Bonus, Penalty and Pushed Rolls

With the 7th edition of Call of Cthulhu firmly upon us I wanted to take some time to discuss bonus, penalty and pushed rolls under the new system. If you haven’t picked up a copy of the 7th edition, you probably should, but its gonna cost ya. You can, however, checkout the quick start PDF which is free <HERE>. I do not yet own a copy of the 7th edition book but I do have the full PDF version. The trouble with getting a PDF before the physical copy is that you have the content in hand and it makes it harder to spend the money of the physical copy if your on a budget like myself. Nonetheless, the 7th edition keepers guide is beautiful, the investigators handbook is as well but if you are only looking to get the rules you wont need to pick that up. The investigators handbook does have lots of great information dealing with the creation, customization and playing of your character. Again, this is a top notch book and <Chaosium Inc.> has done a great job on these. Add in the keepers screen and the field guide and your sitting pretty. For those of you who are new, you may not want to drop money just for the sake of owning the books. In this case the free PDF will get you playing the game and if you want to buy the more in depth PDFs those are available as well for a lower cost than the physical books. Call of Cthulhu is less about rules than it is about story so if you get the quick start guide and some free auto calculating character sheets, also available at <Chaosium Inc.> you will be set. Now your on your way to the eldrich horrors of the Mythos, beware.

Now that we are set to play the game I wanted to discuss one piece which is new in the 7th edition. In the 7th edition we have the concept of the difficulty level of a roll. The rolls can be either regular, hard or extreme. This is a very simple concept to grasp initially and it really makes the system more dynamic in my opinion. So and extreme roll is one fifth of your total in any given skill. If you have 80% chance at doing something, divide that by five, and you get 16, you have a 16% chance of rolling an extreme roll for that skill. Roll under 16 and you have seriously nailed it. We used to call this impaling because the combat rules had this concept for getting an impale when attacking with a weapon that had a chance to do so. Saying you impaled your accounting roll though is a bit strange, now we can say we got an extreme success on our accounting roll, which makes more sense. Half of your initial skill is now called a hard success. Again, 80% skill, divide that by 2, you now have 40% chance for a hard success. Roll less than 40 but above 16 and your have your self a hard success. Good job.