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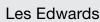
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Campaigner

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Editorial

Welcome to this very special edition of *The Campaigner*, where we celebrate 25 years since the release of *HeroQuest*. This is the first time we have dedicated an entire issue to a single game, but we feel that *HeroQuest* rightly deserves it.

HeroQuest is an important game for me personally. It is what ultimately led me to tabletop wargames and miniatures. But I won't talk about that here. You can find out all about that later on in the issue.

Our focus has primarily been on the original *HeroQuest* boxed board game. A number of expansions were available over the years, and while fantastic additions to *HeroQuest*, we decided to focus our attention on the core game. The reason for this is that we felt the boxed game paved the way for all that followed, and we wanted to properly explore what this meant.

From our research, the main benefit that arose from the expansions was that, as they were progressively released, they fixed the issues in the boxed game. For instance, the ill-defined victory conditions. So the expansions contribution to improving the game of *HeroQuest* should not go without mention.

Be that as it may, we have stuck to exploring the original boxed game. However we do have plans to revisit *HeroQuest*, more specifically its expansions, some time in the future.

Looking through the issue you might spot a couple of obvious omissions. The first would be input from the designer of *HeroQuest* himself, Steven Baker. I did make contact with Stephen, and talked to him at length. Unfortunately, Hasbro denied my request for a formal interview with Stephen about his game, and so his

unique insights into *HeroQuest* are not available.

The other is the highly controversial *HeroQuest 25th Anniversary* edition, being designed and published by Gamezone. Initially there was some contention as to whether this was suitable for the issue, since Gamezone's edition can quite rightly be viewed as entirely unofficial. However, the spirit of the project and its inspiration was undeniable, and it was decided to pursue this as an article subject.

We contacted Gamezone a number of times, but received no response. This, and the fact that the game hasn't been released yet, meant that we decided not to include anything about Gamezone's version of *HeroQuest*.

Do not fret though, as there is still a whole host of interesting articles to read. Such as our first game play through, where we follow three players experiences with *HeroQuest* and have them provide their thoughts at the end. In the very least you will hopefully learn something you didn't know about *HeroQuest* somewhere in this issue.

This issues cover is an original piece of artwork done by Craig Lee. Craig has previously provided the cover illustration for *The Campaigner* on more than one occasion. Each contribution has been fantastic, but this piece is especially amazing. Take a careful look at it and see if you can spot all the little details and nods to the *HeroQuest* game itself.

It is available for download as a desktop background on *The Campaigner* website. Just go to the Issue 9 page. ×

Matthew Lee *Editor*

The Campaigner looks at the most notable events in the recent months, and explores the real facts behind the stories.

Nagash is back

During August, Games Workshop began to release teaser images and product shots for *The End Times.* Some kind of supplement or campaign for Warhammer, it centres around the necromancer Nagash reappearing and bringing together the two warring factions of the undead, the Vampire Counts and the Tomb Kings.

Products that will accompany the release include a new plastic Nagash model, a rule book called Warhammer The End Times: Nagash, as well as a variety of character models. >

Goodbye, Robin

Actor and comedian Robin Williams died 11 August 2014. He was a well known collector of Warhammer 40,000 armies, as well as an avid console and computer gamer. ×

Polite society

The South Australian Tabletop Gaming Society launched mid-August. Its primary focus is the discussion, promotion and organisation of events and hobby related activities in South Australia.

> Started by Terry Masson, it already includes the backing of a number of prominent South Australian tabletop personalities.

You can find the society on Facebook at www.facebook.com/groups/satgs >



To celebrate its 30th anniversary, as well as the birthday of its founder Clifford Ansell, Foundry ran a special giveaway. Each order made during August came with four models of Clifford, each one representing one of the four careers he had over his lifetime. The careers represented were coal mining, the navy, teaching maths and making model casts.

You can find out more about Clifford and the miniatures on the Foundry website (www.

wargamesfoundry.com) >



Doing it for the kids

The National Game Day, held by Extra Life, will this year start at 8am (USA central time) 25 October and end at 8pm 26 October.

Extra Life is a charity that encourages gamers to get sponsors to play for a 24 hour period. All money raised goes to the Children's Miracle Network Hospital of the gamers choice.

You can find out more about Extra Life on their website, www.extra-life.org >

AV Con

AV Con was held over the weekend of 18-20 July in Adelaide, South Australia. Special guests included Chris Avellone, Cherami Leigh and Jon St John. As well as video games and anime being on offer, there was also a board game section being run by the guys at Hungry Hippo Cafe.

You can find photos of the day on *The Campaigner* Facebook page. Go to www.avcon.org.au for more detail on the convention. ×



Guard your mind | At the centre

The end of August saw Privateer Press make models for the new Cephalyx faction available for purchase. Previously Cephalyx Overlords, along with their associated Mind Slavers and Drudges, were only available as part of the Cryx faction. This new Cephalyx faction is part of the Mercenaries group. and includes all new units like the Wrecker.

You can purchase Cephalyx models and rules online from Privateer Press at **privateerpress.com** ×

Tanks a lot

GenCon was held during August. One of the main points of interest was a life-sized Rivet Wars Sturmpanzer at the CoolMiniOrNot booth. It wasn't just for show, attendees could climb inside and get a photo of them piloting a walking machine of destruction. ×

The other game

Revealed at GenCon was the new game *The Others*. Created by Guillotine Games and Studio McVey, it will include a board game and miniature range.

It appears to be a horror game about corruption and greed, where players control either a group of heroes or their monster opponents.

At the moment the game is scheduled to be released some time in 2015. ×

Miniature Central launched its service in early August. It allows miniature enthusiasts to track and trade gaming miniatures, review games and record games between players. The database of miniatures is possibly the largest, most complete and most accurate accumulation of information currently in existence.

You can find Miniature Central online at www. miniaturecentral.com, and at the moment is open for anyone to join.

Kirby's quest

Games Workshop's CEO, Tom Kirby, announced he would be stepping down from his position on 1 January 2015. The announcement was made in the Games Workshop Annual Report.

The company will begin looking for a new CEO from 18 September. A job specification for the position is available from Games Workshop. ×

For the trees

Dampf's Modelling Page began taking orders for its second Wargame Terrain book, called More Wargame Terrain. It will contain content targeted at the novice terrain builder, with tutorials ranging from simple, through intermediate to a selection of expert difficulty. Each piece is inspired by an actual building, model or illustration that the author has seen and admired. The first 100 books will be signed and numbered. >



The HeroQuest Effect

Phil and Amy Atherton - UK

Our current delve through *HeroQuest* was brought about by a recent wardrobe rummage and clean out where the near complete game was discovered. I hadn't actually played *HeroQuest* before (*Space Crusade* being my entry point to the hobby) but Amy had played it with her brother and Uncles when she was younger.

With childhood memories abound and myself wanting to see what I had missed out on, we invited our regular gaming companion (and my cousin) around for a game. He of course had played *HeroQuest* extensively as a younger lad and jumped at the chance to dive back in.

We've now played a good chunk of the scenarios and are having a ball. Of course as adult wargamers the scenarios are far to easy to complete with an organised team of adventurers, and I find myself as the DM with very little time controlling any miniatures as they are quickly off'ed by the said adventurers. However it really is a case of you get out what you put into it.

I put on a voice as the DM (my rendition of the Mouth of Sauron as it happens) and do everything in character as much as possible, while the adventurers themselves have slowly gained their own true characters through their various deeds and mishaps while gaming. We have Crud the 'tater licker (don't ask, and don't let him near a Goblin), Falafel the poncy elf and the pre-requisite Scottish sounding Dwarf who has a biscuit tin for a shield. Ludicrous stuff of course, but what fun we're having!

We're now looking forward to completing the game and perhaps even picking up an expansion or two to see what trials lie in wait for our band of hapless adventurers.

Bradley Visser - Germany

The release of *HeroQuest* was a big event for us as a group of 10 or so year olds. Having previously become interested in wargaming through the *White Dwarf* magazine, but put off due to the investment required to play a game, it was a god send for us kids with no income of our own.

We received our copies for Christmas or as birthday presents and set about having our own versions of games nights. Our gaming group consisted primarily of two sets of brothers, with a few other kids making guest appearances to play the game.

At first we were generally content to stick more or less to the printed rules, but we soon learned to modify things more to our liking and ended up playing some scenarios that had very little to do with *HeroQuest* at all! This included one very strange 'economic strategy' game that involved building businesses like taverns on the game board and that never seemed to have any end conditions.

These days I would be more accurately classified as an interested observer than a wargamer, but the skills I learned and the friends I made by playing *HeroQuest* are with me to this day.

This issue we talked to people about *HeroQuest*, and asked them to provide their insights and experiences.



Jerry Hawthorne - Plaid Hat Games, USA

Hello everyone, my name is Jerry Hawthorne. I am a published game designer, but before that I was an adventure game fan, and my favourite game was HeroQuest! I was excited and honoured to be asked to write about it for *The Campaigner*, this being the 25th anniversary of its release and all. See. HeroQuest is the game that really got me into gaming to begin with.

Back in 1990 I had to take a part time position at a nearby department store while in a transitional stage in life. I didn't make much money, I didn't even own a car, and had to walk to work. One day, while passing through the toy/game aisle, I discovered the giant box covered in fantasy art and with the picture of smiling 9 year old kids on the back. HeroQuest! I spent money I shouldn't have, and hid the game from my livein girlfriend who would have hassled me about spending what little money I had on a kid's game.

Heck, I felt a little guilty. We were new to Dallas Texas, but we quickly made friends, and sometimes we would play a party game or two before going out on the weekends. I eventually talked them into trying *HeroQuest*, and we all became hooked. HeroQuest is such a treasure. It takes the essence of an RPG experience, and distils it into a light and fast moving, dungeon exploring, board game that is easy to play and not bogged down by heavy or lengthy rules. It's a great gateway for new gamers. The base set comes with a colourful board that can be configured in multiple ways, a pile of plastic miniatures, dungeon furniture, and doors that create a visual feast the likes of which have never been matched by any other game.

But at the heart of *HeroQuest* is the quest book, which

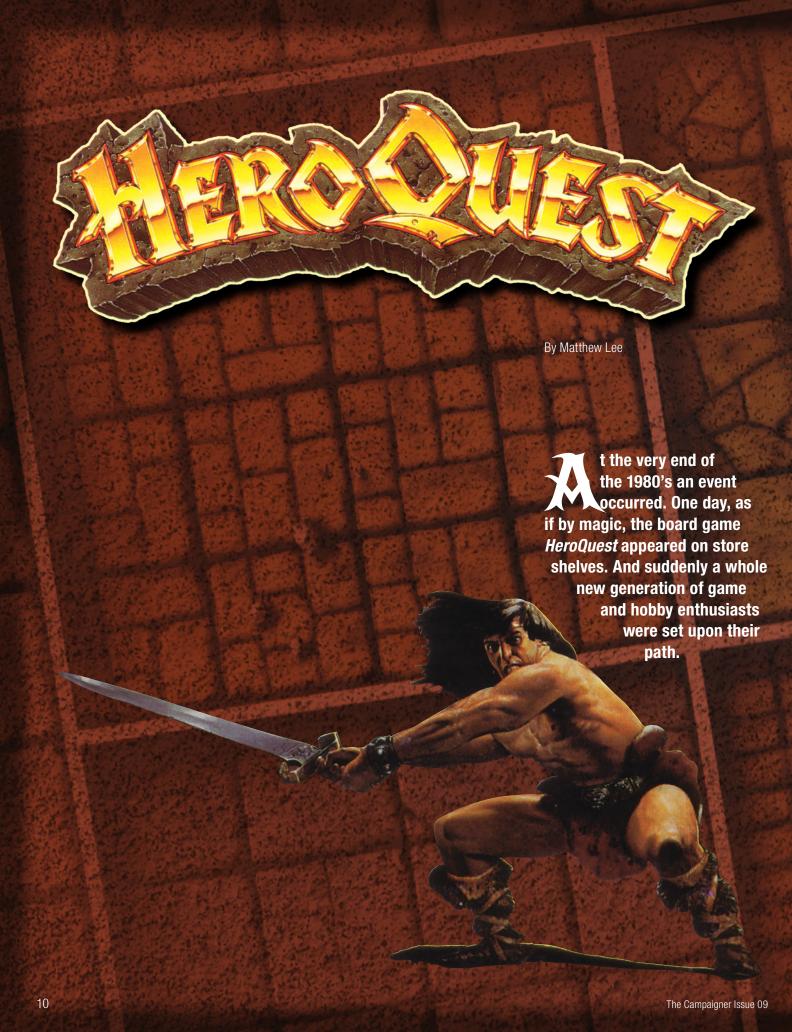
sweeps the players along on an episodic narrative that forms a campaign. The players will meet new and differing challenges with each play because the individual quests offer so much variety. They will become attached to their characters the further they go in the campaign, and I found this emotional connection is what compelled my non-gamer friends to ask to play so often.

Our experiences playing *HeroQuest* are some of my most favourite memories in gaming. It's what inspired me to try and create a similar experience for players of my game Mice & Mystics. In fact, some people call it my 'love letter' to HeroQuest.

I have never stopped being a fan of *HeroQuest*. A couple of years ago, I got to meet and shake hands with Stephen Baker, the designer of *HeroQuest*. I didn't get to chat him up much, but for me it was one of those moments of greatness.

I still belong to a couple of online *HeroQuest* fan communities. There are many people like myself who will be lifelong fans. The site that really bears the torch is Ye Olde Inn. It is a friendly community of talented fans who create their own content for *HeroQuest* and share their creations on the web. There are so many new quests, campaigns, software downloads, cards, and hobby tips, it will blow your mind. They are currently, teaming up to do an unofficial 25th anniversary pack of free downloadable content as a commemorative.

Thanks to everyone for keeping this game alive long after it disappeared from store shelves. That in itself speaks volumes about how special *HeroQuest* truly is.





As a game system *HeroQuest* was very simple. It wasn't like a lot of other board games at the time, which were quite light-hearted and often relied on gimmicks to create some kind of game play difference. Instead *HeroQuest* presented a dark fantasy world and wasn't afraid to use some simple mechanics for game play.

The game could be played with a minimum of two, and up to five, people. One player took on the role of the Evil Wizard, sitting behind a screen and running the game for the other players. The rest of the players took on the roles of Adventurers, and explored different maps to uncover treasure, defeat monsters and complete objectives. There were 14 different maps, called Quests, for the players to navigate. The Quests, when played in order, created an overarching narrative.

It was played on a single board that contained a number of pre-marked

rooms and corridors. To change the accessibility of the board, doors could be placed to access rooms, while tokens were available to block off corridors. Furniture playing pieces could also be placed into rooms to change the play space and help to direct the player's movements.

Monsters were placed on the board to provide obstacles for the players. There were eight monsters which fell into three basic types: undead, greenskins and Chaos. Undead and greenskins contained three difficulties of monster, basically an 'easy', 'medium' and 'hard'. Skeletons and Goblins, Zombies and Orcs, and Mummies and Fimirs respectively. The Chaos monsters were Chaos Warriors and the Gargoyle, while another monster called the Chaos Sorcerer was available but seldom used.

Players moved their Adventurers around the board, searched for traps

and treasure, and fought any monsters that they stumbled across. The same hero characters could be used across multiple Quests, allowing players to amass equipment and gold, used to buy more items. Hidden in certain Quests were Quest Treasures, very powerful magic artefacts that the players could uncover.

Combat utilised a set of custom dice, which had either a skull, white shield or black shield printed onto a face. Attackers rolled the number of die corresponding with their attack rating, while defenders rolled the number of die corresponding with their defence rating. Attackers wanted to roll skulls, while defenders wanted to roll appropriately coloured shields. Each shield cancelled out a skull, with however many skulls left being the amount of body points the defender loses. Once an Adventurer or monster went down to zero body points, they were dead.



HeroQuest was the brainchild of Stephen Baker, a game designer in the employment of Hasbro's Milton Bradley UK division. While he worked on and created a number of family and children's games, Milton Bradley's main audience focus, Stephen yearned to design a fantasy game in the vein of *Dungeons & Dragons*. His goal was to push the boundaries of what board games could do, and he saw on opportunity to tackle this at Milton Bradley. He managed to persuade those in the company to let him try his hand at designing a fantasy based board game, utilising the assistance and expertise of another company, Games Workshop.

Prior to working for Hasbro, Stephen had spent two years as Manager of Games Workshops primary retail location in London. This not only gave him an appreciation and knowledge of miniatures, but provided an inroad to the largest designer and manufacturer of hobby miniatures in the UK.

With Games Workshop onboard, game designer Jervis Johnson became involved. He provided some feedback for Stephen regarding the game design, as well as facilitating the production of prototype and final miniature sculpts. Artwork for the print items was also largely provided by Games Workshop, with the notable exception of the game box illustration done by Les Edwards.

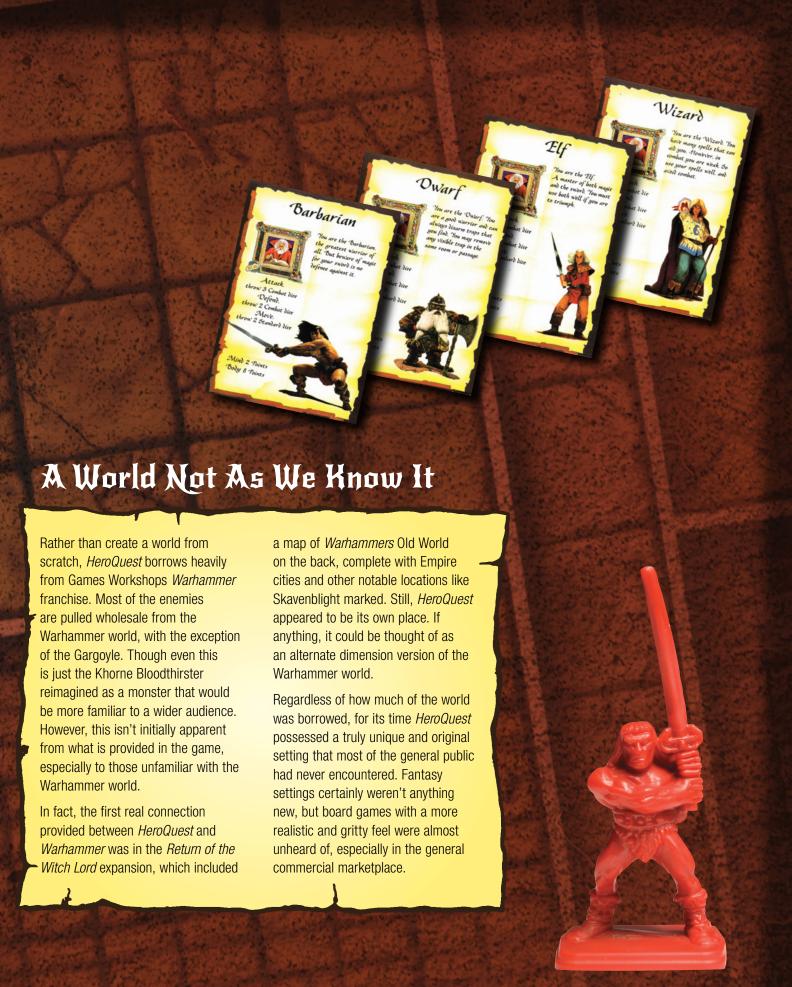
Stephen pulled inspiration for the game mechanics from established roleplay games, like *Dungeons & Dragons*. However, using the skills and knowledge developed creating other

Milton Bradley games, he simplified the experience and crafted it to fit the limited area of a board.

The game was released commercially in 1989 in Europe and Australia, and the following year in Canada and USA. It was quite successful, which surprised a lot of people at Milton Bradley, and started the company's brief exploration of the fantasy board game genre. Between 1989 and 1992 a number of expansions were also released.

HeroQuest along with the expansions and other fantasy games that it inspired, like Battle Masters, generated over USD\$40 million for Milton Bradley and its parent company, Hasbro.

In 1992 HeroQuest won Best Graphic Presentation of a Board Game 1991 at the Origins Awards.





An Expanded Experience

Such was *HeroQuest's* success that it spawned a number of expansions. The first two, *Kellar's Keep* and *Retum of the Witch Lord*, provided additional monster figures as well as new quests and board tiles. Much like the release of the original game these were released in Europe and Australia first, to be followed shortly by Canada and USA.

Following expansions became far more ambitious, providing not only new board tiles, but also new doors, counters, game mechanics and new figure designs. *Against The Ogre Horde* and *Wizards of Morcar*, only released in Europe and Australasia, both included new rules and figures. These were multi-part Ogres and a selection of individual wizards.

USA and Canada also got their own expansions in *The Frozen Horror* and *The Mage in the Mirror*. These also included their own figures and additional rules.

Not all of the expansions were game related. Sets of tools were released in Europe to assist players in creating their own quests. Called the HeroQuest Adventure Design Kit and the Adventure Design Booklet, these included items such as adhesive labels and new character sheets.

Couple this with three novels that were published, and *HeroQuest* was offering more products, additions to gameplay and the capacity for user generated content than any other mainstream board game available.





As a final product, *HeroQuest* is a solid dungeon crawler. The rules are simple to learn, and there is a lot of replayability. However, if compared against similar products available commercially today, it would be considered an above-average game at best. So then why, 25 years later, are people still talking about *HeroQuest*? How did it earn such a fanatical cult following?

The answer is very simple. HeroQuest brought accessible tabletop roleplay to the masses. In doing so it catapulted a vast segment of a generation of people into the broader tabletop game hobby. Unlike most mass market board games, HeroQuest didn't just

rely on a single gimmick to draw in an audience. It took elements of roleplay and fantasy, mixed in exploration and freedom of choice, and topped this off with breathtaking visuals and figures.

The entire experience was unlike anything else available at the time. And it could be found stocked in most large retail outlets. It even had a television commercial!

HeroQuest brought mainstream exposure to many facets of the tabletop game hobby. Roleplay games, miniatures, the 'low fantasy' genre and figure painting being just a small portion of what is currently a massive and diverse multi-million dollar industry. It is amazing to think

that, without *HeroQuest*, the current landscape of the tabletop game hobby could be very different.

Even now, during its 25th anniversary, *HeroQuest* continues to inspire and influence the tabletop game hobby. And it seems quite likely that it will continue to do so for another 25 years. Mentor probably put it best in the original Quest Book, "The Empire must again look for Heroes and to this end I have trained you." We draw on the experiences *HeroQuest* provided and use this to create the tabletop hobby that we want.

Until we meet again, take care, my friends. Farewell... ➤

THE

MILTON BRADLEY CATALOGUE

Fun for the whole family

By Matthew Lee

ne of the defining characteristics of *HeroQuest* at its release was how different it was to the rest of the Milton Bradley catalogue. Everything that *HeroQuest* was, the rest of the companies games were not. In this article we take a look at a small selection of the other products Milton Bradley was publishing at the time *HeroQuest* was available. This not only shows us what a leap of faith the company took in Stephen Baker by releasing the game, but also how much of a black sheep *HeroQuest* was in the Milton Bradley family.



Connect 4

Ages 6 and up. 2 players.

Players take turns inserting coloured tokens into a vertical rack. The aim is to create a row of four tokens the colour that you are placing.

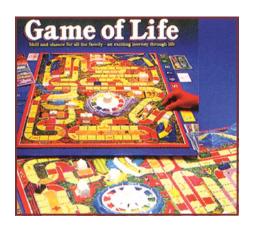


Guess Who

Ages 6 and up. 2 players.

Players take turns asking questions regarding the physical attributes of the character their opponent is holding. Available characters are gradually hidden on a board, until a player believes they can name the character their opponent possesses.

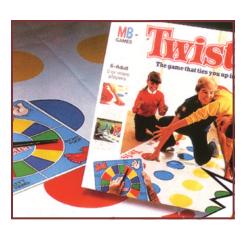
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Game of Life

Ages 8 and up. 2-6 players.

Players move a token along a board, from start to finish. Along the way they encounter life events that either help or hinder them.



Twister

Ages 6 and up. 2-4 players.

Coloured dots are marked on a large plastic mat. Players place either a hand or a foot onto a portion of the map as indicated by a spinner. The first person to topple over looses.



Battleship

Ages 7 and up. 2 players.

Using a grid, players place a selection of ships onto a hidden game board. Each player than takes turns selecting a grid position, with the aim of finding an opponents ship position and landing a hit.



Splat!

Ages 6 and up. 2-4 players.

Using an included mould, the Bug-O-Matic, players create dough bug playing pieces. These are used to move along a board from start to finish. Certain squares require a card to be drawn, which then indicates which player bugs to destroy. Players create new bugs and start again, until a player has moved two of their bugs into the finish area.



Baby Sitters Club Game

Ages 8 and up. 2-4 players.

Players move around a board in a recurring loop. Points are accrued by completing tasks detailed on cards drawn from one of four decks. The first player to amass certain score wins.



Mousetrap

Ages 6 and up. 2-4 players.

Players move their mouse counter around a board from start to finish. Along the way they try and avoid falling prey to the mousetrap. \succ

Gamer Dad

A Father of Adventurers

By Brian Lee

revious entries in the Gamer Dad series have featured fathers who are also gamers, explaining how they bring together both their hobby and their children. This issue promises something different.

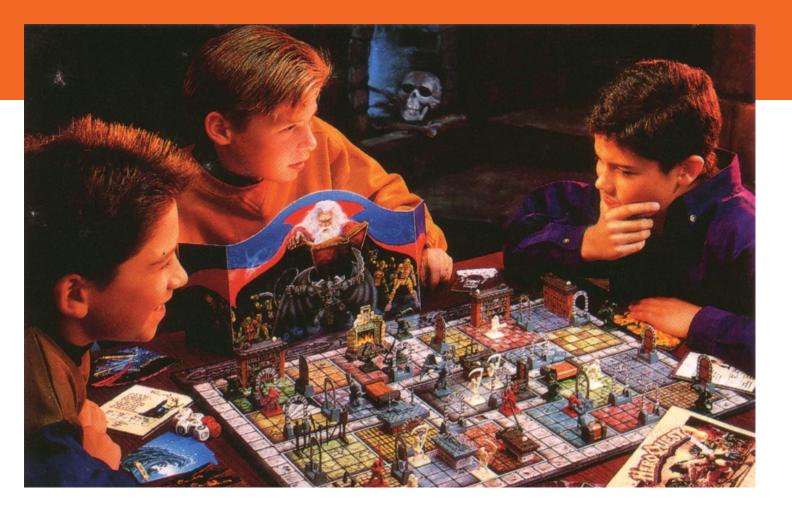
In keeping with the *HeroQuest* theme, this edition of Gamer Dad is being written by a very special guest, Brian Lee. Brian is not a Gamer Dad, let along a gamer. However, he is the father of children who were, and are still, gamers. As Brian explains, largely because of *HeroQuest*.

We hope you find Brian's insights into what a single game can do to influence a persons life educational.

y eldest son Matthew, the editor of this magazine, rang me, told me of the theme of the next issue and asked me to write the Gamer Dad column. I must admit I only agreed to do it because he is my son and I support his lunatic interests.

I must start by saying I am not much of a gamer of any sort, and certainly not a Gamer Dad. However I did raise two boys who were gamers from an early age and have a small insight into the world of gaming and the effect it can have on the player's lives.

I don't really remember much of *HeroQuest*, board games have never been on top of my list of things to do. Certainly I played the odd game with Matthew and his younger brother, Craig, but not so many that I can recall anything about the game in detail. What I do know, however, is the impact



this simple (and to me boring) game has had on my boys. When I first became a father I could have never imagined that a game where you move tiny plastic men and monsters around a board would become such a lifetime interest and passion for my boys.

From the very first moment Matthew saw the TV ad for *HeroQuest* he wanted it. There just seemed to be something about it that fascinated him, something in those few seconds of ad that captured his imagination. Craig was at the age where anything that interested his big brother was of the same interest to him and he followed suit with the same enthusiasm.

The effect of this game on them was near instant. As far as I know this was the first time they had been exposed to a more realistic fantasy setting. Sure they had spent years watching cartoons and reading comics like Asterix but this was their first taste of this more mature type of fantasy.

They played *HeroQuest* for a long time. Once they had gone through the quests in the game several times, they played through the expansions as they were able to get them. Later they began creating their own adventures, then they had to paint the figures just like on the back of the manual. Eventually they used the board and pieces to create their own games, like having the adventurers run their own pubs.

I never discouraged the boy's creativity. They both had an artistic creative streak that they have developed and bought with them into their adult lives.

HeroQuest made a large impact on their early lives and introduced them to something that seems lacking today, creative thinking and fair play. HeroQuest was left behind many years ago but it has left a legacy that continues to influence them to this day.





Because of his fascination in fantasy and miniatures Matthew became interested in tabletop war games, mostly Warhammer. He enjoyed painting and converting and using these to tell a story. Through a large portion of his childhood he wrote short stories, most of these fantasy based. As a teenager he started (with a little help from good old dad) a games club in a local hall that had quite a sizable attendance at its peak. He also ran a regular Warhammer Quest game that continued for almost two years. I still remember the woman next door commenting on the foreign language and strange jargon coming from my garage. In adulthood he put his training and experience in graphic design and publishing to create this magazine, The Campaigner.

Craig also got into tabletop war games where he too explored painting and converting. His big talent

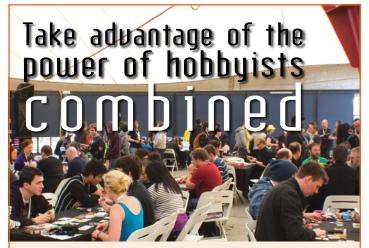
lays in drawing (apart from getting the colour printer working) and he spent much of his childhood and teen years doing fantasy and sci-fi illustrations. Eventually he trained to be a conceptual artist and now produces concept artwork for video games, as well as storyboards, animations and commercial illustrations.

I think it is important for gamer's dads to remember, you aren't just teaching your gamer kid to play games. You are actively influencing the person your child will grow up to become. A game like *HeroQuest* is just a way to discover and nurture your child's interests. Learn what your kid's interests are, learn about those interests and encourage them to learn more. Gaming may fade into the background but the time you spent with them, helping them, will not.

you of life for you know?

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THE HEROQUEST BOX ARTWORK

An interview with Les Edwards

Interview by Matthew Lee

ne of the first things most people think of, when they recall HeroQuest, is the amazing box artwork. A dramatic scene of peril and wonder, as the four adventurers pit themselves against the denizens of a dungeon. The Barbarian mid swing, the Dwarf with his axe ready to strike, the Elf ready to join the fight, and the Wizard's magical duel with the Sorcerer.

The man responsible for this iconic image is veteran artist Les Edwards. From the UK, Les has been a professional illustrator for 35 years and has worked on advertising campaigns, graphic novels, film posters and more. Les took some time out of his busy schedule to talk to us about creating the *HeroQuest* box artwork.

How much direction did you get?

I had a pretty free reign as far as composition was concerned but the characters in the game had already been designed. I had a bunch of the plastic miniatures that came with the game to use as reference and I had to stick fairly closely to their look. I think the rest of the picture was left up to me, subject to approval of course. I can't really remember how much input the client had but there would definitely have been some. For instance, they may have specifically asked for a dungeon scene, but I can't recall after all this time. I seem to remember doing more than one rough sketch but that's not unusual for a job like that.

What influences did you draw on?

That's a tricky question to answer. I'd been doing a lot of game related work for Games Workshop and the Fighting Fantasy books so this kind of thing was sort of second nature at that time. I think, with all the gaming stuff around, an accepted view of how things should look had grown up. Someone asked me recently why Orcs were green and I couldn't really answer; they just were, just as Dwarves always seemed to carry an axe. Artists are always pinching ideas from each other so I suppose if someone painted a really good character other illustrators would, err, "adapt" it for their own purposes.



How did you create the artwork? What medium and materials did you use?

It was painted in oils on a smooth gessoed board. It was probably a hot-pressed watercolour board but I just used to work on whatever I could get hold of from the local art shop.

If tasked with creating the artwork again today, what would you do differently?

I was never entirely happy with the pose of the central barbarian; he looks a bit too crouched but to some extent that's dictated by the shape of the box. I might have to make him a bit smaller while keeping his dynamic quality. I think the composition is a bit ragged in the sense that there are too many individual events going on, so I would try and get things a bit more focused. I'd like to make the architecture a bit more interesting. Now you've got me thinking about it I might have to paint it.

Did you follow the same processes when creating the supplement box artworks?

Yes the procedure was about the same. I probably preferred doing the follow up paintings. They were a lot of fun and there seemed to be a bit less pressure involved, possibly because the clients weren't looking over my shoulder quite so much.

Had you done any fantasy illustration prior to creating the *HeroQuest* art?

Yes, quite a lot.

Had you done any work for Milton Bradley or Hasbro prior to *HeroQuest*.

No, I'd never worked for them before.

Did you ever produce any artwork for HeroQuest that wasn't used?

I think they used everything I produced for them. I can't recall anything that got left by the wayside.

What kind of feedback about the box art do you receive from the public?

I still get the occasional email from people who played *HeroQuest* as a kid. They usually want to know what happened to the artwork, which was all sold to the client. Sometimes people want to commission a new painting with the feel of the *HeroQuest* stuff which is always fun. It was a nice job to do but I'm always a bit surprised that people are still interested in it after all this time.

You can find examples of Les' other work, contact details to commission pieces and ordering information, at www. lesedwards.com.

Wandering Monsters

By Matthew Lee

The games that HeroQuest spawned

t is little surprise that with *HeroQuest's* success other companies soon released games to cash in on the new market. Some drew inspiration from *HeroQuest*, while others just outright duplicated aspects. What follows is a small selection of games that owe their existence to *HeroQuest* in one way or another. They are part of a market that was soon flooded with board games, all trying to take a piece of the *HeroQuest* pie.

Production values could vary wildly, some were obviously crafted with care, while others were garish knock-offs. However try as others might, they could never seem to approach, let alone achieve, the scale and popularity that *HeroQuest* did. If anything, these games are a testament to the skill and knowledge that went into crafting *HeroQuest*.





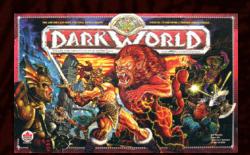
Herocult

Published 1990

One player takes on the role of the Master, running the game by placing flagstones and controlling evil characters. The other players control a hero, all barbarians, and follow a set path, dictated by a 'route card'. The first player to complete their route wins.

Herocult is one of the more blatant knock-offs. It mimics the overall game play and board layout of HeroQuest, if a bit clumsily. Even the box artwork is obviously intended to replicate HeroQuest's iconic Barbarian on the attack. Instead of plastic figures, players use card standees to represent the heroes and monsters.

Because of the route card mechanic the game had moderate replayability. However, the lacklustre playing pieces, as well as the uninteresting board, made repeated playing an unattractive prospect.



Dark World

Published 1992

To its credit, *Dark World* took some of the game play concepts *HeroQuest* introduced and tried to develop them further. One of the players takes on the role of the Evil Lord, and controls the traps and monsters of the dungeon. The other players control four heroes as they make their way towards the final enemy.

The game had obviously had some time and money invested in it. Game figures were plastic, and there was even a large plastic raised platform used for the games climax. Treasure chests opened, with weapons and items that could be placed inside. The weapons could also be inserted into the hero's hands.

The rules were solid, but unfortunately replayability was low. Each game was a stand-alone event, so once players had tried the hero and Evil Lord roles there was no reason for them to play again. However, the game did see a small number of expansions released for it, which helped to give the game some longevity.



Dragon Strike

Published 1993

Another game that took some of the ideas introduced by *HeroQuest* and developed them further, though this time with the *Dungeons & Dragons* pedigree behind it. One player takes the role of the Dragon Master and controls the actions of the enemies. The rest of the players take on the five heroes and attempt to complete certain objectives.

The contents of the game were quite impressive. It came with a selection of plastic figures, cards and tokens, as well as a VHS cassette. Of particular interest were the two game boards, which were double sided. This provided four unique environments for players to send their heroes into.

Game play was a lot more complex than *HeroQuest*, with a more advanced combat system using a variety of polyhedral dice. Rules for flying creatures was included, as well as a greater selection of spells. This meant that the game had a much higher barrier of entry. Also, the fact that the *Dungeons & Dragons* property was attached to this game meant it never saw a mainstream retail release like *HeroQuest*.



Tower of the Wizard King

Published 1993

In *Tower of the Wizard King* players race around a board, collecting pennants and transforming their apprentice wizard into a number of monsters. The player holding the most pennants when the Wizard King finally ascends the staircase and sets foot on the tower is declared the winner.

Tower of the Wizard King doesn't try and create roleplay and adventure, the game play is more along the lines of tradition linear board games. Rather, it rides the fantasy board game wave *HeroQuest* created at the time by replicating some of the more popular manufactured elements.

The game included a number of plastic figures, as well as a large plastic tower with a staircase leading up to it. This, along with the detailed artwork on the board, made *HeroQuest's* influence on *Tower of the Wizard King* undeniable.

Replayability of this game was very low, though some interest was retained through the mechanic that allowed players to take on the form of different monsters. However, each game was a standalone event, and so it was quite easy for game play to get repetitive quickly.

THE HEROQUEST TELEVISION ADVERT

Deep inside another dimension

By Matthew Lee

ack at the end of last century, the 1980s and 1990s, television adverts for board games were commonplace. On a Saturday morning you wouldn't be surprised if you saw a plastic motorised skeleton convulsing for 30 seconds on your television. Or if you were being tasked with hitting a popomatic bubble. However, the advert for *HeroQuest* was a unique spot that was a drastic departure from many other game advertisements.

The live action advert for *HeroQuest* is the only time I can ever remember seeing a board game with miniatures on television. Viewed with no prior knowledge of *HeroQuest* the advert is quite exciting. There are real explosions, realistic monsters, and slightly stern looking children with funny accents.

In a modern setting the *HeroQuest* advert seems almost quaint. While we know that the game draws heavily on Games Workshop's Warhammer world, the advert presents the game as generic fantasy. Today a video game with even a passing connection to a Games Workshop property would be boldly emblazoned with the Games Workshop logo. But in the advert there isn't even a hint of Games Workshops involvement. Even the Milton Bradley logo, that of the creator and publisher, only appears briefly at the end.

The advert starts off with a bang. This is the era before computer graphics, so the exploding *HeroQuest* logo that introduces the spot is done entirely with practical effects. Why it was necessary to destroy the *HeroQuest* logo still escapes me to this day.

Quickly the advert sets the scene, as we are given a flying camera view of a generic fantasy dungeon. The Christopher Lee-esque voice over informs us



that we are "deep inside another dimension".

In what is hopefully not the actor's career-defining performance we are suddenly faced with a loincloth clad barbarian swinging a sword. To the credit of whomever cast this advert, the actor portraying the barbarian has an uncanny resemblance to the barbarian on the *HeroQuest* box.

Another flying camera move takes us up some stairs, giving us a brief glimpse of the Gargoyle miniature superimposed onto the screen. A clever opening door transition reveals a goblin swinging in to attempt to look threatening. This actor, decked out in prosthetics and armour, must have blown half the adverts budget. You can tell they were proud of the effect they got, though, as they linger on this shot for almost two full seconds.

Moving onto the next shot we finally see the *HeroQuest* game itself. It is hard to notice, but the kid in the Evil Wizards role is placing his screen onto the table. Even though the game is already in progress. We quickly get a view of the game in action.

One of the players rolls both the D6 and the combat dice, even though you wouldn't actually do this in the game. Then, presumably the Evil Wizard player, slides a Skeleton into place.

At this point those familiar with the commercially available *HeroQuest* might notice that the miniatures, furniture and even the cards look slightly different. The advert has been shot using a development version of the game.

A combat ensues. A player who apparently forgot to bring his glasses plays his Broadsword card, attempting to use the manliest tone he can muster. His fellow player contributes a Fire of Wrath spell, putting it on top of the Broadsword card to make resolving the combat that more challenging.

The last shot of the game sees the camera quickly rotate around the table. We can see the two children players, as well as the Evil Wizard player sitting in a high backed chair. After the camera passes behind the high backed chair, the Evil Wizard has magically and shockingly transformed into a goblin. The goblin reaches out, in what is probably supposed to be threatening or terrifying. But the look in the eyes of the goblin is almost that of pleading rescue, the outstretched hand almost a cry for help.

For good measure the advert ends by blowing up the *HeroQuest* logo again. Because that was probably the other half of the budget. ×

You can find the *HeroQuest* advert online on services such as YouTube.

HeroQuest in the digital realm

By Matthew Lee

existing tabletop property and translating it to a digital medium is commonplace. On consoles, computers and portable devices you can find digital recreations of Shadowrun, Dungeons & Dragons and even Bloodbowl, as well as more traditional games such as Monopoly and Scrabble. But taking a tabletop game and putting it into a digital medium isn't a new idea.

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In 1991 Gremlin Interactive released an officially licensed version of *HeroQuest*. Played from an isometric perspective, it was available on Atari-ST, MS-DOS, ZX-Spectrum, Amstrad, Amiga and Commodore 64. While it was available over a number of systems, the basic game play mechanics remained the same over all versions.

At the core, it was a very faithful recreation of the *HeroQuest* board game. Each hero is selected in turn and moved around the board. As new corridors are traversed, and rooms entered, they appear on the game area. Players can fight monsters, search for treasure and buy equipment, just like in the tabletop game.

Up to four players can take part in the game, in hot-seat format, while the Evil Wizard players role is automated. All of the board games mechanics used to resolve situations, like rolling for combat, are also handled behind the scenes.

The quests you partake in are almost literal interpretations of what is available in the *HeroQuest* board game. This is right down to furniture placement, traps and treasure rewards.

Unfortunately, *HeroQuest's* greatest strength is also its greatest weakness. The game is such a faithful and complete translation of the board game into a digital game that it offers absolutely nothing new. For anyone who has played the board game before, the quests will be all-too familiar. And for those who have never played the board game, they are missing out on the tactile experience that is such a hallmark of this property.

All-in-all the *HeroQuest* digital game is a solid experience, largely benefiting from its source material. It is let down a little by not using the medium to complement the board game mechanics, but players should find some enjoyment in it, if as nothing more than as a curiosity.

HeroQuest is now classified as abandonware, and is available for download on a number of retro game websites.







Amiga version.







MS-DOS version.

Not Yet Heroes

By Matthew Lee with Nic Equid, Terry Masson and Sam Phillips



hose who remember playing HeroQuest recall the experience fondly. Hours spent with friends as you explored dark dungeons, facing monsters and finding treasure until you reached your ultimate reward. It is this experience that has maintained HeroQuest's place amongst board game royalty.

But how much of *HeroQuest's* praise is created by nostalgia? What is the game actually like to play, especially when you have decades of other games to compare it against? *The Campaigner* assembled a crack team of tabletop game veterans and seasoned adventurers to put *HeroQuest* through its paces, and see whether its reputation is fully deserved.





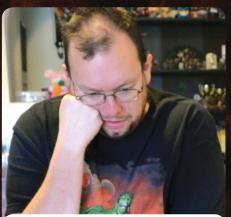
Nic Equid

Nic has been Dungeon Master for many adventure groups in the past, playing systems such as *Rogue Trader* and *Iron Kingdoms*. A keen *Warmachine* player, he is also the resident Pressganger in Adelaide, South Australia.

Game Experience:

Warhammer 40,000. Warmachine. Super Dungeon Explore. Iron Kingdoms. Dungeons & Dragons. Rogue Trader.

Previous *HeroQuest* **Experience:** None.



Terry Masson

Terry is a tabletop board game and war game fanatic. He is experienced at running game demonstrations, as well as holding quiet board game nights at his home. Always with a project on the go, recently he created the South Australian Tabletop Gaming Society.

Game Experience:

Warmachine. Warhammer 40,000. Zombicide. Super Dungeon Explore. Iron Kingdoms.

Previous *HeroQuest* **Experience:** Moderate.



Sam Phillips

Sam is a life-long tabletop game player and prolific miniature painter. Currently he primarily inhabits the Warmachine scene in Adelaide, South Australia.

Game Experience:

Warhammer. Warhammer 40,000. Warmachine. Zombicide.

Previous *HeroQuest* **Experience:** None.









Game One: The Trial

For the first quest it seemed best to start with The Trial, the first adventure in the Quest Book. Since Terry had had the most exposure to *HeroQuest* previously he started out in the Evil Wizard role. Sam took control of the Barbarian and Wizard, while Nic played as the Elf and Dwarf. This is the first quest in the book, so the players received no bonuses.

Terry set the scene with an over-the-top

delivery of the quest objective, and then Nic and Sam were away and exploring the dungeon. It didn't take long for Nic and Sam to get to grips with the rules, while Terry easily took to his responsibilities as Evil Wizard, providing funny accents to the monsters and odd descriptions to the proceedings.

Before they encountered their final objective, Nic managed to lose the Elf in a heated battle with a gang of Orcs.

The Wizard proved the most resilient of the warriors, standing toe-to-toe with foes throughout the entire game and only loosing a few Body Points.

After defeating the Gargoyle, Sam's Barbarian found himself trapped and surrounded in a room alone, and soon succumbed to the blades of Terry's monsters. Seeing discretion as the better part of valour, the remaining Wizard and Dwarf made their escape.









Game Two: Bastion of Chaos

The second quest played was Bastion of Chaos, since it was mid way through the book and started to include elements like traps and secret doors. Nic took on the role of the Evil Wizard, with Sam controlling the Elf and Dwarf, leaving Terry with the Barbarian and Wizard.

Each hero was allowed 300 gold to spend, as the assumption was made that in a situation with ongoing characters, this is a fair estimate as to the wealth they would have acquired by this point. This allowed the players

to buy some equipment before they started the quest.

After milling about in the first few starting rooms, Sam and Terry split up. Try as Nic might, again the Wizard proved to be a mighty foe, slaying enemies and brushing off attacks as if they were nothing. Nic also encountered a little confusion with the Quest Book, having some trouble interpreting the monster icons. This led to a couple of occasions where Terry and Sam were fighting Goblins instead of Orcs, making a few sections easier

than they should have been.

Sam uncovered the final room, containing a sizable gang of monsters, first. Waiting until the monsters have moved and surrounded Sam's characters, Terry walked his Barbarian straight through the stone wall and took down the exposed Chaos Warrior leader in a single turn. With their objective completed, and Quest Item in hand, the warriors mopped up the few remaining monsters and ambled from the dungeon.









Game Three: Quest for the Spirit Blade

The last quest played was Quest for the Spirit Blade. This adventure is the second part in the three-part quest storyline that finishes off the Quest Book. Sam finished off by playing as the Evil Wizard, with Terry taking the Elf and Dwarf, allowing Nic to try out the Barbarian and Wizard.

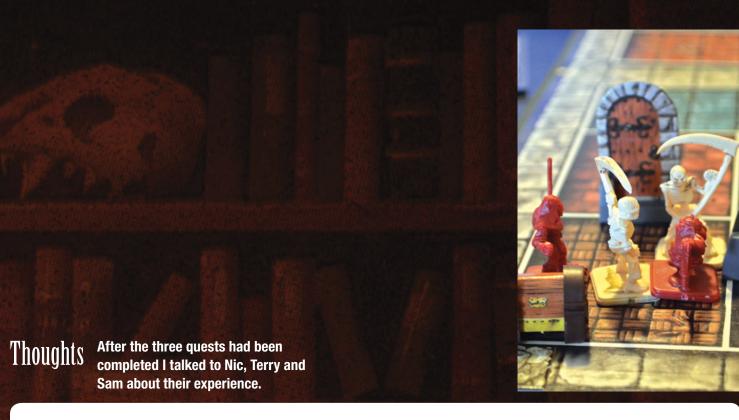
Again, because of this quest being quite late in the book, the players were given an amount of gold to spend on items. This time Terry and Nic gamed the system, outfitting the characters to maximise one particular attribute each.

Immediately, Terry and Nic split up. By this point everyone was quite familiar with the game mechanics, and Terry and Nic approached each room with more caution. This meant that Sam generally had fewer monsters to use, diminishing his active involvement in the game quite a bit.

Still, there were many dangerous hidden traps throughout the dungeon. Quite early into the game Nic lost the Wizard to a combination of traps on the board, as well as pulling trap cards from the Treasure deck. Nic's Barbarian also stumbled upon the room

containing the quest objective, The Spirit Blade, guite early.

Sam managed to use the three Skeletons in the room to surround, and eventually drive back, the Barbarian. The Barbarian rejoined the Elf and Dwarf, who all explored the rest of the board while Sam built a small kill-zone around the objective with his Skeletons. Eventually Terry and Nic realised where the objective was, and assaulted the area with all three warriors simultaneously, easily taking down the monsters with a combination of teamwork and good rolling.



Matthew: So what do you think? How does the game hold up?

Terry2: Pretty well.

Sam: Yeah, it isn't too bad, all things considered.

Nic: The basics seem comparable to current games. But you can tell its age, especially with some of the rules for items and spells.

Terry Yeah, that's right. Some of those just didn't seem to fit in very well. They didn't seem to be there to complement the game, but just fill out some requirement for there to be stuff to buy.

Sam: Or spells to cast.

Terry: I liked walking through the wall, that was a nice little game play trick.

Nic: I didn't like that the spells were one use things, though.

Sam: Yeah, the genie didn't really do much for you.

Nic: Tell me about it. Rolled five dice to attack a monster with the genie and the

stupid thing failed to score any hits.

Matthew: Would you play this again?

Sam: Yes, but we would need to change it up a bit.

Nic: That's right. It needs a lot of house rules to update it. Make it more palatable.

Terry: There isn't a lot of replayability in the quests, though. Once you have played through a quest you kind of know where the monsters and hidden stuff is.

Sam: The Evil Wizard needs to be able to include some randomness.

Matthew: Speaking of the Evil Wizard player, how did you guys find the role?

Sam: It was good, but could get a little boring sometimes. It really needs some way for the player to be more involved, rather than sitting around doing nothing for a couple of turns when there are no monsters.

Nic: I had trouble reading some of the stuff on the map.

Matthew: Yeah, I noticed.

Terry: I had no problems being the Evil Wizard.

Matthew: About that. I noticed that you all seemed more engaged in the game during Terry's game, and gradually seemed to lose energy during the other two.

Nic: Probably because in Terry's game everything was new.

Sam: And he was doing funny voices.

Terry: I like to do that, yes.

Matthew: Is game fatigue the only reason? The first quest had a very defined objective, kill the Gargoyle, while the other two were a little more ill-defined in what you were doing.

Nic: Actually, yeah, I hadn't thought of that.

Sam: Everything did seem to slow down badly near the end during my game, while you guys were wandering around trying to figure out where you were supposed to be going.



Terry: That would be one of the first things I would change, if I played this again. Go through the quests and make sure there is a defined goal for each.

Matthew: Did you have any issues with the board? Especially with it having a set layout?

Terry: That annoyed me the most. Not because it was set, but that the quests didn't use all the rooms, so it was hard to tell if you were on the right track or not.

Matthew: Would it have been better if the rooms and corridors were separate pieces and could be arranged? Like what came in *Warhammer Quest*?

Terry: No, I like the single board. That isn't the issue. It just needs the rooms that aren't being used in the quest marked somehow. For example, I had a friend who used to cover the rooms with paper.

Nic: I really liked the second quest. It seemed to have a better defined game area. It was even easy to see that there was a secret room, because there was this little area in between all the rooms that hadn't been used. The trick became trying to find the right spot for the entrance. That was a great way of doing it.

Matthew: How did you find the mechanics, like combat?

Sam: I liked the combat. It was

cool that it used different symbols. The whole '4+' to hit, or comparing characteristic stats, is becoming very tired.

Nic: The mechanic for searching for traps needs looking at. It seems very cheap that you can only search the room you are in, but there are some rooms with traps right inside the doors.

Matthew: One of those traps directly contributed to the death of your Wizard.

Nic: I know. I don't mind getting killed, but I would rather it was because of my own stupidity, and not because of cheap tricks.

Terry: It would also be good to have a better variety in equipment. Most of the items seem to be only a marginal improvement, and basically boil down to rolling one extra die in attack or defence. Things like the spear, which allows you to attack diagonally, were interesting though, and opened up some new game play opportunities.

Nic: While we are discussing mechanics, I dislike games that are controlled by luck of the dice. Monopoly for example feels less like strategy and more just lucky dice rolling. Even though *HeroQuest* is primarily a dice based game, it felt like it was governed mostly by strategy, especially when items came into play.

Matthew: So what is your final ruling

on *HeroQuest*? Is it any good? Does it deserve the hype?

Nic: If you were going to play it today you would need to introduce a bunch of house rules. But I can see why this was so impressive 25 years ago.

Sam: Yeah. From a visual standpoint it looks amazing. Especially when you get a bunch of miniatures and furniture on the board.

Terry: I remember it being about exploring and fighting monsters, and it still doesn't disappoint on that. It's really quick too, with the simplified mechanics, so it is good for playing a game within a hour or two.

I think it stands up really well to the test of time, and gives stuff like *Super Dungeon Explore* a run for its money. I'd buy it now if it was released as is.

Matthew: Thanks for your thoughts, guys.

There we have it. The game HeroQuest, tested and analysed by current players. The consensus seems to be that the game is still quite fun, if a little dated in some of its mechanics and design. However, the game is still highly recommended, though if you decide to venture into the dungeons of HeroQuest, it might be worth creating some house rules first to complement the expectations of your players. >>

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