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## Call of cthulhu 7e investigator hand

Call of Cthulhu is getting the first major overhaul of the rules in 20 years in the upcoming 7th Edition. At a seminar at Continuum, July 21, 2012, developers Paul Fricker (author of the monograph Gatsby and the Great Race and the scenario Dockside Dogs, contributor to Cthulhu Britannica) and Mike Mason (editor of Cthulhu Britannica and the defunct Whisperer magazine) shared some of the changes we can expect. You can listen to full audio at Yog-Sothoth.com. Here's a summary. Mike Mason, left, and Paul Fricker at Continuum 2012. Photo from Yog-Sothoth.com NOTHING'S FINAL That's the first thing to take away. Paul and Mike say clearly that what they're describing is what they sent to Chaosium and what they hope will be the shape of the game, but that's in Chaosium's hands. Chaosium's Dustin Wright echoed that in a separate email: The rules are likely to change, maybe a lot, by the time they are published. Dustin said Chaosium expects Call of Cthulhu 7th Edition to be published in 2013, but there's no firm date yet. STRUCTURE As Paul and Mike put it together, Call of Cthulhu 7th Edition includes a core rulebook, a "slimmed-down" version of the core rulebook, and a separate players book with rules particular to player characters. They restructured and rewrote the rules from the ground up. They revised everything to fit together more coherently than the 6th Edition, which was built out of the original rules as they evolved over time and a lot of individual rules and chapters that appeared originally in scenarios and campaign books. Paul and Mike set out to strip the rules down and build them back up again, while keeping the game backwards-compatible so players don't have to abandon 30 years' worth of Call of Cthulhu publications. "It's the same game," Mike says of the revisions, "and you're making the same rolls, more or less, but it's how you interpret those rolls and the rolls you can make." CHARACTERISTICS AND SKILLS Characteristics in 7th Edition are strictly percentile scores. There's no Intelligence 12 with an Idea roll of INT x 5 or 60%; you have an Intelligence score of 60% and that's your roll. Skills have been reworked entirely, many of them consolidated, particularly combat skills. A single Fighting skill covers Fist/Punch, Kick, Grapple, Head Butt, and hand-to-hand weapon skills. A single Firearms skill covers Handgun, Rifle, Shotgun, and so on. Fast Talk is gone; Charm and Intimidate are in. The rules will include conversion notes to use old characters in the new rules. Importantly, the 7th Edition rules call on the Keeper and the players to be explicit about what a skill roll means and what will be the consequences for succeeding or failing. That's usually good advice in Call of Cthulhu, but it's crucial in the system Mike and Paul have built. In their system a player can "push" a failed skill or characteristic roll, getting a chance to try again by agreeing to more dire consequences for failure. If you push a skill, failing the retry won't just mean you don't get what you want, it means you also might encounter some new threat or dangerous trouble. Player-Keeper communication is key when the players have to decide whether it's worth pushing a failed roll. All the minor penalties are gone. Instead there are three levels of success and the Keeper says which one the task requires: success at a standard roll with the full rating, success at half the rating, or success at one-fifth of the rating. Each value is meant to be recorded on the character sheet for each skill and characteristic for easy reference in play. Interestingly, the hoary Resistance Table is gone. Instead, in opposed tests the Keeper sets the difficulty based on how good the opposition is. If your opponent has about a 40% skill or characteristic rating, you'd roll at your full skill rating to overcome. If your opponent has something like 90%, you need to roll one-fifth your skill to overcome. THE LUCK ROLL "Pushing" a skill or characteristic isn't the only way to turn failure to success. In 7th Edition, the Luck roll becomes a resource you can spend to adjust the results of skill or characteristic rolls. Let's say you need to roll 60 or less and you roll 63. You can spend three points of Luck to boost your odds enough to succeed after all. But now your Luck score is three points lower — if you need to make a Luck roll it's that much less likely to succeed. The 7th Edition rules mean to make the the functions of the Luck roll more explicit. Paul says, "It's strictly for external circumstances beyond the player character's control. So, you're in the old house, you hear something upstairs. 'I'm going to run to the kitchen. Are there any knives there?' It's a Luck roll." Importantly, spent Luck points don't come back on their own. You can get them back only by calling on a new attribute called Connections during play. CONNECTIONS Connections are things that are important to the character. A Connection could be anything — a person, a place, a thing, an abstract idea. "It might be your dear old mum," Paul says. "It might be the house you grew up in. It might be your dog. If you want to play it, it might be your trusty .38 revolver. Faith in the Lord. Abstract concepts. Whatever is important to your character." You can call on a Connection to refresh Luck points, but only once in a given game session for each Connection. The amount of Luck you can refresh by calling on a Connection depends on the length of the game session, one point per hour of play. Or for a one-off, standalone game session, a flat five points. Each character starts with three Connections. You can gain more through play, mostly by experiencing indefinite insanity due to catastrophic Sanity loss. Each indefinite insanity adds a Connection: Fear of Rats, maybe, or some kind of delusions. You can invoke that Connection, playing up the insanity, to regain Luck points. But you can have no more than five Connections. And once you hit five, if you suffer another insanity, rather than adding a new Connection it corrupts or perverts an old one. So your Connection to dear old mum might get warped and ugly as your sanity erodes. INSANITY Insanity is often played for laughs in traditional Call of Cthulhu games, but Paul and Mike want insanity in 7th Edition to feel increasingly dark, not silly. At the same time they wanted to codify more explicitly what happens to characters who go insane. With an indefinite insanity, not only do you gain a Connection for that insanity after you recover from the initial, short-term breakdown — the Bout of Madness, as Paul and Mike call it. You also are subject to further breakdowns, further Bouts of Madness, any time you suffer SAN loss later. As for the shape of insanity in the game, they deliberately set out to take cues more from fiction than from medical manuals, delusions being more interesting to play than, say, catatonia. The form of a Bout of Madness depends on the circumstances. The rules include guidelines for the Keeper. THE IDEA ROLL The Idea roll is still in the game, but it's used a little differently. As Paul puts it, "It's not, 'Make your rolls. Oh, you failed. Give me an Idea roll. Oh, you failed that. Oh well, I'll just tell you anyway, then.'" The players can always ask for an Idea roll to gain a clue if they feel stymied. If the Idea roll succeeds, they gain the clue. If it fails, they still gain the clue — but the way they gain it puts them in danger. Advice in the book about scenario design helps the Keeper set up the clues in such a way that the Idea roll won't often be necessary. COMBAT It sounds like the combat rules have gotten a pretty serious overhaul. The traditional exchange of attack roll and defense roll is gone. Attacks are opposed skill rolls. The default result, if the combatants' rolls are equivalent — both succeed, both fail, both succeed at 1/5, whatever — is that both take some damage. A lopsided result, where, say, you succeed at 1/5 but your opponent fails, means less damage for you and more for your opponent. Grappling is gone as a separate skill or subsystem. Paul explains, "There are rules that cover things you might want to do, but there's not a generic Grapple skill. It's just Fighting with setting a goal." The Dodge skill is still there, but it's mainly useful for trying to get out of the encounter altogether. You can attack or dodge, not both. Characters are a little more resilient in 7th Edition. Death occurs at a negative hit point level equal to the HP score. If you have 11 HP, you die when you reach -11, not at zero. Along the way you become incapacitated and might be bleeding out, but there's a larger buffer before death. The core rulebook includes advice for the Keeper on considering the ramifications of how readily you kill characters. You're encouraged to think ahead on what your goals are and how that should affect your scenario design. CHARACTER MOTIVATIONS The motivations for player characters putting their lives in so much danger gets deliberate attention in 7th Edition. The players book includes a chapter on building investigator organizations as a reason for characters to work together, a common motivation for them to investigate supernatural horrors, and a way to bring in replacements. It includes a number of examples. On a more personal level, of course, Connections can be used to motivate characters. And the players book includes advice for players on designing characters to suit the game and to facilitate them becoming Investigators. In the core rulebook, a chapter on scenario design includes advice on writing scenarios to motivate characters. MONSTERS Paul and Mike say the monsters of the Cthulhu Mythos are essentially the same, though their combat stats are changed to reflect the new rules. Monsters are presented with advice for the Keeper on using them in play and adjusting them to suit the needs of the scenario and the campaign. Mike and Paul stress that it's the Keeper's job to decide what's right for the game; the Keeper ought to take ownership of the game just as the players should take ownership of how they play their characters. "You're the Keeper," Paul says, "make it how you want." Mike says the longstanding monster categories are gone: "We've taken away descriptors like 'lesser servitor race' or 'greater independent race.' They mean nothing to me, and I'm certainly pretty sure they meant nothing to Lovecraft. There's some sort of hierarchical system of codification of races that . . . make no sense in the Mythos. So we just took those away and now it's like, a mi-go's a mi-go." MAGIC For 7th Edition they stripped out a lot of the spells that crept into the rulebook from scenarios over the years but weren't crucial to the game. (Mike: "Our favorite is Call Fish.") Each spell has a baseline description. But each includes guidelines for making it more powerful. Spellcasters with higher Cthulhu Mythos skill and lower Sanity scores, and nonhuman monsters, can do more with magic. But it's up to the Keeper to set the overall power level of magic and to decide how accessible it will be to the player characters. As a rule of thumb, using magic costs Sanity, which makes you more prone to picking up new insanities, which become new Connections ("Can't resist ancient arcane tomes") that redefine your character in play. SUMMARY "It's still Cthulhu as you know it," Mike says. "It still plays the same, in a sense. What we've done is hung some bells and whistles, and tweaked some bits that we felt didn't work so well. It's the same game. We didn't set out to write a new rulebook. We set out to refresh the rulebook." Paul adds, "Sandy Petersen wrote a great game. We've just tried to help it along." Paul and Mike will run 7th Edition games at GenCon in August and at Concrete Cow in September. What do you think? call of cthulhu 7e investigator handbook pdf. call of cthulhu 7e investigator handbook

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