

From Campaign to Convention



Building a compelling Convention event based on your favorite campaign memories



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Agenda



Campaign vs. the Con

- How it all starts
- We're not in Kansas anymore

Building the adventure

- Not building a “rudimentary lathe”
- Making the dungeon crawl work

Running it at the Con

- Keep those players happy

Q and A



Campaign vs. The Con



How the idea starts...



Remember that time we entered the tower....



Campaign vs. The Con

Long Term

- Shared Back-story
- Know the players

Story Builds

- Arc to Climax

PC investment:

- “Remember when I rode the Dragon!”

PC Intimacy

- “I have that in my pouch!”

3:45 Tops!

- “Your in a bar...”

Standalone

- Must be self-contained
- Needs a payoff

PC is paper

- “I have +1 what?”

PC unknown

- “Didn’t know I had that spell!”





Goals of a good convention event...

- ✖ **Memorable**
- ✖ **Everyone participates**
- ✖ **Great payoff**
- ✖ ***Fun...of course***

- ✖ **Good adventure != Gimmick!**
... Though a gimmick could be fun it won't sustain you for an entire adventure!





Evaluate your adventure...

🐜 Fixed locations?

- Can they “wander off” or “short circuit”?

🐜 Can it stand alone?

- Insider knowledge needed?
- Months of back-story?



13th Warrior



Evaluate your adventure...

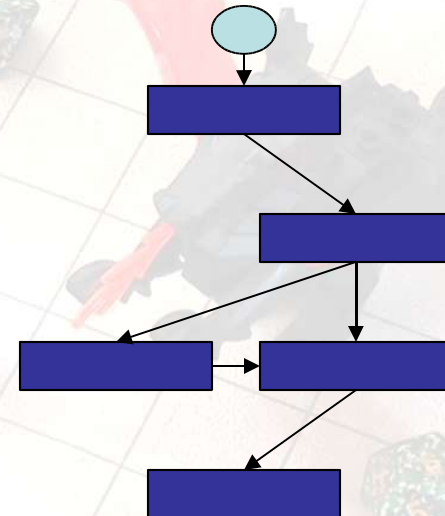
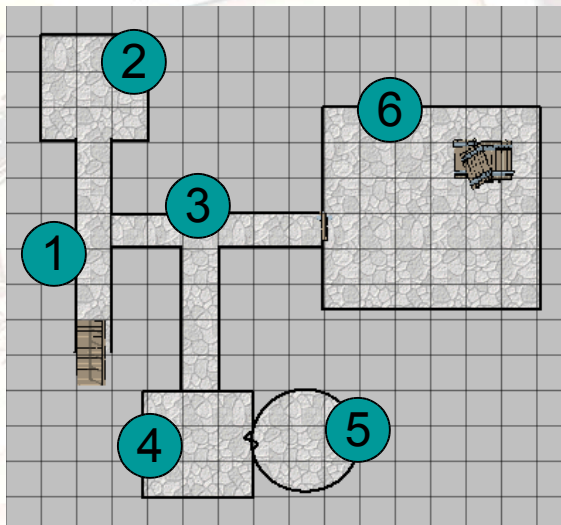
- ✖ **Appealing to different play styles?**
 - Hack-n-Slash, puzzles, “Fizbans”, talkers
- ✖ **How long is it?**
 - Handle different party pacing?
 - Can it be tailored to the “slot”?
- ✖ **Sufficiently play tested?**
 - Tough one... your friends already saw it!
 - Running it once isn't sufficient!



Fixed Locations?

Issues with Location Based?

- What happens if they don't find something?
- What if they bypass everything!
- What happens if they get stuck?
- What if they don't solve the puzzle?

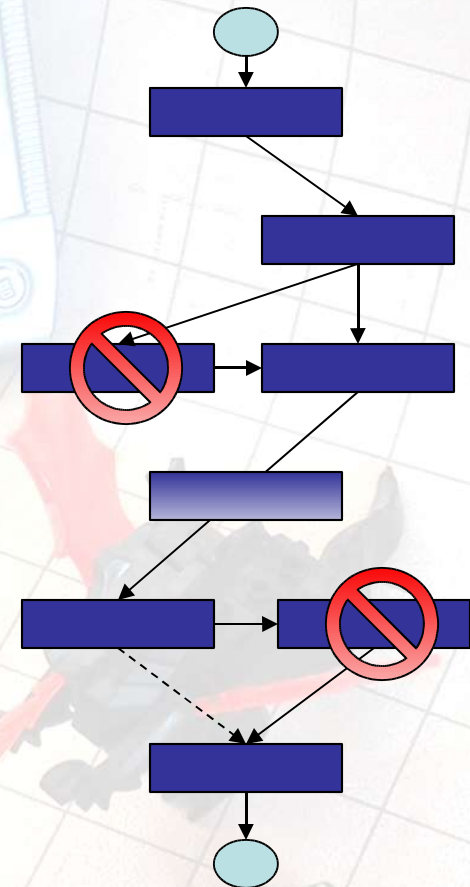




Event Based Adventure

Consider Event Based...

- ✖ Keep the fun parts eliminate the fluff
- ✖ Give the players some slack
- ✖ Key to making “3:45”
You can trim or add
- ✖ An event can focus on a PC’s skills and player’s style





Making it standalone...

 **Can it be put into a well-known campaign setting.**

- Using popular media is OK as long as it can be easily explained.



Lord of the Rings

 **The adventure needs all elements of a great story**

- Set-up (back-story), Launch (unbalance), Story (conflicts), Climax (pay-off), Resolution



Working with Different Styles

Remember:

- Players paid to play your game
- Conventions are meant to be fun!



The original adventure was great for your group...but what about other styles?

- Modify or add events to appeal to different players
- Be prepared to “change” on-the-fly based on player personalities

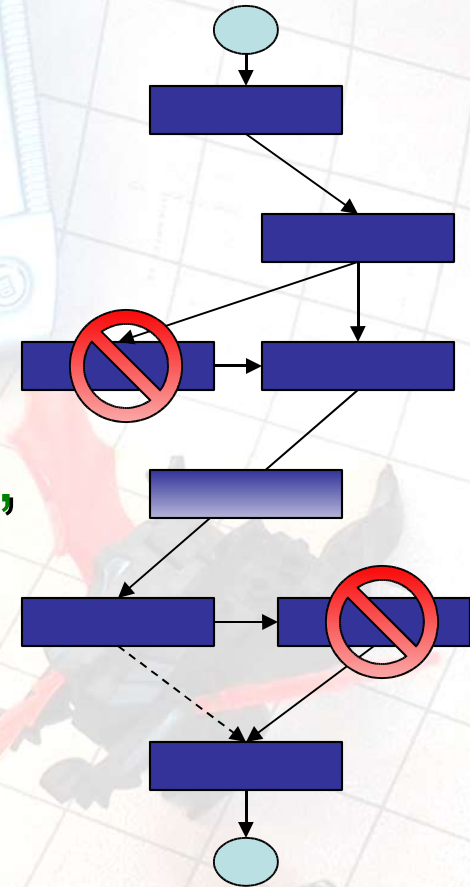
Different Styles: Example





Timing and Pacing

- ✖ **Events are generally 3:45**
 - Plan for 3-3 ¼ hours of play
- ✖ **Event Based pays off!**
 - Allocate time to an event, plan ahead for changes
 - If players are loving something, don't push them forward
 - Watch the “clock”
- ✖ **Have enough “extras” for faster groups!**








Testing the Adventure

- ✖ **Don't *underestimate* the need!**
 - It's your rehearsal
 - Helps shake out “theory to practice” issues
 - Absolutely, without a doubt, can't say enough, use for home rules or game system!!
- ✖ **Remember, the adventure is probably different from the original**
- ✖ **Gives you confidence!**
 - Material, rules, characters, descriptions, maps, timing... check!



Pulling it Together...an Example

“The Lost Tower of Taladas” (6+ years)

-  **Dragonlance adventure based on tower of high sorcery**
-  **Originally completely open ended location based adventure**
-  **Originally from a campaign in Taladas (Ansalon already too overdone)**



Lost Tower of Taladas

Original:

- 22 floors, 7+ key items, Minimal fighting (exploration)
- Too easy to go “straight” to the top of the tower
- Puzzles throughout hinted at what occurred

GenCon Event:

- Kept Dragonlance and built the necessary backstory
- Events that can occur behind any door
- Can quickly eliminate some “keys”
- Puzzles, fighting, and spooky exploration



- 🐉 Topknots and Takhisis...Oh My!
- 🐉 Mission: Impossible Magic
- 🐉 South Park: BEEFCAKE!
- 🐉 Drago-mon – Gotta Kill Em All!





Summary – Creating an Adventure

- ✖ **Minimize insider knowledge**
- ✖ **Think events not locations**
- ✖ **Make the adventure standalone**
- ✖ **Be prepared for different play styles**
- ✖ **Playtest!**



One Last Thing... Write the Description

- ✖ **Make sure players who show up are excited!**
 - **What's your 1 sentence hook!**
 - **What's special; why should they play?**
 - **Include details about setting, system, etc.**

Dragonlance fans! Forged in the Age of Might, an artifact is entrusted to several Kender and ragtag friends. Can they protect it from the Dark Queen and save Krynn? Can you survive her minions? Can the other characters survive the Kender?! Fourth year running for this frantic adventure. You'll probably need to come early if you want to play one of the Kender.

GOOD:

Topknots and Takhisis – Oh My!

You've been invited to one of the most prestigious Drago-mon tournaments in all the king's lands. Only the best monster trainers and gladiators are allowed to compete against each other in a test of skill. Can you win the tournament and be crowned master for all the realm? Perhaps, but first you must survive!

Why Did it Fail?

Drago-mon – Gotta Kill Em All



Running your Adventure at the Con

- ✚ **Recommended: *Bring all the material players need.***
 - Production value is bonus of coming to a Con
 - Character sheets, spell sheets (or list of allowed), kender pouches, etc.
 - Back-story and special information!
- ✚ **Know where your event is before it's time!**
- ✚ **Bring printouts of everything, copies, and a CD just in case!**
- ✚ **Some rolls are better left to the GM!**



Running your Adventure at the Con

Hints!

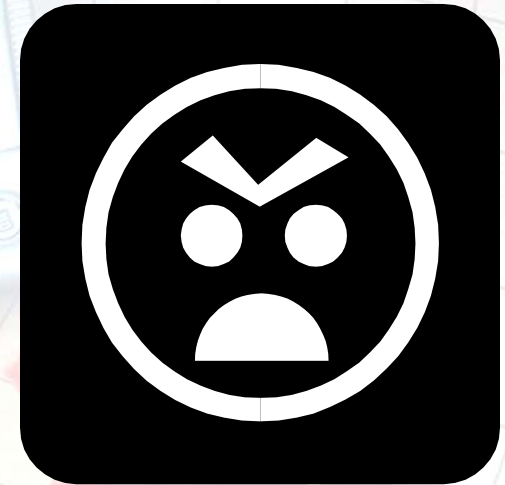
- Purchase spell cards or copy descriptions of spells
- List everything needed on character sheet
- Have all the monsters detailed out (avoid the books!)
- Avoid asking for the character sheets back!
- Try and know how many are signed up prior (makes it easier for generics)...and it's always tickets first then first come!
- If you use miniatures...really use them!



Running your Adventure at the Con

Remember what you hate and don't do it!

- ✖ Starting late
- ✖ Never getting a chance
- ✖ Feeling useless
- ✖ Dying too early
- ✖ GM's canceling events





Running your Adventure at the Con

- ✖ **While playing, some tips.**
 - Use “declaration of intention” to get everyone involved
 - Watch pacing carefully, keep the players moving
 - Take time to enjoy “classic moments” and let everyone know
 - Make sure your heard by everyone
 - I like moving around the table
 - Let everyone know up front
 - You are the law, special rules, any style quirks
 - Make time for Bio breaks and snacks
 - Can backfire if your event is dragging 😞

Questions?

