

NORMCON 2010

BY CHAOS STEVE
AND EVIL MIKE

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NormCon 2010 has sadly come and gone, but you can still re-live every incredible moment of it when you buy the NormCon 2010 2-disc DVD set. We've pulled out all the stops to bring you all of the...*what? The camera was never turned on? Ever!? But how am I going to pay for all the terrain and figures I used during my game? A loan shark!? Are you crazy? Here's hoping people will pay \$19.95 for the PDF...*

NormCon, named after Norm "no relation" Hensley, started a few years ago when a group of us got together for a gaming weekend at Norm's house in sunny Cleveland. This year's NormCon was held at Evil Mike's subterranean lair in Fishers, Indiana. Joining us, besides Norm, were Allen Bohannon and Dave McGuire. After some much needed pizza, the games began.

REALMS OF CTHULHU

First up was Mike's *Realms of Cthulhu*

game inspired by *House on Haunted Hill*. Our characters all received an invitation to spend the night in a haunted house. Those of us that survived would collect a sizable reward—and we all needed that reward.

I played Lance the test pilot, Al played Dr. Trent (a psychologist), Dave played Jack the beat cop, and Norm played Nora the...uh...woman in the group. (I think Nora had the hots for Lance.) After meeting our host, Mr. Loren, his wife, and Mr. Pritchett who owned the haunted house, we were allowed to roam the house. The fun began at 11:00 pm when the solid steel doors closed, sealing the entrance until dawn. There were already steel bars on all of the windows.

To say that the rest of the night was creepy, scary, and deadly would be an understatement. I was the first to travel down insanity road. It was after saving Nora from man-eating plants in the Atri-



Sometimes the atmosphere is everything!

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um. When the rest of the party arrived, we all could see the plants were quite normal after all. So why had I emptied my pistol into the plants and why was I shaking uncontrollably? Doctor Trent took me aside to try to calm my fears—that is his specialty. He failed...critically, and made my insanity worse.

And then there was the killer second floor banister. Mr. Pritchett had already thrown himself over it and died. It wasn't long before I tumbled over it in a failed attempt to save Nora. Apparently I was hallucinating, because Nora was in a completely different room. That didn't make hitting the first floor any less painful though. Wounded and shaken, Doctor Trent once again took me aside to clean up my wounds. He failed, critically, again. With all of my insanity and wounds, My character was at -7 to all of his trait rolls. (That doesn't stop him from trying things though!) Later, after an encounter with some

ghostly hospital patients, Dr. Trent goes over the banister too. Again it was because of Nora, who was lowering his unconscious form to a couch below. The impact causes the floor to collapse sending him into the dark basement. Strangely we left him laying there for quite a while.

Fake deaths, real deaths, screams, noises, a missing Jack, all eventually led to an underground graveyard filled with unimaginable terrors. I died at the "hands" of a giant tentacle-armed brain. Dr. Trent didn't make it either. I was dead by then and didn't see if it was the Mi-go or the brain that got him. Just like in the movie, only two made it out: Jack and Nora.

We finished the evening by watching the movie: *House on Haunted Hill*.

AT-43

Saturday morning Mike had fresh



We were air dropped onto this Thorian base!

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waffles waiting for us. While we ate I sat up my Savage AT-43 game. All of the players got to choose from a mix of characters and powered body armor. There was also one walking tank that someone could choose. Later, they were all thankful that Al chose that tank when they met its Therian equivalent and realized they would have been hard pressed to destroy it without Al's tank. The story took them from a simple search and rescue mission to an all-out assault on a Therian base. The characters got to mow down wave after wave of Therian soldiers (What's not fun about that!) In the end they eliminated the Therian scourge on the planet and destroyed what the Therians were after. But not before the Therian high commander escaped swearing vengeance upon each of them.

TOUR OF DARKNESS

Next, Dave took us to Vietnam via *Tour of Darkness*. I played the medic. Mike was the sniper. Al carried the Hog and Norm played the female nurse, Ashley—just kidding. I don't remember who Norm played. *[Mike's Notes: Norm was*

the grizzled Sergeant who kept ordering me to do stupid, suicidal things!] Our story began with a helicopter crash—ours. After rolling for the equipment that survived (In game terms, we rolled a d6 for each weapon. On a 6 the weapon didn't make it through the crash), Mike discovered that his sniper rifle had been destroyed. (Dave let him spend a benny to reroll the d6. He rolled a 6 again.) Mike searched for the pilot's weapon only to discover the pilot's weapon had also been destroyed. (Yes, he rolled another 6.) I loaned Mike my service pistol. He later lost it in a pit trap. No one else offered Mike a weapon. *[Mike's Note: Although that last bit is hilarious, it is not anywhere close to the truth. I had a pistol...I lost it in a pit trap. I borrowed Steve's later in the game and returned it after heroically saving our Sarge.]*

Before the crash we had been escorting a USO gospel singer to another base. She proved to be quite a soldier and watching Dave GM her was quite fun. No one does a Christian black woman like Dave. We decided to continue heading to our original destination



We fight our way into a tunnel rat maze...those are real bullets as bennies!

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on foot. This took us through a swamp. Mike was shot by a sniper. Al critically failed while trying to ambush said sniper and fell at the enemy's feet. I'm not sure how Al's character survived that.

After going some distance avoiding (and sometimes engaging) the enemy we came across an old temple. Seeing it to be some kind of base, we went inside to hopefully find a radio to call for an evac. Upon entering we found a gruesome scene of blood, brains, and entrails hanging from the ceiling. Following the corridor within, we came to a pit. Believe me, no one wanted to go down in it, but we believed there might be prisoners down there. Norm's heroic character went down and found the prisoners and a feral boy with sharpened teeth. Norm critically failed twice while fighting the feral boy. Once again I'm not sure how Norm's character survived that. *[Mike's Note: This is where I saved the Sarge...conveniently forgotten by Steve.]*

We went deeper into the base. That's when the shells started dropping, shaking the whole countryside around us. Suddenly we found ourselves going the wrong way against a tide of villagers and VC. None of them paid any attention to us. And then we saw why. I

horde of feral creatures were chasing them. Those in the rear of the throng were easily being taken down and eaten by the ferocious feral flock.

In all the mayhem that followed we managed to find our way to a radio, call for evac, and get the heck out of there. Whew.

OLD SCHOOL FANTASY

****Warning: Spoilers Ahead****

The final game of the day was Norm running us through an old school fantasy game called *A Keg for Dragon*. We all played, for lack of another term, hero wannabes. I was the half-orc fighter. Mike was the cleric. Al was the curious Halfling, and Norm was the... *why can't I remember any of Norm's characters???* *[Mike's Note: I say this with all the respect and love that is due, Steve is clearly an idiot...or at least so old that he can't even read his own text. NORM WAS RUNNING THE GAME!!]* Anyway, we soon got our chance to see what being a real hero was like. First we saved a poor traveler from a band of goblins. Then upon entering a town called Northpoint, we were immediately hailed as heroes (because we looked the part) and soon stood before the town mayor. It seems



The best "con men" in Indy!

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that the town owed much of its good fortune to a dragon named Clipwing. The dragon's only request in return was for a keg of fine whiskey every three months. Unfortunately both the whiskey and the Dragon's ward, Charlie, was missing. (I can't remember the ward's real name...only that it started with a C.) Charlie lived in a bolt hole. We thoroughly search Charlie's bolt hole. We fought battles in Charlie's bolt hole. Defended Charlie's bolt hole and even met the dragon in Charlie's bolt hole. Charlie's bolt hole was the place to be.

Unfortunately we got word that the Iron Legion, a vicious tribe of imperialistic goblins were on their way to the town. If we didn't find the whiskey and pay

the Dragon with it, the town would soon be destroyed. After some investigation and some intrigue we discovered a traitor in Northpoint. We also found and fought against the traitor's goblin friends. In the end we did get the whiskey to Clipwing who protected the town by going out and discouraging the goblins from attacking it. We became true heroes then, gained a Dragon's Favor and became owners of the town's inn. Oh, and we found Charlie too and safely placed him back in his bolt hole.

[Evil Mike's Note: We (well, I did) had so much fun making fun of the "Bolt Hole" that it was hard to keep a straight face through most of the game. All the more like an old school fantasy game!]



Be glad you didn't have to face Evil Mike's Brain!!!!