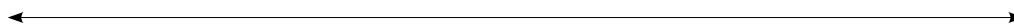




Z-Man Games Newsletter

Issue 30



Note from the Z-Editor:

Welcome to Issue 30 of the Z-Man Games Newsletter!

This issue we preview three games that will be hitting shelves later this year. We take a look at the adventure game *Quest: A Time of Heroes* - a fantasy RPG style game in a box. *Undermining*, a brain burning game of mining for the best resources. And lastly we also take a look at *The Ares Project*, a game that emulates the great genre of real-time-strategy games.

It's been great to see the number of people making comments in game forums across the web, and especially pleasing to see our google group has grown to over 650 members - thanks everyone!

As I usually add, if you have anything you'd like to share with us, whether they be session reports, photos variant ideas, suggestions for the newsletter, or even just questions, send them in to newsletter@zmangames.com!

Thanks!

Giles.

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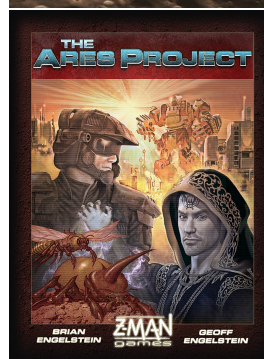
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Upcoming - Quest: A Time of Heroes, designed by Alexander Dotor and Andre Wiesler:



Quest: A Time of Heroes is a fantasy adventure game in the great tradition of other fantasy role playing adventure games, like the choose your own adventure books and wonderful old games like Heroquest. Quest: A Time of Heroes is a one against all style of game, with one player taking on the role of the Quest Master, while up to four other brave souls take on the roles of the heroes whose exploits and daring will see an end to the tyrannies of the world. Over the course of adventures, player characters will grow and develop, learning new gifts, gaining items and improving their attributes.

The game functions something like a mix between a paragraph adventure book and a role playing game, with the Quest Master reading the relevant scenes to the players, who then make many and varied choices about what they will do. Player actions and choices will, in turn, have a major impact on the subsequent occurrences in and direction of the adventure. Combat between the characters and their foes runs something like a tabletop game, with terrain impeding or providing opportunities to characters, and tactical choices about where to move and how to attack playing important roles.

The Quest Master is a role that anyone can play, and the structure of adventures means that it is an easy role to perform, but includes as much challenge and as many interesting choices as the role of a hero. The first adventure is designed as a learning game, so heroes and the Quest Master alike can quickly read the basics, set-up and jump into a game with the minimum hassle. There is also a section in the rules covering guidelines on creating your own adventures, so particularly creative players have the opportunity to baffle and entangle the heroes in quests of their own division.

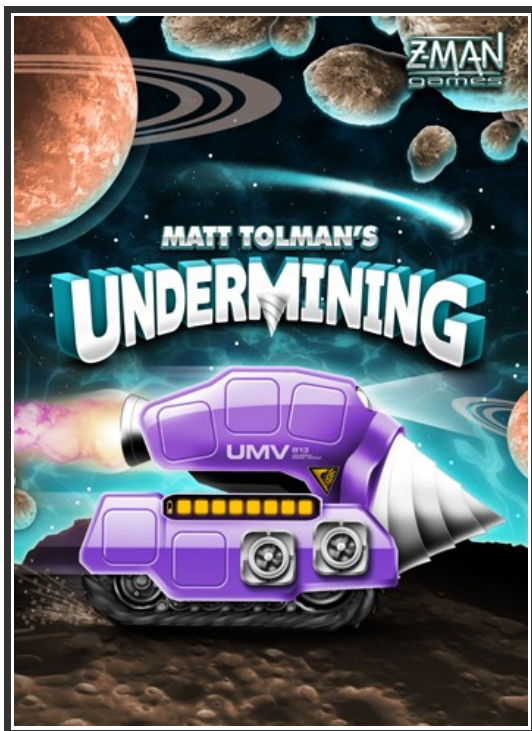
Heroes need to work together, deciding how best to use the groups strengths and weaknesses, and as importantly - who will open that innocent looking chest in the corner - are vital parts of playing the game well. If players can't decide, the leader can always pull rank and force a decision on the group, however, as the leader changes each time this happens, it is important to use it wisely, and for the benefit of all! Dice rolls will decide challenges, with players attributes and gifts also significant factors in whether a test will be a success or a fail.

The Quest Master need not worry about the power creep of experienced heroes either, as their minions and arch villains receive bonuses, and the Quest Master will have access to more event cards which can be used when the heroes seem too close to winning for comfort.

Each adventure in Quest is also playable in a session, with games lasting around an hour. If players are playing a particularly long game, or find they are spending as much time bragging about their achievements and ordering ale in the tavern as they are rescuing those in need, then adventures also include scripted pauses - points in an adventure where characters can rest their weary feet for the night and the players can join them again when next they meet together.

Quest: A Time of Heroes is an epic game filled with characters, development, fantasy motifs and plenty of adventure!

Upcoming - Undermining, designed by Matt Tolman:



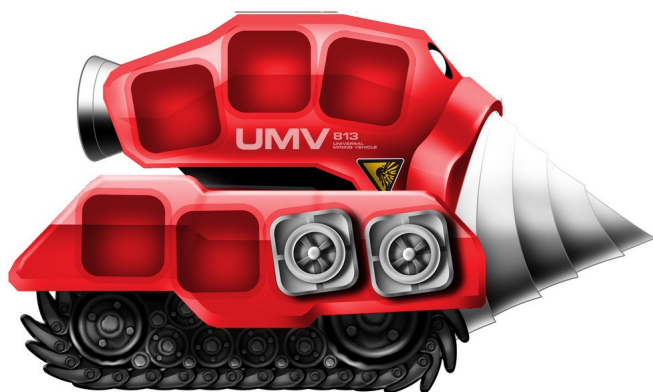
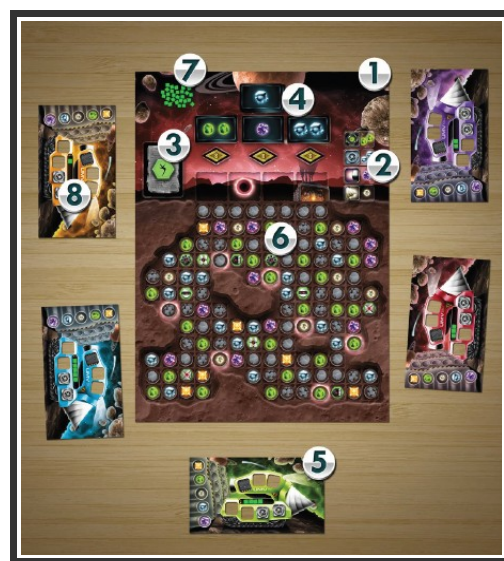
Designed by Matt Tolman, and for between 2 and 5 players, Undermining is a game of digging for resources on an alien world.

Undermining is a game where players need to make the best of the actions available to achieve short term goals, like gaining particular resources, as well as to consider how to set themselves up long term through upgrading their mining vehicle and fulfilling contracts. The game is all about gaining star bucks, with the player who manages to earn the most being the winner in the end. To earn starbucks players will be vying to satisfy contracts for certain resources, but may also earn them for upgrading their vehicles, having resources at game end and finding alien technologies.

Upgrading your mining vehicle, or UMVee, is something that will provide the vehicle with permanent special abilities that come in very handy if used wisely throughout the game. Choosing the upgrades that suit the strategy you are pursuing is a vital part of playing the game well.

Undermining is a highly interactive game, with players actions sometimes benefiting and sometimes impacting the future actions of others. The competition for resources is, of course, very important. But the use of open tunnel spaces to get where you need to go, and the blocking of such spaces is also key. Players can move through other UMVeEs, however, doing so costs battery power - and managing your batteries, which allow extra actions, is also an important part of playing well.

Undermining comes with a double-sided board, meaning the way players are forced to interact can be significantly different one side to the other. With a random layout of resources, different strategies and bonuses that can be achieved through upgrading your UMVee, the timing of contracts for different resources, and one off special bonuses that can be achieved by finding alien technology, no two games of Undermining are ever the same.



Undermining, for all the choices, tactics and strategies remains a straightforward game to learn and play. Games last between 45 and 60 minutes.

Undermining includes a double-sided game board, 5 UMVee player boards, contract cards, star buck tiles, equipment tiles, alien tech cards, debris tiles, wooden battery cubes and 5 plastic UMVee player pieces.

Upcoming - The Ares Project, designed by Geoff and Brian Engelstein:



The Ares Project is a board game that emulates the grand struggles of real-time-strategy games. Players represent different factions vying for control of the Frontier, and ultimately want to vanquish the enemy by destroying their base. The Ares Project can be played as a direct head-to-head two player game, but there are also rules for three and four players, with three players able to play a free-for-all style of game, and four players having the free-for-all option, as well as a team-play variant.

The core of the game revolves around constructing buildings, which enable the production of units, which can then be used to smash the enemy into

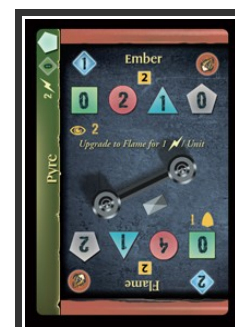
submission. Buildings offer a variety of choice, as the orientation in which they are played will dictate the unit type they are able to build.

Game play is fast and furious: play a card, both players refill their hand to three cards. Once a player is familiar with the potentials of their faction turns can spin by very quickly. Cards can be used in a variety of ways to represent a variety of things in game. If played face-down they represent resources which can be used to construct buildings, or if played face-down on a building, can later be used to construct units. If played face up they provide players with the ability to produce power, gain special effects, or produce units. Power is a vital economy introduced in the advanced game that players will need to manage as well. Some cards require power to function, but the way power will impact on your game strategy comes down to the faction you are playing.

Factions are where The Ares Project shines. Each faction in the game comes with it's own set of rules, and while all are bound by the core rules, each faction plays very asymmetrically. The four factions represented in The Ares Project are: the Kahoum, a psychic kabal for whom the management and use of power is vital. The Xenos, an alien race whose special powers, ability to adapt and evolve and their flexibility make them a tough opponent. The Terrans, remnants of the Earth Defence Force, who have a great variety of units and are stalwart defenders. And The Colossus, a giant robot, who is able to produce the variety of units required easily and certainly capable of packing some serious punch.

Combat is resolved through an innovative battleline system, making what to build, match ups against opponents and tactical choices extremely important.

A player will win automatically if they manage to destroy their opponents home base, but if the game should end before that, it will come down to the points won battling in the frontier throughout the game. To the victor goes the spoils!



Subscription Information:

We have created a google group called '[Z-Man Games](#)'. Anyone can sign up to be a member, and you can adjust your settings as a member so that you receive email notification of any posts made to the group. At this stage only Zev and myself have posting privileges, and aside from notifications about this newsletter and any hot news we think is really important nothing will be posted to the site to clog up your mail boxes.

If there is ever going to be a long delay (of over a month) I will do my best to make sure I post it to the google group to keep everyone in the loop!

We have over 650 members with more joining each month!

You can join the [Z-Man Games google group](#) by going here:

<http://groups.google.com/group/zmangames> and following the prompts to join up.

Release Schedule: *Note, nothing is set in stone, and some releases can be pushed back even as far as into 2012.*

In store now	Hitting shelves soon!	July	Summer	No Date Set
-Ascending Empires -Junta: Viva el Presidente -Nobody but us -Chickens -Onirim (reprint) -Yggdrasil	-Grimoire -Merchants and Marauders (reprint) -Mermaid Rain -Pandemic (reprint)	- Dark Minions - Equilibriion - Mondo - Ninjato - Palenque	-Atlantis Rising -The Ares Project - Battle Beyond Space -The Doom that came to Atlantic City -Guards! Guards -On the Brink (reprint) -Quest: Time of Heroes -Troyes (reprint) - Undermining - Vinhos - Wok Star	- Aviation Tycoon - Dwarven Roads - Sei Taishogun - Scorched Earth - Taktika -The Walking Dead

Links:

www.zmangames.com
<http://groups.google.com/group/zmangames>
www.boardgamegeek.com
www.boardgameinfo.com
<http://fortressat.com/>
www.purplepawn.com
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