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Pathfinder 2e pdf 2019

Hello my loves and welcome back to the PAIZO NEWS UPDATE! We have a very special update if you can imagine, so without further ado: IT'S HERE! It's here! IT'S FINALLY HERE! PATHFINDER SECOND EDITION IS HERE! The second edition of the classic tabletop role game Pathfinder is alive and in the wild TODAY! We were lucky enough to be sent a review copy so we could really sink our teeth in and let us know as soon as it falls the ins, outs, ups, downs, well, and bad of the new edition. Let's get started! But first rules some ground rules. I will initially approach the review of two different angles: that of an experienced member of the TTRPG community, and from the point of view of someone opening the Core book as their first entry into the hobby. I bring it up because it's important to consider new players at every stage of our often-arcane pastime. Secondly, this edition of Pathfinder (PF2E) will at times be compared to its competition: not only the previous edition, but also several editions of other prominent role-player games on the market. As much as I've heard that the Golem likes to avoid such comparisons, they're inevitable. Parts of the system are clearly designed as a response to (or are inspired by) specific aspects of the other games. Now, on the review! [h=3] PART ONE: DIVE IN[/h] Clock on 640 pages, the Pathfinder Core Rulebook is a fierce theme that is less wide than the D&D PHB and DMG through the thickness of a single cover panel – and it is including the sandwich of two cover panels separating the D&D books! Wayne Reynolds is back with his very clear art style, and as far as I can tell the first and only time, the words are printed second edition in the whole book in a corner. But enough judgment a book by its cover, let's get to the meat goodness! The table of contents is given a two-page distribution to introduce each section and provide a description of what is in the store. The clear, understandable writing sets the tone for what must come in the introduent chapter. I can't stress how important it is to read the instructions in order. This advice applies to any TTRPG, but it is even more important for PF2E. There are enough changes from the first edition (PF1E) that even seasoned vets will quickly get lost without a careful read-by. You should also read the introduction chapter because it is a great introduction to the role of games in general. This is all you've ever tried to describe about our favorite hobby abbreviated in an easily-to-consume single page. This is the culmination of all the wisdom that our hobby has made its way to since the dawn of TTRPGs. PF2E is also fast and effective in laying out fundamental concepts and expanding on them in a very natural way. Resist the temptation to jump forward! The answer is often in the following or on the next page. That said, it feels like the launch pushes the limits of the front-loading information to new players. It is necessary, but it easily take an entire evening (or two!) for new players to go over from reading the book to play the game. This problem with design overload is on full view in PF2E's character sheets: There are four pages for each sheet! Most players are unlikely to use the third page (because what Pathfinder player cares about taking notes or characterization outside of Chaotic Neutral? Ha!), but even some forcht characters will need the fourth (spelling) page because of the way their extraordinary abilities such as spells are handled. The first page is dense, but once you get a handle on the core systems, it starts to make sense. I was raised on D&D 3.5, so I'm accustomed to a character page clouded with very small boxes for skills and weapon attacks and arms class and what have you, but new players will almost certainly feel overwhelmed. There is also a whole PAGE dedicated to achievements. Have some forever-magic on the design team get salt over how many achievements the fighters have? If the character sheets were a new player's exposure to the game, I think it would turn them off to PF2E - four pages to D&D 5 tb's two! I don't think it's a stretch to say the two-page will win – especially because there's a lot less math involved. There are paraed-down versions on the internet. Use it, or make your own. [h=3] PART TWO: AND NOW, SOME RULES[/h] Talk about comparisons with other systems: PF2E uses a brand new mechanic called skill. It does all the heavy lifting that BAB, skill points, and save bonuses used to, and it has discrete ties that increase with level! Don't worry, though, it's not your D&D's skill: this skill goes up to 8, not 6, AND you add your level to it. You will also notice that there are now meleé and advanced Strikes. This is your primary attack; PF2E has only renamed it for ease of general reference. Of course, general-reference attack actions in a special box with a special symbol make me think of D&D 4 thou, which is a good thing: D&D 4 tbs were very effective as a game engine at the combat level. Once you get into that mindset, the change is good for the PF2E system as a whole – it's streamlined, making it easier to refer and switch. Another change is the explicit division of game between encounters (battles measured in initiative and rounds), exploration (measured in minutes or hours), and downtime (measured in days to years). There is definitely more support in this book for encounters, but I like that the division is made clear there and that certain things are described as too exhausting to maintain during exploration or downtime (such as casting most game, for example). This mechanic, like some others in this book, makes me wonder how much it will see from real game, but it's just one of those modular things about TTRPGs that they're good for any table. The introduction covers a general run-through character generation, which has been done very well. As a D&D 3.X fan, I don't love the Boost system for chargen, but the width of free boost does not qualify my concerns about just being able to make a given character type in one vouchard form. There is enough variety that you should easily be able to make an atypical member of your ancestors or class. [h = 3] PART THREE: ANCESTORS AND BACKGROUNDS[/h] Firstly, the bad news: PF1E players who were accustomed to bundling racial properties together will make some difficult choices. Do you want your dwarf to stone? They can't have battle training towards giants. You want your eleven resistance to magical sleep effects? Then they don't get free skill with lung bows. The bottom of all this there is a much larger level of adaptability available for each character. D&D fans will recognize three-to-four flavors for every ancestors (outsiders: who show up in classes), and I really like the idea of pursuing greater ancestral boys (in the form of more achievements) than you level up. This means that your dwarf will dwarf dwarf things until they dwarf the dwarf. Full disclosure: I was experimenting with a similar system for a homebrew PF1E neighborhood a while ago and it's heartening to see that I'm in a good company! Other thoughts: hello goblins, you'll be my exclusive choice of ancestry from now on! Semilings can now heal more if they eat a snack while they heal, which is just incredibly noticed for them. They can also pick up an anti-struggle that seems to cause so much frustration for DM's in the line. Backgrounds grant skills proficiencies will once again be familiar with D&D 5 tb barrel and – as with everything in PF2E – comes with even more achievements. Hats off to the designers taken for care in making the new system inclusive: not only is there deliberate support from the gender spectrum (including lack therewith) and choice of pronouns, but the Languages section dedicates space to deaf or hearing imparted characters. Goldstar! [h=3] PART FOUR: CLASSES[/h] There is a lot going on with classes, as you can expect from Pathfinder, but once you read the introduction section in this chapter and take your time through some of the classes, you'll start seeing some commonalities. That's where that skill changer comes out to play, and it's applied to everything. Heck, it's even applied to AC! That being said, not every class increases their skill bonus to AC at the same rate or at the same level, so you're still going to end up with squishier wizards and tanky fighters. Skill is also applied (inequal) to Perception, which is part of each class's features. I think I may no longer play inattentive idiots. To be fair, Perception also functions as your initiative modified, which is one less number to worry about. There is no such thing as rolling for hit points anymore; everyone just gets a flat number. PF1E fans recognise this number as the maximum HP from class's old hit hit I like the ability to lose hit points when leveling! I miss my 1d4 Hit Dice Wizards! You will also discover that each class contains a number of different subclasses. Similar to D&D 5th, each of these subclasses has a different name. I would have preferred if PF2E stuck with the umbrella term subclass. Many of the variety of these subclasses provided are only in name: it is PF2E's way of saying your savings

are now better or your BAB increases. I predict there will be fan-made cards shortening the advance benefits that dispose of the fancy subclass names. The overriding theme here is that everything is balanced. It may be different shaking in real game, but it looks like a fairly well-balanced system for me. It reminds me of a lot of D&; D 4 T, which is another point in his favor - D&D 4 tbs was an excellent tactical combat machine. On the classes! First on is Alchemist, which focuses some hits in the division of mutagen and bomb focuses along subclass lines. This is not to say that you can't get mutagens and bombs with the other focus, but: the subclass only gives you extra game slots (they're called formula, but they're basically spelling slots) for your preferred alchemy. Talk about that semantic section: the magic section makes a great deal of four flavors of magic (divine, arcane, occult, and primal for clerics, magicians, bards, and grapes respectively), but alchemists and their formula form another flavor. Bombs have downgraded a lot, but I would say shallow-scale versions of thunderstans and acid flashing for it. As with most classes with magical beat, alchemists also get a baked version of metamagical as part of their customizing options. Barbarians' subclass divisions (instincts) come with fun small role players in the form of anathemas. Basically, if you act in a certain way (generally not too aggressive), you lose your subclass benefits until you spend a full day of downtime (?). What is... Neatly, of a role mind sense, but can be more of a pain than it is worth, especially since one of the anathemas ignores an insult. Guess which class is going to cause a lot of headaches in the party? Barbarians also give me an opportunity to grab about something in 2E I've never been a fan of: Attacks of events are now optional achievements! What. Bards gets the ability to hide spellings as part of an achievement! They can do this in PF1E, or at least throw them as part of a performance, but hiding game is new and definitely something that housed a lot. They are also now occult magic users (one of the four flavors, or traditions), also known as knowing a bunch of random mostly useless trivia magic. Just another reason I'm a naked, I think. Clerics continue to be able to vomit healing as they really put their mind around it, and now it should look even cool when they do. The new-child-on-the-block version of healing game/channel take more time to throw after greater effects. Necrossia also has a cruel downgrade and clerics are where it's called the first time: you can maximum four pets, and you have to spend one of your three actions for them to do anything. More about it in a moment. You wanted paladins? You have champions! Paladins is one of the champion's three subclasses, or causes; you can further distinguish your champion by taking another divine ally (blade and mountain return of PF1E and shield keys from the new mechanics in PF2E) and another oath (dragonslayer, fiends courses, and shiny). Oath gives you benefits based on your cause and lets you ignore the authority of a specific kind of evil being. Neat! This means that you can break the law into an insufficient governing city and not lose your subclass benefits. By the time I got to the grape section, I began to see a pattern in how the classes had changed. Most players get the option to either a) get an additional 10-level game slot, b) doing something ridiculous, or c) doing something too ridiculous. Grapes can choose between a) that sweet 10 level slot or b) be able to throw a 5th-level game for free once a minute, or c) TURN into a giant MONSTER. Given Pathfinder's history with polymorph effects, it sounds much cooler than it is. Fighters! My very early fears of fighters who were just melee-only were kneeled because fighters can choose to waste their time with a weapon style that doesn't add their primary statistics to damage, such as archery. Also, raising a shield now takes one of your three actions! This rule was in the playtest and I didn't like it, and it's in the game now and I still don't like it. We'll come back to action economy in a little bit. Fighters also show the difference in hijackers: permanent to have an extra action every turn or an extra response to every enemy turn seems just not as awesome as grapes turn into giant caji! Monks feel much more like their PF1E counterparts because their subclass choice comes from the different stand places they can take. Fans of flag of blows will be disappointed because it's a one-time-turning thing and it just gets you one additional punch. Monks are also casualties of those bundled now optional as Deflect Missiles and Wholeness of the Body are now mutually exclusive, to name just one example. What are with new editions of TTRPGs and intended for rangers? PF2E Rangers are not bad, but they have similar issues to their brothers and sisters in D&D 5 Tb. A solid amount of your class functions can go into an animal companion (we all know how quickly you lose them), and the stones are as diverse as ignoring difficult terrain and triggering traps or tracking your prey over aircraft. I get rangers, but when a class's choices include lean in multi-attacking fines that don't get much better, lean in the less harmful archery style, or get a companion that is always weaker than you will be and take some of your action economy, silver linings are to come by. Rogues is now the kids on the block because in addition to getting so many skills, they also get so many achievements. Their sneak attack now maximizes out on 4d6 precision damage. All that said, they're the only way to get Dexterity modifiers to damage to fines weapons, which is way cooler than one of the other two subclasses. There is also frustrating little support for the subclass that are supposed to talk about fast and silver tongues; most of their achievements are aimed at damage or sneaking. It seems like a lost opportunity to make a character shine during an atypical game moment like exploration or downtime. Magicians have always been the blaster magic class and in this edition which means instead of three game slots at each level they get four. They are also the first class to get counterspelling, which is both easier to understand than PF1E, but no less difficult to do: counterplay requires you to at least know the game is thrown and are also limited by traditions of magic. Finally, wizards. They also get scores, but they must use the specific spelling that is thrown (?). Only with a performance investment can their counter spelling be more common. At that point, why bother? Their bound item can also keep them with magicians in a small way by getting another casting of a prepared game. Speaking of wizards, concentration usually takes one of your three actions to maintain unless you drop some high-level performance on it. Wizards can also pick up a version of hiding their spelling, which I think is just neat. [h=3] PART FIVE: SKILLS AND ACHIEVEMENTS/[h] Son made them easier to handle! Not only are there fewer skills, but their increases happen less granular and general DCs are more static. Two developments I think are great: some skill checks require a certain level of skill, so someone who doesn't invest any training in Arcana couldn't randomly roll better than a down-on-side-luck wizard. Also, some checks have been secretly rolled by default, such as Perception. This avoids the common player problem when one person rolls weakly and the whole group sees that and every other player decides to roll perception for no in-character reason! Progress looks a little off. It is possible for a character to start with a third of the five skill skills tapes (untrained/trained/trained/expert/master/legendary), which means that there is not much progress thereafter. To accommodate, the expert tasks can look pretty commonplace, and the legendary tasks are, well, legendary. For example, the sample expert survival check to avoid being lost is successfully navigated a hedge maize; while the monster legendary check for the same skill is navigating an ever-changing dream empire. And the single intermediary step in between is not lost in a featureless desert! You are limited from hitting legendary in the level, but it can ultimately mean a lot of adventurous without much progress. PF2E also disposed of opposed to cheques. Characters and creatures use a DC equal to 10 plus whatever bonus they have to the appropriate storage or skill. For example, instead of rolling Stealth versus Perception, you simply roll Stealth towards the target's Perception DC. Instead of rolling intimidation towards a D.C., you just roll intimidation towards the target's Will DC. Clean and simple – and another good idea inspired by D&D 4 T. On achievements! THERE ARE SO MANY ACHIEVEMENTS. After the initial shock to see three entire pages of performance table, you will see it is useful broken down by skill. It would have been nice if the tables also included a page number with each entry. Also, be sure to read the heading at the beginning of the performance chapter, if it can try a little confusing to find out which achievements you can take. [h=3] PART SIX: EQUIPMENT/[h] In theory, the Pathfinder system uses the silver piece (SP) standard, but most of the currency values are in gold pieces (GP), even your starting currency. It also lists starting currency in SP if you want to strengthen the SP economy. I get the clear feeling that the silver standard won't last very long in real game. Some of the GP scale you may be accustomed to changing has changed. A set of full plate is only 30 GP! Even espionage, notorious waste of money, was brought down a pen or two: the best version in the Core book is only 80 GP. Generally speaking, a zero pF2E's equipment costs, which are good with me, have been cut off. My least favorite part of PF2E's new systems is bulk. I understand the concept in theory: some things are more than just their physical weight to air around. I didn't like it in Starfinder, I didn't like it in the Playtest, and I don't like it now because it's punishing martial characters. A set of armor, a shield, and a sword will take up to half your smashed capacity. Even accepting a maximum-power start character, to fully equipped from take a quarter of your carrying space. In addition, the base bulk values for weapons and weapons for when they swing: WEAR THE STUFF INCREASES THEIR BULK. I'm sure it was probably true when flat-wearing weight was the norm, but also: who was actually shell-wearing weight of worn armor? I was shocked to discover that grandwolds use a D12 for damage now! The tactical decision between big dice or consistent dice is gone! It also means that, with the new rules on the size of the size increase, large weapon fighters get the short end of the stick. I also predict that new players from D&D 5 tb will rather be turned off when they see that finesse and alternated weapons do not add Dexterity modifiers to damage. Maybe it overwhelms the whole fighting style, but it will definitely come as a shock. Weapons also have a variety of special features and critical hit effects. If you are part of the old pool crowd or like to spend time in a wiki deep dive on medieval weapons, I suppose it's attractive. Personally, I think it's too much. The tactical tactical is nice, so the net result for weapons is a mixed bag. This is a fairly small point, but as a rule book, half of a page in the arms section is dedicated to an illustration, shouldn't the illustration of the weapons describe the page? Kyra's are not very illustrative of weapons other than stunned leather drowned in clothes. I won't know Kyra's name unless I've growned it! I miss the days when illustrations came with their own snack flavor text that illustrated the image of what it illustrated on that page, and gave personality to the characters it describes. [h=3] PART SEVEN: SPELLS/[h] Spellcasting is always the thornproof part of any fantasy RPG and part of it comes down to how well they function in the crucifixion of home game. A good part of the complexity of spelling in PF2E is what I call inquiry soup. Keyword soup is the menu of keywords found at the top of most stat blocks in PF2E and it only gets exhausting after the first few iterations. Spellings, weapons, character abilities, achievements... keyword soup is helpful from a design perspective, but it is intimidating for new players. One of the issues that D&D 5 tb bother is that decisive game rate at a higher level than their base level does not make for a significant difference in the game's effect. From some of the calculations I've done with some of the harmful games in PF2E, this is not a problem for PF2E casters! Focus games are only available through certain class features and their game rate can only be recharged by spending 10 minutes meditated. They allow access to some of the more iconic class capabilities such as bardic inspiration and monk ki capabilities. Fortunately, this spells out their own portion of the spelling chapter is given; would be a nightmare to try to find them mixed in the general playist entries. Ritual game takes at least an hour to and have other, more specialized requirements, but they do not need a creature to use game capabilities. I like the idea of a bunch of idiot cults trying a ritual they have no business effort, but unfortunately rituals also have a minimum level for the ritual leader. Fortunately, this is a rule that is easy enough to ignore. My final point about gaming out is a problem with components. Some number of games require material components, but there is nothing to say what the components are or how to get them – except a blanket statement that all components are generally in a game component bag. I do not have a problem with maintaining the mechanical consuming of components; D&D5E has disposed of enforcing that limitation largely because it has been pretty much ignored since it was invented. But if that's the case, why do material components shut down at all? There is humour in D&D 5 tb's material components containing a small gust and a duck feather, but if not even listed, material components are just another leg in your query soup. [h=3] PART EIGHT: ESSAY/[h] I don't have much to say this chapter, as veteran players will already know more than provided here. While this chapter gets new players excited to play in fantastic regions, the impending spectrum of a flood of supplement books acids any enjoyment I can find in wanting to know more. With the hindsight of my experience with PF1E, each sub heading looks like a promise from a twenty- to forty page supplement. To get a full picture of Golarion, we need to buy it all! [h=3] PART NINE: PLAYING THE GAME/[h] I've previously mentioned the three-action economy and it looms great here. This is an interesting design choice that allows for a little more flexibility in terms of arranging what you want to do in turn when. That said, I can't imagine it will feel very different in practice. Thinking alive takes an action to collect, the multi-attack penalty discourages more than one or two Strikes per turn to higher levels, and characters need to move to engage their targets. Most game plays take another two actions to throw, which translates to the PF1E equivalent of a move, small, and standard action. The XP system seems to have a complete renovation: now each level takes a fixed 1,000 XP to achieve, with samples and challenges offering a variable amount of XP based on their relative level to the adventurous party. I like this! This makes encounter budgets much easier on the DM's side. With relative challenge XP should also make social or exploration challenges easier to reward players, if you can only base the XP award of a DC suitable for which level you want. I am amazed that there is a half-page sidebar that says in a very polite way locked up and listens to your DM and stop being a RAW munchkin. This section of the book also demonstrates PF2E's inspiration Sources. Persistent damage (damage taken at the end of the turn, then a role is used to see if the damage stops) looks much like continuous damage from D&D 4 tb; and the fortune and accident effects (rolling two d20s and taking the better/worse result) are certainly inspired by benefit and disadvantage of D&D 5 tb. I don't think these effects will come that often, but I appreciate the designers incorporated useful mechanics from other systems. The doughnut of endangered areas with reach of PF1E is gone, thank you goodness. Falling distance is roughly consistent with my back-of-the-envelope mathematics, and damage is just a flat number based on distance falling – maximum out on 750 damage! Eat it, high-level barbarian! On the other hand, if Bleeding damage is a special kind of Physical damage, why wouldn't it be below the Physical portion of the damage type sidebar instead of in a completely new column to energy, alignment, mental, and poison damage? Also, some small treats for DM's as we finish the Core Rulebook: in case of tyres, SAMPLES GO FIRST IN INITIATIVE! Also, danger damage (reading, blizzards and forest fires and lava and so forth) are standardized ease of reference. Phew! [h=3] PART TEN: THE COMBAT/[h] We move to the second part of this review – that's right, the Core Rulebook and the Combating get reviewed as some! Take a stretch break, get water, relax your shoulders and uncle your jaw. We're in the house piece! If you read through the Nuclear Rule Book in a single sitting, the Combating won't be much of a problem. Many of the materials in the Bestiary build off the patterns found in the core rule book in terms of stat blocks and query soup, and only if there is a wonderful introduction section to refresh you. What stands out most for me is how much Paizo wants to remind us that these creatures do not samples. You can feel this design choice in everything from descriptions to the abilities to the relative power of samples. This is especially pronounced with sample names, where a relatively iconic sample will have a new PF2E-specific name as its primary descriptor – and then in the first line of its flavor text, the name of the sample of D&D. I assume it's as older nerds as myself will know how to connect the new monster with the old one, but it feels unnecessary. Stick to your guns, Paizo! You also see a bit of one-upmanship here and there. You thought D&D abolition was nassic? Well, they are also in Pathfinder and they are CHUMPS compared to the SUPER ABOLETHS which are a way cooler name like Veil masters! You thought lies were coming powerful? They're just level 12! You know what's super powerful and scary? The only demon lord declared in the whole book after ten pages talked about how cool demons and demons were! Speaking of demons, the only two demons with non-monstrous appearance are both illustrated as female presentation, and are representative of the sins of Lust and Pride. Yes, the descriptions of both beings that gender fluid and arbitrary told are demons; and yes, they are both very tastefully dressed; but it is still a misstep in this day and age. Heck, D&D 5 tb is not perfect in this regard, but at least depicts both male and female versions of succubi on par with equal footing and with equal appeal. In a similar vein, the page on the orange culture does nothing to reduce their role as sometimes problematic stereotypes. Paizo's obsession with full-page layouts short-short changes some of the samples in the Combiatary, especially the Nightmare. The poor criterion only gets a single sentence description before it is right in the statblock and the next statblock. There are some entries in the Bestiary that shout virtually for a supplement to come together and make them playful ancestors – especially since goblins are now part of the core team. I wouldn't be surprised if catfolk (which certainly isn't D&D tabaxi) was a playful ancestor in the future, with orchestrated not far behind. This can explain why ogress is more mirror and clean in illustration - they can as playful ancestors, so avoid PF2E them as sweaty sheets. If a final delicious little nugget is hidden at the back of the Bestiary, the developers included a sidebar that makes it clear sharks rarely harm people and that their danger is far baffled by survivors' stories – well on you again, Paizo! Another golden star! [h=3] CONCLUSION/[h] As much as I've already written about the Core Rulebook and the Bestiary for PF2E, there are still a lot that has fallen on the editorial red pen – so check it out for yourself! Much care has been put into the introduct section to make sure you land on your feet when you jump into PF2E and Paizo has clearly learned some of the best – including PF1E! – when it comes to balancing the new system. There are some issues here and there, but overall it looks like an excellent new addition to the TTRPG pantheon and a great way to start an obsession with our favorite pastime. This article was contributed by Ben Reece (LongGoneWriter) as part of EN World Columnist (ENWC) programme. If you enjoy the daily news and articles of EN World, please consider consenting to our Patreon! Last edited by a moderator: August 13, 2019 Page 2 Hello my loveliest and welcome back to the PAIZO NEWS UPDATE! We have a very special update if you can imagine, so without further ado: IT'S HERE! 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Have some forever-magic on the design team get salt over how many achievements the fighters have? If the character sheets were a new player's exposure to the game, I think it would turn them off to PF2E - four pages to D&D 5 tb's wot! I don't think it's a stretch to say the two-page will win – especially because there's a lot less math involved. There are paraed-down versions on the internet. Use it, or make your own. [h=3] PART TWO: AND NOW, SOME RULES!/[h] Talk about comparisons with other systems: PF2E uses a brand new mechanic called skill. It does all the heavy lifting that BAB, skill points, and save bonuses used to, and it has discrete ties that increase with level! Don't worry, though, it's not your D&D dad's! This skill goes up to 8, not 6, AND you add your level to it. You will also notice that there are now meleee and advanced Strikes. This is your primary attack; PF2E renamed it only for ease of general general Of course, general-reference attack actions in a special box with a special symbol make me think of D&D 4 thou, which is a good thing: D&D 4 tbs were very effective as a game engine at the combat level. Once you get into that mindset, the change is good for the PF2E system as a whole – it's streamlined, making it easier to refer and switch. Another change is the explicit division of game between encounters (battles measured in initiative and rounds), exploration (measured in minutes or hours), and downtime (measured in days to years). There is definitely more support in this book for encounters, but I like that the division is made clear there and that certain things are described as too exhausting to maintain during exploration or downtime (such as casting most game, for example). This mechanic, like some others in this book, makes me wonder how much it will see from real game, but it's just one of those modular things about TTRPGs that makes them good for any table. The introduction covers a general-run-through character generation, which has been done very well. As a D&D 3.X fan, I don't love the ability boost system for loading, but the width of free boost does not queue my worries about just being able to make a given character type in one plural form. There is enough variety that you should easily be able to make an atypical member of your ancestors or class. [h = 3] PART THREE: ANCESTORS AND BACKGROUNDS/[h] Firstly, the bad news: PF1E players who were accustomed to bundling racial properties together will make some difficult choices. Do you want your dwarf to stone? They can't have battle training towards giants. You want your eleven resistance to magical sleep effects? Then they don't get free skill with lung bows. The bottom of all this there is a much larger level of adaptability available for each character. D&D fans will recognize three-to-four flavors for every ancestor (outsiders: who show up in classes), and I really like the idea of pursuing greater ancestral boys (in the form of more achievements) than you level up. This means that your dwarf will dwarf dwarf things until they dwarf the dwarf. Full disclosure: I was experimenting with a similar system for a homebrew PF1E neighborhood a while ago and it's heartening to see that I'm in a good company! Other thoughts: hello goblins, you'll be my exclusive choice of ancestry from now on! Semlings can now hear more if they eat a snack while they heal, which is just incredibly noticed for them. They can also pick up an anti-squid that seems to cause so much frustration for DM's in the line. Backgrounds grant skill proficiencies will once again be familiar with D&D 5 tb barrel and – as with everything in PF2E – comes with even more achievements. Hats off to the designers for care in making the new system inclusive: not only is there deliberate support from the gender spectrum gender spectrum lack therewith) and choice of pronouns, but the Languages section devotes space to deaf or hearing impounded characters. Goldstar! [h=3] PART FOUR: CLASSES/[h] There is a lot going on with classes, as you can expect from Pathfinder, but once you read the introduction section in this chapter and take your time through some of the classes, you'll start seeing some commonalities. That's where that skill changer comes out to play, and it's applied to everything. Heck, it's even applied to AC! That being said, not every class increases their skill bonus to AC at the same rate or at the same level, so you're still going to end up with squishier wizards and tanky fighters. Skill is also applied (inequal) to Perception, which is part of each class's features. I think I may no longer play inattentive idiots. To be fair, Perception also functions as your initiative modified, which is one less number to worry about. There is no such thing as rolling for hit points anymore; everyone just gets a flat number. PF1E fans will recognize this number as the maximum HP of the class's old hit dies... but I like the ability to lose hit points when leveling! I miss my 1d4 Hit Dice Wizards! You will also discover that each class contains a number of different subclasses. Similar to D&D 5th, each of these subclasses has a different name. I would have preferred if PF2E stuck with the umbrella term subclass. Many of the variety of these subclasses provided are only in name: it is PF2E's way of saying your savings are now better or your BAB increases. I predict there will be fan-made cards shortening the advance benefits that dispose of the fancy subclass names. The overriding theme here is that everything is balanced. It may be different shaking in real game, but it looks like a fairly well-balanced system for me. It reminds me of a lot of D&; D 4 T, which is another point in his favor - D&D 4 tbs was an excellent tactical combat machine. On the classes! First on is Alchemist, which focuses some hits in the division of mutagen and bomb focuses along subclass lines. This is not to say that you can't get mutagens and bombs with the other focus, but: the subclass only gives you extra game slots (they're called formula, but they're basically spelling slots) for your preferred alchemy. Talk about that semantic section: the magic section makes a great deal of four flavors of magic (divine, arcane, occult, and primal for clerics, magicians, bards, and grapes respectively), but alchemists and their formula form another flavor. Bombs have downgraded a lot, but I would say shallow-scale versions of thunderstans and acid flashing for it. As with most classes with magical beat, alchemists also get a baked version of metamagical as part of their customizing options. Barbarians' subclass divisions (instincts) come with fun small role players in the form of anathemas. Basically, if you (generally not too aggressive), you lose your subclass benefits until you spend a full day of downtime (?). What is... Neatly, of a role mind sense, but can be more of a pain than it is worth, especially since one of the anathemas ignores an insult. Guess which class is going to cause a lot of headaches in the party? Barbarians also give me an opportunity to grab about something in 2E I've never been a fan of: Attacks of events are now optional achievements! What. Bards gets the ability to hide spellings as part of an achievement! They can do this in PF1E, or at least throw them as part of a performance, but hiding game is new and definitely something that housed a lot. They are also now occult magic users (one of the four flavors, or traditions), also known as knowing a bunch of random mostly useless trivia magic. Just another reason I'm a naked, I think. Clerics continue to be able to vomit healing as they really put their mind around it, and now it should look even cool when they do. The new-child-on-the-block version of healing game/channel energy takes more time to throw to get bigger effects. Necrossia also has a cruel downgrade and clerics are where it's called the first time: you can maximum four pets, and you have to spend one of your three actions for them to do anything. More about it in a moment. You wanted paladins? You have champions! Paladins is one of the champion's three subclasses, or causes; you can further distinguish your champion by taking another divine ally (blade and mountain return of PF1E and shield keys from the new mechanics in PF2E) and another oath (dragonslayer, fiends courses, and shiny). Oath gives you benefits based on your cause and lets you ignore the authority of a specific kind of evil being. Neat! This means that you can break the law into an insufficient governing city and not lose your subclass benefits. By the time I got to the grape section, I began to see a pattern in how the classes had changed. Most players get the option to either a) get an additional 10-level game slot, b) doing something ridiculous, or c) doing something too ridiculous. Grapes can choose between a) that sweet 10 level slot or b) be able to throw a 5th-level game for free once a minute, or c) TURN into a giant MONSTER. Given Pathfinder's history with polymorph effects, it sounds much cooler than it is. Fighters! My very early fears of fighters who were just melee-only were kneeled because fighters can choose to waste their time with a weapon style that doesn't add their primary statistics to damage, such as archery. Also, raising a shield now takes one of your three actions! This rule was in the playtest and I didn't like it, and it's in the game now and I still don't like it. We'll come back to action economy in a little bit. Fighters also point the difference in captains: permanent to have an extra action every turn or an extra response to enemy turn just doesn't look as wonderful as grapes turn Giant kajut! Monks feel much more like their PF1E counterparts because their subclass choice comes from the different stand places they can take. Fans of flag of blows will be disappointed because it's a one-time-turning thing and it just gets you one additional punch. Monks are also casualties of those bundled now optional as Deflect Missiles and Wholeness of the Body are now mutually exclusive, to name just one example. What are with new editions of TTRPGs and intended for rangers? PF2E Rangers are not bad, but they have similar issues to their brothers and sisters in D&D 5 Tb. A solid amount of your class functions can go into an animal companion (we all know how quickly you lose them), and the stones are as diverse as ignoring difficult terrain and triggering traps or tracking your prey over aircraft. I get rangers, but when a class's choices include leanness in multi-attacking fines that don't get much better, lean in the less harmful archery style, or get a companion that is always weaker than you will be and take some of your action economy, silver linings are harder to come through. Rogues are now the big kids on the block because in addition to getting so many skills, they also get so many achievements. Their sneak attack now maximizes out on 4d6 precision damage. All that said, they're the only way to get Dexterity modifiers to damage to fines weapons, which is way cooler than one of the other two subclasses. There is also frustrating little support for the subclass that are supposed to talk about fast and silver tongues; most of their achievements are aimed at damage or sneaking. It seems like a lost opportunity to make a character shine during an atypical game moment like exploration or downtime. Magicians have always been the blaster magic class and in this edition which means instead of three game slots at each level they get four. They are also the first class to get counterspelling, which is both easier to understand than PF1E, but no less difficult to do: counterplay requires you to at least know the game is thrown and are also limited by traditions of magic. Finally, wizards. They also get scores, but they must use the specific spelling that is thrown (?). Only with a performance investment can their counter spelling be more common. At that point, why bother? Their bound item can also keep them with magicians in a small way by getting another casting of a prepared game. Speaking of wizards, concentration usually takes one of your three actions to maintain unless you drop some high-level performance on it. Wizards can also pick up a version of hiding their spelling, which I think is just neat. [h=3] PART FIVE: SKILLS AND ACHIEVEMENTS/[h] Son made them easier to handle! Not only are there fewer skills, but their increases happen less granular and general DCs are more static. Two what I think is great: some skill checks require a certain level of skill, so that someone who investing any training in Arcana could not randomly roll better than a down-on-his-happiness wizard. Also, some checks have been secretly rolled by default, such as Perception. This avoids the common player problem when one person rolls weakly and the whole group sees that and every other player decides to roll perception for no in-character reason! Progress looks a little off. It is possible for a character to start with a third of the five skill skills tapes (untrained/trained/trained/expert/master/legendary), which means that there is not much progress thereafter. To accommodate, the expert tasks can look pretty commonplace, and the legendary tasks are, well, legendary. For example, the sample expert survival check to avoid being lost is successfully navigated a hedge maize; while the monster legendary check for the same skill is navigating an ever-changing dream empire. And the single intermediary step in between is not lost in a featureless desert! You are limited from hitting legendary to middle-teens in level, but it can ultimately mean a lot of adventurous without much progress. PF2E also disposed of opposite checks. Characters and creatures use a DC equal to 10 plus whatever bonus they have to the appropriate storage or skill. For example, instead of rolling Stealth versus Perception, you simply roll Stealth towards the target's Perception DC. Instead of rolling intimidation towards a D.C., you just roll intimidation towards the target's Will DC. Clean and simple – and another good idea inspired by D&D 4 T. On achievements! THERE ARE SO MANY ACHIEVEMENTS. After the initial shock to see three entire pages of performance table, you will see it is useful broken down by skill. It would have been nice if the tables also included a page number with each entry. Also, be sure to read the heading at the beginning of the performance chapter, if it can try a little confusing to find out which achievements you can take. [h=3] PART SIX: EQUIPMENT/[h] In theory, the Pathfinder system uses the silver piece (SP) standard, but most of the currency values are in gold pieces (GP), even your starting currency. It also lists starting currency in SP if you want to strengthen the SP economy. I get the clear feeling that the silver standard won't last very long in real game. Some of the GP scale you may be accustomed to changing has changed. A set of full plate is only 30 GP! Even espionage, notorious waste of money, was brought down a pen or two: the best version in the Core book is only 80 GP. Generally speaking, a zero pF2E's equipment costs, which are good with me, have been cut off. My least favorite part of PF2E's new systems is bulk. I understand the concept in theory: some things are more than just their physical weight to air around. I didn't like it in Starfinder, I didn't like it in the Playtest, and I don't like it now because it's punishing martial characters. A set of armor, a shield, and a sword will take up to half your smashed capacity. Even accepting a Start character, to be fully equipped from take a quarter of your wear space. In addition, the base bulk values for weapons and weapons for when they swing: WEAR THE STUFF INCREASES THEIR BULK. I'm sure it was probably true when flat-wearing weight was the norm, but also: who was actually shell-wearing weight of worn armor? I was shocked to discover that grandwolds use a D12 for damage now! The tactical decision between big dice or consistent dice is gone! It also means that, with the new rules on the size of the size increase, large weapon fighters get the short end of the stick. I also predict that new players from D&D 5 tb will rather be turned off when they see that finesse and alternated weapons do not add Dexterity modifiers to damage. Maybe it overwhelms the whole fighting style, but it will definitely come as a shock. Weapons also have a variety of special features and critical hit effects. If you're part of the old school pool crowd or like to spend time in a wiki deep dive on medieval weapons, I suppose it's attractive. Personally, I think it's too much. The tactical options are delicious, so the net result for weapons is a mixed bag. This is a fairly small point, but as a rule book, half of a page in the arms section is dedicated to an illustration, shouldn't the illustration of the weapons describe the page? Kyra's are not very illustrative of weapons other than stunned leather drowned in clothes. I won't know Kyra's name unless I've growned it! I miss the days when illustrations came with their own snack flavor text that illustrated the image of what it illustrated on that page, and gave personality to the characters it describes. [h=3] PART SEVEN: SPELLS/[h] Spellcasting is always the thornproof part of any fantasy RPG and part of it comes down to how well they function in the crucifixion of home game. A good part of the complexity of spelling in PF2E is what I call inquiry soup. Keyword soup is the menu of keywords found at the top of most stat blocks in PF2E and it only gets exhausting after the first few iterations. Spellings, weapons, character abilities, achievements... keyword soup is helpful from a design perspective, but it is intimidating for new players. One of the issues that D&D 5 tb bother is that decisive game rate at a higher level than their base level does not make for a significant difference in the game's effect. From some of the calculations I've done with some of the harmful games in PF2E, this is not a problem for PF2E casters! Focus games are only available through certain class features and their game rate can only be recharged by spending 10 minutes meditated. They allow access to some of the more iconic class capabilities such as bardic inspiration and monk ki capabilities. Fortunately, this spells out their own portion of the spelling chapter is given; would be a nightmare to try to find them mixed in the general playist entries. Ritual game takes at least an hour to and have other, more specialized requirements, but they do not need a creature to use game capabilities. I like the idea of a bunch of idiot cults trying a ritual they have no business effort, but unfortunately rituals also have a minimum level for the ritual leader. Fortunately, this is a rule that is easy enough to ignore. My final point about gaming out is a problem with components. Some number of games require material components, but there is nothing to say what the components are or how to get them – except a blanket statement that all components are generally in a game component bag. I do not have a problem with maintaining the mechanical consuming of components; D&D5E has disposed of enforcing that limitation largely because it has been pretty much ignored since it was invented. But if that's the case, why do material components shut down at all? There is humour in D&D 5 tb's material components containing a small gust and a duck feather; but if they're not even listed, material components are just another leg in your query soup. [h=3] PART EIGHT: SET/[h] I don't have much to say about this chapter, as veteran players will already know more than provided here. While this chapter gets new players excited to play in fantastic regions, the impending spectrum of a flood of supplement books acids any enjoyment I can find in wanting to know more. With the hindsight of my experience with PF1E, each sub heading looks like a promise from a twenty- to forty page supplement. To get a full picture of Golarion, we need to buy it all! [h=3] PART NINE: PLAYING THE GAME/[h] I've previously mentioned the three-action economy and it looms great here. This is an interesting design choice that allows for a little more flexibility in terms of arranging what you want to do in turn when. That said, I can't imagine it will feel very different in practice. Thinking alive takes an action to collect, the multi-attack penalty discourages more than one or two Strikes per turn to higher levels, and characters need to move to engage their targets. Most game plays take another two actions to throw, which translates to the PF1E equivalent of a move, small, and standard action. The XP system seems to have a complete renovation: now each level takes a fixed 1,000 XP to achieve, with samples and challenges offering a variable amount of XP based on their relative level to the adventurous party. I like this! This makes encounter budgets much easier on the DM's side. With relative challenge XP should also make social or exploration challenges easier to reward players, if you can only base the XP award of a DC suitable for which level you want. I am amazed that there is a half-page sidebar that says in a very polite way locked up and listens to your DM and stop being a RAW munchkin. This section of the book also demonstrates PF2E's inspiration Sources. Persistent damage (damage taken at the end of the turn, then a role is used to see if the damage stops) looks much like continuous damage from D&D 4 tb; and the fortune and accident effects (rolling two d20s and taking the better/worse result) are certainly inspired by benefit and disadvantage of D&D 5 tb. I don't think these effects will come that often, but I appreciate the designers incorporated useful mechanics from other systems. The doughnut of endangered areas with reach of PF1E is gone, thank you goodness. Falling distance is roughly consistent with my back-of-the-envelope mathematics, and damage is just a flat number based on distance falling – maximum out on 750 damage! Eat it, high-level barbarian! On the other hand, if Bleeding damage is a special kind of Physical damage, why wouldn't it be below the Physical portion of the damage type sidebar instead of in a completely new column to energy, alignment, mental, and poison damage? Also, some small treats for DM's as we finish the Core Rulebook: in case of tyres, SAMPLES GO FIRST IN INITIATIVE! Also, danger damage (reading, blizzards and avalanches and forest fires and lava and so forth) are standardized for ease of reference. Phew! [h=3] PART TEN: THE COMBAT/[h] We move to the second part of this review – that's right, the Core Rulebook and the Combating get reviewed as some! Take a stretch break, get water, relax your shoulders and uncle your jaw. We're in the house piece! If you read through the Nuclear Rule Book in a single sitting, the Combating won't be much of a problem. Many of the materials in the Bestiary build off the patterns found in the core rule book in terms of stat blocks and query soup, and only if there is a wonderful introduction section to refresh you. What stands out most for me is how much Paizo wants to remind us that these creatures do not samples. You can feel this design choice in everything from descriptions to the abilities to the relative power of samples. This is especially pronounced with sample names, where a relatively iconic sample will have a new PF2E-specific name as its primary descriptor – and then in the first line of its flavor text, the name of the sample of D&D. I assume it's as older nerds as myself will know how to connect the new monster with the old one, but it feels unnecessary. Stick to your guns, Paizo! You also see a bit of one-upmanship here and there. You thought D&D abolition was nassic? Well, they are also in Pathfinder and they are CHUMPS compared to the SUPER ABOLETHS which are a way cooler name like Veil masters! You thought lies were coming powerful? They're just level 12! You know what's super powerful and scary? The only demon lord declared in the whole book after ten pages talked about how cool demons and demons were! Speaking of demons, the only two demons with non-monstrous appearance are both illustrated as female presentation, and are representative of the sins of Lust and Pride. Yes, the of both creatures beings that gender is fluid and arbitrary for said demons; and yes, they are both very tastefully dressed; but it is still a misstep in this day and age. Heck, D&D 5 tb is not perfect in this regard, but at least depicts both male and female versions of succubi on par with equal footing and with equal appeal. In a similar vein, the page on the orange culture does nothing to reduce their role as sometimes problematic stereotypes. Paizo's obsession with full-page layouts short-short changes some of the samples in the Combiatary, especially the Nightmare. The poor criterion only gets a single sentence description before it is right in the statblock and the next statblock. There are some entries in the Bestiary that shout virtually for a supplement to come together and make them playful ancestors – especially since goblins are now part of the core team. I wouldn't be surprised if catfolk (which certainly isn't D&D tabaxi) was a playful ancestor in the future, with orchestrated not far behind. This can explain why ogress is more mirror and clean in illustration - they can end up as playable ancestors, so PF2E avoid depiction of them as sweat slob. If a final delicious little nugget is hidden at the back of the Bestiary, the developers included a sidebar that makes it clear sharks rarely harm people and that their danger is far baffled by survivors' stories – well on you again, Paizo! Another golden star! [h=3] CONCLUSION/[h] As much as I've already written about the Core Rulebook and the Bestiary for PF2E, there are still a lot that has fallen on the editorial red pen – so check it out for yourself! Much care has been put into the introduct section to make sure you land on your feet when you jump into PF2E and Paizo has clearly learned some of the best – including PF1E! – when it comes to balancing the new system. There are some issues here and there, but overall it looks like an excellent new addition to the TTRPG pantheon and a great way to start an obsession with our favorite pastime. This article was contributed by Ben Reece (LongGoneWriter) as part of EN World Columnist (ENWC) programme. If you enjoy the daily news and articles of EN World, please consider consenting to our Patreon! Last edited by a moderator: August 13, 2019 Page 3 Hello my loves and welcome back to the PAIZO NEWS UPDATE! We have a very special update if you can imagine, so without further ado: IT'S HERE! It's here! IT'S FINALLY HERE! PATHFINDER SECOND EDITION IS HERE! The second edition of the classic tabletop role game Pathfinder is alive and in the wild TODAY! We were lucky enough to be sent a review copy so we could really sink our teeth in and let us know as soon as it falls the ins, outs, ups, downs, well, and bad of the new edition. Let's get started! But first rules some ground rules. I will initially approach the review of a two corners: that of an experienced member of the TTRPG community, and from the point of view of someone who is opening the book as their first entry into the hobby. I bring it up because it's important to consider new players at every stage of our often-arcane pastime. Secondly, this edition of Pathfinder (PF2E) will at times be compared to its competition: not only the previous edition, but also several editions of other prominent role-player games on the market. As much as I've heard that the Golem likes to avoid such comparisons, they're inevitable. Parts of the system are clearly designed as a response to (or are inspired by) specific aspects of the other games. Now, on the review! [h=3] PART ONE: DIVE IN/[h] Clock on 640 pages, the Pathfinder Core

Rulebook is a fierce theme that is less wide than the D&D PHB and DMG through the thickness of a single cover panel – and it is including the sandwich of two cover panels separating the D&D books! Wayne Reynolds is back with his very clear art style, and as far as I can tell the first and only time, the words are printed second edition in the whole book in a corner. But enough judgment a book by its cover, let's get to the meat goodness! The table of contents is given a two-page distribution to introduce each section and provide a description of what is in the store. The clear, understandable writing sets the tone for what must come in the introduct chapter. I can't stress how important it is to read the instructions in order. This advice applies to any TTRPG, but it is even more important for PF2E. There are enough changes from the first edition (PF1E) that even seasoned vets will quickly get lost without a careful read-by. You should also read the introduction chapter because it is a great introduction to the role of games in general. This is all you've ever tried to describe about our favorite hobby abbreviated in an easily-to-consume single page. This is the culmination of all the wisdom that our hobby has made its way to since the dawn of TTRPGs. PF2E is also fast and effective in laying out fundamental concepts and expanding on them in a very natural way. Resist the temptation to jump forward! The answer is often in the next paragraph or on the next page. That said, it feels like the launch pushes the limits of the front-loading information to new players. It is necessary, but it can easily be a whole evening (or two!) for new players to switch from reading the book after playing the game. This problem with design overload is on full view in PF2E's character sheets: There are four pages for each sheet! Most players are unlikely to use the third page (because what Pathfinder player cares about taking notes or characterization outside of Chaotic Neutral? Hat), but even some chant-characters are going to need the fourth (spelling) page because of the way their extraordinary abilities such as spell out Be. The first page is dense, but once you get a handle on the core systems, it starts to make sense. I was raised on D&D 3.5, so I'm accustomed to a character page that is with very small for skills and weapon attacks and arms class and what have you, but new players will almost certainly feel overwhelmed. There is also a whole PAGE dedicated to achievements. Have some forever-magic on the design team get salt over how many achievements the fighters have? If the character sheets were a new player's exposure to the game, I think it would turn them off to PF2E – four pages to D&D 5 tb's wwo! I don't think it's a stretch to say the two-page will win – especially because there's a lot less math involved. There are paraed-down versions on the internet. Use it, or make your own. [h=3] PART TWO: AND NOW, SOME RULES/[h] Talk about comparisons with other systems: PF2E uses a brand new mechanic called skill. It does all the heavy lifting that BAB, skill points, and save bonuses used to, and it has discrete ties that increase with level! Don't worry, though, it's not your D&dad's skill: this skill goes up to 8, not 6, AND you add your level to it. You will also notice that there are now melee and advanced Strikes. This is your primary attack; PF2E has only renamed it for ease of general reference. Of course, general-reference attack actions in a special box with a special symbol make me think of D&D 4 thour, which is a good thing: D&D 4 tbs were very effective as a game engine at the combat level. 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This means that your dwarf will dwarf dwarf things until they dwarf the dwarf. Full disclosure: I was experimenting with a similar system for a homebrew PF1E neighborhood a while ago and it's heartening to see that I'm in a good company! Other thoughts: hello goblins, you'll be my exclusive choice of ancestry from now on! Semilings can now heal more if they eat a snack while they heal, which is just incredibly noticed for them. They can also pick up an anti-struggle that seems to cause so much frustration for DM's in the line. Backgrounds grant skills proficiencies will once again be familiar with D&D 5 tb barrel and – as with everything in PF2E – comes with even more achievements. Hats off to the designers taken for care in making the new system inclusive: not only is there deliberate support from the gender spectrum (including lack therewith) and choice of pronouns, but the Languages section dedicates space to deaf or hearing impaired characters. Goldstar! [h=3] PART FOUR: CLASSES/[h] There is a lot going on with classes, as you can expect from Pathfinder, but once you read the introduction section in this chapter and take your time through some of the classes, you'll start seeing some commonalities. That's where that skill changer comes out to play, and it's applied to everything. Heck, it's even applied to AC! That being said, not every class increases their skill bonus to AC at the same rate or at the same level, so you're still going to end up with squishier wizards and tanky fighters. Skill is also applied (inequal) to Perception, which is part of each class's features. I think I may no longer play inattentive idiots. To be fair, Perception also functions as your initiative modified, which is one less number to worry about. There is no such thing as rolling for hit points anymore; everyone just gets a flat number. PF1E fans will recognize this number as the maximum HP of the class's old hit dies... but I like the ability to lose hit points when leveling! I miss my 1d4 Hit Dice Wizards! You will also discover that each class contains a number of different subclasses. Similar to D&D 5th, each of these subclasses has a different name. I would have preferred if PF2E stuck with the umbrella term subclass. Many of the variety of these subclasses provided are only in name: it is PF2E's way of saying your savings are now better or your BAB increases. I predict there will be fan-made cards shortening the advance benefits that dispose of the fancy subclass names. The overriding theme here is that everything is balanced. It can shake differently in real game, but it like a fairly well-balanced system MY. It reminds me of a lot of D&D 4 T, which is another point in his favor - D&D 4 tbs was an excellent tactical combat machine. On the classes! First on is Alchemist, which focuses some hits in the division of mutagen and bomb focuses along subclass lines. This is not to say that you can't get mutagens and bombs with the other focus, but: the subclass only gives you extra game slots (they're called formula, but they're basically spelling slots) for your preferred alchemy. Talk about that semantic section: the magic section makes a great deal of four flavors of magic (divine, arcane, occult, and primal for clerics, magicians, bards, and grapes respectively), but alchemists and their formula form another flavor. Bombs have downgraded a lot, but I would say shallow-scale versions of thunderstians and acid flashing for it. As with most classes with magical bent, alchemists also get a baked version of metamagical as part of their customizing options. Barbarians' subclass divisions (instincts) come with fun small role players in the form of anathemas. Basically, if you act in a certain way (generally not too aggressive), you lose your subclass benefits until you spend a full day of downtime (?). What is... Neatly, of a role mind sense, but can be more of a pain than it is worth, especially since one of the anathemas ignores an insult. Guess which class is going to cause a lot of headaches in the party? Barbarians also give me an opportunity to grab about something in 2E I've never been a fan of: Attacks of events are now optional achievements! What. Bards gets the ability to hide spellings as part of an achievement! They can do this in PF1E, or at least throw them as part of a performance, but hiding game is new and definitely something that housed a lot. They are also the first class to get counterspelling, which is both easier to understand than PF1E, but no less difficult to do: counterplay requires you to at least know the game is thrown and are also limited by traditions of magic. Finally, wizards. They also get scores, but they must use the specific spelling that is thrown (?). Only with a performance investment can their counter spelling be more common. At that point, why bother? Their bound item can also keep them with magicians in a small way by getting another casting of a prepared game. Speaking of wizards, concentration usually takes one of your three actions to maintain unless you drop some high-level performance on it. Wizards can also pick up a version of hiding their spelling, which I think is just neat. [h=3] PART FIVE: SKILLS AND ACHIEVEMENTS/[h] Son made them easier to handle! Not only are there fewer skills, but their increases happen less granular and general DCs are more static. Two developments I think are great: some skill checks require a certain level of skill, so someone who doesn't invest any training in Arcana couldn't randomly roll better than a down-on-side-luck wizard. Also, some checks have been secretly rolled by default, such as Perception. This avoids the common player problem when one person rolls weakly and the whole group sees that and every other player decides to roll perception for no in-character reason! Progress looks a little off. It is possible for a character to start with a third of the five skill skills tapes (untrained/trained/master/expert/master/legendary), which means that there is not much progress thereafter. To accommodate, the expert tasks can look pretty commonplace, and the legendary tasks are, well, legendary. For example, the sample expert survival check to avoid being lost is successfully navigated a hedge maize; while the monster legendary check for the same skill is navigating an ever-changing dream empire. And the single intermediary step in between is not lost in a featureless desert! You are limited from hitting legendary to middle-teens in level, but it could ultimately mean a lot of adventurousness without much progress. PF2E also disposed of opposite checks. Characters and creatures use a DC equal to 10 plus whatever bonus they have to the appropriate storage or skill. For example, instead of rolling Stealth versus Perception, you simply roll Stealth towards the target's Perception DC. Instead of rolling intimidation towards a D.C., you just roll intimidation towards the target's Will DC. Clean and simple – and another good idea inspired by D&D 4 T. On achievements! THERE ARE SO MANY ACHIEVEMENTS. After the initial shock to see three entire pages of performance table, you will see it is useful broken down by it would have been nice if the tables also included a page number with each entry. Also, be sure to read the heading at the beginning of the performance chapter, as can try a little confusing to find out what achievements you can take. [h=3] PART SIX: EQUIPMENT/[h] In theory, the Pathfinder system uses the silver piece (SP) standard, but most of the currency values are in gold pieces (GP), even your starting currency. It also lists starting currency in SP if you want to strengthen the SP economy. I get the clear feeling that the silver standard won't last very long in real game. Some of the GP scale you may be accustomed to changing has changed. A set of full plate is only 30 GP! Even espionage, notorious waste of money, was brought down a pen or two: the best version in the Core book is only 80 GP. Generally speaking, a zero PF2E's equipment costs, which are good with me, have been cut off. My least favorite part of PF2E's new systems is bulk. I understand the concept in theory: some things are more than just their physical weight to air around. I didn't like it in Starfinder, I didn't like it in the Playtest, and I don't like it now because it's punishing martial characters. A set of armor, a shield, and a sword will take up to half your smashed capacity. Even accepting a maximum-power start character, to fully equipped from take a quarter of your carrying space. In addition, the base is bulk values for weapons and weapons for when they swing; WEAR THE STUFF INCREASES THEIR BULK. I'm sure it was probably true when flat-wearing weight was the norm, but also: who was actually shell-wearing weight of worn armor? I was shocked to discover that grandwords use a D12 for damage now! The tactical decision between big dice or consistent dice is gone! It also means that, with the new rules on the size of the size increase, large weapon fighters get the short end of the stick. I also predict that new players from D&D 5 tb will rather be turned off when they see that finesse and alternated weapons do not add Dexterity modifiers to damage. Maybe it overwhelms the whole fighting style, but it will definitely come as a shock. Weapons also have a variety of special features and critical hit effects. If you're part of the old school pool crowd or like to spend time in a wiki deep dive on medieval weapons, I suppose it's attractive. Personally, I think it's too much. The tactical options are delicious, so the net result for weapons is a mixed bag. This is a fairly small point, but as a rule book, half of a page in the arms section is dedicated to an illustration, shouldn't the illustration of the weapons describe the page? Kyra's are not very illustrative of weapons other than studded leather drowned in clothes. I won't know Kyra's name unless I've growned it! I miss the days when illustrations came with their own snack flavor text that illustrated the image of what it illustrated on that page, and gave personality to the characters it describes. [h=3] PART SEVEN: SPELLING is always the thorn-like part of any fantasy RPG and part of it comes down to how well they in the crucifixion of the home game. A good part of the complexity of spelling in PF2E is what I call inquiry soup. Keyword soup is the menu of keywords found at the top of most stat blocks in PF2E and it only gets exhausting after the first few iterations. Spellings, weapons, character abilities, achievements... Keyword soup is helpful from a design perspective, but it is intimidating for new players. One of the issues that D&D 5 tb bother is that decisive game rate at a higher level than their base level does not make for a significant difference in the game's effect. From some of the calculations I've done with some of the harmful games in PF2E, this is not a problem for PF2E casters! Focus games are only available through certain class features and their game rate can only be recharged by spending 10 minutes meditated. They allow access to some of the more iconic class capabilities such as bardic inspiration and monk k capabilities. Fortunately, this spells out their own portion of the spelling chapter is given; it would be a nightmare to try to find them mixed in the general play listings. Rituals spells take at least an hour to throw and have other, more specialized requirements, but they do not need a creature to use game capabilities. I like the idea of a bunch of idiot cults trying a ritual they have no business effort, but unfortunately rituals also have a minimum level for the ritual leader. Fortunately, this is a rule that is easy enough to ignore. My final point about gaminge out is a problem with components. Some number of games require material components, but there is nothing to say what the components are or how to get them – except a blanket statement that all components are generally in a game component bag. I do not have a problem with maintaining the mechanical consuming of components; D&D5E has disposed of enforcing that limitation largely because it has been pretty much ignored since it was invented. But if that's the case, why do material components shut down at all? There is humour in D&D 5 tb's material components containing a small gust and a duck feather, but if they're not even listed, material components are just another leg in your query soup. [h=3] PART EIGHT: SET/[h] I don't have much to say about this chapter, as veteran players will already know more than provided here. While this chapter gets new players excited to play in fantastic regions, the impending spectrum of a flood of supplement books acids any enjoyment I can find in wanting to know more. With the hindsight of my experience with PF1E, each sub heading looks like a promise from a twenty- to forty page supplement. To get a full picture of Golarion, we need to buy it all! [h=3] PART NINE: PLAYING THE GAME/[h] I've previously mentioned the three-action economy and it looms great here. It's an interesting choice that allows for a little more flexibility in terms of arranging what you want to do in turn when. That said, I can't that it will feel very different in practice. Thinking evall takes an action to collect, the multi-attack penalty discourages more than one or two Strikes per turn to higher levels, and characters need to move to engage their targets. Most game plays take another two actions to throw, which translates to the PF1E equivalent of a move, small, and standard action. The XP system seems to have a complete renovation: now each level takes a fixed 1,000 XP to achieve, with samples and challenges offering a variable amount of XP based on their relative level to the adventurous party. I like this! This makes encounter budgets much easier on the DM's side. With relative challenge XP should also make social or exploration challenges easier to reward players, if you can only base the XP award of a DC suitable for which level you want. I amused that there is a half-page sidebar that says in a very polite way locked up and listens to your DM and stop being a RAW munchkin. This section of the book also demonstrates PF2E's inspiration from other sources. Persistent damage (damage taken at the end of the turn, then an unchanged role used to see if the damage stops) looks much like continuous damage from D&D 4 tb; and the fortune and accident effects (rolling two d20s and taking the better/worse result) are certainly inspired by benefit and disadvantage of D&D 5 tb. I don't think these effects will come that often, but I appreciate the designers incorporated useful mechanics from other systems. The doughnut of endangered areas with reach of PF1E is gone, thank you goodness. Falling distance is roughly consistent with my back-of-the-envelope mathematics, and damage is just a flat number based on distance falling – maximum out on 750 damage! Eat it, high-level barbarian! On the other hand, if Bleeding damage is a special kind of Physical damage, why wouldn't it be below the Physical portion of the damage type sidebar instead of in a completely new column to energy, alignment, and poison damage? Also, some small treats for DM's as we finish the Core Rulebook: in case of tyres, SAMPLES GO FIRST IN INITIATIVE! Also, danger damage (reading, blizzards and avalanches and forest fires and lava and so forth) are standardized for ease of reference. Phew! [h=3] PART TEN: THE COMBAT/[h] We move to the second part of this review – that's right, the Core Rulebook and the Combating get reviewed as some! Take a stretch break, get water, relax your shoulders and uncle your jaw. We're in the house piece! If you read through the Nuclear Rule Book in a single sitting, the Combating won't be much of a problem. Many of the materials in the Bestiary build off the patterns found in the core rule book in terms of stat blocks and query soup, and only if there is a wonderful introduction section to refresh you. What stands out most for me is how much Paizo wants to remind us that these creatures do not samples are You can feel it choice in everything from descriptions to the abilities to the relative power of samples. This is especially pronounced with sample names, where a relatively iconic sample will have a new PF2E-specific name as its primary descriptor – and then in the first line of its flavor text, the name of the sample of D&D. I assume it's as older nerds as myself will know how to connect the new monster with the old one, but it feels unnecessary. Stick to your guns, Paizo! You also see a bit of one-upmanship here and there. You thought D&D abolition was nassic? Well, they are also in Pathfinder and they are CHUMPS compared to the SUPER ABOLETHS which are a way cooler name like Veil masters! You thought lies were coming powerful? They're just level 12! You know what's super powerful and scary? The only demon lord declared in the whole book after ten pages talked about how cool demons and demons were! Speaking of demons, the only two demons with non-monstrous appearance are both illustrated as female presentation, and are representative of the sins of Lust and Pride. Yes, the descriptions of both beings say that gender fluid and arbitrary told are demons; and yes, they are both very tastefully dressed; but it is still a misstep in this day and age. Heck, D&D 5 tb is not perfect in this regard, but it at least depicts both male and female versions of succubi on par with equal footing and with equal appeal. In a similar vein, the page on the orange culture does nothing to reduce their role as sometimes problematic stereotypes. Paizo's obsession with full-page layouts short-short changes some of the samples in the Combatary, especially the Nightmare. The poor criterion only gets a single sentence description before it is right in the statblock and the next statblock. There are some entries in the Bestiary that shout virtually for a supplement to come together and make them playful ancestors – especially since goblins are now part of the core team. I wouldn't be surprised if catfolk (which certainly isn't D&D tabaxi) was a playful ancestor in the future, with orchestred not far behind. This can explain why ogress is more mirror and clean in illustration - they can end up as playable ancestors, so PF2E avoid depiction of them as sweat slob. If a final delicious little nugget is hidden at the back of the Bestiary, the developers included a sidebar that makes it clear sharks rarely harm people and that their danger is far baffled by survivors' stories – well on you again, Paizo! Another golden star! [h=3] CONCLUSION/[h] As much as I've already written about the Core Rulebook and the Bestiary for PF2E, there are still a lot that has fallen on the editorial red pen – so check it out for yourself! Much care has been placed in the introduction section to make sure you land on your feet when you jump into PF2E and Paizo has clearly learned some of the best – PF1E! – when it comes to balancing the new system. There are a few here and there, but overall it looks like an excellent new addition to the TTRPG pantheon and a great way to start an obsession with our favorite pastime. This article was contributed by Ben Reece (LongGone/Writer) as part of EN World Community (ENWC) programme. If you enjoy the daily news and articles of EN World, please consider consenting to our Patreon! Last edited by a moderator: August 13, 2019 Page 4 Hello my loves and welcome back to the PAIZO NEWS UPDATE! We have a very special update if you can imagine, so without further ado: IT'S HERE! It's here! IT'S FINALLY HERE! PATHFINDER SECOND EDITION IS HERE! The second edition of the classic tabletop role game Pathfinder is alive and in the wild TODAY! We were lucky enough to be sent a review copy so we could really sink our teeth in and let us know as soon as it falls the ins, outs, ups, downs, well, and bad of the new edition. Let's get started! But first rules some ground rules. I will initially approach the review of two different angles: that of an experienced member of the TTRPG community, and from the point of view of someone opening the Core book as their first entry into the hobby. I bring it up because it's important to consider new players at every stage of our often-arcane pastime. Secondly, this edition of Pathfinder (PF2E) will at times be compared to its competition: not only the previous edition, but also several editions of other prominent role-player games on the market. As much as I've heard that the Golem likes to avoid such comparisons, they're inevitable. Parts of the system are clearly designed as a response to (or are inspired by) specific aspects of the other games. Now, on the review! [h=3] PART ONE: DIVE IN/[h] Clock on 640 pages, the Pathfinder Core Rulebook is a fierce theme that is less wide than the D&D PHB and DMG through the thickness of a single cover panel – and it is including the sandwich of two cover panels separating the D&D books! Wayne Reynolds is back with his very clear art style, and as far as I can tell the first and only time, the words are printed second edition in the whole book in a corner. But enough judgment a book by its cover, let's get to the meat goodness! The table of contents is given a two-page distribution to introduce each section and provide a description of what is in the store. The clear, understandable writing sets the tone for what must come in the introduct chapter. I can't stress how important it is to read the instructions in order. This advice applies to any TTRPG, but it is even more important for PF2E. There are enough changes from the first edition (PF1E) that even seasoned vets will quickly get lost without a careful read-by. You should also read the introduction chapter because it is a great introduction to the role of games in general. This is all you've ever tried to describe about our favorite hobby abbreviated in an easy-to-consume single page. This is the excretion of The wisdom our hobby has plucked its way since the dawn of TTRPGs. PF2E is also fast and effective in laying out fundamental concepts and expanding on them in a very natural way. Resist the temptation to jump forward! The answer is often in the next paragraph or on the next page. That said, it feels like the launch pushes the limits of the front-loading information to new players. It is necessary, but it can easily be a whole evening (or two!) for new players to switch from reading the book after playing the game. This problem with design overload is on full view in PF2E's character sheets: There are four pages for each sheet! Most players are unlikely to use the third page (because what Pathfinder player cares about taking notes or characterization outside of Chaotic Neutral? Hat), but even some forcht characters will need the fourth (spelling) page because of the way their extraordinary abilities such as spells are handled. The first page is dense, but once you get a handle on the core systems, it starts to make sense. I was raised on D&D 3.5, so I'm accustomed to a character page clouded with very small boxes for skills and weapon attacks and arms class and what have you, but new players will almost certainly feel overwhelmed. There is also a whole PAGE dedicated to achievements. Have some forever-magic on the design team get salt over how many achievements the fighters have? If the character sheets were a new player's exposure to the game, I think it would turn them off to PF2E – four pages to D&D 5 tb's two! I don't think it's a stretch to say the two-page will win – especially because there's a lot less math involved. There are paraed-down versions on the internet. Use it, or make your own. [h=3] PART TWO: AND NOW, SOME RULES/[h] Talk about comparisons with other systems: PF2E uses a brand new mechanic called skill. It does all the heavy lifting that BAB, skill points, and save bonuses used to, and it has discrete ties that increase with level! Don't worry, though, it's not your D&dad's skill: this skill goes up to 8, not 6, AND you add your level to it. You will also notice that there are now melee and advanced Strikes. This is your primary attack; PF2E has only renamed it for ease of general reference. Of course, general-reference attack actions in a special box with a special symbol make me think of D&D 4 thour, which is a good thing: D&D 4 tbs were very effective as a game engine at the combat level. Once you get into that mindset, the change is good for the PF2E system as a whole – it's streamlined, making it easier to refer and switch. Another change is the explicit division of game between encounters (battles measured in initiative and rounds), exploration (measured in minutes or hours), and downtime (measured in days to years). There is definitely more support in this book for encounters, but I like that the division is made clear there and that certain things are described as too exhaustingly exhausting during exploration or downtime (such as casting most game, for example). This mechanic, like some others in this book, makes me wonder how much it will see from real game, but it's just one of those modular things about TTRPGs that makes them good for any table. The introduction covers a general run-through character generation, which has been done very well. As a D&D 3.X fan, I don't love the ability boost system for loading, but the width of free boost does not queue my worries about just being able to make a given character type in one plural form. There is enough variety that you should easily be able to make an atypical member of your ancestors or class. [h = 3] PART THREE: ANCESTORS AND BACKGROUNDS/[h] Firstly, the bad news: PF1E players who were accustomed to bundling racial properties together will make some difficult choices. Do you want your dwarf to stone? They can't have battle training towards giants. You want your eleven resistance to magical spell effects? Then they don't get free skill with lung bows. The bottom of all this there is a much larger level of adaptability available for each character. D&D fans will recognize three-to-four flavors for every ancestors (outsiders: who show up in classes), and I really like the idea of pursuing greater ancestral boys (in the form of more achievements) than you level up. This means that your dwarf will dwarf dwarf things until they dwarf the dwarf. Full disclosure: I was experimenting with a similar system for a homebrew PF1E neighborhood a while ago and it's heartening to see that I'm in a good company! Other thoughts: hello goblins, you'll be my exclusive choice of ancestry from now on! Semilings can now heal more if they eat a snack while they heal, which is just incredibly noticed for them. They can also pick up an anti-struggle that seems to cause so much frustration for DM's in the line. Backgrounds grant skills proficiencies will once again be familiar with D&D 5 tb barrel and – as with everything in PF2E – comes with even more achievements. 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Also now occult magic users (one of the four flavors, or traditions), also known as know a bunch of random mostly useless trivia magic. Just another reason I'm a naked, I think. Clerics continue to be able to vomit healing as they really put their mind around it, and now it should look even cool when they do. The new-child-on-the-block version of healing game/channel energy takes more time to throw to get bigger effects. Necrossia also has a cruel downgrade and clerics are where it's called the first time: you can maximum four pets, and you have to spend one of your three actions for them to do anything. More about it in a moment. You wanted paladins? You have champions! Paladins is one of the champion's three subclasses, or causes; you can further distinguish your champion by taking another divine ally (blade and mountain return of PF1E and shield keys from the new mechanics in PF2E) and another oath (dragonslayer, fiends courses, and shiny). Oath gives you benefits based on your cause and lets you ignore the authority of a specific kind of evil being. Neat! This means that you can break the law into an insufficient governing city and not lose your subclass benefits. By the time I got to the grape section, I began to see a pattern in how the classes had changed. Most players get the option to either a) get an additional 10-level game slot, b) doing something ridiculous, or c) doing something too ridiculous. Grapes can choose between to waste their time with a weapon style that doesn't add their primary statistics to damage, such as archery. Also, raising a shield now takes one of your three actions! This rule was in the playtest and I didn't like it, and it's in the game now and I still don't like it. We'll come back to action economy in a little bit. Fighters also show the difference in hijackers: permanent to an extra action every turn or an extra response to every enemy turn seems just not as awesome as grapes turn into giant caiju! Monks feel much more like their PF1E counterparts because their subclass choice comes from the different stand places they can take . Fans of flag of blows will be disappointed because it's a one-time-turning thing and it just gets you one additional punch. Monks are also casualties of those bundled now optional as Deflect Missiles and Wholeness of the Body are now mutually exclusive, to name just one example. What are with new editions of TTRPGs and intended for rangers? PF2E Rangers are not bad, but they have similar issues to their brothers and sisters in D&D 5 Tb. A solid amount of your class functions can in an animal companion (we all know how quickly you lose them), and the stones are diverse as ignore difficult terrain and triggered traps or track your prey over aircraft. I get rangers, but when a class's choices include leanness in multi-attacking fines that don't get much better, lean in the less harmful archery style, or get a companion that is always weaker than you will be and take some of your action economy, silver linings are harder to come through. Rogues are now the big kids on the block because in addition to getting so many skills, they also get so many achievements. Their sneak attack now maximizes out on 4d6 precision damage. All that said, they're the only way to get Dexterity modifiers to damage to fines weapons, which is way cooler than one of the other two subclasses. There is also frustrating little support for the subclass that are supposed to talk about fast and silver tongues; most of their achievements are aimed at damage or sneaking. It seems like a lost opportunity to make a character shine during an atypical game moment like exploration or downtime. Magicians have always been the blaster magic class and in this edition which means instead of three game slots at each level they get four. They are also the first class to get counterspelling, which is both easier to understand than PF1E, but no less difficult to do: counterplay requires you to at least know the game is thrown and are also limited by traditions of magic. Finally, wizards. They also get scores, but they must use the specific spelling that is thrown (?). Only with a performance investment can their counter spelling be more common. At that point, why bother? Their bound item can also keep them with magicians in a small way by getting another casting of a prepared game. Speaking of wizards, concentration usually takes one of your three actions to maintain unless you drop some high-level performance on it. Wizards can also pick up a version of hiding their spelling, which I think is just neat. [h=3] PART FIVE: SKILLS AND ACHIEVEMENTS/[h] Son made them easier to handle! Not only are there fewer skills, but their increases happen less granular and general DCs are more static. Two developments I think are great: some skill checks require a certain level of skill, so someone who doesn't invest any training in Arcana couldn't randomly roll better than a down-on-side-luck wizard. Also, some checks have been secretly rolled by default, such as Perception. This avoids the common player problem when one person rolls weakly and the whole group sees that and every other player decides to roll perception for no in-character reason! Progress looks a little off. It is possible for a character to start with a third of the five skill skills tapes (untrained/trained/master/expert/master/legendary), which means that there is not much progress thereafter. To accommodate, the expert tasks can be reasonably looks, and the legendary tasks are, well, legendary. For example, the sample expert survival check to avoid being lost is successfully navigating a hedge thousand; while the monster legendary check for the same skill is navigating an ever-changing dream empire. And the single intermediary step in between is not lost in a featureless desert! You are limited from hitting legendary to middle-teens in level, but it could ultimately mean a lot of adventurousness without much progress. PF2E also disposed of opposite checks. Characters and creatures use a DC equal to 10 plus whatever bonus they have to the appropriate storage or skill. For example, instead of rolling Stealth versus Perception, you simply roll Stealth towards the target's Perception DC. Instead of rolling intimidation towards a D.C., you just roll intimidation towards the target's Will DC. Clean and simple – and another good idea inspired by D&D 4 T. On achievements! THERE ARE SO MANY ACHIEVEMENTS. After the initial shock to see three entire pages of performance table, you will see it is useful broken down by skill. It would have been nice if the tables also included a page number with each entry. Also, be sure to read the heading at the beginning of the performance chapter, if it can try a little confusing to find out what achievements you can take. [h=3] PART SIX: EQUIPMENT/[h] In theory, the Pathfinder system uses the silver piece (SP) standard, but most of the currency values are in gold pieces (GP), even your starting currency. It also lists starting currency in SP if you want to strengthen the SP economy. I get the clear feeling that the silver standard won't last very long in real game. Some of the GP scale you may be accustomed to changing has changed. A set of full plate is only 30 GP! Even espionage, notorious waste of money, was brought down a pen or two: the best version in the Core book is only 80 GP. Generally speaking, a zero PF2E's equipment costs, which are good with me, have been cut off. My least favorite part of PF2E's new systems is bulk. I understand the concept in theory: some things are more than just their physical weight to air around. I didn't like it in Starfinder, I didn't like it in the Playtest, and I don't like it now because it's punishing martial characters. A set of armor, a shield, and a sword will take up to half your smashed capacity. Even accepting a maximum-power start character, to fully equipped from take a quarter of your carrying space. In addition, the base is bulk values for weapons and weapons for when they swing; WEAR THE STUFF INCREASES THEIR BULK. I'm sure it was probably true when flat-wearing weight was the norm, but also: who was actually shell-wearing weight of worn armor? I was shocked to discover that grandwords use a D12 for damage now! The tactical decision between big dice or consistent dice is gone! It also means that, with the new rules on the size of the size great weapon fighters get the short end of the stick. I also predict that new players from D&D 5 tb will rather be switched off when they see that and alternatory weapons do not harm Dexterity modifiers. Maybe it overwhelms the whole fighting style, but it will definitely come as a shock. Weapons also have a variety of special features and critical hit effects. If you're part of the old school pool crowd or like to spend time in a wiki deep dive on medieval weapons, I suppose it's attractive. Personally, I think it's too much. The tactical options are delicious, so the net result for weapons is a mixed bag. This is a fairly small point, but as a rule book, half of a page in the arms section is dedicated to an illustration, shouldn't the illustration of the weapons describe the page? Kyra's are not very illustrative of weapons other than studded leather drowned in clothes. I won't know Kyra's name unless I've growned it! I miss the days when illustrations came with their own snack flavor text that illustrated the image of what it illustrated on that page, and gave personality to the characters it describes. [h=3] PART SEVEN: SPELLS/[h] Spellcasting is always the thornproof part of any fantasy RPG and part of it comes down to how well they function in the crucifixion of home game. A good part of the complexity of spelling in PF2E is what I call inquiry soup. Keyword soup is the menu of keywords found at the top of most stat blocks in PF2E and it only gets exhausting after the first few iterations. Spellings, weapons, character abilities, achievements... Keyword soup is helpful from a design perspective, but it is intimidating for new players. One of the issues that D&D 5 tb bother is that decisive game rate at a higher level than their base level does not make for a significant difference in the game's effect. From some of the calculations I've done with some of the harmful games in PF2E, this is not a problem for PF2E casters! Focus games are only available through certain class features and their game rate can only be recharged by spending 10 minutes meditated. They allow access to some of the more iconic class capabilities such as bardic inspiration and monk k capabilities. Fortunately, this spells out their own portion of the spelling chapter is given; it would be a nightmare to try to find them mixed in the general play listings. Rituals spells take at least an hour to throw and have other, more specialized requirements, but they do not need a creature to use game capabilities. I like the idea of a bunch of idiot cults trying a ritual they have no business effort, but unfortunately rituals also have a minimum level for the ritual leader. Fortunately, this is a rule that is easy enough to ignore. My final point about gaminge out is a problem with components. Some number of games require material components, but there is nothing to say what the components are or how to get them – except a blanket declaration that all is generally in a game component bag. I do not have a problem with maintaining the mechanical consuming of components; Michael McCarthy or not. away with enforcing that limitation largely because it was pretty much ignored since it was invented. But if that's the case, why do material components shut down at all? There is humour in D&D 5 tb's material components containing a small gust and a duck feather; but if they're not even listed, material components are just another leg in your query soup. [h=3] PART EIGHT: SET/[h] I don't have much to say about this chapter, as veteran players will already know more than provided here. While this chapter gets new players excited to play in fantastic regions, the impending spectrum of a flood of supplement books acids any enjoyment I can find in wanting to know more. With the hindsight of my experience with PF1E, each sub heading looks like a promise from a twenty- to forty page supplement. To get a full picture of Golarion, we need to buy it all! [h=3] PART NINE: PLAYING THE GAME/[h] I've previously mentioned the three-action economy and it looms great here. This is an interesting design choice that allows for a little more flexibility in terms of arranging

what you want to do in turn when. That said, I can't imagine it will feel very different in practice. Thinking evall takes an action to collect, the multi-attack penalty discourages more than one or two Strikes per turn to higher levels, and characters need to move to engage their targets. Most game plays take another two actions to throw, which translates to the PF1E equivalent of a move, small, and standard action. The XP system seems to have a complete renovation: now each level takes a fixed 1,000 XP to achieve, with samples and challenges offering a variable amount of XP based on their relative level to the adventurous party. I like this! This makes encounter budgets much easier on the DM's side. With relative challenge XP should also make social or exploration challenges easier to reward players, if you can only base the XP award of a DC suitable for which level you want. I am amused that there is a half-page sidebar that says in a very polite way locked up and listens to your DM and stop being a RAW munchkin. This section of the book also demonstrates PF2E's inspiration from other sources. Persistent damage (damage taken at the end of the turn, then an unchanged role used to see if the damage stops) looks much like continuous damage from D&D 4th; and the fortune and accident effects (rolling two d20s and taking the better/worse result) are certainly inspired by benefit and disadvantage of D&D 5th. I don't think these effects will come that often, but I appreciate the designers incorporated useful mechanics from other systems. The doughnut of endangered areas with reach of PF1E is gone, thank you goodness. Falling distance is roughly consistent with my back-of-the-envelope mathematics, and damage is just a flat number based on distance falling – maximum out on 750 damage! Eat it, Barbaric! On the other hand, as Bleeding damage is a special kind of Physical damage, why wouldn't it be below the Physical portion of the damage type sidebar instead of in a completely new column to energy, alignment, mental, and poison damage? Also, some small treats for DM's as we finish the Core Rulebook: in case of typos, SAMPLES GO FIRST IN INITIATIVE! Also, danger damage (reading, blizzards and avalanches and forest fires and lava and so forth) are standardized for ease of reference. Phew! [h=3] PART TEN: THE COMBAT[/h] We move to the second part of this review – that's right, the Core Rulebook and the Combating get reviewed as some! Take a stretch break, get water, relax your shoulders and uncle your jaw. We're in the house piece! If you read through the Nuclear Rule Book in a single sitting, the Combating won't be much of a problem. Many of the materials in the Bestiary build off the patterns found in the core rule book in terms of stat blocks and query soup, and only if there is a wonderful introduction section to refresh you. What stands out most for me is how much Paizo wants to remind us that these creatures do not samples. You can feel this design choice in everything from descriptions to the abilities to the relative power of samples. This is especially pronounced with sample names, where a relatively iconic sample will have a new PF2E-specific name as its primary descriptor – and then in the first line of its flavor text, the name of the sample of D&D. I assume it's as older nerds as myself will know how to connect the new monster with the old one, but it feels unnecessary. Stick to your guns, Paizo! You also see a bit of one-upmanship here and there. You thought D&D abolition was nassic? Well, they are also in Pathfinder and they are CHUMPS compared to the SUPER ABOLETHS which are a way cooler name like Veil masters! You thought lies were coming powerful? They're just level 12! You know what's super powerful and scary? The only demon lord declared in the whole book after ten pages talked about how cool demons and demons were! Speaking of demons, the only two demons with non-monstrous appearance are both illustrated as female presentation, and are representative of the sins of Lust and Pride. Yes, the descriptions of both beings say that gender fluid and arbitrary told are demons; and yes, they are both very tastefully dressed; but it is still a misstep in this day and age. Heck, D&D 5th is not perfect in this regard, but it at least depicts both male and female versions of succubi on par with equal footing and with equal appeal. In a similar vein, the page on the orange culture does nothing to reduce their role as sometimes problematic stereotypes. Paizo's obsession with full-page layouts short-short changes some of the samples in the Combatiary, especially the Nightmare. The poor criteriin only gets a single sentence description before it is right in the statblock and the next statblock. are some entries in the Combating that Shouting for a supplement to come together and make them playful ancestors – especially since goblins are now part of the core team. I wouldn't be surprised if catfolk (which certainly isn't D&D tabaxi) was a playful ancestor in the future, with orchestrated not far behind. This can explain why ogress is more mirror and clean in illustration - they can end up as playable ancestors, so PF2E avoid depiction of them as sweat slob. If a final delicious little nugget is hidden at the back of the Bestiary, the developers included a sidebar that makes it clear sharks rarely harm people and that their danger is far baffled by survivors' stories – well on you again, Paizo! Another golden star! [h=3] CONCLUSION[/h] As much as I've already written about the Core Rulebook and the Bestiary for PF2E, there are still a lot that has fallen on the editorial red pen – so check it out for yourself! Much care has been put into the introduct section to make sure you land on your feet when you jump into PF2E and Paizo has clearly learned some of the best – including PF1E! – when it comes to balancing the new system. There are some issues here and there, but overall it looks like an excellent new addition to the TTRPG pantheon and a great way to start an obsession with our favorite pastime. This article was contributed by Ben Reece (LongGoneWriter) as part of EN World Columnist (ENWC) programme. If you enjoy the daily news and articles of EN World, please consider consenting to our Patreon! Uruguay became a smuggler's provy in 2019.

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