



**Wizards
of the
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Retailer
Newsletter
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Sept. '97**

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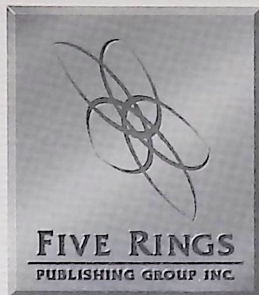
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Five Rings Publishing Group Joins Wizards of the Coast

by Ryan S. Dancey

FRPG

Wizards of the Coast, Inc. completed the acquisition of Five Rings Publishing Group, Inc. in late June. As a result, FRPG has become a wholly owned subsidiary of Wizards. In the weeks since the merger, the FRPG staff has been asked a lot of questions. Here we've compiled answers to some frequently asked questions.

Is Wizards going to change the Five Rings staff?

Nope. All the key design and development staff members are still working with Five Rings, except now they are Wizards of the Coast® employees.

Is Wizards' R&D going to take over development of Legend of the Five Rings® and your other products?

No. FRPG development is still going to be handled by the teams that were involved before the merger. AEG is going to continue to do the L5R trading card game, Dan Verssen is still handling the **Star Trek: The Next Generation™** dice game, Last Unicorn is delivering the **Dune™—Eye of the Storm™** TCG, and Luke Peterschmidt is finishing the **Rage™** trading card game relaunch.

What will happen to Five Rings Publishing?

For now, not very much. We're still working out of the

Five Rings Publishing Schedules September Release for New Dune TCG

by Ryan S. Dancey

This summer Five Rings Publishing is proud to release the **Dune—Eye of the Storm** trading card game based on Frank Herbert's science fiction masterwork, **Dune**. The game was designed by Last Unicorn Games of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, publishers of the acclaimed **Aria™** system, and the **Heresy™** trading card game.

Set to hit the shelves in September, the **Dune—Eye of the Storm** TCG will be released in sixty-card faction starter decks, with complete rulebook, and in fifteen-card randomly assorted Spice Packs. Each starter deck is designed to reflect one of the six factions, and the cards within are playable right out of the box. The Spice Packs contain random cards from all six factions. The starter decks carry an \$8.99 suggested retail price, and the Spice Packs carry a

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BATTLETECH

To the Victor . . .

As the sun set over the arena of the first ever BattleTech® TCG World Championship, one player stood victorious. The BattleTech TCG World Championship took place at Origins™ in Ohio and had sixty-two participants, all vying for a huge prize package. World Champion Peter Sundholm went home with more than \$1,000 worth of BattleTech products, \$1,000 in cash, a gold medal, a piece of art valued at \$1,000, and rare cards signed by the judges.

The BattleTech TCG World Championship turned out to be a truly international event, with two of the four finalists hailing from Canada and two from the United States. At 3:00 A.M. Peter Sundholm of Olympia, Washington had defeated Terry Borer of Ontario, Canada in a decisive two games. The atmosphere was friendly and extremely sportsman-like, and all of the participants were excited to be part of this first BattleTech event. Players are already looking out next year's World Championship and our experienced judging high for participants in the DCI-sanctioned BattleTech tournaments throughout the year. This is the start of something big.

Contact Linda Roberts at (425) 204-7346 to request DCI-sanctioning for your BattleTech tournaments. 

RPGA Program Relaunched

by Lisa Stevens

At the GEN CON® Game Fair in Milwaukee this August, the Roleplaying Game Association (RPGA®) was relaunched with new programs and a lot of excitement. Formed in 1980 to provide the budding roleplaying game business with a high level of tournament play at conventions, the RPGA has grown, with tens of thousands of dedicated gamers joining its ranks through the years. The network's fan magazine, the *Polyhedron*® newszine, has published 125 issues and thousands of RPGA-sanctioned tournaments have been held over the last seventeen years.

Traditionally, the RPGA Network tournament system has been held at conventions, but starting in 1998, we will bring the excitement of sanctioned tournament play to your store through our Adventures Guild™ retail play program. Beginning in January 1998, we will provide two RPGA-sanctioned adventures per month to participating stores. Each adventure will be sanctioned for one two-week period during the month. Any gamers who play in the adventures will receive RPGA ranking points, and judges will receive judging points.

The adventures will tie in to products being released near the given month, providing gamers with a preview and, hopefully, encouraging them to purchase the products. The Adventures Guild program will allow

you to showcase key TSR® products each month and encourage sales. In addition, running roleplaying tournaments in your store is a surefire way to bring more people into roleplaying, because they see the excitement and fun that a roleplaying game generates. You've seen the effect that hosting **Magic: The Gathering**® events in your store has on generating interest in the game, so why not give it a try with roleplaying?

As an added bonus we will offer retailers the opportunity to purchase classic RPGA adventures that have been run at conventions in the past, but haven't been played for years. These adventures will allow you to fill in the gaps in your store in case your gamers demand more than two adventures per month.

The exact list of products we will showcase each month has not been finalized as *Retailer Direct* goes to press, but look for it in an upcoming issue. We are also finalizing the program's cost to retailers. We wanted to share the news about the RPGA Network with you as soon as possible, and we'll bring you more information in a future issue of *Retailer Direct*.

In addition to the Adventures Guild program, we will carry on with business as usual at the RPGA. *Polyhedron* magazine will return to a bimonthly publishing schedule. We will sanction tournaments at

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RUMOR CONTROL

by Jillian "Perkygoth" Sutter

Hello again readers, and welcome to the September edition of Rumor Control. As always, I am going to start this article with a plea: send me rumors! Please! Every month finds me scrambling to dig up an appropriate rumor to answer in this column, and I need more of YOUR input. Otherwise, I'm going to carry out my threats, and start writing articles about make-up and fashion.

Now that the unpleasant task of threatening you is out of the way, I'm sure you're wondering what sort of fascinating rumor I'm going to confront this month. Well, wonder no longer! This month's query is: **"How do I get those way-keen, oversized Magic: The Gathering cards?"**

Yeah, you know the ones I mean. The 4" x 6.5" cards that have featured such classics as Serra Angel, Black Lotus, and Shivan Dragon. Well, you can't get *those* anymore. However, other cards will be available.

Where, you ask? Easy. Some of the oversized cards were used as prizes through Arena™—The League for Magic: The Gathering. In past seasons, we've had an oversized version of Balduvian Horde, as well as versions of Arena's alternate land cards.

These are **only** available through Arena. If you aren't an Arena store, you'll just have to resign yourself to not being able to have those cards. Or do the clever thing and sign up for Arena, which is what I'm sure you were planning to do anyway.


The other place you will find oversized **Magic** cards is in various magazines that participate in promotions with us. As you may remember, one of the most popular oversized cards we ever did, Chaos Orb, was only distributed through an issue of *Inquest* magazine. You can look forward to seeing more oversized cards appearing in other magazines down the road.

Well, that's it for this month. Send me your rumors! Mail them to me at:

Rumor Control
Attn.: Jillian Sutter
P.O. Box 707
Renton, WA 98057-0707

or send me email at

<mr@wizards.com>.

If you don't feel like writing, just pick up your phone, dial (800) 821-8028, and ask for me. But, like I always say, "No, I can't tell you confidential information!" 



A New Twist for Arena

The Autumn Season of Arena will feature a new type of **Magic** product: the preconstructed deck. These sixty-card decks are built entirely from *Tempest*™, the new stand-alone expansion for the **Magic** TCG. They are designed to let players try out the new expansion "right out of the box" without extensive deck construction.

The preconstructed decks come in four varieties. The Swarm features a horde of creatures designed to overrun a player's opponent. Deep Freeze is a variation of the classic Counterspell deck centered on shutting down an opponent's creatures and dismissing his or her spells. The Slivers introduces a new group of creatures that share cumulative abilities. The fourth deck, titled The Flames of Rath, takes burning and blasting to a whole new level. The four decks are designed to play competitively and are accompanied by a strategy guide and deck list.

This year, the Autumn Season will be broken down into two periods. The first period runs from Friday, October 24, through Thursday, October 30. During this period, players may use any of the four preconstructed decks, but must use them exactly as listed on the decklist.

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Storm Watch

Watch for the storm coming from all directions. As mentioned in our last *Retailer Direct*, the **Magic: The Gathering—Tempest** stand-alone expansion is set to hit the shelves in October. Every retailer on our mailing list should have received their merchandising kit for the *Tempest* expansion. If you have not received it, please contact your Merchant Relations representative at (800) 821-8028. Included in the kit is advance packaging, three poster-sized **Magic** cards from *Tempest*, a banner announcing the October 4 Prerelease tournaments, a beautiful art poster by Donato Giancola, and a small quantity of *Fifth Edition* rulebooks.

Rulebooks are included in the kit because there are no standard rulebooks included with *Tempest* products. Each standard, randomized deck contains a storybook with character sketches and the *Tempest* story line. The new preconstructed decks come with a strategy guide as well as deck-enhancement tips so players can add cards to their ready-to-play decks.

Several trade magazines will feature contests for the *Tempest* release. *The Duelist*® magazine presents the *Tempest* "Actions Speak Loudest"

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THE DUELIST Update

The Duelist Increases Frequency in 1998

Production of *The Duelist* magazine will increase to nine issues in 1998. Three more issues per year means more of the **Magic** information, Wizards features, and gaming industry coverage that your customers crave—and more sales for you. The upcoming issues will release as follows:

Duelist #22 February/March issue releases first week in January

Duelist #23 April/May issue releases first week in March

Duelist #24 June/July issue releases first week in May

Duelist #25 August issue releases first week in July

Duelist #26 September issue releases first week in August

Duelist #27 October issue releases first week in September

Duelist #28 November issue releases first week in October

Duelist #29 December issue releases first week in November

Duelist #30 January issue releases first week in December

Duelist #21 Update

Look for the following exciting features in *Duelist* #21 (January 1998 issue):

- Free **Magic** Shivan Dragon over-size card
- A special preview of the 1998 *Duelist* Invitational in Rio de Janeiro
- Strategy feature by Pro Tour™ player Brian Hacker


Order deadline for *Duelist* #21 is October 17; on-sale December 1; WOC07521; \$4.95 retail price.

Duelist #22 Update

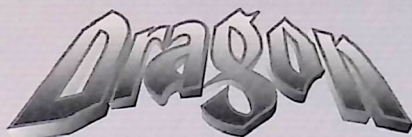
Look for a preview of Rachimulot (code name for the next **Magic** expansion), strategy articles, puzzles, and more. The order deadline for issue #22 is November 11; on-sale January 1, 1998; WOC07522; \$4.95 retail price.

And remember, ask your distributor about our **15% return allowance** for *Duelist* magazines.

The Duelist Sideboard™ #8 will be mailed free to all retailers in the *Retailer Direct* database. As the overall environment for organized play continues to expand, we've changed the format from a bimonthly magazine to a monthly tabloid to reach a larger audience.

The editorial content for the initial revamped *Duelist Sideboard* will include extensive tournament results from Pro Tour—New York (June), the U.S. Nationals (July), and the 1997 **Magic** World Championships (August). Watch for your copies around mid-September. 

Two of your favorite titles join the Wizards team!



Dragon® magazine is the monthly resource for all AD&D® game players.

Issue # 240 is our "Mystery & Suspense" issue. Look for:

- Rules for using the Saga™ system in the **Ravenloft®** setting
- A tour of medieval mystery fiction to inspire any **AD&D** campaign.

Dragon magazine issue #240 (October '97) goes on sale October 1, retail price \$4.95.

Issue #241, the "Ancient Empires" issue features:

- Five new player-character races for the **Greyhawk®** campaign
- New kits and rules for archeological **AD&D** adventures

Dragon Magazine #241 (November '97) goes on sale November 3; retail price \$4.95.

Also, look for our special Annual Issue on sale November 3, with features on every current campaign setting, as well as all the regular departments of *Dragon* magazine. (On sale November 3; retail price \$5.95).

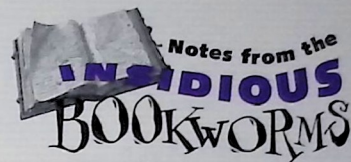


Dungeon® magazine features bimonthly adventures for heroes of all levels.

Issue # 65 (November/December 1997) includes "The Ice Tyrant," the first **Dragonlance® Fifth Age®** scenario, plus plenty of **AD&D** game adventures.

In issue #66 (January/February) look for the **Forgotten Realms®** adventure "Operation Manta Ray" and more **AD&D** game scenarios.

**Be sure to ask your distributor for
Dragon and *Dungeon* magazines.**



So, maybe you think the Insidious Bookworms only care about **Magic**-related information? It's not true, and we will prove it! I mean, don't get us wrong, we love the **Magic TCG** . . . it's just that Peter has personally taken the helm of TSR, Inc., so we've suddenly developed a very strong interest in roleplaying.

The TSR Retailer Awareness Study is already completed. The purpose of this study is to identify retailers that carry TSR products and find out what they think of them. We have also added questions on key TSR products to our Monthly Retailer Study. This will allow us to monitor product performance at the retail level.

By the time you get this issue of *Retailer Direct*, we will have launched the first of several phases of the TSR Consumer Study at the GEN CON game fair. A detailed survey on roleplaying habits and consumer attitudes, this study will help us identify what TSR consumers really want. If your customers weren't at GEN CON, don't worry, this survey will also be distributed through *Dragon* magazine, *Dungeon* magazine, and on the TSR website. All interested gamers will have a chance to voice their opinions.

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RoboRally— Grand Prix

The Master Control Computers were not amused. On a distant planet that served as the Empire's grid-widget factory, production had gone down but requests for replacement robot parts were skyrocketing. In an attempt to increase efficiency, the Master Control Computers sent middle-management 'bot DL-6RT to give the grid-widget control computers a kick in their virtual butts.

Upon arriving at the factory, DL-6RT did a quick inspection of the 144,325.21 square-mile facility, discovering a multitude of maze-like structures with thousands of robots blasting, pushing, spinning, and racing about. DL-6RT was deeply disturbed by this chaotic mess created by the thoroughly obsessed control computers . . . but also deeply intrigued. In order to fully understand the **RoboRally** race, DL-6RT had to get involved. As per its programming, the robot decided upon the first order of business . . . RE-ORGANIZATION!

The result, the *Grand Prix*™ race track, offers three new boards of main-sensor-trunk-tingling excitement, each specially designed for use alone but also fully compatible with preexisting **RoboRally** boards.

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1997 RoboRally Worlds and Wizards' Dream Team Challenge

A high participation at the 1996 National Championships at the Origins convention caused this year's **RoboRally** World Championships locale to move from Seattle to the Columbus-based board gaming convention. Returning from last year were Eric Dodds of Costa Mesa, California, and Andy Stalker from Columbus, Ohio, the respective 1996 **RoboRally** World Champion and runner up. Both of these participants were invited back to compete in the final round, while

Robert Campbell of Alameda, California, was invited back to participate in the second round.

Eighty-six other participants faced-off in preliminary rounds, with the first- and second-place players at each table advancing to the second round. Each player was faced with turns of 100 seconds as they negotiated Machine Shop and Exchange.

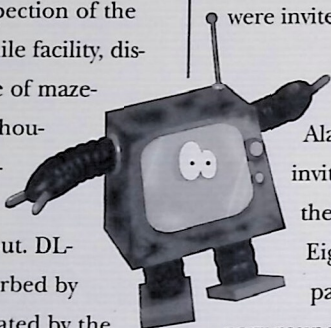
Thirty second-round competitors and Robert Campbell gathered in groups of five (and one table of six), vying for the six spots at the Worlds table. Only one player from each table would move to the next level, although everyone at this stage was guaranteed a prize. Each player was given ninety seconds to complete a

turn, battling it out on a grueling four-board course.

Finally, after four hours of preliminary and secondary rounds, we were able to begin the World Championship games. Six challengers faced off against last year's champions, with each player hoping to be the next World Champion. Each player was able to use just eighty seconds for programming in this five-flag, path-crossing race.

Eric Dodds felt the heat of being last year's champion. He was pummeled from several players and held back. Andy Stalker, on the other hand, negotiated his way carefully in the early game, maneuvering his robot to remain virtual for three turns. This allowed him to pull away from the rear of the pack and remain in third place when his robot finally became real. For several turns, it seemed that a different player was going to be the next World Champion, as Andy remained third and Eric was bringing up the rear. Then, in just one turn, Andy was able to push both players ahead of him into pits, allowing him to capture the lead. Though the game lasted another ten turns, no one was able to catch up to the experienced World Championship player. Andy was

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Perfect Hours?

by Rich Redman

Customer Service team lead

Customer Service's operating hours changed again on August 4. Since retail-ers call us for their cus-omers, you'll want to be aware of the new hours. I'll also explain how I make the deci-sions for such changes and tell you some of the best times to call us.

Our new hours are 9:00 A.M.–8:00 P.M., making our day an hour shorter at each end.

We're still open Monday through Saturday, and that won't change.

We made several changes to our Customer Service operating hours this year for vari-ous reasons. We

surveyed our callers at the end of last year, and they overwhelmingly felt we should be open later in the evening and on Saturdays. We tried that, and with a few exceptions, it seems to be very popular.

Let's take a look at an average day in Customer Service (see chart above).

Calls pick up very sharply around 9:00

A.M., and drop off quickly after 6:00 P.M. By 8:00 P.M., we're not even getting as many calls as we were when we first opened. When we looked at revising our schedule again, we chose the eleven hours from 9:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M., when we get the most calls. Tracking numbers like this is part of my job, and

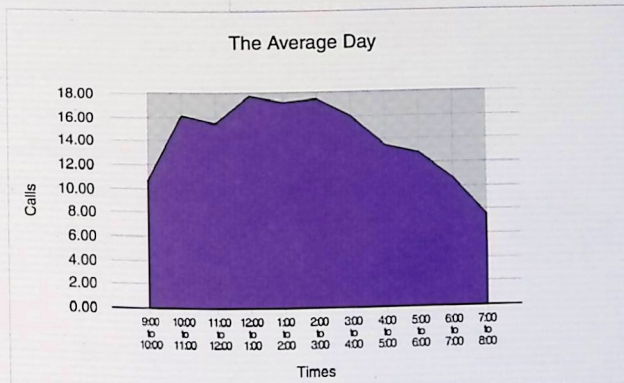
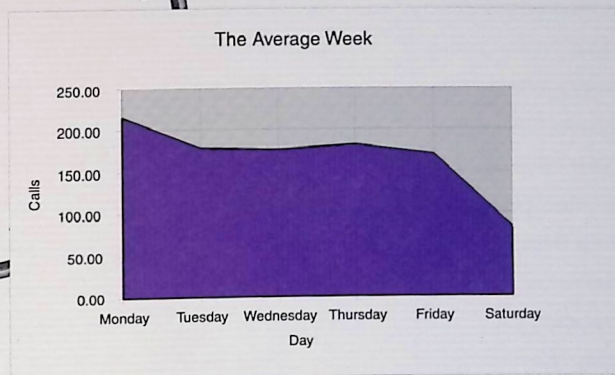
The average week is indicated by the chart below.

Changing our hours obviously changes the shifts all of our Customer Service reps work, which means more people will be available on Monday at 9:00 A.M. (the worst time of the worst day) to help. If you can wait until Tuesday to call, you and your customers are much more likely to get through to us quickly

and, frankly, we'll be less stressed out when you do.

If you or your customers have questions about product release dates or how to play our games,

you can reach us at (206) 624-0933 from 9:00 A.M.–8:00 P.M. Monday through Saturday. If your customers have a concern about the quality of the product they purchased, they can call that number during the same hours. And if you can call on a day other than Monday, you're much more likely to get through quickly, and to get through to a relatively relaxed Customer Service rep.




I review calling patterns roughly quarter-ly. I work with the whole team to arrange our shifts to cover the times of highest traffic, and to have fewer people at work when traffic is slow. So contrary to what you might think, it's actually better to call during the middle of the day—we have a lot more people avail-able to help then.

Coming to Your Town Soon!

The trucks have rolled out for the National **Magic: The Gathering** Sampling Tour, which runs through the end of the year. Three exhibits will travel to approximately one hundred and fifty lifestyle events across the country, including music festivals, extreme-sports events, state fairs, college entertainment events, lifestyle festivals,

and military entertainment festivals. Event-goers can stop by the **Magic** tent for a demonstration of the *Portal*™ trading card game and the chance to win fabulous prizes, including trips.


Here's the schedule for the *Portal* sampling tour. If your store is located near one of our stops, chances are you'll be seeing hordes of new

customers who tried *Portal* and want more! 



Arena (cont. from p. 3)

Beginning on Friday, October 31, and running through the end of the season on Sunday, November 30, league players will be able to add up to fifteen cards to their decks. These cards may come from any of the following sets or expansions: *Fifth Edition*™, *Mirage*™, *Visions*™, *Weatherlight*™, or *Tempest*. These fifteen cards may either be incorporated as part of the player's deck or as part of the player's sideboard; in either case, the player's deck must have exactly sixty cards and the sideboard must have exactly fifteen cards. At the beginning of the match, the player must announce to his or her opponent that he or she is using a sideboard (as per the Arena Floor Rules).

For more information about Arena, please see the Wizards of the Coast website, located at <http://www.wizards.com>. To participate in the Autumn Season of Arena, please contact Wizards of the Coast Merchant Relations at (800) 821-8028. Orders placed by October 10 receive a \$5.00 discount! 



State	City	Event Name	Dates
CA	Mammoth Lakes	NORBA Mountain Biking	7/26-7/27
CA	San Diego	NAS MIRAMAR Air Show	8/15-8/17
CA	Santa Monica	NISS National In-Line Championships	9/6-9/7
CA	Venice Beach	NISS National In-Line	8/8-8/10
CO	Denver	Taste of Colorado	8/29-9/1
CT	Hartford	HORDE Festival	8/6
FL	Daytona	Daytona Beach Sky Fest	11/8-11/9
FL	Jacksonville	Jacksonville Air Show	11/1-11/2
FL	Miami	Battle of Bands	11/15
FL	West Palm Beach	HORDE Festival	8/24
GA	Atlanta	Atlanta's Haunted House	10/27-10/31
GA	Atlanta	College Tour-Morehouse/Spelman	11/13-11/14
GA	Atlanta	College Tour-Georgia State University	11/17-11/18
GA	Statesboro	College Tour-Georgia Southern	11/3-11/4
IL	Champaign	College Tour-University of Illinois	9/23-9/25
IL	Tinley Park	HORDE Festival	8/3
IN	Muncie	College Tour-Ball State University	9/8-9/9
IN	Noblesville	HORDE Festival	7/25
MA	Mansfield	HORDE Festival	8/8
MA	Mansfield	HORDE Festival	8/9
MI	Ann Arbor	College Tour-University of Michigan	9/15-9/16
MI	Clarkston	HORDE Festival	7/27
MI	East Lansing	College Tour-Michigan State	9/18-9/19
NC	Charlotte	HORDE Festival	8/15
NC	Charlotte	College Tour-University of NC	10/23-10/24
NC	Greensboro	College Tour-University of NC	10/20-10/21
NJ	Camden	HORDE Festival	8/17
NJ	Homdale	HORDE Festival	8/19
NY	Saratoga Springs	HORDE Festival	8/10
NY	Wantaugh	HORDE Festival	8/12
OH	Cincinnati	HORDE Festival	7/29
OH	Columbus	HORDE Festival	7/30
OH	Oxford	College Tour-Miami University	9/3-9/5
OH	Toledo	College Tour-University of Toledo	9/11-9/12
OK	Oklahoma City	Oklahoma State Fair	9/12-9/21
OK	Oklahoma City	BMX-ABA Stunt Biking Championship	11/27-11/30
PA	Burgettstown	HORDE Festival	8/21
PA	Pittsburgh	College Tour-University of Pittsburgh	9/29-9/30
PA	University Park	College Tour-PA State University	10/2-10/3
SC	Columbia	College Tour-University of SC	11/10-11/11
SC	Orangeburg	College Tour-SC State University	11/6-11/7
TN	Memphis	College Tour-University of Memphis	11/24-11/25
TX	Dallas	Dallas State Fair	9/26-10/19
TX	San Antonio	San Antonio Air Show	10/25-10/26
UT	Park City	NORBA Mountain Biking	8/23-8/24
VA	Fairfax	College Tour-George Mason University	10/9-10/10
VA	Hampton	College Tour-Hampton University	10/13-10/14
VA	Harrisonburg	College Tour-James Madison	10/6-10/7
VA	Williamsburg	College Tour-College of William & Mary	10/16-10/17
WA	Seattle	End Fest	8/2
WA	Seattle	Bumbershoot Festival	8/29-9/1
WI	Troy	HORDE Festival	8/2


\$2.99 suggested retail price. The set contains over three hundred cards in three rarities: common, uncommon, and rare. Each faction starter deck contains one card available nowhere else, keyed to that faction.

Dune—*Eye of the Storm* players assume the roles of minor houses struggling to gain admission to the High Council of the Landsraad—the governing body of the Imperium. To achieve this objective, they must hoard Melange, the spice—a paranormal substance that increases the life span of its users, heightens consciousness, and provides glimpses of the possible future to a select few. The spice is found on only one world in the universe—a blasted desert planet named Arrakis. The spice cannot be synthesized, and it cannot be duplicated. Consequently, Arrakis is the center of all political, social, military, and economic attention within the Imperium.

Players align themselves with one of six major factions in the *Dune* universe: House Corrino, the Imperial Family; House Atreides, dedicated to reforming the Empire; House Harkonnen, despicable but subtle would-be overlords; the Bene Gesserit, a sisterhood of witches; the Spacing Guild, whose members hold a monopoly on interstellar trade and communication; or the Fremen, the uncouth denizens of Arrakis itself.


Each of these factions is opposed by some of the others. Choosing a faction provides the player with enemies as well as allies. The major characters of the *Dune* novel, and many of the minor characters as well, appear in the *Eye of the Storm* game, including Duke Leto Atreides II, his son Paul, the Lady Jessica, Duncan Idaho, Gurney Hallock, the Baron Harkonnen, Emperor Shaddam IV, and many others.

The initial release of the game, *Eye of the Storm*, is set just as the Atreides take up residence on Arrakis. During this time in the story, the Harkonnen and the Emperor are secretly maneuvering to set up the downfall of the Atreides. Young Paul has not yet realized the awesome powers he possesses, but the Spacing Guild Navigators have sensed the threat he poses and have demanded that the Emperor take steps to remove him. The Bene Gesserit believe that Paul may be the Kwisatz Haderach, a superbeing capable of being in many places at once, the result of a thousand-year Bene Gesserit breeding program.

Over the next two years this story will expand and grow, as the Atreides are betrayed, Paul learns of his potential, the Fremen rise in revolt against their Harkonnen overlords, and the Emperor himself is forced to take direct action to preserve his Dynasty. 

contest in Issue #20. The contest challenges readers to match characters from the *Weatherlight* saga with actions from the *Tempest* story line. *InQuest* #30 presents the "Atog's Lament" contest, in which readers must solve the many riddles of the Atog's rhyme. Fall 1997 *Gamer Magazine* quizzes readers about the jovial goblin Squee and his mysterious toy. *Scrye* 4/4 challenges readers to find and draw a *Tempest* expansion symbol in the issue. Prizes include plenty of *Tempest* products and signed cards by Richard Garfield.

Additional marketing support for the *Tempest* expansion will include an online contest at the Wizards of the Coast website at <http://www.wizards.com>. The "Tempest: Into the Storm" promotion will launch in mid-September 1997 and will run through mid-October 1997. Players will be challenged to guide the *Weatherlight* flying ship through a series of mazes leading to the stronghold of the evil Volrath in order to win prizes. Cutting-edge graphics and original art from the *Tempest* card set will add to the excitement of this unique promotion.

Be sure to tell your players who are active in the cyberworld that **Magic** creator Richard Garfield will be available for a CompuServe chat at 6 P.M. PST on October 14. Henry Stern, lead developer of the *Tempest* expansion, will also be on hand to answer questions about *Tempest*. Visitors should log on at (GO WIZARDS). 

Five Rings (cont. from p. 1)

same offices in Redmond, Washington, about thirty minutes from the Wizards campus. We have our own budget, our own marketing program, and our own product development plans.

Will the Five Rings games become Wizards games?

Not in the foreseeable future. The Wizards logo will not appear on Five Rings products, and we will be maintaining our own website, customer service department, and other functions. Wizards will be handling our accounting and operational tasks such as human resources. In early 1998, Five Rings will relocate to the Wizards office park, but we will still maintain a separate identity.


Why sell out? Wasn't Five Rings doing well?

Actually, Five Rings was and is having a great year. The merger is a result of an opportunity for Wizards to become involved with an exciting and energetic smaller company, and for Five Rings to gain access to the resources and capital of its much bigger parent. For both companies, the merger was a very positive deal, resulting in benefits to both Wizards and to Five Rings.

What benefits will Five Rings get from the deal?

First, we have a chance to work with the most successful gaming company in history. We will be able to review the extensive marketing

research data that Wizards has compiled over the past few years. We'll be able to work with the staff of *The Duelist* magazine, the DCI™, and the Andon Unlimited™ convention organization. We'll have access to the type of working capital we'll need to accomplish our objectives, including the release of four games in the next eight months, and full support and customer service for our entire product line.

We're all looking forward to working with everyone at Wizards of the Coast. In the future, you'll see more information on our plans and products. In short: we're glad to be part of the team! 

Grand Prix (cont. from p. 6)

In addition, three new board elements: trap door pits, chop shops, and repulsor fields, will bring the **RoboRally** board game to the next level of excitement.

Pit Row

Tired of watching 'bots wander around looking for a wrench? Pit row provides ample opportunity for 'bot repair and option acquisition. The chop shop element will allow 'bots to reload options, exchange options, or if their timing is right, gain new options. Don't go thinking it's safe . . . a healthy dose of oil slicks and the new trap door pits will keep the 'bots on their toes. This is

where the *Grand Prix* starts, but not where it ends.

Canyon

This two-level board is outfitted with portals and a sunken center. It's a fast-paced section of Robo race track—and speed is the first order of business! Careful, or you might go over the edge!


Back Stretch

The Back Stretch completes the *Grand Prix* game boards. As the robots make their way around the track, they'll be encountering more trap door pits, more oil slicks, more chop shops, and wild repulsor fields

that make the **RoboRally** race track look like a pinball machine.

Probably the most dangerous of the *Grand Prix* boards, the Back Stretch still keeps the pace quick, with conveyor belts providing a fast track to victory. One last thing, watch out for those lasers!

The *Grand Prix* expansion is designed to create the fastest-paced **RoboRally** games yet. Get ready for whiplash as you strain to keep up with Twonky and friends when they blow by.

RoboRally—*Grand Prix* is an expansion for previous **RoboRally** releases and not a stand-alone game. 

Dream Team (cont. from p. 6)

pushed forward and won the 1997 **RoboRally** World Championship with Doug Lange of Kettering, Ohio as the 1997 runner up.

Wizards of the Coast's Dream Team, Richard Garfield and Peter Adkison, then challenged the 1996 World Championship team and the 1997 World Championship team to a two-on-two-on-two event. Andy qualified for both 1996 and 1997 teams but played on the 1996 team. Doug added Joe Shalosky of Columbus, Ohio, to the 1997 team for this event.

Andy had

faced

Peter and Richard in last year's

Dream Team challenge. Though his team went up six flags to two in the eight-flag race, Wizards' own Dream Team astounded the crowds with the come-from-behind victory of the year, a triumph that nicknamed the members Richard "Lightning" Garfield and Peter "Thunder" Adkison. Andy certainly had a bone to pick with both of them, and the Dream Team was ready for the challenge.

A two-level, ten-flag race was set up with Machine Shop and a never-before-seen board in this three-team challenge in which either player may touch the flag. Other restrictions included no communication between players after they received their pro-

gram cards, and an incredible seventy-five-second time limit for each turn.

As the race for the first flag began, Richard was pitted against Andy in a mad dash for the first flag, a familiar battle from last year's challenge. Like last year, Andy pulled just a little ahead of Richard, actually touching the first flag at the end of the first turn, drawing an option card, and receiving The Big One. Two phases later, Richard pushed Andy off the first flag, shooting him in the process. Just before Richard could register the touching of the flag, Andy announced he was taking the point of damage to The Big One. A

look of surprise passed across


Richard's face as he realized the full impact of what Andy had just done.

The 1996 World Champions quickly pulled ahead of the pack by four flags before either of the other teams

could negotiate the first flag. By the eighth flag they were still up by four flags but in a surprising draw of option cards, Richard gathered the Brakes while Peter picked up the Big Gun and Self-Destruct, three critical options from last year's victory. As Eric headed toward the ninth flag, Peter moved up within two and had the critical programming moment to decide whether he would use the Self-Destruct. He decided against using the device. In no time, the 1996 World Champions defeated both the 1997 World Championship team (at six flags) and Wizards' own Dream


Team (at five flags) in the 1997 Dream Team Challenge.

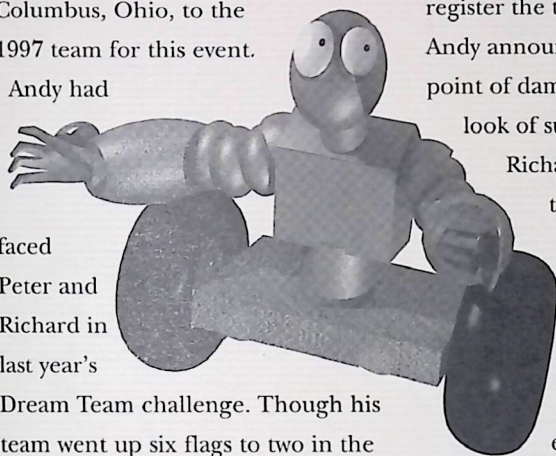
As Richard was renamed "Static Electricity" and Peter became "Distant Thunder," they vowed revenge at next year's Dream Team challenge. They will get that chance as Andy Stalker and Doug Lange will have the opportunity to face the 1-1 Dream Team in next year's Dream Team Challenge.

With an expected attendance of more than one hundred fans, next year's **RoboRally** World Championship promises to be filled with surprises. We'll see if Andy Stalker can remain in the World Championship circle for a third year in a row and who will pull ahead in Dream Team Challenge victories: Andy Stalker? Or Wizards' own Dream Team? Be there next year to find out! 

RPGA (cont. from p. 2)


conventions as usual. The RPGA Network will also open up a Fellowship-Level Membership, which will be FREE to anyone who participates in a sanctioned tournament. This membership will allow players to keep their ranking points from tournaments and retain character experience points from Living Campaign tournaments.

So, you can see that there is quite a bit going on at the RPGA now. We are proud to be back to serve the roleplaying gamer community and are pleased to bring retailers into the action. 






Mission Accomplished?

Have hired guns invaded your store? Hopefully, they picked up plenty of **BattleTech**—*Mercenaries*™ product and entered the Hired Guns competition. The deadline is near. Mercenary Unit Captains have until September 12 to recruit more **BattleTech** TCG players and submit their entry forms at your retail display. Does your store have the winning team? Find out in early October which team captain and guests will claim the bounty and travel to the Wizards of the Coast Game Center in Seattle to display their gaming prowess. 

Co-op for TV and Radio

Most of you have probably seen the **Magic: The Gathering** “A brain, a deck, and a friend” commercials on TV. We have made arrangements to have the national spot re-edited for co-op commercials.


We have thirty-second radio and television spots available. The TV spot has a three-second tag at the end for retail store information.

If you are interested in these commercials and participating in the co-op program, give Lisa Hart a call at (425) 204-7694. She can help you with all of your co-op advertising needs. 

Retailer Direct and You!

Here in Merchant Relations we are constantly reviewing our retailer programs to make sure we're serving you to the best of our ability. You're holding one of those programs in your hands, the *Retailer Direct*, and it looks like it's time to make a change.

We realize that our retailers receive numerous mailings from different companies every month, and it can be difficult to make sense out of everything. To try and cut down on some of the traffic, we're going to put the *Retailer Direct* on a bimonthly schedule. You can expect to see the newsletter and its accompanying goodies January through November.


If you have any questions or comments about *Retailer Direct* or its new schedule, please contact Wendy Wallace at (800) 821-8028 or send email to <mr@wizards.com>. 

Bookworms (cont. from p. 5)

Also at GEN CON will be a survey on the event itself conducted by Andon Unlimited™, Wizards of the Coast's conventions company, and a series of research projects devoted to the **Alternity**™ science fiction role-playing game, an upcoming TSR release.

And coming up in the near future we will have studies for the RPGA Network, the **Dragonlance** product line, and more.

Please encourage your customers to complete our surveys when they have an opportunity to do so. We aim to give players what they want, but we don't know what that is if they don't tell us.

As the information comes rolling in, we'll be sure to share it with you. And no, we haven't forgotten about digging up **Magic** tidbits for you, but when Peter says “jump”... 



**National Model and Hobby
Chicago, IL
Oct 4 - 7**

**CanGames
Glouster, Ontario
Oct 3 - 5**

**PensaCon
Pensacola, FL
Oct 10 - 12**

**Pro Tour - Chicago
Chicago, IL
Oct 17-19**

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