



The Sixty Seventh issue of a sort-of letter substitute, kinda thing. Maybe weekly, maybe not. Available from:

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Available via the World Wide Web, or as an email attachment. I recommend the Portable Document Format (pdf) or, if you insist, a word or Rich Text Format (rtf) can also be emailed. Get in touch and we'll sort something out. You are going to [TorCon III](#), aren't you? Dated, already, 25/05/03.

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## **The Cream of Con-Runners.**

**By James Bacon**

'James, it just wouldn't work, the dealers and the fans would not accept it, the dealers and fan area must be separate.' Director, Interaction, Novacon 2002.

Previously I have spoken about the nay-sayers, when it comes to Worldcon. I have made their concerns known, I have offered suggestions and solutions, and generally there was some talk about the whole event that is Worldcon.

I got myself into a little heated argument, while having one such talk, at Novacon last year, an unusual one, as it was with a director of Interaction, who told me that to have the fan and dealers' area as one was totally unworkable. 'They wouldn't want it anyhow' I was told, the fans that is. There was much talk, of unhappiness and disquiet. Protestations from dealers, and the such, and I just left it as it was, obviously not succeeding with my argument.

Well I am just back from Eastercon in Hinckley and I am very upbeat and chipper about Worldcon. The guys who seem to have come together of late to run it, or who were always there, shone strongly, at this, a brilliant Eastercon.

It was reassuring to see so many key members of the Worldcon committee grafting hard and making this Eastercon work so well. There was superb organisation and as a participant, great communication. I have no complaints.

I am unaware if this was some sort of dry run, or some-such, but it gave me a definite feeling of confidence, and I heard, that Interaction took in over £7,000 over the course of the weekend, so I probably can take it as read, that others either felt the same way, or that momentum is really starting to get going.

I looked over the Staff list of Interaction when I got home, and I have to say that, there are now a lot of people on that list whom I respect, something that wasn't so, due to my ignorance, this time last year.

Running a convention doesn't just come down to the committee, and I know this from experience. Stefan Lancaster and I, who have run a few cons, now, rely very heavily on others, who give a tremendous amount of help. For instance my partner has been a real support, she helps me, and is there for me, whether it be as a sounding board, or to run and find a MIA guest, throughout the cons. Likewise, there are people, friends, who we lean on, Dave 'Elvis' Elder is a real example of a 'non-committee' committee member, he does loads, gets loads, and just lurks around on the periphery when the applause goes up. Likewise is Flick, who we would be lost without, who essentially runs the registration.

So there are always others not mentioned, who are key to success, I rely on so many friends, and appreciate it greatly, and hope that it's a mutual thing with all getting a buzz from the event.

While at Hinckley, I started to notice, that the committee members, especially the ones involved with Interaction, on whom I was discreetly keeping an eye on, are exactly the same. They have best friends, honest, and partners, who they also rely on, and although it wasn't overt, it was there, if you looked, and I did. I then started to realise who these invisible 'non committee' grafters were, and then, when I got home here, I realised that there is a serious support network, just like my own, and like my own, these people are good people, but unlike my own, they are also, along with those who are on the Interaction Committee, the cream of con-runners.

I also spoke briefly to Vincent Doherty. I was talking about the James White Award, hopeful as I am that there might be a chance that when we present it in 2005, which will be at Interaction, that it gets a good slot, and during this conversation he spoke of James whom he knew very well.

I realised as he spoke, unbeknown to him, that I have known him a long time, well a long time to me, I am but 28, and now have been involved in stuff in one way or another for about 12 years, but I defiantly knew him a long time before I ever met him, back when the idea of an Irish boy running a con in London would be scoffed at, and I didn't say it, I just smiled, and nodded.

I suppose that's one of the beauties of hearing a story being told, that you come to know of someone, without knowing them, but in a way, because the story had been told a number of times, a story which I enjoyed, I had imagined the fan, and what I had imagined was nowhere near the mark, I didn't do the story its full justice, but this was a rather fantastic squaring of a circle.

So now I am at home, and have a few moments to contemplate things, I realise, that I honestly can't wait for 2005, the beer, the chicks, the laugh, the parties, and undoubtedly the bloody good convention.

I have faith, I am a believer, I am confident, and I have a vision. Of a cheque book and I paid up my full membership and a support to boot, and that was the week before Eastercon.

On a finishing note, I was expecting much in the way of a riot at Hinckley. The committee with baying dogs, stewards with shields and protective body armour, gophers firing baton rounds into a heaving aggressive and chaotic fighting throng. Where were the Ambulances, the Water Cannon, the armoured Landover's I thought, the ripped wallpaper, tables being thrown and all sorts of anarchy and disorder, unruly book sellers, and undisciplined rampaging fans, just where were they. Was this not a dealer room and fan room amalgamated into one, I had hoped for some real carnage. I came to the stark realisation that I was the only one who noticed, or cared.

They were all taking money. Jaysus.

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You know, James can be a real pain at times. Too boisterous, sometimes a bit too up front and he drags you into all these schemes and plans that, in reality, you'd rather not be involved in. But dammit his enthusiasm is infectious.

More fannish stuff next time.

This is being distributed to a whole bunch of friends on the net, if you received this and would NOT like to be on the mailing list please accept my apologies for this intrusion and let me know so that you will not be bothered by further ramblings. If you know someone who would like to be on the mailing drop me a line.