

The Queen's Lane Advertiser

(Incorporating Convention News)

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Edited by Jeremy Tullett

A magazine containing news about various games conventions taking place in the UK

Inside this issue:

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Forthcoming Conventions

Winter StabCon Britannia Hotel Stockport 2-4 January 2009 Bookings(at)stabcon.org.uk	OxCon The Mitre High Street Oxford 24-25 January 2009 users.ox.ac.uk/~board/oxcon	SorCon Ramada Hotel Colchester 27th Feb - 1st March 2009 www.sorcon.co.uk
TringCon XVIII Marsworth Village Hall Marsworth Nr. Tring Buckinghamshire 4 April 2009 www.ftwr.com/tringcon	BayCon 2009 Exeter Court Hotel Kennford Devon 16-19 April 2009 www.baycon.co.uk	Beer and Pretzels The Town Hall Burton upon Trent Staffordshire 16-17 May 2009 www.spiritgames.co.uk/bnpd etails.php
UK Games Expo The Clarendon Suites 2 Stirling Road Edgbaston, Birmingham 6th - 7th June 2009. www.UKGamesExpo.co.uk	Summer StabCon Britannia Hotel Stockport 4-6 July 2009 Bookings(at)stabcon	Manorcon XXVII Stamford Hall University of Leicester 17-20 July 2009 www.manorcon.org.uk
TringCon XIX Marsworth Village Hall Marsworth Nr. Tring Buckinghamshire 3 October 2009 www.ftwr.com/tringcon	MidCon XXXI (Probably) Thistle Birmingham City Hotel (Probably) 13-15 November 2009	



UK GAMES EXPO

BIRMINGHAM

2009

5TH, 6TH & 7TH JUNE

The Clarendon Suites
2 Stirling Road (off Hagley Road),
Edgbaston, Birmingham B16 9SB

*** Boardgames**
*** Miniature Games**
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*** Expo Awards**
*** Living Dungeon Feature**

Good games. Good people. Good times.

Visit the website for further details.

UK GAMES EXPO
BIRMINGHAM 2009
Good games. Good people. Good times.

NEWS RELEASE: DECEMBER

EXPO GOES 3 DAYS

GOOD NEWS! the UK's best attended, multi-category, games show just got better...

- * 3 Days - introducing Friday Games Day - more time
- * Exclusive Boardgame Releases from UK publishers - more new games
- * Special Kniziathon Event - more features

Don't miss out, join us in 2009.
The Expo Team
P.S. Register on the website for your free newsletter now, and keep up to date with the latest news.

5TH, 6TH & 7TH JUNE

www.ukgamesexpo.co.uk

MidCon 2008 Report (Jeremy Tullett)

Another record-breaking year! We had 143 people through the door, exceeding 2007's count by one!

The committee felt that the convention was largely trouble free. The Brains was late being put on tap, but was still ready before most people arrived. Breakfast on Saturday was not served as early as had been promised, but the hotel made a good recovery, and got things moving as quickly as possible.

Overall, I found the hotel and its staff much more responsive this year, doubtless at least partly because I had two quite extensive meetings with the management team in the week before the convention.

We also sent out a questionnaire shortly after the event, to everyone for whom I had a (working) email address, and this table summarizes the results:

	Fine	Bit Cramped	Very Cramped
Venue Space	15	11	

	Excellent	Good	OK	Poor	Very Poor	Did Not Use
Bar	1	6	9	2	1	6
Coffee shop		4	7			12
Restaurant food	1	4	1			18
Bar food	2	6	4	1		13
Coffee shop food	2	4	5	2		10
Accommodation	2	11	6			

The coffee shop (as the questionnaire didn't make clear) was the food bar in the lounge area. There were a couple of complaints that the hot dishes on each day were rather similar, although they were varied from day-to-day.

As usual the bar was perceived as expensive (at £8.00 for a glass of not-cold Chablis, I'd tend to agree), and some purists thought that the Brains was poorly served.

In 2007, the Wroxton looked rather cramped, which is why we rented extra space for the secondhand games stall. This seemed to work well, although at peak times the Wroxton was still close to capacity, and a number of people commented that the table layout made navigating their way across the room difficult. (Actually, I think that the hotel has some new tables, which are slightly bigger than the ones that we have used in previous years.)

Dan Lester was to have done the quiz for us, but was called away to New York at the last moment. However, he did (eventually) email the questions over, and they were presented to the quiz-goers by a ... er ... relaxed MidCon chairman who had arrived a little late back from dinner on Ludgate Hill. The advantage of this arrangement was that the quiz master was no better placed to interpret the meaning of the questions (or the answers) than the other people in the room, so arguing with him was pointless, although it didn't stop a few people trying.

The winners were the Three Muppets (Simon Maudsley, Dave Rooke and Tom Box) by a narrow margin from Team Fat Bastard.

No other tournaments were organized by the committee, or notified to them. A request was received for a Diplomacy game during early November, but it wasn't followed up on the weekend. Diplomacy tournaments at MidCon are a rapidly fading memory, although a small surge at Manorcon this year suggests that a resumption is not entirely out of the question.

Ownership of the hotel chain to which Birmingham City Thistle belongs continues to be uncertain, as does the proposed refurbishment work, which has been on the stocks for at least two years. Nevertheless, the management seem to be very keen to have us back in 2009, and we have a provisional booking (but no draft contract) for 13-15 November 2009.

We look forward to seeing you again.

OxCon 2009 (Robert Clough)

OxCon 2009 is almost here! It will be happening on the 24th and 25th of January at the Mitre Pub on Oxford High Street.

A map can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/2acta6>. The Mitre is a few minutes walking from the town centre and less than 15 from the train station. Parking in Oxford is challenging, at best, so if you're driving we recommend you use the Thornhill park and ride, on the East side of Oxford and easily accessible from junction 8 of the M40 and the Oxford ring road. See <http://www.parkandride.net/> for more information. The "High Street" bus stop is just over the road from the Mitre, which will be on your right.

If you are coming by train then various busses, including the 5 and X3, leave from outside the main station entrance. You want to go to the "Queen Street" stop, and the Mitre is on the left a further 2 minutes slow walk in the direction the bus is going. Hopefully the driver will be able to tell you when you reach Queen Street. Alternatively, it's less than 15 mins. on foot: Leaving the main station entrance, turn left down Botley Road and then veer right down Park End Street. Continue straight on to New Road, then Queen Street, and finally the High Street. The Mitre will be on your left. If you want to make your own travel plans using online tools, then the postcode for the Mitre is OX1 4AG.

While there will be various casual games going on, the main events are going to be a Puerto Rico Tournament on the Saturday, and a Settlers of Catan Tournament on the Sunday. To enter a tournament you must arrive by 10:50 on that day for the draw, for an 11am start. There will be prizes for the winners of these tournaments. While we have a few copies of these games, any extra copies which could be used for the event would be greatly appreciated. The tournaments will finish at around 6pm, but the room is booked for the whole day, so casual gaming can continue until the closing time of the Pub.

Entry Fees for the Event are as follows:

Convention only £4

Convention plus Puerto Rico tournament £7

Convention plus Settlers tournament £7

Comprehensive weekend entry (Puerto Rico and Settlers) £10

Students are half price.

We are also planning an informal gaming session on Friday 23rd most likely with pizza. While the Mitre has food on offer there's also be a trip to an Oxford curry house. If you are interested in either of these events please email board@herald.ox.ac.uk and we will send you further details nearer the time. For the Saturday night curry, you must email us as we will need to work out numbers for reservations.



JKLM Games brings you three new games. So is it going to be fighting aliens, building the Great Wall of China, or buying and selling Tulips?

In *Ascendancy*, you play an alien race, trying to gain control of the galaxy from the Empire, while at the same time, competing with the other players alien races to do so. Over 6 rounds (short game) or 9 rounds (long game), you build up your technology and your galactic navy, in order to conquer the space systems which the empire previously overran. *Ascendancy* is for 2-4 players, and takes about 1 hour for the short game, or 2 hours for the long game.

Tulipmania is set in the first bubble market. Players buy and sell tulips as the prices climb rapidly. But beware, when the price gets too high, they will crash rapidly. At that point, if you have buyers who have already agreed to buy your tulips, then you are set up to make a substantial profit. If not, then as the prices crash, so does all the money you've made. *Tulipmania* is for 3-5 players, and takes 45 minutes to play.

In *Huang Di*, you play one of 2-6 master builders chosen by the Emperor (Qin Shi Huang) to help construct one of the greatest man-made structures in the world – The Great Wall of China. You compete with the other master builders to for the prestige of building sections of the wall to the Emperor's liking. But while competing, you also only have a limited amount of time available to build the wall before the Mongols invade.



**ManorCon XXVII
Stamford Hall, University of Leicester
17-20th July 2009**

Following on from last year's successful convention, ManorCon will once again be held at Stamford Hall, University of Leicester, in 2009.

The big change this year is, we are no longer offering Twin accommodation. We have come to realise that the University is not in a position to offer twin accommodation in a viable way. This was reflected in the problems we had in 2008, where we had to switch several people from twins to singles when they arrived, because the twin accommodation was not acceptable (especially in terms of the distance to walk from the accommodation to the gaming rooms).

For those people who want twin accommodation, we recommend The Regency Hotel, which is just under a mile from the convention. The contact details are The Regency Hotel, 360 London Road, Stonygate, LE2 2PL. Telephone 0116 270 9634. It offers double rooms for between £62 and £69 per night (2008 rates). If you use this (or any other) hotel, please let us know, and if there are enough people who decide to use it, then we will look into whether we can get a group discount in 2010.

The other change to the accommodation is, this year we will be returning to the single rooms we used in 2007. We apologise for the last minute change which was forced on us by the University in 2008, and the problems this caused, but this was a one-off, and so in 2009, we will return to using the single accommodation which is directly adjacent to the main hall.

One other piece of news is, Nick Kinzett has stepped down from the committee. We are currently looking for a replacement, so if you are interested, please let us know, and we'll ~~consider you for interview~~ greet you with open arms!

Apart from that, ManorCon will be pretty much the same as the successful formula we had in 2008. Running from Friday lunchtime to Monday lunchtime, it will once again feature the Second Hand Game Sale on Friday and Saturday, the UK SpielChamps on Saturday, where teams can qualify to represent the UK at the World Spielchamps in Germany in October, the Pop Quiz on Saturday evening, and the Treasure Hunt on Sunday afternoon (which will hopefully be shorter than the 2008 edition!), as well as more games than you can shake a stick at.

As well as the Spielchamps, there will be the usual tournaments, including Diplomacy, 18XX, Puerto Rico, Imperial, St Petersburg, Settlers, Acquire, Midnight Party. We will also have tournaments in any of the new games from Essen 2008 that prove to be popular - the two hot favourites right now are Le Havre and Dominion. Once again there will be a Croquet tournament, and as seen in 2007, nothing - not even the wettest ManorCon in history - will stop it.

Bishop Games will once again be running the games stall in 2009. As ever, they will be offering a 10% discount on all games, and if you have any special requests, they will try their hardest to bring them along. There will also be a Second Hand Games Stall that, as happened in the past, will be in a separate room, and will be open on Friday evening and Saturday afternoon. The treasure hunt will once again be run on Sunday afternoon, by last year's winners - Three Phil's and Three Fillers.

Dan Lester will be setting the Pop Quiz on Saturday evening, and hopefully, unlike in 2007, and at MidCon 2008, he'll actually turn up to compere it too!

There is of course a bar. After failing to finish the Real Ale in 2007, it was all gone well before the end of Saturday night in 2008. We will look into whether there is anything we can do to increase the quantity available without increasing the financial risk to the convention, but if not, then people will have to put up with unreal ale on Sunday and Monday!

Included with this issue of QLA, you should find a booking form. You can also download the booking form (and find lots of other ManorCon information) on the ManorCon website, www.manorcon.org.uk. Please note the booking deadline - 14th June 2009. If you need any further information, please feel free to contact us:

By post: Steve Jones, 59 Sudeley Walk, Putnoe, Bedford, MK41 8JH, UK

By phone: ++44 (0)1234 405878

By e-mail: info@manorcon.org.uk

The Queen's Lane Advertiser (incorporating Convention News)

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Please contact the coordinator if:

- You run a convention and would like to be a part of the 'zine.
- You run a convention and would like to be included in the upcoming conventions list.
- You would like to offer to help out in some way.
- You are not on the mailing list for this 'zine, but would like to be.
- You would like to advertise in QLA.

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