
Module Review: D0 - Hollow's Last Hope

Contributed by dDemonicAngels
Tuesday, 16 October 2007
Last Updated Tuesday, 18 August 2009

Module Review: D0 - Hollow's Last Hope

My Rating: 5/10 - Read the full article to find out why.

The folks of Falcon's Hollow live in an isolated village on the outskirts of the Darkmoon Vale forest. And something is making them deathly ill. The heroes are hired to find a cure for the disease. Can they find the cure in time to save the town?

This introductory module for four 1st-level characters is Paizo's first entry on its GameMastery line. This sleek, glossy adventure hopes to start off a successful monthly series of modules that will attract a faithful following. Paizo has even set up a monthly subscription plan to make purchasing them even easier. If the automatic plan isn't for you, then modules can be bought individually.

Title:

D0 - Hollow's Last Hope

Publisher:

Erik Mona, Paizo

Terrain:

Wilderness, Dungeon

Level:

Four 1st-level characters

System:

D&D 3.5 d20

Format:

High gloss, full color

Pages:

16

MSRP:

\$5.99

Author:

Jason Bulmahn &

F Wesley Schnieder

Cartographer:
Christopher West &

Robert Lazzaratti

Artist:

UDON with Joe Ng, Espen Grundetjern & Vincent Dutrait

Editor:

Jason Bulmahn, Mike McArtor & Jeremy Walker

Overview

D0 - Hollow's Last Hope is set up as a introductory module to D1 - Crown of the Kobold King. At half the price and half the usual number of pages, the story is set in Falcon's Hollow, a town on the edge of the wilderness.

The adventure starts in town where the PCs are hired to find a cure for a disease that is killing people. Following a treasure-hunt type scenario that requires them to find specific ingredients in very specific locations, the heroes must face random and not-so-random in the forest until the final encounter in the ruins of a dwarven monastery.

There isn't really a big baddie in the adventure, although the final battle involves a talking worg. The monastery is also the main location for the second module when the party is forced to explore the lower levels.

Organization/Layout (10 out of 10)

The module is a straight forward find-the-ingredient-and-save-the town adventure and the layout follows that straight line starting in town and ending at the monastery. It is peppered with artwork, sidebars and special notes that break up the text and make it an easy read. The maps are located on the inside front cover for easy reference.

Monster stats are minimal but I prefer it that way. What I find nicely done is the 'Before Combat', 'During Combat' and 'Morale' comments added to each encounter that helps you play the monster better.

Writing (7/10)

The writing is good, but nothing special. It is easy to follow the story line, but it is simple to start with. The module has a smooth and consistent feel throughout even though it has two authors. On the other hand, it doesn't grab you keep you hooked like some rare authors can.

Maps (8/10)

There are two full-colored maps on the inside cover. The first is a beautifully detailed map of the monastery. Just enough details and not too cluttered. The second map is an overland shot of Falcon's Hollow and the surrounding area. It's a mixture of styles that succeeds in getting the message across in a functional but not necessarily esthetical way.

Innovations (4/10)

There isn't anything special about the contents that impress me enough to steal for my own campaign. There is a new dragonkind monster that is based on a real life Austrian myth which is well-done but doesn't really add anything new. There is also a new magic item which is meant to be a treasure but is too necromantic for any good aligned-party members to bear.

Rogues Gallery (4/10)

Only one NPC has any detail and there are no real stats for her. She could easily have been developed into a valuable resource for the party but the character goes nowhere. Also the party must meet up with a ranger who is really only introduced by name.

Art quality (8/10)

The art is straight from the pages of Dungeon magazine which I have always appreciated. The cover art shows an excellent shot of a fighter up against the worg. Inside is another shot of the same fighter which implies some coordination and planning of the art.

There is a superb shot of a wizard reacting to three darkmantles. The view is from to the side and slightly lower than her so it gives an excellent sense of the threat the darkmantles poses as they descend on her. I am truly impressed at Joe Ng for being able to pump up the threat of these low level creatures.

Editing (6/10)

Although the adventure works well, there are minor flaws which don't are unusual for Paizo's adventures. The town is described as dangerous on the edge of the wilderness with heary people. But there is nothing to support this. It might as well be a small town anywhere.

It says specifically that a "plague has come to Falcon's Hollow and the town's leaders can't be bothered to stop." What town's leaders would ignore a plague? It's just inconsistent with other parts of the text where you find the source of the disease and know that a maximum of 40 people will die.

The town flavor text (with the only typo) says that "Theirs is a life of hardships, broken only occasionally by a handful of

festival and the infrequent merchant caravan." Yet later in the description we find that "merchant caravans regularly travel here from any number of points abroad." There a couple of contradictory points like this that are easily fixed but should never have been there to begin with.

Overall Rating (5/10)

The module is okay for what it is, a straightforward wilderness and dungeon romp. It is actually superbly done for that. But I can't really recommend it because there is nothing special about it. I would describe it as an adventure that isn't really special enough to be published in Dungeon magazine.

And I could forgive all thif is it were really just a setup for D1 - Crown of the Kobold King. But in fact this module is completely separate. Glancing ahead at D1, I can see that nothing is carried over except the name of the town. The monastery is there also but only the lower levels are mentioned. The top floo doesn't even exist. This module is never even referenced.

I would assume that the town of Falcon's Hollow is what they are trying to set up, but little information is given about the town except a vague outline of uncaring leaders and dangerous surroundings. Only one NPC is introduced and (peeking ahead) she is not referred to in the second module.

So since there is no tangible connection between the two modules, I have to look at this adventure by itself. Falcon's Last Hope is functionally and visually very good but the story is completely average and for the price just is not worth it.

dDemonicAngels is the online identity of Bil White, a freelance writer from Montreal. Despite this disappointing first look at the GameMastery module line, Bil has high hopes for the subsequent adventures.