

Summer 2008 Issue 5

SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

WOLFGANG BAUR PRESENTS

KOBOLD

Quarterly™

A TINY LITTLE MAGAZINE OF KOBOLDS & DRAGONS

Dark Gods & Magical Altars

Ecology
of the **Homunculus**

Princess of Hell

by James Jacobs

Interview with
4th Edition
Designers

It Came from
Monster Island

OPEN
DESIGN

100% KOBOLD CONTENT



Improve Your Improvisation / Maximize Your Monk / Awesome Action Points
thetto of Zöbeck / V is for Vermin / Ask the Kobold / Magical Instruments

contents

6 Editorial
New Math

9 Letters
From the Mines

12 Princess of Hell
Jezebel, Princess of Poison Winters
by James Jacobs
She has such a friendly face.

18 Ecology
Ecology of the Homunculus
by Joshua Stevens
Small creations with big dreams.

28 Mega-Super-Dire-Fiendish
It Came from Monster Isle!
by Matthew J. Hanson
One kaiju is all it takes to kick your ass.

32 Kobold Diplomacy
4th Edition Designers: Collins, Heinsoo, Wyatt
Toe-to-toe with the 4E designers. Triumph or wipeout?

40 Flashing Blades
Make Your Action Points Awesome
by Roger Carbol

44 **Ask the Kobold: Q&A**
by Skip Williams

48 Dungeon Design
Improving Your Improvisation
by Nicolas Logue

52 **Unique Altars**
by Phillip Larwood

56 Character Design
Maximize Your Monk
by Ross Byers

59 **Horn of Triumph: Magical Instruments**
by Stefen Styrsky

62 Bestiary
V is for Vermin
by Acryn Rudel

66 The Free City
The Kobold Ghetto
by Wolfgang Baur



On the Cover

Darren Calvert brings us a golden look at our mascot, Jiro, and a scaly friend of his. Room enough for big and small here, apparently.

You might think that this is an expanded version of our premiere issue's cover, and you'd be right.

Reviews

Book Reviews 42

by Cynthia Ward and Pierce Watters

Cartoons by Stan!

10' by 10' Toon 46
Bolt & Quiver 51

New Math



KOBOLD QUARTERLY, or KQ if you like, is one year old. Thank you to all of you—readers, designers, artists, and everyone who has contributed—for making it happen.

It's a sad fact that most new magazines don't survive, and KQ has at least as many foes as your typical kobold. Like our wily mascot, though, we're beating the odds. We've outsmarted them and outlasted them, and I'm happy to say this coming year looks even brighter. Or at least as bright as it gets, down in the mines.

This issue is our Midsummer Madness issue, appearing on or around the summer solstice, the longest day of the year. I've always treasured the long summer days since moving to the Seattle area 10 years ago. The sun stays up long past bedtime, until 10 or 10:30 at night, and people get a little strange around this time of year. Everyone stays up late because, well, it's light out and it's hard to sleep.

And frankly, I've been staying up late as well, working on the magazine and finalizing the most recent Open Design project, Nicolas Logue's *Blood of the Gorgon*, which went off to its patrons about the time KQ went to press. It's glorious, with beautiful maps, a rich and engaging storyline full of cults, blood, and all the entertainment that a madman villain can bring.

The next Open Design project, *Tales of Zobeck*, will be just as exciting. It provides an anthology of about eight adventures written by a both professional designers and promising Open Design patrons. It also includes a gazetteer on the city of Zobeck itself, by yours truly. *Tales of Zobeck* will be the short version of the larger setting book I've been wanting to write for about two years, and I'm up to my eyeballs in it and loving it.

The summer madness has also brought new and weird experiences this summer. There's no more Vancian magic

in the new edition of my favorite RPG, when I know Jack Vance was a founding influence on Gygax and the original editions the game. There's no more gnome PCs in the players' book.

That one actually kind of hurts.

I love gnomes, because one of the defining characters in my high school campaign was a gnome who always thought he could beat the odds. Gotta respect him for trying. And for running an illusionist/thief. Man, the weird thing isn't the new math involved in a new edition, it's fighting off the nostalgia for the way it used to be.

I digress. KOBOLD QUARTERLY is heading to GenCon and I will have a surprise for those subscribers who stop by and visit the Open Design booth there, near either the Green Ronin or Paizo booth. Ask all you like about the subscriber prize, there will be no hints until 10 AM on Thursday, August 14th, when the dealer's hall opens. Kobolds love to spring surprises and I promise no traps are involved in this one.

If you have comments on this issue's articles, the state of the RPG field, or an opinion on whether the next issue should be 3rd Edition or 4th Edition, direct your couriers, *message* spells, sealed letters, and email to letters@koboldquarterly.com or to Kobold Letters, PO Box 2811, Kirkland, WA 98083.

Until then, I look forward to serving you nothing but the best in independent Wizards & Warlocks for another year, and thank you for your patronage.

Wolfgang Baur
Kobold in Chief