

Welcome to Pick Up and Deliver, the podcast where I pick up my audio recorder as I step

out for a walk and deliver an episode to you while I stroll around.

I'm Brendan Riley.

Well, good morning listeners.

It's a lovely day here in suburban Chicago.

The sky is partly cloudy.

The temperature is in the low fifties, not too breezy.

Plenty of birds out chirping today.

I'll call out if I spot any specifics other than house sparrows, which is the usual and

robins, some robins there.

And it seemed like a nice day for a walk.

It's the last day of my spring break, so I thought I would get out and record a couple episodes

and have some fun.

You'll probably hear these episodes late next week if my schedule holds.

Well, today's idea came from Rob.

I think for your suggestion, Rob, and the donation at our material.

So Rob, I was at Rob's last week for, or this week, for some gaming and we busted out a game

that he had found at Goodwill called Minotaur Lords.

This is a game by Reiner Knizia and it was published in 2004, or at least the copy he

bought was.

It was brand new in-string and we tried it out.

It was a battle line style game.

I'll talk about it more in a board game espresso episode.

But the important thing is we opened it, it was new in-string, we opened it.

Inside was the Fantasy Flight Games Spring Catalog from 2004.

And I looked through it and it was interesting to see what games were in there and I thought

I would talk about the games that are in the Spring 2004 Fantasy Flight Games Catalog

and talk about the, I don't know what they mean for the future of the game industry.

Now part of it is I can't always tell whether the games are new or published already, some

of them it'll say.

So I think most of these are games that are coming for fall.

It's a summer update version on the front coming August.

So this might be games that are coming out in August, in which case, whoa, Fantasy Flight

was producing a ton of games back then.

I can't tell which games are already part of the catalog or which ones are new.

I'll narrate that as I go along.

I looked through this once but I haven't prepped the episode really, so I'm going to be going

through page by page and talking about what I see.

If you're interested in seeing the catalog itself, I will put a scan of it in the show notes

as a pdf.

All right, let's jump into it.

So like I said, it's Fantasy Flight Games Spring Catalog 2004.

On the cover it says, "War of the Ring" based on the Lord of the Rings trilogy by J.R.R.

Tolkien. It's a picture of somebody on a white horse attacking somebody on a black dragon.

So I presume it's the King of Gondor attacking one of the Nazgol lords maybe up at the top

in small letters that says summer update version.

So I presume this is the spring catalog but updated for summer.

I'm not sure why it wouldn't be the summer catalog then, but there it is.

So let's jump right in.

All right, the top it says new.

So these are new games. We have Blue Moon, which is a new Reiner Knizia game.

The Blue Moon base game and two expansions seem to already be out and what they're advertising

is two new expansions, the kind and terror expansion.

Now Blue Moon is a famous Reiner Knizia game that has gotten a lot of love.

I'm aware of it, I believe, because Zee Garcia of the Dice Tower, back when I used to watch

them regularly, would often mention Blue Moon as a game he enjoys.

I believe that one of the guys from so very wrong about board games also really likes Blue Moon.

Although I feel like Blue Moon City is the game that they play or Blue Moon Legends if there's

an updated version maybe.

Since this is 2004, this would have been the original one.

It is a faction battling game, I believe.

I don't know much more about it than that.

Of course, this is part of a long-running experience of Reiner Knizia making games that

stand the test of time, that have a variety of different ways of interacting and end up

being pretty good.

The art on it is sort of weird, weird celestial beings, I think.

Yeah, and it says you have a deck that you're fighting for dominance with.

Again, this isn't a new game, apparently.

These are two new expansions for a game.

But it's interesting to see that they were already, they were doing expansions in 2004,

which again, I wasn't really in the board game hobby in 2004.

I maybe had a couple hobby games, I maybe had Munchkin, I think I had Stevenson's rocket

by then.

But generally, I didn't have a lot in the way of hobby board games.

Yeah, interesting stuff.

So that's Blue Moon.

Second page, War of the Ring, new based on the Lord of the Rings trilogy by J.R.R. Tolkein.

So this is War of the Ring.

I know War of the Ring is a lot of people's sort of favorite game.

I think War of the Ring second edition is really the home run.

And I don't think that's published by Fantasy Flight.

I think that's a different publisher.

So I don't know if Fantasy Flight didn't have a lot of success with this and they let it

go.

But yeah, it looks like it came out in 2004.

It looks like a fun box.

Epic Battles, 215 figures says.

And it looks like it's a lot of fun.

So interesting to see, again, Fantasy Flight, two games in a row that still get talked

about.

I've heard of, right?

Neither of these games are games that have gone completely un-missed by me.

Despite the fact that I really wouldn't be aware of Fantasy Flight for at least a decade

after this.

All right, moving on.

Third page, Warcraft Board Game.

So it says like the original Warcraft Game is available for \$40.

Oh, I should tell you prices because that's funny.

Blue Moon Base Game is 25.

Each expansion is 10 bucks.

War of the Ring, Base Game is 60 bucks.

So I'm rounding up.

It is 59.95.

But whatever.

Warcraft to the board game, 40 bucks.

And the new expansion coming in August is Warcraft Expansion for 35.

So you could be all in on the Warcraft Board Game for \$75.

That's a good investment.

I think that game is worth quite a bit on the second hand market now.

This would be the first one that I don't really care about.

And I'm only aware of because it is well thought of in terms of the second hand market.

This one no longer says new.

So I think we are seeing now we're seeing expansions and other things, but we're still in the new

section.

The next one is the George R. Martin's Game of Thrones, The Board Game.

This is the original edition, which has John Snow on a horse on the cover rather than

the sort of castle, which is the current version you would buy, which is the second edition.

And this is the advertisement for the game, which costs \$40, \$50.

But then also for \$35, you can get the Way of Kings expansion or Clash of Kings expansion,

which I believe or Rob said is now part of the base game.

If you buy the Game of Thrones game now, it comes with that expansion built in already.

So again, I guess of the four, three of these are to me still making waves.

Blue Moon still gets talked about some, it did get an expansion.

Warcraft is the only one that sort of died out.

Game of Thrones, The Board Game, got a second edition and still gets played and talked about a fair amount.

Next up, we have a couple collectible card games, of course, Fantasy Flight was doing this

for a long time.

This would have been just before they started doing living card games, actually probably a decade

before they started doing living card games.

I guess 2012 was when they started doing that.

But these are collectible card games.

We got Game of Thrones, collectible card game, and Call of Cthulhu, collectible card game.

Both of these are games that get a lot of interesting talk.

I think Call of Cthulhu is a cooperative game.

We're working together to fight the other horrors.

As far as I know, it is not related in form to Arkham Horror of the card game, although

certainly related in theme and in market space.

There really wouldn't be room for them to be doing two of those.

Interesting that they decided to move to the Arkham Horror card game, which, of course,

Arkham Horror is a Fantasy Flight property.

Call of Cthulhu is, I believe, Tellurian Games RPG.

And so there, it's a registered trademark of somebody else, so they're paying a fee to

run that.

It doesn't surprise me that they would retire it and go with their own Cthulhu mythos game.

Game of Thrones, of course, went into a second edition, and that's the card game that I've

played, and that one is the living card game.

I haven't played this original collectible card game version.

The board makes it look like it's a two-player game rather than a multiplayer, three, four-player

game.

So, I haven't gotten a chance to try that.

Looks pretty fun.

But, of course, neither of those are still around.

I would say, next up is Runebound.

Runebound is a sort of board game adventure where you have a deck, you have a board, and you're

running around a fantasy land, and you're fighting different challenges in Caves and stuff.

I know this because I played Runebound's second edition.

I got it in a trade.

We played it one time, and I traded it along.

In part because the art was really over the top in terms of Chainmail Bikinis.

Of scantily clad women for no reason, and frankly kind of embarrassing to play.

The game play itself was okay, but I feel like it's the kind of game where you have to have

played it a few times to really understand and do well with it, and we weren't interested

in playing again after playing the first time.

So Runebound's second edition did not stick for us.

Runebound first edition, I don't know whether it had those issues or not.

Well, I do see at least one two scantily clad women in the art depicted on this page.

It looks like what we're seeing is the expansion, an expansion for Runebound that was due in

October of 2024.

So Runebound I think does land in this category of kind of sandbox adventure games in the fantasy

space, which of course you could see thematically maintained and grew.

Descent would be fantasy flight's follow up to that.

We also have gloomhaven and a variety of other games that follow in the footsteps of Runebound.

I would say the big thing that Runebound does that a lot of these other games don't is

it sticks to a map.

And so the encounters are on cards and such, but the gameplay itself is not in the dungeon

it's on a map.

So you know, we see that method in play in Eldritch horror.

We see that method in play in Mage Knight, but I would say that method is not as common.

Now gloomhaven does have an overland map, but you don't play on it.

It is in service to the dungeons.

Well that brings me to the end of the summer update part of the pamphlet.

So now I'm into the part that's specifically labeled spring catalog 2004.

And it's got several different colors that I'm not clear on.

And I think here you can point to like a distinct downplay in what it is we're looking at in terms

of longevity.

For example, we have the Fire Within a D20 role playing game called Fireborn.

Fireborn is the name of it.

You can get the players handbook for 30 bucks, the Game Master's Handbook for 30 bucks.

I've never heard of that so I didn't last.

Oh, this must be the RPG section.

We have Midnight, a world where evil rules and darkness has fallen across the land.

We have a whole bunch of different books.

There's already a bunch of source books and they're bringing out three, four new source

books in June, July and August for the game.

We have Dawnforge Crucible of a Legend.

This would be another RPG system, which it looks like the mecha-morphicist source book is

available in June, but there are already several source books available.

Looks like Horizon, New Playing Frontiers is the company.

So maybe Fantasy Flight is partnering with them, sort of co-publishing situation.

So that was the green section, which it must have been RPGs.

And now we get into the blue section, which seems to just be Lord of the Rings related

material.

We have the Lord of the Rings board game.

We have the Friends and Foes expansion.

We have the Sauron expansion.

We have the Lord of the Rings trivia game.

Lord of the Rings confrontation, which is the one that you really wish you had bought

for \$20.

Because that one is very well regarded.

And I played it once.

It was great.

And it's not widely available now.

Although I feel like they're bringing it back.

Like they just republished it or there's talk of republishing it.

So if that's something you're interested in, I have heard good things.

I did enjoy it when I played it.

It's maybe worth looking out for.

Then they have the Lord of the Hobbit, the board game as well.

None of these are marked newest.

I presume all of these are just available in the Fantasy Flight catalog and things that

you could buy and play if you so desired.

And we have an orange section where it's just Dragon Shield.

They have boxes of card sleeves, card game box and card coffins by Cheese Weasel Logistics.

If you wanted a card coffin, you could get one of them.

And then they have a bunch of other stuff that looks like smaller releases.

But some of them are new.

We have Colossal Arena, Reiner Knizia's Colossal Arena.

This game was republished.

Oh, it's a reprint of Titan Arena, which was an Avalon Hill game.

So that's maybe not what I'm thinking of when I think of Colossal.

There's Minotaur Lords, which is marked as new, Senator, which is marked as new, and

Frenzy, which is marked as new.

Those are all games available to buy soon.

A lot of them are marked in July.

We have Wreckage, a tabletop game, which seems to be some sort of, I don't know, car battling game.

We have Citadel's Mutiny, Acclamation point, Mag Blast, Second Edition.

All of these are not marked new.

So these are things that you could get in their catalog, but they are not new.

We have Ink Inc. Agnido, Kingsgate Arena Maximus, Magdar, Quick Sand, Kingdoms.

That's a Runner Knizia game, which I think has been republished recently.

Locoh, Atlantean, Maginor, Maelstrom, and Orgza Borgame.

It says, "Visit our website, fantasyflightgames.com."

Then they have a little ad for Twilight Imperium 3rd Edition September.

Huh.

Well, what a weird place to have an ad for that, maybe it's going to be in their fall catalog.

So that is the entirety of the catalog I've narrated for you.

So some thoughts.

I mean, one thing that really speaks to me there is, man, I'm really sad that Fantasy

Flight Games has so changed its footprint in the landscape.

I feel like these days really what you see from Fantasy Flight Games are their established

titles.

You have the Arkham Files line.

You have the occasional Star Wars game that they're bringing out.

You have, um, I'm having trouble thinking of other things that they do regularly.

They have a couple of card games that they've been doing, but I don't know how much they're

supporting them anymore.

They used to have some role-playing games, but I think those got spun off.

I guess they still print Twilight Imperium, and there might be a couple other things.

But generally, the company has really scaled back.

And part, you know, it was sold.

And I think in the sale, we've seen a change in the publishing model.

I think that a lot of the games that used to be part of the platform have been spun off.

All the miniatures games were spun off.

The role-playing games I think either have been discontinued or spun off.

So I'm not sure what the current future for Fantasy Flight Games is, but, uh, I am

sad for what it used to be.

It used to be a pretty vibrant company that did some original properties.

They did some license stuff, and they turned out a lot of cool games, and now it feels like

they don't do much of that original stuff anymore.

But for a long time, Fantasy Flight was top of the pops, as the British would say.

I don't think they would, but it's a phrase from Britain.

I do like the model of the catalog.

Of course, the catalog insert depends on a game company having a robust catalog.

So somebody, a company is like Renegade or AEG or Days of Wonder or companies that have

a robust catalog, absolutely.

But I think the board game market has more and more switched to these titles where games

are basically available when they're printed for a short time, and then maybe they'll get

reprinted.

Game companies really don't want to sit on large stocks of things that have been printed

already.

So I think that the model of having a huge inventory available has reduced somewhat, and

maybe that's one of the reasons we don't see the catalog thing anymore.

It's also just people don't communicate via print as much anymore.

And it caused money to put a thing in there.

This probably cost 50 cents to print, and in the time when the advertising channels were

much reduced, the competition in the board game space was much reduced, maybe this made

sense.

I don't know how much people are doing that anymore.

But I guess I'll know next time I buy, sometime soon we're going to have the next chapter

of the Arkham Horror card game will be coming out, and when I buy that, I'll find out,

is this still available?

Do they still have a catalog in?

I will let you know at that point.

Well that's about it for me today.

Thanks for joining me on this journey through Spring of 2004.

I hope you enjoyed it.

I look forward to talking to you again.

What games from Spring of 2004 did stand out the most for you?

What fantasy flight games stand out the most for you?

You can share those over on board game geek guild 3269.

I'd love to hear it there.

In the meantime, I hope that your next walk is as pleasant as mine will be.

Bye-bye.

[MUSIC]

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