

Over 180 Attendees. Biggest Ever!!

# ENBICON IV Big Success



By Stéphane Comeau

This past weekend almost two hundred gamers from all over the maritime provinces converged on the UNB Student Union Building for Enbicon, the UNB/STU gaming club's annual gaming convention.

Rick Gaigneur, Chairman of the Enbicon organizing committee was "very happy" with the turnout. "This is the fourth year we've had a convention and every time we get a better attendance," he said.

This year's convention had well known author of fantasy novels Margaret Weis as guest of honor. Ms. Weis, who has authored many works in the fantasy genre such as 'The Darksword Trilogy', 'The Rose of The Prophet' and co-authored many of the books in the popular Dragonlance saga, hosted a seminar on her writing on Saturday. She also took the time to talk informally with fans throughout the weekend and sign copies of her books.

The standard fare for a gaming convention is, of course, games. And there were many varied types to be played at Enbicon. There are basically two 'types' of games played at gaming conventions: board games and role-playing games.

Board games are generally like the games most people are familiar with. You have counters or playing pieces which you move on the board in an attempt to achieve victory over your opponent or opponents. The rules are usually clear and no referee is usually needed. Chess, checkers and Monopoly are all examples of board games, but such mundane examples were not to be seen at Enbicon (except that spontaneous game of Bridge...).

Popular board games at this year's convention was 'BattleTech', where players maneuver giant armored robots (called 'mechs') on a battlefield to destroy their enemies who are, of course, attempting to do the same. The Anvil, an Enbicon tradition, is a 'BattleTech' tournament game where players bring their own lead miniature, often painstakingly painted, to do battle in an every man for himself fight. When a player's 'mech' is destroyed the victor has the honor of smashing the loser's miniature with a hammer and anvil. This year there were 31 entrants, and only one survived.

Another popular choice was 'Starfleet Battles', in which players fought one-on-one duels using ships derived from the popular 'Star Trek' tv series and movies.

Other examples include 'Diplomacy' where up to seven players compete for control of Europe of the early 20th century (supposedly this was Winston Churchill's favorite), 'Squad Leader' an extremely detailed simulation of tactical engagements during WWII, Axis and Allies, where players attempt to lead their nations to victory in WWII, and 'Talisman' where players race against each other to recover powerful magic items.

The above examples are but a sampling of what board games were played. They range in complexity from ridiculously easy to the absurdly complex (you haven't got a textbook with as much information in it as a complete 'Squad Leader' rulebook), but there is something to suit all tastes.

The other type of games that are extremely popular at Enbicon are role-playing games. In these games one of the participants takes on the role of 'game master', otherwise known as "referee", "dungeon master" or "the guy who shoots

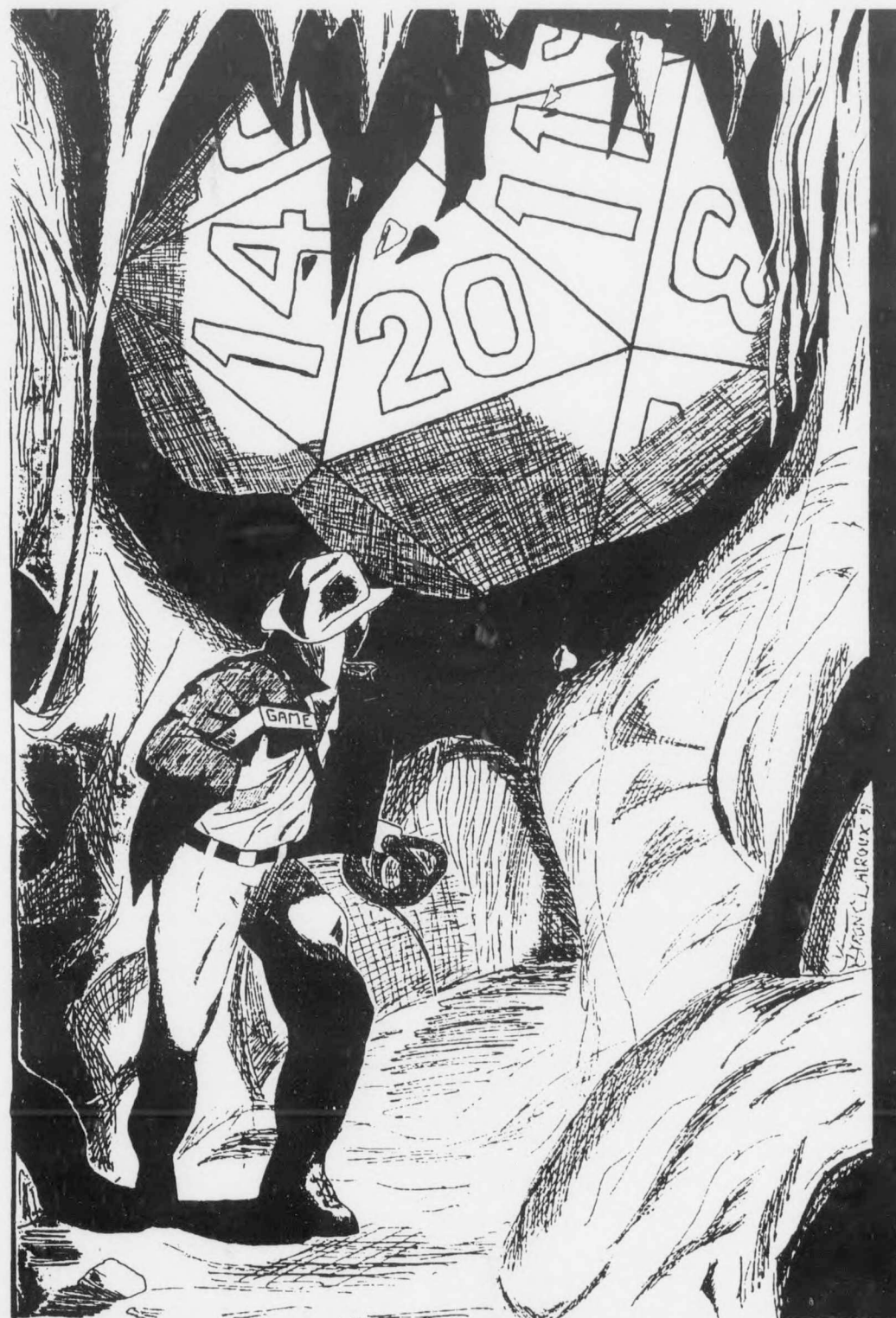
down all my ideas". Many of you will be familiar with the 'Dungeons and Dragons' game that was the original role-playing game that has now spawned innumerable variations on the theme. In a role-playing game the game master uses a game system appropriate to the type of adventure he wishes to run to create the 'world' and the 'characters' that the other players will play.

Like board games, role-playing games come in a variety of types and difficulty levels. From swords and sorcery, to science fiction, to comic book super-heros. There is a role-playing system to suit the tastes of any player. These games usually emphasize cooperation amongst the players to achieve a set goal, such as freeing the princess from the evil wizard, foiling the plans of some technological empire to crush the rebellion, or retrieving some holy artifact before the nazis do. And yes, many game masters get their ideas from movies and books.

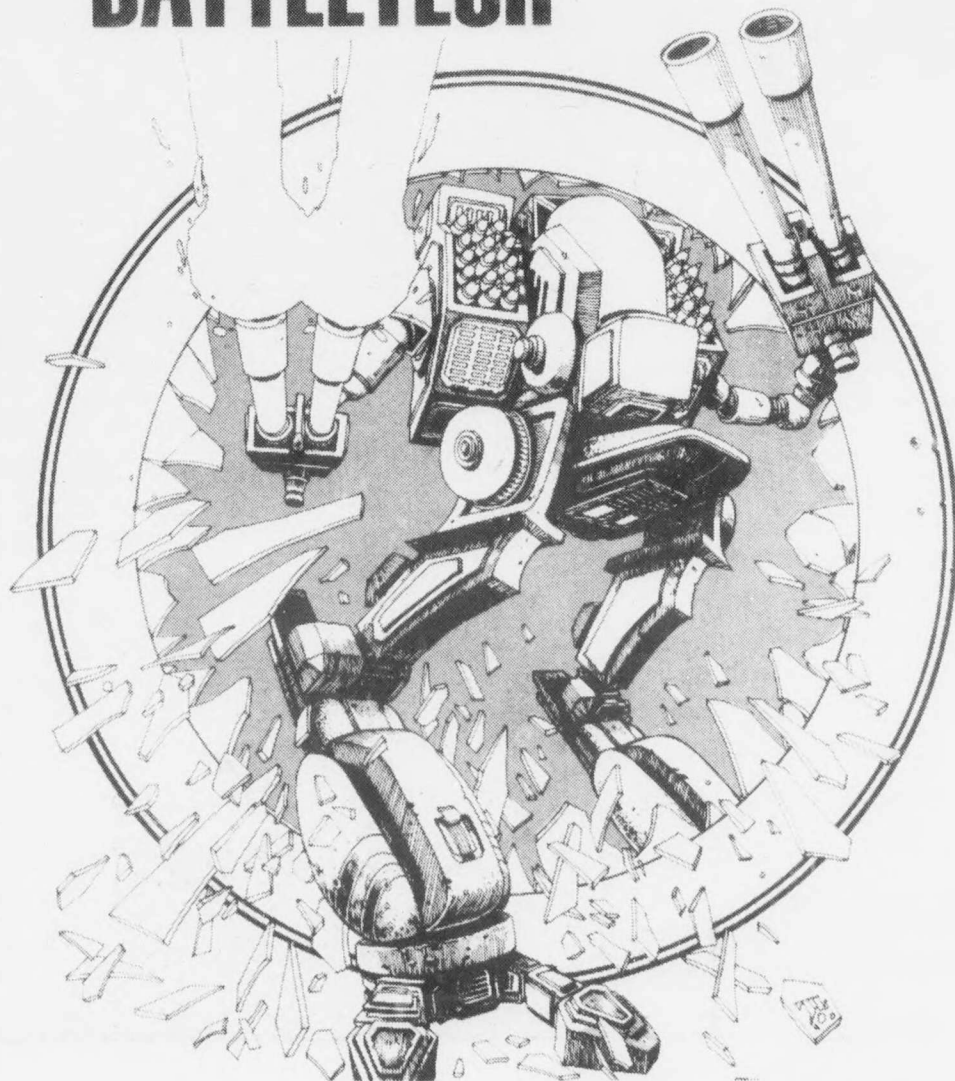
Another popular feature of Enbicon is the game auction. Gamers can bring in their old games where they can be auctioned off. This year's auction lasted for about four hours and saw many a game change hands.

The continuing growth of Enbicon over the four years of its existence has greatly encouraged its organizers, who hope that next year's convention will see a continuation of the trend. "Enbicon is becoming recognized as a well-organized annual event throughout the maritime gaming community, many of those who attend one year plan to return because they can count on having a good time," said Gaigneur.

The UNB/STU gaming club is active on campus throughout the year. Watch for announcements of meetings if you are interested in learning more about gaming or are looking for worthy opponents to trash. And who said gaming was for geeks? *If we're in the company of Winston Churchill then maybe being a geek isn't so bad...*



## BATTLETECH



**Eat  
Hot  
PPC  
Fire  
Alien  
Scum**