - 6 PM
- **Sunday**  
February 13th:  
Dungeons & Dragons 4th Edition Essentials RPG  
1 - 6 PM

## ON A ROLE ROLE PLAYING GAMES

### Gaming in the Land of the Rising Sun

As I began work on my samurai film RPG *Death Frenzy*, one of the items on my 'to-do' list was to take a survey of the handful of similarly-themed games which preceded it.

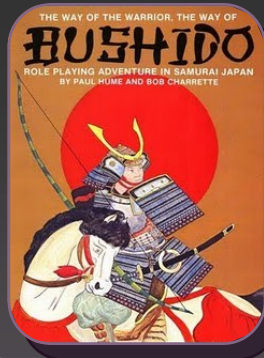


Feudal Japan is a fascinating time and place, a combination of sublime tranquility and violent savagery which is difficult to capture in gaming terms. It was also a highly stratified society, which usually means that role-playing opportunities in feudal Japan arise from exploring these stratifications and a player's inability to easily move up the social ladder. Obligation is also a common theme which can and should be brought into play if one wishes to properly represent the setting.

Over the last 25 years various game systems have attempted to tackle roleplaying in Feudal Japan with varying degrees of success, and this article hopefully will serve as a brief introduction to these efforts.

One of the earliest games to tackle this topic was *Bushido* (1979). Originally published by Tyr Games, *Bushido* later entered the Fantasy Games Unlimited stable and at the time was the go-to system for gamers wishing to seek adventure in feudal Japan. Designed by Bob Charette and Paul R. Hume (the same team which designed FGU's post-apocalyptic game *Aftermath!*), *Bushido* is mechanically similar to earlier editions of *Dungeons & Dragons*, using a d20 (the die, not the system) based mechanic for most task resolution. True to the setting, however, *Bushido* tracks a character's Honor alongside their other ability scores helping to reinforce the game-world's social strata. Like D&D, magic-using professions were available, subdivided into the standard wizard / priest roles. Despite its age, *Bushido* remains in print to this day, and still commands a small but dedicated following. It's also worth noting that FGU's own in-house D&D alternative, *Chivalry and Sorcery*, received a Japanese makeover in the form of *Land of the Rising Sun*, a stand-alone game which utilized a modified version of the C&S rules set. Unlike *Bushido*, both C&S and *Land of the Rising Sun* appear to be out-of-print.

Speaking of *Dungeons & Dragons*, in 1985 TSR released it's own variant on this theme in the form of *Oriental Ad-*



*ventures*. *Oriental Adventures*, unlike *Bushido*, folded all of Asia into a single monoculture called Kara-Tur. Although the original book designated that Kara-Tur was its own unique universe, it was later brought into the Forgotten Realms universe and became a continent on Abeir-Toril. Written by Gary Gygax, David 'Zeb' Cook, and French writer / game-designer François Marcelle -Froideval, *Oriental Adventures* was ostensibly a fantasy setting and while it carried over much of what makes feudal Japan tick (honor,

social obligation) it was also notable in that it introduced non-weapon proficiencies to the D&D universe. These included such skills as calligraphy, flower arranging, masseur, tea ceremony, and poetry - all essential elements to properly express the culture. Although *Oriental Adventures* was a popular 2nd Edition release, with a subsequent 3rd Edition update, no such volume has been announced for 4th Edition (although several monsters which originated in the setting have appeared in the 4th Edition monster-stable).

Ten years later, Alderac Entertainment took a similar approach with *Legend of the Five Rings* (L5R). Although L5R began as a collectible card game, a tabletop RPG followed two years later. Like *Oriental Adventures*, L5R takes place in a fictionalized version of feudal Japan, called Rokugan. The most notable feature of this setting is its focus on clan-based factional warfare. Like Japan's warring clans, L5R envisions an Empire subdivided into numerous groups named after various animals (Crab, Crane, Phoenix, Mantis, etc.) and much of the game's action revolves around the interactions of these various clans. As you would imagine, political intrigue is a central focus. For a time, L5R was co-mingled mechanically with *Dungeons & Dragons*, with sourcebooks featuring dual sets of rules, one to support traditional L5R play and one to accommodate D20 systems. This was a result of an acquisition of the L5R license by Wizards of the Coast, and indeed 2nd Edition L5R was essentially the official WotC 3rd Edition *Oriental Adventures* release. Another notable feature of L5R is the meta-fictional conceit that the political status of *Rokugan* is decided at regular tournaments and officially sanctioned gameplay events. As players duke it out for control of *Rokugan*, the world itself is altered with each release to reflect the current status quo.



(continued on page 5)

## COMICS CORNER COMIC BOOKS



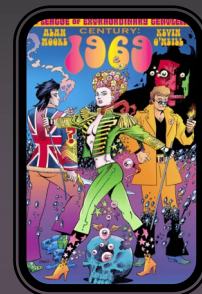
It appears that the First Family of super heroes, *The Fantastic Four*, may be suffering from lower circulation numbers on their comic book. Why is this evident? Because they have decided to kill off a main character. This is usually a marketing decision that Marvel or DC, in particular but not exclusively, uses to boost sales. “Quick, invoke the RIP initiative!” Just in the past few years we have seen the demise of *Captain America* and *Batman*, and who could forget the death of *Superman* fiasco about 20 years ago (has it been that long?). So, if you follow *The Fantastic Four* or are just on a “super hero death watch”, check out FF #587 for the full story. Just keep in mind that no one is ever truly dead in comic books.....

*Wizard* magazine has ceased publication. *Wizard*, the premiere comics news periodical, has been around for 20 years but has become somewhat obsolete, due to the internet, and expensive to maintain in harsh economic times. According to founder, Gareb Shamus, an online version of the magazine, now titled *Wizard World* (to fall in line with their Wizard World Tour conventions) will go live sometime in February.



Coming in April, and just in time for the theatrical release, is *The Mighty Thor* #1 from Marvel Comics. The good news is, this begins an original story run and it is not a movie tie-in. Helmed by writer Matt Fraction, it appears that the first order of business is for Thor to defend Asgard from Galactus!

July sees the release of the next chapter of the *League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*. Creators Alan Moore and Kevin O’Neill continue to move the story forward in time. It’s 1969 and what’s left of the League must stop the birth of the antichrist? That’s right; it’s LoEG vs. The Omen! Groovy, Baby!



## MORE ON A ROLE ROLE PLAYING GAMES

AEG will be releasing *The Legend of the 5 Rings RPG: Emerald Empire 4<sup>th</sup> Edition* sourcebook in April. Aside from bringing the game up to date with 4<sup>th</sup> Edition rules the book also boasts 30% new content.

*Ultimate Combat* is the new hardcover rulebook for the *Pathfinder Role-Playing Game* that will be released in August from Paizo Publishing. The 256-page book will have tons of new material, including three new classes – the ninja, samurai and the gunslinger. Paizo is offering free test documents on their [website](#) and welcomes feedback.



In May, Cubicle 7 Entertainment will be releasing the *Primeval Core Rulebook* for the new RPG. *Primeval* is based on the BBC TV series in which a group of modern day scientists fight prehistoric beasts that are invading England via a series of dimensional and/or temporal “anomalies”. It will use the same game system as *Doctor Who: Adventures in Time and Space RPG*.



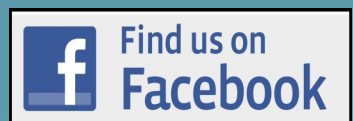
# FEBRUARY 2011 EVENTS

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 Board Game Night 6-10 pm	2 New Comic Day D&D Encounters Keep on the Borderland Heroclix OP DC 75th, week 2 - 300pt - 2 Player Team Sealed 5-10 pm Dave - Cthulhu Tech 6-10 pm	3 Open Card Gaming 5-10 pm RPG: Pathfinder Society 6-10 pm	4 Friday Night Magic 4 pm - 12 am OWBN LARP: Sabbat 7 pm - 12 am	5 Board Game Night OWBN LARP Camarilla 7 pm - 12 am MTG Mirrodin Besieged Launch 9-6
6 Open Miniature Gaming- All Day YQ101 Series: Game of Thrones and other Living Card Games 1-6 pm	7 MTG Booster Drafts & Win-A-Box Standard 5-10 pm Warhammer Fantasy / Warhammer 40K 5-10 pm	8 Board Game Night 6-10 pm Jeffrey O - GURPS Vikings: The Cross and the Rune 6-10	9 New Comic Day D&D Encounters March of the Phantom Brigade @ 10, 1, 4 & 7 Heroclix OP DC 75th, week 3 - 300pt Dave - Cthulhu Tech 6-10 pm Andrew- Hollow Earth	10 Open Card Gaming 5-10 pm RPG: Pathfinder Society 6-10 pm	11 Friday Night Magic 4 pm - 12 am LARP: Camarilla Geist 7 pm - 12 am	12 Board Game Night 6 pm - 12 am Flames of War 1500 pt. Late War Tournament 9-7:15
13 Open Miniature Gaming- All Day YQ101 Series: Dungeons & Dragons 4th Edition Essentials 1-6 pm	14 MTG Booster Drafts & Win-A-Box Standard 5-10 pm Warhammer Fantasy / Warhammer 40K 5-10 pm	15 Board Game Night 6-10 pm	16 New Comic Day D&D Encounters March of the Phantom Brigade @ 10, 1, 4 & 7 Heroclix OP DC 75th, week 5 - 400pt - Goldent Cunstructured Dave - Cthulhu Tech	17 Open Card Gaming 5-10 pm Greater Cincinnati RPG Meetup 7-10 RPG: Pathfinder Society 6-10 pm	18 Friday Night Magic 4 pm - 12 am OWBN LARP: Sabbat 7 pm - 12 am	19 Board Game Night OWBN LARP Camarilla 7-12 MTG Legacy Tournament 9-6
20 Open Miniature Gaming- All Day World of Darkness Geist- Camarilla Fan Club 6-10 pm	21 MTG Booster Drafts & Win-A-Box Standard 5-10 pm Warhammer Fantasy / Warhammer 40K 5-10 pm	22 Board Game Night 6-10 pm Jeffrey O - GURPS Vikings: The Cross and the Rune 6-10	23 New Comic Day D&D Encounters March of the Phantom Brigade @ 10, 1, 4 & 7 Heroclix OP DC 75th, week 6 - 300pt Sealed Dave - Cthulhu Tech 6-10 pm Andrew- Hollow Earth	24 Open Card Gaming 5-10 pm RPG: Pathfinder Society 6-10 pm	25 Friday Night Magic 4 pm - 12 am LARP: Camarilla Requiem 7 pm - 12 am	26 Independent RPG Celebration 9-6 LARP: Changeling 7pm - 12am Board Game Night 7pm - 12am
27 Open Miniature Gaming- All Day Movie Night - The Mummy 6-8 pm	28 MTG Booster Drafts & Win-A-Box Standard 5-10 pm Warhammer Fantasy / Warhammer 40K	1 March Board Game Night 6-10 pm	2 New Comic Day D&D Encounters March of the Phantom Brigade @ 10, 1, 4 & 7 Heroclix OP DC 75th, week 5 - 400pt - Goldent Cunstructured Dave - Cthulhu Tech	3 Open Card Gaming 5-10 pm RPG: Pathfinder Society 6-10 pm	4 Friday Night Magic 4 pm - 12 am OWBN LARP: Sabbat 7 pm - 12 am	5 MTG Mirrodin Besieged Game Day 9am - 6pm Board Game Night 6pm - 12am OWBN LARP Camarilla 7-12



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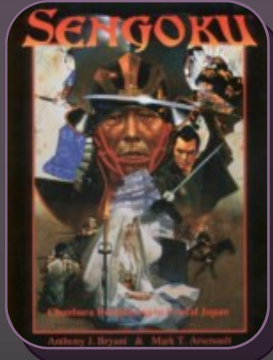


## ON A ROLE ROLE PLAYING GAMES

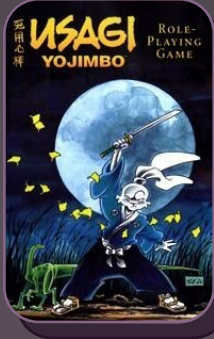
### Gaming in the Land of the Rising Sun

(continued from page 2)

In 1999, Gold Rush Games released *Sengoku*, a game which is largely hailed not for its mechanics but for the exhaustive background information provided in the rulebook. One of the co-writers of *Sengoku*, Anthony J. Bryant, is a scholar of Japanese history and has contributed to the well-regarded Osprey Publishing series, as well as the Mainichi Daily News and even once served as an Editor on TSR's *Dragon Magazine*. Bryant's work on *Sengoku* is considerable; reading the rulebook feels like an introductory college course in Japanese history - it's so comprehensive that one feels intimidated to run a game in the setting for fear of not paying heed to the various nuances of Japanese culture. Bryant knows this, however, and includes tips for acclimating players into the culture. This is important because the game actually includes mechanics for social faux pas and other behavioral missteps which can result in inadvertently instigating a duel or other violent repercussion. Words have power, and cheesing off the wrong person can result in loss of life or limb, literally. *Sengoku* also offers three different levels of play, Historical, Chanbara, and Anime, each of which differs in how closely they mirror reality. At the Historical level, players are modestly powerful and are expected to have a working knowledge of the culture and history. Chanbara is a cinematic experience, which exemplifies the tropes of Samurai cinema, while Anime is out-and-out fantasy.



Gold Rush Games also publishes the *Usagi Yojimbo* RPG, a game set in feudal Japan about a talking rabbit. No, seriously. If you're familiar with Stan Sakai's *Usagi Yojimbo* comic, you'll know what I'm talking about. *Usagi Yojimbo* is a long-running series of graphic novels about feudal Japan, with all the humans replaced by anthropomorphic animals - the title character being a rabbit version of the famous swordsman Miyamoto Musashi. Sakai's graphic novels are well-regarded, having garnered three Eisner awards throughout the 90's. Like *Sengoku*, *Usagi Yojimbo* uses the Fuzion system - although, confusingly enough, a competing *Usagi Yojimbo* RPG was released by Sanguine Productions in 2005.



The indie scene has also contributed its' fair share of games set in feudal Japan.

Luke Crane's popular fantasy RPG *Burning Wheel* received a chanbara supplement called *Blossoms Are Falling*, a 200-page book which introduces new rules for running a



*Burning Wheel* campaign in Heian-era Japan. In addition to new life-paths, skills, and monsters *Blossoms Are Falling* also includes a Clan Burner to allow players to create their own clan for use in play.

In 2005 the Iron Game Chef competition gave rise to *The Mountain Witch*, an indie RPG about a group of ronin who have a common purpose, to kill an evil mountain witch atop Mt. Fuji. Each player also harbors a secret goal, however, which usually brings them into contention with the other players. *The Mountain Witch* is notable for its trust mechanics, which can be used to aid or hinder other players.



Finally, Danielle Lewon's *Kagematsu* is an indie RPG in which one player is Kagematsu, a wandering ronin who encounters a village being terrorized by a supernatural entity - the remaining players are female villagers who take turns entreating the ronin to defend their village. *Kagematsu* is largely about turning gender roles and politics on-end (the game suggests that a female player portray Kagematsu, while the male players all play women). It's a wonderful gaming experience which brings out all kinds of uncomfortable situations and drama. Notably, *Kagematsu* won the *Diana Jones Award* for Indie Game of the Year at Gen Con 2010.



As you can see, feudal Japan is a rich and rewarding pool from which many different kinds of game experiences can be drawn. When I set out to design a game in this period, I was worried that the setting was too narrow to accommodate yet another game, but I was soon proven wrong. It is an era full of nuance and flavor, ripe for exploitation by gamers and game designers alike.

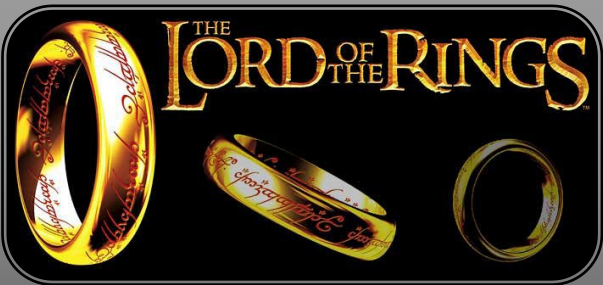
-Alex Mayo

## SMALL VICTORIES MINIATURES GAMING

WizKids will be bringing *The Lord of the Rings* to their *HeroClix* line in late 2011. Warner Brothers and WizKids announced the licensing agreement in January. Supposedly, the miniatures game will be available in a campaign-style box set as well as the traditional booster packs.



## WELCOME A BOARD BOARD GAMING



The WizKids licensing agreement, mentioned previously, will also spawn a *HeroClix LotR Strategic Board Game*. In this semi-cooperative game the players will actually take on the part of the Nazgul who are trying to find and capture the ring before it can be destroyed at Mount Doom.

Days of Wonder will be releasing the *Cargo Noir* board game in March. Set in a 1950's "film noir" time frame, the players must "smuggle" gold and goods by way of various ports around the world while trying to outbid each other for said goods. Object: The one who gets the most stuff wins!



## WINNERS CIRCLE

FRIDAY NIGHT MAGIC STANDARD		FRIDAY NIGHT MAGIC DRAFT	
1/07/11	Korey Fay		
1/14/11	Korey Fay	1/14/11	Steven McCarthy
1/21/11	Alex Kopowski		
1/28/11	Korey Fay	1/21/11	Clayton Hightower
1/29/11	Pre-Release Event		Justin Rasor
1/30/11	Pre-Release Event		Clayton Hightower

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**HOURS**  
 Monday through Thursday  
 10 AM to 10 PM  
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 Saturday  
 9 AM to 12 AM  
 Sunday  
 Noon to 10 PM

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