

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sodbusters More Than 20 Years in the Making

Mississauga, Ontario - May 15, 2008 (Mansion House Games) *Sodbusters*, a new board game released this month, was a labour of love for nearly twenty-five years for its designer, Randal Heide.

It all began when Heide and a friend became frustrated with a board game they had purchased and sat down to reinvent it. Realizing that they could do better than the designer of the game they had bought, they switched focus to their own original concepts, and soon had several games under development.

Sodbusters, which simulates the settling and farming of the North American prairie around the turn of the last century, is the first of his games to reach the market – nearly a quarter of a century later. Along the way, Heide learned that the hard part wasn't the inspiration, it was developing a polished, marketable product.

“Lots of people invent games,” he says. “It’s like writing fiction. Existing board game publishers are inundated with submissions, most of which aren’t commercially viable. The other option is to self-publish – which takes money you can afford to lose.”

Back in the 1980’s, Heide had no money to invest in such a project, so he placed *Sodbusters* on a back burner while pursuing a corporate career. It wasn’t until he left his management job to launch a strategy consulting practice in 2003 that the game became more than an occasional hobby that he’d pull out and fiddle with from time to time. Although it remained a part-time project after that, he never dreamed it would take five more years to reach the market.

“Game design is like writing,” Heide says. “If you want to get it right you have to go through several rounds of testing and revision, letting people who’ll give you unbiased feedback play it. And then, once you think you’re ready, you have to find a good artist and a manufacturer who know the business, and wait for them to do their thing.”

Did he have doubts along the way? “Many times!” Heide says. “The early versions worked, but took too long and weren’t fun enough. I wasn’t sold that I had a marketable product until my nephew, who was one of my playtesters, brought a prototype to a family reunion when things got slow. It was played almost straight through for the next day and a half while a stack of popular published games was completely ignored.”

More information about *Sodbusters*, including a list of stores and online retailers selling it, is available at www.sodbusters-game.com

Randal Heide is available for interview by contacting Mansion House Games.



Mansion
House
Games

5930 Hemingway Rd., Mississauga, ON L5M 5M1 905-821-4270 fun@mansionhousegamesandhobbies.com