

YRIEL'S RAIDERS

by Matt Keefe

Although Eldar Corsairs are a constant threat to merchant shipping, they very rarely pose a major threat to Imperial battlefleets. The same cannot be said of the dozens of fleets of Eldar ships that protect each Eldar Craftworld. Each of these Craftworld warfleets is a deadly and highly potent force that is capable of laying waste to an entire sub-sector.

Over fifty years before the Tyranid assault, High Admiral Yriel had led Iyanden fleet. Although he was considered one of the greatest Eldar naval tacticians to have ever lived, his character was flawed by the sin of pride. When Iyanden had been threatened by a Chaos space fleet raiding out of the Eye of Terror, Yriel had led the fleet on a pre-emptive attack on the Chaos Fleet's flagship, leaving Iyanden Craftworld unprotected. He only returned just in time to stop a suicide attack by a small flotilla of Chaos raider ships, who nonetheless managed to damage the Craftworld. Expecting to be feted and honoured for his victory, Yriel was deeply angered when he was called upon to defend his course of action. Claiming that his record should speak for itself, Yriel refused to enter into the debate, leaving his old friend Kelmon no choice but to elect a new High Admiral in his place. Bitter with rage, Yriel vowed that he would never set foot on Iyanden again. He and a small band of followers left the Craftworld and formed an Eldar raider company that became the single most powerful Eldar pirate force operating in the galaxy.

When he heard of the Tyranid's assault on Iyanden, Yriel did his best to ignore the terrible peril that threatened his old Craftworld. But proud though he was, righteously angry though he was, Yriel could not leave Iyanden to its fate in this, its very darkest hour. Battling his way through the Tyranids' psychic blockade, Yriel swept to the aid of his people. He arrived just in time.

Like a thunderbolt from the blue Yriel and his raider fleet smashed into the Tyranid Hive Swarms. He was quickly joined by the few remaining craft of Iyanden's fleet, and together the combined Eldar space fleets tore the Tyranid

Swarms apart. Two more waves of Tyranid Hive Swarms attacked the Craftworld, only to meet the same fate. Not a single Tyranid ship reached the Craftworld, though the cost to the Raiders was dear. Bloodied but unbowed the Raiders prepared to sell their lives to the last in order to turn back the next wave of Tyranids. On the bridges of the Craftworld and of the circling Eldar ships vigilant eyes watched the scanners, waiting for the first tell-tale blip that would indicate the direction of the next assault. Minutes passed, then hours, and with a growing sense of wonder the Eldar realised that no more Tyranid Swarms were coming - the assault was over. The Hive Fleet had been destroyed!

But on Iyanden Craftworld the war went on. The Tyranid Hordes that had been fighting a tenacious rearguard action awaiting the aid of the rest of the Hive Fleet now turned like cornered rats and hurled themselves at the Eldar. Caught by surprise the Eldar staggered back, desperately trying to hold the suicidal Tyranid onslaught. The Fortress of the Red Moon fell to a surprise attack, and for a moment it seemed that with victory within their grasp the Eldar would be defeated. But, for the second time, Yriel led his Raiders to the rescue of the Craftworld. Disembarking from their orbiting spacecraft the Raiders joined with the battered defenders of Iyanden Craftworld and, yard by yard, step by step, forced the Tyranids back. A final wild charge led by the Tyranid Hive Tyrant was annihilated by the combined efforts of the Avatar, Yriel and the Ghost Warriors, and then in a series of vicious one-sided battles the last of the Tyranids were hunted down and destroyed. The Tyranid attack on Iyanden Craftworld was over. The Tyranids had been defeated.





FLAME OF ASURYAN, YRIEL'S FLAGSHIP

.....320 points

At the heart of Iyanden lies the Shrine of Asuryan. It is here that the most powerful and wise of Iyanden's leaders gather for all talk of war and it is here that the armies of Iyanden muster when the time comes. There is no place more sacred, nor more heavily guarded within the entire Craftworld.

At the centre of this great shrine burns a constant flickering fire, the Flame of Asuryan itself – a beacon, a symbol of hope to the Eldar of the Craftworld. It is said that the Flame of Asuryan is the burning fire with which the Eldar will claim victory over all who would attack the Craftworld, though it is also said that should the flamed ever go out, Iyanden's light will diminish also. When Yriel led the Craftworld's fleet, he was considered to be the favoured of Asuryan, and amongst his many great titles earned himself the honorific of 'Bearer of the Flame', and duly renamed his flagship *The Flame of Asuryan* accordingly.

The *Flame of Asuryan* is magnificent, even by the standard of Dragonships. It bears three great sails – one born upon its long elegant spine, and another pair each mounted atop the great outriggers to its flanks, both of which also bear deadly pulsar lances.

The *Flame of Asuryan* bore Yriel to many great victories at the head of the Iyanden fleet and he would give little thought to parting with the vessel once his own rank was lost and his own place amongst the Craftworld taken from him. Instead, he and his most loyal followers departed, Yriel himself still aboard his mighty flagship. By such means did the *Flame of Asuryan* come to depart the Craftworld of Iyanden.

When Hiveworld Kraken descended upon Iyanden, Yriel made no attempt to aid his former home, but when the Tyranids overran Iyanden and threatened the Shrine of Asuryan itself, he could no longer ignore its calling. Returning at the head of a mighty fleet of raiders who he had gathered about him in his years of exile, Yriel smashed aside the Tyranid fleet.



TYPE/HITS	SPEED	TURNS	SHIELDS	ARMOUR	TURRETS
Cruiser/8	10/20/25cm	special	Holo-fields	5+	0
ARMAMENT		RANGE/SPEED	FIREPOWER/STR		
Prow Weapons Battery		30cm	16		
Keel Launch Bay		Speed Nightwing Fighters 30cm* Phoenix Bombers 20cm*	4		
Port Pulsar Lance		30cm	1		
Starboard Pulsar lance		30cm	1		
			Front		
			-		
			Front		
			Front		

*Nightwings function exactly as Darkstars, Phoenix bombers function exactly as Eclipse.

Notes: The Flame of Asuryan carries the most fearsome members of Yriel's own pirate warband, which count as an Aspect Warrior Fighting Crew.

THE CRAFTWORLDS & THE OUTCASTS

The Eldar are an incredibly ancient race, who once ruled a vast empire across the stars. Then came the hideous times of the fall, when the Eldar were consumed by their own decadence and fell from power. The few who survived were scattered across the stars in their vast Craftworlds - vessels as large as worlds which now stand as the Eldar race's last remaining havens.

It is impossible to say with certainty how many Craftworlds there are. They were built many millennia ago in great urgency and in times of unimaginable peril. The turmoil and confusion which preceded the destruction of the Eldar worlds was great. All higher government had long since ceased to operate, and it was only thanks to the heroic actions of a few far-sighted individuals that the Craftworlds were built at all.

The Eldar Path

Aware that it was the ineffable power of their own whims and desires which had so wantonly brought about their downfall, the survivors, the Eldar of the Craftworlds, have developed a way to control their own inner natures. Every Eldar chooses for himself a discipline which he then makes it his task to master. It may take years to successfully accomplish this, perhaps more than a single human lifetime. Each discipline is rightly called a path, and each path may necessitate further choices and specialisations. For example, the Path of the Warrior has many Aspects, and whilst all enable the Eldar to master the skills of combat, each Warrior Aspect brings with it its own special techniques and abilities. Other paths include that of the Bonesinger, as the psycho-technicians of the Craftworlds are called, who craft wraithbone and other psycho-plastic materials to fashion the material artifacts of the Eldar. There are innumerable paths, some chosen but rarely, each offering its followers a complete way of life.

Outcasts & the Path

Sometimes the rigid constraints of the Eldar path are intolerable even for an Eldar to bear; such individuals leave their Craftworlds and become known as Outcasts. Many Eldar spend years or decades as Outcasts before they return to the Eldar path. Outcasts must bear the terrible burden of their heightened Eldar consciousness without the protection of the Eldar path. Set free within the universe they are dangerously vulnerable. Only Eldar of especially strong character can survive for long as Outcasts. After years of adventure and wandering, or sailing the seas of space aboard the pirate fleets, most Eldar eventually return to the sanctuary of the Eldar path.

Eldar Pirates are outcasts – Eldar who have turned away from the Path and abandoned their craftworld. These Eldritch Raiders live quite apart from the orderly, disciplined Eldar of the Craftworlds forming ravenous bands of pirates, corsairs and raiders. As with other outcasts, some of these eventually return to the Path, or may retain some ties to their original craftworld. However, the wilful and unaccountable actions of the Outcasts stand far apart from the carefully scribed and considered actions of the Craftworld Eldar, and for the most part the Farseers show great reluctance for their own peoples to mix with the wayward and dangerous Outcasts.

Combining Eldar Craftworld and Corsair Vessels

Outright alliance between fleets acting on the will of a Craftworld's Seers and the more volatile, self-serving Eldar Corsairs is relatively rare, but certainly not unknown. It does, however, usually only occur when a knowledgeable leader of great influence is present, able to both satisfy the careful measured desires of the Seers yet at the same time prove his might to the more aggressive pirates. Such leaders, like the legendary Yriel, are rare, but the fleets they command are invariably powerful.

Ordinarily, Craftworld Eldar fleets CANNOT use the Reserves rules to pick ships from a Corsair fleet (nor vice versa). To use a mixed Craftworld and Corsair fleet, you must first choose to use ONE particular Eldar fleet list. In place of that fleet's normal Fleet Commander option, you must then choose an Eldar Hero (listed below). The presence of an Eldar Hero then entitles your fleet to take ships from the 'other' Eldar list (i.e. reserve Corsair ships if your fleet is a Craftworld Eldar fleet, reserve Craftworld Eldar ships if your fleet is made up of Corsairs).

FLEET COMMANDER

Eldar Hero

Your fleet may be led by an Eldar Hero, in place of its normal fleet commander.

Eldar Hero (Ld 10) 150 pts

You may purchase re-rolls for your Eldar Hero by paying the cost listed below:

One re-roll 50 pts
Two re-rolls 75 pts
Three re-rolls 100 pts