

Army Tactics

as told by Brahm Tazoul

The snarling vermin kept advancing, despite having their hideous giant rats fall one after another.

"Ignore the rats, dolt! Shoot those red-eyed devils coming in behind them!"

"I can't!" screamed the marksman as he let loose another arrow. "They're getting too close! I have to take them out before they chew my legs out from under me!"

Snarling with frustration, Captain Yarim of the Bloods Brigade drew his sword and dagger and went to work on the ever-encroaching horde. Squeals of stuck rats filled the sewers, overcoming the shouted commands of the captain.

"Shoot, damn you!" he implored as he dispatched yet another oversized rodent. Looking quickly over his shoulder, he failed to see his archer. Without any time to spare, he turned back to knock a bladed fist away from his throat. "It'll take more than ye to take me down, rat-scum!" he challenged. The skaven merely hissed, and jumped away, scampering into the shadows of the sewers. With nothing but piles of dead and dying rats laying about him, Captain Yarim looked about for his missing marksman.

Seeing nothing in the sputtering light of his failing torch, he began to back-track, only to trip over a prone form laying face-down in the murky water. Rolling the body over,

Yarim knew it was his missing archer even before he saw his bruised face and split skull.

"Ignorant PESTS!" he screamed down the blackened passageway. "Have you any idea the coin I had invested in this man?" The roar that answered him was deafening. Standing quickly and starring in terror at the darkness, Captain Yarim desperately searched for the source of that blood-chilling sound, but found nothingness mocking him instead. Moments later, it became all too clear.

The Rat Ogre came barreling down the sewer line, its great strides carrying it ever-closer to the frozen man. Yarim's mouth opened and closed, but no sound came out. He raised his sword feebly, its tip wavering in the air. With one fell swipe, his head was removed from his body, and the Blood Brigade was heard of no more.

While it is true that each and every warband that scours Mordheim has its unique strengths and weaknesses, one must first successfully master tactics and understand the battlefield before victory becomes a constant companion. Over the next few pages, I will cover the basics of guerilla warfare, and point out several key elements to a successful warband and campaign. Understand that not all tactics are sound with every warband; the Undead have a nearly complete lack of long-ranged attacks, however their fear-causing units dominate in hand to hand. Keep that in mind as you read over the tactics and tips held herein.

Deployment

One of the key things to walking (and not crawling) away from any scenario is deployment. Too often I have seen good warband rout from a table simply because they were not properly prepared for the rigors of the upcoming encounter. There are a few things to keep in mind when deploying your troops for battle.

- If you have the option, choose the side of the table that best suits your warband. Don't immediately go for the edge closest to the target area or objective. Ensure that your warband is going to be around *long enough* to complete the objective or reach the target. If you've many archers, choose the side that either provides the most (and easiest) attainable high-ground or most defensible ground. If you've a lack of missile attacks, choose ground with lots of cover, allowing you to approach your enemies in the best way. Always consider your warbands abilities and weaknesses when choosing where you are going to sit, and not just the side closest to the fridge!
- When placing your figures, use common sense. If you're going to try and gain control of the high-ground, then ignore the pot-shots and hail-mary's that may present themselves. Simply run your archers to their chosen ground and do it quickly. Your shots from your preferred ground while not moving will more than compensate for the possible one or two shots that you ignored while getting there. If you're making a mad dash at an opposing side, then protect your good melee fighters with fodder; henchmen, warhounds, giant rats, etc. Let them take the wounds while your strongmen get up close and personal. On the other hand, if you've a low-rout warband, the

units up front should be either those with the highest toughness, best armor or special abilities (Step Aside, Dodge, Lightning Reflexes being prime among them). They will buy you the time you need to get within arms-reach of your foes.

- Regardless of pre-conceived notions of an alliance or truce, ***never*** leave a flank unguarded. Always leave some sort of fodder or currently unnecessary troop to guard your heroes as they advance. I've seen it happen where two "allied" warbands were both eliminated because one side chose the incorrect time to end their agreement. An unprotected flank shared with your ally can be the quickest route to your downfall.

The Crucial First Turns

It is extremely important to be able to survey a battlefield and pick out the most opportune places for you to engage in hand to hand combat, where your archers should be placed, and where you'd like to pin your opponents down. Just as important are your plans on how to obtain and dominate those crucial locales. Make them, and most importantly, stick to them.

- Create a strategy while placing your men before the first turn. Make a mental note of what each of them is going to do over the next two turns. Attempt to stick to that plan as closely as possible, while ignoring minor details that may arise. If someone is leaving themselves open to a seemingly "perfect" attack, it's probably not that perfect. Ensure that your men reach where it is you want them to go, and then work out your next plan. If you react, you are already fighting a losing battle. If you force your opponents to react to you, then you've the upper hand.

- If you've the units to do so, you should always have two fighting squads. While not completely independent of each other, they enable you to cover more ground, and force your opponents to consider far too many options for them to cover them all with certainty. A favorite tactic of mine is to have a squad of fighters and a squad of archers. Working in harmony, these two groups can decimate nearly any opponent that stands before them; the archers restrict enemy movement, as well as enable me to choose when and where I'd like hand to hand combat to occur. Once I've engaged my enemy, my archers are free to move about and pick more choice locales, or simply to carry-on and finish any specific scenario objective.
- You have to decide if you are going to make a run for glory, or if you are going to try and widdle-down your competition first. I am personally a fan of the latter. Unless the benefits of the scenario-bonus is lost if you've eliminated your foes early-on, I would seriously recommend picking a good place to bunker-down and force your foes to come to you. This is particularly true if you subscribe to my previous point; find a good space, deploy your ranged units appropriately, and wait. Eventually, they are going to have to come after you. Just be sure that you are in the better of the two positions.
- If winning the scenario depends on a specific task, I would suggest trying to prevent others from doing it rather than attempting it yourself. For example, if you must remove a chest from the field of battle to win the scenario, pick the most likely candidate for the task, and deploy

your forces with preventing him/her from obtaining that goal in mind. As such, you should set up where you can shoot down the runners, block their likely routes of escape, and allow yourself the benefit of escaping relatively unscathed from battle. If there are more than one other warband on the table, all the better. Bide your time, and allow them to wear each other down. Then pounce once one is gone and the other is weakened. Although everyone *loves* a hero, heroes very often wind up dead

Know Your Enemy

Whenever you encounter something new, it is natural to fear it. Fortunately for us table-top generals and commanders, the world of Mordheim offers very little in the way of surprises. The only surprises on the battlefield are those that you allow to happen.

- Request to see your opponents roster sheet before every battle. You may not know what type of upgrades their forces have received since you last did battle with them.
- Make note of any weaknesses you see. If a model has suffered a massive chest wound (thus a -1 to T) then it would be a prime target for your bows/long bows. Nervous system damage is horrible to melee-based units, so be sure to engage them whenever the opportunity presents itself. Exploit your foes weaknesses to their fullest, and not only will you prove to be a more dangerous adversary, but your own troops will be better off for it.

That is all for this installment. Be sure to read my other supplements on **Equipping a Warband** and **Warband Choices**, available soon here at www.brahmsbook.com