



KEITH ANDERSON/THE DAILY NEWS

HIGH OCTANE COMICS & Collectibles Warhammer expert Karim Sadik, above, shows the fantasy game, *Island of Blood*, and the futuristic game, *Assault on Black Reach*, two of many games to play at the BIGCON Saturday and Sunday. Left, All A-Board Games business owner Derek Johnson shows *Magic The Gathering*, *Ticket to Ride*, *The Settlers of Catan* and *Apples to Apples* that will be at BIGCON.

Gamers debut Interior gathering

By MICHELE YOUNG
Daily News Staff Reporter

It's all fun and games. And everyone is welcome to play, watch or just ask questions.

Organizers of the first (and, they hope, annual) B.C. Interior Game Convention (BIGCON) are setting up tables and opening the doors this weekend for hundreds of gamers and wannabes.

BIGCON is being held at the Kamloops Convention Centre inside the Kamloops Towne Lodge on Saturday and Sunday.

The event began with Clive Lovett, a 45-year-old table game lover who is a member of the Facebook group, Kamloops Board Game Society.

There are huge gamer conventions around the globe that attract all kinds of fans of Warhammer, Magic and others. The closest events are held in Victoria, Vancouver and Calgary.

But Lovett said the Kamloops crowd wanted to play host to an event of their own. Thus BIGCON was born.

"We're sure of at least 100, but hoping for a couple hundred through the doors to see what's going on or to stop and play games," he said.

There will be demonstrations of games and how to paint Warhammer figures.

There will be tournaments to watch and fantasy art on display.

Unlike video games, which have such a fast pace that players keep their eyes and brains locked on a screen, the board games allow for more social interaction among players, he said.

"It's all face-to-face social gaming."

Derek Johnson, owner of All A-Board Games and a co-sponsor of the convention along with High Octane, said games such as Warhammer and Magic have strong followers in Kamloops.

While Warhammer is dominated by

males, a high percentage of females — 30 per cent — play Magic here. That's unusual, he said.

More than 130 people have registered for the Magic tournament and 40 for Warhammer. Newcomers to the games will get a chance to learn and play for themselves.

"My hope is to make it an annual event," he said.

A portion of the admission costs will go to Big Brothers, Big Sisters of Kamloops.

Doors open at 9 a.m. both days. Play goes until 11 p.m. Saturday, and 4 p.m. Sunday. Kids' games are being demonstrated Saturday at 2 p.m., family goes at 10:30 a.m. Sunday.

The cost of admission is \$10 for a day pass and \$15 for the weekend. Kids under 12 are free if they come with an adult.

The Kamloops Convention Centre is at 1250 Rogers Way.