Rules Review

By Gav Thorpe, Derek Gillespie, Stephen Pearson & Andy Hall

*Every year the Inquisitor Rules Committee (names above) hold an annual Rules Review to see what changes or tweaks (if any) need to be done to maintain the game system. Below is this year's findings. The rules additions and changes are official so Gamesmasters should take note. Where relevant, alterations and/or additions are highlighted in **bold italics**. Commentary on the changes is in italics.*

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Subdue: is a special action that can be used by the character when in close combat (not at arm's length, even if armed with a reach 4 or greater weapon). The character attacks as normal. If he hits his foe, the blow automatically lands on the head location (no need to roll). Regardless of the weapon used, the attack does ***no damage***. As he has been hit in the head, the enemy character will have to pass a Toughness test or be stunned. If a character with this skill manages to subdue an enemy who is already stunned, the target is knocked unconscious. However, the subdued character counts as having the True Grit skill, and so may attempt to recover consciousness (it's a good idea to have someone keep an eye on subdued enemies to avoid nasty surprises!).

This ability now does no damage to the victim and is just a restraining technique as was its original intention.

Acrobatic: The character is highly agile and is able to leap a startlingly far distance, performing somersaults and other astounding feats. An acrobatic character adds another D6 yards when jumping, and may jump over other characters. The character can leap directly upward D3+3 yards and reduces the percentage chance of an action combined with a jump by a quarter rather than by half. A character with this talent may also jump over his opponent as a close combat action (like an extravagant circle move) – place him on the opposite side of his opponent, 2 yards away. ***Your opponent may make an Initiative test; if he passes he may make a 90º turn towards you.***

This gives an opponent of an Acrobatic character a little more chance and makes Acrobatic slightly less of a no-brainer.

Feint: The character has perfected the art of deceiving his opponent in close combat, with a mixture of body language and fake strikes. Once per turn the character may make a feint instead of another close combat action. The character rolls to hit as normal, and if the feint hits it is successful. No damage is done but a successful feint means that the enemy counts as having attempted two additional parries that turn. A feint may not be parried or dodged. ***If the feint is missed then the opponent may make an immediate Counter Attack.***

Feint is another ability that has been seen with alarming regularity. Allowing the opponent to counter-attack will make players think if they truly need to use it.

Blademaster: The character has superb knife-fighting skills, able to do things with a blade that makes it deadlier than a sword. A blademaster can dart in and out of combat with astounding speed, cutting deep gouges into the enemy. If a character with this talent is attacking or parrying with knives ***(not Power Knives, just normal mundane blades)*** he counts as having a Reach 4 weapon and all hits count as critical hits.

This ability was never intended to be used for anything but normal knives, this just clarifies that point.

Lightning Reflexes A: A character with lightning reflexes thinks on his feet with outstanding speed, able to assess a combat situation and come up with the best course of action in moments. ***A character with lightning reflexes may carry out their actions at any time during the turn, even going before characters with higher Speed values. Additionally, if more than one character has an equal Speed value then the one with lightning reflexes may go first, (if both have lightning reflexes then use Initiative as normal).***

Lightning Reflexes B: A character with lightning reflexes thinks on his feet with outstanding speed, able to assess a combat situation and come up with the best course of action in moments. ***If a Character with lightning reflexes needs to Change his Actions as described on page 26 of the Rulebook then he does not have to make an Initiative test to re-declare his actions. He does this automatically because he is such a quick thinker!***

Lightning reflexes is an ability that had us flummoxed for a quite a while. The current ability has proven to be too powerful and has not been used as it was intended. Unscrupulous players were simply pausing for breath as their first free action giving them a large tactical advantage. At the rules review we went through several possible solutions until we came up with the two presented above. We are still unsure which is the best solution and so both have been presented. Next year, based on feedback from players, we will make a decision as to which one to go for.

Hit Location

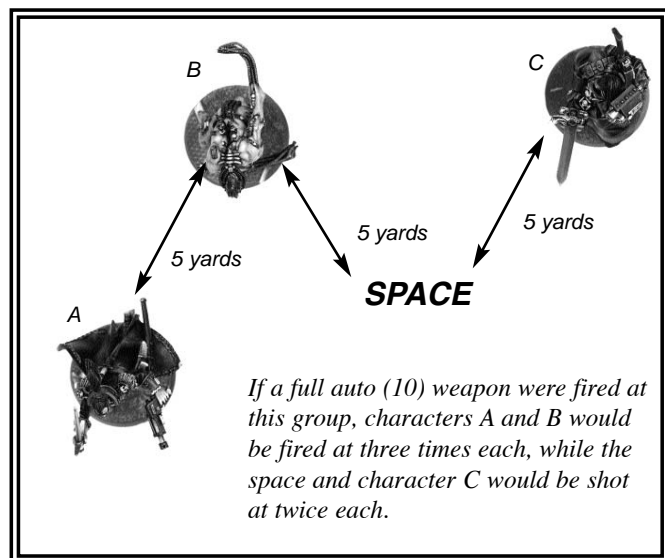The hit location chart has changed, use the new one below:

HIT LOCATION TABLE	
D100	**Location**
01-30	*Leg*
31-35	Groin
36-65	*Arm*
66-80	Abdomen
81-95	Chest
96-00	Head

(If an arm or leg has been hit then it is the closest to the opponent, if this is unclear then the GM must decide.)

If an opponent is hit in close combat then the +20% modification no longer applies. Instead the attacking player can decide to add 10% to the roll, but he must declare this before the roll is made. Note that the modifiers for being higher or lower than your opponent still apply.

The hit location chart has been in a state of flux ever since Inquisitor has been published. We hope to have solved the problems with the new chart. The player's choice of a +10% mod also adds another element of strategy to the combat.

FULL AUTO AND FLAME

Firing on full auto means squeezing the trigger and letting rip in a pretty random fashion. This works in a very different way to normal firing, to represent its particular advantages and disadvantages. To fire on full auto, nominate a target group. All characters in a target group must be within 5 yards of at least one other character in the target group, and they must all be within the character's arc of fire. If you wish, you may elect to fire at 'spaces', in which case the empty space counts as another character in the target group. Obviously the if the 'space' is hit as an end result of firing, the shots are wasted. This can be seen in the diagram below:

If a full auto (10) weapon were fired at this group, characters A and B would be fired at three times each, while the space and character C would be shot at twice each.

Once the target group is established, you must determine your basic to hit roll. This is the character's BS, modified by Range (but no other modifiers) to the furthest target in the group. This to hit roll is then divided by the number of shots being fired in the burst of fire. The final to hit roll is calculated by multiplying this number by the number of targets in the group.

For example: A character needs 63 or less (after range modifications) and is firing 10 shots at 5 characters. The calculation is there fore $(63/10)x\ 5 = 31$ – only round off the final to hit number, not in the intervening stages.

The character then makes a to hit roll for each shot fired. These are not shots at specific targets, but rather an indication of the general accuracy of the burst. Once the number of hits has been determined, each is randomly allocated against a potential target. Note that it is entirely possible for one target to be hit several times while others remain unscathed – being hit doesn't prevent a character from being hit again in the same burst of fire.

All targets in the target group, whether hit or not, must take a pinning test at their basic Nv (in other words, no +20% for not being hit as is usually the case).

Randomise hit location and calculate damage as normal for each shot. Note that full auto can never make placed shots.

Flame Weapons: Some weapons, instead of firing a projectile or bolt of energy, spray a fountain of liquid over an area. The most common examples of these are flamers, which gout burning incendiary fuel, though some rarer ones may fire clouds of acid, gas or other substances. Due to their nature, it is highly inadvisable to fire flame weapons whilst moving quickly, and so they may only be fired as part of a combined action if the character is walking or stationary.

Flame weapons are fired at a target group in the same way as full auto weapons, and the same method is used to determine potential targets. The to hit procedure works slightly differently,– static targets are generally easier to hit and take more damage than fast-moving ones.

Use the following method to calculate the chances of hitting each target. The basic chance of hitting is the firer's BS. This is divided by the number of targets in the group – the wider the fire is spread, the less chance of hitting any one particular target. You then roll to hit each target in turn. The number of times a target can potentially be hit is shown on the chart below:

Target is moving at:	Number of to hit rolls made
No movement	D6+1
Crawl	D6
Walk	D3+1
Run	D3
Sprint (or faster)	1

Roll to hit the target the number of times indicated; work out location and damage, burning effects and so on as normal.

All targets in the target group, whether hit or not, must take a pinning test at their basic Nv (in other words, no +20% for not being hit as is usually the case).

The Full-Auto and Flamer rules are another area of the game system that we have never been quite happy with. The problem being that unscrupulous players would just full-auto on single characters taking down even the most heavily armed and protected Chaos Magus. This is all well and good but the aim behind full-auto was that of firing at groups of charters in an indiscriminate way, not just saving it all for the bad guy or rival Inquisitor! After much discussion, Gav came up with the new rules you've just read – hopefully this will solve the problem. If not, we'll try again next year!

THE ADDITIONAL RULES SECTION

Lucky Shot: When rolling for damage, if you roll the maximum damage possible, i.e. 12 for a lasgun, 24 for a Boltgun, then you may roll another base damage dice and add it to the damage total i.e. D6 for a Lasgun, D10 for a Boltgun. This represents a lucky shot hitting a particularly crucial place, such as a gap in the armour etc.

Up-Close: To move up-close a character must first hit is opponent in an attempt to distract them enough to slip past his guard. Moving up-close is not hindered by a dodge or parry – only the to hit roll must be successful. Place the models base-to-base. When fighting up-close penalties due to weapon reach differences are reversed i.e. a sword would be harder to use than a knife at this close distance so the modification is reversed to a –20% to the sword wielding player. As the combatants are so close, parrying is impossible and the character can only dodge without the normal +20% modifier – a straight roll.

Encumbrance: These rules allow GMs to take into account the difficulties of moving swiftly whilst laden down with heavy armour, weapons and equipment. If you find that your characters are taking everything bar the kitchen sink into battle, you may want to introduce the rules to your campaign to encourage more lightly-equipped characters. A character can carry a certain amount of equipment before their performance is impaired. The amount a character can carry (their Encumbrance value) is equal to their Strength+50, after all modifications for bionics, power armour, combat stimms, etc. Add up the weight of all weapons and equipment carried (treat all equipment without a specified weight as 5). In addition, each point of armour (except powered armour) weighs 5 points. This is the total weight of their equipment. Compare this to their Encumbrance value. For every 25 points, or part, that their equipment is more than their Encumbrance value they are at -1 Speed (minimum 1). No model may carry more than twice their Encumbrance value.

Like the lightning reflexes section above, these new rules are still in an undecided state and so have been placed in the rules review in a trial status, if player feedback is good we would consider placing them in the 'additional rules' section (found on page 180 of the rulebook) next year. Thanks to Pontifex Maximus at The Conclave for the Lucky Shot rules and Peter Bell & Inquisitor Henderson for the Up-close rules.

FAQ

How does using Psychic Powers in Close Combat work?
As described on page 56 of the rulebook, only you cannot concentrate and you can only use powers on yourself or opponents in combat.

Why are Frag missiles potentially better than Super-Frags?
They're not – change the Damage on Frags to D10 and the Damage on Super-Frag to 2D6.

Why are Krak missiles potentially better than Super-Krak?
They're not – for Krak change the Blast to 6 and Damage 3D6. For Super-Krak change the Blast to 8 and Damage to 2D10.

Can you teleport opponents into solid objects?
Although not strictly against the rules this is exactly the kind of thing a GM should cover. The GM should ask himself 'would this make the game/story cooler?" If so then go for it. I can imagine uber-bad guys doing this all the time. However, if it starts to get a little tedious the GM should stick some mods and penalties on it to stop the game becoming a teleportation-fest!

What is the Leadership characteristic used for?
Leadership is indeed an underused characteristic and something we are aware of. However it does have its uses that are often missed by players. The Actions section on page 180 of the rulebook does a good job of explaining where Leadership tests would be applicable. Also remember that Ld is a measure of a characters loyalty and allegiance. GM's should be encouraged to force Ld tests when a character is being persuaded to do something by a silver-tongued daemon, or is trying to withhold information from a cunning torturer. Do not forget that not all characters would get on with each other, maybe a character doesn't agree with his leaders orders so a Ld test is needed to see whether he will follow them.

APPENDIX: THE 2002 RULES REVIEW
Rules that are still relevant from last year's review:

Minimum Actions: Each turn in Inquisitor represents about ten seconds of real time. Even though ten seconds does not sound very long it is still quite a long time in the fast paced encounters that happen in Inquisitor. Even the slowest fighters should be able to do something in the space of ten seconds. However it has come to our attention that even the most experienced Inquisitor will be caught dithering at the most inopportune time. So to abate this situation add the following sentence to the bottom of the Action Rolls section on page 24: Even if the player fails all of his actions rolls (i.e. all D6 rolls are 3 or below) he is allowed a minimum of one action per turn.

Nullifications: We've found that it's an altogether too common occurrence that a psyker will fail a Willpower test by a large margin and instead of bending the nature of reality to his whim, finds his brain dribbling out of his ears. This is all well and good up to a point, but in a larger game a psyker who attempts a simple Blinding Flash can find himself nullified by two other psykers, resulting in a horrific psychic overload and a drooling idiot in place of a noble Inquisitor. As a result, it's impractical to use psychic powers unless you're sure there are no other psykers on the battlefield; the risks are too great. So replace the second sentence of the Nullification section on page 56 with: A enemy Psyker may attempt to Nullify the power if he is directly affected by that psychic power.

Thus a character may attempt to nullify a Blood Boil that is targeting him, but his allies may not. Similarly, he may attempt to nullify a Blinding Flash if he can see the origin of the flash, but not if he cannot see it (he is not the target and it does not affect him directly).

Armour & Weapons: A few Armour values were inconsistently printed in the Rulebook. They are Flak Armour 3, and the Conversion Field 2D6. The Needle pistol and Web pistol are described as Basic in the Type column on page 72 of the rulebook. They are in fact Type: Pistol.