**Forum Posts for Week 4**

***Domin8 writes:***

**The New World and You**

Ok, so you’ve just managed to get yourself off Noob Island and you’ve just hit level 3 and you are feeling pretty darn good about yourself. But then, you head into the Dark Forest around Antarra and… die… and die again… and die again? What is wrong? Is your character broken? Are you doomed to a life of hovering around town, hoping to score a hit before kiting your monsters back to the town guard?

Maybe, but don’t give up just yet. The Noob Island is a little deceiving in terms of how monsters and battles are balanced. On Noob Island everything is balanced pretty well for you. Most enemies have combat skills between 8-12, and do around 4-6 damage each time they hit. There are some exceptions, and some swingy hits, but on average, you are fighting things that give you ample time to decide to fight or flee. Indeed, the way skill levels and damages are balanced on Noob Island can make some fights drag out, becoming more a battle of attrition than anything else.

The New World isn’t balanced the same way as Noob Island. First thing to note that it really isn’t balanced at all! Generally speaking, areas around towns are fairly tame, and you can expect similar combat skill levels if you stick to the hunting grounds near cities. However, as you go further out, and especially if you step through a gate, you can find yourself facing creatures many levels above your skill, and possibly unbeatable.

First tip ***Use Your Monster Lore Skill***. When you come across a new monster, use Monster Lore to assess it. Even a basic success on a ML check will give you the combat skill level of the creature. If you are up against something 4-5 levels higher than you, you will need a team, or a plan. Higher ML checks will give you information on the enemies’ powers and possibly weaknesses.

If you don’t have Monster Lore, there are lots of ways to get access to it. The Captain can hire guides that will give you a basic level of ML for 100 or so gold each journey. Also, Scribes can make lore books which can substitute for ML. Unfortunately, NPC scribes don’t sell these books, and PC scribes know just how valuable they are. Prices have skyrocketed in the past few weeks. Expect to pay something like 100 gold *per use* for a Monster Lore Book.

Second tip ***Tier Up Your Gear***. Near the starter towns, enemy hit points do not increase above what you faced on Noob Island. What does increase is enemy damage, and sometimes armor. Tier one gear is going to quickly fall behind. Tier two gear is pricey, so prioritize your weapon first and then work on your armor, one gear slot at a time.

Third tip ***Be Wary of Monster Upgrades***. Once you get to the New World, every group of creatures will have at least one upgraded creature. An upgraded creature has one or more extra attributes that will make it more dangerous. Countering this guy can make your life a lot easier. Some of the upgrades that I have seen are as follows:

* Tank -- +4 Armor, counter with Pierce, or Burn
* Offensive -- +4 Attack Skill, -2 Defense Skill, Bonus Damage Dice, Less Hit Points, counter by killing quickly or engage with your tank
* Nauseating -- -2 Attack/Skill checks to adjacent enemies, counter with range
* Piercing – All attacks get Pierce (4), counter with range or high defense
* Resistant – Takes half damage from some class of attacks, usually melee or magic, counter by not hitting them with that
* Toxic – Each hit that penetrates armor has a chance to cause instant death, avoid at all costs

I have no idea why Toxic even exists! I have seen this only once in the game, and it wasn’t even on a boss, just on a random troll. It is very OP and unfair. Counter by petitioning the devs to get rid of this bogus power.

These upgrades make it extremely important to ***Nail Your Matchups***. Get your tanks on the enemies that need to be tanked. Get your ranged guys kiting enemies that can’t be meleed. Keep everyone off your spell casters. Keep the healers in a central position so they can reach every team member.