

CARTOON ACTION HOUR

COMMERCIAL BREAK

No. 1 June, 2008

What is the Commercial Break?

What you're reading now is the first installment of what is essentially a newsletter. But it's also more than just a newsletter. Or, I should say, it *will* be more than just a newsletter. You see, once the **Cartoon Action Hour: Season 2** rulebook is unleashed upon the world, the Commercial Break will feature not just news/previews, but also new material for the game.

Basically, it will be 2-3 pages of whatever nifty stuff I feel like tossing out there to you, our loyal fans. There's no release schedule for Commercial Breaks, nor is there an exact page count. This is freeform **CAH** fun – nothing more, nothing less.

I hope you enjoy it!

--- Cynthia Celeste Miller

What do you Judge a Book by?

Why its cover, of course! Okay, well, that's not usually a good thing to do, as you could miss out on some incredible books due to a few lousy covers. But in the case of **Cartoon Action Hour: Season 2**, I think its safe to say that you can go ahead and judge it by its cover. The reason for this boils down to the fantastic work of a talented artist and graphic designer named Eamon O'Donoghue.

I could wax philosophical all day long about why his work is astounding, but I think I'll refrain and let his work speak for itself. So with that, I am proud to debut the cover of the **Cartoon Action Hour: Season 2** rulebook!

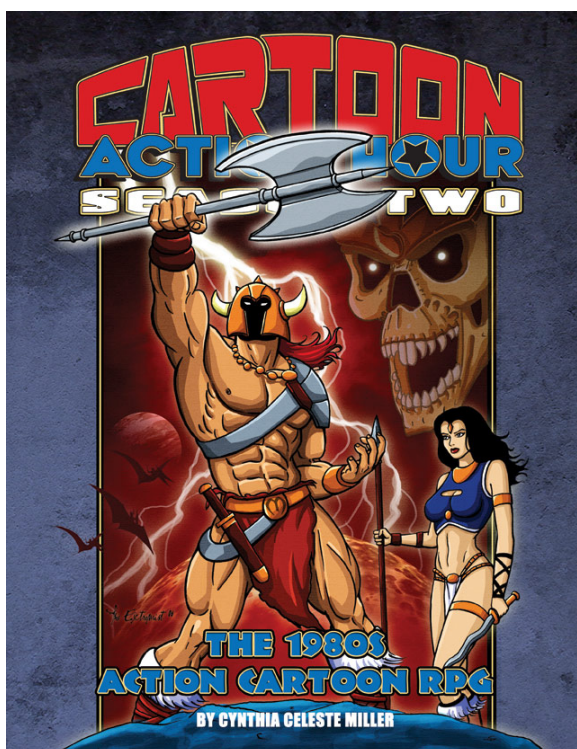
Longtime **CAH** fans will do doubt notice that we have taken a drastically different approach to the cover than we did with

the original rulebook's cover. While the first cover was teeming with characters, the new one has but three. The reason for this is that I very much wanted something more iconic in nature. I also wanted it to be more focused and less chaotic, with a strong retro-toon vibe. I firmly believe that the cover delivers all this in spades.

The last thing I want to discuss is my decision to represent one genre rather than multiple genres. This was a difficult decision for me and I'll be truthful, I waffled on it for quite some time before finally writing up the cover description that was sent to Eamon. The main reason I went this route was because, while **CAH** certainly accommodates a plethora of genres, the original cover gave one the impression that it was a mish-mash of genres all rolled into one. I don't want that

misconception for the game. It's not that I have anything against "kitchen sink" settings; it's just that **CAH** isn't about that. Sure, you can create your own kitchen sink series (and that's fine), but the average series for the game is more centralized.

At any rate, I hope you enjoy the cover as much as I do!



Cartoon Action Hour: Season 2 FAQ

With the excitement of the **Cartoon Action Hour: Season 2** rulebook's impending release, there are many questions that loom heavily. I have received many questions recently (and not so recently) regarding the game and its future. So, let's take some time to answer them.

Question: Will **CAH:S2** be published as a joint venture between Spectrum Games and Z-Man Games like the first edition was?

Answer: No. Spectrum and Z-Man amicably ended their partnership close to three years ago. **CAH:S2** will be published directly by Spectrum Games, using a print-on-demand service.

Question: Is Kargorr going to be in the rulebook?

Answer: What would a **CAH** rulebook be without Kargorr? He is absolutely going to be in the book. And he's joined this time around by his old nemesis from "Galactic Heroes", Jason Bravesteel.

Question: Do Traits still function the same as they did in the first edition?

Answer: Yes and no. At its core, the Trait system functions the same way that they always have. Super-ratings are gone though. There has been a massive change to the Trait list itself, however. In fact, there is no more Trait list! Now, you get to make up your own Traits. There are limitations to it, naturally, but it allows you to truly define what your characters can do.

Question: Are Special Abilities going to remain unchanged?

Answer: Special Abilities are no longer in the game. They are now represented by Traits. The game even has Bonuses and Restrictions that can be applied to Traits in order to make them more accurately represent powers, vehicles, companions, or whatever else you want. It's even more versatile than before!

Question: I love **CAH**, but the character creation rules were too complex. Have they been simplified?

Answer: Definitely! Basically, here's how you create characters. Jot down a few personality/background tidbits (called Factoids), Choose a few Subplots if you want, create some Traits, buy your ratings in those Traits, select some Modifiers for the Traits if you'd like, and figure up three Stats (Base Oomph, Threshold, and Battle Rating). It now takes about 15-30 minutes

for a new player to create a character. The number crunching has been greatly reduced as well.

Question: Has combat stayed the same?

Answer: Not at all. The first edition combat system was pretty much your standard RPG fare. You rolled to hit, you rolled damage and determined the result. Now, it's more open-ended and abstract. In fact, in keeping with the retro-toon genre, combat isn't just about dealing a ton of damage to enemies. You can win the day without causing even an ounce of damage. In the retro-toons, violence was downplayed big time. In **CAH:S2**, rather than taking damage per se, characters receive Setback Tokens. Each Setback Token reflects the character inching her way ever closer to the jaws of defeat. Setback Tokens can represent being demoralized, trapped, confused, frustrated or, yes, even damaged. Once a character accumulates its forth token, she is Defeated and is out of the fight.

This system allows the use of Traits that normally wouldn't normally be associated with combat. For example, it's possible for a character to use a Trait called "Resourceful" to sucker an enemy into falling into a pit or to use a Trait called "Witty Banter" to fluster an enemy to the point where's he's so mad he can't think straight. Either of these actions can cause a Setback Token.

Question: Will there be further **CAH:S2** products?

Answer: You can count on it! The first product will be "After These Messages...", which is named after our long-since defunct e-magazine from years ago. It will offer a hodgepodge of useful game material, including two new series, rules for adapting CAH to other eras, info on running less serious series (ala the Smurfs, Snorks, etc.), and much more.