Masters and Minions Tournament Playtest (Floor Set Protos!)
Posted by Tav_Behemoth - 2004/07/12 15:27

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Here's the first of a series of pictures from the test run of Behemoth3's Masters and Minions tournament. This is from Round 1 of the tournament, devoted to the Stirge Horde. Here, the heroes are in a stirge breeding facility encountering some of the new monsters from the Masters and Minions series: a tiny stirge-riding ashmalkin wizard and a blood bloat, an amphibious horror related to the stirge in a way the adventurers will soon discover...

(The problem with new monsters, of course, is that miniatures haven't been created for them yet; the rat is standing in for the ashmalkin and his mount, while the xorn is doing duty as the blood bloat. Using your imagination is what fantasy gaming is all about, right?)

We have many things to thank Stefan Pokorny for:
- Founding Dwarven Forge and creating Master Maze.
- Hosting the tournament at his studio in Brooklyn. For Dwarven Forge fan, it's a real treat to see the place where the magic happens!
- Loaning us miniatures and Master Maze pieces from his own awe-inspiring collection, including prototypes he painted himself like the Lava Pit (used here to represent a magical elven sap-distilling pool captured by the ashmalkins).
- Helping us design and set up the mazes, which he does with amazing speed and ingenuity.
- Being one of the tournament playtesters: as Pally Furfoot, a halfling necromancer, he saved the day on several dramatic occasions!

As we were setting up the night before the playtest, Stefan said: "I spend so much time working on these, I hardly ever get to play with them" -- we're honored that we could provide an opportunity for him to enjoy the fruits of his labor as much as we do!

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Masters and Minions Tournament Playtest (Floor Set Protos!)
Posted by Mister Sharkey - 2004/07/12 21:32

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Now that's tasty. I can't wait for the Floor Set to show up in my FLGS. I want my Master Maze nooooooow! :lol:

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Masters and Minions Tournament Playtest (Floor Set Protos!)
Posted by MyLordVoid - 2004/07/14 18:36

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Tav,

I Love the Pic, and I Know the Proto was off Scale with the Other Floor Pieces but I can't wait to See the Final... How Kewl that You Had a Chance to Game with "The Man" As Well... And What Miniatures are we Looking at Here?

Mister Sharkey,

Welcome Back, good ta See you are Still Around... And Me Too... I Want to See Everying that will Be Released in the Next Ten Years sitting on my Table Right Now... Ok...Ok... I Would Settle for Some Pictures of Everything DF intends to release over the Next Ten Years.....

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Masters and Minions Tournament Playtest (Floor Set Protos!)

Posted by Tav_Behemoth - 2004/07/21 11:05

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MyLordVoid,

The miniatures we used in the playtest were a mix of Stefan's and mine. He hand-painted his (the rat, the xorn, the dwarven fighter); some I noticed were Ral Partha, dunno about the others. Since I'm not much with a paintbrush, mine (the monk, the shadow, the other heroes in the hall) are from the new line of pre-painted D&D minis--not quite as cool but still a blessing to clumsy DMs on a budget like myself!

Twas cool indeed to game with "The Man" -- I'm lucky enough to have him as a player in my regular D&D campaign, but we really benefitted from his advice as a playtester for the tournament. When we ran it again at DexCon, the minotaur maze was a lot scarier thanks to Stefan's input, and I've cooked up a few new wrinkles for Gen Con that should make it more dangerous than ever...

Next time I'll bring my camera of precognition and see if I can get some pictures of future releases for the next 10 years!

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Masters and Minions Tournament Playtest (Floor Set Protos!)

Posted by Tav_Behemoth - 2004/07/21 11:16

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Here's a picture of the minotaur maze, looking down the stairs towards the tomb -- it's so cool-looking I haven't seen a party yet who's been able to resist opening it, even when they *know* something bad is likely to happen as a result!

This was a picture we set up ahead of time, not an actual shot from the playtest -- I got so wrapped up in running it that I forgot all about the camera.

Here are some comments from actual playtesters, though:

B3 What part was the least fun? Why?
Stopping. Because I wanted to keep playing. :-)

B3 Did you feel like there was more to do & discover after the end of the adventure? Would you want to play a continuing campaign that began with this session?
I did feel like there was more to do after the adventure. "One-shots" never seem like enough for me, but this game particularly made me want to keep on playing, to delve deeper into the secrets of your world.

B3 Based on this playtest, what is your impression of Masters and Minions?
It's clear that the intention is to take a handful of monsters and really make them come to life. With great drawings and lots of personality, I expect Masters and Minions achieves that goal.

- Salman "Totally Sweet Nickname" Bahkt

"I liked the basic idea of an expanded ecology around the monsters... There was definitely more to do and discover after the end of the adventure. I would love to play a continuing campaign that began with this session... Based on this playtest, I like the concept and follow through of 'Masters and Minions.' I would definitely recommend people purchase it, as well as tell my friends to try the tournament." Ã¢â‚¬â€?Andrew Coleman

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Masters and Minions Tournament Playtest (Floor Set Protos!)
Posted by MyLordVoid - 2004/07/21 22:02

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Although "Critical" Comments are Most "Useful" the Good Ones Keep us Motivated... Kudos on the Responses of Your Obviously Happy Players... And as a Side Note, I Have to say that the Minotaur Figs in the New D&D Sets are Impressive in Scale... They are Much More Animal Based than Human which is How a lot of Previous Figs have Been... (Right or Wrong I Like this Twist), And I Like the Minotaur Young, Which are Still These Massive Warrior Figs... Did You Use Other Lines of Minotaur Figs as Well?

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Masters and Minions Tournament Playtest (Floor Set Protos!)
Posted by Tav_Behemoth - 2004/07/21 22:32

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I got plenty of useful / critical comments as well, but mostly from the folks in my regular group who know me (and my weaknesses) already -- these responses were especially encouraging because they were players who we recruited just for the playtest.

The minotaur figure with the bloody sword is one of Stefan's, a Ral Partha I think; it should be holding a second sword in its off hand, but the blade broke off. (One nice thing about the D&D minis is that not even my two-year-old can harm them!) The two young minotaurs and the one with the two-handed axe are from that line. Not visible in this picture is a minotaur from the Talisman board game which I painted.

We needed all the different minotaur miniatures we could find because there are four new kinds of minotaurs in this Horde Book: the Bull Lord (an enormously powerful minotaur patriarch), the minotrice (a fierce huntress) and the minotrice maze mage (albino-skinned and magically gifted), and the tauron (even more bestial and less manlike). I'd be glad to learn of other sources for minotaur minis -- again, the problem with doing a tournament for new monsters is that there aren't figures to represent them yet!

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Masters and Minions Tournament Playtest (Floor Set Protos!)
Posted by MyLordVoid - 2004/07/21 23:14

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Yes I Have Some Talisman Minotaurs (GW), as Well as Some from the Warhammer Quest (GW)... They are Slightly Different But there are Like 15 or More... I will Never Use that many Minotaurs... Ever..... I Have a Few Other Talisman Figs in Use as Well... They Had Some Great Spellcasters and Barbarians...

(They are that Oversized GW 30mm though so I Think the Monsters are Better overall than the Humans in terms of Scale with other Miniatures)...

It was Hard to Tell from the Pic that-that was a Minotaur with a Bloody Sword... I Was Unsure... As to Other Lines... It Seems Like Minotaurs are Fairly Common to a lot of Mini Lines... At least it Seems like I See them All the Time... (Or Did when we Still had a Local Game Store)... Seems everyone Special Orders these days instead of Carrying a lot of Stock...

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