PBV

Unearthed

The Mysterious Realm of Play-By-Mail Gaming

23rd Slap Your Grandma Issue!



January 8th, 2023

For whom does the PBM bell toll?

PlayByMail.Net

ISSUE #23

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Send Submissions To: playbymail.net@gmail.com January 8th, 2023

"My God, man! Is that PBM that you're playing?!"

CONTENTS

Civilize - A First Look

Gaming Brings Its Own Surprises

Editorial

Red Herring PBM Articles

From PBM Companies & GMs

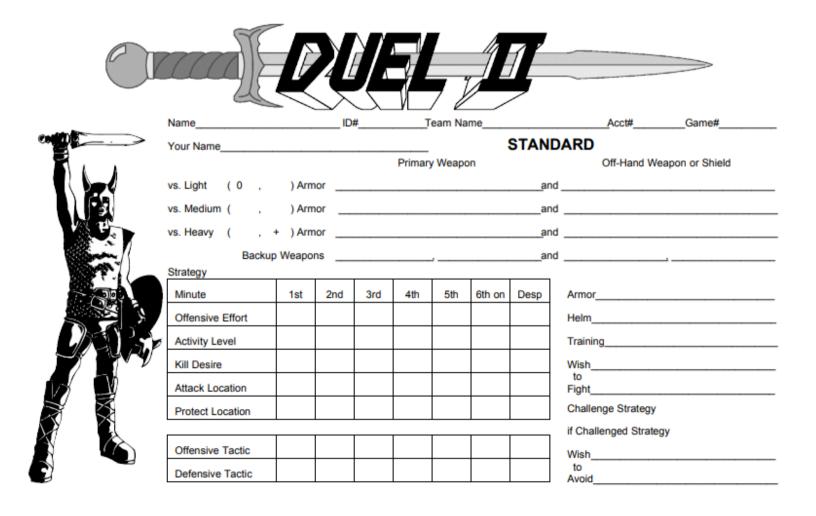
A Brief Musing About Carol Mulholland

*** Due to space considerations, Charles' forthcoming article on Hyborian War had to be pushed back to Issue #24. It's coming, though! Thank you for your patience.



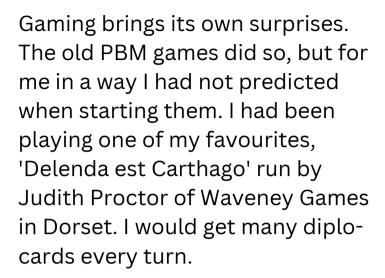
A bloodthirsty crowd roars as the gladiators enter the arena. Nervous but hardheaded team managers watch from their battle crested pavilions. Will months of training and patiently rehearsed strategy pay off with an arena victory? Or will all be lost on the jagged blade of an opponent's sword?

Apart, on the throne of honor, the Duelmaster looks on, a body of knotted muscles and scars a testimony to his honor. His visage is impassive but his thoughts boil. How long before some young warrior's sword finds his heart -- perhaps one of those he now watches? He shakes himself, casting aside dark thoughts. For the moment, he is the Duelmaster, Champion of the Games. His smoldering eyes scan the arena floor where the warriors assume their fighting stances. His raises his clenched fist and the gladiators leap forward... Victory, disgrace, or death lies awaiting on the open sand.



Gaming Brings Its Own Surprises

Leslie Ian Jones



Whilst playing the role of the Sheyhulislam of the Caliphate, one card got my attention. After weeks of chatting via the game a meeting was arranged for us to meet in person. So at the once-a-month PBM pubmeet at the Victoria & Albert in Marylebone Station, London.

I knew I was meeting a female player. To say I was nervous was an understatement. She was lovely. Chatted the whole evening and met the next day for a trip to London Zoo. Oh yes this PBMer knew how to woo the lady. Cutting a long story short. We met in September 1991 and married in March 1992. Yes, this PBMer was a fast worker!

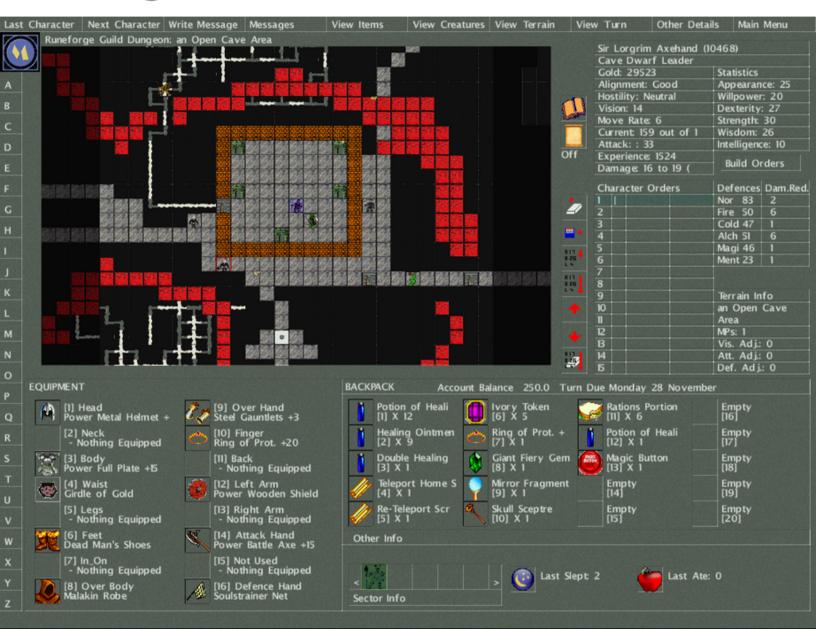
That was my surprise, as I was not looking for a partner who played in just one PBM game. That's how lucky I was. The real surprise was our son, who as part of his degree in Politics & History, wrote his dissertation on "What factor contributed to the decline of UK PBM gaming in the late 1990s and early 2000s?" All the game rulebooks, Flagship magazines, and Eagle's Cry from Delenda helped with his research.

My gaming hobby was now history!



DUNGEONWORLD

The Largest PBM Adventure Game Ever Made!

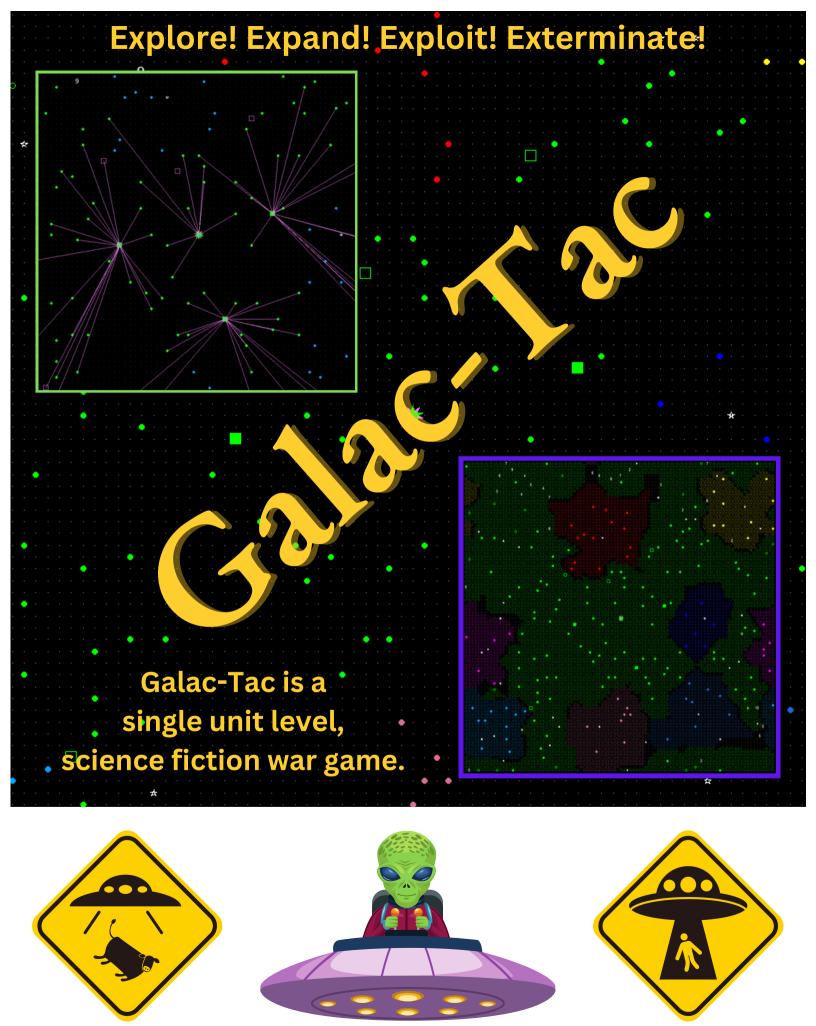


A screen capture from Madhouse's DungeonWorld Nexus View Editor









Civilize

A First Look

Troy Hooper

Civilize is an open-ended, postal PBM in the tribal genre, currently in the beta playtest. The player controls a group of around 1,000 individuals, which having been split from some unknown main tribe, has to find its own way in a strange land. The writings of Two Crows, their interim leader, give some flavour:

"It has been some fourteen moons since we parted ways from out forefathers and foremothers, cast alone in this new land. Though we say 'alone' this is not true, there are other people, and monsters too, that also inhabit this place. The people we have met, so far, have been happy to trade for what little we have to offer. The monsters, strange lizardfaced creatures our young warriors have named 'Kobolds,' are, however, less friendly."

Set in what the game moderator calls the Bone Age (an imagined era that predates the Stone Age), items such as wooden clubs are the standard issue, while bone spears represents the height of current technology. It is expected that, as the tribe advances into the (Paleo-/Meso-) Neolithic Age, new stone-based implements will become available. There are hints that the future may include the Bronze Age or even Iron Age eras for those tribes who can survive long enough (though do not expect to invent the wheel any time soon!).



"Limited by our skill to manufacture tools and implements, we initially struggled to feed our people. There are no verdant jungles like in the old country, instead, this land is a carpet of apparently endless plains and hills, bounded by oceans and mountains. None of this terrain readily yields up its

food, and it feels like we are having to relearn old skills just to survive."

Survive, yes. The player will soon learn that their first year in Civilize will be about surviving. The main task will be to survive the approaching winter, the deepest being in month 11. Fortunately, you will start out in month 1, already equipped with as many Preserves (Food that has been prepared in a way that its lasts more than one turn) as you can carry, though these will not last long. Priority should be given to Hunting or Fishing for Food, which is eaten by the tribe, and any excess being lost, as it spoils. By using the Cooking skill, you may begin to convert Food into Preserves, which you should stockpile to see you through the winter months. Cooking, like most other skills, will need to be learned by the new tribe.

"Winter has lifted, and our people seem none the worse for the ordeal of the cold, wet months, thanks to the foresight of our Elders, who advised us throughout the year. Winter will come again, as it does every year, but with each winter we survive. the better we are able to face to the next, while discovering more about the land we find ourselves in."

In Civilize, the player manages resources each turn, which primarily are the people. Each turn covers one month of the year, and for which the people are allocated to tasks such as Hunting and/or Fishing for Food, to Defence should fate send Kobolds (or worse) in your direction. Additionally, the tribe may undertake activities like Cooking, Weaving or Bonecrafting (if you have the skill and the materials), as well as exploring the surrounding land.

From my initial understanding of the game (playtest version), there will be three distinct phases of play. The player is not required, nor obliged, to move to the next phase, assuming their tribe has qualified to do so:

Survival - The period of keeping the tribe alive and getting through (at least) the first winter intact. Take this as a warning: fail to prepare, and your tribe will starve to death. It is expected that

ISSUE #23

population, through attrition, will be reduced during this phase.

Acculturation - Once the basics of survival have been mastered, the tribe may begin to develop culturally, making it a more attractive to people who may wish to join the tribe, restoring and expanding the population lost during the Survival phase. Among other ways, a tribes' culture is expanded by interacting with the (NPC) settlements that may be encountered.

Civilisation - As the tribe develops culturally, it may wish to exchange its nomadic lifestyle for something more settled, which will open up access to new skills and opportunities. One requisite for settling will be to clear the region of hostile forces (mostly Kobolds!), before staking a claim.

I am looking forward to reporting more as the playtest develops, and in the fullness of time, it being open to regular postal players.

Troy Hooper (playtester)



PBM UNEARTHED

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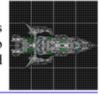
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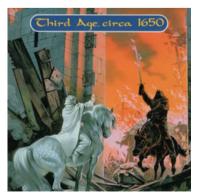
Historians to produce the definitive ongoing record of our conquest of the galaxy.

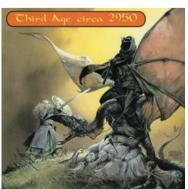


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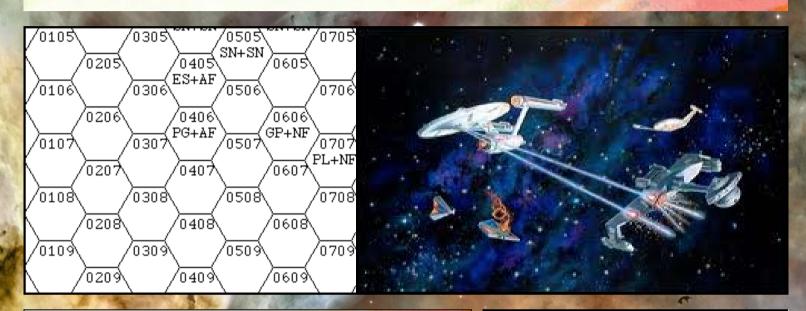






MiddleEarthGames.Com

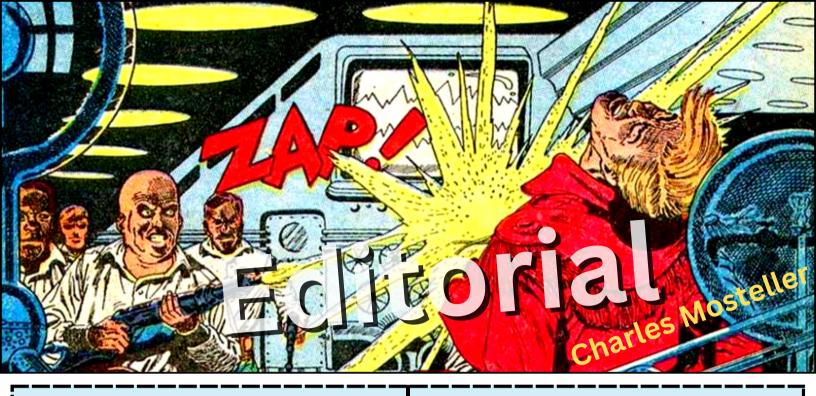
Star Fleet Compaign in the High Arena MARIAN RICHARD MARIAN MARIAN





30-1213: The LiftPort, Inc (410) and Harsh Reality (638) Corporations decided to have it out today over in hex 30-1213. In a 3 turn battle, the attacking fleet (F-POL (M) "Masterson" and G-BDD "Spinecrusher") destroyed defender (T-NDD "Aryx-1"). LiftPort, Inc, the attacking Corp, had a total AF of 54 versus a DF of 32.

Can you say retaliation?



ZAP! We're back with another new issue of PBM Unearthed. But are you prepared for what we've brought your way from the realm of play by mail gaming?

Since the last issue published, I've heard from numerous different people, including **Glenn Harrold**, **Leslie Jones**, and **Troy Hooper**. It's always good to receive feedback and articles. Glenn thanked me for my work and efforts and patience with PBM Unearthed, and assured me that he's not the only one who recognizes the value that I give to the community. If you're out there reading this, Glenn, then know that I really do appreciate your support and your kind words. It's always nice to be appreciated.

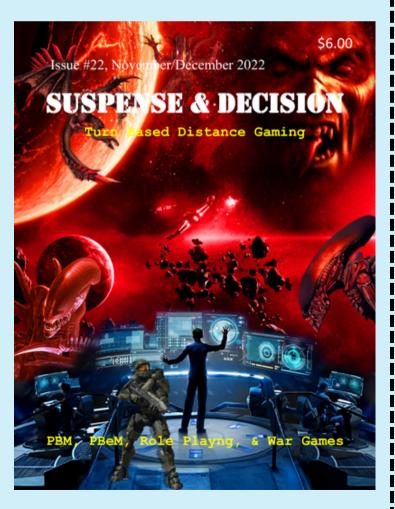
While browsing the PBM Discord, I caught sight of some other nice words being said about PBM Unearthed, and I have excavated them and included them elsewhere in this issue. Just look for some colored boxes that feature comments by **Andy**, **Fungus**, **werewolf_punch**, and **FenrisK**.

Andy "volunteered" to help me with a side project. Yeah, that's right, people, there's stuff going on in the background that you don't even know about.

The enthusiasm shown for the PBM Discord is right on the money. It's actually been more popular than PBM Unearthed, and people are using it and enjoying chatting with

one another. It's good to see a whole bunch of different people getting use out of it. It's still not as busy as it could be, but it's come a long way from very humble beginnings. If you haven't checked it out, yet, then click here.

Jon Capps has another issue of Suspense & Decision about to publish. On January 7th, 2023, he posted an update on the S&D blog, saying that he hopes to have it wrapped up by the 15th. If you haven't subscribed to it, yet, then you can do that here.



I know that I often try to drum up some submissions from our readership, but Jon Capps can always use some help, too. Don't forget about him. He would love to have you send him an article or some feedback or just something else that he could include in new issues of **S&D** that he publishes. He's also specifically asked for GMs to send him some comments for his **Spokesmen Speak** column! Click here to e-mail him, right now!

I know that sometimes the issues of **PBM Unearthed** get a little thin on the reading material, so this issue, I included a special treat - I stumbled upon **Red Herring** magazine. I don't think that I had heard of it, before. So, I included a whole page of links in this issue that you can click on, and read a whole bunch of different PBM articles from the 1990s.

I couldn't get the links to link to the exact pages, but I did include the exact page numbers to aid you in quickly finding your way to the old play by mail articles contained in the sixteen issues in question, which were authored by none other than **Tim Lomas**. *Enjoy them!*



Guild House
This square is the guild house of one
of the in-game guilds. Walk onto it for
a description. Issue an 'L 2'order on it for



this square. Some combat modifiers and low damage are possible. The square wed over as if it were 'or



Bottomiess Pit
A terrible black pit fills the square.
This terrain is impassable and should be treated like a wall.



Portcullis

A stout iron portcullis is here. Normally, these are open and can be treated as an open square. Rarely, they are closed. Look around the area for more info.



There is a bed in this square. See the rooms 'look' description for the state of the bed. The square can be moved over as if it were 'open'.



Stairs Down
There is a flight of stairs leading down.
See the rooms 'look' description for more info. The square can be moved over as



There is a flight of stairs leading up.
See the rooms 'look' description for more info. The square can be moved over as



Courtyard/Market
This square is part of a courtyard
or market area. Buy and Sell
orders can be issued here as shown
in "Courtyards" in this guide.



Locked Door
Thora is a locked door here. The square There is a locked door here. The sq cannot be entered or passed until a rogue has unlocked the door.



Magical Trader
One of the enigmatic Magical Traders One of the enigmatic Magical Traders is here. Magical Traders very seldom move. All Buy and Sell orders can be issued while



Wall / Sheer Rock
This square is completely blocked by This square is completely blocked to a wall, or sheer rock and cannot be entered or passed through.



Unlocked Door

uith an unlocked This square is filled with an unrocked doorway. It can be treated exactly like an open square for movement and combat purposes.



Crawispace
This corridor is a rough low crawispace.
It can be treated like an open square, although hidden combat modifiers with long weapons do apply.



There is a treasure chest here. You can attempt to open it using a 'Z 60' order, although this can he very dangerous for the untrained. The square be very dangerous for the untrained, can be moved over as if it were 'open'



MADCENTRAL.CO.UK

DUNGEONWORI

The Largest PBM Adventure Game Ever Made!

DungeonWorld is a character-based multiplayer turn-based fantasy adventure game.

It is set in an epic world full of monsters, mayhem, swords and sorcery.

You can play DungeonWorld completely for FREE with a single character, or play commercially with as many characters as you like.

Whichever way you choose, all players are in the same continuous shared world. It's the biggest game of its kind on earth! Enjoy!



Private Land
This square marks the edge of some private land owned by a noble or lord. It costs 2 Move Points to cross. Issue an 'L 2' order for info on the owners name.



are is a road. Travel on it Ihis square is a road. Iravel on it costs 1 Move Point. Roads are useful for faster travel between cities and places of interest.



City, Castle or Keep

This square is a city, castle or keep of some kind. It costs 1 Move Point to cross. Some of these can be entered. Issue an 'L 2' order to do so.



Dungeon Entrance

This square is a Dungeon Entr It costs 1 Move Point to cross. Issue an 'L 2' order to enter the Dungeon. Entrance



This square is a magical place of It costs 2 Move Points to cross. Issue an 'L 2'order on it for more info on the magical place.



Broken Land

covered in cracks, pits and ravines. It costs 3 Move Points to Cross.



Town or Village

There is a town or village here. This square costs 1 Move Point to cross. Some of these squares act as limited traders. A few (but not many) can be entered using the "L 2" order.



This terrain type is woods or light forest. Hunting/Foraging is usually good here. Vision is reduced slightly if you end your turn in Light Forest. It costs 2 Move Points to cross.



This terrain is tough going. Steep Hills make for slow progress, but do increase your vision when you end your turn on them. They cost 4 Move Points to Cross.



Gentle Hills

Pleasant rolling hills which slow progress a bit but increase vision when you end your turn on them. Gentle Hills cost 3 Move Points to cross.



This sort of terrain is hard to travel and often teeming with danger. Heavy Forest decreases vision when you end your turn in it. It costs 3 Move Points to cross and can hide IDs of characters in it.



This terrain type is impassable. To cross a mountain range you must first find a pass of some kind.



Open Land
Can be fields, farmland, wasteland or just about any other sort of open area you can imagine. Open Land costs 2 Move Points to cross



Body of Water Water comes in the form of streams, lakes, shallow and deep rivers. It costs 4 Move Points to cross, although some types are impassable without a bridge or boat. * The idea for the planet-destroying, robot Berserkers comes from stories written and copyrighted by Fred Saberhagen, and is used with his permission.



games@rickloomispbm.com

#(480)945-6917

PBM Discord Chatter

Happy New Year @GrimFinger, thanks for the new issue.
Although I'm relatively new to pbem (2 years so, just a nipper), I've seen lots of positives, recently, particularly as a result of you setting up this Discord server.

It's great to see the chat in other games, as it gives you a real insight as to whether it's a good fit. As soon as I saw the term 'spreadsheets in space' for Takamo, I knew I had to give it a whirl.

TribeNet is alive and well, and looking forward to a new code relaunch (@Drused being another pbm hero alongside @Raven Zachary).

As published in your magazine recently, there's also an exciting new game on the horizon by @Fungus. Lots to be excited about in the small sphere I am involved in, and I'm sure there is more to talk about, more widely.

Some things need both effort and time to show results.
You're putting in the effort...
just let it have a bit of time, too.

Andy 01/08/2023

PBM Discord Chatter

I see the magazine (like this Discord, and the PBM forum before it) as an invaluable oasis in a desert of disparate games. Something that links everyone together, however tenuously. Just being here is a valuable thing. Most people don't write articles. Most people don't play more than one game, but we're all grateful for the efforts of anyone who helps to bring the community together and inform us about developments in our hobby.

Fungus

01/08/2023

PBM Discord Chatter

The PBM scene right now is like life growing under the Arctic ice. It's there, but people might assume it's a dead place unless there are scientists working to publicize what's going on there. PBM Unearthed is like one of those journals documenting the life that's growing. If it wasn't around, I probably would have walked right over a lot of activity under my feet and never knew it existed.

werewolf_punch

01/08/2023

Suspense & Decision



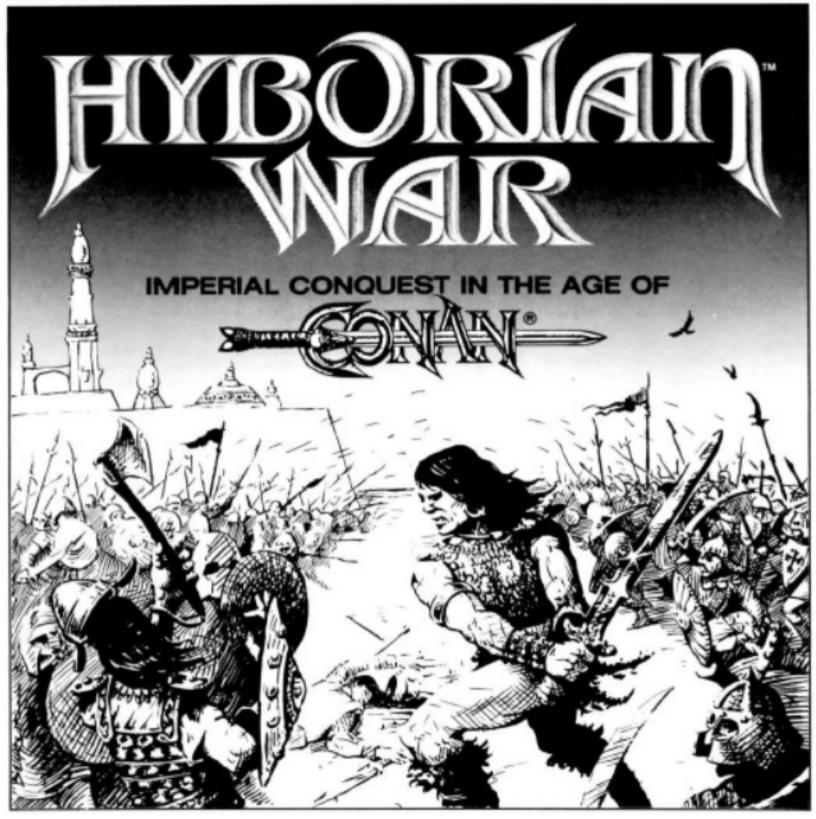
PBM Discord Chatter

Regarding the actual challenges addressed by Charles in Issue #22, I imagine publishing PBM Unearthed often feels a bit thankless. And I know people like me, who often don't hesitate with critiques, can make it seem all the more difficult. But it's obvious that PBM Unearthed, like Suspense and Decision before it, is doing a world of good for the hobby, and is fueling a community that its members truly value. I still think the once-a-week publication schedule for PBM Unearthed is a bit insane, though I admit, I always enjoy seeing a new issue come out. If it seems overwhelming, I recommend a less frequent release schedule. Better that than to see it disappear completely.

FenrisK 01/08/2022









Information that previously appeared on this page has been removed 01/12/2023



"All the News From Clans to Print"

Clan News

Global Edition

Fire Warnings: The fire threat has passed.

VOL. DCCCXX . . . No. 59

820-08, 29 DECEMBER 2022

clannews@outlook.com

FREE



Vincent van Goat: the one-eared Clan News mascot

The Clutch



elcome to a new issue of Clan News_we survived the threeweek break and we're back on track for a new turn next week!

It's been a rough holiday break for your Clan New editor. I've just recently recovered from a seven-day long bout of COVID, followed by a trip



followed by a trip that included both a mandatory evacuation of the airport terminal due to a suspicious bay (creating a massive traffic jam), followed by a canceled flight home due to inclement availer. I was stuck in Los Angeles for three extra days, which turned into a nice vacation extension, but it also made Clan News late this week. Sorry about that, it's good to be home and back on schedule again.

For always looking for more class to be interviewed and we could also benefit from more caption contest entries and class notices. As a reminder, you're paid in-game for being interviewed and submitting any class notices. If you win the caption contest, you're paid for that, too!

Until next time ... don't forget to feed your goats.

Raven Zachary, Yáahl, Clan 540



Image by Charles W. Bartlett via Wikimedia Common

In This Issue

| Page | |
|---|--|
| Naval Combat | |
| Guards for Local Settlements | |
| Monthly Reminders | |
| • The 123 Caption Contest | |
| 820 Triball League | |
| We're the Ekawi - Episode 34 | |
| • Clan Interview: 633 | |
| Featured Item: Oar | |
| Featured Rule Topic: Trade Envoy6 | |
| Featured Skill: Archaeology | |
| Featured Research Topic: Mining Ladder6 | |
| An Update on TribeNet 2020 | |
| • T.W.D.H! | |
| • Notices | |
| • Rumours | |
| Notes from the GM | |
| Tribe Talk Discord Tidbits | |
| • Clan Ratings | |

Contribute

Submit your content to Clan News. Contributors are paid in-game. See the last page of this issue for more details.

Clan News Issue #60 deadline: 9 January 2023 @ 8:00 UTC



Notices

Another mysterious message, some comics, and a few trade notices. A selection of great (and paid!) notices in this issue.

Check out this month's clan notices starting on page 8 of this issue.

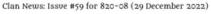
Turn Deadline

Orders for 820-09 are due on 1 January 2023
Australian Eastern: 20:00

Australian Eastern: 20:0 UK: 9:00

UTC: 9:00

USA Eastern: 4:00 / USA Pacific: 1:00



Page 1 of 18







From PBM Companies & GMs



EAKING NEWS BREAKING NEWS BREAKING NEWS B



Harlequin Games



From <u>legends@group.io</u>

Swords of Pelarn 28 Victory!

Congratulations to the Raven Lords. They have successfully maintained a Military Dominance victory.

The winners are:

C101 Krenko - Mons Johnson C103 Grezno - Mons Johnson C105 Twilight Sparkles - Sean Foster C107 Mistress - Sean Foster C109 Gurganthos - Ricco van Prooijen C111 Zad - Ricco van Prooijen





Are you a PBM company or PBM GM with something to say?

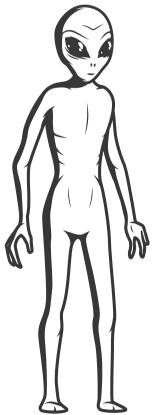
Well, then, you're in luck, because this space is available. In fact, you could have had it, this issue, but if you want your company and game news to appear in the pages of PBM Unearthed, then you've first got to actually send it in.

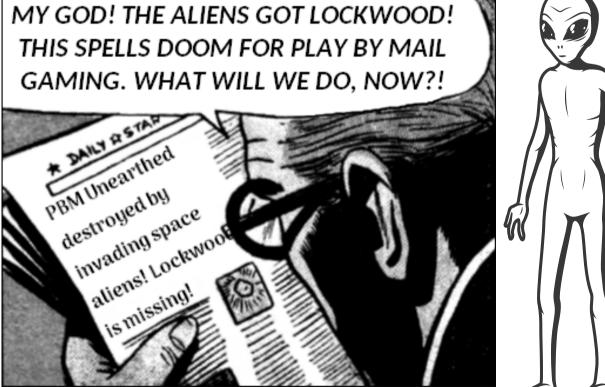
Yes, it's that easy!

Better luck next time. Send to:

playbymail.net@gmail.com









PBM Links



2300 A.D. - The Great Game

Adventurer Kings

Agema

Ancient Empires

Alamaze

Austerlitz

Atlantis Miskatonic

Atlantis: New Origins

Atlantis PbeM

Battle Plan

Clash of Legends

Combat Conditional Podcast

Company Commander

Continental Rails II

Covert Operations

Dark Age

Diplomacy World

Duel2

DungeonWorld Adventures

DungeonWorld Estates

Empires

Engarde!

Eressea

Extra Time

Extra Time: Chairman

Feudal Lords

Fire on the Suns

Flagship

Forgotten Realms

Galac-Tac

Galactic Conflict

Gameplan

Gameplan Baseball

The Glory of Kings

Heroic Fantasy

Hoopplan

Hyborian War

Ilkor: Dark Rising

Imaginary Wrestling Association

It's A Crime

KnightGuild

Legends

Les Petites Bêtes Soyeuses

Liminal En Garde!

Lords of the Earth

Middle-earth PBM

Mobius I

Monster Island

Nuclear Destruction

PBeM - Spiele

Phoenix: Beyond the Stellar Empire

Quest

Quest of the Great Jewels

Raceplan

Regime Change

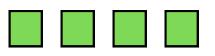
REN1493

Renaissance

Riftlords



PBM Links



(Continued)

Rome is Burning

RSW: Retro Space Wars

Run Chase

Scramble for Empire

Slapshot

Soccer Star

Soccer Stats

Spaceplan

Star Chase

Star Fleet Warlord

Starweb

Stellar Conflict

Summit PBM

SuperNova: Rise of the Empire

Suspense & Decision

Takamo

The Isles PBM

Throne of Cofain

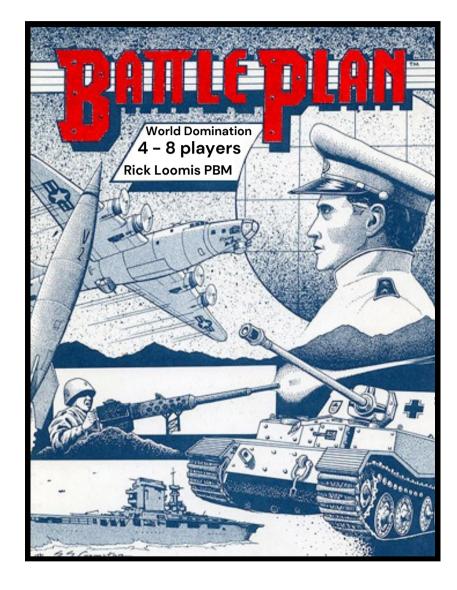
TribeNet

Victory! The Battle for Europe

War of the Dark God

World Wide Battle Plan

Wraith





Other Links

Tabletop Spirit
To Win Just Once

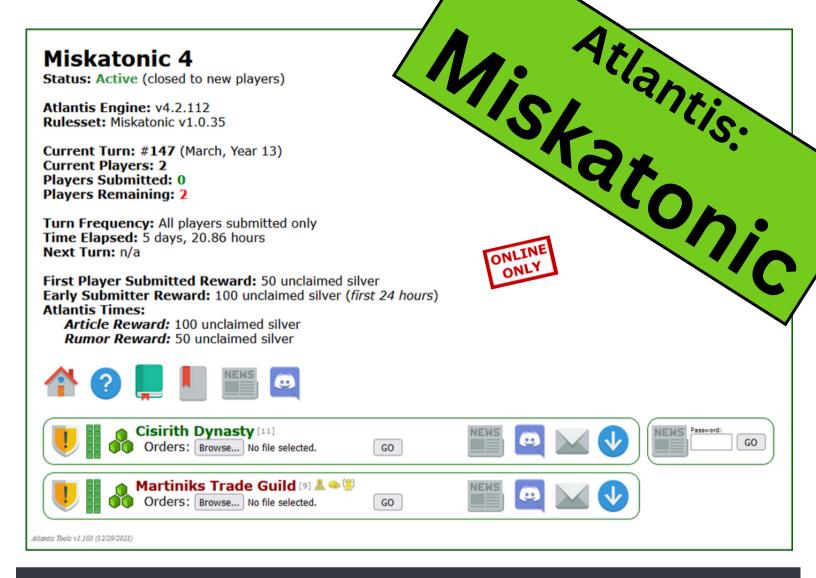














Atlantis: New Origins atlantis-phem.com



The Mighty Pen was always one of my favorite features in Flagship magazine. I truly hate that Carol Mulholland passed away. I use Canva to publish PBM Unearthed. How wonderful it would have been, if Carol had had such a tool at her disposal, from the very beginning of her long reign as editor of that PBM magazine from the other side of the Atlantic Pond. What I publish is a mere shell of what she would have accomplished.

Charles Mosteller

XISICS Postal Roleplaying on he Lonely Coast

Existes is a Narrative Play-By-Postal-Mail, Roleplaying-style game designed specifically for prisoners, by a former prisoner. It is set in The Lonely Coast fantasy-adventure setting, where players can run a single character or small group of characters starting a new life for whatever reason. The only rule is that the characters are starting over in a new life, with pretty much the clothing on their backs, very little experience, and a past they'd rather not talk about.

"The furthest flung outpost of a mighty kingdom, turbulent waters and forbidding, twisted forests separate the Lonely Coast from the glittering lights of civilisation. Some visitors come in search of adventure while others embrace the anonymity of the frontier. Still others, tiring of civilisation's decadence, come to start a new life. Adventurers are normally intent on battling the ferocious humanoids of the interior or on uncovering the ancient ruins and hidden treasure caches of the Old People lying forgotten in the untamed places of the Tangled Wood."

Foreword by Creighton Broadhurst
 The Lonely Coast Campaign Setting

The cost per turn is \$1.50 (and can accept stamps as payment), as an ex-con myself, I know how little money prisoners typically have available for entertainment after toiletries and coffee. Running this 100% hand-moderated game is a hobby, not a business, and it generates as much creative enjoyment and satisfaction for me as it does for the players. I have been running this game since 2017, while still in federal prison, so the game is well-established and runs quite smoothly.

This is a Narrative PBpM, as mentioned above, which means it isn't about statistics, resource-gathering, or management and number-crunching; Exlsles is about the story, as written by both the player and myself, the Game Master. Some players enjoy writing their characters' story in great detail, while others simply want to give direction, or even choose from a list of options; I tailor the game to your wishes, writing the story of how your decisions guide your character through the campaign setting. Turns are processed within two weeks of receipt, and there is no deadline for players to respond. Each player is running their character(s) in the same setting, but not directly interacting with other players, unless so desired.

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Creighton Broadhurst

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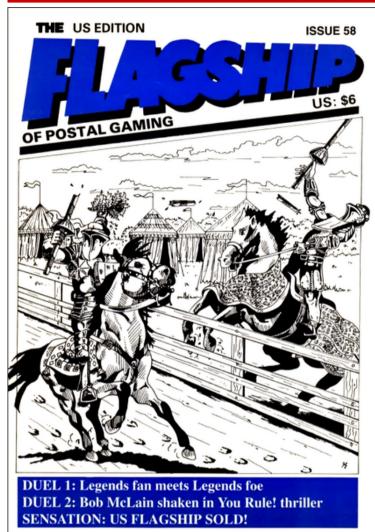
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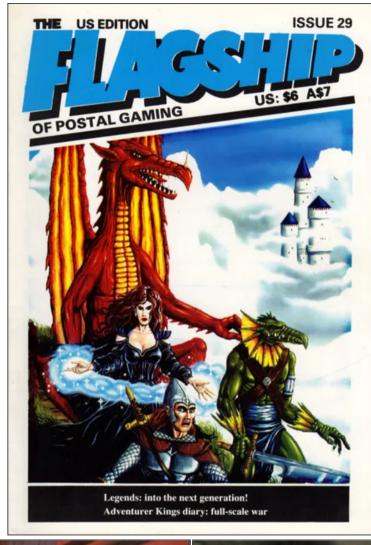
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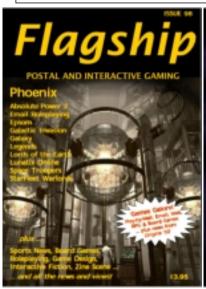
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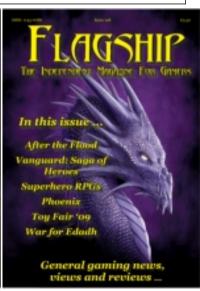
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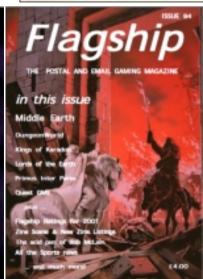
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