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Game on - for 40 hours

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When Joshua Wolfer, 28, was a criminal justice major at Shippensburg University, he said, he lived with a few computer geeks.

Three apartments of guys linked their computers and spent hours playing games. What started out as a side project turned into a business, and now Wolfer is the administrator of FITES, a computer gaming LANParty that stands for Frag Infinity Tournament (Extreme Slaying).

"I kinda fell into this by mistake," he said.

Wolfer is hosting a 40-hour LANParty this weekend at the Holiday Inn Holidome, 2000 Loucks Road, West Manchester Township. Up to 150 gamers equipped with their computers will battle it out in tournaments playing "Battlefield 2," "CounterStrike Source," "Unreal Tournament 2004," "Call of Duty 2" and "StarCraft: Broodwar."

Wolfer said the war games are called first-person shooter games, so the players run around the virtual world with guns in hand taking care of business. Trophies are awarded to the winners. Players must be 13 or older.

The group has held large events in Harrisburg, but this is the first such event in York. Wolfer said there are some gamers who will chug Mountain Dew and Red Bull so they can last the 40 hours. "They get hyped up on caffeine," he said. "I've never done it. I've gone 36 (hours)."

There are two four-hour sleep breaks scheduled at 3 a.m. Saturday and 1 a.m. Sunday, but many players stay up for open play. For those who need to get out of their seats, Wolfer said, there is karaoke and active games such as "Guitar Hero," "Dance Dance Revolution" and "Wii Home-run Derby."

"No one can sit in their chair for 40 straight hours," he said.

While many gamers can play from the comfort of their own home, Wolfer said the connection at the hotel will be 100 times faster than the Internet, which makes for more intense playing. Besides, with more than 100 gamers in one room, the competition sky rockets.

While there will be some serious competition going on, Wolfer said, gamers of all skill levels should check it out.

"I think most people have played before," he said. "It is a competition, but you don't have to be a serious gamer."

- NICKI LEFEVER, FLIPSIDE STAFF PIC: SUBMITTED A group of gamers zero in on their targets at a LANParty with FITES, which stands for Frag Infinity Tournament (Extreme Slaying), at Little People Daycare in Springettsbury Township.

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