

As we were preparing our report on the release into distribution of some new Arcane Legions figures that had previously been available only to online club members (see "[Mighty Monsters Join 'Arcane' Legions](#)"), we had questions. Luckily, we were able to connect with Compound Fun's Ray Wehrs to find out why the club products were being released into distribution and what else was going on with Compound Fun imprint Wells Expeditions' Arcane Legions (see "[New Minis Game from WizKids Alumni](#)").

**Are the figures now going into distribution the same ones as the ones offered through your club? Why are you making that change?**

You asked whether they were the same figures as what was offered through the club and the answer to that is yes. They're the identical figures. It's a great product. You get two dragons, four unit cards and the base for \$35 for the pair of dragons, the *Dragons of the Far East*; and then for the *Servants of Thebes* you get two of the servants, four of the unit cards (and having the four different cards actually allows you to play four different characters on the board), and you get the bases to field them, and again, those are \$35 for the two.

The reason why we're doing that is that one of the core values for our company is to put as much of the game in the player's hand as possible. To that extent we developed the Unit Builder. In order to utilize the Unit Builder you had to be a Centurion Club member. Unfortunately that membership, even though it was as low as it was (\$3 per month to join and you had to pay \$12 to buy in for four months), became a gatekeeper and a deterrent for many of our players. It's really an important part of the game. We would like to see the players actually utilize it and creating content for the game and getting the game with all the depth potential that it actually has. The Centurion Club prevented us from actually allowing that to happen. So we're going to open up the club to everybody.

**You're making it free?**

Yes. If you become a registered player, you automatically become a Centurion Club member. By doing that it's going to allow us to let the players become more engaged in the product. What we're going to be doing for the guys that were the alpha players if you will, and the guys who actually led this thing off and really supported us, we're going to refund their twelve dollars. All of the players who paid for the Centurion Club membership we're going to refund 100% of their money.

**This was a club only product. Are you going to continue to have some products that are only available online? Are you going to put all your products through distribution or are you just dealing with these products on kind of a one-off basis?**

The larger limited edition figures that we have online will be offered through distribution. And again they are limited so we don't expect them to last a long time. More importantly for us it was about getting more players to use that Unit Builder. The Unit Builder is going to allow us to add additional content to the game and more depth of play for the players.

*Arcane Legions* was always a great value proposition for the consumer. What we've tried to do is actually increase the value for them by utilizing alternate stats for the figures that he already purchased on the unit builder. Now he gets twice as much game play out of the figures that he's already purchased. It also allows us to introduce different game mechanics and offerings through the Unit Builder. We just wanted more players utilizing the tool.

**So you've got these figures coming out in March and April. Is there another full expansion planned? We understood you'd originally planned one for around the same time period.**

*Dawn of Valor* will release in August.

**Why are you pushing it back?**

As with any miniatures game, with *Arcane Legions* you need a player base that can support the product. We need to build that player base and make it more significant than what it is today. In order to produce the product we needed to get more players engaged. We're very confident we're going to be able to do that. So just allowing ourselves to get more players engaged in the product.

**One of the things that's interesting about the Arcane Legions launch was the value proposition. You could build a big army very cheaply, yet it has some collectible features. One of the things we've heard people say about it is consumers are having a hard time getting their arms around it, figuring out what it is. Is it closer to a GW-style miniature game or is it closer to a collectible game? That difficulty in figuring out what it is may be a barrier to adoption. What are your thoughts on that question?**

It's a mass action miniatures game with a huge value proposition. One of the things about the game is that for guys that were looking at the current offerings, whether it was GW, whether it's the Privateer Press products, any of the current offerings in the miniature lines are a very expensive proposition. In addition to that the rule sets are pretty complex. They're great games, however they take anywhere between five, six hours to actually play the games and literally months to build an army.

With *Arcane Legions* what we wanted to do was to give the guy who said no to those offerings a product that he could say yes to. With *Arcane Legions* being \$35 dollars for a two-player starter, and you get the 123 figures in it, three heroes, and everything you need to play for the buyer and a buddy, we thought that value proposition would be something the players would grasp onto very, very quickly.

The unfortunate part of this whole situation is that we weren't looking and still aren't looking to steal another miniatures player and bring him into our game. We would love that opportunity, we love that there are miniature players out there who are playing our game and enjoying the game, but we don't see *Arcane Legions* as being a replacement for Games Workshop. A guy that's playing the GW products is not going to give up his primary game to play *Arcane Legions*. He will play *Arcane Legions* for a filler game. Our game only takes an hour and a half to two hours to play. So if he doesn't have a full six hours to play the game, he'll have to really jump in and play our game.

But when we built the product it was built for the consumer that looked at a GW product, or he looked at the Privateer product or the other products that are available and said, 'You know what? I really like the whole concept of very large armies on the table. I just can't afford to invest the type of money that it takes to play those battle games.' With *Arcane Legions* we were able to give them a very similar experience at a fraction of the cost. This is a game that not only has all the strategy and all the depth of play of many of the other games if not more so at a fraction of the cost, it's one that's actually very very good for calling a new consumer into the miniatures hobby.

**What you're saying is that the problem with adoption, with getting traction with the game, is that it's been mis-targeted at the retail level?**

I believe as good a job as we did in getting the product in front of the retailer and trying to explain who this product was for, the retailers bought, and they went, 'Oh great! This is a great value for a miniature game. I want to give it to my miniatures player.' And so he just was not presenting the product to the consumer that we thought would actually be purchasing the product.

**How do they find those guys? If it's a potential miniature player who's been deterred the investment of time or money, how do they identify him?**

The way we're viewing it, a consumer comes in and he looks at these other products and these other offerings and he's trying to decide what investment he wants to make and how far he wants to go into the game. At that particular point when the retailer shows him the other product, and the consumer says, 'Wait a second. That's just way too much for me. I can't afford that.' 'Well here. Try *Arcane Legions*. See how you do with that.' Again the retailer's going to his existing player base and not introducing it to new potential players. That's what we'd really like them to do.

The other side of the coin right now is that with the economy in the state that it's in, a lot of retailers are very tight on time. They are forced to do a lot of the operations in the store themselves. So when they actually once had the time to sit down, run a demo and show people how to play the game, they're now ringing the till, cleaning the store, stocking the shelves, doing a bunch of other things. They just don't have the manpower that they used to have to actually demo and sell the games.

A lot of those retailers are saying to us, 'Until I have a consumer walk up to me and ask me for the game I'm not willing to take a large stance in the product.' They put the starter on the shelf, then a couple of boosters and then that's all that's there. It's hard to find in the store because there's not a large presence. And also when the consumer comes in there's not the community to play with.

The community aspect of it is something that we're going to be working very diligently at birthing. We have some ideas on how we're going to do that.

The game does need to be demoed. And it does need to be shown, the way many of the core hobby games have to be shown in order to be successful. It's not just that the retailer is objecting to that, he'd love to be able to show the games and he's willing to show the games. He just doesn't have the time to show the games. What we're going to try to do is hook up Legionnaires with each one of those stores and allow the Legionnaires to actually help create the community around the store, run the demos and run the events.

The other problem that we're having is being able to get to the consumer and deliver the messages directly to them, that is very, very challenging these days. There are not as many vehicles as there once was, five six years ago. That limitation has also made this growth process more difficult than what we would have liked it to have been.

**What are Legionnaires?**

Legionnaires are volunteers. They're demo guys and they're the guys who are really the alpha players and really want to help build the community.