



TURNING UP THE HEAT

Zed racing in New Hope City

Written by Ed Teixeira

When Rich “badgered me”...uh, asked me for an article on Dead Heat for InSight I said sure thing. At first I thought the typical Bat Rep would work. You know, our first race has five Zombies with Reps yadayadayada.

Boring.

Just to bring everyone up to speed, Dead Heat is a simple little game that you can have fun with without too much set up or thinking. It’s great for playing with friends as a party game (okay, my friends would like it) and easy to understand. Each zombie is paired with a baiter who tries to get his zombie to move towards the finish line crossing it before the others. First, second, and third place wins money while last

place usually means the Zed can be retired. There’s some strategy to it where you try and get your zed to run faster towards the finish line while getting your opponent eaten along the way. Yes, there’s racing, betting, and the normal “racing game stuff” but it’s also a good “game within a game”.

Here’s what I mean. You can combine it with All Things Zombie. How? Easy. In Dead Heat the Zeds are Rep 4, 3, and 2. The Rep 4 zeds are the best but not all zeds are Rep 4. And if things work out badly a Rep 4 zed can be reduced to Rep 3. There’s always a need for those fast running (shuffling) fellows and where do they come from?

Why from ATZ of course! Now instead of searching the apocalyptic landscape for supplies and weapons your characters can now earn some “bank” by going out and capturing zeds. The trick is knowing how to do it. I’ll leave that up to you zed wranglers to devise but let’s just say you’ll need a way to capture them and transport them back to the city.

Which brings me to how I use Dead Heat in my 5150 games. The 5150 Book Two rules will

The racers arrive.





Top The baiters have arrived. Bottom The baiters step out.

revolve around New Hope City. New Hope City is a backwater community of one million or so folks both basics (humans) and aliens. Tucked away from the prying eyes of Gaea Prime, almost anything goes in NHC and wealth and fame can be won and lost in a variety of ways. I'm not going to divulge too much but here's a looksie at the "alive and well" sport of Zed racing in New Hope City.

You can hear the crowds before you can see the stadium. Thousands of people pack the stands waiting for the races to begin. A ticket is tough to get with the good ones all scarfed up by the corporate suits in their pretty private boxes. But that's okay because if you can't be there you can at least watch it in the Pub-Vids located all around the city. It's Saturday night and the time is right for some unwinding and...wait. Yes, here they are folks, the racers.

The truck slowly makes its way down the track as the crowds scream in anticipation. It's Nazi Night and the Zeds are dressed in appropriate garb. As the zeds are unloaded and maneuvered to the starting area the noise goes up a level or two. The baiters have arrived.

The limo comes to stop and the baiters step out to the roar of the crowd. Baiters in New Hope City especially those that make it to Finn Mack stadium in downtown are popular and treated like 20th century Earth rock stars. Baiters come in many shapes and sizes and are dressed in a variety of styles giving them a larger than life persona. There's Evil Eddie the Clown, Boy Scout Billy, and Areeja the School Girl just to name a few.

"Ladies and gentlemen, take your marks!"



Billy shows why he's been in the big time ...

Suddenly the crowd noise drops to nothing. The Zeds are ready to go, the baiters take their places and the bell rings. The race is on!

The bell rings and all hell breaks loose. The crowd roars as the zombies shuffle forward. Baiters dart in and between the undead just out of reach trying both to get close and urge their zed on while causing their opposing zombies to run amok.

Suddenly Billy's down! Egged on and distracted by Evil Eddie Billy stumbles and his zed has him



Boy Scout Billy takes a spill!

in its sights. But Billy shows why he's been in the big time for a while as he deftly rolls out of harms' way. With a glare at Evil Eddie, Billy gets back to the race, but the stumble has cost him some time.

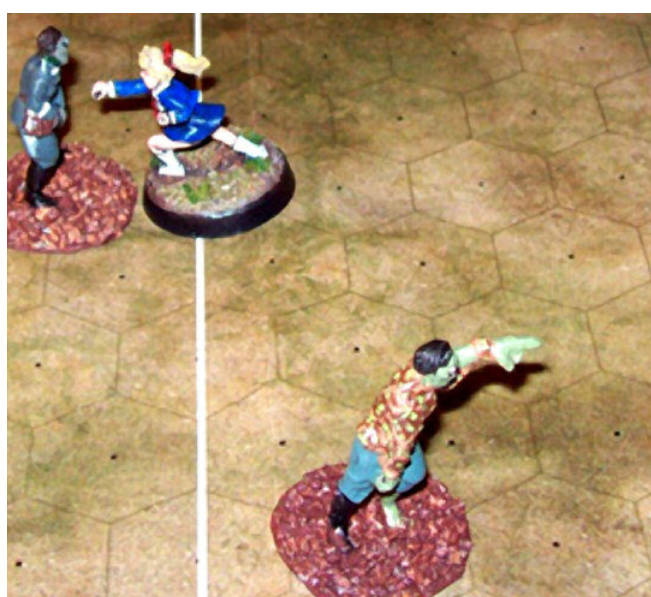
Any contact between baiters results in automatic disqualification but this doesn't stop Bambi from darting in and between opposing baiter M&M and his zed while getting her own zed to pick up the pace. At the quarter pole M&M and



Bambi and M&M in the clinches against the rail.

Bambi are locked up in a deadly duel while Areeja the School Girl is taking command and increasing her lead.

But leads can be short lived as sometimes the zeds get so far out in front they slow down. Must be a lack of stimulation. And speaking of stimulation let's pick up our race at the three quarter pole. Sure enough, Areeja's Zed has slowed down and despite her urgings is going even slower. Boy Scout Billy has let it all hang out and has now moved into second, dropping Areeja to third. Speaking of letting it all hang



Bambi takes the lead!



Boy Scout Billy's last chance.

out, Bambi has whipped her zed into a frenzy and he's now in first. Lucky for her, when M&M fell to the ground earlier in the race she dodged out of the way of the two zeds that fell upon him. Looks like we have an opening for a baiter for next week's races!

As we head towards the finish Bambi is in the lead with Billy a few steps behind. By now Areeja needs some real help to win and its not happening.

Bambi backs off from her zed allowing him to saunter across the finish line and Billy sees his chance. Darting in almost close enough to touch his zed Billy makes one last push. His zed responds, picks up speed, and crosses the finish line a step or two before Bambi's! Bambi's zed lurches across for second and Areeja's zed takes third. Evil Eddie places fourth, Cruiser is fifth, and M&M suffers a DNF (did not finish).



Boy Scout Billy caps a great comeback with a victory.

I hope this article spurs your imagination and inspires you to maybe play a game within a game. Till next time. Hmmm, Friday Night Fights...