

WARHAMMER[®]

40,000

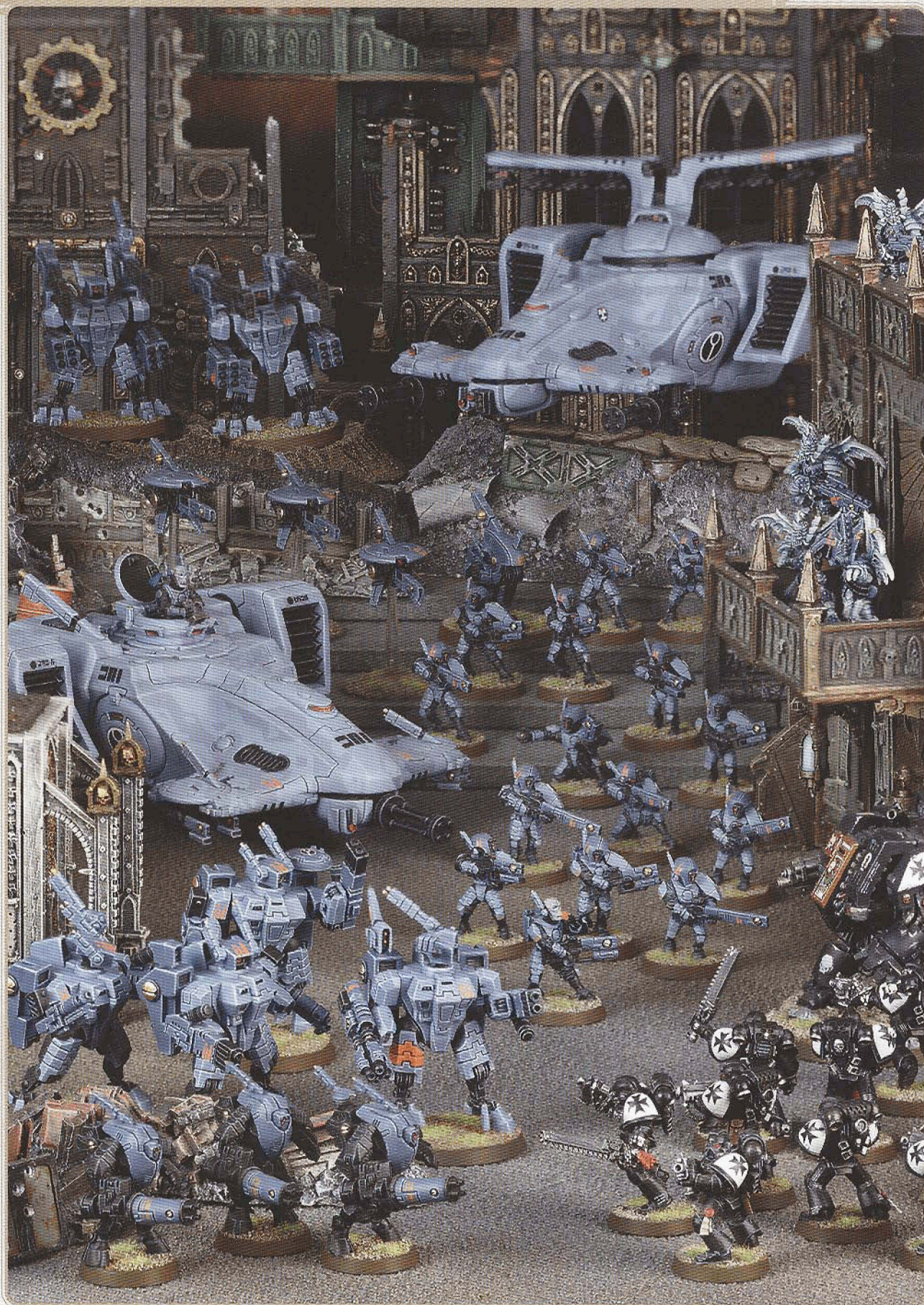
TAU EMPIRE



WARHAMMER
40,000

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ISBN: 1-84

TAU EMPIRE



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Special thanks to

Jonathan Harrop,
Agis Neugebauer,
Tim Sawyer, Myles Davies
and the Ancient and
Honourable Order
of Techpriests.

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British Cataloguing-in-Publication Data. A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

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Printed in China.

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INTRODUCTION

Greetings, Commander, to this sacred text that will help you to further the Greater Good of the Tau empire. This book will guide you in collecting, painting and gaming with a Tau force in the Warhammer 40,000 game. The Tau way of war is efficient and deadly, combining the hi-tech wargear and weapons of the Tau with the specialised skills of their allies, the Kroot and the Vespids. A Tau commander recognises the skills and abilities of all those under his command and uses them to fearsome effect.

THE TAU EMPIRE

The alien race known as the Tau inhabit an area of space near the Eastern Fringe of the galaxy and are a young, dynamic race, with highly advanced weaponry and technology. Though less than two thousand years old, their fledgling empire is rapidly expanding into space and encountering all the elder races of the galaxy. In galactic terms, their empire is small, based around a densely packed globular cluster of stars, which enables the Tau to travel between them without many of the dangers normally associated with warp travel. The Tau empire also encompasses several alien races who have been subsumed into the empire voluntarily or whose services are bought through trade agreements.

Tau civilisation is based around a rigid system of castes, each relating to the four elements of nature – fire, water, air and earth – which dictate a Tau's particular role within their society, be it warrior, bureaucrat, pilot or worker. Their rulers form a mysterious fifth caste, translated as the Ethereals, who bind the other castes together. The Tau empire is underpinned by the concept that it is only right and noble for the individual to set their own desires aside to work together for the greater good of the empire. Overall, they're very good at it too.



Unlike most alien races which Humanity has encountered, the Tau are not overtly hostile, though they will fight fiercely to protect those territories they have claimed as their own. The sheer dynamism of the Tau is pushing them further into occupied areas of the galaxy and this has inevitably brought them into conflict with both Humans and other alien races.

WHY COLLECT A TAU ARMY?

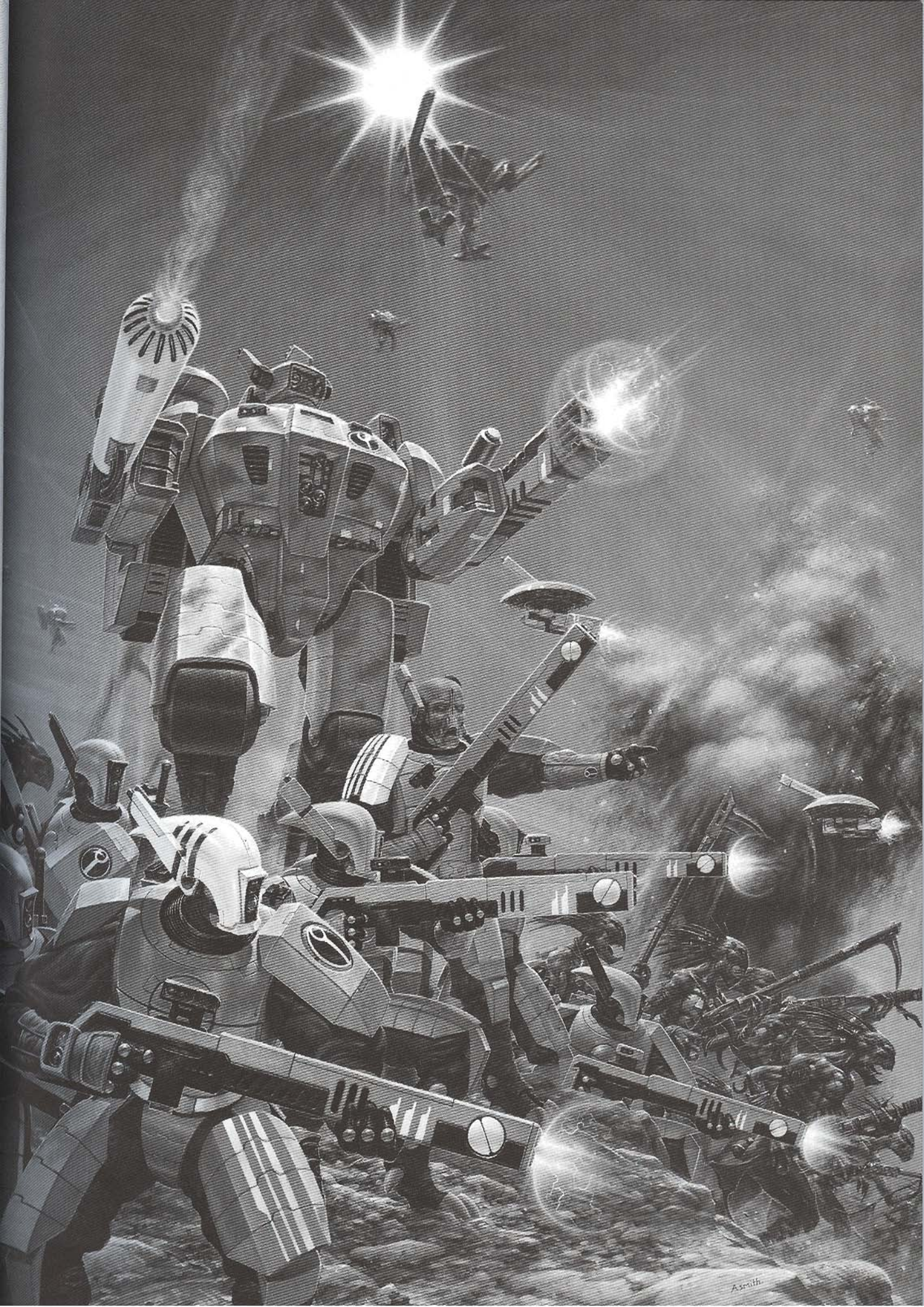
The Tau are a very stylish and powerful army with many specialised troops at their disposal. Their main strength and appeal lies in the different types of battlesuit equipped warriors. These highly mobile warriors are hardened veterans and their battlesuits are capable of mounting a fearsome array of firepower. Combined with their exceptional armour protection, this makes them very difficult to take out with most troopers' basic weapons. If you're looking for a manoeuvrable army that can pack a heavy punch while being able to soak up the enemy's return fire, then the Tau are the force for you. Tau technology is highly advanced with many exciting devices and upgrades with which you can equip the battlesuits to further enhance their ability to deal death.

Tau Fire Warriors are courageous fighters with solid leaders, and if a member of the Ethereal caste accompanies them, their confidence and self belief will keep them fighting in the face of insurmountable odds. The Tau dislike close combat, preferring to destroy their enemies at long range with hi-tech weaponry as they are neither particularly strong nor tough. When the fighting is likely to get close and bloody, the Tau can call upon allies in the shape of the Kroot and the Vespids. The Kroot are ferocious carnivores employed as mercenaries and are capable of holding their own against most opponents. The Vespids are nimble insectoids, whose swift wings allow them to outflank and pin down the enemy while the Tau move into position for the killing blow.

A fully painted Tau army looks very striking on the tabletop and suits painters who want the best of both worlds. On the one hand you have the clean, elegant lines and bright colours of the Tau Fire Warriors in their battlesuits and grav-tanks, while on the other you have the allies, with their large areas of flesh or chitin to colour. Even basic painting techniques will quickly produce a battle-ready force, giving you the chance to build a playable army quickly and easily, and begin to expand the frontiers of the glorious Tau empire. May the Ethereals guide you, Commander.

For even more advice on collecting, painting and gaming with a Tau force, log on to our website at:

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THE TAU

12th Edition

Far from Terra, in the eastern reaches of the galaxy, lies the empire of the Tau. Though not extensive, it encompasses a region of space some three hundred light years in diameter, with the Tau homeworld at its centre, and just over a hundred settled worlds. A number of these worlds are home to alien races which are either subservient to the Tau or whose services are bought. The Tau are a young race, barely six thousand years old, yet they are highly advanced technologically and their empire is expanding rapidly, pushing further into space with growing self-confidence.

DISCOVERY

The first Imperial contact with the Tau race came in 789.M35, when the Adeptus Mechanicus Explorator vessel, *Land's Vision*, discovered and categorised what is now their homeworld of T'au. Initial investigations revealed the planet to be dry and arid with few lush areas and an abundance of oceanic, aerial and terrestrial xenomorphs. The first Adeptus Mechanicus teams to explore the planet noted that the savannah dwelling aliens had mastered the use of primitive weapons and discovered fire, but nothing of worth was perceived in their continued existence and the world was earmarked for routine cleansing and colonisation. Seeding ships were despatched to begin the colonisation of T'au but, before they arrived, freak warp storms of unimaginable fury engulfed them and, despite the presence of highly skilled navigators and captains, every vessel in the colony fleet was lost. Rather than simply blowing themselves out, the warp storms continued to make space travel impossible for light years in all directions, and many whispered that this was a sign that the planet was cursed. In any case, the Imperium soon had to turn its attention to more pressing concerns.

The 361st High Lord of the Administratum, Goge Vandire, had proved to be a paranoid megalomaniac and led the Imperium into one of the bloodiest periods in its war-torn history, the Age of Apostasy. However, this is not the place to speak of Vandire's Reign of Blood. Suffice to say that he was eventually overthrown and stability restored to the Imperium when Sebastian Thor was elected Ecclesiarch. The rebuilding of the Imperium was to take many hundreds of years and, while this work was under way, the warp storms cutting T'au off from Imperial scrutiny continued to rage, concealing the nascent development of the Tau race.



ADVANCED EVOLUTION

On the forgotten backwater of T'au, the species first catalogued by the Adeptus Mechanicus grew bigger and stronger, some plains tribes migrating further and further afield as hunting grounds grew scarcer in response to the increasing population. As the centuries passed, each branch of the Tau began developing in their own way, displaying a unique talent for rapidly adapting to their chosen environment. High on isolated mountain peaks, Tau soared on thermals, rising up from the hot plains on thin, membranous wings, and found plentiful employment amongst the other Tau as messengers and scouts. Those whose migrations had carried them to lush river valleys began establishing well-constructed farming communities, developing their metallurgical, tool-making and mining skills to create the first Tau settlements. Others realised that different communities could produce what they could not and negotiated trade agreements between the disparate tribes, recognising the inherent value in each others' skills. The larger Tau who remained on the plains grew stronger still, becoming skilful and aggressive hunters. They took what they wanted and if they had to fight in honourable battle to get it, so much the better.

For some unknown reason, technological innovation was at a more accelerated pace than would normally be expected for a newly emergent race. The Tau who had begun building the first communities quickly escalated to use fortresses and simple black powder weapons to defend their settlements from marauding tribes of plains dwellers allied with the Tau of the air. Trade routes were cut and the Tau who negotiated between the various tribes were attacked to prevent alliances from being formed. Soon vast intertribal wars ravaged the main continent, with Tau tribes turning on each other in savage battles utilising primitive firearms. The wars dragged on for many years, thousands dying on every side and with no end to the slaughter in sight. Squalid conditions caused by the fighting and a lack of fresh food and water allowed a virulent plague to spread rapidly across the continent until more Tau were dying of disease than were being killed in battle. As the savagery of the fighting escalated, it seemed as though the Tau race would surely extinguish itself in the fires of its own barbarity.

THE ETHEREALS

The Tau now entered their darkest age, when the entire race was being destroyed by war and disease. As the 37th millennium drew to a close, many strange portents and omens were observed, such as flickering lights in the night sky and half-glimpsed figures in the mountains. Many believed that these were signs that they were living in the last days; that extinction was nigh. 'The Ethereals of Fio'taun' is one of the foremost legends amongst the Tau and tells of how their race was pulled back from the brink of annihilation.

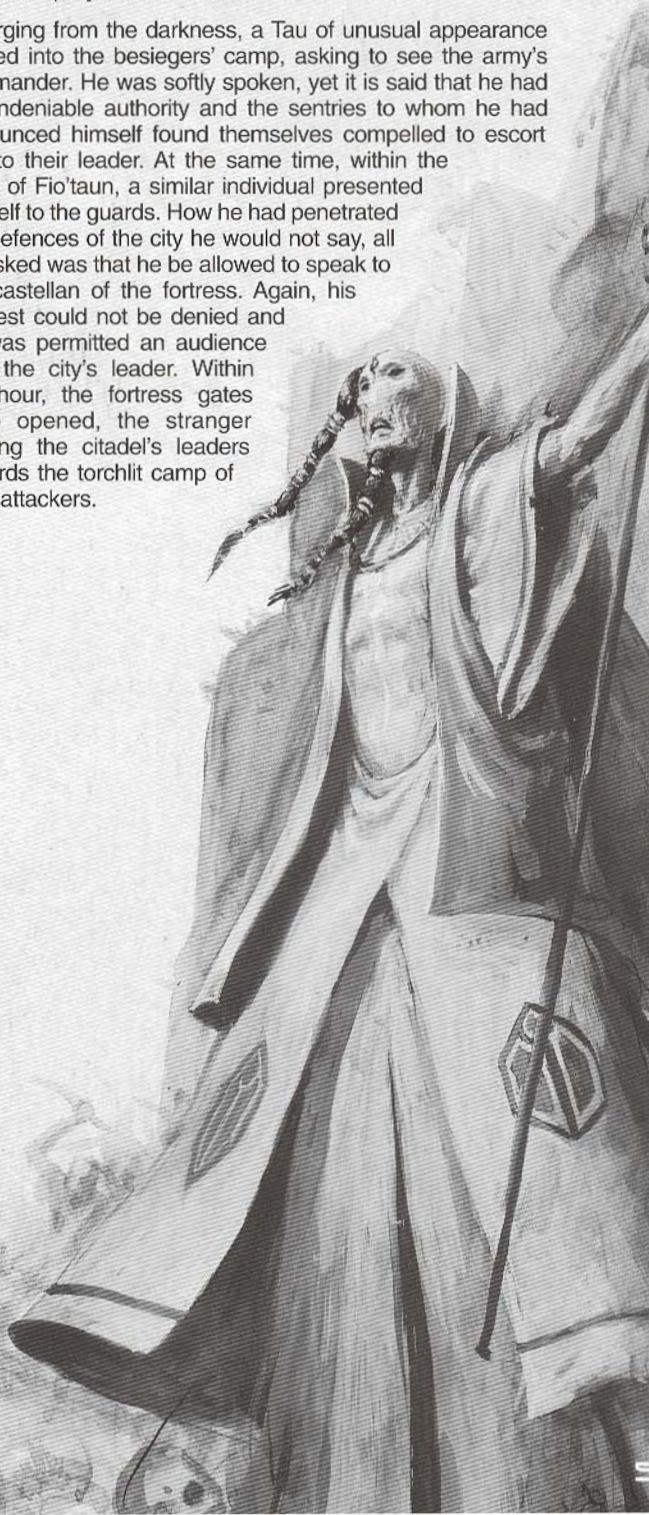
The legend tells that on a mountain plateau called Fio'taun, an alliance of plains dwellers and Air Tau laid siege to the mightiest fortress-city of the builder Tau. Nearly seven thousand beings dwelt in the great citadel and, in vain, the traders attempted to negotiate with the plains warriors. Their blood was afire and they would brook no settlement save that delivered at the end of a rifle. For five seasons the cannons of Fio'taun held the attackers at bay, but supplies were

"A thousand fibres connect each of us with our fellow Tau and along those fibres our deeds run as causes which come back to us as effects. Everything we do must be in furtherance of the Greater Good lest we return to the Mont'au, the Terror."

Shas'o Vior'la Kais, Fire Warrior commander

low and disease was rife within the city walls. As night fell upon another bloody day's fighting, the leaders within Fio'taun prayed for a miracle. Little did they know that on this night their prayers would be answered.

Emerging from the darkness, a Tau of unusual appearance walked into the besiegers' camp, asking to see the army's commander. He was softly spoken, yet it is said that he had an undeniable authority and the sentries to whom he had announced himself found themselves compelled to escort him to their leader. At the same time, within the walls of Fio'taun, a similar individual presented himself to the guards. How he had penetrated the defences of the city he would not say, all he asked was that he be allowed to speak to the castellan of the fortress. Again, his request could not be denied and he was permitted an audience with the city's leader. Within the hour, the fortress gates were opened, the stranger guiding the citadel's leaders towards the torchlit camp of their attackers.



As the gates opened, they were met by a party from their enemy, led by a figure who was the stranger's twin in all respects. The two newcomers called themselves Ethereals and bade the others sit. Beneath a maiden moon of purest white, they began to speak, explaining that the talents of each of the tribes could be harnessed. They spoke of a Greater Good that could be achieved if they would put aside their warlike ways and work together. The two strangers talked through the night, their words carrying great power, and as the sun crested the horizon, a truce was agreed between the warring factions.

Fio'taun was just the beginning. Soon, more of the Ethereals emerged and the message of peace and Greater Good began to spread to every corner of the globe, the battles slowly dying out as the new philosophy took hold. Within the space of a year, the wars were over and the Tau flourished like never before. Well-constructed towns and cities sprang up throughout the continent, commerce routes were re-established by the traders and communications maintained by the Air Tau. The warriors of the plains were the hardest to convince that this was the way forward, but as they saw the civilised wonders being created by the other castes, they finally agreed to the Ethereals' entreaties that they become honour bound defenders of the Tau. It was decreed that from that day forth each of the tribes would be known by the element that most befitted its role in the Greater Good. The builders and artisans would be the Earth caste, the traders the Water caste, the messengers and scouts would become the Air caste while the warriors of the plains would be known as the Fire caste. Having saved the Tau from a slow racial extinction, the Ethereals were revered with the utmost devotion by the other castes, binding and guiding them as they looked towards the future with a new found sense of hope.

DYNAMIC EXPANSION

The next thousand years saw an unprecedented period of scientific discovery and cultural and philosophical advancement. Working together for the Greater Good became the cornerstone of Tau society, the ultimate ideal to strive for. It enabled the Tau to fully utilise each caste's talents and allowed them to send their first rockets into space. The Air caste were heavily involved in the early exploration of space and, within a short period of time, orbital communities were established and the colonisation of the nearest moon was well underway. With orbital docks, larger vessels could be constructed and Tau ships ventured further and further afield, with communities developing on almost every viable moon, world and planetoid within reach. Air caste astrogators produced the first stellar maps of nearby celestial bodies, revealing that their homeworld lay within a globular cluster of densely packed stars. The attendant risks of novae and supernovae prompted further expansion and the Earth caste began the construction of even larger colony ships.

The expansion of the Tau empire continued at an explosive rate, the Tau making contact with a number of alien races and, despite the destruction of several ships, the empire continued to advance. Many less advanced alien races were incorporated within its borders and most of these willingly became part of the Tau empire. The Orks were a notable exception to this and the Tau fought many battles with the Greenskins before finally abandoning their attempts to subsume them into the empire. After the successful navigation of a warp rift, the Ethereals and Air caste worked to refine the technique of travelling through warp space but, without the specialised mutation of the Navigator gene, their colony ships could only make short 'hops' into warp space, skimming the edges of the Immaterium. With the tightly packed nature of the Tau empire, this did not prove to be a problem and protected them from many of the inherent dangers of warp travel.

Given their limited exposure to the Warp, the Tau found it difficult to comprehend the hallucinogenic effects it had on other races and the terrible threat it could represent to psykers. Such talents were a mystery to the Tau as they had no psychic abilities whatsoever, their minds barely even registering in the Warp at all.

Soon the Tau empire stretched over a little more than three hundred light years and incorporated eight heavily settled systems known as septs. These formed the hub of the empire, with colonies, outposts and waypoints established throughout Tau space.

At the frontiers of Tau space, on the world of Pech, traders with an escort of Fire caste warriors encountered a Kroot enclave and fought alongside them in a battle against Ork raiders. In the Kroot, the Tau recognised a strength they could harness, and soon Kroot warspheres began to appear with more regularity in Tau expeditionary forces. While the Kroot's cannibalistic tendencies repulsed the Tau, they valued and respected their strength as warriors, perhaps believing that continued contact with civilisation would eventually show the Kroot the error of their ways.



"It is not our technology that will enable us to prevail in this galaxy. It is our shared sense of honour and commonality of cause that unites us and will give us the power to defeat our enemies."

Shas'el Sa'cea Or'es, Fire caste commander

The Tau quickly came to recognise the value of integrating other races into their empire. Within scant decades of making contact with the first such races, alien subjects were being granted roles of responsibility within Tau society. Some aliens integrated because they had little alternative, others because they saw genuine benefit to doing so. A small number, it was believed, might one day come to recognise the Greater Good, and bow down to the Ethereals like the Tau themselves. The Tau would be first among equals. Such became the dream of the Tau empire.

IMPERIAL CONTACT

With such rapid expansion of their empire, it was only a matter of time until Tau colony ships entered Imperium controlled space. System defence ships stationed at Devlan in the Ultima Segmentum detected the arrival of an alien vessel that did not halt at the designated checkpoints, and immediately attacked it. Unprepared for such an aggressive response, the Tau ship fled, but was unable to make good its escape as Imperial Navy ships summoned by the planetary governor destroyed it in an engagement at the system's edge. An Imperial investigation was launched into this technologically advanced race when Adeptus Mechanicus Genetors discovered that genetic samples taken from the corpses on the alien ship matched those of the primitive xenos discovered six millennia before by *Land's Vision*.

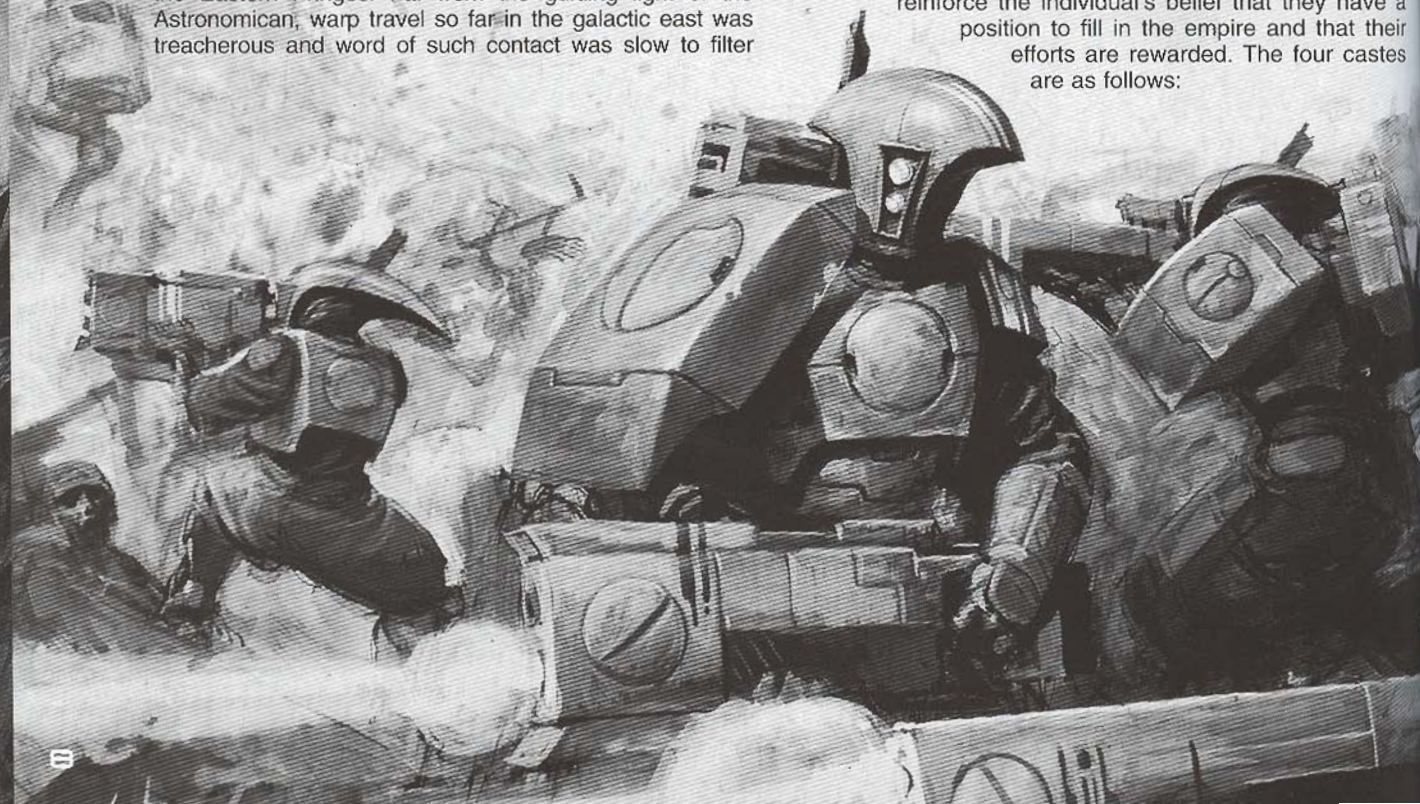
Further, less violent contact with the Tau was made by Rogue Traders and merchants exploring the darkness of the Eastern Fringes. Far from the guiding light of the Astronomican, warp travel so far in the galactic east was treacherous and word of such contact was slow to filter

back to the Administratum. Members of the Water caste had established trade agreements with Imperial worlds on the frontier and exchanges of goods and technology were common. Alarmed by the threat of alien contamination, the Administratum readied a suitable response and, almost a century later, the Damocles Crusade smashed into Tau space, destroying several outlying settlements and pushing deep into the Tau empire. However, when the Imperial fleet reached the sept of Dal'yth, the crusade ground to a bloody stalemate as the formidable numbers and high technology of the Tau and their Kroot allies thwarted every attempt to capture the system. After many months of terrible fighting, with nothing gained on either side, Imperial commanders eventually agreed to requests from the Water caste for peace talks. The negotiations were successful and the Imperial fleet withdrew from Tau space, partially in response to the negligible chance of victory, but also due to the impending approach of Hive Fleet *Behemoth*. As the fleet withdrew, Tau forces, one of which was led by the infamous Commander Farsight, followed in its wake and retook their lost worlds, assimilating groups of Human deserters and renegades in the process.

The Tau empire continues to expand its borders, pushing ever further into space and establishing colonies on every world capable of sustaining life. However, a new threat has arisen in the form of Tyranid splinter fleets from Hive Fleet *Kraken* and the Battle of Ichar IV. Attacks from the Tyranids have fallen upon several Tau worlds and the terrible danger these voracious super-predators represent has quickly been realised by the Ethereals. As contact is lost with yet more colonies, the Tau empire girds itself for war.

THE CASTE SYSTEM

As decreed by the Ethereals, Tau society is divided into four castes, each based on one of the four elements of nature. Tau are born into their caste and breeding between the castes is forbidden by the Ethereals. By use of the caste system, not only are the Tau performing the most basic form of genetic engineering, but they also reinforce the individual's belief that they have a position to fill in the empire and that their efforts are rewarded. The four castes are as follows:





Fire – The Fire caste are the warriors of the Tau. It is the duty of these warriors to protect the other castes. Centuries of selective breeding has led to the Fire caste being the biggest and strongest of the Tau. The Fire warriors are strongly motivated by a strict code of honour in battle, but they are not mindless thugs. They see ranged combat as preferable to the somewhat brutal affair of close combat. They are not naturally equipped for such fights, preferring to use advanced weaponry rather than brute force to win battles. A warrior starts life as a young line trooper, a Shas'la, and after surviving four years 'on the line' they must take their first Trial by Fire. If they survive this ordeal then they are fit to don the full battlesuit. If they survive a further four years, they take the second Trial and successful participants advance yet further. A veteran who manages to survive yet another four years becomes eligible to take part in a third Trial if he wishes and, if he is still alive by the end, will become a Commander, or Shas'el. Commanders who survive four years are allowed to retire from active service, join the council of advisors and play a greater part in Tau politics. Other than death, this is the only way to leave the Tau military.



Earth – The Earth caste are the artisans and labourers of the Tau. It is they who build the machines, erect the dwellings and provide the food for the rest of society. Without the Earth caste, the farms would not produce, the factories would sit idle and the work would remain undone. None of the other castes would be able to live without their continued existence. Engineers and scientists beyond compare, the Earth caste are responsible for the maintenance of Tau technology but, unlike the Techpriests of the Imperium, they fully understand the workings of their machines and are capable of more than simply reproducing ancient designs.



Water – Water is the element that can be found in all living things, flowing continuously to allow life to function. So it is that Water caste members are bureaucrats, politicians, negotiators and administrators. They are the merchants and diplomats, moving in and around the other castes to make sure that society functions smoothly. Water

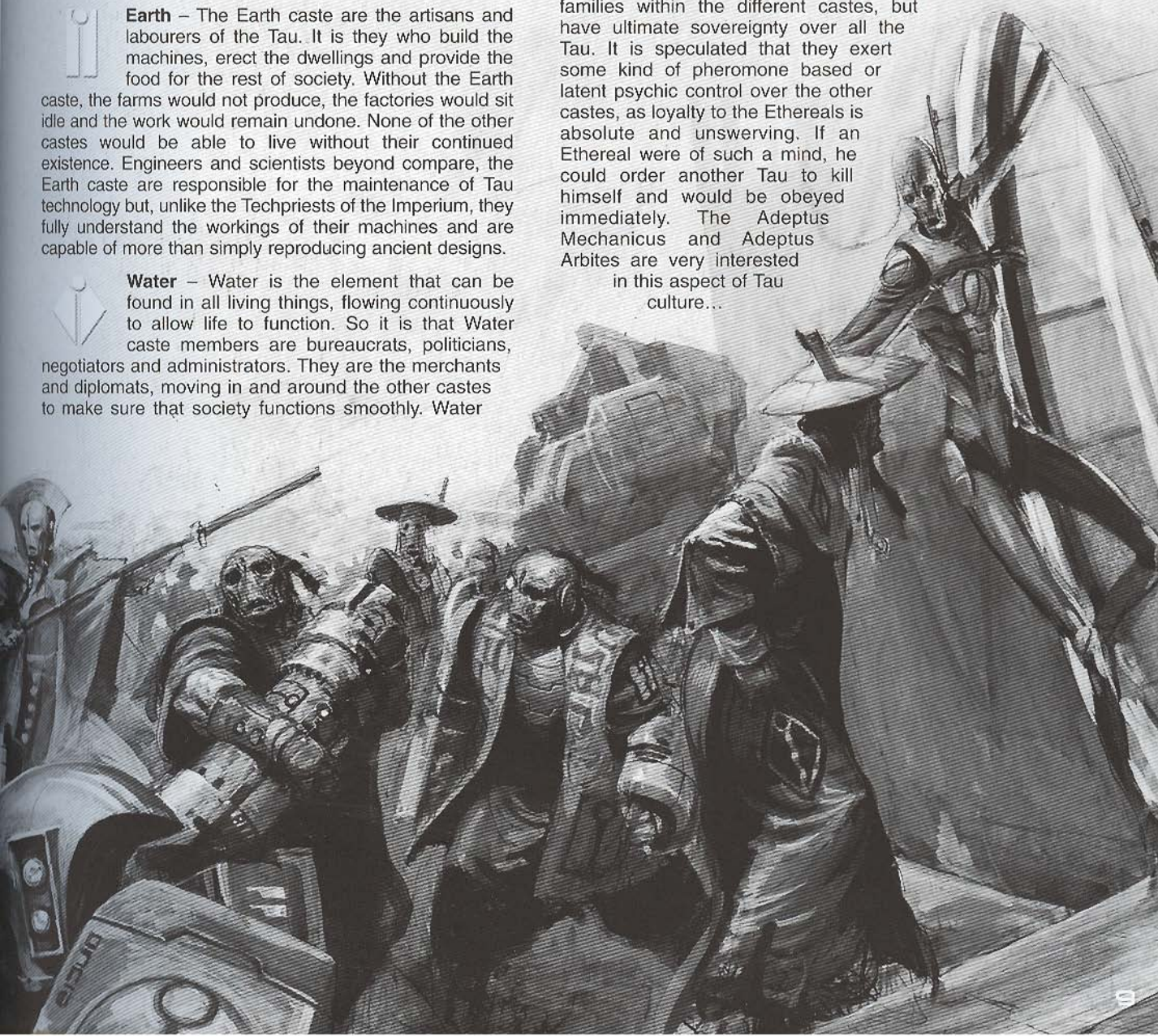
caste members often accompany Tau expeditionary forces to negotiate safe transit through alien systems and smooth the passage of Tau merchants and colonists.



Air – The Air caste members were traditionally messengers and couriers but now, with the march of technology, they are the Tau equivalent to the Imperial Navy. They are pilots and spaceship crews, transporting goods and warriors to where they are needed. They are the unseen force that can lay waste to towns and cities, bombarding them from orbit. Air caste members live almost entirely offworld, except for pilots of atmospheric craft (although frequently they live in orbital stations). They are the invisible caste, normally unseen but essential nonetheless.



The Ethereals – The Tau word 'Aun' translates variously as the Celestial or Ethereal caste, and originates from the mysterious individuals who united the disparate Tau tribes. These are the rulers of the Tau empire, headed by a council of the wisest Ethereals. They are advised by members of the highest families within the different castes, but have ultimate sovereignty over all the Tau. It is speculated that they exert some kind of pheromone based or latent psychic control over the other castes, as loyalty to the Ethereals is absolute and unswerving. If an Ethereal were of such a mind, he could order another Tau to kill himself and would be obeyed immediately. The Adeptus Mechanicus and Adeptus Arbites are very interested in this aspect of Tau culture...



THE TAU EMPIRE

The Tau are a supremely dynamic and energetic race. The principle of the Tau'va – the Greater Good – drives them ever outwards from their homeworld, into the great unknown of space. Such expansion has led to contact with many alien cultures. The Greater Good requires that all join together and acknowledge the guidance of the Ethereal caste, and this includes any and all races with whom the Tau come into contact. Perhaps unsurprisingly, few races are willing to surrender unreservedly, and so the Fire caste has gone to war on numerous occasions. Those worlds that will not willingly join the empire are dragged to the negotiating table under threat of annihilation. Those that remain openly defiant face obliteration under the orbital guns of the Air caste fleet.

The Tau empire encompasses a dense yet astrographically small area of space. Many hundreds of star systems exist within this region, and an unusually high proportion harbour an environment conducive to life. As the Tau steadily expand the borders of their empire, they continue to encounter other races. The empire now encompasses over twenty septs – fully developed Tau systems – and a large number of vassal alien homeworlds. The populations of these worlds are fully integrated in to the empire, each striving towards the Greater Good.

T'AU - FIRST AMONGST EQUALS

At the centre of the empire lies the race's homeworld, T'au. A largely arid world, with shallow, gentle seas and a warm climate, T'au is the administrative and spiritual centre of the empire. From the Council of the Highest, orders and edicts are issued across the region, orders that are followed without question, for the Ethereal caste members who issue them are revered by countless billions, and their wisdom is beyond doubt.

The highest ranked officials of all the castes assemble at councils within the glittering domes of T'au, there to

receive the wisdom of the Ethereal caste. Fire caste high commanders, upon whose word the bravest of the Fire caste march to war, sit beside Air caste admirals who command massive conquest and colonisation fleets. Earth caste planners who administer entire worlds accompany Water caste ambassadors bearing the word of the Greater Good across the stars. All gather upon T'au to hear the word of the Ethereals, and to enact it, for the Greater Good of the empire.

THE THREE SPHERES OF EXPANSION

Key epochs in the history of the Tau empire have been marked by intense periods of expansion and colonisation. So energetic are the Tau as a race that it often appears to outsiders that they are possessed of some manner of manic drive, pushing them ever outwards into space. The Fire caste largely exemplifies this drive, but it is ever moderated by the guiding hand of the Ethereals, who ensure that the race's dynamism is employed to the good of all. Some outsiders have offered theories as to what misfortunes may befall the race should the Ethereals' grip on their charges be lessened. They point to the events of the Farsight Enclaves as possible evidence.

The Fire caste Commander O'Shaserra, called 'Shadowsun', leads the most recent expansion – that of the Third Sphere. This young leader replaced the outcast Commander O'Shovah as pre-eminent Fire caste figurehead. Farsight's recidivistic actions at the closing of the Second Phase Expansion are seen by many to be in contravention of the Greater Good. The Second Phase ended with the establishment of the Farsight Enclaves on the far side of the Damocles Gulf. O'Shovah has been blamed for precipitating an unprecedented schism within the empire by not recalling his forces after the wars there had drawn to a close.

Though the Third Sphere is yet to become fully established, it has already come to embody the dynamism inherent in the Tau spirit. Just where this leaves Commander Farsight and his enclaves remains to be seen.

ALIEN EMPIRE

When the Tau encounter an alien race, they inevitably look for those qualities that may best serve the Greater Good. As the Tau harbour an unquenchable confidence in their own manifest destiny, they are utterly determined that their own methods are the correct methods. As a consequence, they tend to seek out those qualities that best complement their own over those that run counter to them. Hence, the Tau do not necessarily seek out aliens that exhibit a particular penchant for close combat for example, regarding them instead as savage and unsophisticated. They value aliens with broadly similar methods to themselves – hence the stealthy Kroot complement the Tau's Pathfinders and the Vespids work admirably alongside Crisis teams. This principle is carried over into many aspects of Tau society. Many and varied aliens are to be found working alongside their Tau overseers in population centres across the length of the empire.

THE PERDUS RIFT ANOMALY

To the galactic north east of the Tau empire lies an area of space long forbidden to the Imperium's vessels. When the Tau began to explore their region, they too found the Perdus Rift an area hazardous to any vessel attempting to cross it. The Rift is an area of space through which the corruption of the Immaterium intrudes upon the material universe. Within this region, the laws of physics are stretched to breaking point, time and space having little meaning. Worse, the anomaly acts as a gateway to elsewhere, through which things from nightmares may pass. Though instances of such intrusion have, thus far, proven rare, the forces of nearby Dal'yth have on several occasions been forced to mobilise in response to a sudden incursion of previously unknown enemies through the Rift. The Ethereals have now placed an interdiction order upon the region, and it is piqueted at all times by an Air caste fleet, ever vigilant against the horrors that lurk beyond.

THE TAU & HUMANITY

Exactly when the Tau empire and the Imperium of Man first came into contact with one another is nigh impossible to discern, for each was slow to recognise the nature of the other. For the Tau's part, it was fringe, dissident or overtly renegade elements of Humanity that they first encountered, in the form of Free Captains and pirates across the coreward borders of the Damocles Gulf. Initial contacts ranged from friendly negotiations and trade to outright hostility. It was some time before the Water caste came to grasp the fact that the Humans they had encountered were merely the forgotten outcasts of an incomprehensively vast galactic empire. So vast, in fact, that any overt aggression on the part of the Tau might lead to their fledgling empire's complete destruction.

Though many of the more passionate leaders of the Fire caste called for a war of conquest, the Ethereals issued their instructions for the integration of the Human Imperium into the Tau empire. The Water caste were to align themselves with nearby dissident Human factions, and over the course of several decades of patient negotiations insinuate themselves into the courts of several dozen Imperial Commanders. The influence of the Tau spread further and more rapidly than any amount of military action could have taken it, until a swathe of worlds were trading with the Tau in preference to the Imperium's trade cartels. Alien goods and technology flowed through the markets of these border worlds in blatant contradiction of the ancient laws of the Imperium. The second phase of the Ethereals' instructions was ready to be instigated.

Upon a score of worlds, Water caste envoys whispered long-rehearsed words into willing ears. The seeds of rebellion had long been cultivated, and now bore fruit as each Imperial Commander declared himself rid of the shackles of the Imperium's rule. In the ensuing power vacuum, the Tau expanded, claiming for themselves those worlds that came to be known as the Farsight Enclaves.

The Imperium's response was unusually swift, yet characteristically brutal. War was declared, and the Damocles Gulf Crusade launched. Within a short period, the Tau's influence was pushed back across the Damocles Gulf, but only at great cost to the Human armies. In time, the momentum of the Imperium's armies was spent, and more pressing concerns called for their hasty deployment.

An uneasy peace descended across the war-torn border sectors. The Imperium had demonstrated but the merest fraction of its size and power, yet the Tau had gained invaluable

"It is well that they are known as the Water caste. One might as well try to nail the sea to the wall as pin them down with a straight answer. They flow around your words until they wear you down, like the trickle of water that over time will split the rock."

Rogue Trader Guarmerius

insight into its methods. More importantly, the Tau had learned that those disenfranchised and rejected by the Imperium could be manipulated. Surely, they reasoned, no matter its size, no power so fractured could ultimately stand before the manifest destiny of the Tau, and the Greater Good of their empire.



THE TAU ART OF WAR

The Fire caste are the specialist warrior caste of the Tau – they have always been sturdier and more aggressive than the other castes and were successful plains hunters in their early history. Tau battle tactics still derive from the discipline of the hunt and are based on effective coordination of the hunters and correct selection of the position from which to make the kill and the weapon with which it is to be made.

ORGANISATION

Tau are organised in teams of warriors originating from the same sept, often bound by a Ta'lissera. These teams are grouped into an all-arms combat force known as Hunter Cadre under the leadership of a Commander. In many cases, an Ethereal will accompany the force, and the balance of teams will be selected for the particular hunt to be undertaken.

TACTICAL PHILOSOPHY

The two most common forms of Hunter Cadre are the Mont'ka and Kauyon. Each method is taught by the great Fire caste academies on each Fire caste world and have their own adherents amongst the Shas'o and Shas'el masters. They are both based on hunting techniques. Broadly speaking, there are two approaches to hunting: the first involves bringing the prey to the hunter, the second involves the hunter running the prey to ground; the former is Kauyon, the latter Mont'ka.

Mont'ka – Killing Blow

Roughly translated, Mont'ka is the Killing Blow. It is the art of identifying a target of opportunity and attacking it swiftly with a Hunter Cadre, often deployed from a Manta missile destroyer. A Cadre pursuing the Mont'ka may stand in readiness for several days awaiting the command to strike. During this time they will plan the exact movements they will perform when the call comes. Often the decision to strike will come from a Shas'el or Shas'o with a good view of the enemy or the input of a well-sited Pathfinder team.

It is firmly believed that the bond of trust between the Cadre that conducts the Mont'ka and the Commander who orders it brings honour to both. The attack will be immediately called off if the prey remains resilient or evasive.

Kauyon – Patient Hunter

In the Tau language the words for hunter and patience are derived from the same root. This technique is the oldest of the Tau techniques and has the most variations. Essentially the technique relies on the interaction of the hunter and the lure. In recent times, auxiliary troops such as Kroot are used as the lure, although some septs still regard the role as one that honours both hunter and prey and allow only bonded Fire Warrior teams to undertake it.

The lure's role is to expose itself to the prey and draw it into a position where it can be killed by the hunter. The more subtle Commanders have been known to use the absence of troops as a lure. Once the prey is in position, the lure is free to escape or help the hunter as the situation dictates. Hunters are frequently equipped with Crisis, Stealth or Broadside armour with weapons carefully selected for the particular prey.

SIEGE

The Tau do not hold positions by choice. Defensively, the Earth caste construct bunkers and fortifications to provide shelter from long-range or aerial bombardment. Sometimes they construct a hidden bunker or Run'al to allow close observation of the enemy. Neither are intended for static defence.

The Fire caste are entirely committed to mobile warfare in which targets are identified, tracked and killed in an efficient and cautious manner. The Tau regard close combat as primitive and always plan their attacks around the application of firepower.

Tau cities are not fortified except under the direst circumstances and, wherever possible, they attempt to either draw enemy attacks away or slow the enemy's advance while an evacuation is performed. Once a city is evacuated, the Tau will defend it just as they would a region of rocky ravines, and many variants of Kauyon are solely concerned with exploiting the peculiar layout of a city.

On the rare occasions when the Tau are absolutely compelled to defend a vital resource, they still apply their traditional techniques. In this case, the Mont'ka is applied as lightning fast forays out of the defences, each aimed at killing the enemy that pose the greatest threat. The Kauyon is represented by a feigned retreat from the perimeter to draw the attacker into a well-prepared kill zone.

On the offensive, Tau prefer not to attack cities by storm. Instead, they watch the main approaches and use the city as a lure to draw relief forces into ambushes. The Tau are good night fighters and when darkness falls they move into range of the defences and systematically destroy them.

When they absolutely must storm defences, the attack will be led by auxiliary troops such as the Kroot in a variation of Kauyon. The assault troops are not used as pawns – the Tau way of war does not recognise the concept of expendable troops. Instead their safety is entrusted to the troops providing the covering fire who must identify and kill enemy firebases before the assault force suffers serious harm. The Kroot are frequently used as 'stormers' because their natural fieldcraft skills allow them to make the best use of natural cover as they advance. There is a Mont'ka variant where precisely planned strikes are launched (often by Crisis teams) against a careful selection of targets which, when destroyed, compromise the entire defensive position. This technique is the hallmark of a master strategist and will rarely be sanctioned otherwise.

BATTLE

As the Tau empire expands, the need to fight large-scale engagements has caused the purist Fire caste approach to be questioned and, at the suggestion of the Ethereal caste, large numbers of auxiliaries have been incorporated into the Tau military, the most common being the mercenary Kroot and the insectoid Vespids.

The Kroot in particular are used to maintain a battle line around which the highly mobile Tau Hunter Cadres operate. This change has allowed the Tau to fight wars on a large scale where previously they would have been limited to raids.

Tau battle plans are very complex as each Hunter Cadre is assigned specific targets, locations and times. Teams are briefed at length beforehand and simulations are widely employed. The Tau may start a battle with elaborate flowing attacks, each launched with perfect planning, but sooner or later their prepared scenarios cease to apply and they lose momentum. When this occurs, they will disengage and plan anew.

It is important to note that the Tau regard territorial gain as militarily irrelevant compared to the destruction of enemy forces. Ground is for position from which to make the kill; once the kill is made, the ground is for the taking. A Tau army will gladly retreat from a strong enemy attack to preserve Tau lives while it awaits its opportunity to strike back decisively.

Tau attribute no dishonour to prudent retreat and see last stands as a lack of imagination or the last refuge of an incompetent commander. Unlike the Imperium of Man, the Tau empire cannot draw on limitless manpower, so the strategy of attrition is unknown to them.

The Fire caste is capable of battle rage and there have been occasions where the death of an especially beloved Ethereal has enraged an army beyond endurance. This does not result in them rushing into hand-to-hand combat. Instead they advance steadily while pouring an unceasing volume of fire into the enemy. Such an attack will only be halted by the expenditure of all ammunition.

COMMANDER PURETIDE

At the time of the Second Expansion, a Fire caste Commander named Puretide came to lead the armies of the Dal'yth sept to many victories against those that denied the doctrine of the Greater Good. Many of the Second Sphere septs owe their very existence to campaigns of conquest planned and executed by this brilliant leader. Grievously wounded towards the end of his life, Puretide became a hermit, committing his accumulated wisdom and experience to posterity. He sincerely wished those that would learn from his uniquely balanced style of war might continue his work. Many Fire Warriors studied under his tutelage, though few, if any, grasped the full scope of his teachings. Many went away only having learned one aspect of Puretide's works, and a number of schools of thought evolved, each centred around one of these individuals. Both Commander Farsight and Commander Shadowsun were one-time students of Puretide, and it is apparent that both have taken one particular aspect of his teachings and mastered it to the exclusion of the others. Some suggest the two Commanders are opposites in other ways, and that confrontation between their ideals is inevitable.

VICTORIES OF THE TAU

The history of the Tau empire is one of glorious, if measured, expansion into space. Each period of colonisation has seen the empire expand with an energy and dynamism characteristic of the race. It is ever the warriors of the Fire caste that bring the Greater Good – doctrine of the Tau'va – to those that reject the words of truth spoken by the envoys of the Water caste. Though it bears its share of defeat and tragedies, the history of the Tau is the history of bold expansion, martial honour and noble sacrifice. Such is the way of the Greater Good.

THE WAR OF THE PLACE OF UNION

At the close of the first period of the Tau empire's expansion, an exploration fleet out of Dal'yth encountered Ork attack ships firing on Kroot warspheres. The previously unknown Kroot were defending their enclave on Krath. Unwillingly drawn into battle, the Tau fought back and their superior ships easily destroyed the Orks. However, the smaller ships had merely been the vanguard for a much larger Ork fleet and the new allies soon found themselves trapped. Thus began an extended war that saw the Kroot and Tau fight side by side against the Orks, holding on long enough for a relief force of Fire Warriors from Sa'cea to arrive and complete the destruction of the Greenskins.

So impressed were the Sa'cea Fire Warriors by the Kroot bravery that they agreed to help liberate the remainder of their enclaves from the Orks. For the next ten years, Tau forces fought to drive the Orks from Kroot worlds, eventually coming to the Kroot homeworld at the behest of the greatest Kroot leader, Anghkor Prok. At the sacred Oathstone on Pech, Anghkor Prok swore allegiance to the Tau empire and pledged his warriors to the Greater Good, marking a period of cooperation between the races that has lasted to the present day.

THE DAMOCLES GULF CRUSADE

The Second Phase Expansion culminated in the Tau crossing the Damocles Gulf and making contact with frontier Imperial worlds in the Timbra sub-sector. These worlds were known by the Administratum to harbour dissident tendencies. The Tau were quickly condemned as a potentially dangerous xeno-species and the Imperium launched a Crusade to expel them from the region.

Initially in the Hydass system, the Sy'l'kell system and Viss'el, the Imperial juggernaut crushed the isolated Tau outposts it encountered, primarily through the power of its fleet. It was in the Dal'yth system, however, that the

Crusade overreached itself when it attempted to purge a heavily populated Tau sept world and ran into the full might of the Tau military. The Crusade fought its way across Dal'yth Prime but was gradually worn down by the Tau until they found themselves stalemated a long way from their own bases. Titans exchanged fire with hovering Mantid missile destroyers, Imperial Guard fought hand-to-hand with Kroot mercenaries, and Space Marines learned to respect the skill and courage of the Fire caste.

Word had started to reach the Crusade of renewed Tyranid attacks and within the High Command all hope of a quick victory had already faded. It is conceivable that the Tau might have blockaded the Crusade but as an enlightened race the Tau saw more advantage in opening a dialogue with the Imperium. The Crusade was allowed to withdraw, allowing the Fire caste to swiftly reclaim those worlds it had lost to the Imperium's counter-attack at the outset of the conflict.

THE ARKUNASHA WAR

In the aftermath of the Damocles Gulf Crusade the Tau consolidated their grip over the worlds they had wrested from the Imperium's control. During this period, the now infamous Commander Farsight rose to power as the pre-eminent Fire caste leader, and won great glory in the name of his caste. Farsight's greatest victories were won amidst the arid oxide-deserts of Arkunasha. When the newly established Tau colony there was threatened by Orks, he led the Fire Warriors in a masterful defence against many times their own numbers. Using the immense canyons and gulleys criss-crossing the desert to maximum effect, O'Shovah set the Ork invaders to chase shadows, constantly boxing off and destroying isolated elements wherever they turned at bay, earning him the famous title 'Farsight' for his actions.

It is true that towards the end of the war O'Shovah was in turn surrounded and besieged by massive numbers of Orks in the natural fortress of the Argap highlands, but even then his Fire Warriors held the mountains for months until the last remnants were evacuated. Some believe that the Commander was embittered by the bloodshed of the siege and blamed others for failing to break through the encirclement. Instead the Orks were allowed to batter themselves to a standstill against O'Shovah's defences before being easily scattered the following year.

THE KOLOTH GORGE MASSACRE

The period following the Second Sphere Expansion saw only small-scale skirmishes along the borders of Tau and Imperium space, but this changed when the Tau attack on Nimbosa heralded fresh expansion along the Eastern Fringe.

"One of their light walkers carried a weapon of lethal effect. It fired a form of ultra-high velocity projectile. I saw one of our tanks after having been hit by it. There was a small hole punched in either flank – one the projectile's entry point, the other its exit. The tiny munition had passed through the vehicle with such speed that everything within the hull not welded down had been sucked out through the exit hole. Including the crew. We never identified their bodies, for all that remained of them was a red stain upon the ground, extending some twenty metres from the wreck."

Major Kane, Mordant 607th Heavy Armoured Regt.

The Imperium's forces were ill-disposed to meet this threat, the majority of the Ultima Segmentum fleet engaged in hunting splinter fleets of Tyranids from Ichar IV. It would be many months before any sizeable force could be mustered to fight the Tau. An envoy under the protection of the Imperial Fists Space Marines was despatched to the nearest Tau sept of T'olku with instructions to commence protracted negotiations in order to delay the main Tau offensive.

Every day spent in negotiations brought the retribution of the Imperium's forces closer to Nimbosa and gave the beleaguered Human colonists a chance of holding out against the invaders. However, the world of T'olku is famed amongst the Tau for the sage counsel, debating and diplomatic skills of its inhabitants and attempts to stall the Tau assault were unsuccessful. Led by Commander Brightsword, the full weight of the Tau fell upon Nimbosa and the colonists fought to the last, not a single soul surviving the final attack. Four months later, Imperium forces fought their way to the surface of Nimbosa, to find the Tau well dug in and ready for a major offensive. Brightsword allowed the Imperial Guard to batter themselves on his defences before, like O'Shovah had done with the Orks, leading a series of aggressive raids, running rings around the ponderous Imperial Guard formations. Eventually, at what Imperial scholars have since dubbed the Koloth Gorge Massacre, Brightsword trapped the Imperium's forces within a narrow gorge and systematically destroyed them in a three-hour slaughter. It was noted that Brightsword was summoned back to T'au shortly after the Nimbosa war and there are those who believe it was to be censured for the remorselessness of his tactics.

THE WARS OF THE THIRD SPHERE

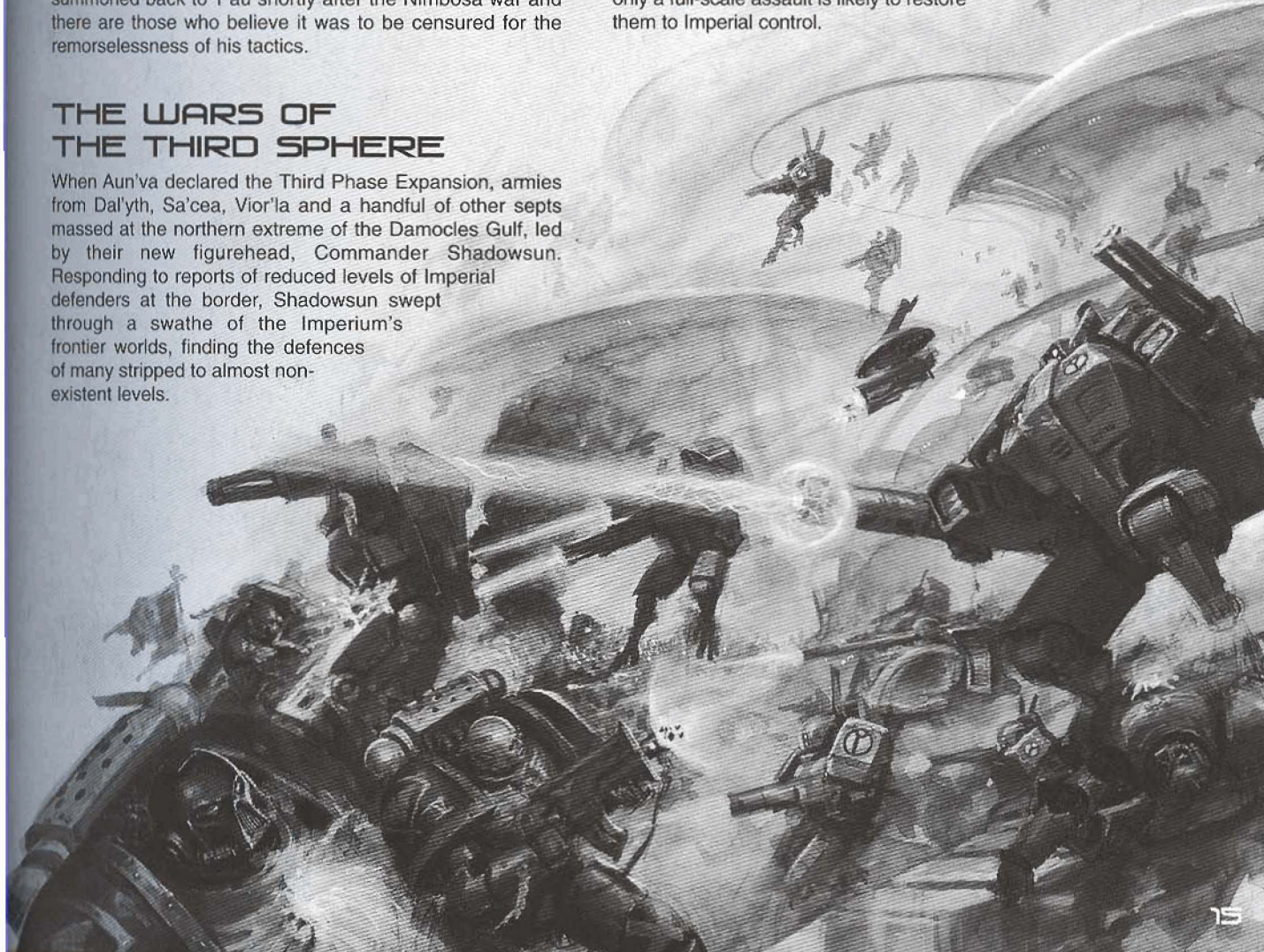
When Aun'va declared the Third Phase Expansion, armies from Dal'yth, Sa'cea, Vior'la and a handful of other septs massed at the northern extreme of the Damocles Gulf, led by their new figurehead, Commander Shadowsun. Responding to reports of reduced levels of Imperial defenders at the border, Shadowsun swept through a swathe of the Imperium's frontier worlds, finding the defences of many stripped to almost non-existent levels.

"It is as we join with others, in a way that only the Tau can, in shared engagement to the Greater Good, that we find ourselves able to fully realise our true potential. And that is the final source of our hopes and intentions."

Aun'ei T'au Tam'ya, Ethereal caste

Those forces that did remain were totally insufficient to hold the Tau at bay, and many, thanks to the actions of a Human traitor operating out of Sa'cea, were convinced by the Water caste to lay down their arms without a struggle.

Buoyed by her initial successes, Shadowsun led her armies deeper into the Imperium's space, where she encountered far greater resistance. Shadowsun saw that to overextend her forces would lead to a lethal depletion in the momentum of her attack. Instead of crashing headlong into the Imperium's defences, she split her fleet and scattered it on more than a dozen headings. Each made a devastating series of hit-and-run attacks against targets that received no warning, and against which the Imperium could mount no effective counter. At length, the Imperium settled into a static defence of a handful of key worlds. Shadowsun exploited this strategy by marshalling her forces once more and launching an all-out attack against a single cluster of Imperial worlds, overrunning each and claiming them for all time for the glory of the Tau empire. These worlds are now flourishing septs, and have been so heavily fortified that only a full-scale assault is likely to restore them to Imperial control.



ALIENS IN THE EMPIRE



VESPID STINGWINGS

The world of Vespoid lies a mere three light years to the galactic south of the D'yanoi sept. Vespoid is a benighted gas giant, and its atmosphere is entirely inimical to all but those life forms that evolved there.

The violet-hued, storm-wracked stratosphere of the world provides a shallow layer within which life, against all odds, has evolved. Across this band skim islands of rock that, by dint of the lighter-than-air gases trapped within, float upon the violent tides of the upper atmosphere. Each island is eroded by harsh gales into the form of a flat-topped stalactite, and its innards are as hollow as a termite mound.

The Stingwings have evolved in this harsh climate, and are well equipped to prosper in Vespoid's lethal atmosphere. Chitinous wings carry them aloft upon the cold, gusting winds, and diamond-hard claws provide the means to tunnel within the rock of the sky-borne stalactites. The Stingwings share their environment with a bewildering array of life forms, many of which compete with them for possession of the drifting islands. Others eke out an existence at higher or lower levels of the planet's atmosphere.

Prior to the Tau making contact with the Vespoid, the race had developed to a point where the 300 or so large stalactites were each ruled by a stable government. Wars between each of these drifting nations were infrequent. Though they had not developed space flight, the Vespoids' technology had progressed to the point where weaponry was lethal enough that full-blown wars were undesirable in the extreme.

Upon first contact with the Vespoids, the Water caste experienced difficulties communicating with the planet's leaders. The mindset of the race appeared too radically different to that of other races the Tau had encountered. But, at the instructions of the Ethereals, the Earth caste constructed a communications interface device that facilitated a degree of understanding between the races. This device was later developed into the 'communication helmet' worn by Vespoid leaders.

Uniquely at the time of their integration, the Vespoids welcomed their place within the Tau empire. They bowed to the pre-eminence of the Ethereals completely without debate. It has been whispered that this acceptance is linked to the fact that all of the race's leaders wear the interface helmets given to them by the Tau, but no evidence of this claim has proved forthcoming.

The weapons carried by the Stingwings represent technology unique to Vespoid. Mounted at the base of each is a highly energetic and unstable crystal harvested from the lowest levels of the largest islands. At such depths, the atmospheric pressures create bizarre crystal formations, and it is only the larger female Vespoids, those who form the leader class, who are able to descend to such depths and harvest the purest crystals. The Tau have provided the Stingwings with the technology to mount these weapons upon advanced, highly efficient neutron containment and projection systems, making them amongst the most deadly weapons of their type. These weapons are only used by the Vespoid, for the constant, ultrasonic tone emitted by the vibrations of their wing casings modulate the energies contained within the crystals.

The Stingwings have proven themselves of great use to the Fire caste, who value the aliens' speed and agility as well as the lethality of their weapons. The Stingwings are often integrated into Hunter Cadres that are configured as fast-moving, highly mobile forces, where they act as scouts alongside infiltrating Pathfinder teams. They have also been deployed as reserves for Cadres with a high number of Crisis teams, their speed and manoeuvrability allowing them to respond to orders and react to threats with astonishing speed. It is a great compliment that the Fire caste regards the Vespoid Stingwings as skilful and reliable allies, an honour yet to be paid to the mercenary Kroot of Pech.

"The strength of your force may be calculated by multiplying its weight by its velocity. Strive always to maximize both and victory shall be yours."

Commander Pureitide

— The Forty Second Meditation on the Way of the Warrior

THE KROOT

The Kroot originated on the world of Pech, a world located in Ultima Segmentum, in the north-west of the Tau empire. Hardy evergreen forests of jagga trees cover the prime continent. Those few areas of land not forested are rocky and inhospitable. The Kroot live in family groups known as kindreds and most dwell in arboreal homes in the trees constructed from hides bound together with regurgitated dead wood.

Kroot are tall and their bodies have a wiriness to them that appears deceptively fragile. In actuality, the Kroot musculature is extremely powerful and composed of dense fibre spindles with a greater power to mass ratio than is found in Humans. Swift muscle contractions create a whiplash effect, allowing the Kroot to deliver powerful blows with great rapidity. On the ground, the Kroot tend to move with a bounding, hopping gait, but when in dense forests, can spring from tree to tree at great speed. The Kroot favour primitive garb; harnesses worked from the hides of animals and adorned with bones, handcrafted amulets and circlets. By far the most odious habit of the Kroot is their practice of eating the flesh of the dead. In battle, this leads them to ritually devour the corpses of those they have killed and almost nothing is beyond their tastes.

The Kroot digestive system is extremely efficient, capable of breaking down almost any organic material into an energy form that can be stored in specialised organs scattered throughout their bodies called nymunes. The strangest quirk of Kroot digestion is their ability to extract potentially useful strands of their food's DNA. It is known that much of the double helix structure of their DNA is in fact blank, used to separate those areas that do contain genetic information. The Kroot have somehow inherited the ability to incorporate useful DNA codes into their own genetic make-up. Larger Kroot, called Shapers, who have an instinctive understanding of this process, can direct their kindred to consume certain prey in order that, in successive generations, they may take on elements of those genes.

Pech is entirely integrated into the Tau empire, but not all Kroot fight for the Tau – it is not unknown for mercenary forces to be found fighting alongside Eldar, Human renegades, the dread legions of Chaos and even Orks. The Kroot have no deeply held prejudices against any particular alien races and give little or no thought to who they fight, only that they are paid. This practice is entirely at odds with the Greater Good, and so the Kroot keep knowledge of it from the Tau, itinerant Mercenary Kindreds avoiding contact with Tau forces.

The Kroot are fearsome opponents in close combat. Their fighting ability is without doubt greater than that of most Humans and is a factor of their corded muscle structure and superior vision. Kroot are stronger than Humans although they have comparable tolerances to injury. However, unlike Imperial soldiers who fight secure in the knowledge of the Emperor's benevolence, the Kroot fight solely for reward and this is reflected in the unpredictable level of their battlefield discipline. The

Kroot fight with a rifle, which, while relatively primitive, is capable of delivering a charged round more powerful than a standard issue lasgun. These weapons are generally adorned with a collection of deadly close combat attachments that enable the skilled and long-limbed Kroot to fight without specialised assault weaponry. More powerful armament comes in the form of the Kroot gun, mounted on the back of the Krootox beasts. These guns fire a larger, more powerfully charged round, capable of smashing lightly armoured vehicles and killing even the most powerful individual with a single shot.

"They are fierce indeed these Kroot, and savage. I look upon them and tremble at their ferocity. I can only hope that when the enemy sees them they tremble as I do."

Por'vre Tau Cho, Water caste envoy to Sy'Tkell prior to the ambush of the 17th Brimlock Dragoons.



TAU SEPT WORLDS

The world or system from which a Tau hails forms a large part of his identity. The culture of each of these called sept worlds is subtly unique. This is due in part to the age of the world – it may be one of the First Phase colonies established during the early stages of the Tau expansion into space, or it may be a much younger society. The relative proportions of the various castes differ from sept to sept too, and this may lead to a certain outlook and character to the world and the Tau born there.

FIRST PHASE COLONIES



T'au

The Tau homeworld. As the eldest sept, Tau from here are considered especially learned and wise. Though a world of varied terrain types, large areas of its surface are arid in nature and these are the regions in which the Tau first flourished.



Tau'n

The first offworld colony of the empire, Tau from this world are considered to be pioneering and often lead exploratory missions throughout Tau space.



D'yanoi

Meaning 'twin moons'. Isolated for many years from the main body of the Tau empire, the Tau on this world regressed to a more basic level of technology. Though they have since regained their place in the empire, the inhabitants are still regarded as somewhat rustic and backwards. D'yanoi is cast in a perpetual half-light by the complex interaction of its moons with its own tide-locked orbit.



Bork'an

A centre of learning & academia, with many universities and research facilities. A high percentage of the Fio caste come from this world.



Dal'yth

A very cosmopolitan world where trade is valued much as conquest, Tau from this world welcome offworlders and, as such, the world has seen the most contact with alien species. Many Water caste merchants and traders come from this sept.



Fal'shia

The Fio caste members of this world are famed for the quality of their artisans and their work is much sought after. Many of the most important Tau technological innovations have come from this world, and Tau from this sept are regarded as great problem solvers.



Vior'la

Vior'la orbits a binary star and its name translates as 'hot-blooded'. This is a notorious Fire caste world whose warriors are especially aggressive and skilled in the arts of death. The oldest and most respected of the Fire caste academies was founded here many centuries ago.



Sa'cea

One of the hottest and most densely populated Tau worlds, this sept has a greater proportion of Fire Warriors than almost any other and is highly militarised. Those hailing from Sa'cea are regarded as particularly disciplined and honourable warriors.

SECOND PHASE COLONIES



Au'taal

Well known as a verdant and beautiful sept where those Tau able to move freely throughout the empire may spend their free time relaxing. Tau from this world are known for their easygoing attitude to their duty to the empire and other Tau often regard them as lazy.



N'dras

For reasons unknown, this world was voluntarily abandoned by the Tau nearly half a century ago. The few remaining Tau from N'dras are regarded as being untrustworthy and are generally of quicker temper and brooding countenance.



Ke'lshan

Situated near the Perdur Rift, this sept has suffered a great deal at the hands of all manner of alien races and, as such, the inhabitants have become mistrustful of those not known to them. Ke'lshan Tau are held to be solemn and taciturn, unfriendly and sometimes openly hostile to alien races.



Elsy'eir

Renowned for the quantity and quality of their poetry and artwork, Tau from this sept are regarded as intellectuals and are well respected for their creativeness.



Tash'var

On the frontier of Tau space, this world has suffered depredations from Orks and other piratical races. Its inhabitants are seen as tenacious and hardy, practical and courageous.



Vash'ya

Known as the world 'between spheres', members of the Kor caste have a long tradition on this planet, providing the majority of the pilots and ship crew for the early Tau expansion into space.

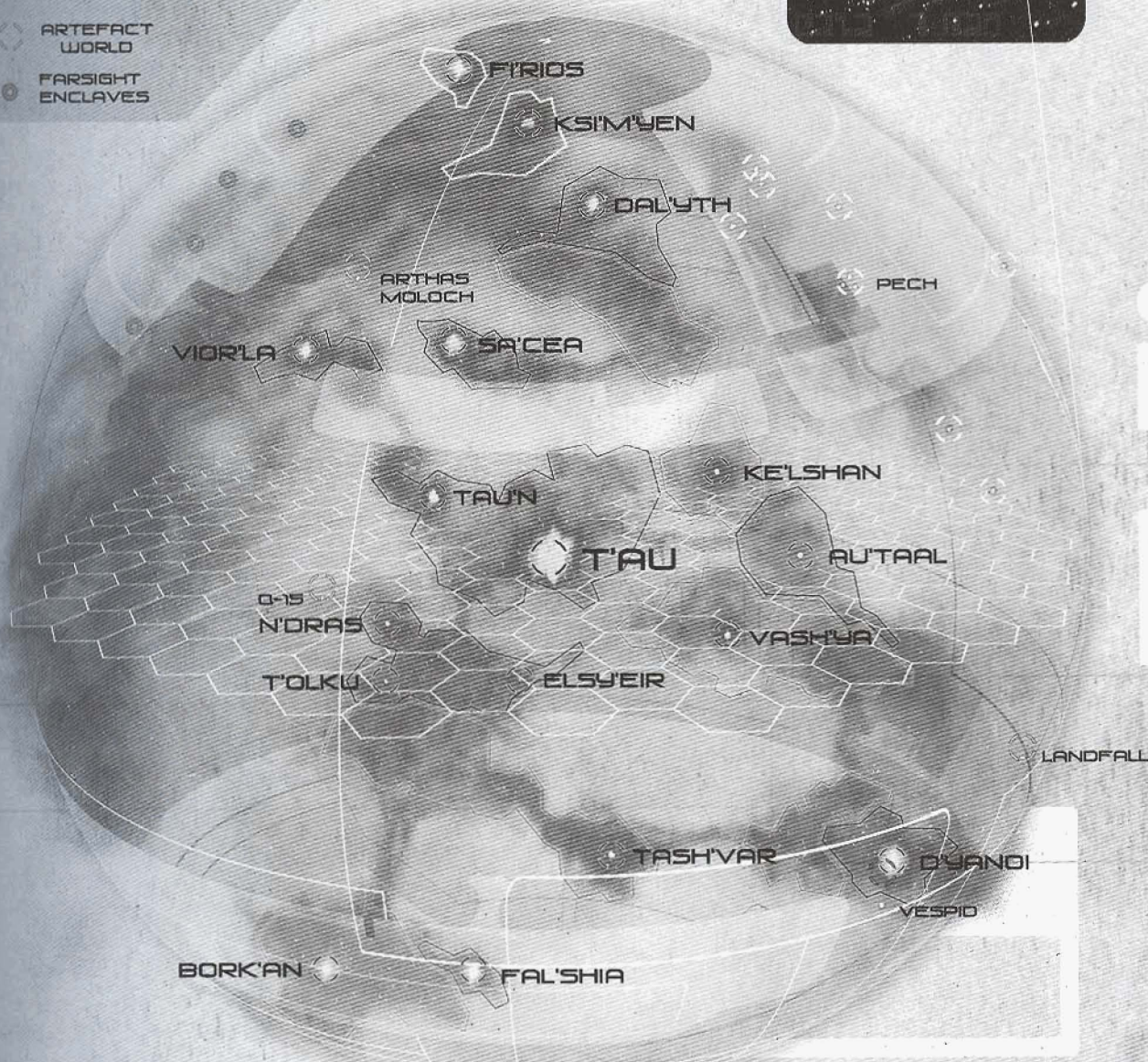


T'olku

Known for the sage counsel, debating and diplomatic skills of its Ethereal caste members, many of those Tau who have had successful dealings with alien species originate from this world.

	TAU WORLD		1ST PHASE COLONIES
	KROOT WORLD		2ND PHASE COLONIES
	VESPID WORLD		3RD PHASE COLONIES
	ARTEFACT WORLD		
	FARSIGHT ENCLAVES		

THE TAU EMPIRE



THIRD PHASE COLONIES



Ksi'm'yen

Ksi'm'yen has yet to emerge as a distinct society, yet the traits of luck, subtlety and opportunistic subterfuge have already become associated with its people. The first of a handful of the so-called Third Phase, or Third Sphere colonies, Ksi'm'yen was conquered largely by stealth. A combined force representing the fleets and Hunter Cadres of a number of Second Phase septs moved in upon the world, which was claimed by the Imperium, whilst it was stripped of its defenders due to pressing needs elsewhere.



Fi'rios

The Tau occupying this world wrested it from the grip of a fierce Ork Warlord, though doing so cost them dear. They have come to be recognised for a tenacious refusal to accept defeat, tempered by a stoic acceptance of the price all must pay in the furtherance of the Greater Good.

COGITATION ON THE EVOLUTIONARY PROCESS AND TECHNOLOGICAL HERESY OF THE TAU RACE

Telepathic Duct: Astropath-terminus Torugan

Ref:AdMech/99348844/Xen583

Author: Genetor Secundus Zachary Santiago

Report Transmitted: Korwyn Delta

Destination: Mars

Date: 5432999.M41

EVOLUTION

With increased contact being made with the xenos known as Tau, it is becoming apparent that, with the exception of Tyranids, this race has displayed a rise to prominence unlike any other. The first recorded contact with the Tau, some six thousand years ago, found them in a primitive state, having only recently mastered the use of simple clubs and fire. Further information is extremely scarce as the planet appears to have been isolated for many thousands of years by warp storms of unusual ferocity and duration. Renewed contact has revealed an evolutionary leap far beyond what would normally be expected.

Since they were first catalogued, the Tau have progressed to a technological level that, while obviously not as enlightened as that of our own blessed order, is nevertheless highly advanced. Deus ex Mechanicus, all praise to the Omnisiah!

I have undertaken this study to deduce the origin of the Tau in order to discover whether this progression is the result of natural selection or some other external force. Natural selection is an evolutionary mechanism that takes place when selected individuals of a population are better able to adapt to their environment and, consequently, produce more offspring. Nature ultimately selects those individuals with the traits most likely to survive into adulthood and reproduce.

As a consequence, the resulting evolution is so gradual as to be almost impossible to detect in only a few generations. However, in the case of the Tau, there is evidence to suggest that

their species underwent short periods of ultra-rapid change. We can only guess what caused these changes, perhaps climatological variance, altered feeding patterns of predators, food supply or some unknown external factor (see attached graph Ad/Mech32). The result would be an accelerated rate of change in gene pool frequencies of the traits that became most favoured by the new environmental conditions.

It is now quite apparent that the evolutionary history of the Tau is extremely complicated. Different subspecies have evolved at different rates and those rates have changed through time in response to complex patterns of interaction with other species and environmental factors. What these interactions were we can only guess at, given the little information we were able to extract from the Tau test subject on his race's early history. From the information gleaned, I humbly advance a theory, which I call 'Zachary's Theorem of Adaptive Divergence', to explain the evolution of the Tau.

Driven by natural selection, adaptive divergence is the diversification of a species into two or more subspecies as groups adapt to their distinct environment. I believe that the initial step is the separation of a species into distinct breeding populations, which could occur as a result of geographic or social isolation. Over time, the gene pools of the isolated groups would diverge from each other by gradually acquiring random mutations or as a result of genetic drift. In other words, nature selects different traits to exist within the gene pool of the different populations. Over time, the populations genetically diverge enough so that, to all intents and purposes, they become separate subspecies. One would normally expect this process to take millions of years, but evidence of synthetic proteins and amino acid chains within the test subject's internal organs

leads me to believe that this process may have been accelerated somewhat. How this heresy against nature could have occurred is beyond the scope of this document and a mystery I leave to other, more qualified investigators.

TECHNOLOGY

The heresy of these aliens reaches its zenith when one looks at their technology. While, admittedly, their performance can match and occasionally exceed that of Imperial manufacture, it displays none of the proper obeisance to the holy spirit of the Machine God. Such effrontery I can scarcely believe. I recommend that all recovered Tau artefacts be destroyed (in accordance with Adeptus Mechanicus directives AdMech666). It is on the eastern frontier that one finds the most blatant disregard for Imperial doctrine, with many outlying colonies trading with these aliens for their technology in the form of improved construction and agricultural machinery. Where Imperial servants have discovered such illicit artefacts they have seized them and placed the offending colonists in permanent servitude.

The insidious influence of these aliens should not be underestimated. Though it is not within my purview to advise on Imperial policy, I urge the recipient of this document to pursue the persecution of these deviant aliens with the utmost vigour wherever encountered.

Your humble servant,

Genetor Secundus, Zachary Santiago



TAU LANGUAGE

The language of the Tau is a complex, highly evolved form of communication. In sound it is deeply lyrical and soft, with many words and meanings dependant on intonation, glottal emphasis and even posture. Its multiple arrangements of polysyllabic word groups makes it difficult in the extreme for human vocal cords to pronounce. Only a skilful linguist would have any hope of speaking even the most basic Tau words and phrases.

The Tau have many ways of referring to one another. To the Tau, the most important part of their name is the caste they are born into and this forms the first portion of their identity. Broadly speaking, the Tau are organised into four main castes, each corresponding to the four elements, fire (Shas), earth (Fio), air (Kor) and water (Por).

The Fire caste are the soldiers of the Tau. The labourers, builders and artisans are those of the Earth caste – the sustaining caste without whom Tau society could not function. The Air caste are messengers and the pilots of Tau ships. Most of the Air caste remain in space as it would be hazardous in the extreme for them to return to a natural gravity environment. Lastly, the Water caste, with whom outsiders have had the most contact, are the diplomats and administrators, those who facilitate the smooth workings of the other castes. The name of the fifth caste, (Aun) can be variously translated as 'Celestial' or 'Ethereal'.

With the caste of a Tau established, the second portion of their name refers to their rank within society. The Tau are unusual as a culture in that there is no stigma attached to any rank or profession. Each Tau has his or her place in society and enjoys the respect of their peers no matter how menial a task they perform. Each role is recognised as being part of the greater whole and a furtherance of the common good. There are five major levels of Tau rank, each of which has a subtly different meaning dependent on the caste to which it is suffixed. In ascending order of seniority, these ranks are as follows

(including the best Imperial equivalent of each rank based upon the nuances of the Fire caste).

- 'La - warrior
- 'Ui - veteran
- 'Vre - hero
- 'El - Noble (or possibly knight)
- 'O - Commander

Next in a Tau's name comes his 'sept' which translates as either his extended family or place of birth. This portion of the Tau name is open to the widest interpretations and has many subtle differences in meaning. For example, a Tau from one of the elder worlds (septs) may be perceived as wiser or more sophisticated by implication than one from a younger sept who in turn are regarded as more dynamic and practical. Certain worlds also contain meaning in themselves and can embody a particular trait within the Tau who originate from these worlds. For example, the name of the Tau planet of Vior'la means 'hot blooded' and is known as a particularly aggressive Fire caste world. Other such planets include Bork'an, which is regarded as a centre of learning and study.

Lastly comes a Tau's individual name and these names are earned in recognition of some achievement rather than given at birth as is the case with humans. These are perhaps the most puzzling element of the Tau name and while some of their names may be relatively easily understood, such as 'Shovah' (far-sighted) or 'Kais' (skilful), others are more obscure. It is also possible for some remarkable individuals to accumulate more than one name in his lifetime. Some of the more notable Tau have literally dozens of names. It is common for these Tau to truncate their full names and be known by a much simplified appellation. As an example of how the Tau titles translate, the name Shas'O Vior'la Shovah Kais Mont'yr can be broken down as follows. This individual is a member of the Fire caste (Shas), holds the rank of Commander ('O), hails from the world of Vior'la and has the personal names that translate as farsighted (Shovah), skilful (Kais) and blooded (Mont'yr). However, this Tau is more commonly known as O'Shovah or Commander Farsight and this form of address is much more popular with Tau of great accomplishment.

Tau Alphabet

𐄀 a	𐄁 m
𐄂 b	𐄃 n
𐄄 c/k	𐄅 o
𐄆 d	𐄇 p
𐄈 e	𐄉 r
𐄊 f	𐄋 s
𐄌 g	𐄍 t
𐄎 h	𐄏 u
𐄐 i/y	𐄑 v
𐄒 j	𐄓 w
𐄔 l	𐄕 x

Tau Timekeeping

The Tau'cyr is an annual cycle on Tau. A Tau'cyr is broken down into 6 kai'rotaa each of 80 rotaa, each kai'rotaa is dedicated to a caste with the additional one dedicated to the race as a whole. A rotaa is broken down into ten decs; decs are either light-time or dark-time. Most Tau need only 1-2 decs of sleep per rotaa.

Conversion

The Tau'cyr or Tau year lasts approximately 300 Terran days (297.74 to be precise). A kai'rotaa is therefore about 50 Terran days. A rotaa is approximately 15 Terran hours and a dec is 1.5 Terran hours.

TAU MILITARY ORGANISATION

The most significant unit of the Tau Fire Caste is the Hunter Cadre. This force is lead by an accomplished veteran commander, and is considered capable of dealing with most tactical situations it is likely encounter upon the field of battle. But Hunter Cadres are not large enough to deal with every threat, and on occasion must group together to form larger armies, particularly when taking part in a larger war of conquest. Each and every unit within the Fire Caste operates as part of a whole, its ultimate goal to fulfil the dictates of the Greater Good.

TEAM (TAU: LA'RUA)

The smallest unit; equivalent to a single squad or section in the Imperial Guard. The most common type is the Fire Warrior team, consisting of six to twelve Fire Warriors and normally led by an experienced leader called a Shas'ui.

A Fire Warrior team normally has a transport vehicle, in the form of a Devilfish troop carrier assigned to it, allowing it to operate as mechanised infantry. Often, however, the transport will be left at a secured base of operations or aboard a transport vessel, with the team operating as light infantry.

Other types of unit are also organised into (often smaller) teams, including ad hoc units, equivalent to the Imperium's kill-teams, consisting of mission-specific specialists of all types. Such teams are referred to as Mission Groups, and are commanded from the far higher level of Coalition.

CADRE (TAU: KAU'UI)

A Cadre is an all-arms grouping roughly equivalent in size to an Imperial Guard company, led by a Cadre

Commander. The Cadre is a standing formation, and includes a number of infantry and vehicle units within including battlesuits and Hammerhead tanks. In this regard, the Tau are very different to the Imperium in the organisation of their military, for the different 'arms' are fully integrated at the tactical level and are considered in all respects part of the same unit.

A Cadre normally consists of up to six Fire Warrior teams, plus a number of Pathfinder, Stealth and Battlesuit teams, plus a handful of Hammerhead tanks or more specialised vehicles such as the Sky Ray. Auxiliary troops such as Kroot Carnivores may be attached for a tactical role, being administratively detached from a higher level such as a Command.

A Cadre keeps a large stock of equipment and vehicles, allowing it to operate in a variety of roles. By fielding an equal amount of Devilfish-mounted Fire Warrior teams and Hammerhead tanks for example, the Cadre may operate as an armoured unit. By fielding Fire Warrior teams on foot as support for specialised Stealth and Pathfinder teams for example, the Cadre becomes an infiltration force.



COMMAND TEAM



FIRE WARRIORS



FIRE WARRIORS



FIRE WARRIORS



XV8 CRISIS TEAM



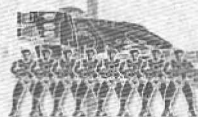
KROOT



KROOT



VESPID



PATHFINDER TEAM



PIRANHA LIGHT SKIMMER TEAM



SNIPER DRONE TEAMS



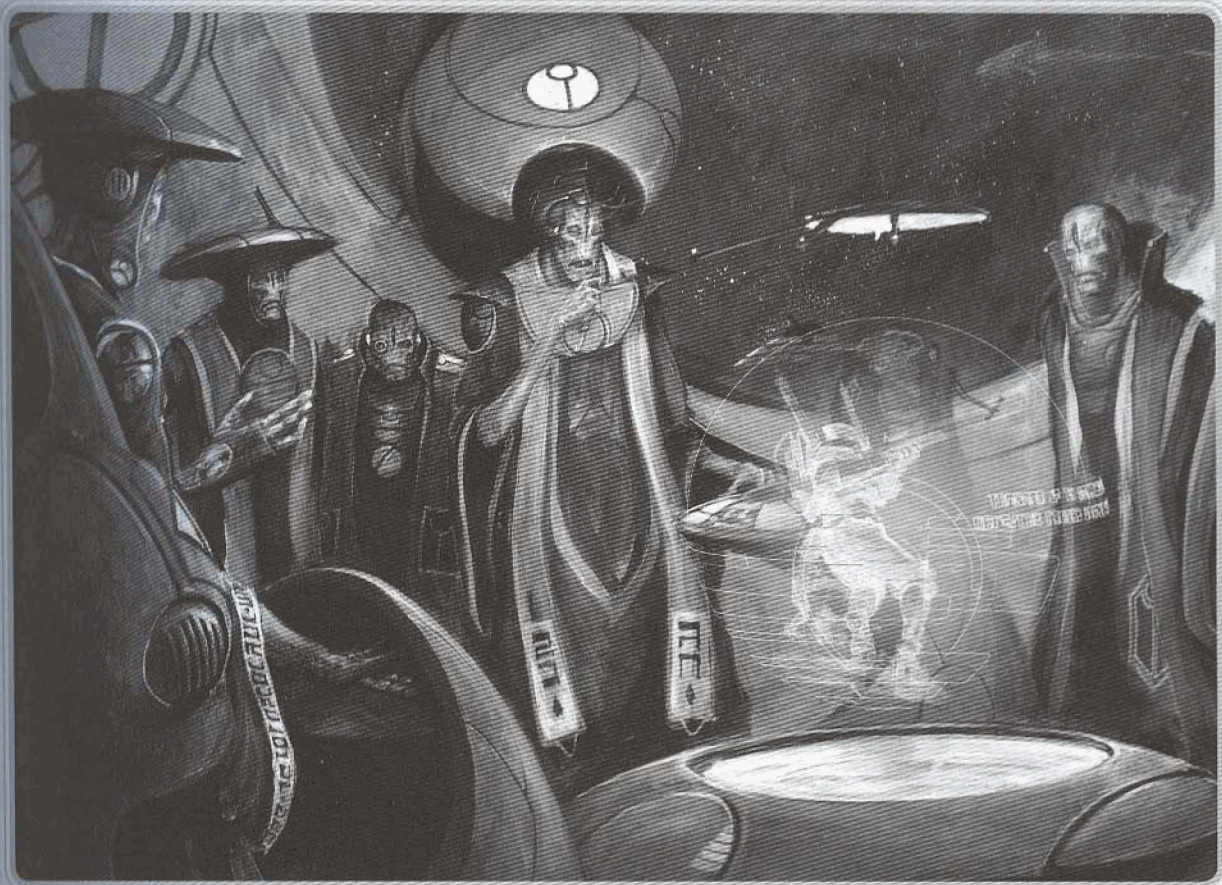
XV88 BROADSIDE SUIT TEAM



HAMMERHEAD GUNSHIP

SAMPLE 'HUNTER CADRE' COMPOSITION

'FURY' Mobile Infantry Assault Configuration as fielded during the Solstice V Suppression. A cadre such as this represents a typical Tau Empire army in the Warhammer 40,000 game, as detailed over the following pages.



CONTINGENT (TAU: TIO'VE)

A Contingent is simply a grouping of Cadres – normally three to six. The most senior Cadre Commander will be designated Contingent Commander, and his own Cadre will act as an independent unit, or as headquarters security, while the other Cadres form 'brigaded' line units. A Contingent is not a permanent grouping, though constituent Cadres may become expert in acting together in prolonged campaigns. Such a unit is of roughly equivalent size to an Imperial Guard regiment.

BATTLE (TAU: KAVAAL)

A Battle is a temporary grouping of Contingents, and the highest level of Fire caste organisation thus far committed in the field. To date, all such formations have been gathered with the express purpose of taking a given objective – once this objective is achieved the formation is dissolved.

COMMAND (TAU: UASH'O)

Just as a Battle is a force assembled with a specific objective in mind, 'Command' is a term for all the forces of a given caste, in a given location. In all likelihood, the location will be a world, though it could be a planetary system. Thus, all Fire caste units on the world of Nimbosa were part of 'Fire Caste Command Nimbosa', while all Air caste units there came under the responsibility of 'Air Caste Command Nimbosa'.

A Command is headed by the most senior Commander in the force, who is referred to in the case of the Fire caste as a High Commander.

COALITION (TAU: SHAN'AL)

The four Commands are drawn together into a strategic organisation referred to as a Coalition, and presided over by an Ethereal, or a council of such. This is the level at which inter-caste cooperation is coordinated, for, while smaller units may operate entirely independently for quite some time, the maintenance of larger forces requires the castes to work together as a united whole. Thus, a Coalition will consist of all Tau forces on a given world or system, or the forces necessary to take such an objective.

For example, a fleet setting out to conquer and colonise a new world would constitute a Coalition, for it would require the space-going expertise of the Air caste, the diplomacy of the Water caste, backed up by the strength of the Fire caste, and the colony-building skills of the Earth caste, all led by the Ethereal caste.

This arrangement is notable in that it limits the otherwise largely independent castes to a single planet, unless they act together, for the so-called Greater Good. Therefore, in the unlikely event of any sort of rebellion by the members of any given caste, the upheaval might be limited to a single world and easily containable by the combined action of the other castes.

TAU ARMY LIST

This section of the book is given over to the Tau army list, a listing of the different troops and vehicles a Tau commander can use in battle, or in your case games of Warhammer 40,000. The army list allows you to fight battles using the scenarios included in the Warhammer 40,000 rulebook, but it also provides you with the basic information you'll require to field a Tau army in scenarios you've devised yourself, as part of a campaign series of games, or whatever else may take your fancy.

The army list is split into five sections. All of the teams, squads, vehicles and characters in an army list are placed in one of the five sections, depending upon their role on the battlefield. Also, every model included in the army list is given a points value, which varies depending upon how effective that model is on the battlefield. In addition, the Armoury presents weapons and equipment that can be given to your models. Before you can choose an army for a game you will need to agree with your opponent upon a scenario and upon the total number of points each of you will spend on your army. Having done this, you can proceed to pick an army as described below.

USING A FORCE ORGANISATION CHART

The army lists are used in conjunction with the Force Organisation chart from a scenario. Each Force Organisation chart is split into five categories that correspond to the sections in the army list, and each category has one or more boxes. Each box indicates that you may make one choice from that section of the army list, while a dark toned box means that you must make a choice from that section.

USING THE ARMY LISTS

To make a choice, look in the relevant section in the army list and decide which unit you wish to have in your army, how many models there will be in the unit and which upgrades that you want (if any). Remember that you cannot field models that are equipped with weapons and wargear not shown on the model. Once this is done subtract the points value of the unit from your total points, and then go back and make another choice. Continue doing this until you have spent all your points. Now you are ready to continue the dynamic expansion of the Tau empire.

Army List entries

Each army list entry consists of the following:

Unit Name: In addition to the name, this may also show a limitation on the maximum number of choices you can make of that unit type (0-1, for example).

Profile: These are the characteristics of that unit type, including its points cost. Where the unit has different warriors, there may be more than one profile.

Number/Team/Squad etc: This shows the number of models in the unit, or the number of models you may take for one choice from the Force Organisation chart. Often this is a variable amount, in which case it shows the minimum and maximum unit size.

Equipment: These are the unit's standard weapons and equipment.

Unit Type: This refers to the Warhammer 40,000 Unit Type Rules chapter. For example, a unit may be Infantry, Vehicle or Jump Infantry.

Options: This lists the different weapon and equipment options for the unit and any additional points cost for taking these options.

Character: Some entries may include an option to upgrade one team member to a character. If a team is allowed to have models with upgrades then these must be given to ordinary team members, not the character.

Transport: If a unit is permitted to be mounted in transport, this is mentioned here.

Special Rules: This is where you'll find any special rules that apply to the unit.

SPECIAL TAU NOTES

Strategy Rating

The Tau have a Strategy Rating of 1.

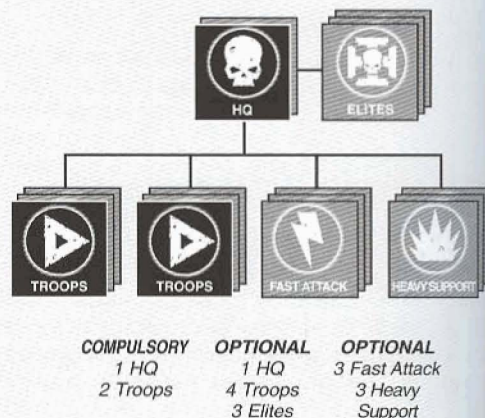
Sentries

When required to deploy sentries, the Tau player may use either 6 Gun Drones or 8 Kroot.

Experience

When playing Tau in a campaign in which experience is being counted, then experience is accumulated in the same way as normal. Drone squadrons never gain experience. The experience deduction for being reduced below 50% only takes effect if the unit loses more than 50% of non-drone models.

STANDARD MISSIONS



ARMOURY

The armoury is split into three main sections – those items of equipment that may be taken by Tau equipped with a battlesuit, those that may be chosen by models on foot, and vehicle systems.

BATTLESUIT ARMOURY

All models with battlesuits must take a number of battlesuit weapons and/or support systems, as detailed in their army list entry. These may be in any combination, up to any points cost within the normal limits. A model in a battlesuit that has access to the Armoury may also choose up to 100 points from the Battlesuit Wargear list. No model can pick the same item twice, and all equipment, other than wargear (which is assumed to be integrated), must be represented on the model.

BATTLESUIT WEAPONS SYSTEMS

Airbursting fragmentation projector (Special Issue) 20 pts
Burst cannon 8 pts/12 pts
Cyclic ion blaster (Special Issue) 15 pts
Flamer 4 pts/6 pts
Fusion blaster 12 pts/18 pts
Missile pod 12 pts/18 pts
Plasma rifle 20 pts/ 30 pts



BATTLESUIT SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Advanced stabilisation system 10 pts
Blacksun filter 3 pts
Command & control node (Special Issue) 10 pts
Drone controller 0 pts
Multi-tracker 5 pts
Positional relay (Special Issue) 15 pts
Shield generator 20 pts
Target lock 5 pts
Targeting array 10 pts
Vectored retro-thrusters (Special Issue) 10 pts

BATTLESUIT WARGEAR

Bonding knife 5 pts
Ejection system (Special Issue) 15 pts
Failsafe detonator (Special Issue) 15 pts
Gun Drone 10 pts
Iridium Armour (Special Issue) 20 pts
Hard-wired blacksun filter . . . 3 pts
Hard-wired drone controller 0 pts
Hard-wired multi-tracker . . . 5 pts
Hard-wired target lock 5 pts
Marker Drone 30 pts
Shield Drone 15 pts
Stimulant injector (Special Issue) 10 pts

Twin-linked battlesuit weapons systems: Where a weapon system is given two points values, the first is the price for the normal, single-mounted version, and the second is for two weapons (counting as a twin-linked weapon of that type). A single-mounted weapon counts as a single battlesuit weapon system, and a twin-linked weapon counts as two. No model may carry three of the same weapons system.

Special Issue items: Items labelled as 'Special Issue' are unique systems undergoing field-testing prior to becoming more widely available. Therefore, only one of each system may be taken per army, and only by those models whose army list entry states they may take Special Issue systems.

Hard-wired systems: Hard-wired systems take the form of cybernetic upgrades or warrior jewellery, and as such do not count towards the number of support systems a battlesuit character can take. The same rules apply to the system whether it is hard-wired or hard-point mounted; the difference is that only characters with access to wargear may choose them.

Advanced stabilisation system

Tau weapons systems and battlesuits are all equipped with stabilising gyroscopes that enable them to bring weapons to bear at speed. An advanced stabilisation system allows the wearer a degree of mobility whilst firing even the heaviest of weapons.

During the Movement phase, the battlesuit may choose to use the

Slow and Purposeful universal special rule for the remainder of the turn, though if it does it may not make an additional jetpack move in the Assault phase.

Also, if one model in a team has advanced stabilisation then all models in the team must be similarly equipped, and if one model makes use of the system, all must do so. The unit may still take drones.

Airbursting fragmentation projector

This weapon scatters fragmentation bomblets over a wide area, at a height calculated by a simple AI within each warhead to cause optimum damage. The weapon suffers no penalties for moving and firing, and may not benefit from markerlight hits.

Range	Str	AP	Type
G18"	4	5	Assault 1
Large Blast Marker, No Cover Save			

Blacksun filter

This advanced optical filter enables the user to double the distance rolled for determining how far they can see when fighting at night. See the Warhammer 40,000 rulebook for details of night fighting. Only models equipped with the blacksun filter gain any extra benefit. Eg, if a Broadside team leader has the filter and his team doesn't then only the team leader may fire at ranges above the normal 2D6 x 3" visibility distance at night.

Bonding knife

This is a ceremonial knife, not intended for combat, carried by the leader of Fire caste Warrior teams who have performed the Ta'lissera ritual and bonded as a group. So long as the bearer is alive, the bonded team may regroup even if below half strength. Battlesuit wearers need not actually carry the knife but may have a knife design painted onto their armour.

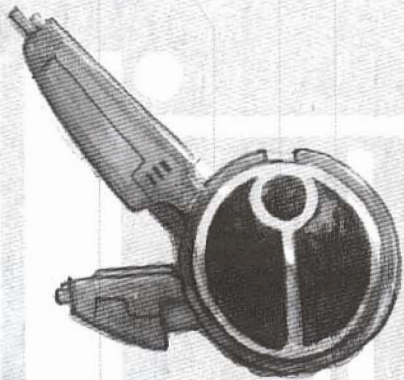
Burst cannon

The burst cannon finds use across the Tau military, primarily mounted on battlesuits and vehicles. Utilising the plasma induction technology found in the pulse rifle and other systems, the burst cannon is a multi-barrel weapon able to sustain high rates of fire.

Range	Str	AP	Type
18"	5	5	Assault 3

Command and control node

A sophisticated AI-assisted transmission system. All friendly units with a model within 12" may use the bearer's Leadership for the purposes of Target Priority tests.



Cyclic ion blaster

Developed to combat multiple, lightly armoured enemies, this weapon generates a rapid stream of ion radiation, unleashing it through its four barrels. Though the rate of fire is stable, the ionisation effect is variable. Any rolls to wound of a 6 count as AP1, regardless of the target's Toughness.

Range	Str	AP	Type
18"	3	4	Assault 5

Drone controller

A drone controller acts as a hub for communications between the operator and a number of drones. A model with a drone controller must take one or two Gun, Marker or Shield Drones, in any combination, from the Wargear list.

Ejection system

This system provides the pilot a chance of escaping catastrophic damage to his battlesuit. Should the character lose his last wound to a shooting attack that does not cause Instant Death, the battlesuit is replaced with a single model, representing the pilot.

The profile of this model is the same as before the pilot ejected, less 2 Strength, 1 Toughness and it has 1 Wound and no Armour Save. It is equipped with a pulse pistol only. Independent characters and single-member teams ('Monats') without drones only.

Failsafe detonator

This device is intended as the ultimate expression of the doctrine of the Greater Good, and is to be used only in the direst of circumstances. The failsafe detonator may be triggered if the bearer is part of a team that is forced to make a Fall Back move having lost an assault.

The team is moved as normal, but the character stays where he is and the enemy may not make a Sweeping Advance. Once his team has moved, and before Pile In moves, the character activates the detonator – place the Large Blast marker centred on the character, and roll for partial hits on other models as

normal. Every model hit takes single, Strength 8; AP– hit, and the character is removed as a casualty. The enemy may not Consolidate. Note that the enemy unit need not take a Morale check should the attack inflict 25% casualties, as occurs outside the normal sequence in which such checks are required.

Flamer

Used when fighting massed, lightly armoured opponents, the flamer is a lethal weapon when used by Crisis teams fighting in amongst densely packed terrain.

Range	Str	AP	Type
Template	4	5	Assault 1

Fusion blaster

Fusion blasters are carried by Crisis suit equipped warriors as anti-tank weapons, and many pilots have become adept at stalking enemy armour, using their high mobility to outflank the enemy and engage his weaker, rear armour.

Range	Str	AP	Type
12"	8	1	Melta Assault 1

Iridium armour plates

The character's battlesuit is fitted with additional armour protection, in the form of iridium armour plates fitted across its surface. These increase the model's Armour Save to 2+, but the additional 6" move in the Assault phase is reduced to D6".

Missile pod

A simple shoulder or arm mounted multiple missile delivery system, the missile pod is used by battlesuit-equipped teams for engaging enemy light vehicles at medium range.

Range	Str	AP	Type
36"	7	4	Assault 2

Multi-tracker

The multi-tracker is a sophisticated fire control system mounted in a sensor node, often upon a battlesuit's shoulder. It enables the model to fire two battlesuit weapon systems in the same turn.

Plasma rifle

Plasma technology is used by many races, despite its unstable nature. Tau favour a form of the technology that foregoes a degree of stopping power for increased safety of the operator.

Range	Str	AP	Type
24"	6	2	Rapid Fire

Positional relay

This records detailed battlefield data and relays it in a tight-band, encrypted burst to a single unit operating as a strategic reserve. From the second turn onwards, as long as the bearer is on the table at the beginning of the turn in which this device is used, a single unit that is being held in Reserve may be deployed on a D6 roll of 2+, though no other units in Reserve may be deployed this turn.

Railgun

The Tau battlesuit railgun uses linear accelerator technology to project a solid projectile at hypervelocity. It is capable of punching through the thickest of armour and of taking down the largest of enemies.

Range	Str	AP	Type
72"	10	1	Heavy 1

Shield generator

The cohesive energy field projected by the shield generator confers a 4+ Invulnerable Save.

Smart missile system

The smart missile system fires self-guiding missiles with the intelligence of a drone, which first search for then hunt down the target, passing around any blocking terrain. The smart missile system can engage any target in range regardless of whether there is a line of sight to it or not. The target can count the benefits of cover they are in, or are touching if it lies between them and the firer. Models firing a smart missile system do not need to make a Target Priority test. In addition, smart missiles are not affected by the Night Fighting scenario special rules.

Range	Str	AP	Type
24"	5	5	Heavy 4

Stealth field generator

A stealth field is projected from small nodes situated at points upon the user's body, surrounding him in a distortion effect that makes him extremely difficult to target. Enemy models attempting to fire at a unit wholly equipped with stealth field

generators must roll to check their spotting distance by rolling 2D6x3 as if firing at night. If the models are not within spotting range, the firer may not choose to fire at a different target. The firing unit may, however, choose to ignore models equipped with stealth field generators and fire on a more distant target, and in this case will not be required to take a Target Priority test if this target is the next closest. Models equipped with stealth field generators count as being in cover if they are assaulted. If firing at models equipped with stealth field generators while the Night Fighting special rule is in effect, no further effect is gained. Barrage weapons roll an additional D6 for scatter when targeting a model equipped with a stealth field generator. Any drones controlled by a model with a stealth field generator will also be shielded at no further cost in points.

Stimulant injector

The character's battlesuit is fitted with an advanced life support system that is able to flood his system with stimulants should he become wounded. The model is subject to the Feel No Pain special rule, as described in the Warhammer 40,000 rulebook.

Stealth armour

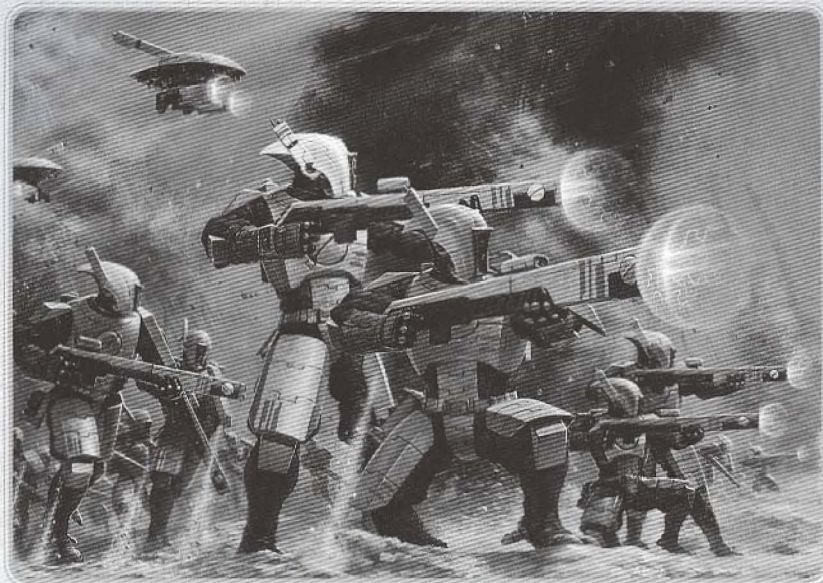
A smaller suit developed for the specialised role of infiltration. Stealth team members are Jump Infantry subject to the Jetpack rules, as explained in the Warhammer 40,000 Unit Type Rules section and the wearer and any attached drones may be deployed using the Deep Strike special rule if the mission being played permits it (though he may not make the additional 6" move in the turn he arrives). In addition, the advanced sensor suite employed by the battlesuit grants the wearer the Acute Senses special rule as described in the Warhammer 40,000 rulebook.

XV8 Crisis battlesuit

The most reliable and commonplace of battlesuits, XV8 suits are the mainstay of the elite Crisis teams of the Fire caste. Crisis suits are Jump Infantry subject to the Jetpack special rules, as described in the Warhammer 40,000 Unit Types Rules section, and the wearer and any attached drones may be deployed using the Deep Strike special rule if the mission being played permits it (though he may not make the additional 6" move in the turn he arrives). In addition, the advanced sensor suite employed by the battlesuit grants the wearer the Acute Senses special rule, found in the Warhammer 40,000 Universal Special Rules section. The battlesuits are designed to compensate for the recoil of light weapons fire, so they do not count as moving when they fire Rapid Fire weapons. This ability does not extend to heavy weapons, however, and the user must be stationary to fire them.

XV88 Broadside armour

A powerfully built variant of the Crisis battlesuit, the advanced sensor suite employed by the battlesuit grants the wearer the Acute Senses special rule, found in the Warhammer 40,000 Universal Special Rules section. The battlesuits do not count as moving when they fire Rapid Fire weapons. This ability does not extend to heavy weapons, however, and the user must be stationary to fire them.



Target lock

This specialised target acquisition system enables the model to target a separate enemy unit to that engaged

by the rest of its own unit. All firing in the unit must be declared before any to hit rolls are made. One Target Priority test is made for the unit – if

passed, all the separate shots are taken; if failed, all shooting must be at the nearest target, as specified by the Target Priority rule.

Targeting array

A relatively new application of targeting technology used in vehicle-mounted targeting systems, a targeting array grants the user +1 BS, up to BS 5.

Vectored retro-thrusters

The character's suit is equipped with additional thruster nozzles, allowing him a degree of additional manoeuvrability that may be useful in escaping an enemy that has engaged him in close combat. The character benefits from the Hit and Run universal special rule, as detailed in the Warhammer 40,000 rulebook. Independent characters and single-member teams ('Monads' without drones only).

INFANTRY ARMOURY

A model not equipped with a battlesuit, with access to the armoury, may choose up to 100 points from the Infantry Wargear list. No model can pick the same item twice, and all equipment, other than hard-wired wargear (which is assumed to be worn as warrior jewellery or cybernetic systems) must be represented on the model.

INFANTRY WARGEAR

Bonding knife	5 pts	Hard-wired blacksun filter . . .	3 pts	Gun Drone	10 pts
EMP grenades	3 pts	Hard-wired drone controller .	0 pts	Marker Drone	30 pts
Honour blade (Ethereal only) .	10 pts	Hard-wired multi-tracker . . .	5 pts	Shield Drone	15 pts
		Hard-wired target lock	5 pts		

Hard-wired systems: Hard-wired systems allow Tau without a battlesuit to benefit from some support systems normally only mounted on a battlesuit. See the Battlesuit section of the Armoury for each system's rules.

Bonding knife

This is a ceremonial knife, not intended for combat, carried by the leader of Fire caste Warrior teams who have performed the Ta'lissera ritual and bonded as a group. So long as the bearer is alive, the bonded team may regroup even if below half strength.

EMP grenades

EMP grenades emit a brief electromagnetic pulse that overloads circuitry, causing fires, meltdowns and other critical malfunctions. They are used when assaulting enemy vehicles, hitting in the same

way as grenades and meltabombs. When determining damage, roll a D6. On a 4 or 5 they inflict a glancing hit, on a 6 they inflict a penetrating hit.

Honour blade

This is a long, broad-bladed spear mounted on a lightweight metallic shaft. The honour blade is used to settle disputes between Ethereal caste members in stylised bloodless duels. It is used in elegant sweeping movements where the blade becomes virtually invisible. The honour blade must be used in two

hands – the wielder cannot therefore count as carrying an additional weapon. It adds +2 to the wielder's Strength.

Kroot gun

A larger calibre version of the Kroot rifle, the Kroot gun is so heavy it must be mounted upon the back of the lumbering Krootox and operated by a warrior dedicated to its use. The weapon finds its primary use in engaging enemy light vehicles.

Range	Str	AP	Type
48"	7	4	Rapid Fire

TAU VEHICLE ARMOURY

Each vehicle may take the upgrades listed in its army list entry. With the exception of seeker missiles, only one of each upgrade may be taken per vehicle. Vehicle upgrades must be shown on the model.

TAU VEHICLE UPGRADES

Sensor spines 10 pts	Blacksun filter 5 pts	Disruption pod 5 pts
Targeting array 5 pts	Target lock 5 pts	Decoy launchers 5 pts
Multi-tracker 10 pts	Flechette discharger 10 pts	Seeker missile 10 pts each (maximum 2 per vehicle)

Blacksun filter

This is simply a vehicle-mounted version of the hard-wired filter system. The vehicle doubles the distance rolled for determining how far it can see when using the Night Fighting mission special rules.

Decoy launchers

Decoy launchers are mounted near the engines of Tau skimmers and fire clouds of reflective strips and tiny emitter drones to protect the vulnerable thruster arrays. Whenever an Immobilised result is rolled on the Glancing Hit Vehicle Damage table, the Tau player may force his opponent to re-roll the dice, though the second result stands, even if it is worse.

Disruption pod

A disruption pod throws out distorting images in both visual and magnetic spectra, making it hard to target at range. Weapons firing at the vehicle

from more than 12" distant count the vehicle as an Obscured Target.

Flechette discharger

Powerful clusters of reactive charges are attached to the hulls of many Tau vehicles. If the enemy approach, they fire off vicious clouds of high velocity flechettes. Any model attacking the vehicle in close combat will be wounded on a D6 roll of 4+, with Saves allowed, before resolving its attacks.

Gun Drones

A vehicle may be equipped with two Gun Drones. The drones will move with the vehicle, safely contained in specially designed recesses. During any Tau Movement phase, the drones may disengage in the same way as infantry dismount from a transport and form an independent unit. From then on, the drones function as a Drone squadron. The drones may not rejoin the vehicle during a game and will never count as a Scoring Unit.

While attached, the Gun Drones may fire as part of the vehicle, using their own BS, in addition to any other weapons that would normally be permitted to fire, and are treated as passengers if the vehicle is damaged.

Hammerhead railgun

The railgun is a linear accelerator which functions using standing wave acceleration along a number of cylindrical superconductive electrodes that surround the barrel. It can fire either a solid projectile or a sophisticated bundle of submunitions. The submunitions

option is only available to the vehicle mounted railgun.

Railgun (solid shot)

Range	Str	AP	Type
72"	10	1	Heavy 1

Railgun (submunition)

Range	Str	AP	Type
72"	6	4	Heavy 1 Large Blast

Ion cannon

Ion weaponry generates a stream of high-energy particles that are accelerated by an electromagnetic field. These will react explosively with the target as a result of direct transfer of energy at the atomic level.

Range	Str	AP	Type
60"	7	3	Heavy 3

Landing gear

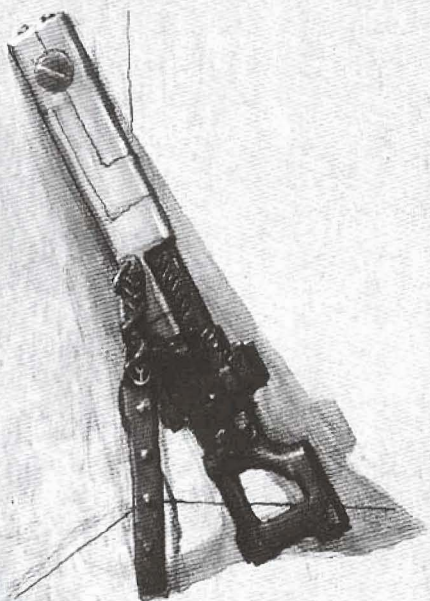
Though they utilise advanced anti-gravitic technology, Tau vehicles are fitted with basic landing gear in case they should suffer malfunction. In any turn that the vehicle does not move, it may choose to no longer count as a Skimmer until it moves again. This benefit does not apply on the first turn of the game.

Multi-tracker

The vehicle-mounted multi-tracker is combined with advanced stabilisers enabling a vehicle to fire as if it were a fast vehicle.

Seeker missiles

Seeker missile arrays are provided to allow Tau infantry to immediately obtain fire support, for Fire caste doctrine does not allow for organic integrated heavy weapons in Fire Warrior teams. Any model equipped



with a markerlight may request a seeker missile salvo as detailed in the markerlight rules. Up to two seeker missiles may be fitted to a single vehicle, and one or both launched in a single turn, each using different markerlight hits. Each is a single shot weapon. The missiles do not need a line of sight from the vehicle they are mounted on to the vehicle. The missile is assumed to move in a straight line between the model carrying the missile and the target itself for the purposes of deciding whether the shot strikes the front, side or rear. The missiles have no maximum range. Ordinarily, the vehicle carrying the seeker missiles has no control over them and cannot launch them itself. The mechanism is remote and responds only to markerlight users.

The missiles may always be fired, each at different targets if relevant, regardless of the distance the vehicle has moved or whether it has fired any other weapons. They may also be fired if the vehicle has suffered a Crew Stunned vehicle damage result.

Range	Str	AP	Type
unlimited	8	3	Heavy 1

Sensor spines

Sensor spines are used to feed data to an advanced ground-following flight control system. The vehicle may opt to use them instead of moving normally. Whilst doing so, the vehicle does not hover above a terrain feature – instead, it is counted as actually moving through it. It may therefore claim to be an obscured

target in the same way as a normal vehicle in the same position, but the sensors allow it to avoid the effects of dangerous terrain.

Targeting array

Targeting arrays assist the vehicle gunner's aim by adjusting for the target's range and speed. Add 1 to the vehicle's BS.

Target lock

The target lock identifies potential targets and plots fire plans to counter them, granting the vehicle gunner far more choice about the targets to be engaged. Each weapon on the vehicle may fire at a separate enemy unit if desired, subject to the normal line of sight rules.

Drones

Drones are independent artificial intelligences, programmed to protect the Tau. Unlike the Imperium, the Tau make extensive use of machine intelligences. Normally drones will require regular orders from a Tau, but when several intelligences are networked together in a squadron they become capable of acting independently for a long period.

Drones under the command of a drone controller are counted when assessing if the unit they are with should take a Morale check having taken 25% casualties. They are similarly counted when determining if the unit is strong enough to claim an objective. If their unit suffers losses, drones are counted when determining if it is below 50% for Victory Point purposes.

Drones must maintain coherency with the unit their controller is in. If he is an independent character then the drones and character form a unit but the character and drones may still join another unit. If the character with the drone controller is killed then all his drones are removed at the end of the Shooting or Assault phase in which he died.

Shield Drone

WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
2	2	3	X	1	4	1	n/a	X

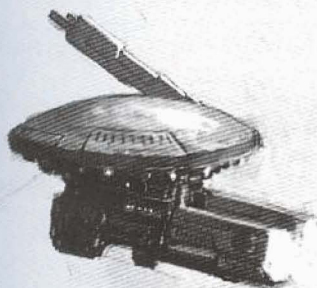
Equipment: None.

Unit Type: As owner.

SPECIAL RULES

Close Protection: Shield Drones always have the same Toughness and Armour Save values as the individual they accompany.

Invulnerable Save: The Shield Drone is equipped with powerful energy shields. It has a 4+ Invulnerable Save.



Gun Drone

WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
2	2	3	3	1	4	1	n/a	4+

Equipment: Twin-linked pulse carbine.

Unit Type: As owner, or Jump Infantry (jet pack) if independent.

All Gun Drones on a vehicle or in a Piranha squadron must disembark at the same time, counting as a single unit.

Sniper Drone

WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
2	2(3)	3	3	1	4	1	n/a	4+

Equipment: Rail rifle, target lock & stealth field generator, targeting array (bonus included above).

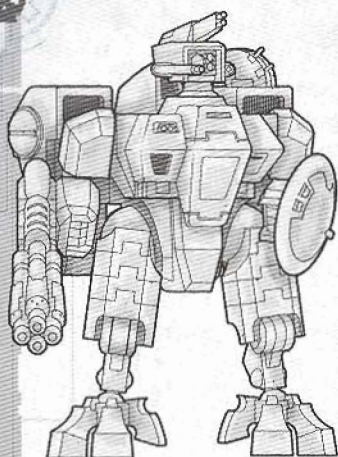
Unit Type: As owner.

Marker Drone

WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
2	2(3)	3	3	1	4	1	n/a	4+

Equipment: Networked markerlight, targeting array (bonus included above).

Unit Type: As owner.



1+ COMMANDER (TAU: SHAS'EL OR SHAS'O)

Commander is a position of great honour for Tau of the Fire caste. It is attained only after years progressing through the ranks of Fire Warriors to fight first in the Battlesuit teams and then as part of another Commander's Bodyguard. Proof of accomplishment in not only the tactical but also the strategic arts of war may then earn the Commander's approval and elevation from Shas'vre. Tau Commanders are formidable warriors, frequently sporting scars, bionics and disfigurements earned in their career. According to their renown they may be called upon to command anything from a Cadre to a Battle. The number and size of previous commands is reflected in the rings confining their long scalp locks. A Shas'el can only progress to the rank of Shas'o after repeated success in the field.

	Points	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Shas'o	75	4	5	5	4	4	3	4	10	3+
Shas'el	50	3	4	5	4	3	3	3	9	3+

Unit Type: Jump Infantry (jet pack).

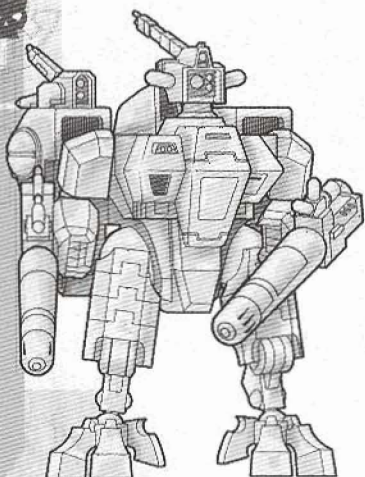
Equipment: The Commander is equipped with an XV8 Crisis battlesuit, and must select three battlesuit weapons systems or support systems. He may select additional items from the Battlesuit Wargear list, including Special Issue systems.

SPECIAL RULES

Independent Character: Unless accompanied by a Bodyguard, the Commander is an independent character and follows the Independent Character special rules in the Warhammer 40,000 rulebook. If accompanied by drones, he may still join other units as an independent character.

Bodyguard: The Commander may be accompanied by a Bodyguard, see the separate entry below. The Commander and his Bodyguard count as a single HQ choice.

XV8 battlesuit: The Commander's battlesuit grants him the Acute Senses and Deep Strike special rules. See the Armoury for more details.



XV8 'CRISIS' BATTLESUIT BODYGUARD TEAM (TAU: SHAS'VRE)

A Bodyguard team of Fire Warriors in Crisis battlesuit armour may accompany a Shas'o or a Shas'el. The Bodyguards will always be Shas'vre veterans, experienced and proven in battle. It is common for such Bodyguard teams to be predominantly made up of the Commander's kin or long-term friends, and it is a great honour to be chosen for such duty. The Bodyguard embody the Tau philosophy of striving for the Greater Good at the expense of personal glory and these warriors are much respected by the rest of the army.

	Points	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Shas'vre	35	3	3	5	4	2	3	2	8	3+

Team: A team consists of 1-2 Shas'vre. There can only be 0-1 team per Commander, and they may not be taken separately.

Unit Type: Jump Infantry (jet pack).

Equipment: Each Shas'vre is equipped with an XV8 Crisis battlesuit, and must select three battlesuit weapons systems or support systems. Each may select additional items from the Battlesuit Wargear list, including Special Issue systems.

SPECIAL RULES

XV8 battlesuit: The Bodyguards' battlesuits grant them the Acute Senses and Deep Strike special rules. See the Armoury for more details.

ETHEREAL (TAU: AUN)

Little is known of the Tau Ethereal caste, appearing as shrouded, enigmatic figures that eschew the advanced equipment favoured by the Tau Fire caste. Ethereals seem to combine the roles of priesthood and royalty within Tau society, and command unquestioning loyalty from all of the other castes. Ethereal caste members are occasionally seen on the battlefield, although whether leading or observing is unclear.

	Points	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Ethereal	50	4	3	3	3	2	3	3	10	—

Equipment: The Ethereal normally carries symbols of office that can be used as a pair of close combat weapons (+1 Attack). These may be exchanged for an honour blade for 10 points. He may select equipment from the Infantry Armoury.

Unit Type: Infantry.

SPECIAL RULES

Independent Character: Unless accompanied by an Honour Guard, the Ethereal is an independent character and follows the Independent Character special rules in the Warhammer 40,000 rulebook. If accompanied by drones, the Ethereal may still join friendly units.

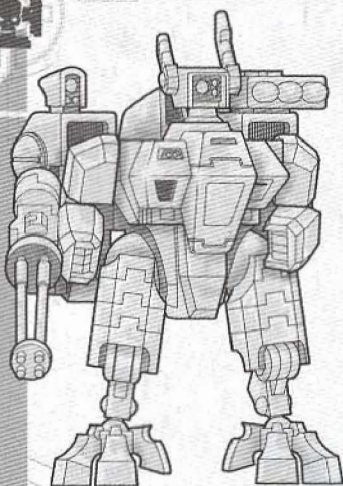
Honour Guard: The Ethereal may be accompanied by an Honour Guard of Veteran Fire Warriors who have chosen to forgo the normal progression to battlesuit pilot and then Commander. The Honour Guard is chosen as a normal Fire Warrior team (it does not count as the compulsory choice), but does not take up an additional Force Organisation slot. These Veteran Fire Warriors cost an additional 2 points over the basic cost, and each benefits from +1 Ballistic Skill, but otherwise have the same unit size, weapons and options.

Inspiring Presence: The Ethereal and all Tau units (not Kroot, Vespids or drones) with a line of sight to him may re-roll any Morale checks. If the Night Fighting rules are in use then roll to determine the distance the unit can see. This includes passed Morale checks. The re-rolled result stands. Any Tau unit joined by an Ethereal caste member becomes Fearless.

Price of Failure. Whilst the Tau are inspired by the presence of their Ethereals, they are conditioned to dread their death above all things, for fear of the return of the Mont'au – the Time of Terror before the coming of the Ethereals. If a friendly Ethereal is killed then every unit of Tau on the tabletop (not Kroot, Vespids or Drones) must take a Morale check at the start of their next turn if they are not in close combat or falling back. In addition, every Tau that takes the test will benefit from the Preferred Enemy universal special rule, with the enemy as their preferred enemy. This applies whether the Morale test is passed or failed, and lasts until the end of the game.



ELITES



XV8 'CRISIS' BATTLESUIT TEAM (TAU: SHAS'UI)

Those Fire Warriors who prove themselves in battle earn the right to wear a battlesuit and bear the name of Shas'ui. They are experienced fighters who have fought the deadliest foes and triumphed. Their loyalty and skill is beyond question and the best and bravest of them may be honoured by being elevated to become a bodyguard to their Shas'o or Shas'el. Teams of Crisis battlesuit warriors will have fought together for many years and, in many cases, will have performed the Ta'lissera ritual where the warriors swear oaths of communion and loyalty to one another, placing the welfare of the team ahead of their own personal desires.

	Points	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Shas'ui	25	2	3	5	4	2	2	2	8	3+
Shas'vre	+10	3	3	5	4	2	3	2	8	3+

Team: A team consists of 1-3 Shas'ui.

Unit Type: Jump Infantry (jet pack).

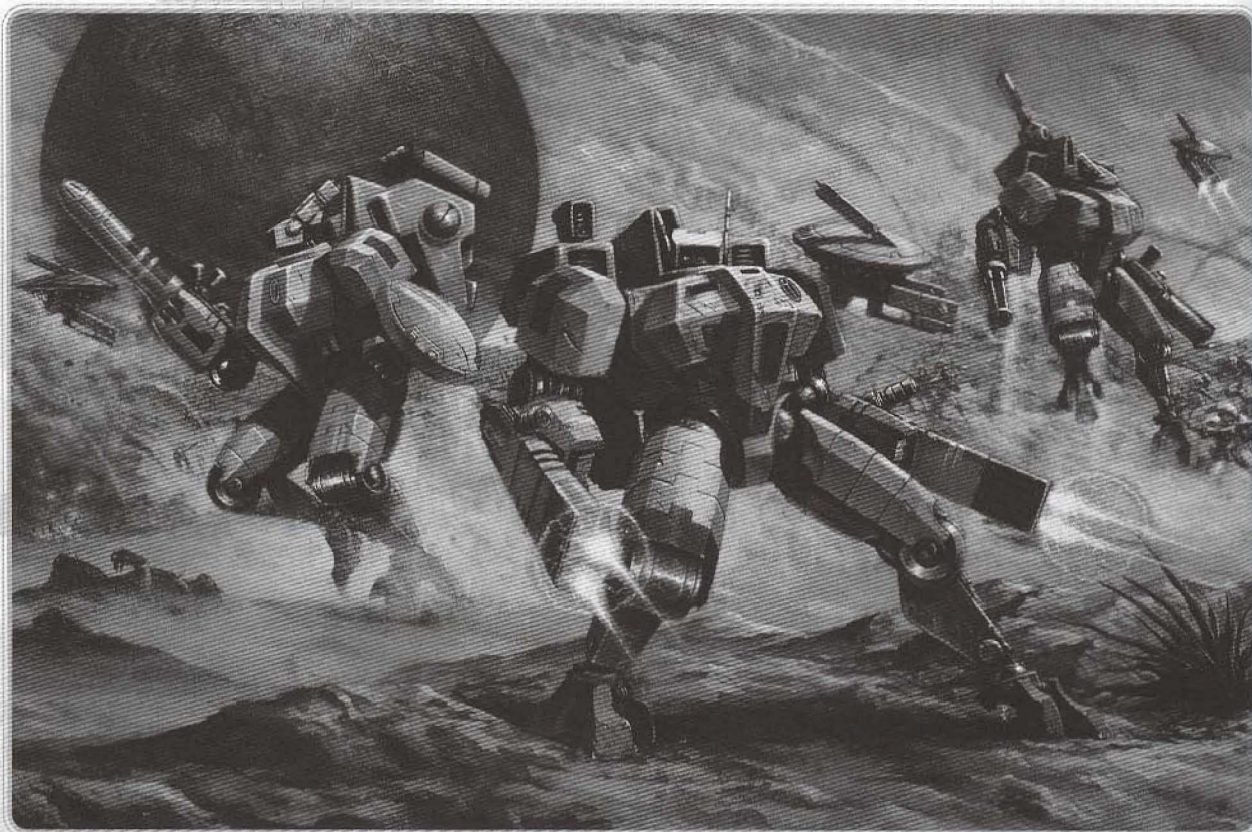
Equipment: Each team member is equipped with an XV8 Crisis battlesuit, and must select three battlesuit weapons systems or support systems.

Character: One Shas'ui per team may be designated as a team leader at +5 points, and may select items from the Battlesuit Wargear list. A Shas'ui team leader may be upgraded to a Shas'vre for an additional 5 points, giving him access to Special Issue wargear.

SPECIAL RULES

XV8 battlesuit: The team members' battlesuits grant them the Acute Senses and Deep Strike special rules. See the Armoury for more details.

ELITES



STEALTH TEAM (TAU: SHAS'UI)

Stealth teams, equipped with XV15 or the slightly larger XV25 Stealthsuits, are the 'lone wolves' of the Tau army, operating independently of other formations. They are intent upon ambushing isolated enemy troops and intervening in support of friendly units. They are not factored directly into Tau battle plans and so enjoy a great deal of freedom of action within very broad parameters. The leaders of Stealth teams are often regarded as being slightly eccentric and delight in employing new and unpredictable tactics. Many a foe of the Tau empire has found himself attacked from an unexpected quarter by Stealth teams positioned ahead of the main army.

	Points	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Shas'ui	30	2	3	4	3	1	2	2	8	3+
Shas'vre	+10	3	3	4	3	1	3	2	8	3+

Team: A team consists of 3-6 Shas'ui.

Unit Type: Jump Infantry (jet pack).

Equipment: Each team member is equipped with a burst cannon and Stealth armour with integral stealth field generator. Each team member may select one battlesuit support system. If this option is taken, all members must do so, though each may select a different system.

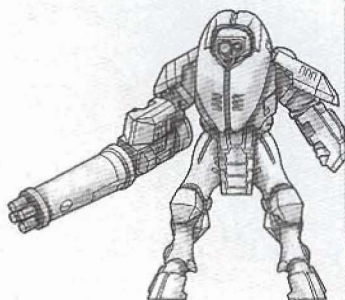
Options: One in three models (including the team leader or Shas'vre) may replace their burst cannon with a fusion blaster at a cost of 2 pts per model.

Character: One Shas'ui per team may be designated as a team leader at +5 points, and may select items from the Battlesuit Wargear list. A Shas'ui team leader may be upgraded to a Shas'vre for an additional 5 points. The team leader or Shas'vre may also purchase a markerlight at an additional 10 points.

SPECIAL RULES

Infiltrate: Stealth armour teams can use their suits to move into forward positions ahead of the main army unseen. To represent this they can set up using the Infiltrators scenario special rule if the mission allows it. Any drones attached to the unit may accompany them. If the mission does not allow troops to use the Infiltrate rule then the Stealth armour troops must set up with the rest of the army.

Stealth Armour: The team members' battlesuits grant them Acute Senses and Deep Strike special rules. See the Armoury for more details.

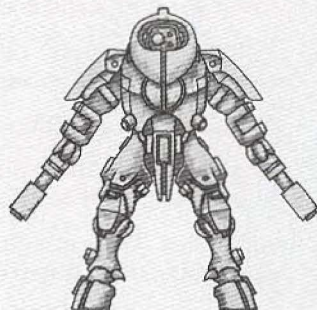


THE XV22 BATTLESUIT

Tau battlesuit technology is ever evolving, for the Tau learn from experience and utilise their technology to overcome those obstacles that stand in the way of the Greater Good. Current marks of battlesuit are easily mass-produced and known to be reliable, yet there are a number of other models in development, many of which make use of technological developments that the Earth caste are not yet able to produce on a mass scale.

These experimental suits are issued to trusted commanders or their subordinates, where they can be field-tested and their performance analysed. The XV22 battlesuit worn by Commander Shadowsun is such a suit, the first '2' in the designation indicating the suit's mass class, the second indicating that it is undergoing field-testing.

Whether or not the XV22 becomes approved for general use will be determined by its performance in the battles of the Third Sphere Expansion. Its future relies as much upon Shadowsun as hers does on the XV22.



TROOPS

1+ FIRE WARRIOR TEAM (TAU: SHAS'LA)

Fire Warrior teams are ever present in Tau armies and are formed from members of the same sept. They are cautious but efficient, and their pulse rifle armament gives them excellent firepower. Often mounted in a Devilfish troop carrier, they are able to rapidly deploy and lay down a withering fusillade upon their foes.



	Points	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Shas'la	10	2	3	3	3	1	2	1	7	4+
Shas'ui	+10	2	3	3	3	1	2	2	8	4+

Team: The team consists of 6-12 Fire Warriors.

Unit Type: Infantry.

Equipment: Pulse rifle.

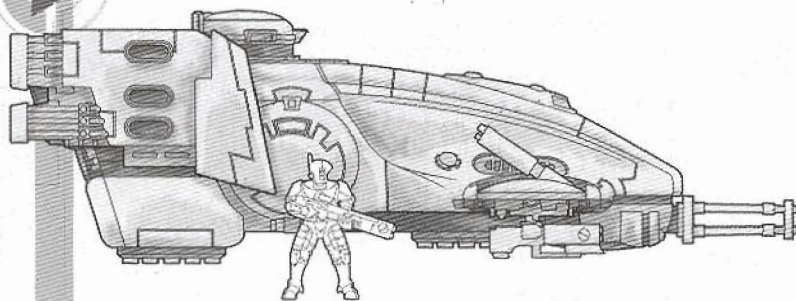
Options: Any number of the Fire Warriors in the team may exchange their pulse rifle for a pulse carbine at no extra points cost. The team may carry photon grenades at an additional cost of +1 point per model and EMP grenades at an additional cost of +3 points per model.

Character: One Fire Warrior Shas'la may be upgraded to a Shas'ui team leader at +10 points, and may select items from the Infantry Wargear list. A Shas'ui team leader may also purchase a markerlight at an additional 10 points.

Transport: If it numbers twelve models or less (including drones), the team may be mounted in a Devilfish troop carrier.

TRANSPORT: DEVILFISH TROOP CARRIER

The Devilfish troop carrier is the workhorse of the Tau ground forces and is able to carry twelve warriors. Armed with a fearsome burst cannon, it can rapidly transport its passengers to their destination then act as mobile fire support once they have disembarked. The Devilfish also carries a pair of Gun Drones to provide even more firepower.



	Points	Front	Armour Side	Rear	BS
Devilfish	80	12	11	10	3

Type: Tank, Skimmer.

Crew: Tau Fire caste.

Unit Type: Vehicle.

Weapons: Burst cannon and a pair of Gun Drones. It is also equipped with landing gear.

Options: The Devilfish may be equipped with any of the vehicle upgrades specified in the Tau Armoury. The Gun Drones may be replaced by a smart missile system at a cost of +20 pts.

Transport: The Devilfish can carry up to twelve models. It may not carry any troops in XV battlesuits.

Access Points: There are access hatches at the rear and on each side of the hull. Models embarking or disembarking must be within 2" of one of them.

Fire Points: There are no fire points; the Devilfish is a pressurised environment. This means that passengers may not fire while aboard the vehicle.

KROOT CARNIVORE SQUAD

Kroot Carnivore squads are the most common auxiliaries serving alongside the Tau armies. The Kroot worlds have long been part of the empire, ever since a Tau expeditionary force helped liberate several Kroot enclaves from Ork domination. The Kroot warriors have a strict code of honour and, in return for the support of the Tau empire, supply large numbers of warriors as exclusive mercenaries. Their self-sufficiency and unparalleled fieldcraft are a major asset to the Tau and a useful contrast to their more technologically dependent masters. Kroot squads may also contain the lumbering Krootox and agile Kroot Hounds. Whilst the Tau find the Kroot's predilection for eating the flesh of their vanquished foes barbaric, it is hoped that prolonged exposure to the Tau's sensibilities and culture will eventually purge them of this distasteful habit. Despite this, the Kroot are afforded virtually the same level of respect as a Tau, since their skill at arms is much valued by the less physically able Tau. The Kroot are honoured for their martial prowess and are rewarded for their efforts, as befits loyal citizens of the Tau empire.



	Points	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Kroot	7	4	3	4	3	1	3	1	7	–
Shaper	+21	4	3	4	3	3	3	3	8	6
Kroot Hound	6	4	0	4	3	1	5	2	7	–
Krootox Rider	35	4	3	6	3	3	3	3	7	–

Squad: The squad numbers from 10-20 Kroot, 0-12 Kroot Hounds, and 0-3 Krootox Riders.

Unit Type: Infantry.

Equipment: Kroot are armed with a Kroot rifle, Krootox Riders with a Kroot gun, and Kroot Hounds with their ferocious fangs.

Options: If a Shaper is included in a Carnivore squad, its members may acquire a 6+ Armour Save at a cost of 1 point per model.

Some Shapers carry weaponry gifted from the Tau. For an additional 5 points, the Shaper's Kroot rifle can be replaced with either a pulse rifle or a pulse carbine.

Character: One Kroot may be upgraded to a Shaper at an additional cost of 21 points.

SPECIAL RULES

Fieldcraft: Kroot gain +1 to their Cover Save in woods or jungles. Kroot in woods or jungles do not have to roll a Difficult Terrain test; they can always move up to 6". In addition, they can see and shoot through 12" of woods or jungle terrain rather than the 6" that would normally be the case.

Infiltrate: If the squad does not contain a Krootox Rider it may infiltrate if the mission permits it. See the Warhammer 40,000 rulebook for the Infiltrators scenario special rules.

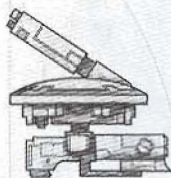
RITUAL OF THE TALISSERA

Many Tau groupings are 'bonded', according to a solemn ceremony known as the 'Ta'lissera'. The best translation which xenolexicons can derive for this word is communion or marriage. It appears to be some kind of sworn bond where groups of Tau pledge support and community to one another. The Tau who have sworn these pledges may address each other by their individual names and are much admired.

This bond is seen as the ultimate Tau expression of respect for one another as it symbolises the sacrifice of individual pride to become part of a greater whole. The 'Ta'lissera' is most commonly found within the ranks of Fire caste warriors and Earth caste work teams, who regard themselves as ennobled by their bond of communal purpose.

FAST ATTACK

FAST ATTACK



GUN DRONE SQUADRON (TAU: KOR'VESA)

Acting in support of Fire Warrior teams and armed with twin-linked pulse carbines, squadrons of Gun Drones can pin enemy troops in place while the main body of the Tau army takes further shots at the advancing enemy.

	Points	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Gun Drone	12	2	2	3	3	1	4	1	7	4+

Squadron: The squadron numbers from 4-8 Gun Drones.

Unit Type: Jump Infantry (jet pack).

Equipment: Twin-linked pulse carbine.

SPECIAL RULES

Deep Strike: Gun Drone squadrons are able to deploy using the Deep Strike mission special rule in missions that allow it.



PATHFINDER TEAM (TAU: SHAS'LA)

Tau Pathfinders are the eyes and ears of a Cadre's commander, and coordinate closely with other formations. Fire caste doctrine states that a Cadre in the field should be pulled forward by its Pathfinders, as opposed to its Pathfinders being pushed forward by the Cadre. An efficient Pathfinder team can help other Fire Warrior teams operate at peak efficiency and are highly respected as a consequence. They are the undisputed masters of battlefield positioning, with limitless patience and a proud determination to choose the most valuable targets for others to destroy. Imperial troops who fought in the Damocles Gulf Crusade described the signature of the barely visible markerlight beams as the Valkyrie's Mark, because those it chose were soon numbered amongst the dead.

	Points	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Shas'la	12	2	3	3	3	1	2	1	7	4+
Shas'ui	+10	2	3	3	3	1	2	2	8	4+

Team: Consists of 4-8 Pathfinders and a Devilfish.

Unit Type: Infantry.

Equipment: Pulse carbine with markerlight target designator.

Options: Pathfinders may carry photon grenades at an additional cost of 1 point per model and EMP grenades at an additional cost of 3 points per model. Up to three Pathfinders in a team (but not the team leader or Shas'ui) may replace their pulse carbine and markerlight with a rail rifle and target lock at a cost of 10 points each.

Character: One Pathfinder Shas'la may be upgraded to a Shas'ui team leader for an additional 10 points, and may select items from the Infantry Wargear list.

Transport: Pathfinders must select a Devilfish troop carrier at an additional cost of 80 points.

SPECIAL RULES

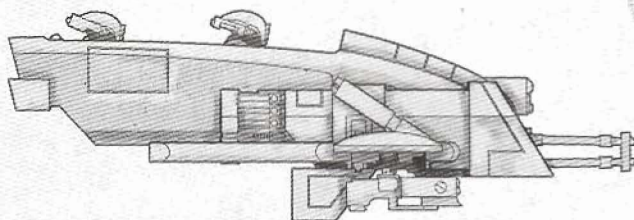
Scouts: Pathfinders are Scouts, see the universal special rules in the Warhammer 40,000 rulebook.

Marker Beacon: The Devilfish transports issued to Pathfinder teams are equipped with enhanced optical processors and long-ranged communications systems. These are used to guide the deployment of battlesuit-equipped teams. Tau units deploying by means of the Deep Strike rule to a point visible to the Devilfish may re-roll the Scatter dice. Note that the Devilfish must already be on the table at the start of the turn for the marker beacon to be used.

FAST ATTACK

PIRANHA LIGHT SKIMMER TEAM

The Piranha is a lightly armoured vehicle used by the Tau in a range of capacities including rapid response, support of Pathfinder teams and even as battlefield transport for high-ranking dignitaries. By upgrading the vehicle to carry a fusion blaster or a pair of seeker missiles it becomes an effective tank hunter, particularly when guided to target by Pathfinder teams.



	Points	Front	Armour			BS
			Side	Rear		
Piranha	60	11	10	10		3

Type: Skimmer, Fast, Open-topped.

Crew: Tau Fire caste.

Team: The Piranha team consists of between 1 and 5 Piranhas.

Unit Type: Vehicle.

Weapons: Each Piranha is armed with a hull-mounted burst cannon and a pair of Gun Drones.

Options: The hull-mounted burst cannon may be replaced with a fusion blaster for 5 points. It may take any of the following vehicle upgrades: sensor spines; targeting array; blacksun filter; flechette discharger; decoy launchers; disruption pod; target lock, seeker missiles.

VESPID STINGWINGS (TAU: MAL'KOR)

The Vespids provide auxiliaries to Tau armies, who value them for their skill at negotiating dangerous ground at speed. They make ideal mobile reserve or flanking troops, though the Tau rely on the communion helm issued to the Strain Leaders to communicate with the Stingwings and coordinate their actions.

	Points	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Stingwing	16	3	3	3	4	1	5	1	6	5+
Strain Leader	22	3	3	3	4	1	5	1	9	5+

Strain: The unit consists of a Strain Leader and 3-10 Stingwings

Unit Type: Jump Infantry.

Equipment: Neutron blaster.

SPECIAL RULES

Fleet of Wing: The Stingwings are surprisingly agile for their size, and many warriors have paid the price for underestimating their speed. They are Fleet, as described in the Warhammer 40,000 Universal Special Rules.

Skilled Flyers: Vespids are skilled at negotiating dangerous obstacles whilst fighting to full effect. They may re-roll failed Dangerous Terrain tests.

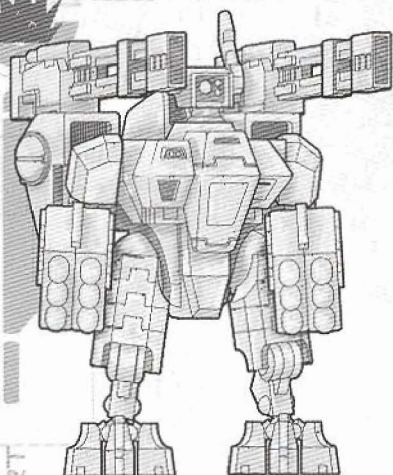


"I have received your messages, acquainting me that these worlds belong to your Emperor, your master. In return I am to inform you that the said worlds belong to his Ethereal Majesty, Aun'O Bork'an Vral, my master, by right of settlement. Should you wish to gain similar rights you must submit yourselves to his wisdom as members of the Tau empire."

Por'el Tau'n Ukos, Water caste negotiator

HEAVY SUPPORT

XV88 BROADSIDE BATTLESUIT TEAM (TAU: SHAS'UI)



Experienced veterans can wear Broadside battlesuits and are the most heavily armed of all Tau ground troops. Broadside teams utilise a heavily modified version of the Crisis battlesuit armour. The standard jet pack is removed, which frees up weight for the incorporation of some extremely heavy weapon systems. Broadside teams must be able to engage and destroy heavily armoured targets and, consequently, are equipped with the most devastating weapons in the Tau arsenal.

	Points	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Shas'ui	70	2	3	5	4	2	2	2	8	2+
Shas'vre	+10	3	3	5	4	2	3	2	8	2+

Team: Consists of 1-3 Broadside Shas'ui.

Unit Type: Infantry.

Equipment: Each model is equipped with an XV88 Broadside battlesuit, and is armed with a twin-linked railgun and smart missile system.

Options: The Broadside team members must choose one battlesuit support system. The smart missile system may be replaced with a twin-linked plasma rifle at +10 points.

Character: One Shas'ui per team may be designated as a team leader at +5 points, and may select items from the Battlesuit Wargear list. A Shas'ui team leader may be upgraded to a Shas'vre for an additional 5 points.

SPECIAL RULE

XV88 battlesuit: The team members' battlesuits grant them the Acute Senses special rule. See the Armoury for details.

SNIPER DRONE TEAMS (TAU: OR'MON'KOR)

Sniper Drone teams consist of a single Tau Spotter and three rail rifle-equipped drones. Each team is equipped to provide pinpoint accurate anti-personnel firepower, and they do this best when working in groups of two or three such teams.

Sniper Drone Teams cost 80 points per team

	Points	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Spotter	See above	2	3 (4)	3	3	1	2	1	8	4+
Drone	See above	2	2 (3)	3	3	1	4	1	7	4+

Team: The team consists of one Spotter and three Sniper Drones. Up to three such teams may be taken as a single Heavy Support choice but only one such choice may be made per army. In addition, the team is never counted as a Scoring Unit.

Unit Type: Infantry.

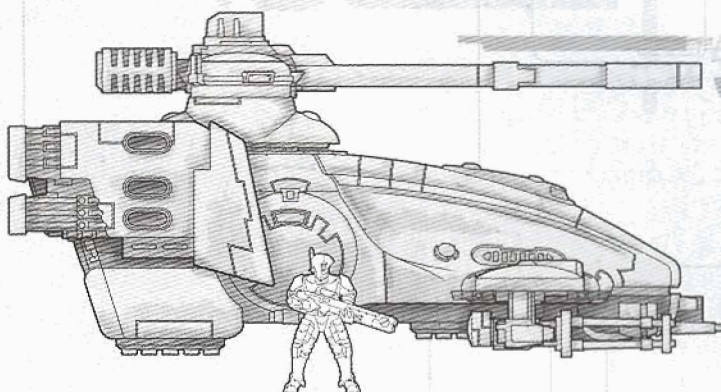
Equipment: Each model is equipped with a stealth field generator and a targeting array (bonus included above). The Spotter is armed with a pulse pistol, a drone controller and a networked markerlight. Each drone is equipped with a rail rifle and a target lock.

"The question of the timing of the commencement of hostilities is one upon which you must meditate most deeply. Once your decision is arrived at, it must be pursued with the utmost energy."

Commander Puretide – The Thirty Seventh Meditation on the Way of the Warrior

HAMMERHEAD GUNSHIP

The Hammerhead gunship is the main battle tank of the Tau army. Most of the internal space within the tank is taken up by capacitors for its weapon systems, and thus it cannot carry troops. During the Damocles Crusade, many Imperial tank crews learned the hard way how deadly its main weapons can be.



	Points	Front	Armour Side	Rear	BS
Hammerhead	90	13	12	10	3(4)

Type: Tank, Skimmer. **Crew:** Tau Fire caste. **Unit Type:** Vehicle.

Weapons: A Hammerhead is armed with a turret-mounted primary weapon system and a hull-mounted secondary weapon system, and is equipped with landing gear. It is always equipped with a targeting array (already added to BS above) at no extra points cost.

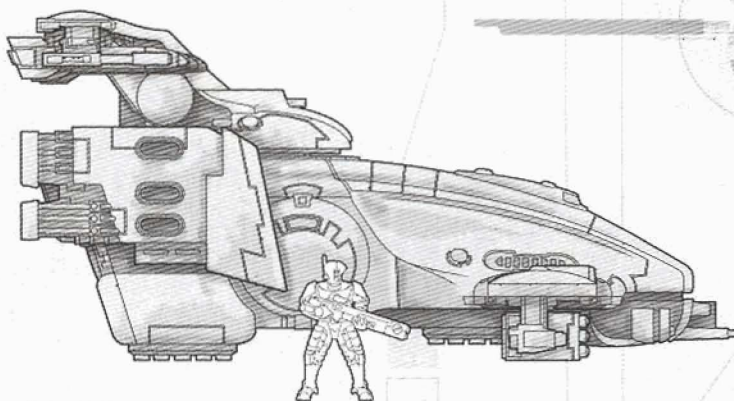
The primary weapon system is either an ion cannon at +15 points or a railgun at +50 points.

The secondary weapon system is either two burst cannons at +10 points for the pair, a pair of Gun Drones at +20 points for the pair, or a smart missile system at +20 points. Note that the burst cannons are not twin-linked and can fire separately.

Options: The Hammerhead may be equipped with any of the vehicle upgrades permitted by the Tau Armoury.

SKY RAY MISSILE DEFENCE GUNSHIP

The Sky Ray is a variant of the more common Hammerhead gunship, and provides a dedicated missile platform that is used by the Fire caste to provide point attack fire support for Fire Warrior teams, who lack their own heavy weaponry. When guided by the markerlights of Pathfinder teams, the Sky Ray makes an exceptional perimeter and air defence missile system.



	Points	Front	Armour Side	Rear	BS
Sky Ray	125	13	12	10	3

Type: Tank, Skimmer. **Crew:** Tau Fire caste. **Unit Type:** Vehicle.

Weapons: A Sky Ray is equipped with landing gear, and is armed with six turret-mounted seeker missiles, two networked markerlights (these are counted as defensive weapons) and a target lock (meaning it can launch its own missiles, potentially at two different targets per Shooting phase). It is also equipped with a hull-mounted secondary weapon system.

The secondary weapon system is either two burst cannons at +10 points for the pair, a pair of Gun Drones at +20 points for the pair, or a smart missile system at +20 points. Note that the burst cannons are not twin-linked and fire separately.

Options: The Sky Ray may be equipped with any of the following vehicle upgrades: sensor spines; targeting array; blacksun filter; multi-tracker; flechette discharger; disruption pod; decoy launcher.

HEAVY SUPPORT

HEAVY SUPPORT

AUN'VA - MASTER OF THE UNDYING SPIRIT

It is said that Aun'Va is the oldest and the wisest of his caste. He has counselled the greatest leaders of the Tau for longer than any can recall, and his hand can be seen at work behind much of Tau history. He is the most senior Ethereal upon T'au, sitting upon the councils that rule not just the sept but the entire empire. His word is heeded by every member of his caste, for his counsel has ever proven wise and true.

But Aun'Va is not merely a spiritual leader, for history is replete with instances of him leading the Tau expansion from the very leading edge of conquest. His presence gave the Fire caste the will to rid the Si'coa system of the hateful Reek, his words sending them into a righteous rage. Upon the flanks of Mount Scion he pronounced the fate of the Orks of Waaagh! Grognik – a sentence that was efficiently enacted by ten thousand Fire Warriors.

Aun'Va next declared the Third Expansion, addressing the combined Councils of the four castes. Flanked by his ceremonial guard, Aun'Va gave a slow, deliberate speech, culminating in a rousing call to arms. As his words echoed into silence, a million Fire Warriors listening outside the council dome went down on bended knee. The Earth caste began the building of a vast temple in his name. The Air caste launched a thousand vessels, each named for one of his deeds, and the Water caste dedicated an army of envoys to carry his words to the stars.

Aun'Va's next act was to decry the actions of the renegade Commander Farsight, naming O'Shaserra – Commander Shadowsun – as the new hero of the empire. She would lead the Third Sphere Crusade, the master giving counsel, guiding her and her mighty armies for the Greater Good. With Shadowsun leading the attack, Aun'Va would lend his presence where it was most needed. At Celephel Fields, the crusade suffered grievous losses at the hands of the Orks, yet Aun'Va's words spoke directly to each warrior, instilling them with the courage to stand in the face of overwhelming odds. Deep within the scorched forests of il'Wolaho, Aun'Va consoled Shadowsun with words of wisdom and insight, inspiring her to face her fears, and to bear the loss of her sisters, for the benefit of all. He sealed the siblings' Ta'llissera in their absence, leaving the final words of the ceremony unsaid until the sisters are reunited.

Aun'Va stands as supreme Ethereal within the newly won septs of the Third Sphere, Shadowsun ever loyal at his side. Across half a dozen new worlds, a million Fire Warriors and many more colonists stand ready to sacrifice all upon a single word of their beloved Ethereal, the Master of the Undying Spirit – Aun'o'T'au'Acaya'Va'Denta.

Aun'Va and Honour Guard

Cost 205 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Aun'Va	1	3	2	3(5)	4	1	1	10	4+*
Guard	4	4	3(5)	3(5)	2	3	3	10	4+*

Special Character: Aun'Va is a special character. He may be used in Tau armies of at least 1,500 points as an HQ choice. You may not select any additional items from the armoury.

Equipment: Aun'Va is equipped with the Paradox of Duality, which, in addition to the rules below, is counted as a close combat weapon. Each guard is armed with an honour blade.

Unit Type: Infantry.

SPECIAL RULES

Honour Guard: Aun'Va is always accompanied by a ceremonial retinue of two Honour Guards, the entire group counting as a unit and as a single HQ choice.

Counter-Attack: Each guard is utterly dedicated to protecting the Master, and will step forward to block any who approach him unbidden. Each guard benefits from the Counter-Attack special rule, as described in the Warhammer 40,000 Universal Special Rules section.

The Paradox of Duality: Aun'Va bears a ceremonial staff, within which is housed an artefact of incalculable power – power only an Ethereal can wield. The Paradox of Duality grants Aun'Va and his Honour Guards an increased Toughness characteristic (the unmodified value is used for the purposes of Instant Death), and a 4+ Cover Save, which may be re-rolled if it is failed.

Supremely Inspiring Presence: All Tau units (not Kroot, Vespids or drones) with a line of sight to Aun'Va are counted as Stubborn. If the Night Fighting rules are in use, roll to determine if the unit can see the Ethereal.

Ultimate Price of Failure. Should Aun'Va be removed as a casualty, every Tau unit on the table (not Kroot, Vespids or drones) must take a Morale check if they are not in close combat or falling back. Every unit that takes the test gains the Preferred Enemy universal special rule in relation to the enemy army, and in addition gains the Furious Charge universal special rule.

"It burns so briefly, the light of my children, so briefly. But, by the Greater Good, it burns so bright!"

Aun'Va



O'SHOVAH - COMMANDER FARSIGHT

Hailing from the world of Vior'la, famous for the aggressiveness of its Fire caste warriors, O'Shovah or, as he is more commonly known, Commander Farsight's first and greatest victories were won against the Orks amid the arid oxide-deserts of Arkunasha. When the Tau colony there was threatened, he led the Fire Warriors in a masterful campaign against many times their own numbers. Farsight's training under the legendary Commander Purity had taught him to use the terrain against the foe and O'Shovah's tactical brilliance during the war earned him the famous title, 'Farsight'.

Though his training had shown him the value of long-range firepower, O'Shovah encouraged the aggressive spirit of the Fire caste in his warriors and they fought many bitter battles at close range with the Orks and emerged triumphant. Though by the war's end, Commander Farsight had become deeply embittered, as he believed that others had failed to support him effectively during the campaign, and this feeling was shared by a number of his, for want of a better word, acolytes, most notably an aggressive young Fire Warrior named Brightsword.

Farsight continued to battle against the Greenskins and helped defeat two more Ork Waaagh's. Along with the forces of Commander Shadowsun (another of Commander Purity's pupils), O'Shovah's warriors were instrumental in holding off Imperial forces during the Damocles Crusade and once Imperial forces were called to battle against Hive Fleet *Behemoth*, several Tau reclamation forces were despatched to reconquer their lost colonies. O'Shovah was the leader of one such force, a considerable fleet of ships and ground troops accompanying colony ships to repopulate the cleansed worlds. As was customary, several Ethereal caste members were also part of the expedition. Commander Farsight's expedition ran into unexpected difficulties with an Ork incursion probing at the shattered edges of the Tau empire and, in response to this, O'Shovah abandoned his recolonisation mission and instead directed his efforts at fighting the Orks, drawing his forces into a decade-long campaign across many worlds.

"Each must find their own way. If those in our heartland had witnessed the savageries of the void as have we they would know this. The hand of each of the great starfarers is turned against the other; none will join their strength together just to see their ancient enemies prosper. Neither should we."

Attr Commander Farsight 765.M41

In time, O'Shovah's forces pushed into several Ork-held systems and destroyed their worlds, effectively terminating the immediate threat. One such planet was the 'artefact world' of Arthas Moloch, a shrinehold at the periphery of the Damocles Gulf purged by the Scythes of the Emperor Space Marines Chapter in M39. In the ruins of a pre-human civilisation, the Tau forces engaged an unknown enemy and the Ethereal caste leaders of Farsight's expedition were killed. Undaunted, Farsight continued the war against the Orks without the guidance of an Ethereal and soon his expedition was well beyond the known reaches of Tau space. But Farsight refused to return to the Tau empire, instead choosing to establish a string of heavily fortified strongholds along the frontier of the Damocles Gulf. This region has long been forbidden to the Tau, and when contact was severed between Farsight and the Tau homeworlds, it could mean only one thing. But to countenance the notion that Farsight has set up his own colonies is to accept that he has turned his back on the empire and is fighting for personal gain rather than the Greater Good.

Commander Farsight

Cost 170 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Farsight	5	4	5	4	4	5	4	10	3+

Special Character: Commander Farsight is a special character. He may be used in Tau armies of at least 1,500 points as an HQ choice, though he may never be part of a force that includes Aun'Va or Commander Shadowsun. You may not select any additional equipment from the Armoury.

Equipment: XV8 Crisis battlesuit, hard-wired target lock, shield generator, bonding knife, plasma rifle and dawn blade (see below).

Unit Type: Jump Infantry (jet pack).

SPECIAL RULES

Dawn blade: The dawn blade is an alien artefact that O'Shovah gained on the dead world of Arthas Moloch. Its sculpted surface flickers with unknown energies that paint glittering arcs of destruction as it is swung. No Armour Saves may be taken from hits caused by the dawn blade and O'Shovah rolls 2D6+5 when rolling to penetrate the armour of a vehicle.

Ork Fighter: O'Shovah's fame was won battling against Orks and he has denounced the normal Tau philosophy of using ranged combat almost to the exclusion of all else. Fire caste warriors of the Farsight Enclave train heavily in hand to hand combat and any Tau model in an army led by O'Shovah counts as having the Preferred Enemy special rule when fighting Orks.

Breakaway Faction: O'Shovah and his followers have chosen to separate themselves from the Tau empire and they have altered the composition of their fighting forces to better represent this. No Ethereals, Kroot or Vespids units may be included in O'Shovah's force. Crisis battlesuits count as 1+ units in the same way as Fire Warriors, and the following units count as 0-1 in an army led by O'Shovah: Stealth armour, Pathfinder squads, Hammerhead, Broadside battlesuits, Sky Ray gunships & Piranha skimmers.

Blood Brothers: Every model in Farsight's army with access to the Armoury gains a bonding knife at no additional cost.

Independent Character: Unless accompanied by a bodyguard, O'Shovah is an independent character (see the Warhammer 40,000 rulebook).

Bodyguard: O'Shovah may be accompanied by a bodyguard as detailed for a commander in the Codex army list, though the unit size is changed to 1-7 Crisis battlesuits.



O'SHASERRA - COMMANDER SHADOWSUN

The Tau empire has undergone a period of unprecedented expansion, with many enemies who previously jealously guarded their borders apparently now doing so in greatly reduced numbers. Quite why this is so is unknown, but Earth caste signal intercepts are filled with mentions of a great war in a distant region of space that has drawn away many of those who would fight the expansion of the Tau empire. Seeing great opportunities in this, Aun'Va of the Aun declared that the great push into the Third Sphere colonies would begin. Such a decision was not taken lightly; for the loyalty of the Fire caste was not as sure as it had once been, with many of its warriors openly proclaiming their support for the renegade Commander Farsight. With O'Shovah's breakaway from the Tau empire, his deeds have, despite the best attempts of the Ethereals, caused a schism amongst the Fire Warriors of the Tau.

As the new campaigns were unveiled, so too was the warrior that Aun'Va decreed would spearhead the war effort, a warrior who knew that to follow Farsight's example could only lead to the Mont'au, the time when the Tau race threatened to extinguish itself in barbaric civil war. This warrior was known as Commander O'Shaserra, and she knew that the Fire Warriors needed a new hero to follow; a leader who exemplified all that was noble about the Greater Good. O'Shaserra was already a well known and respected warrior, having earned her command in the deserts and jungles of the K'resh Expansion, where the Greenskin menace in that sector was finally contained. Against the Tyranids, she led several devastating raids that disrupted the alien command and control structure so thoroughly that the Tau armada was able to scatter and destroy an entire splinter fleet without the loss of a single vessel.

Prior to the commencement of the Third Sphere campaigns, O'Shaserra ordered an empire-wide communication where she would make an address to the Fire Warriors. Commander Shadowsun made her address from the Mont'yr battle dome (where O'Shovah previously trained) resplendent

in her formidable new battlesuit, complete with bespoke weaponry and wargear. It was a sight to stir the martial hearts of all who saw her, but O'Shaserra wanted to do more than simply display her own prowess. Standing before the Mont'yr battle dome, was a six-metre tall marble statue of O'Shovah in his Crisis battlesuit, plasma rifle raised to the heavens. With the entire empire of Fire Warriors watching, O'Shaserra turned and fired her weapon system at the statue, obliterating it in a burst of white-hot fire. As the dust settled, she spoke of the new campaigns and the duty that sat at the heart of every Fire Warrior and the honour that would be gained in following the path of the Tau'va. Though there was great outcry at this wanton destruction of a place sacred to the Fire Warriors of Vior'la, none could doubt O'Shaserra's courage and eloquence in such a direct act.

Within the month, the Third Sphere Crusade had begun and, under O'Shaserra's inspired leadership, the Tau empire expanded significantly. With Imperial attention elsewhere, and the local Tyranid and Ork menace temporarily contained, Tau settlement colonies and pioneer teams reached far and wide into the outlying systems of the Damocles Gulf, the Perdur Rift and much further afield. Although the encroachment on Imperial space was relatively minor, the Tau established no fewer than five Third Phase colony systems in a halo around their existing sept worlds. With Commander Shadowsun at the head of their armies, the shadow of O'Shovah seems to have finally been laid to rest, though his exact whereabouts still remain a mystery.

Commander Shadowsun

Cost 175 points

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Shadowsun	4	5	4	3	3	4	4	10	3+
Drone	2	0	3	3	1	2	1	n/a	3+

Special Character: Commander Shadowsun is a special character. She may be used in Tau armies of at least 1,500 points as an HQ choice. You may not select any additional items from the Armoury. She counts as the 1+ Fire caste Commander the army must take. Note that if you choose Commander Shadowsun, no other Tau model may select the same equipment from the Special Issue Wargear list of the Tau Armoury.

Equipment: XV22 battlesuit, multi tracker advanced target lock (allowing her to target two enemy units, with no Target Priority test required), drone controller and command-link drone, two Shield Drones, two fusion blasters, bonding knife.

Unit Type: Jump Infantry (jet pack).

"To follow any path other than the Tau'va is to doom us all. Only together and with courage and discipline shall we stand victorious. Fight with fire and courage and nothing can stand against us."

Commander Shadowsun

SPECIAL RULES

Independent Character: Except when accompanied by her drones, Commander Shadowsun is an independent character (see the Warhammer 40,000 rulebook).

XV22 battlesuit: This experimental battlesuit grants the user the Acute Senses special rule, and includes a stealth field generator. The XV22 battlesuit contains an integrated shield generator that grants Commander Shadowsun a 4+ Invulnerable Save.

Command-link drone: Networked to the leaders of the warriors under her command, the command-link drone allows Commander Shadowsun to better direct the battle. Any Tau units (including Vespide units with a Strain Leader, but not Kroot units) within 18" may use her Leadership for any Morale, Pinning or Target Priority tests.



TAU SUMMARY

TAU PROFILES

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Ethereal	4	3	3	3	2	3	3	10	-
Crisis Shas'o	4	5	5	4	4	3	4	10	3+
Crisis Shas'el	3	4	5	4	3	3	3	9	3+
Broadside									
Shas'vre	3	3	5	4	2	3	2	8	2+
Crisis Shas'vre	3	3	5	4	2	3	2	8	3+
Stealth Shas'vre	3	3	4	3	1	3	2	8	3+
Broadside									
Shas'ui	2	3	5	4	2	2	2	8	2+
Crisis Shas'ui	2	3	5	4	2	2	2	8	3+
Stealth Shas'ui	2	3	4	3	1	2	2	8	3+
Fire Warrior Shas'ui	2	3	3	3	1	2	2	8	4+
Fire Warrior Shas'la	2	3	3	3	1	2	1	7	4+
Spotter	2	3(4)	3	3	1	2	1	8	4+
Shaper	4	3	4	3	3	3	3	8	6
Kroot	4	3	4	3	1	3	1	7	-/6
Kroot Hound	4	0	4	3	1	5	2	7	-/6
Krootox Rider	4	3	6	3	3	3	3	7	-/6
Vespid Stingwing	3	3	3	4	1	5	1	6	5+
Strain Leader	3	3	3	4	1	5	1	9	5+
Gun Drone	2	2	3	3	1	4	1	7*	4+
Sniper Drone	2	2(3)	3	3	1	4	1	7	4+
Marker Drone	2	2(3)	3	3	1	4	1	n/a	4+
Shield Drone	2	2	3	X**	1	4	1	n/a	X/4+ **

TAU VEHICLE PROFILES

Vehicle / Armour:	Front	Side	Rear	BS
Devilfish Troop Carrier	12	11	10	3
Piranha Light Skimmer	11	10	10	3
Hammerhead Gunship	13	12	10	3(4)
Sky Ray Missile Defence Gunship	13	12	10	3

TAU WEAPONS PROFILES

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type	Notes
Burst cannon	18"	5	5	Assault 3	
Flamer	Template	4	5	Assault 1	Ignores Cover
Ion cannon	60"	7	3	Heavy 3	
Kroot rifle**	24"	4	6	Rapid Fire	See Armoury
Kroot gun	48"	7	4	Rapid Fire	
Markerlight	36"	n/a	n/a	Heavy 1	See Armoury
Missile pod	36"	7	4	Assault 2	
Plasma rifle	24"	6	2	Rapid Fire	
Pulse rifle	30"	5	5	Rapid Fire	
Pulse carbine	18"	5	5	Assault 1, Pinning	
Pulse pistol	12"	5	5	Pistol	
Fusion blaster	12"	8	1	Assault 1, Melta	
Railgun (solid shot)	72"	10	1	Heavy 1	
Railgun (submunition)	72"	6	4	Heavy 1	Large Blast Marker Hammerhead only
Rail rifle	36"	6	3	Heavy 1, Pinning	
Seeker missile	Unlimited	8	3	Heavy 1	See Armoury
Smart missile system	24"	5	5	Heavy 4	See Armoury
Vespid neutron blaster	12"	5	3	Assault 1	

Tau Terminology

Aun are members of the Tau Ethereal caste.

Shas'la are basic Fire caste warriors.

Shas'ui are experienced Veterans who could potentially be equipped with a battlesuit.

Shas'vre are experienced battlesuit pilots.

Shas'el and Shas'o are force commanders.

Notes

* Gun Drones' Leadership is only applicable when operating in independent squadrons.

** Shield Drones always have the same Toughness and Save as the individual they accompany. They also have a 4+ Invulnerable Save which may be taken instead of their normal Save.

MARKERLIGHT COUNTERS



These counters can be used to record markerlight hits. To make a template, photocopy this page and carefully cut out each counter with a sharp pair of scissors or a craft knife. If you like, you can mount each marker on a 25mm round slot base.

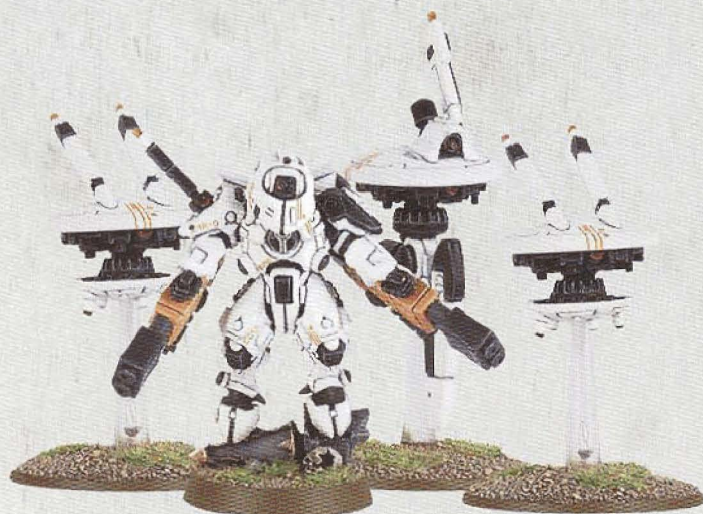
THE TAU ARMY

The following pages focus on the models that make up a Tau Empire force. Included are the various warriors and war machines in the army, alongside the aliens that fight for them. This section also contains information about the uniforms and markings of Tau Empire armies, which you can use to add a greater degree of detail and depth to your collection.



HEROES OF THE EMPIRE

Tau Special Characters include Aun'Va, the wisest of the Ethereals, and Commander Shadowsun, newly emerged heroine of the Third Sphere crusade. Commander Farsight meanwhile leads a renegade faction.



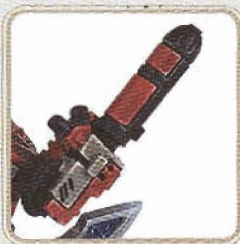
Commander Shadowsun,
wearing helmet, and drones



Commander Shadowsun and drones



Commander Farsight



ETHEREALS

Unlike the Fire caste Warriors in a Tau army, members of the Ethereal caste dress primarily in the colours of their sept. They carry into battle ornate weapons such as honour blades.



Ethereals of the Sa'cea sept, with honour blades



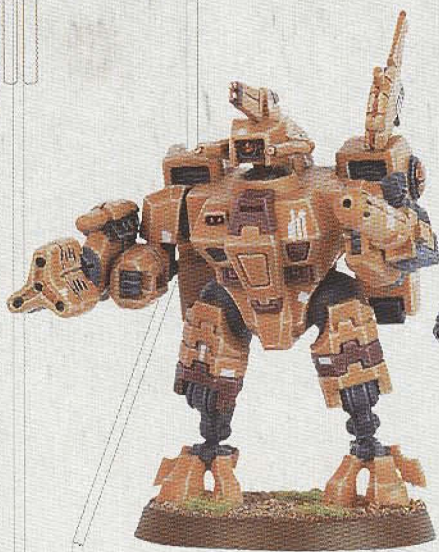
Ethereals of the T'au sept, with symbols of office (left) and honour blade, drone controller and drone (right)



Ethereal Aun'Va with Honour Guard

BATTLESUITS

The battlesuits of the Tau perform many functions on the battlefield. The Crisis battlesuits are worn by both army commanders and their elite bodyguards, while the Broadside delivers powerful support care of its twin-linked railguns. With their smaller suits the Stealth teams are able to range ahead of the main force and launch unexpected attacks on their foes.



Crisis battlesuit Commanders



XV88 Broadside battlesuit with twin-linked railguns and smart missile system

SPECIAL ISSUE SYSTEMS



Cyclic ion blaster



Positional relay



Airbursting fragmentation launcher



Command & control node

Special issue systems are unique, experimental wargear. Only one of each item may be taken in an army.



XV8 Crisis battlesuits



XV25 Stealthsuits



XV25 Stealth team

BATTLESUIT WARGEAR



XV8 plasma rifle



XV8 flamer



XV8 burst cannon



Smart missile system



Missile pod



XV8 fusion blaster



Multi-tracker



Target lock



XV8 shield generator

STEALTHSUIT WARGEAR



XV25 burst cannon



XV25 fusion blaster



XV25 drone controller



Bonding knife

Battlesuits can be equipped with two weapon systems and one support system. Stealthsuits can have one weapon and one support system.

WARRIORS OF THE FIRE CASTE

The armies of the Tau septs are built upon the solid foundation of the Fire caste. The ever-efficient Fire Warrior teams can bring to bear a mass of firepower in any war zone, whilst the Pathfinder teams excel at scouting ahead of Tau lines, deploying from Devliffish troop carriers. With their Sniper Drones, a Tau Spotter can pinpoint enemy personnel for removal.



Fire Warrior
with pulse carbine



Fire Warrior
with pulse rifle



Sniper Drones & Spotter



Pathfinder with rail rifle



Tau Fire Warriors with Piranha light skimmers



Pathfinders with Devilfish transport

FIRE CASTE MARKINGS

Squad leaders

Fire caste team leaders are distinguishable by the sept colour applied to panels on their helmet and shoulder pad.



Sept markings

Fire caste teams display their sept colour in stripes, applied to weapons and armour. These markings relate to warpaint applied to warriors of the Fire caste in the distant past. The number and position of these markings is generally the same for all members of a team, and can be used to distinguish teams of the same type.



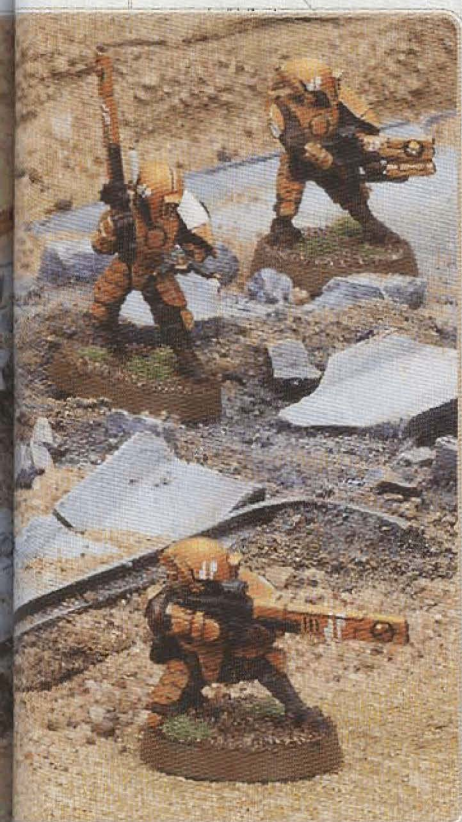
Tau Empire badge

The common symbol of the Tau empire (which also serves as the symbol of the Tau homeworld sept) is displayed on the armour of all Fire caste warriors, regardless of sept or uniform style.



Bonded units

Units bonded by the Ta'lissera can be identified either by a bonding knife carried by the team leader, or a knife design painted on their armour.



VEHICLES & DRONES

The Hammerhead and Sky Ray gunships are potent symbols of the Tau's military might, while drones and Piranha light skimmer teams provide a rapid response to any threat.



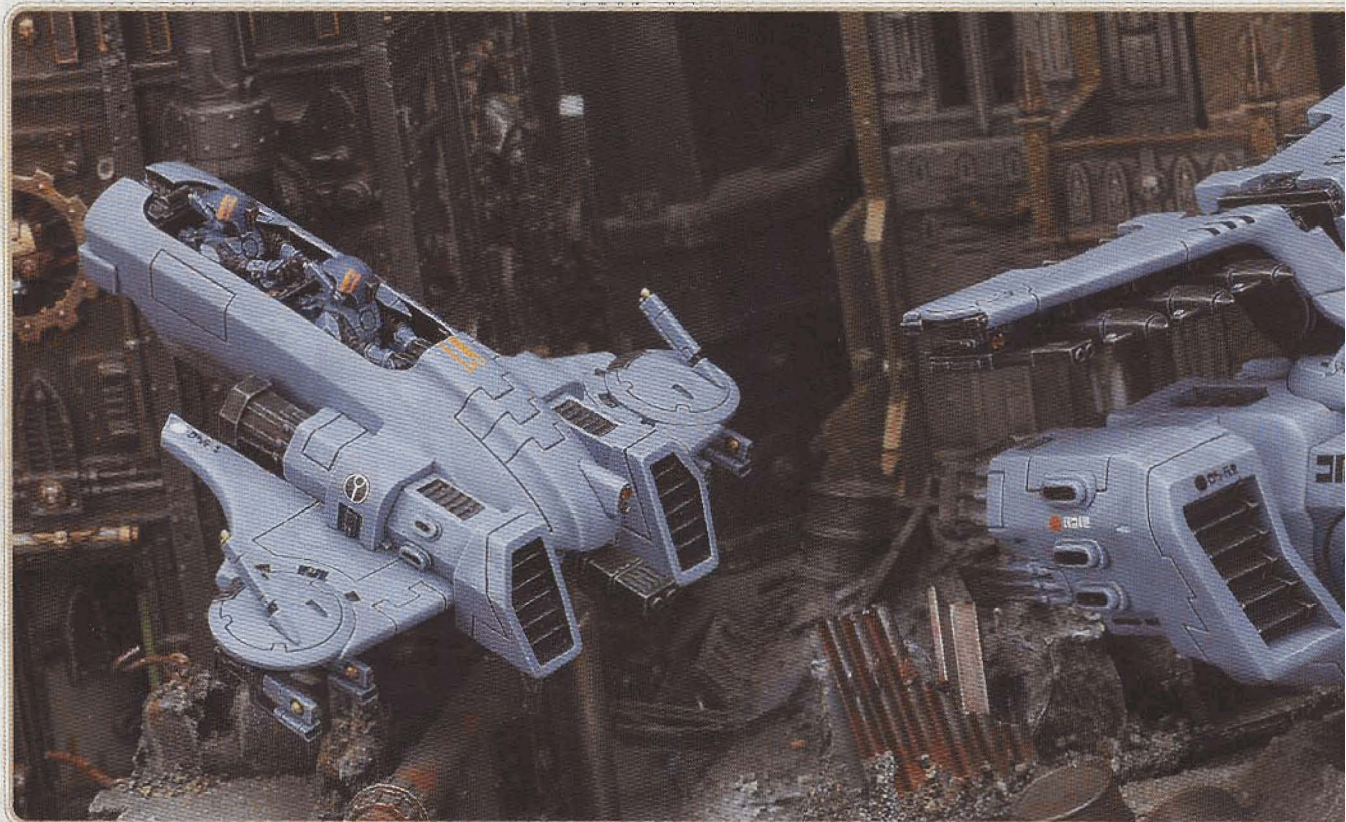
Gun Drones



Shield Drone



Marker Drone



Piranha light skimmer and Sky Ray missile defence gunship



Hammerhead gunship with railgun and burst cannons



Tau vehicles use similar sept markings to those of the infantry.



Vehicles display the Tau Empire symbol prominently on the hull.



Ion cannon



Smart missile system



Sensor spines

ALIEN AUXILIARIES

With the expansion of their empire many alien races have been absorbed into the fighting arm of the Tau. Notable amongst these are the lethal Vespids Stingwings and the carnivorous Kroot mercenaries.



Vespids Stingwings



Vespids Strain Leader communion helm



Vespids neutron blaster



Kroot Carnivore squad



Krootox Rider



Shaper with pulse rifle



Shaper with Kroot rifle



Kroot Hound

PAINTING TAU FIRE CASTE

The models shown on this page represent a selection of uniforms taken from first and second phase colonies. Each entry includes information on the colours used to paint them. The same basic colours and sept markings can be applied whether the model you are painting is a Fire Warrior, drone or battlesuit.



T'AU SEPT

The colours worn by warriors from T'au reflect the arid climate of that world. The yellow and brown camouflage is in many ways the 'dress uniform' of the Tau military.

- Sept colour: Skull White
- Armour: Vomit Brown
- Cloth: Scorched Brown



KE'LSHAN SEPT

This Fire Warrior wears a uniform suitable for shipboard duty. This scheme is typical of the Cadres stationed aboard the Air caste vessels interdicting the Perdur Rift region of space.

- Sept colour: Golden Yellow
- Armour: Codex Grey
- Cloth: Codex Grey mixed with Chaos Black



D'YANOI SEPT

This Fire Warrior of the D'yanoi sept wears a dour brown uniform. This is a common scheme used by Hunter Cadres fighting in wet or swamp regions.

- Sept colour: Ice Blue
- Armour: Graveyard Earth
- Cloth: Desert Yellow



AU'TAAL SEPT

Au'taal is a verdant world, and the vivid green worn as a rank marking by its members reflects this in a very literal way. The uniform worn by this Fire Warrior is ceremonial rather practical.

- Sept colour: Scorpion Green
- Armour: Terracotta
- Cloth: Kommando Khaki

SA'CEA SEPT

The most common colour worn by warriors of Sa'cea is a blue-grey appropriate to the built-up nature of the sept. This uniform is worn by Fire Warriors of all septs as urban camouflage.

- Sept colour: Fiery Orange
- Armour: Shadow Grey / Shadow Grey mixed with Space Wolves Grey
- Cloth: Chaos Black



BORK'AN SEPT

The rank markings worn by Tau of the Bork'an sept are a jade green, a colour symbolic to the Tau of practicality. This Fire Warrior wears a white uniform, for fighting in snowbound terrain.

- Sept colour: Hawk Turquoise
- Armour: Space Wolves Grey
- Cloth: Codex Grey



VIOR'LA SEPT

This warrior's uniform reflects the surface of his homeworld, which is arid and inhospitable. The red rank - marking reflects Vior'la warriors' famously hot-blooded nature.

- Sept colour: Blood Red
- Armour: Rotting Flesh
- Cloth: Catathan Green

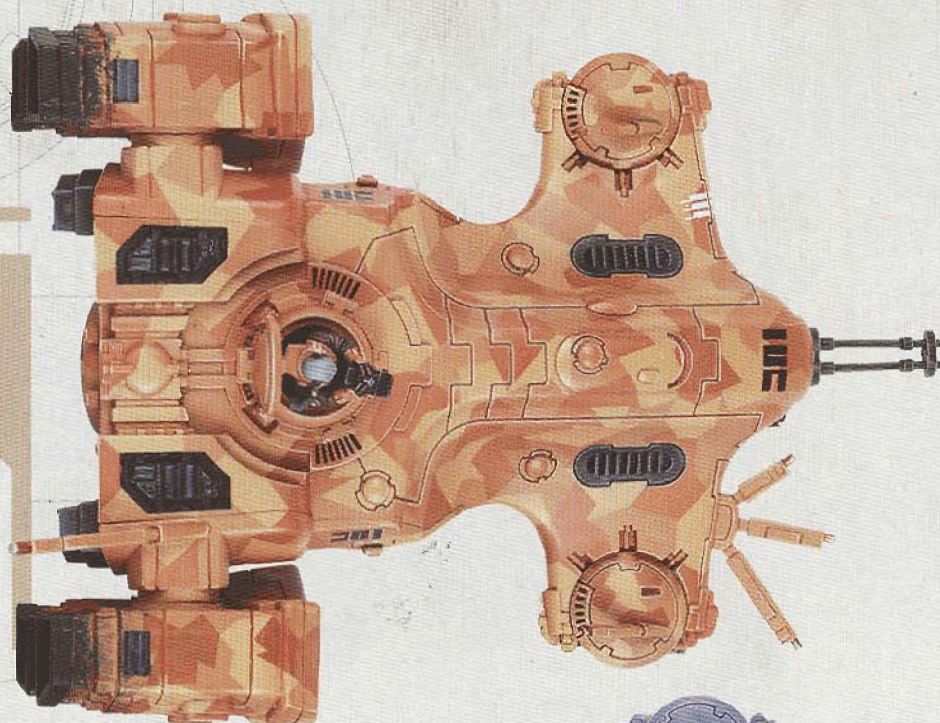


TAU UNIFORM

Some battle colours worn by the warriors of the Fire caste are determined by the nature, character and history of their sept, but by far the majority colours are simple camouflage, based upon the environment and climate of the war zone in which the wearer is fighting. More rarely, battle colours are prescribed by the Ethereals, or derived from the complex Fire caste warpaint of old. The wearer's identity, role, rank, Cadre and even sept can be quickly ascertained by any other Tau.

PAINTING TAU TANK CAMOUFLAGE

Unlike the infantry and battlesuits of the Fire caste, the vehicles of Tau are often painted with camouflage. The colour of the pattern is based on the colour of the armour worn by the infantry and takes the form of a series of overlaid blocks in different shades.



T'au camouflage

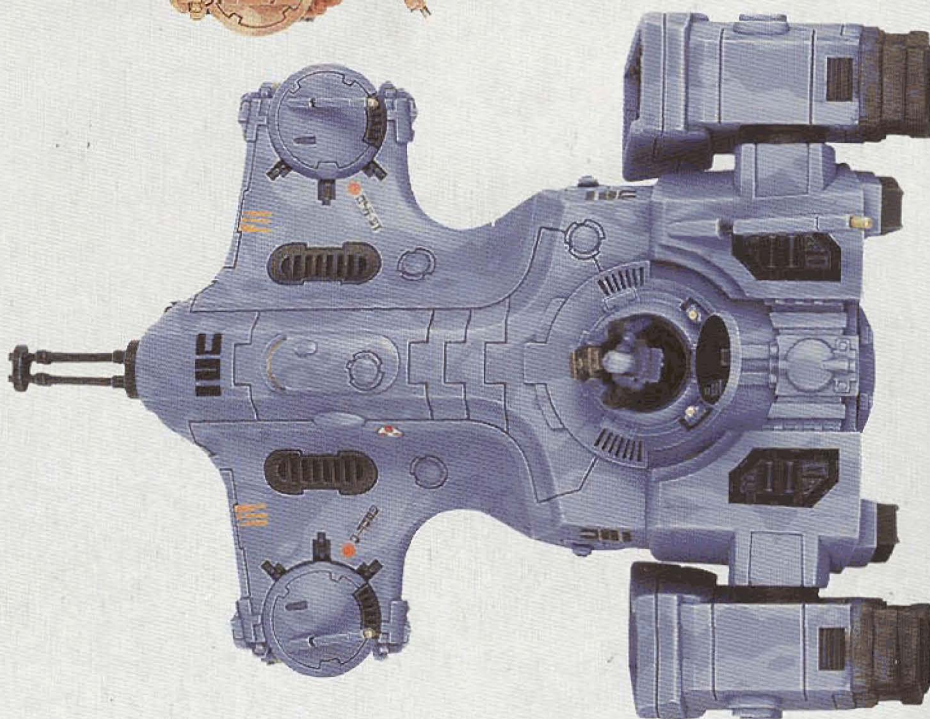


Sa'cea camouflage

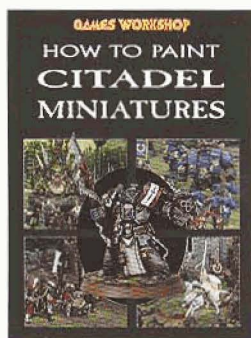
Painting Tips

It's a good idea to paint your tank commander separately, to make it easier to paint the hard-to-reach areas.

Remember to remove any drones from your tank while you paint it, otherwise you'll expose an unpainted area when you remove them during play, as described on page 29.



For a wealth of useful techniques and ideas about painting your models, read *How to Paint Citadel Miniatures*.



Alternative camouflage patterns

TAU COLOUR SCHEMES

Kroot and Vespids can both be painted in a range of colours. Vespids colourings may denote different strains, while Kroot can actually alter their own pigmentation. Some examples are shown here, but there are many more.

KROOT



● Scorched Brown mixed with Camo Green



● Chaos Black
● Golden Yellow

VESPID



● Hawk Turquoise mixed with Fortress Grey



● Chaos Black
● Blood Red

The colours of the Tau septs can be applied differently to various elements of the army. Here are examples of how a force can look consistent across the various units.

SA'CEA SEPT



Ethereal

The Ethereal is linked to his sept via the colour of his robes. The orange is the same as the sept markings on the rest of the army.



Fire Warrior

The urban camouflage of the Sa'cea sept is demonstrated on this Fire Warrior. The orange sept markings denote his homeland.



XV25 Stealthsuit

The Stealthsuit uses the same camouflage as the rest of the sept, but in this case the dominant colour is black rather than grey.



Gun Drone

To create a strong army theme the Gun Drone bears the same uniform colour as the Fire Warrior.

BORK'AN SEPT



Ethereal

The robes of the Ethereal are painted to match the camouflage of the warriors, while details are picked out in the sept colour.



Fire Warrior

A snow pattern camouflage is shown here on the Fire Warrior. The army uses other colours in different war zones.



Sniper Drone

The Sniper Drone follows the same pattern as the Fire Warrior. Armoured units look consistent if painted in the same style.



Kroot Carnivore

The Kroot's warpaint and armour matches the army's snow camouflage.

COLLECTING A TAU EMPIRE FORCE

The army shown on these pages is a good example of as a reasonably large, balanced force, containing a broad selection of the units that the Tau Empire has to offer. This is not to suggest that Tau Empire players should necessarily be aiming to collect an army just like this one. In fact it's possible to field a variety of Tau Empire armies, from a force with a high concentration of battlesuits or alien auxiliaries to one made up exclusively of Hammerheads and infantry squads mounted in Devilfish. If this is going to be your first army, then the core of this one would make a good start to your collection, and might give you some ideas about where to go next. If not, then it will give you an indication of what a 1,500 point Tau Empire army looks like on the tabletop.



TROOPS – Fire Warrior Team: 200 points
12 x Fire Warriors with pulse rifles.
Devilfish.



TROOPS – Kroot Carnivore Squad: 223 points
Shaper with pulse rifle & 17 Kroot.
1 Krootox & 6 Kroot Hounds.



FAST ATTACK – Vespids Stingwings: 102 points
Strain Leader & 5 Stingwings.



HQ – Shas'o Commander: 127 points
Cyclic ion blaster; fusion blaster;
positional relay; hard-wired multi-tracker;
hard-wired target lock.



HEAVY SUPPORT – Broadside Team: 145 points

*Shas'ui with railgun; smart missile system; multi-tracker.
Shas'ui with railgun; smart missile system.*

HEAVY SUPPORT –

Sky Ray Missile Defence Gunship: 125 points
Smart missile system.

TROOPS – Fire Warrior Team: 120 points

12 x Fire Warriors with pulse carbines.

**HEAVY SUPPORT –
Sniper Drone Team: 80 points**

**FAST ATTACK – Piranha Light
Skimmer Team: 65 points**

1 Piranha with fusion blaster.

ELITES – Crisis Team: 153 points

*Shas'ui with fusion blaster; flamer; shield generator.
Shas'ui with fusion blaster; flamer; multi-tracker.
Shas'ui with fusion blaster; flamer; target lock.*

ELITES – Stealth Team: 140 points

*Shas'vre with burst cannon, bonding knife; drone
controller; Marker Drone; hard-wired target lock.
2 x Shas'ui with burst cannon.*





WARHAMMER 40,000

TAU EMPIRE

A young and ambitious race, united in their purpose, the Tau seek to bring enlightenment and unity to those who join them.

While the races of the galaxy tear one another apart, the Tau grow stronger and stronger. On the Eastern Fringe, far from the power of Terra, world after world has fallen to their dynamic advance. At the forefront of this rapid expansion are the warriors of the Fire caste. Unfettered by Mankind's superstition and fear of technology, the Fire Warriors go into battle carrying weapons of immense power, encased in battlesuits that can withstand the fiercest of attacks.

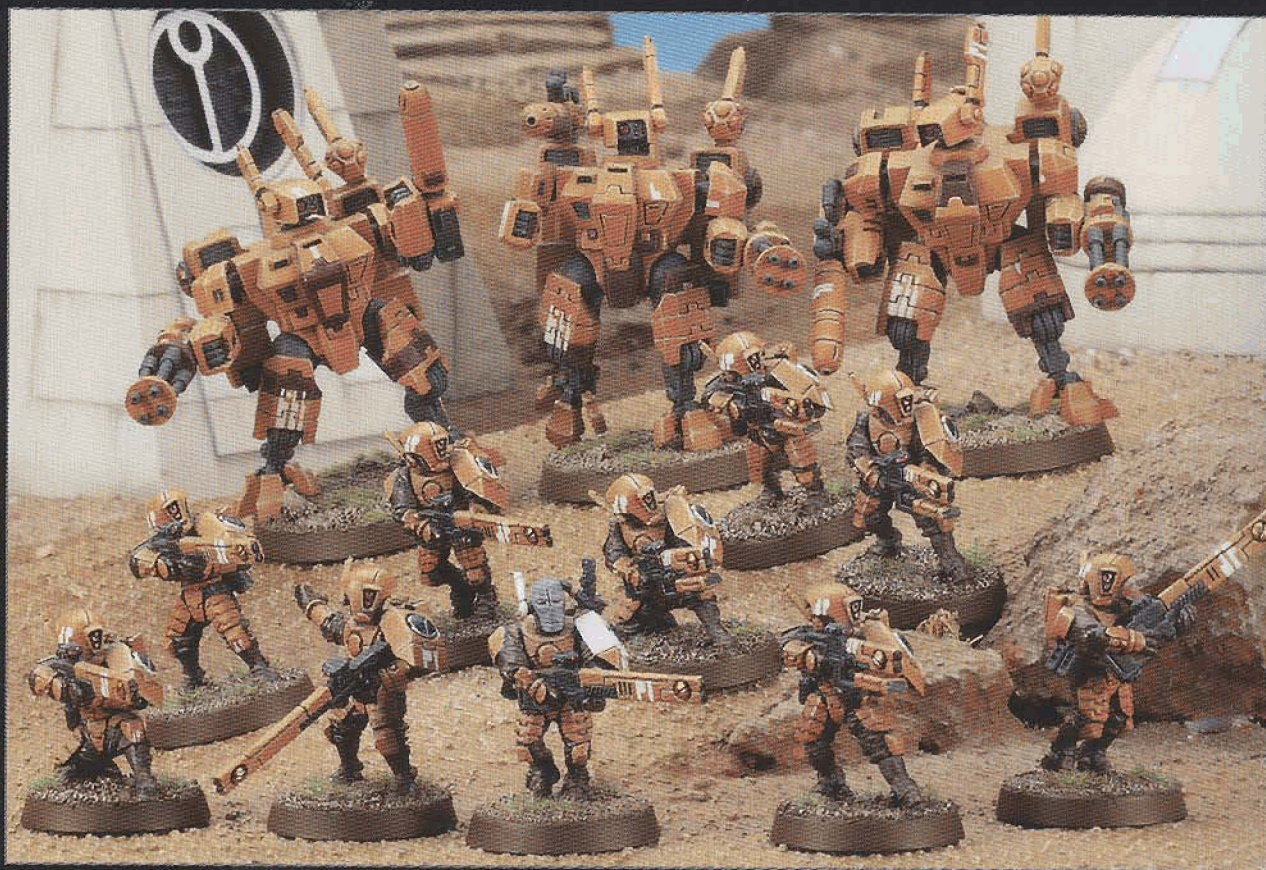
Led by the mysterious Ethereals and accompanied by alien allies whose cultures have been subsumed into their empire, the Tau believe that the very stars themselves will be reformed in the cause of the Greater Good.

"It saddens me greatly that we must take arms against the peoples of the galaxy. By their deaths they deny themselves the liberation that is only to be found in total surrender to the Greater Good."

Aun'Va – Master of the Undying Spirit

Inside you will find:

- **ARMY LIST.** The complete Tau army list that allows you to choose your forces for a tabletop battle, featuring the Kroot, savage mercenary allies, and the Vespids, swift, winged auxiliaries that fight for their Tau masters. Also included are wargear, battlesuit systems and vehicle upgrades.
- **BACKGROUND.** An expansive overview of the Tau empire covering its origins, culture, major worlds and its methods of waging war.
- **HOBBY SECTION.** Sixteen full-colour pages packed with advice and tips on collecting, modelling and painting a Tau army.
- **SPECIAL CHARACTERS.** Three renowned Tau characters are detailed, the senior Ethereal Aun'Va, the renegade Commander Farsight, and the newly emergent heroine of the Tau Third Phase Expansion, Commander Shadowsun.



WARHAMMER 40,000
TAU EMPIRE CODEX



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