

Game Review – from Gen Con Australia E-News: December 2007

Product

Dash-In Dungeons (Basic Set)

Company

Wednesday Night Games

Number of Players

2-5 Players

Review

Once upon a time, back when I started gaming, you could buy RPGs that had everything you needed to play right there in the box and a good night's gaming meant exploring a dozen rooms in a dungeon while beating the living hit points out of everything you found. There were stories and goals, sure, but these were set-aside in favour of doing the fun thing and unleashing strange new magic.

The experience of going through the Dash-In Dungeons box brought back a lot of memories of those early days. With over 490 cards in the basic set alone, there's plenty of things to paw through as you get a feel for the game.

The concept of Dash-In Dungeons harkens back to fantasy adventure gaming the way it used to be, with the six sample adventures offering up goal-driven dungeon crawls with a heavy dose of room trashing and looting. The four character classes fit into familiar archetypes from other fantasy games and the adventure concepts are fairly standard fantasy tropes, sending the players to hunt an ogre, raid an orc lair, and slay a dragon. While some may sneer at the simplicity of the set-up, this is the kind of gaming that many new players are eager to cut their teeth on and Dash-In Dungeon makes no bones about it's focus on quick and exciting rather than complex and prolonged play. With a recommended session length of one hour, it's designed for the quick bite rather than the twelve-course meal. What sets Dash-In Dungeons apart from many other products of this ilk is the method in which everything is presented. Everything in the system, from the rule-books to the sample adventures, maps and monsters, is represented by a specially printed card. Even the mechanics are card based, with players drawing cards for skill-checks or combat actions and comparing the total value of their draw to a difficulty level. While it can take a couple of minutes to adapt to the mechanics, they're solid and easy to use with enough detail to cover most important situations. The insistence on using cards for everything does have some downsides - I'd recommend getting one of those plastic trading-card sleeves to keep the rules in the correct order and easy to find - it also makes keeping track of the use of spells and special abilities easy to explain and easier to monitor. The process for most of the character's special abilities is simple – use a spell and hand the relevant card over to the GM. Once you're out of cards, you're out of magic.

On the whole I think Dash-In Dungeons is ideal for introducing new players to the game, but it'll also find a place among groups who want something quick and easy to break out when their regular game misses a session or they're just not up to playing something else.

For more information on this product, visit the Dash-In Dungeon webpage at <http://www.dashindungeons.com/>

Send us a review of your favourite game to enews@genconoz.com