

Warhammer Quest™

DUNGEON ADVENTURES IN THE WARHAMMER WORLD

A DUNGEON OF YOUR OWN

By Gavin Thorpe

“Of course nobody knows we’re here, manling!” Snorri Ironaxe reassured his Barbarian companion. To prove his point, the Dwarf limped ahead of the others and into the dimly-lit chamber that was their goal. There was a cruel snicker from the darkness as the Skaven sprang their trap...

CREATURES OF DARKNESS

In White Dwarf 188, Ian Pickstock showed how you can use the blank Event card decks to create a range of Monsters that fit your Citadel Miniatures collection. Well, I thought that this was such a good idea that now I almost always use the blank Event decks in my own adventures, along with a few more of my own ideas. This means that I can easily fight Chaos-orientated adventures, or populate my dungeons entirely with Skaven and their foul minions.

There are two key components to making an adventure for a specific type of adversary – the Event cards and the adventures themselves. With just Event cards you can create the right type of adversaries to fight against, but you’ll still be playing the same adventures as before. To really create the dark hold of a Chaos horde or a Skaven lair, you’ll have to invent specific adventures for your Warriors to complete. This is the same process we went through creating the Lair of the Orc Lord and Catacombs of Terror adventure packs. We sat down and looked carefully at what made the Orcs and Undead so characterful, and worked out how best to translate this into a series of challenging Warhammer Quest adventures. For this article though I only have a little space, so I’ll just look at creating your own personalised deck of Event cards and come back to the adventures later...

MOMENTOUS EVENTS

Let’s deal with those Event cards then. As Ian pointed out, it is simplicity itself (well, almost) to create ‘M’ type Event cards for your chosen race. Your first stop is the Bestiary section of the Roleplay Book. You’ll find an almost exhaustive guide to every creature and troop type that can be found in the Warhammer World. *Almost* exhaustive. Any gaps in the Bestiary are not due to a particular dislike of the particular Monster on the part of Andy Jones (nor even our absent-mindedness), they are absent merely because there was only a certain number of pages to go round, and some slow-pokes were left at the back of the queue!

Anyway, it is the matter of a few minutes to translate the appropriate Monsters to your cards. A couple of players have said to me that they find the blank cards most useful for playing adventures above Battle-level 1. Despite the horrendous amounts of pain and misery the Monster tables caused us (well, slight anguish anyway!) it is true that the Event cards are an excellent way of playing harder adventures. There is no reason why you have to have just a Battle-level 1

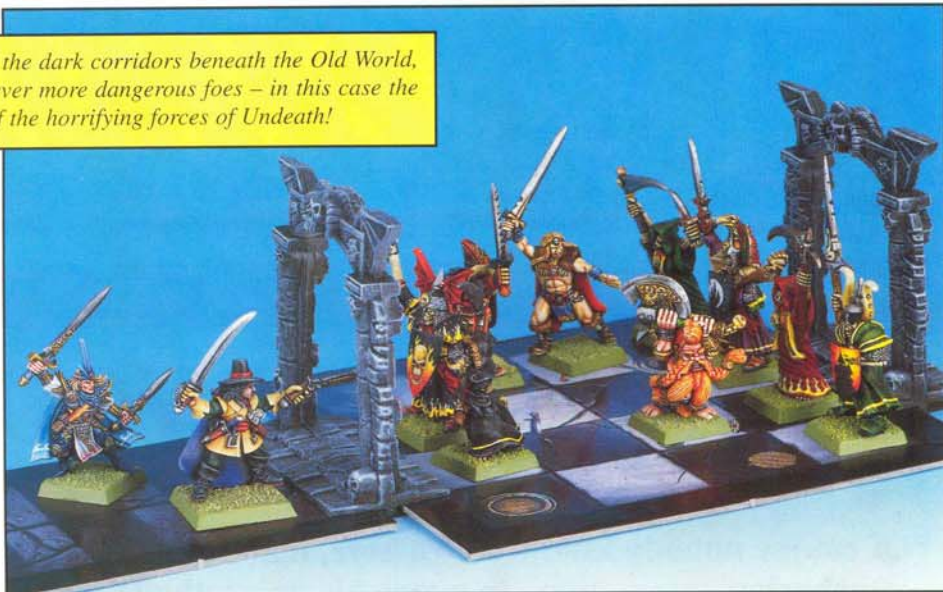


As you venture deeper into the dark corridors beneath the Old World, you must triumph against ever more dangerous foes – in this case the Warriors have fallen foul of the horrifying forces of Undeath!

Event deck, is there? Look at some of the higher Battle-level tables and you'll see that there's plenty of Monsters to go round. At higher Battle-levels, each entry on the Monster tables can contain up to four or five different types of Monsters. If possible, try to pick entries with only one or two types of Monster so you can fit their profiles and special rules onto a single card. For example, for Battle-level 5, your 'M' Event cards could include:

- 1 Wight Lord and D6 Wights,
- 1 Cockatrice,
- 1 Gorgon,
- 1D3+1 Chaos Warriors riding Juggernauts,
- 3 Dragon Ogres,
- 1D3 Beasts of Nurgle and
- 1D3 Skaven Warfire Thrower teams.

This is a pretty eclectic selection of Monsters, but would allow you to fight a Battle-level 5 adventure using the cards alone.



For special rules, simply make an abbreviated version on the card to remind you – if something is too complex you can easily refer to the relevant section of the Roleplay book (which you would have to do anyway!).

TAILORED DECKS

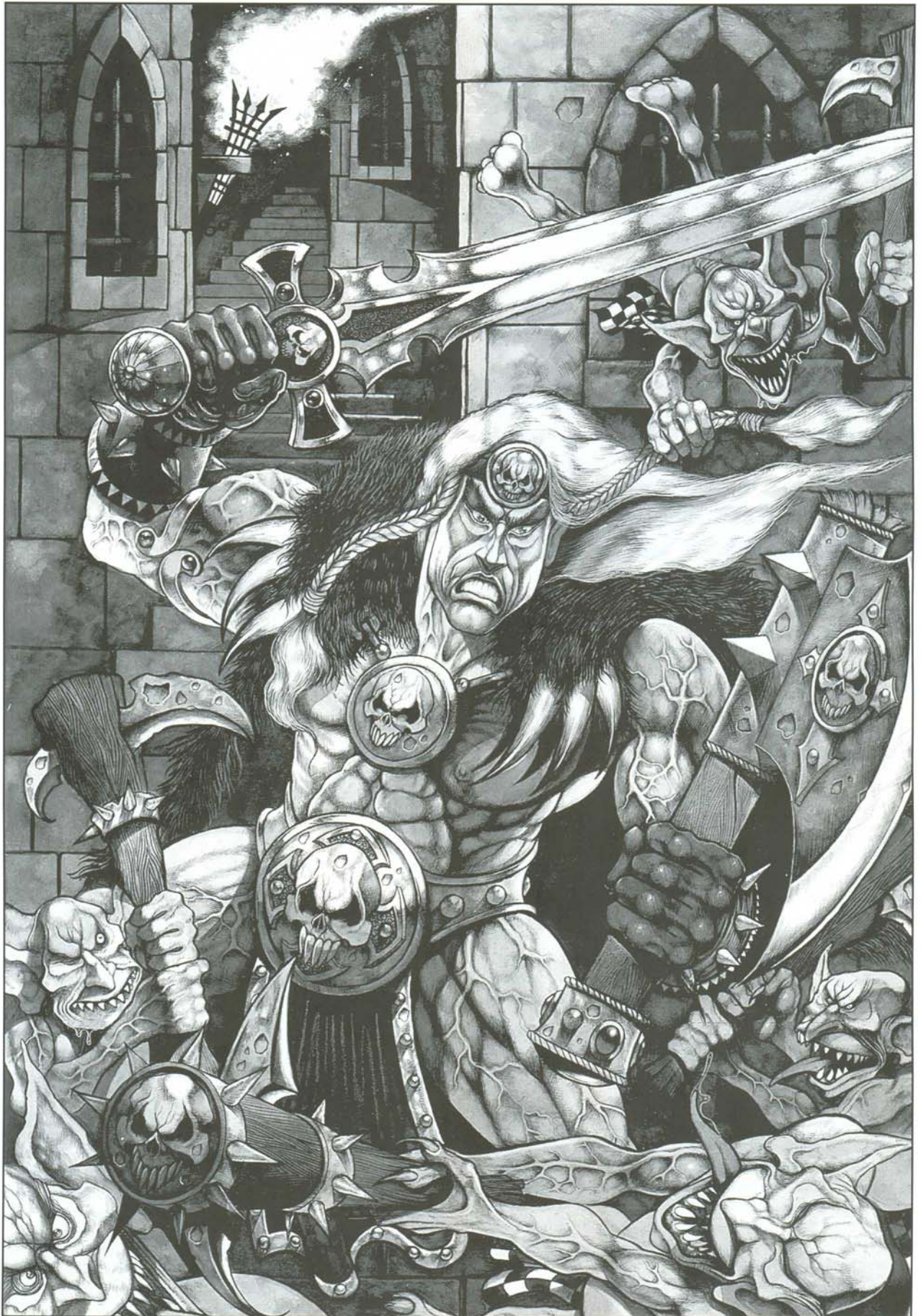
Well, back to what I was saying about tailored Event decks. As you can see, it is simple to copy out the details from the Roleplay book, and Ian's article shows how to devise special rules for troop types which can't be found in the bestiary (send them in, we may publish an expansion to the Warhammer Quest Bestiary sometime!).

As well as your Monsters, though, you need to come up with 'E' type Events – those spike-filled pits and rooms filling with sand that make an adventure more than just a Monster bash! Events of this sort can be split into two types – those that help the Warriors and those that hinder them. Those of you who read my *Into the Depths* article in the last issue will be thinking "e's sed all dis before!", and you'd be right. But last issue I was talking about board sections, which are subtly different. If you *think* you know what I'm going to say next, you can skip the next paragraph (but then you'll never know...).

Well, that's the know-it-alls gone, so I can carry on with my explanation. The thing to strive for with your new Events is balance. In the same way that the more powerful Monsters come in smaller groups, so more deadly traps or larger treasure hoards should be equally rare. The only real way to achieve game balance is to do what our games designers do – playtest! Try out your ideas, and modify them according to what happens. If an Event kills off the whole party, it's pretty safe to say it needs toning down a bit! On the other hand, if the Warriors stroll into a room and end up laden down with treasure when they come out the other side, you should make things a bit more difficult. As your Warriors progress up through the Battle-levels (hopefully!) you should toughen up your Events accordingly.

Well, now that everybody knows about game balance I can sprinkle a few ideas into your fertile imagination – some of them may grow into brilliant Events in the fullness of time. The easiest way to do this is by way of example. Do you have your new Event cards from this month's card section? You do?







Right, these are some Events that I just happened to have bubbling around in my head a while ago, and I got the chance to include them in White Dwarf (lucky me!). Let's take the simplest one first. By the way, all my cards are designed for Battle-level 1, but that's because as well as taking my Barbarian, Ragnar – Scourge of Evil, up through the ranks, I like to play one-off games with the different Warriors available, trying out different party compositions and generally messing about with my adventures.

RAT OGRE

The Rat Ogre is the most straightforward of the four Event cards. I simply used the profile from the Roleplay book, noting that they roll two dice for damage and ignoring the rules for *Fear*, since Battle-level 1 Warriors are so full of fiery youthfulness they aren't scared of anything (it's only as you gain experience that you truly learn what terror is!). Noting that Rat Ogres are even tougher than Minotaurs, I thought a single Rat Ogre would be enough to suitably tax the Warriors' skills. The choice of a Rat Ogre was purely for personal reasons – they have such a reputation for savagery and violence I wanted the opportunity to defeat one in combat!

ORC AMBUSH

The Orc Ambush is one of the most simple changes you can make to significantly alter an Event. All I've done is take one of the Monsters' special abilities from the Roleplay Book (*Ambush* in this case) and given it to a type of Monster that doesn't usually have it. You could do something similar with a little thought. For a start, *any* type of Monster can ambush people (in retrospect I think that Skaven are even more appropriate than Orcs) so there's a start. Or how about Black Orcs with the *Parry* ability (they get to parry and therefore ignore a Warrior's blow on a certain dice roll), they'd be nasty!

The Citadel range of models contains Monsters armed with all sorts of weapons, wearing different armour and riding a variety of monstrous creatures. If you came up with rules for Giant Wolves, there's no reason why your Gobbo Wolf Riders couldn't come sweeping down the corridor towards your party! What about Beastmen with halberds instead of throwing spears? You could say that their long weapons enabled them to *fight in ranks* (that is, attack the Warriors from two squares away). The only limit to what you can do is your miniatures collection and your imagination.

With this Event, game balance was maintained by reducing the number of Orcs attacking from 2D6 Orcs to 1D6, which offsets the fact that the Warriors will be attacked before they get a chance to react.

TREASURE TROVE

Treasure Trove is a fun Event because it offers greater rewards, but at a higher risk. Because the chances of finding treasure and triggering an Unexpected Event are the same, you really have to decide where your priorities are and how fit you think the party is. If you get greedy when your Warriors have already been through almost the entire dungeon, there is a good chance that all the Treasure in the world isn't going to save you! On the other hand, that *Healing Potion* could be the next card in the Treasure deck... What a dilemma!

SPIDERS' LAIR

The *Spiders' Lair* is similar to the Orc Ambush, in that it applies a special ability which hinders the Warriors from the start. In this case, it happens that the Spiders have the *Web* ability anyway, but you can achieve a similar effect with other Monsters. For instance, your brave Warriors could come across a particularly foetid group of Zombies and each Warrior would have to roll their Toughness or less on a D6 to avoid choking on the stench and suffering a -1 to hit penalty for the duration of the combat. To ensure game balance in this type of situation, it's a good idea to either reduce the number of attacking Monsters, or increase the amount of Treasure gained for overcoming the adversaries.

OTHER EVENTS

All the Events I've talked about so far have been pretty negative – they provide foes for the Warriors to overcome. However, not all Events have to be resolved with a few fireballs and a strong sword-arm. There is room for divine inspiration in the form of a small idol or chapel where the Warriors can heal or gain some special ability. Another option is for the Warriors to encounter the ghost of some unfortunate Warrior from the past, who guides them for a little while. This could be resolved by ignoring Unexpected Events for a certain number of turns or board sections, or perhaps allowing the Warriors to turn over the next couple of Event or Dungeon cards so they can see what's in store for them. This should be just enough to give them an edge, but not enough to make finishing the adventure pointless and devoid of surprises. There are many ways the Warriors can be aided without just giving them the opportunity to grab lots of Treasure!

I could go on for ever, almost, but I'm sure you can come up with loads of ideas without me going on and on. Well, it's time to start thinking about writing your own new adventures. Until then, bye!