

# ACE Game Club Newsletter

## Minutes of the Meeting of June 4, 2000

Club President and Fearless Leader Art Raasio opened the meeting by noting that the turnout was light: only 12 breathing members were present. Lockers were the first order of business for the meeting. In accordance with Club policy, all locker holders must be present at the Club meeting to pay for their monthly locker rental, or have their belongings removed from the lockers immediately. Jim Thorpe and Art were present to pay; Tony and others unspecified were absent (oops!). A great deal of unloading of lockers followed. The count was 3 evicted, 3 lockers available. The Club will reinstate lockers during the 30 days following the meeting for \$1, if the lockers have not already been reassigned.



### ACE Game Club Members give Games Day a WAAAAGH!

Jim said that the Club needs someone who is present to call members before the next meeting. Shawn offered to do this last month, but was not present. Mike Clancy was also not present. Dave Peterson reminded that members that the Club compensates members with a blister of miniatures worth up to \$7.00 for doing this chore. Doug Staples courageously volunteered to make calls before the next meeting.

Art moved that the Club move its next meeting to July 9 to avoid the July Fourth holiday weekend and Games Day in Baltimore.

Jim D said that congratulations are in order to Rich for exiting the military and joining the ranks of the unemployed, er, civilians. We wish him all the best in his new endeavors.

It was confirmed that Jim and Beth are scheduled to do a large Warhammer Fantasy demo at the July Game Club meeting. They plan to have enough troops on the table that everyone will be able to run some *[sounds like a Chaos hoard in more than name -Ed.]*

Jim D said that Eric is here to talk about the possibility of renting the whole theatre for a showing of the new X-Men movie on opening night.

The idea is to do a bit of horse trading in order to make this worth while for both parties.

Meanwhile, Eric told the group that he has designed a role playing game and would like to recruit the Club to play test it. Thursdays are open and might perhaps provide a venue for Eric's game. Eric read the group a blurb from his fantasy role playing system. It uses a Gothic Fantasy setting including psionics and the usual swords and magic. Eric is looking for artists/illustrators for the game book. The fate of the orb is in your hands!

Jim said that we need to pry Dave Peterson out of the house by getting him to start a new BattleFleet Gothic campaign. Dave agreed to start the Club's third BFG campaign on June 12 at 6:30pm.



### U.S. Games Day Under Full Steam!

The Club's weekly schedule was reviewed. Rich Lewis is running D&D on Wednesday nights. Thursdays Dave and Shawn are alternating. Friday night is Jim D's D&D campaign. This campaign is full. Also full is Art's D&D campaign on Saturday nights. Jimbo's Warhammer 40,000 league has ceased to function. Saturdays are now open for pick-up gaming. Art and Leo discussed starting a Blood Bowl league in the fall.

Jim D pointed out that the last time Blood Bowl was a big event people got very competitive and it did not make the games fun after a while. Jim asked about possibly running Advanced Hero Quest or Warhammer Quest. Art said he would like run Fantasy Football in the fall. Randy Dilday is interested in running regular Babylon 5 Wars.

Jim said that the new Full Thrust book is now in stock, and that Game Club members get a special 25% discount on the Rebellion boxed set. Rebellion is a great deal: it includes not only game rule books and mechs, but even plastic hill terrain pieces.

Art asked to have the Club membership list for next meeting. Jim suggested that the Club buy a packet of postcards to mail out about three weeks before memberships expire. Membership has been falling (from a peak of 130 down to 80), and this might begin to turn things around. Art said that he would address the cards at each Club meeting.

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Art told the members that they could no longer park next door now that the martial arts academy is open. However, parking is still available at the florist's on Sundays.

Jim announced that Shane and/or Marty now hold the record for the most consecutive deaths in a D&D campaign. Art described Jim's character in his campaign, Nogg, who is a Kobold. Nogg tried to poison the fish he caught, and ended up poisoning himself (*a la* Fisherman's Warf buffet).

With no further business before the group, Art adjourned the meeting and everyone began setting up for the scheduled BattleTech tournament.



### ACE Game Club Goes to Games Day!

On June 30 and July 1 Games Workshop held its annual U.S. Games Day in Baltimore, MD. Numerous Club members participated in this event.

Games Day featured innumerable tables of Warhammer, 40K, Warmaster, Mordheim, and BattleFleet Gothic with fantastic terrain. Specialty events included "Rumble in the Jungle," a huge multi-player 40K event, the Skaven Training Academy, the Battle for Armageddon, and Imperial Guard Sentinel races.

Attendees had the opportunity to meet Games Workshop luminaries including Rick Priestly, Paul Sawyer, and Alan Merritt. On Saturday the entries in the Golden Demon figure painting contest were on display. Two showcases of pre-release miniatures had gamers drooling as well.



Fleeing Space Monsters on the BattleFleet Gothic Bring-and-Battle Table

### Saturday Night D&D with Art: The continuing adventures of Art's Night Saturday D&D Game, by Lewis Rich

The day started well with only the lingering taste of unsalted fish and kobold poison clinging to our tongues. The swamp helped refresh our strength by providing such a soft bed of mud to sleep on. What more can a group ask for?

Oh, I had forgotten about our friendly security patrol from Bolgo that kept us company all night. They were such good company, especially with our women. They were very surprised we allowed our women to wear shoes and talk to their betters. Ann avoided expressing her appreciation (throttling the idiots came to mind) to these excellent men. We were all sad to see these fine men leave. They had brought chauvinism and bigotry to such new heights.

Only hours after they had left we were horrified to find that Nogg (our pet kobold) had stolen the patrol captain's gold badge. As punishment we gave Nogg an extra ration of fish.



### Gamers Brave the Dangers and the Green Sludge of Mordheim

We set out just prior to noon from the "great civilization of Bolgo." Deciding that it was not the wisest course of action to allow our women to go into town (we worried Ann would burn it down), so we sent Duo the Paladin, Brother Jack, Moe the Bone-crusher, and the Druid.

Upon entering Bolgo, the guys were very impressed with the level of technology and civilization mud could achieve. The town of Bolgo actually had a single impressive structure that soared into the heavens (2 stories about 20 feet tall).

The kindly population welcomed our party with open arms (screamed and ran). The town constables tried to convince our friends to attend a party in their honor. They offered to show the guys the unique experience of burning at the stake or maybe the excitement of kicking at the end of a rope. Duo the Wrong-Way Paladin, respectfully declined their offer.



## The Rumble in the Jungle at Games Day

The town constables ever so happy to have them there secured Duo's "oath of blood" that they would enjoy their short stay. By the end of the day Duo left the town with all his blood still flowing in his veins and not flowing in the streets of his beloved Bolgo. They quickly rejoined the party with the supplies the grateful town of Bolgo let them buy (at a 500% mark-up).

The party was once again all together, and we quickly set off to our goal. The Nun kept us all entertained with her witty saying she learned in the nunnery. She also kept our spirits high by showing us how Nuns fly.

Within days the mud of the beautiful swamp gave way to firmer ground. With the paladin out scouting we plotted our normal business. We felt that his delicate ears would be hurt by our planning of plunder, pillaging, and burning of orphanages. The paladin is such a delicate soul.

Meanwhile our luckless Druid was having interpersonal problems with his animal followers. Mangy, his lupine friend (wolf), was not happy with his name and made it very clear to all. As the druid laid down to rest for the night Mangy anointed him with his powerful smelling urine. Daryl, seeing the error in his ways, changed Mangy's name to Alpha.

At last we arrived at our destination, an ancient castle rumored to be both evil and rich. Much to our disappointment it appeared totally deserted.

Not letting this dissuade us, we sought to enter the deserted castle. The portcullis was down and rusted shut. Our combined strength was not enough to break its iron will, and it stayed shut.

The Nun quickly spotted a hole in the ancient wall, and suggested she climb up to see if it did indeed provide an entrance into the castle. The Nun, always the big flirt, allowed the party a glimpse of her chastity belt on the way up. Brother Jack tied Phallen & the Nun's ropes together

with his notorious slipknot. Phallen, confident in Brother Jack's skill, quickly climbed the wall with the aid of the rope. Once he was rejoined with the Nun he lowered her to the ground and climbed down himself. Holding the rope tight they beckoned to Brother Jack to join them. However this time Brother Jack's immense skill with the slipknot worked too well and the ropes parted ways, leaving the party split.

Phallen and the Nun searched for the opening mechanism for the portcullis. Once it was found, Daryl cast light through the portcullis to help. Luckily it had its desired effect and blinded Phallen, causing him to stumble and make enough noise to make sure the inhabitants (if any) would know we are there. The impressive mechanical skill of both Phallen and the Nun quickly rendered the mechanism into its components. With all the components spread on the floor, they quickly realized that they forgot to number the parts and could not reconstruct the winch to open the portcullis.



## The new Ork Warlord displayed at Games Day is as big as a dreadnought! Waaaaagh!!!

Another way had to be found. The druid, always insightful, found a backdoor into the castle. The entrance was very difficult though. It was 3 feet off the ground and about the size of a hay wagon. Ann almost broke a nail on the way in. Slider tried to commit suicide on the way in but the 3 foot drop was too short, and he was projected to recover well. The inner courtyard of the castle showed signs of recent masonry work (a 500-year-old pile of rubble). Quickly we searched for anything of interest (gold). The paladin searched for evil and quickly found Nogg.

Slider found some ants (2-foot long ants) and started playing with them. Seeing their friends having fun, more ants decided to play. Since Slider was occupied they went to play with the rest of the party. The fun was short lived for both Ann and Tallia as they fell down some ant holes.

During the play, things got a little rough as the paladin shot both an ant and slider with poorly aimed arrows. The Druid had a little trouble with a spell and fried his fingers. Ann, finally free of her hole, joined in and it was over, as all the ants were gone.

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Afterwards both Tallia and Slider were seen taking a wee nip from the bottle.

Not finding anything else to play with, we moved on to the towers. Once again we were stopped, this time by the ancient iron doors of each tower.



## **The Battle for Armageddon, featuring the IG on an amphibious landing**

As we tried to pry one open the ants came out once more, but our magic users treated them to an impressive show.

At last we pried the iron door from its frame and entered the ruined tower. The interior was empty and quiet with only stairs leading down. Long did we debate the wisdom of going down, but decided to go anyway.

Down we went into the ground, only to find yet another empty room and a deserted corridor. Deciding this was a perfect time to stop we set up a guard shift and went to sleep.

Phallen, always observant, heard a door close and roused some of the party. He quickly ran up the stairs to see if someone was dropping by but there was no one there. His powers of observation failed him as he did not realize it was the door at the end of the corridor, not the one at the top of the stairs.

Dejected he and Slider came back down stairs to find the Nun having a personality crisis (caused by the lack of having one). She was confused and angry. She felt she should have the right to blind the party at any time, have the final say in any matter, and be the ruler of all that she surveys.

We ignored her and left her to stand the final guard shift. The Nun (none too smart) decided that the magic users did not require sleep and woke everyone up 2 hours in advance. Our magic users did not mind losing most of their casting ability for that day.

As we made our way deeper into the dungeons of the castle we came at

last to our first real challenge. A manticores jumped our poor party, spraying us with deadly tail spikes.

Duo, Slider, and Tallia promptly jumped into action against the beast. The glorious battle raged with the swirl of magic, flashing steel, claws, teeth, and the constant whining of the Nun. Ann blinded the creature with a well-timed spell as the fighters pressed harder.



## **Alan Merritt discusses the new 25-year retrospective of Warhammer 40,000 art work that will be released in December**

Finally the dumb beast fell dead and the party, turned to quiet the whining of the Nun.

Oh, almost forgot the plunder.

## **Thursday Night D&D Adventure Update. by Shawn Batey**

Our group uses hybrid rules from both 1st and 2nd edition because using just one set of the rules makes characters to one-dimensional. I also added some of my own to make it a more personal game.

This what occurred in our last meeting to the best of my knowledge. I finished the ending in the city after the last meeting since we ran out of time. Please tell everyone I miss them but my work schedule is wacky right now and I will try and get out again soon.

The veteran group of noble adventurers were getting weak from the overbearing cold that beseeched the vile place they had been sent to do battle with the Demilich they had come to know as "The Devourer." They were growing weary from lack of sleep, for the last few nights they had been getting interrupted more and more often by the undead minions that had been set free, unknown to them, to slow their progression down so the Demilich could prepare for the final ascension to his Godhood and Full reign of the Negative energy Plane.

Brother Chi the monk had been sensing great danger for many weeks now but could not put his finger on the cause until they reached the resting place of the Demilich. Jacob (the wild mage) had noticed that his magic although powerful was not having the effect that it should on many of the creatures in this foul place and was worried that he and the others might perish and their souls be lost without anyone ever knowing where they had been and Scarn (High Priest and Master Locksmith) was

noticing an even deadlier trend as they went deeper into the mouth of the Devourer, his prayers were not healing near what they normally do; he had calculated that his healing powers granted by prayer were at least 50% less effective in this evil dead place. Even with the enhanced powers they had been granted by their experimentation with wild magic they knew that their next encounter could very well be their last.

The weary travelers (those I have mentioned are the only 3 original members of the starting party and that is why they are mentioned and not the other 5 that accompanied them) and their companions cautiously walked into a room only to notice a large crystalline structure with many facets supported by a tripod over a gaping black hole, easily distinguishable as the border of the negative energy plane. In the facets they could see the faces of the many thousand souls that the Demilich had trapped and could hear them crying out to be released from their prison. "But how do we do that?" they asked themselves, only to get a reply from the trapped souls: "kill the Demilich and free us!"

Suddenly from a corner a skull lowered from the ceiling only being noticed because of it glow, and suddenly a wave of terror came over the adventurers! They new who it was: it was the Demilich himself and they knew it would take all they had to Destroy him. Brother Chi was the first to be noticed by the power of the Demilich and his life force began to drain away. Knowing that he could last while trying to save the others he went into a trance and focused his chi to keep his soul from fading away into the darkness. His efforts fortunately slowed the Demilich down long enough for the others to make a decision about what to do. They decided that the only way to stop his ascension to power was to destroy his focus, the crystal. They tried many things to destroy the foundation holding the crystal, many resulting in weapons of significant power being destroyed in one frail swing, The only thing that seemed to work was magic and brute blunt force. Jacob managed to get his magic to function and disintegrate one of the legs of the tripod but the other 2 held strong until all focused their strength and beat it until it folded under the weight of the Crystal it supported and fell into the negative energy plane, being destroyed along with the souls inside it in a bright display of fascinating lightning.

Brother Chi, by this time had become weak, collapsed under the stress of his life force, his very chi, being ripped out of him. Fortunately for him the Demilich, without his source of power, decided to flee into the a hole. Where it went no one knows. Since he fled in such a hurry he had no time to gather his prize possessions and our travelers had time to gather a few of them and then gate back to their home where they were greeted with surprise and astonishment. All who knew them thought surely that they had perished since no one had seen or heard any word from them in weeks.

They were given a celebration for ridding the lands of the undead plague that once ran amuck. There was wine, women, and dancing given to all those who wanted free of charge and they were given free reign to go to any city and be treated as heroes. The accounts of their great deed will forever be written in the history books and many generation to come will know their names and praise them to all in the lands.

## Letters from Camp: An Account of Jim D's Friday Night D&D Campaign, Translated from the Gnomish by Noel More

Dear Mom,

I have finally found an adventuring party that doesn't look to hopeless. The guy organizing it is called Fool (the I is silent). Unfortunately there aren't any other gnomes in the party, mostly humans and daisy-eaters. Some of these guy's are big enough to hide behind, so I should be alright. You were right about what you said about humans, I could not believe it until I saw it for myself. The funny thing is that they seem totally unaware of how silly it makes them look.

I have to sign off now, we are throwing a going away party for ourselves.

Your loving daughter

G

Dear Mom,

I am taking this opportunity to write you this note while the rest of the party crawls across a perfectly adequate bridge that crosses a small ravine. Hey, some guys are shooting at the slow pokes that are still on the bridge. Well, I guess I ought to go help them.

The ingratitude of some people! After all of the effort I went to helping them, the stupid halfling went and got shot and then died. Though the spray of blood back-lit by the sun did look pretty cool.

Fool (the I is silent) is trying to get us organized so I have to go.

Your loving daughter

G

Dear Mom,

I wish there was another gnome in the party that I could talk to. I think everybody else is insane. This big human Willie, who pretends to be a knight, mostly shoots party members in the back, and nobody complains about it. So I'm going with the flow. Then the party agrees to gamble with these dwarfish bandits with delusions of grandeur and loses. Now we are supposed to pay a 50% tax on all of the gold we carry out of the tower! So guess who is not picking up any gold?

I fought off some skeletons that attacked the party, some of the other people helped a little. I need to go help Willie open a door.

Your loving daughter

G

P.S. Is Lars a pansy name or what?

## 6th Fleet Turn 05: NATO Takes it on the Shin From Soviet Subs, by Tracy Johnson

In the ongoing game of 6th Fleet:

The Soviet submarine force emerged like monsters of the deep.

It is assumed a previously undetected Soviet submarine finished off the Israeli submarine "Gal" damaged earlier this turn. Since there were no survivors, the true identity of Soviet sub is unknown. It is only assumed to be an old 1950s style Foxtrot class sub known to be patrolling the area before hostilities (12 points).

The Oscar class submarine Svesa launched a major spread of torpedoes at her capitalist tormentors off the coast of Morocco, sinking the U.S. Frigates Thach and Rentz. The U.S. Frigate Stark, was (ominously,) missed in the spread ( $6 * 2 = 12$  points).

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Meanwhile, the Soviet Guided Missile sub, Lipitsy, avoided using her main armament and launched torpedoes missing the U.S. Guided Missile Cruiser Texas, and damaging the U.S. Destroyer Comte De Grasse.

The Soviets are up to 111 points, the U.S. is at 34 points.

## **To LARP or not to LARP** **Or** **"So you say you want to be a Dragon-slayer"** **A Game review by Mike Clancy**

Recently I've had the chance to join in on a local group that plays a LARP game called NERO (New England Role-playing Organization), a locally owned chapter of an international group of LARP gamers. David Bliss is the owner/organizer of the local chapter known as VALOR. Six other volunteers work with him on organizing the games, running scenarios, playing NPC's (non-player characters), doing costumes and whatever else is required.

A LARP is a "Live Action Role Play" game. It is basically a live action, real time, Dungeons & Dragons game. For those of you who have only seen the Vampire LARP'ers who stand around trying to look cool while being depressed, moody and/or dramatic, FORGET THEM. This Game is NOT like that! I've had a BLAST at the two games I've attended.

VALOR meets outside of Richmond once a month at the Pocahontas State Park. Games typically run from Friday night until Sunday morning. The game officially runs 24hrs a day, and generally there is NO stopping...but even the monsters get tired and need to sleep when the clock hits 5:30am. So, want to sneak around in the dark? Go for it! Night battles are COMMON for this game. And believe me you have NO idea how hard it is to pick out the good guys from the bad guys on a dark rainy night! There is nothing like killing or getting killed on accident by one of the "good guys".

Also, the combat in this game is "real". If you want to beat the annoying magic user into submission with your long sword, go for it! But you better be able to dodge the spell packets while you try to close in on him! Damage is done by calling out the damage of the weapon as you begin your swing and BEFORE you hit your target. Example, a fighter using a long sword would call "2 normal" and if he hits his target, that person/monster would take 2 points of damage. (Definitely run from the guy that is calling "32 Magic Slay," this is Very Bad News when you are 1st level.) It should also be noted that people are not out there swinging swords and such like they are Louisville Sluggers. If you hurt the person you are fighting against you are swinging Too Hard! Pain is NOT the name of the game here. This Is Most Definitely NOT your father's SCA.

Hand to hand combat is done using padded weapons, basically it's a 1/2" PVC tube covered in 3/4" pipe insulation & duct tape. Shields are made of 1/4" wood, with the edges of the shields also covered in 3/4" pipe insulation. Magic use is done by reciting a particular phrase and throwing a "Spell Packet" (some call them spackets). A spacket is a small amount of birdseed (about the size of a gumball) wrapped in a square of fabric. If you get HIT with a spell packet, either shield, weapon, or on your body, it affects you. If the spell caster doesn't manage to hit you with the packet, there is no effect. In addition, there is no effect if the spell caster doesn't recite the phrase properly.

Armor is as real as you want it to be (and can afford to spend). Most players run around in a VERY basic fantasy costume. It is not necessary

to spend a ton of money on clothing, but High-top sneakers & blue-jeans are highly discouraged. For those of you that have LOTS of extra time and/or cash to spend... Go Buck wild! Some players have really cool leather armor; there is even one regular player that runs around in about 30lbs of chainmail armor. Weapons are generally anything you might find on the Dungeons & Dragons equipment list. They are however, grouped into general "classes" of weapons, long sword, short sword, two-handed sword, spear, pole-arm, bow, crossbow and others. You can model these weapons any way you choose, as long as it meets safety requirements.

Buying costumes, weapons and related products can run up quite a tab. A large battle-axe can run around \$35, a shield about \$40. When buying other armor the sky is the limit, but I recommend checking the auctions on Ebay.

As for the costs of going to the events, a three-day event will cost about \$45 (\$35 if you pre-register one week in advance). A 4-day event generally costs \$65, (pre-reg. for \$55) but the prices vary by chapter. If you come and be an NPC for the weekend (you get to play the monster all weekend and whup up on folks) the event is free for you and your character does get XP, PLUS you get a free meal each day and all-you-can-drink water. The facilities are quite nice, and usually pretty clean. The State Park maintains several groups of cabins that are used by the chapter to play in. Some are sleeping quarters for characters, and there are separate & isolated areas for those that are playing the monsters (monster camp, by-the-way is off-limits). The reason for this is pretty simple, if you WANT to attack monster camp and try and raid it for its gold & whatever else you may find up there, feel free. BUT you have to understand that the people playing the Monsters get to defend with EVERYTHING they have available. The following example was relayed to me by one of the NPC's and several other regular players. "Do you REALLY want to attack four Arch-mage Demi-lich's and their Dark-Knight minions?" Definitely a quick way for your character to end up messily dead.

With this game, you get your choice of four basic classes: Fighter, Rogue (Thief), Scholar (Magic-user), Templar (Paladin/Cleric). There is no use of religion in-game. There are about 15 different races to choose from, some "official" and some that are new to the game and are only being run on a case-by-case basis. The race choices are varied: several types of elves (including dark elves), half-orcs & half-ogres, hobblings (halflings/hobbits), humans & barbarians, dwarves, Sarr (a feline race), and Wolven (a wolf-based race).

Skills are bought by each player based on character class. For example, if you want to be a fighter using two axes and throwing fireballs while dressed in plate armor, you CAN. Only not at 1st level. Skills are bought at different rates for each of the classes. Scholars and Templars can buy spells at cheaper rates than Rogues. Templars and fighters can buy weapon & fighting skills for fewer points than Rogues and Scholars. There are NO limitations on what skills you can buy, except that you must have accumulated enough BP (Build Points) to buy those skills.

Realism is both encouraged and "bent" in this game. A person running around in costume makes for a much better game. For example, there are times when your character may need to climb out of a window and run. Some folks can and will dive out of said open window and run like a bat out of hell. Others, such as those of a more "robust" stature, can use the "out of game" call, which is typically done by placing ones hand/weapon on top of your head and giving a three-second count of your action. An example, "I dive out the window. One. I dive out the

window. Two. I dive out the window. Three.” then walk out, and while standing outside the window, take your hand off your head and start running!

You will find the typical mix of people you get at any D&D game. Such as, the Gung-Ho fighters right up front, swinging & fighting, as well as magic users casting spells and healing people who had been taken down in combat. Some of these people are pretty darn cool to game with, they know their stuff, they WANT to play and they are there to have a GOOD TIME.

But now onto the dark side of the game. We need to get down to the nitty gritty...the People. Are these folks YOU would want to game with? In a word, YES. The problem is, there are always a FEW there that are not so fun; these people ARE in the minority, but they are there. As in ANY normal tabletop game, there are folks, who basically sit around and DO nothing to help the party. They try to hang back, let others do the killing and/or dying and then collect the treasure from the monsters that OTHERS have taken down. I have also seen two or three players that are “the whiners.” They complain about anything and EVERYTHING and are generally a pain-in-the-ass, and must be avoided. This is fairly easy to do, because these people do little except sit in their cabins (I have yet to deduce why they bother to come at all). Generally speaking though, the two or three “bad” players do NOT ruin it for the other players that are out there LARPing and having a good time.

Speaking from personal experience, you can get hurt in this game. However, this is usually NOT from getting hit by someone. I’ve been taken out during a fight, and then stepped on by a 6’4” 260 lb fighter wearing combat boots. (“Ouch!” was one of the many words to come to mind at the time, to say the least.) I acquired another interesting bruise while backing away from three trolls and into a very unforgiving tree. However, the WORST and most “interesting” injury I saw was during a night combat. About six players, around 3am, were chasing down an NPC while it was dark as sin. The area was just barely lit from the lights of a nearby cabin. The NPC stopped, turned, and fought with his closest opponent. When he saw the rest of us coming he took off at a full run around a bush. His kneecap promptly found the picnic table that was on the other side of the bushes. Watching this guy catch that table, and seeing him do a flip over it was worthy of either a John Woo film or a move by “Star Wars” Darth Maul. This was one of the most sickening and, yet, coolest things I’ve ever seen in real life. The thought crossed my mind to take off my shin-guards kiss them after having seen that. EVERYONE stopped and we waited until we knew he was ok, fortunately for him he only had a softball-sized knot to his knee, a really nasty bruise and a fairly interesting combat story. After that, “Game on!” and the fight kept going! (However, that NPC did sit out the rest of the combat.)

Bear in mind that this game typically runs with 25+ players, one “official” DM (David Bliss), and approximately four assistant DM’s/NPC’s, plus a few people that are strictly running NPC’s. The DM’s are usually overworked! It is impossible for them to cover the entire 700+ acres of woods, and can be hard to find at times. This fact should not come as a surprise to anyone that has played a D&D game. We have all dealt with the times when that one character manages to do something REALLY stupid. The DM then has to take that person aside for an hour (or more in this case) to get their situation resolved. (UPDATE: I’ve recently talked to Dave Bliss and he commented on this review. The situation with the lack of available rules marshals is being corrected, and at future games there will be MANY more people that

are qualified to make rule calls, and run plot/storylines). Also, I must admit, we have had a few rain delays in the two games I’ve attended. I mean, let’s be honest, who really LIKES standing ankle-deep in water, in an open field, during a lightning storm? There have also been a few slow times in the middle of the day after it rains, few people want to move, much less fight, in 90+ degree weather and 80%+ humidity.

The camp itself is very nice. There are two groups of cabins, sleeping two to six people each. All of which have electricity and window screens, a few even have the luxury of heat or a fireplace. Usually there are some bugs, mosquitoes & ticks. But this is to be expected...let’s get real; it’s the WOODS people! Just be prepared and bring some bug spray! The cabins are weather tight, and quite comfortable to sleep in, the one exception being getting stuck with a bunkmate who snores like a band-saw on high power. But that is easy to remedy...just find a different cabin. There is a decent shower facility. Four shower rooms, with separate male/female bathrooms. Getting a hot shower in the morning can present a problem. I have had spotty luck with getting hot water before everyone else gets there in the morning. Sometimes skipping the shower and remaining “manly” is better than a COLD shower.

The camp also has a very large lodge building, with a kitchen. Snacks and water are available 24hrs a day in addition to the four meals being served each day. The food is pretty good and not fancy. Nachos and cheeseburgers are a staple of the menu. Food prices are very reasonable, so there is no need to leave camp to get some grub. Word is there will be a FREE Thanksgiving Feast, with real fixings and all the trimmings; of course you WILL have to pay for the event itself.

So, all in all, TWO THUMBS UP for this game! I’m Hooked! There are two chapters in Virginia, one right here in Hampton (VALOR), and another in DC called METRO.

If you’d like more information, please feel free to look up the website for VALOR [www.stonereach.com](http://www.stonereach.com). Or the website of the NERO organization [www.nerolarp.com](http://www.nerolarp.com). Too be honest, the VALOR chapter is in the midst of re-vamping its website and so general information on the game is a bit thin. But the NERO site has links and Info galore.

## **BattleFleet Gothic Campaign Three Starts, by Dave Peterson**

BattleFleet Gothic campaign 3 started meeting on June 12 at ACE from 6:30pm to 9:00pm. Attendance since the campaign began three weeks ago has been light (we were up to seven last week). If you haven’t made it yet, you can be sure that you have been missed!

This Campaign will conclude on July 31. As always, campaign games are open to all ACE Game Club members in good standing. It would be best if everyone was regular, but sporadic, newbie, or one-time players are welcome. After all, it is summertime and everyone’s schedules are all over the map.

Starting fleet values are 700 points, to ensure that games will be fast enough to complete before closing time. Your fleet must have approximately 400 points of capital ships and 300 points of escorts. It might be better to say, a minimum of 300 points must be escorts.

We are handling repairs, refits, and replacements at the beginning of each session. Each capital ship can repair D3 points; each escort squadron can replace D3 ships up to its original size; lost ships are replaced using a table for each fleet type (that ensures that you get a

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random type of replacement and have a 1/6 chance of getting no replacement at all).

The second event of our campaign sessions is the allocation of forces into battles. Defending forces select a card representing the location of their squadron on patrol. The card lists the scenarios that are available in the location. Once everyone is paired up, players choose a battle off the card and get going.

Renown points will be totaled for each force (Imperial, Chaos, Orks, Eldar, Pirates). The campaign will be won by one of these sides (rather than an individual MVP squadron commander). It is therefore in the interest of squadron commanders to coordinate among themselves in the allocation of attacking and defending forces.



**Mayhem and Madness at the Games Day Speed Painting Contest**



**Games Workshop's Rick Priestly and Paul Sawyer were available to chat with Games Day attendees**



"Excuse me, but did you see any purple blokes with four arms go by just now?"

## **Notes from the Greyhawk Press, by Walt Kassel**

Dry Wax, Dwarf Proprietor

### **Earth Quakes Diamond Lake**

"Pit mine turned into strip mine in seconds," Guild Mistress Deepsmith said.

Two mines were "turned over and sunk in the northern end of Diamond Lake. Mining town suffers minimal damage. Miracle the town wasn't over turned. Blackstone claims they slept through the Quake. Blame strange mining party for using explosives and special exploding brew made by enterprising Dwarven Cook from Greyhawk City.

Livestock slain on the Iuz Borderlands by strange griffin with gray feathers. Unlicensed griffin rider blamed for indiscriminant slaughters. Rider may have come from Perrenland. Rangers warn shepherds and cattle herds and pigeon farmers to take appropriate safeguards.

Yatzee stuns opera house with strange singing and language. Little Gnome joined by Otto in a Grand Operatic Review. Grand Finale sung by both in unfamiliar language. "What does O Solo Mio mean anyway?" said puzzled operagoers. Strange duo to do Oerth Tour, billed as "The Two Tenors." Open in Nyvers next month. Show in town for two weeks.

Paid for by Durgar's Brewery & Tap House, The Red Serpent, The Wizard's Hat, Thanador Enterprises, Doc's Ferry Fishery (DL), and *Phithweel's Teenkre Tules* (as written in the Gnomish tongue).