

Interview with Pete Sinclair of Fun Publications

Contributed by lonegamer8
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The Allspark has been lucky to be able to interview Pete Sinclair of Fun Publications, notably editor on Hasbro's Transformers Collectors' Club magazine, as well contributing various fiction, such as co-writing "Dawn of Future's Past" with Forest Lee and managing editor for "Shattered Glass". We thank him for taking time out of his busy schedule to answer a few of our questions!

The Allspark: What got you started with Fun Publications?

Pete Sinclair: In late 2004 Hasbro contacted Jon and Karl Hartman about something to be discussed in regard to the Transformers convention license. Since I was one of the organizers of BotCon 2004 I jumped in on the call as well. Long story short, Hasbro wanted a few people to help their new licensee, Fun Publications, get up to speed on TF's. By the time it was all said and done there was an advisory board set up consisting of Jon, Karl, J.E. Alvarez, Benson Yee and myself.

By January of 2007 I was doing quite a bit outside of the advising activities (Club Magazine editor and so on) so I began working part time. In April of this year I was offered a full time position with Fun Publications and the rest is history!

AS: You've dealt with many different stories, and different toys from that fiction, which of each has been your favorite?

PS: I am still very partial to Dawn of Future's Past because that was the first story I was really involved in and Beast Wars is by far my favorite of all the Transformers fiction.

You know, counting 2009, we have now produced somewhere around 60+ toys. That is a big pot to choose from... The Ratchet from 2005, Optimus Primal and Tigatron from 2006, Springer from 2007, Megatron from 2008 and the Club Seacons... That is my short list.

AS: Fans have been known to be quite vocal with their feelings about both the Club fiction and figures, how has this affected the Club's future storylines and/or figures?

PS: We really do listen. I mean, we know who our audience is and while you always appreciate feedback you still have to be true to the story you want to tell. That said, we have tried to make sure we offer a variety of stories so that everyone gets something. I think this is most evident with Cheap Shots, the comic that comes with the Nightbeat figure. While it takes place in the Classicverse, it is just a fun, stand alone story that does not take itself too seriously.

AS: Transformers fans love to speculate "what if's" when it comes to Transformers and repaints. Have you ever gone into one of the many discussions fans have had on what repaints they'd like to see and base any Club or Botcon figures some of the suggestions? Any "That's awesome! We've got to do that!" moments?

PS: Our list of toys that fall in to the category of "we should do that" is quite long. Often times though the logistics or theme we have set up may exclude those.

As far as ideas online, it seems like a few of the very cool ideas seem to creep up in many different circles. There is one out there that we had also thought of, and I think just about everybody has thought of, since Universe was first revealed. We REALLY want to do this one...

AS: Walmart will be receiving a number of G1-inspired repaints. Big Daddy, Breakaway, Crankcase to name a few. While these are under the Movie banner, any chance that the Club might work them into the Classics-verse?

PS: You never know, but hey, Breakaway already has points going for him as that toy features a name first used by the

Club for the Year 3 Membership toy.

AS: One of those Walmart figures is an homage to the Gobot Crasher. We've seen a few other Gobots appear in the Club fiction, will we see any more sneak into the Transformers' Universes?

PS: Maybe...

AS: You've let it slip that there will be one final Classics-verse comic after the comic that comes with Nightbeat. Can you say anything about the plot or how it will be released?

PS: Well, as far as another Classicverse story, I did not say comic per-se. There is just one last story floating out there that would wrap up the Classicverse. I know Withered Hope worked as a great add on to both the Transtech and the Classics comic fiction.

AS: We've seen one Trade Paperback of the Club comic. Are any more Trade Paperbacks on the horizon?

PS: Yes, there will be another but we have not decided when and what the content will be. It will be released by us this time as well.

AS: While working with the Club and convention stories, you've dealt with quite a few new characters that end up not getting a toy. Which of those would you most like to see eventually make it to plastic form? I know quite a few fans would say Elita-1...

PS: Elita 1 would make a GREAT exclusive... As far as others, those Constructicons from Shattered were pretty awesome!

AS: The Club has grabbed onto a few figures that were originally unreleased color schemes; like the Seacons, Club Astrotrain, and Shattered Sideswipe. Is the Club looking at any other unreleased redecoes that it might be interested in releasing?

PS: Most options are always on the table. However, the Seacons were mainly a "right place/right time" situation. Unreleased Deco's are often unreleased for a reason so we always need to be sure that it is something that makes sense and that it will sell well.

AS: The Club has released both comic stories as well as stories in prose form. "I, Lowtech" appears to be the last Transtech prose story, and then after that will be the Shattered-verse's "Dungeons & Dinobots". Any plans for stories after those two?

PS: Yes, D&D is just the first of the Shatteredverse Prose stories.

AS: Bios have been another great way for the Club to expand on its fiction, especially the Minicon bios since we most likely wouldn't see their stories if not for those. Are there any plans for the Minicons to come back?

PS: Yes

AS: As the editor for the club magazine, if you could give more focus to one section of the magazine, what would it be?

PS: It is always tough to decide on what we should showcase in each issue. I mean, we have a set number of pages for the comic, for the profiles, so we sometimes have to cut here and there if we want to expand a certain feature for a specific issue. For instance, in the next issue of the Club Magazine we had to make all kinds of room for a new feature people are going to be crazy excited about! I will say, and I can't stress this enough, if you have not been a member, or were a member and left, you really don't know what you are missing out on!

AS: The 25th Anniversary of Transformers is coming up next year. Does the Club have any plans for something special next year?

PS: We are thinking about a few things, how to add our part to the hoopla that is coming... But yes, we do have a lot planned for 2009!

Again we'd like to thank Mr. Sinclair for not only giving us his time to answer our questions, but also for being kind enough to share some images with us!

Here is an early look at some concept art and roughs...

Click the images above to see larger versions. The Dinobots sketch is by Evan Gauntt and the Shattered Blaster is by Chad Porter. These are very early previews for a series of Shattered Prose stories the Club is planning featuring 6 very talented and exciting artists!