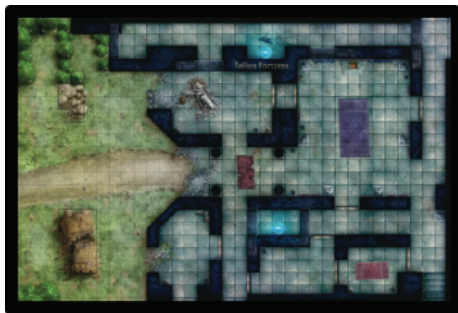


EDITOR'S NOTES

by **Dave Paul (Vrecknidj)**

If you missed the hand-off, you missed a lot. We'll do what we can to get you up to speed. If you've been playing minis so much that you haven't come up to breathe, you might not have known that the DDM Guild has now taken over, through official license, the Dungeons & Dragons Miniatures skirmish rules. You'll continue to have rules and rules updates, you'll see new stat cards for the minis that Wizards of the Coast continues to produce, and you'll see new maps.

Joel Broveleit (demetri0us) has joined the crew. In addition to his mad design skills, he's a top-notch player, excellent and respected contributor and all-around good guy. ⬇



New DDM Guild map: Fallen Fortress. page 6

CHAPTER UPDATE

There are already 50 chapters in 13 nations. Jim Ansaldo, Chapter Lead, is leading the chapters and their chapter masters into new gaming opportunities. DCI sanctioning will proceed (so if you let your rating slide, you're going to have to get to work!) but the DDM Guild has plans for the reporting of unsanctioned events as well. Play at home? The DDM Guild wants to know.

(Continued on Page 2)

Original edition announcement!, page 8

FROM THE PIT

Organized Play has a few new items in its bag of tricks. One, the Arena format, is discussed by Garry below. Another, Scenario Play, is a format allowing for campaign play where the results of players' games will have an impact on future segments of the scenario. The first of these scenarios will be the Drow War; future scenarios will take advantage of some of the beloved critters from the Icons series. Finally, Organized Play will soon have complete details for the first DDM Championship operating entirely under the management of the DDM Guild.

(Continued on Page 3)



Also in this issue, an interview with designer Stephen Hagen (page 6)

DESIGNING DDM

One of the great tasks before the DDM Guild is a re-inventing of the rules: from the rules that players use in their homes to the rules that judges consult on a "tough call" to the floor rules that govern sanctioned play and the world championships. A new Battle Rules booklet is available online and robust chats about them are occurring on several of the message boards. Your input is encouraged. Everyone who has played the game through more than one set of miniatures knows that the rules are organic and growing. Nevertheless, one of the DDM Guild's goals is to have a rulebook that will stand without major revisions for up to two years.

(Continued on Page 5)

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Only one page? visit www.ddmguild.com

CHAPTER UPDATE

by **Jim Ansaldo (JohnnyQuest)**

Continued from page 1

Again and again at Dungeons & Dragons Experience, people noted that they'd met people whom they'd never met before, people who played D&D Minis but weren't online or who had never been to a tournament before. Doubtless, there are thousands upon thousands of such players in the world. This is a resource that the DDM Guild would love to tap into. Do you know any players who are "Off the radar?" who do not have an online presence or who don't often frequent a retailer? Let's get their names! Let's hear their interests, let's find out what bands they play and what maps they love. Maybe they have rules suggestions the rest of us haven't considered. Without bringing them in, how will we know?

Online league play has started; head over to the DDM Guild website and sign up. Monthly scenario play is a wonderful new addition to the game. Expect some excellent rivalries as the various chapters vie against one another for claims to fame and glory.

One of the chapters in particular is serving as a model for others to emulate. **Don Campagna**, the MidSouth DDM Guild chapter master, shares his experience.

I used to manage a retail store in Montpelier, Vermont in the early '90s. When the snow was three feet high, and the temperature was below zero, my staff and I liked to hang out after work and play games. There wasn't much else to do in the middle of rural Vermont. One day at the store in our mall, I came across the Red Basic D&D Set; I thought that it would be a fun game for us to play. A group of co-workers and friends started playing every Sunday. I would make a big batch of spaghetti, and we would play until the early hours of Monday morning. Those were some great times, the laughter and the fellowship that the game generated was infectious, and soon our group grew to over ten people. We played for several years; old players left and new players joined.

I moved to Tennessee in 1993 and D&D was put on the back burner, my career and family needs left little free time. About a decade later, in 2004, I moved to the Memphis area and I found myself having a little more time on my hands. While surfing the 'net one day, I found an eBay auction for some D&D Miniatures and thought they'd be very cool. We had used clothespins and buttons when I'd played in Vermont.

So, I found the Wizards website and starting looking at miniatures. Pretty soon I had all the 3.5 edition books and several boosters of minis. The only problem is that I did not know anyone else who played. Several weeks later I was at a game store and read a post from a DM who was looking for players. I showed up at his next game and found some new gaming companions.

Shortly after that, I attended MidSouthCon, here in Memphis. I was back in the D&D spotlight! I ran a few games at the con, and I loved having the minis for my games. After the con, our new little group fell apart - time restraints, schedule conflicts, babies, work - we have heard them all. So once again, I did not have anyone to game with.

For the next two years, the only gaming I did was at the annual MidSouthCon. I ran games all weekend and ran a minis tournament. I got involved with the con committee and became a co-chair for the gaming committee. This was my D&D "fix" for the year. But I wanted more. After last year's con, I heard that a new gaming store had opened in a suburb of Memphis and checked it out. I visited the new store and told the store owner that I wanted to start some D&D gaming groups and possibly some D&D minis gaming too. He was very supportive and let me post notices in the store for players. He also gave me times and dates that I could use for my new gaming groups.

I went to Yahoo! Groups and started a new D&D group for the Memphis Area. I invited my old gaming buddies to join and I posted on other Yahoo! Groups and other websites. I posted on MeetUp, Facebook, MySpace, and Pen and Pencil Games. Three months ago, we started running 4th edition games. Yahoo! Group membership grew and when Gameday came we had to organize three groups for that Sunday! We added the Dungeon Delve from Wizards Play Network. So far, the last two months have been completely full.

I wanted to add D&D Miniatures to our gaming events, and I had just signed up as a new DDM Guild chapter master for the MidSouth Area. I had been active on the Wizards forums for minis for a long time, and I was anxious to find new players and get D&D minis gaming going too. Again, I posted on websites, posted notices at the store, invited old gaming friends, and talked up D&D minis on our Yahoo! Group. I created a poll to see if there was any interest in minis. Many of the players were interested in playing D&D minis also.

I started some Wednesday night "Learn how to play" sessions and met new people that wanted to play minis. I gave away several boosters and other swag that I had left over from the con and the players loved it! Pretty soon we were sanctioning our games and we were growing our membership. People were telling other people, friends were inviting friends to come, and our tables were filling up. Our Yahoo! Group now has over 30 members, and our last Wednesday Minis night had 8 people show up to play. DDM is alive and well in the Greater Memphis area.

So, how did this happen? And how can you make it happen in your area?

- 1. Work with your game store.** A supportive site for playing is essential.
- 2. Advertise and network.** Take advantage of the networking opportunities online.
- 3. Get the word out.** Post at the game store and anywhere else potential players might be.
- 4. Freebies.** Nothing draws goblins, I mean gamers, like shiny things. Entice them to return.

My vision is to travel to other guilds and have tournaments between the members. We also look forward to some online gaming competitions. This is gonna be good.... And we are just getting started! ④

FROM THE PIT

by D. Garry Stupack (Tried)

Continued from page 1

Welcome back to the Organized Play Pit. This time, I'd like to invite you to join me in the Arena (see inset for rules.).

As many of you already know, Arena is a new play format that has been introduced by the DDM Guild. Arena provides a fast-playing format that represents a quick clash between small groups of skirmishers. If you don't want to have to wait before you mete out the damage, this format will probably suit you.

Many of you may be wondering, why a new format?

I'm going to try to convince you that the Arena format fulfills many roles that were missing in DDM, and that will be very helpful as we take our game into the future.

Let's review the rules:

Number of Players: Two (but suitable for larger numbers in fun play.)

Warbands: Build warbands with 100- (quick), 200-(standard), or 500-point cost limits (epic) using the standard warband construction rules. However, your warband can contain a maximum of 5 creatures, and a half-size battle map is used in Arena, even for 200- and 500-point battles.

No Larger Than Huge Creatures: Only Huge and smaller creatures are legal in the Arena.

Setup: Arena uses the standard set-up procedure.

First, Arena provides a very "easy to learn" format for new players. It's fairly easy to keep track of only 5 creatures, and this can help overcome the intimidating array of rules that DDM offers.

However, despite its ease of play, it is not necessarily a "simple" format. It permits very interesting figures to be used by new players, and makes it quite easy to build themed bands, which new DDM players tend to want to do.

Secondly, those who've played Arena can attest that it's a great "fast play" format. The recommended time for each round is 35 minutes, and most games will be finished even faster. This means that even on a weekday night at your

local gaming store, full tournaments can be run. Tournaments of four, five, or even six rounds are easy to set up and run.

This simplicity also applies to warband building, and is particularly welcome for players that have little time outside of the gaming world to obsess over warband building. With Arena, it's quick and easy to slap together a five-figure warband. This means less time building warbands, and more time actually playing. This offers something for highly competitive players too, since the metagame that evolves around five figures is very different than that of the ten-figure warband which is played on full-size

maps. We hope that this gives you a chance to play different figures from your collection. And if you get to pilot a figure you otherwise might not, that's a good thing.

There are currently four small maps available, and we are hoping to release even more within the next year. The hope is that this will create great variability. Small maps are more amenable to home printing, too, since, depending on their size, you can print them on either four or six pieces of paper. So far, the legal maps have been 17 by 22 squares. However, expect some maps to vary from this formula in the future.

The third point worth considering is that this format mimics the standard encounter in the new fourth edition Dungeons & Dragons game. This means that you can introduce your RPG friends to the DDM game in a format that they will quickly pick up on. This is particularly true if they like the "Delve" format made popular at the big gaming Cons.

It should be possible, with a little creativity, to have a 200 point "DDM Delve" with one party of five adventurers. The "DM" can put together increasingly difficult encounters of 130, 160 and 200 points of monsters, and the Delve can be resolved using the DDM rules. Remember to let your party heal and recharge as they rest between encounters. On this note, it's worth pointing out that a real effort is being made to have the

Scoring Victory Points: You score victory points by destroying enemy creatures or by occupying a victory area. Destroying enemy creatures: You score victory points equal to the cost of each destroyed enemy creature. If the creature has any items assigned to it when it is destroyed, you score victory points equal to the cost of those items as well. Occupying Victory Areas: You score 10 points for occupying a victory area in Arena, (regardless of the battle construction limit used).

Victory Conditions: Victory goes to the first player to score victory points equal to point cost limit used in warband construction; for example, 200 points in a 200-point battle.

(for full rules check out the new battle rules 2009 available now at our site)

rules be similar, so DDM can help to improve a player's tactics in RPGA events, too.

Finally, something that was announced online, and was shown firsthand to those attending Dungeons & Dragons Experience in Fort Wayne, there will be a semi-random packaging of the Monster Manual products, which will include one visible figure and four randomly packaged figures. Having a five-figure format will create much better opportunities for the DDM Guild to run release tournaments and other limited events. This would help avoid a prohibitively expensive limited event if only one or two packages are needed to be purchased. It's also worth considering that miniatures stat cards created by the DDM Guild will not be packaged in the monster boosters, and therefore having a format with fewer creatures will permit much faster sorting and distribution of cards at these events.

So, if you haven't tested the format yet, perhaps now's the time to try.

It's a quick, quirky and quintessential DDM. ⬇

Can't Find A Game?

Play Dungeons & Dragons miniatures online for free by joining us for the new online DDM league. Details at our website. Sign up for a weekly league match at www.hordelings.com.

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DESIGNING DDM

by Kevin Tatroe (ktatroe)

Continued from page 1

Stats

Another of the major tasks is the stats of all the pieces. There are several major issues at stake here: stats for the post-Demonweb minis, stats for the pre-Demonweb minis, and access to both 1.0 and 2.0 stats for all the pieces.

Wizards of the Coast will have released stats for every pre-Demonweb piece by some point in 2009. The DDM Guild will be designing the stats for all the post-Demonweb minis, with release dates forthcoming. Stephen Hagan (interviewed in this issue) is the lead designer for the first post-Demonweb set!

Cards

One of the big news items at the meeting at D&D Experience was the new look for the minis stat cards. As you can see, most of what you're used to is just as easy to read and use as

it ever has been. There are a few big changes to the layout (such as the Champion Rating in the upper right corner and the Bloodied score in the lower left), there are some changes that at first blush appear to push outside the existing protocol (such as having each Defense score shown separately), and something which will feel to some players like an actual change (you'll see that the Abilities and the Level have been moved to the space just below the name and that the Powers section has been cleaned up).

Items

Many folks were quite pleased to see a whole sheet of magic items available for play. The pre-

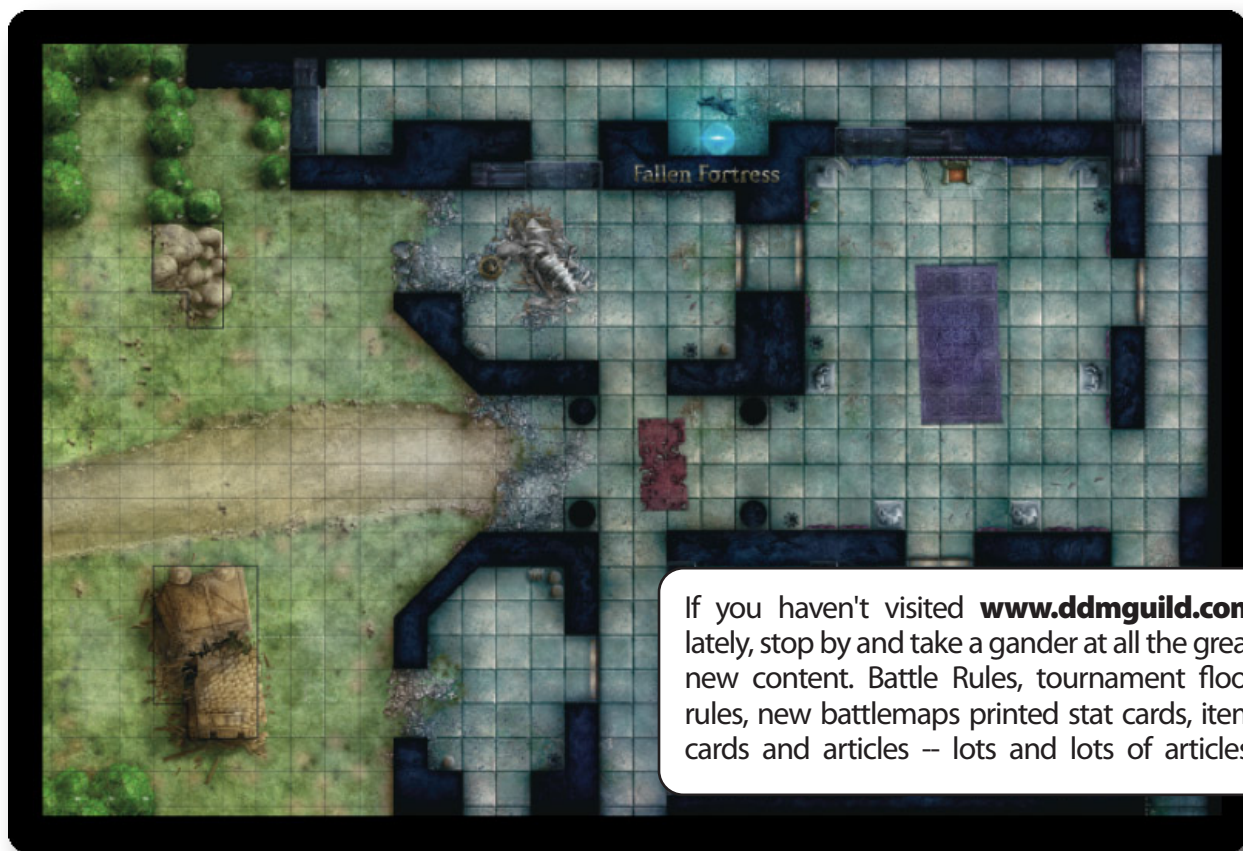


-printed sheets went fast at XP. For D&D players, magic items are a natural extension for monsters and heroes. For skirmishers, this is all new and exciting. Hopefully, we'll see some of these showing up in competitive play over the next few months.

Maps

Did you see the Fallen Fortress map?

Those who played in the Community Draft at XP were among the first. The DDM Guild is working on various ways of getting maps into players' hands. Keep an eye on the DDM Guild website. And, in case you hadn't already seen them reappearing where you play, the Teleport Temple and Dragondown Grotto are once again legal (check the website for rules).Ⓢ



The new ddmguild map: Fallen Fortress

THE DESIGNERS

by Dave Paul (Vrecknidj)

Stephen Hagan (AesophDarkfable) is a sociologist and veteran gamer. He started more than two decades ago with RPGs, playing both DC Heroes (1st edition) and D&D (2nd edition) before adding miniatures gaming. He started tournament play with the Giants of Legend release event and shortly after Deathknell became a serious tournament player. Sets Stephen has worked on include Deathknell (designer), Aberrations (designer), and now Dangerous Delves (set lead). Many minis players remember fondly their first rare; Stephen's was the Mind Flayer. (Editor's note: this may say something about him, best be wary....)

Unbroken: *There were designers before you; some of the work they did had an influence on you. Which designers and which designs had the greatest impact, and why?*

Hagan: *That is a very difficult question to answer for a few reasons. The foremost is with the original Wizards designers, other than for a few select sets, it's hard to judge just who designed what. In addition to that, once I was on board and a member of the restat team, at first a commenter, then as a designer- most of us were getting our legs under us at the same time. I have some very solid work in Deathknell for example, but I really think my best work hits in the two sets I worked on after that going through Aberrations and Dragoneye. As the teams and commenters*

began getting used to each other and feeling each other as well as we could within the limited confines of a messageboard and cyberspace, many of us really started to hit our strides. All that said, I did get a chance back in July of 2008 to comment on the stats of what would have become Feywild, and those designs from Peter Lee did have a pretty distinct influence on some of the areas I saw as design space. But overall I think that just working with the teams had the greatest influence. We all have our little nuances of what we like and don't like in design, and when those start bleeding together, you develop as a better designer. An example of this is that both Kevin (Ktatroe) and Jim (JohnnyQuest) felt it was important to make minis that tell a story, and I think this was a very influential idea that leaked into a lot of my work.

Unbroken: *Of the pieces you've worked on that are already out, which are you most proud of, and why?*

Hagan: *The only thing you've seen of mine yet is the Tavern Brawler. It was my "trial" figure. The rest of the work that I have done will be forthcoming beginning in Deathknell.*

Unbroken: *Are there any pieces you've worked on, that aren't out yet, that you can "spoil" for us? And, if not a whole piece, some part of a piece? And, if not, are there any abilities you can give us a hint about?*

Hagan: *I wish. I really do, I actually took this to*

Kevin and had him check in, but at this time there is just no way that we can. What I can talk about though is ideas. One thing that Kevin did as lead for Deathknell, and that I will do in sets that I am the lead on the future, is he developed with the team a cohesive set theme. So at the time we discussed what to do beyond the obvious living versus the unliving, as Unhallowed did that theme pretty well. What we came up with was sacrifice. So a lot of the abilities, not every figure mind you, but a decent proportion of them, has some relation to the theme of sacrifice, making hard choices. You might have to give up victory points, or even lose access to another ability, to use an ability. It was a fun theme to work around.

Unbroken: *What influence has designing had on your playing? How about on your judging? (Has designing stats made you a better player? A better judge?)*



Hagan: *Honestly, since I started designing I haven't had as much of a chance to play. I am pushing towards player retirement at this point as I get more involved with the design process as well as with judging. That might change when I move this summer, but presently I can't say it has had an influence on my playing directly. What it*

"The only thing you've seen of mine yet is the Tavern Brawler. It was my trial figure."

has done is given me a lot more respect for some figures. I have more of a tendency to see how abilities work together and relate to each other, it might not make me a better player directly, but I think it makes me want to play a lot of stuff I normally would not. It has helped my judging immensely though as I am forced, to a point, to be more steeped in the rules and their interaction.

Unbroken: *What impact does rules design (or rules consideration) have on stat design and vice versa?*

Hagan: *As much as you would expect. I stay out of rules design as I don't*

Stephen Hagan
(photo by Jim Ansaldo)

have a head for the nuances of the rules grind. But we have great rules minds commenting on all our work, so the rules of course really push design forward. Abilities get nixed here or there. It's not pervasive, we have a good set of rules, they don't get in the way too much.

Unbroken: *While working on pieces, have you had any thoughts about new maps that would be good for those pieces, or new terrain?*

Hagan: *Not personally, maps are such a hard nut to crack due to costs and other factors that I just never really think of them much. I have had thoughts on new terrain here or there, but I generally quickly shovel those thoughts to the side.*

Unbroken: *At some point, you had to have learned that magic items were going to be introduced. Has this influenced stat design?*

Hagan: *Not really. For the magic items to be good, they needed to be designed with our design document in mind. As long as a figure follows the design document, theoretically, a magic item should never be an issue. Now that said, I am sure there will be a problem eventually; there will always be some interaction that we could not foresee. Funny enough, the first time a magic item ever became an issue in the design of a figure was just this last week. I was working on a figure and the question came up about a hypothetical item that might never exist, and how the figure would interact with it. What that question pointed to, and in the end*

meant, was that the ability was broken. It didn't matter that the item might never exist, but the ability itself was a problem, as it was obvious that a few minor interactions could show up and break it wide open. So I downed the ability a bit, and it ended up being a solid figure.

Unbroken: *To what degree does the chatter on the forums influence your designing?*

Hagan: *There is chatter? Where are these forums? Mmmmm. Ok, kidding aside, I try not to let chatter influence me too much. There is a process; we stick to the process; we make good figures. I do look at people's design ideas and see what I can pillage. I do keep in mind what things are popular and what things are not. But overall, we can't let the chatter rule us. We just have to do what we do.*

Unbroken: *Are there some players whose play style has influenced your designing? (No need to name names, of course.)*

Hagan: *This is an interesting question that I have never considered. The answer I think is yes, but there wouldn't even be a name to name really, as it is something we are probably all guilty of here or there. I look to avoid figures that are designed only as turtle figures, or that take fun away from the game. In the end, this is a game. That means it is supposed to be fun. We tend to use less conceal these days. Why? Because it's not fun. Used sparingly, it's a great ability, but overall - NOT FUN. I have skirmished where types of bands have influenced me more*

than players have influenced me (Too Many Puppies, Archmages, and the old school LSD turtle come to mind.) I just want people to have fun playing the game, so, ironically perhaps, players have influenced me if they've used strategies that just aren't fun. ☺

Original edition announcement!

The DDM Guild is happy to announce the appointment of two avid players to the DDM original edition project. Ilya Ginsberg (Илья Гинзбург) of Belarus and Gregg Dieckhaus of the United States will be Co-leading the design and development efforts central to the original edition game. This will include creating a new, standardized rulebook, writing new scenarios, addressing rules questions that arise, and of course, designing and developing stats for the new miniatures released by WoTC. The first five to be released will be the 2008 Starter Set minis, and will be the first official minis designed for the original edition game since 2007. These developers will be working with our OP head, D.Garry Stupack as the third member of the original edition team, to provide support to guild members that continue to enjoy the original edition game. Congratulations to Ilya and Gregg! ☺

Unbroken Contributor Credits:

Jim Ansaldo (JohnnyQuest) | Chapter Lead
Joel Broveleit (demetri0us) | Goofic Design
David Paul (Vrecknidj) | Guild Crier
D. Garry Stupak (Tried) | Organized Play Lead
Kevin Tatroe (ktatroe) | Guildmaster and Current Edition Lead Designer