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SPYRER GANGS IN NECROMUNDA

By Jervis Johnson, based on original material by Andy Chambers

Even in the living nightmare of the Underhive, the Spyrers are spoken of with a shudder. Parents scare small children into obedience with a mention of their name and grown men fall silent at tales of their attacks. To Underhive dwellers they are demons of the darkness, blood-soaked fiends who prey upon the warring gangs without compunction or pity.

These creatures are not devils or ghosts, as the Underhivers know all too well. They are the sons and daughters of the Noble Houses that rule Hive Primus and the whole of Necromunda from the fastness of the Spire. These siblings of noble blood are cast down into purgatory to prove themselves tough and resourceful enough to take their place amid the ruling families. In a hive containing so many billions of souls, only the most dynamic and merciless individuals can expect to rule, or indeed to survive.

Spyrers are sent below the wall in teams. Once in the Underhive they can expect little help, no money and no resources: they have only the equipment they bring with them and their own native wits to help them survive. The only assistance they can expect to receive is the occasional appearance of the Noble House Matriarch or Patriarch

that has sponsored the team, either or both of whom will occasionally venture into the Underhive to see at first hand how their charges are doing, and maybe lend them a hand against especially dangerous opponents.

Of course, a Spyrer's hunting rig is no ordinary set of armour. Spyrers use ritualised combinations of weapons and armour that favour different combat styles. Each rig is meticulously crafted off-world, a wondrous device of half-forgotten technologies worth its own weight in credits. The rig is self-sustaining and self-repairing, with integral weaponry and, most importantly of all, built-in power boosters which activate as the wearer gradually masters the suit's functions. These power boosters make each Spyrer evolve in a subtly different way, creating a diverse and powerful group of individuals in each hunt.

The Spyrer family
Top from left to right: *Jakara Spyrer, Spyrer Patriarch, Spyrer Matriarch.*
Bottom from left to right: *Orrus Spyrer, Malcadon Spyrer, Yeld Spyrer.*

A Spyrer team can only cross back above the wall when it has achieved its stated objective, which might be to slay a half-dozen Underhive warriors or to survive in the wastes for a certain period of time or some similar vow. Their fighting suits record all that occurs in the depths and verifies their kills, so no duplicity is possible; the Spyrers must succeed in their quest or die trying. In the Underhive itself they are hated and feared, but in the Spire they will be lionised on their return and the survivors of the team will take their place among the powerful ruling elite of Necromunda. In time they may become a Matriarch or Patriarch in their own right, and return to the Underhive to feel the thrill of the chase once again. Many hunting teams find it impossible to wait that long, and will be drawn back to the Underhive by an adrenalin-fuelled desire for blood and death that life in the Spire simply cannot fulfil.

SPECIAL RULES

The following special rules apply to Spyrer Hunting teams.

Vow

A Spyrer team must commit itself to achieving a specific aim during its time in the Underhive. The Spyrers' vow must be made when the team is started and may be chosen from the following:

A. To kill a total of one gang fighter for each starting member of the team. Eg, if the team had six members they would have to kill (as in result 11 to 16 on the Serious Injury table) six enemy gang fighters before they returned above the wall.

Or

B. To earn a total of 200 Experience Points for each starting member of the team. Eg, if the team had five members they would have to earn a combined total of 1,000 Experience Points before they returned above the wall.

Or

C. To survive a total of two games for each starting member of the team. Eg, if the team had four members they would have to survive eight games before they returned above the wall.

Once a Spyrer team returns above the wall it splits up and the hunters start their new lives in the Noble Houses. However, many aspirants develop such a taste for the excitement and bloodletting of the hunt that they will return to the Underhive. To represent this, you are allowed to replace any members of the team that have been killed or you wish to retire with new recruits. These new recruits must have the same total cost, including Experience cost bonuses, as that of the members of the team that they are replacing. The new Hunting team may then return to the Underhive with a new set of vows (you may not choose the same set of vows two times in a row). A Hunting team may keep on returning to the Underhive in this fashion as many times as the player controlling them wishes to.

For example, a Hunting team completes its vows and returns above the wall. One member of the team (a Jakara) was killed, and one (an Orrus) has suffered serious injuries that so affect his capabilities that he is retired. Both had received 5 extra Experience Points when recruited to the team, adding +25 credits to the cost for each one (see the rules for Spyrer Experience below). The cost of these two members of the team was therefore 190+185+25+25=425 credits, so they can be replaced

with new starting team members of that value. A new set of vows is chosen for the team, and they return to the Undervive as if they were a starting Hunting team.

Starting Territory, Income & Starvation

Spyrers start with one piece of territory generated on the Territory table. This forms their base camp and they may move their camp to another piece of territory if they capture it, but they cannot hold more than a single piece of territory at a time. If the Spyrers lose their current base camp generate another on the Territory table.

Spyrers never collect any income, never trade and can never buy extra gang members after their initial recruitment. They are committed into the Underhive until they complete their vow. Once they have completed a vow they are allowed to recruit new members as described above.

Spyrers gain synthesised sustenance from protein packs wired into their suits, so they are immune to the effects of starvation.

Capture

Gang fighters captured by Spyrers are liable to be turned into interesting suit ornaments as the Spyrers have no interest in ransoms or exchanges. The only way a gang can get back captured members is by playing a Rescue scenario against the Spyrers. The Spyrers just love using captured prey as bait to get more. Spyrers captured by gangers can expect only a slow and horrible death. Their companions will make no attempt to rescue them and they can expect no ransom from the Spire.

A Spyrer who is captured is automatically killed. Spyrer weapons and equipment cannot be used by non-Spyrers, and cannot be sold to Guilders for extra credits.

Power Boosts

The power boosts for Spyrer suits begin to kick in once the hunter starts making kills and earning Experience Points in combat. They work by increasing the energy feed into weapon systems and making them more powerful, improving cybernetic enhancements to make the wearer stronger or faster, thickening armour cells to increase their protection, and so on. Power boosts, like skills and characteristic increases, can only be earned with Experience Points, and are included on the Spyrer Advance table (see below)

No boost may be taken more than once. If a boost is rolled a second time then pick a boost from the list that the Spyrer does not already have. Once all boosts have been taken, re-roll boost results on the Advance table.
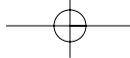
Leaders, Bottle Rolls and Pinning

A Spyrer team has no set leader: leadership devolves to whoever has the highest kill score at the time, or the best ideas. In game terms this means that any Bottle rolls are taken using the best Leadership characteristic in the team (assuming that that member is present and not down or out at the time). In some scenarios, an Experience Point bonus goes to the leader of the winning gang: in a Spyrer team this will go to the Spyrer with the best Leadership who fought in the game.

Spyrers are in constant communication with each other and are highly self-motivated. This means that a Spyrer who is pinned is always allowed to roll to try and escape from pinning at the start of their turn even if there are no other Spyrers within 2" of them.

Very Important: Spyrer gangs are easily disheartened if things start to go against them. Because of this they must start taking Bottle rolls once one member of the team is down or out of action, rather than a quarter of the team as would normally be the case.

MATRIARCHS & PATRIARCHS

Spyrer Matriarchs and Patriarchs are not purchased as part of the team. Instead, the Hunting team may ask for their assistance **once each** during the period of time they are in the Underhive fulfilling their vows. Once they have each given their assistance in a battle they may not be used again until the Hunting team has fulfilled their vows. A Hunting team that returns to the Underhive after fulflilling its vows can once again call on the assistance of the Matriarch and Patriarch once each, and so on.

The Matriarch and Patriarch must be called upon at the start of a scenario, between steps 2 and 3 of the pre-battle sequence (see page 117 of the Necromunda: Underhive rules). The following restrictions apply to calling on their aid:

- They may not be called upon if the Spyrers have a higher Gang Rating than their opponents.

- If the opposing gang have a Gang Rating that is up to 1000 points higher than the Spyrers, then either the Matriarch *or* Patriarch (**not** both) will only help if the Spyrer player rolls a 4+ on 1D6. On a roll of 1-3 the Matriarch or Patriarch will not give their help.

- If the opposing gang have a Gang Rating that is more than 1000 points higher than the Spyrers, then either the Matriarch *or* Patriach will freely give their assistance if called upon to do so. However, only one can be called upon for their help.

If the Matriarch or Patriarch give their assistance then they are treated as being part of the Hunting team for all rules purposes for the rest of this battle. The Matriarch or Patriarch counts as the Hunting team's gang leader and adds 1000 points to the Hunting team's Gang Rating for this battle.

Matriarchs and Patriarchs may not gain Experience. If they are taken out of action, they will either fully recover or be replaced, so don't roll on the Serious Injury table for them if they are taken out of action.

These changes aside, all of the rules that apply to Spyrers also apply to Matriarchs and Patriarchs.

SCENARIOS

Spyrers roll on the normal Scenario table. If the Spyrers get to pick the scenario, they can only choose one of the following: Gang Fight, Ambush, Hit and Run, The Raid. Alternatively, if both the Matriarch and Patriarch are still available then the Spyrers can choose the "Old Habits Die Hard" Scenario described later.

The Stalker prepares to swoop down upon his next victims.
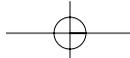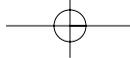
ORRUS

Cost to recruit: 185 credits

The Orrus embodies the most brutal aspects of the Spyre Hunters. Its distinctively oversized powered arms and hulking shoulders betray the Orrus' fearsome combat style: that of crushing and battering its opponents to a bloody pulp. Ranks of armoured pistons power the arms and its blunt, claw-fingered hands, and each fist is backed by a rack of bolt launchers to blast apart opponents at a distance. Though the Orrus is the slowest of the Spyre Hunters it is also the most indomitable. Not only are the powered arms and shoulders heavily armoured but a force field protects the Spyrer as he lumbers forward.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
4	4	3	4	3	1	3	2	7

Weapons: The Orrus suit is armed with two bolt launchers, mounted in each fist.

Armour: The Orrus suit gives the wearer the following characteristic increases: Weapon Skill +1, Strength +1, Attacks +1. These increases have been included in the Orrus Hunter profile above.

The Orrus suit also gives an Armour saving throw of 4, 5 or 6 on a D6 and is protected by a force field which gives it a saving throw of 6 on a D6 against any shooting hits. The force field Armour saving throw is not subject to saving throw modifiers so it will always save on a roll of 6.

Equipment: An Orrus Spyrer is equipped with a bio-booster, filter plugs and photo contacts.

JAKARA

Cost to recruit: 190 credits

Jakara weapons are the mono sword and mirror shield. The Jakara is the lightest of all the Spyre Hunters, emphasising agility and speed over heavy armour. The suit itself is armoured with flexible plates like snake scales which are overlaid with the tubes and cables that feed power to the Spyrer's limbs. The Jakara buckler is inset with energy absorbing devices that look like faceted jewels, each one of which can drain the force from a shot or blow and hurl it back at the attacker.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
5	4	3	3	3	1	3	1	7

Weapons: The Jakara suit is armed with a monomolecular sword and a mirror shield. The shield allows the user to parry in hand-to-hand combat. If the mirror shield saves against a shooting attack that is energy-based (laser, plasma or melta) the Jakara can fire it back immediately. Roll to hit using the Jakara's BS: if the blast hits, resolve it with the original weapon's profile.

Armour: The Jakara suit gives the wearer the following characteristic increases: Movement +1, Weapon Skill +1. These increases have been included in the Jakara Hunter profile above.

The Jakara suit also gives an armour saving throw of 5 or 6 on a D6. The mirror shield gives the Jakara an additional saving throw of 4, 5 or 6 on a D6 against attacks originating in the forward 90° arc of the user. The shield saving throw is not subject to saving throw modifiers so it will always save on a roll of 4, 5 or 6.

Equipment: A Jakara Spyrer is equipped with a bio-booster, skull chip, filter plugs and photo contacts.

YELD

Cost to recruit: 170 credits

The Yeld is the most bizarre of the Spyre Hunters: a winged fiend with pinions of chameleonic metal and claws of laser energy. When not in use, the Yeld's wings sweep back to form a pinioned cloak of steel and reveal the heavy forearm units bearing laser tubes that are its primary weapons. Its wings are jagged with edges sharp as razors so it can slice its victim as it swoops overhead. When stealth is needed, the Yeld's wings curl around it and mimic the hues surrounding its body, concealing the Spyrer from view until it takes flight again.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
5	3	4	3	3	1	3	1	7

Weapons: The Yeld suit is equipped with laser gauntlets.

Armour: The Yeld suit gives the wearer the following characteristic increases: Movement +1, Ballistic Skill +1. These increases have been included in the Yeld Hunter profile above.

The Yeld suit also gives an Armour saving throw of 5 or 6 on a D6. It also mounts the Yeld's wings, which are detailed in the Spyrer Equipment section.

Equipment: A Yeld Spyrer is equipped with a bio-booster, filter plugs and photo contacts.
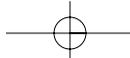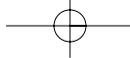
MALCADON

Cost to recruit: 165 credits

Malcadon are cunning and subtle in their hunting, trapping their victims in webs of iron-hard silk before tearing them apart with steely claws. Two bulbous spinarets for creating the web threads are mounted on the suit's arms and connect to the Malcadon's hunched back amidst a snake's nest of tubes. The rest of the elongated limbs and back of the Malcadon are covered with downward pointing spines and overlapping plates of armour. Its arms and legs are boosted by pistons and hydraulics which permit it to climb swiftly and leap great distances so that it can move quickly among the mass of broken pipes and struts which form the dark canopy of the Underhive.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
6	4	3	3	3	1	4	1	7

Weapons: The Malcadon is equipped with a web spinner.

Armour: The Malcadon suit gives the wearer the following characteristic increases: Movement +2, Weapon Skill +1, Initiative +1. These increases have been included in the Malcadon Hunter profile above.

The Malcadon suit also gives an Armour saving throw of 5 or 6 on a D6.

Equipment: A Malcadon Spyrer is equipped with a bio-booster, filter plugs and photo contacts.

MATRIARCH

Cost to recruit: See special rules above

Spyrer Matriarchs are feared throughout the Underhive as grim-faced reapers that slay from the shadows. The Matriarch wears a special 'chameleon cloak' that allows her to blend in with her surroundings. She will stalk her prey and then suddenly appear, her chainscythe in one hand, a deadly sharp monomolecular sword in the other. Matriarchs are hugely experienced fighters, and able to wield both weapons with deadly efficiency. Within moments their prey will be dead and the Matriarch will disappear back into the shadows.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
6	6	5	3	4	3	7	3	8

Weapons: The Matriarch is armed with a sharpened monomolecular sword and a chainscythe.

Armour: The Matriarch suit gives the wearer the following characteristic increases: Movement +1, Weapon Skill +1, Initiative +1. These increases have been included in the Matriarch profile above.

The Matriarch suit also gives an Armour saving throw of 4, 5 or 6 on a D6 and includes a chameleon cloak. The chameleon cloak inflicts a -1 to hit modifier on all shooting attacks made on the Matriarch, and a -1 combat score modifier against any opponent fighting the Matriarch in hand-to-hand combat.

Equipment: A Matriarch is equipped with a bio-booster, filter plugs and photo contacts.

Skills: The Matriach has the following skills: Jump Back (agility), Combat Master (combat), Counter-Attack (combat), Killer Reputation (ferocity), Infiltration (stealth).

PATRIARCH

Cost to recruit: See special rules above

Spyrer Patriarchs are equipped with the finest combat armour that credits can buy. The suit's heavily reinforced armour is capable of shrugging off all but the most powerful attacks, while its powerful servomotors allow the wearer to move and fight without hindrance. The suit has highly sophisticated in-built targeting systems that allow the wearer to detect and attack multiple targets simultaneously. However, most deadly of all are cybernetically controlled combat arms fixed to the suit's back that can lash out to attack any opponent that is near by.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
4	6	5	4	4	3	6	3	8

Weapons: The Patriarch is armed with two boosted pulse lasers, and two power claws. The Patriarch may use both pulse lasers when he shoots, and may engage different targets with each one if desired. Both power claws may be used in hand-to-hand combat.

Armour: The Patriarch suit gives the wearer the following characteristic increases: Weapon Skill +1, Strength +1. These increases have been included in the Patriarch profile above.

The Patriarch suit also gives an Armour saving throw of 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6 on a D6.

Equipment: A Patriarch is equipped with a bio-booster, bio-scanner, filter plugs and photo contacts.

Skills: The Patriarch has the following skills: Iron Will (ferocity), Hurl Opponent (muscle), Marksman (shooting).
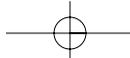
SPYRER EXPERIENCE SYSTEM

Spyrer gangs can buy starting Experience Points, representing time spent in training arenas in the Spyre. Each Experience Point costs 5 credits. The cost of this training is added to the basic cost of the Spyrer. It is quite possible for a Spyrer to start his or her career with one or more advances from training. These should be rolled on the appropriate table below.

SPYRER STARTING EXPERIENCE

Type	Starting Experience Points
Orrus	0+1 per 5 credits spent
Malcadon	0+1 per 5 credits spent
Yeld	0+1 per 5 credits spent
Jakara	0+1 per 5 credits spent
Matriarch	May not gain Experience
Patriarch	May not gain Experience

SPYRER EXPERIENCE TABLE

Experience Points	Title
0-5	Green Hunter (Basic starting level for Spyrers)
6-15	Green Hunter
16-30	Hunter
31-50	Hunter
51-75	Stalker
76-100	Stalker
101-125	Stalker
126-150	Stalker
151-175	Stalker
176-225	Killer
226-275	Killer
276-325	Killer
326-400	Killer
401+	Great Killer (Anyone that reaches this level may not improve any further.)

MAXIMUM VALUE TABLE

Orrus

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
4	7	6	6	5	3	5	4	9

Malcadon

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
8	7	6	5	4	3	6	3	9

Yeld

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
8	6	7	4	4	3	6	3	9

Jakara

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
7	7	6	4	4	3	7	3	9

ORRUS ADVANCE & POWER BOOST TABLES

Advance Table

2D6	Result
2	Orrus Power Boost.
3	Combat Skill.
4	Ferocity Skill (Re-roll if you get Iron Will).
5	Characteristic Increase. Roll again: 1-2 = +1 Initiative; 3-6 = +1 Leadership.
6	Characteristic Increase. Roll again: 1-2 = +1 Ballistic Skill; 3-6 = +1 Weapon Skill.
7	Characteristic Increase. Roll again: 1-4 = +1 Strength; 5-6 = +1 Attacks.
8	Characteristic Increase. Roll again: 1-3 = +1 Wounds; 4-6 = +1 Toughness.
9	Muscle Skill (Re-roll if you get Bulging Biceps).
10-12	Orrus Power Boost.

Power Boost Table

D6	Result
6	**Sustained Fire Bolt Launchers.** New ammo feeds come on line to make the suit weapons capable of sustained fire. The bolt launchers gain Sustained Fire 1 dice. Roll once for the number of shots, and roll once to hit with each one, but then roll two dice to wound as you would with a single shot.
5	**Power Field Strengthened.** The suit's power field saving throw is improved by +1.
4	**Combat Neuroware.** The suit links up additional neuroware which sharpens the wearer's fighting skills. You may roll for a new skill on any Skill table or increase one characteristic by 1 point.
3	**Thickened Armour.** The suit's armour thickens and hardens, so its saving throw is improved by +1.
2	**Heavy Bolt Ammo.** The bolts fired by the suit's launchers explode more fiercely on impact. The boost increases them to Strength 5.
1	**Improved Bolt Launcher Range.** The bolt launchers' range is increased by 4".

The prey fight each other, unaware that there are greater threats close by.

JAKARA ADVANCE & POWER BOOST TABLES

Advance Table

2D6	Result
2	Jakara Power Boost.
3	Stealth Skill.
4	Combat Skill.
5	Characteristic Increase. Roll again: 1-4 = +1 Initiative; 5-6 = +1 Leadership.
6	Characteristic Increase. Roll again: 1 = +1 Ballistic Skill; 2-6 = +1 Weapon Skill.
7	Characteristic Increase. Roll again: 1 = +1 Strength; 2-6 = +1 Attacks.
8	Characteristic Increase. Roll again: 1-3 = +1 Wounds; 4-6 = +1 Toughness.
9	Agility Skill (Re-roll if you get Quick Draw).
10-12	Jakara Power Boost.

Power Boost Table

D6	Result
6	**Heightened Reflexes.** The suit's reflexes sharpen incredibly so that the Jakara can swing its shield around to protect it from enemies appearing from any direction. The boost allows the model to turn up to 45° after the enemy's Movement phase.
5	**Sharpened Mono Sword.** Molecules flake away from the edge of the mono sword to make it even sharper. The Jakara's Strength in close combat is increased by +1.
4	**Combat Neuroware.** The suit links up new neuroware which sharpens the wearer's fighting skills. You may roll for a new skill on any Skill table or increase one characteristic by 1 point.
3	**Enhanced Mirror Shield.** The mirror shield is improved and becomes capable of absorbing different kinds of energy. The boost allows the shield to deflect kinetic energy back at its target (such as bullets from autoweapons, missiles, etc) as well as energy weapons.
2	**Improved Motive Power.** The suit's power output for movement is boosted, increasing its speed. Add +3 to the Jakara's Movement.
1	**Thickened Armour.** The suit's armour thickens and hardens, so its saving throw is improved by +1.

MALCADON ADVANCE & POWER BOOST TABLES

Advance Table

2D6	Result
2	Malcadon Power Boost.
3	Ferocity Skill (Re-roll if you get Iron Will).
4	Stealth Skill.
5	Characteristic Increase. Roll again: 1-4 = +1 Initiative; 5-6 = +1 Leadership.
6	Characteristic Increase. Roll again: 1-3 = +1 Ballistic Skill; 4-6 = +1 Weapon Skill.
7	Characteristic Increase. Roll again: 1-3 = +1 Strength; 4-6 = +1 Attacks.
8	Characteristic Increase. Roll again: 1-3 = +1 Wounds; 4-6 = +1 Toughness.
9	Agility Skill (Re-roll if you get Quick Draw).
10-12	Malcadon Power Boost.

Power Boost Table

D6	Result
6	**Weaving Spinners.** The spinner muzzles change to allow it to cover an area. The boost gives the spinners a Blast marker.
5	**Toxin Sacs.** Insidious neurotoxins synthesised by the suit from pollutant waste coat its spines. The Malcadon's Strength in close combat is increased by +1.
4	**Combat Neuroware.** The suit links up additional neuroware which sharpens the wearer's fighting skills. You may roll for a new skill on any Skill table or increase one characteristic by 1 point.
3	**Thickened Armour.** The suit's armour thickens and hardens so its saving throw is improved by +1.
2	**Improved Motive Power.** The suit's power output for movement is boosted, increasing the Malcadon's Movement by +3.
1	**Improved Spinner Range.** The suit's spinner range is increased by 2".

YELD ADVANCE & POWER BOOST TABLES

Advance Table

2D6	Result
2	Yeld Power Boost.
3	Combat Skill.
4	Stealth Skill.
5	Characteristic Increase. Roll again: 1-4 = +1 Initiative; 5-6 = +1 Leadership.
6	Characteristic Increase. Roll again: 1-2 = +1 Strength; 3-6 = +1 Attacks.
7	Characteristic Increase. Roll again: 1-4 = +1 Ballistic Skill; 5-6 = +1 Weapon Skill.
8	Characteristic Increase. Roll again: 1-4 = +1 Wounds; 5-6 = +1 Toughness.
9	Shooting Skill (Re-roll if you get Gunfighter).
10-12	Yeld Power Boost.

Power Boost Table

D6	Result
6	**Pulse Lasers.** New power feeds come on line to make the suit weapons capable of sustained fire. The Yeld's lasers gain Sustained Fire 1 dice.
5	**Sharpened Claws.** Molecules flake away from the edge of the Yeld's wings to make them even sharper. The Yeld's Strength in close combat is increased by +1.
4	**Combat Neuroware.** The suit links up additional neuroware which sharpens the wearer's fighting skills. You may roll for a new skill on any Skill table or increase one characteristic by 1 point.
3	**Enhanced Chameleon Powers.** The chameleon circuits in the Yeld's wings become faster and more accurate. The boost inflicts a -1 to hit modifier at short range against all shooting attacks made on the Yeld.
2	**Improved Wings.** The suit's power output to its wings is boosted, increasing its speed. Add +3 to the Yeld's Movement.
1	**Boosted Laser Power.** The suit's lasers become more focused and deadly. The boost increases them to Strength 4

SPYRER WEAPONS

The following special rules apply to the weapons used by Spyrers. Note: Spyrer weapons damaged by the Disarm skill, or anything else for that matter, will automatically repair themselves at the end of the game.

ORRUS BOLT LAUNCHERS

The bolt launchers on an Orrus suit are racks of small rockets mounted on the back of its crusher fists. The power boosts of an Orrus hunting rig can extend the power and burn duration of the rocket's tiny engines, giving them a greater range. They can also increase the power of the warheads and improve the fire control so that salvoes of bolts can be fired.

Special Rules

Orrus bolt launchers are linked to fire together so they must be fired at the same target and only a single dice is rolled to hit. However, if a hit is scored make two separate rolls to wound.

Range		To Hit				Save	Ammo
Short	Long	Short	Long	Str.	Damage	Mod.	Roll
0-8	8-18	+1	0	4	1	-1	2+

MALCADON WEB SPINNER

The spinarets of a Malcadon's web spinner spew out silky threads of gossamer that harden with the strength of steel wires. A victim of the web is left hopelessly ensnared and at the mercy of the Malcadon's ripping claws. The Malcadon can also use its spinner to create threads that it uses to climb vertical surfaces or lower itself down sheer drops.

Special Rules

If a Malcadon hits a model with its web spinner then the opposing player must roll a D6 while the Spyrer player rolls two D6 and picks the higher. Both players then add the Strength of their respective models to the score. If the Malcadon's score is lower than the victim's, the model is merely pinned by the attack and can attempt to escape pinning as normal if a friendly model is nearby.

If the scores are equal or the Malcadon beats the target's score, the model is entangled and effectively goes down. All the normal rules for being down apply, so the model can wriggle 2" in its Movement phase and roll for recovery in each Recovery phase, representing the model having a chance of breaking free or suffering serious injuries from the steely threads. If a model breaks free it still has its full complement of wounds, but it suffers the -1 to BS and WS penalty for taking a flesh wound.

If the Malcadon is running, charging or simply not firing in its turn then it can use its threads to help it move. This means that it can move up or down walkways and platforms even if there is no ladder or lift available. The distance moved up or down is counted against the Malcadon's total movement for the turn and the Malcadon must end its movement on a flat surface, not dangling between two platforms.

Range		To Hit				Save	Ammo
Short	Long	Short	Long	Str.	Damage	Mod.	Roll
0-4	4-10	+1	+1	special – see above			2+
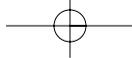
YELD LASER GAUNTLETS

The Yeld hunting rig is fitted with heavy gauntlets mounting multiple laser tubes. The gauntlets fire a storm of laser bolts from the Yeld's fists, a deadly attack which has the longest range of any of the Spyrer hunting suits. The power boosts for the Yeld rig make its lasers even more potent, feeding more power to them so they can fire in a sustained mode and increasing their penetrating power.

Range		To Hit				Save	Ammo
Short	Long	Short	Long	Str.	Damage	Mod.	Roll
0-10	10-20	+1	–	3	1	-1	2+

PATRIARCH BOOSTED PULSE LASERS

The Patriarch is armed with two laser weapons based on the same technology as the Yeld's laser gauntlets. In the case of the Patriarch, the weapons are fitted to two of the cybernetically controlled arms of combat armour. Thanks to the armour's sophisticated targeting systems, both weapons can be used simultaneously, and are capable of engaging separate targets if desired.

Range		To Hit				Save	Ammo
Short	Long	Short	Long	Str.	Damage	Mod.	Roll
0-10	10-20	+1	–	4	1	-1	2+

Special: Sustained Fire 1 dice.

PATRIARCH POWER CLAWS

Two of the arms that belong to the Patriarch's combat armour are fitted with power claws. These deadly weapons can whip round to attack any enemy that moves close to the Patriarch. They are surrounded by a shimmering blue power field, and are perfectly capable of punching through solid steel if need be.

Range	Strength	Damage	Save Mod.
Close Combat	5	1	-3

JAKARA MONOMOLECULAR SWORD

The monomolecular sword carried by the Jakara is a marvel of molecular engineering. The blade is a living crystalline structure which constantly renews its edge as it is blunted. The sword's edge is only one molecule thick and can slice through any but the densest of matter. As the Jakara's power boosts kick in, the sword's edge renews itself more regularly and evenly to make it even sharper still.

Range	Strength	Damage	Save Mod.
Close Combat	As user +1	1	-1

Special: User may parry.

MATRIARCH SHARPENED MONOMOLECULAR SWORD

This is basically the same as the Jakara's sword, but even sharper. Treat it as a monomolecular sword with an additional +1 Strength bonus.

MATRIARCH CHAINSCYTHE

A Spyrer Matriarch is armed with a chainscythe. When not in use, the chainscythe can be folded down into a small baton carried on the Matriarch's hip or in her hand. At the touch of a button it quickly expands out into a deadly close combat weapon that is capable of slicing a man in two.

Range	Strength	Damage	Save Mod.
Close Combat	5	1	-1

SPYRER EQUIPMENT

The following special rules apply to the equipment used by Spyrers.

JAKARA MIRROR SHIELD

The Jakara mirror shield is a complex device that contains an unusual force field generator. The generator sets up a resonant energy vortex across the shield which bleeds off the power it absorbs into one of several containment devices which stud the shield's surface. In turn this stored energy can be channeled back to its source as a brilliant bolt of heat and light.

Special Rules

The shield allows the user to parry in hand-to-hand combat. If the mirror shield saves against a shooting attack which is energy based (laser, plasma or melta), the Jakara can fire it back immediately. Roll to hit using the Jakara's BS: if the blast hits, resolve it with the original weapon's profile.

The mirror shield gives the Jakara an additional saving throw of 4, 5 or 6 on a D6 against attacks originating in the forward 90° arc of the user. The shield's saving throw is not subject to saving throw modifiers, so it will always save on a roll of 4 or more.

YELD WINGS

A Yeld's wings are made out of hundreds of individual plates of metal connected together by micro fibre bundles on an articulated frame. The fibre bundles are activated by brainwaves read directly from the wearer's cortex through a series of conductive filaments. With a little training the wearer can make the wings move and flap at will, enabling him to glide exceptionally well or climb upward somewhat more laboriously. Each of the metal plates is wired with crystalline circuitry so that they can change colour and meld into the wearer's surroundings as part of the Yeld's defences.
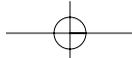
Special Rules

The Yeld's wings allow its user to fly up to his normal Movement characteristic in a turn, or double that if he charges or runs (flaps). Since the Yeld's wings allow it to glide well rather than truly fly the Yeld must land at the end of his move. Flying upwards counts as 2" for every 1" moved; flying downwards counts as $\frac{1}{2}$" for every 1"moved.

The chameleonic effect of its wings allows a Yeld to hide even if it is not behind cover; the Yeld simply remains stationary long enough for its outline to disappear completely. In addition to this, the chameleonic effect of the wings makes a Yeld difficult to track at long range. Any shooting attack against a Yeld suffers an additional -1 to hit penalty if the weapon firing is at long range.

SPYRER SCENARIOS

SPYRER SCENARIO ONE: OLD HABITS DIE HARD

The following scenario may be played if the Spyrer player gets the choice of scenario. It recreates a battle between a Patriarch and Matriarch and an Underhive gang.

Spyrer Matriarchs and Patriarchs don't just visit the Underhive in order to find out what has happened to a Spyrer hunting team that they have sponsored. Sometimes they will travel over the wall on a hunting trip of their own, just to 'keep their hands in', as it were. They will stalk the Underhive, waiting until they come across an Underhive gang. Once they have found their prey, they will attack without mercy.

Playing The Scenario

Follow the rules for playing the Ambush scenario for this scenario, except where modified below (see page 123 of the Necromunda: Underhive rules). The Spyrer Matriarch and a Patriarch are the attackers, the opposing gang the defenders.

If the opposing gang has a gang rating of up to 1500 then **either** the Matriarch or Patriarch will take them on (attacker's choice). If the opposing gang has a rating of over 1500 points then **both** will take part.

Special

The Spyrer Matriarch and Patriarch may not gain Experience, and may not take over territory from the opposing gang if they win. Members of the opposing gang scores double points for surviving and for each wounding hit inflicted on the Patriarch and Matriarch.

Taking part in this scenario **does** count as 'lending assistance' with regard to the Matriarch and Patriarch.

The Orrus and Jakara storm a Van Saar settlement.

SPYRER SCENARIO TWO: HOME DEFENCE

"I once knew a whole bunch of young braves, just like you they was: proud, honourable, courageous. Not too smart. One day, as ah recalls it, they all heard tell of a bad place in the Underhive, where wicked spirits had come to live. This place was a big old ruin and it was on the outskirts of their territory. Somethin' made that place its home, somethin' real evil like, and folks out by the border of the territory started windin' up missin'. So these youngbloods gets all hot-headed, and tool up to go out there. An you know what? Those bad ol' Hive spirits just swallowed them right up. Never seen those boys again."

The following scenario may be played if the Spyrer's opponent gets choice of scenario. It represents an assault on a feared and hated Spyrer den by an Underhive gang.

As any Hiver will tell you, Spyrers are something more than human. They don't eat like us, they don't sleep like us, and their world revolves around an arcane and immensely powerful battle suit whose origins are shrouded in the mists of time. Let those who have understanding of such things not forget that these devices seem to learn by themselves, and increase their destructive potential with the passing of the days spent on the hunt. And when the blood craving is briefly satisfied? Then is the time for the very armour itself to become dormant and assimilate its experiences. During this time the Spyrers enter a state of sleep of sorts, becoming limp and immobile for about a day. Do not be fooled, though, for they are far from vulnerable...

Contained within a Spyre Hunter's suit is a miraculous set of devices which are fully capable of preventing serious harm befalling the occupant of the armour as it lies in its unnatural slumber. It is known that when the Spyrer shuts down to absorb its recent experiences, certain functions of the suit remain active: life support obviously, but there is also another system that is only ever seen when the Spyrer is in this state. Millions of microscopic machines, tiny enough to be able to manipulate the very molecules of substances they come into contact with, flood from vents in the armour to pour across the floor of the Underhive. The refuse and scrap in the general area is rapidly transmuted into a nest of wires and conduits linking the recumbent Spyre Hunter to a number of small silver globes. Each of these devices contain a single defence system to be activated when an unwelcome visitor strays too close. These range from powerful guns to routine alarms triggering the awakening of a highly irate Spyrer itching to have a word with the unfortunate individual responsible. The following set of rules details their uses in a scenario depicting a raid on a Spyrer home base as they sleep.

Terrain

The Spyrer player sets up the scenery and deploys his forces in hiding within a 6" radius of the exact centre of the board. He then places defence counters (see below).

The attacking player then chooses which side of the board he wishes to approach from and deploys along that table edge. Since the terrain here represents the nerve centre of the Spyrers' territory, security is thorough and the attackers may not use any means of infiltration.

Attackers

Since this scenario requires a great deal of stealth and subterfuge on behalf of the attacker to actually follow the Spyrers all the way to their hideout without being spotted, only a small assault force can carry out the job. Therefore,

The Scarlet Widows locate a Spyrer cell and attack.

the attackers are limited to 1D6 gang members on this mission. The attackers may not use any special detection equipment to spot the Spyrers in their hiding places, since the anti-surveillance devices of the Spyrers put anything the Underhive has on offer to shame. Sleeping Spyrers can only be spotted by models within a range equal to their Initiative in inches. Shooting but failing to injure a sleeping Spyrer will automatically wake it up! The Spyrer may be used normally from the next turn onwards. This is the only way Spyrers can become active, aside from the triggering of an alarm.

Defenders

By the point at which the attackers strike, the Spyrers have entered temporary shutdown to assimilate new information regarding their suit's running. They may do absolutely nothing until specifically awakened by either getting shot at, as detailed above, or by an alarm defence function as detailed in the following section.

Each Spyre Hunter suit may run up to 1D3 defence routines. The defence routines are chosen randomly by the suit every time it is used in this way, and are rarely the same twice. These defences are represented in the game by defence counters, which are placed within a 12" radius of the Spyrer at the beginning of the scenario. The counters are activated if an enemy model moves within 6" of them. They can be shot at, counting as small targets (-1 to hit) and have a Toughness of 5 with 2 Wounds. A defence counter that is hit but not destroyed will be activated automatically. The destruction of a counter will awaken the Spyrer it is linked to, in the same way as an alarm, if the Spyrer player can roll a 5 or a 6 on a D6.

You can use pretty much anything you feel is appropriate to represent defence counters – pennies, pieces of card, bits of coloured plastic, or whatever. The more adventurous amongst you might even consider modelling your own!

When you place the counters, you must keep track of which defence belongs to which Spyrer. Then, as they become activated, roll for their effect on the defence system table opposite.

Author	*Jervis is the head Fanatic and in charge of the Fanatic studio and all who sail in her.*
	He is currently working on the second part of the Pit Fighter article which will be featured in issue 3.
Further Information	*The Spyrers including the new Patriarch and Matriarch figures are available to order from your nearest Games Workshop or you can visit the website for details. (See the How to Order pages on page 94).*
More Necro Website	*Over the page for "My Dad's Bigger Than Yours".* *www.Necromunda.com*

Spyrer Defence System Table

2D6	Result
2	**Piggy-Back System:** Make two rolls on this table, ignoring further rolls of a 2. If two sentry guns are rolled both will fire at the same target each turn.
3-5	**Sentry Gun:** A turret armed with a sentry gun pops up and fires as if on overwatch. The sentry gun has the same characteristics as a boltgun and counts as having a BS of 4. It may shoot as if on overwatch every turn until it runs out of ammo. It will shoot at the first target to move within range and line of fire.
6	**Alarm:** The Spyrer awakens and may be used from the next turn onwards.
7	**Malformed Construct:** The globe contains nothing more than a puddle of unresolved goo and wires. No effect!
8	**Alarm:** The Spyrer awakens and may be used from the next turn onwards.
9-11	**Sentry Gun:** A turret armed with a sentry gun pops up and fires as if on overwatch. The sentry gun has the same characteristics as a boltgun and counts as having a BS of 4. It may shoot as if on overwatch every turn until it runs out of ammo. It will shoot at the first target to move within range and line of fire.
12	**Improved Alarm:** The Spyrer awakens and may be used from the next turn onwards. In addition a second Spyrer of your choice is awakened.

Ending The Game

The game continues until either one side bottles out, or has no remaining gang members who can fight. The Spyrers will not bottle whilst any of their number remain asleep, and therefore do not have to make tests until they have all been awakened.

Experience

+10	Winning gang leader
+5	Per wounding hit
+1D6/+2D6*	For each surviving gang member

*Special: If the Spyrers lose this battle, they gain no Experience and must generate a new territory due to the capture of their base camp. However, winning the battle gains them an additional +1D6 each.

EPIC

STORM OVER GEHENNA

A Campaign For Epic by David Candlish

Located roughly 500 light years from Armageddon, Gehenna has the dubious claim to fame of being the first planet to fall to Waaagh! Ghazghkull. A key stronghold and listening station on the borders of Ork/Imperial space, Gehenna was usually the first to respond to any major uprisings in Ork space, "nipping them in the bud" before they could develop into fully fledged Kroosades. It seems somewhat inevitable in hindsight then that this would be the one of the first targets for Ghazghkull on his path to Armageddon.

Prior to the Ork invasion, the Gehenna system was relatively small, with a sparse civilian population and only two planets orbiting its K-class orange star. Gehenna Prime was the only habitable world, with a general environment similar to Mars shortly after terraforming (that is to say vast expanses of mineral rich deserts with isolated patches of vegetation and no large animal life). The main civilian settlement was a city home to roughly 40,000 Adeptus Exploratus workers and scientists involved in the study of

ancient ruins on the planets southern continent. Imperial forces stationed on this planet numbered in excess of 100,000 regular Guardsmen, with an unusually high contingent of four Storm Trooper companies stationed in orbit ready to react quickly to any Ork movements. Although devoid of any major capital ships, the Imperial Navy had permanently stationed a large number of fast attack destroyers in orbit, serviced by a Ramilies class fortress. At any one time there was always at least two of the Storm Trooper companies out on operations with the fleet, and usually three of the companies were on active duty. Following the age-old tactic of "the best defence is a good offence", Gehenna survived so close to Ork space by destroying any potential invasion force before it became strong enough to be a real threat.

This strategy served the Imperium well for centuries, and Imperial commanders saw little reason to change it – after all, the Orks were nothing if not predictable. Subsequent analysis of long range scan data and Astropathic reports have since revealed the unmistakable signs of deliberate planning on the part of the Orks, and the only conclusion can be that Imperial forces had fallen into a routine that the Orks used to their advantage. The Ork plan that was

the eventual downfall of Gehenna was surprisingly elegant in its simplicity, but with all the cunning we have come to expect from Warlord Thraka. A few months before the main attack was scheduled, Ghazghkull ordered Ork uprisings in several systems close to Gehenna and, as usual, the Imperial strike forces responded. With three-quarters of the elite Imperial forces engaged in neutralising these 'mini-Waaaghs', Ghazghkull launched what can only be described as a surgical strike on Gehenna with the sole aim of eliminating its long range communications facilities. Since the planetary defences were tailored to stop large-scale attacks from Ork Kroozers, the Kommandos had little trouble in covertly reaching the surface and the ground based defence platforms were overrun in a short space of time. With the defence lasers and missile batteries silenced, the Ork fleet managed to easily overwhelm the orbital defence network and, before the planetary guard knew what was going on, the Ork Landers were already dropping off hordes of troops.

The Ork attack was twin pronged. While a large motorised column attacked the main planetary defence stronghold in the north, Ork foot troops dropped directly into the centre of the only civilian city. Both attacks were designed to hit Astropaths. In a display of consummate ineptitude, the Imperial commander responsible for defending the city ordered his troops to dig-in before the numerically superior, but less mobile, attackers. As a result, the Orks were allowed to build up their forces until they attacked at a single point, overrunning defenders before moving onto the next objective. Simultaneously, formations of Gunwagonz, supported by fast bike units, encircled the

Imperial fortress in the north. Faced with an attack on three fronts, the brave Guardsmen held their fortress for as long as they could before they were inevitably destroyed. With the centres of Imperial power on the planet shattered, the general retreat was sounded and the survivors converged on the star port, pursued by the Orks. Although the Ork's delay in neutralising the Imperial stronghold had allowed the defenders a chance to call for aid, the return of a few Storm Trooper units was not enough to allow the defenders a chance to escape. As the last ship bravely tried to lift off, crippling ground fire destroyed its engines and the vessel came crashing down. With its destruction, the chance of warning the defenders of Armageddon died too.

"However beautiful the strategy, you should occasionally look at the results"

Ancient Terran General

REFIGHTING THE GEHENNA CAMPAIGN

This campaign pack will allow you to re-fight the various battles involved in the fall of Gehenna. Where possible, you should play the different scenarios in order as the outcome of one battle can have a direct bearing on another. The force dispositions for each mission reflect the actual troops available to both commanders and are not intended to be equal – the Imperial forces were surprised by a larger force after all! Players should remember that the point of playing scenarios like this is to have fun and winning is only a secondary goal.

Although you do not have to play these missions using Imperial and Ork troops, part of the appeal of an historical campaign such as this is to see how much better you could have done "in their shoes". By all means replace the Imperial Guard with Space Marines and the Orks with Eldar, but I'd advise giving the campaign a go with what you find here at least once! In terms of the terrain and map layouts, some missions are flexible about the actual topography, whereas others have stipulations about the location of specific features. For example, in the city it is not essential to perfectly reproduce the location of every building in every street, but the location of the key objectives should be maintained.

Regarding models, it is entirely possible that miniatures for the different units will not be available at the time of release and in these cases I leave it up to the discretion of the players as to what 'counts as' what.

CAMPAIGN STRUCTURE

The Gehenna campaign consists of four linked major engagements. The outcome of each battle has a direct link to subsequent missions, as well as contributing to the overall 'victory status' of the campaign as a whole.

Invasion: 'Invasion' details the initial landings by Ork Kommandos and their efforts to destroy ground-based defence lasers and missile silos. The level of success in this mission will dictate the numbers and types of forces available to the Ork player in the next missions, as well as any possible reinforcements for the Imperial commander.

Elysium: The fighting in the streets of 'Elysium' sees a relatively mobile, armoured defence force pitted against a seemingly endless horde of Ork Boyz. Can the Imperial commander use his elite tank units to disrupt the Ork attack, or should a line be drawn in the narrow streets with any Ork crossing it paying the price in blood?

Last Stand: Colonel Rawke's 'Last Stand' focuses on the desperate defence of the Imperial stronghold and the Astropath contained within. The Imperial player is faced with a frightening amount of Ork armour & fast-attack vehicles. Indeed, the odds are stacked so heavily against the Imperial player it is not anticipated that they survive – all they can do is hold out long enough to buy more time for Imperial forces elsewhere!

Reckoning: As the campaign draws to its final 'Reckoning', will the Imperium have done enough damage to the Ork attackers to allow messengers to escape and warn Armageddon, or will we be condemned to watch Gehenna fall again beneath the boot of Ghazghkull Thraka?
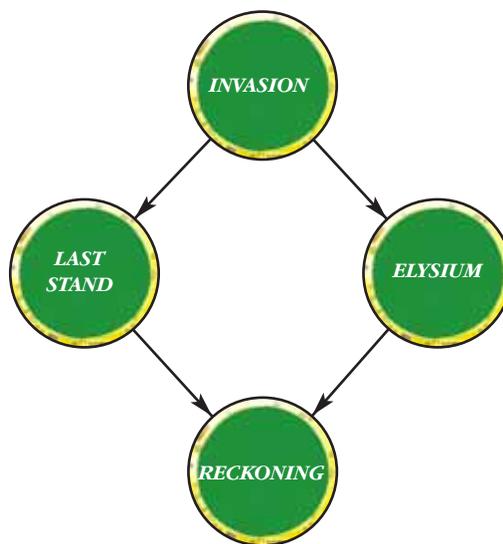
Invasion

*"I guess it was nothing sir, it must have been a sensor glitch"*

Ensign Murby, stationed aboard Ramilies station Shield of Faith *shortly before the invasion of Gehenna began.*

Hours before the main Ork fleet arrived, Blood Axe Kommandos simultaneously attacked all of the defence laser & plasma missile silos scattered across the surface of Gehenna. This scenario gives you the chance to replay this crucial series of events in the invasion, setting the balance of power for the events to come. Although many such operations were conducted during the real campaign, the outcome of this battle will be used as an indicator for the general outcome planet-wide.

HISTORICAL ANALYSIS

Using data recovered from Chimera emergency broadcast transmissions as well as pict-data from salvaged orbiting weather satellites, the Ork tactics used in destroying the defence installations appear to have been brutally effective.

The Orks appear to have made three simultaneous insertions, with small but well-equipped formations of Kommandos assigned to each installation in the area. The Imperial response, consisting of a mechanised infantry & Sentinel outriders, advanced from the west. Although no contact had been reported at this point, and the ground commander was only following orders to investigate a possible disturbance, the lack of tactical awareness shown is unforgivable. Had he survived the engagement, the captain in charge would surely have faced summary execution for his wilful negligence. As the advance elements of the response force entered the area, they spotted a force of Orks on the hills to the east, heading directly for the station Beta. In an attempt to reach the Orks before they inflicted any serious damage, the entire Imperial formation was ordered to flank speed to intercept, rather than secure the other installations before requesting back up and using their numerical superiority to neutralise the attackers. This allowed the hidden Ork formations ample time to destroy the Alpha & Gamma batteries before they advanced & attacked the rear of the Imperial forces. At this point, coming under fire from three sides as well as a well-timed attack run from a flight of Ork "Fighta-Bommerz", the Imperial commander broadcast his emergency signal although by the time reinforcements arrived they found all Imperial forces in the area destroyed. A sizeable number of Orks were found dead, although it is uncertain (and unlikely) that all of the invaders were destroyed.
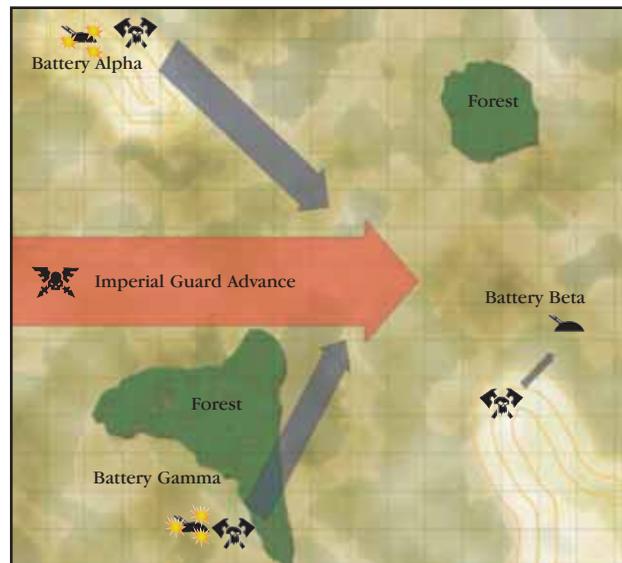
Map showing the movement of forces that led to the destruction of the Imperial Guard regiment

TOPOGRAPHICAL ANALYSIS

This scenario is set in the northern continent of Gehenna, in an area known for its rolling hills and large forest regions (by Gehennai standards anyway). Although any terrain can be used, some general guidelines should be kept in mind when creating the battlefield. A 4' x 4' table is the ideal size for an engagement of this size. It is important that each defence battery is at least 50cm from any other, and care should be taken to ensure that there is ample cover so troops positioned on a hill cannot see every battery – there should be numerous places for the Orks to deploy out of sight of the Imperial forces.

IMPERIAL DEPLOYMENT AND FORCE DISPOSITION

The Imperial player has the following forces under his command.

- Red Platoon, 2nd Gehenna Mechanised Infantry Company, led by Captain Tyler.
  6 Infantry stands
  1 Command stand
  4 Chimeras
- Yellow Platoon, 2nd Gehenna Mechanised Infantry Company
  6 Infantry stands
  3 Chimeras
  1 Commissar stand
- 2nd Support Company, 1st Hellhound squadron
  3 Hellhounds
- Scout Patrol Omega-Tertius
  4 Sentinels
- Scout Patrol Omega-Quintus
  4 Sentinels
- 15th Flak Support Detachment
  3 Hydras

The Imperial player deploys first, and all units must be placed within a box 30cm x 60cm. No unit may deploy within 30cm of the north/south board edges. Troops must be deployed within their transports and may not leave them until an Ork unit has been spotted by any Imperial formation.

MISSION OBJECTIVES

Investigate the area for signs of enemy activity. If any enemy units are detected, terminate with extreme prejudice. The primary objective is to secure all three defence batteries, with the destruction of hostiles a secondary goal. No air support is immediately available for this mission, and is no possibility of any ground reinforcements.

Make a record of the units which survive this engagement – any formation with a strength of 50% or greater will be available in a subsequent mission.

ORK DEPLOYMENT AND FORCE DISPOSITION

The Ork player has the following forces under his command:

- Grognutz' Leet Kommando Horde
  18 Kommando stands
  1 Nob stand
- Bogbreff's Flyboyz
  6 Ork Fighta-Bommerz

After the Imperial player has deployed, split the Kommando stands into units of at least 4 stands and number each one. Place scraps of paper or dice on the board in various locations anywhere on the board, but out of site of the Imperial player and at least 25cm from any defence installation. Note you can use "decoy" pieces of paper – make a list recording what number corresponds to what unit and the Fighta-Bommerz are not deployed with the other units.

The Ork player has the first turn and can move each hidden unit as if they were a stand of Kommando infantry. However, if the unit wishes to attack a defence installation then the unit must be revealed and the models placed on the table. If an Imperial unit moves into line of sight of a piece of paper then that unit must also be revealed with at least one stand placed in the open (ie. not in or behind cover).

On any turn after the first, the Ork player may bring his air units onto the board and use them as normal.

MISSION OBJECTIVES

The Ork player must destroy as many defence laser installations as possible. A defence laser can be destroyed either by shooting at it, or in an assault. When shooting,
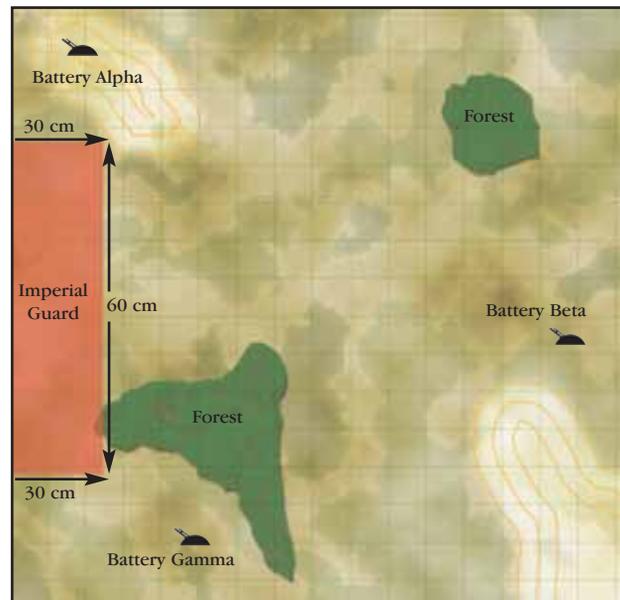
Scenario Deployment Map

roll to hit as if it were an armoured vehicle (use the weapons AT value), then make saves as normal. If the battery fails its save then it loses a Structure Point. Once all Structure Points are lost then the installation is destroyed. If a battery is engaged in an assault, then the Orks will hit based on their Firefight/Close-Combat values. A defence laser hit in a firefight still has a chance to save, but any close combat hits do not get a saving throw and result in the immediate loss of a Structure Point.

A defence laser has a saving throw of 4+ and 3 Structure Points. When the last Structure Point is lost, roll a D6 – on a roll of a 6 all units within 10cm must make a saving throw or be destroyed as the laser's powerplant goes critical. (Players can use the Defence Laser datasheet on page 73 – Ed.)

Once any Imperial unit has spotted an Ork unit, the Ork player has four turns to destroy as many defence lasers as possible – after this the Imperial forces are assumed to have received sufficient air support to neutralise the Kommandos.

BATTLE AFTERMATH

After the last turn has finished, record the number of defence laser batteries destroyed and any Imperial forces above 50% unit strength. The number of batteries remaining will directly influence the amount of Ork reinforcements that will be available for the following missions.

ELYSIUM

"Aim fer dat big buildin' over der. No da uvver wun! NO DAT WUN! Zoggit, just land it 'ere."
Kaptain Parrkurr of the Ork Landa 'Funderbird Too'

With the defence network disabled and the orbital defences utterly overwhelmed, the Orks started landing in huge numbers. Mercifully, the invaders seemed bereft of any Gargants, although a small number of the smaller 'Stompas' were spotted. With another task force en route to kill the Imperial Astropath situated in the north, a sizeable force was dispatched to the civilian city of Elysium to take out the commercial Astropath stationed in the Navigator Guild headquarters. In a display of supreme skill, or perhaps remarkable luck, Ork pilots managed to land almost directly in the centre of the city, carving a wedge that allowed other Landas to move in behind them. With the defensive forces scattered at strategic points throughout the city to repel an attack from outside, the Imperial formations were ordered to form a hasty ring of defence around the Ork beach head. Rather than take out the transports in their more vulnerable state when deploying troops, the captain in charge of the defences opted to wait and dig-in. As a result, the Orks amassed in huge numbers before overwhelming the defensive perimeter at one key point. Once the Orks were loose in the city at large the Imperial troops stood no chance of stopping them and the Guild buildings were soon destroyed.

HISTORICAL ANALYSIS

The drastic landing of Ork troops took the defenders by surprise and left many units out of position. Although a more decisive ground commander would have marshalled his troops and taken the fight to the enemy, Captain Barik had evidently grown lazy from his comfortable city defence assignment and did nothing to stop the Orks from marshalling their strength. Although his tactic of forming a defensive perimeter may have worked against an unruly mob of human citizens, it was woefully inadequate when trying to contain the aggressive Ork army.
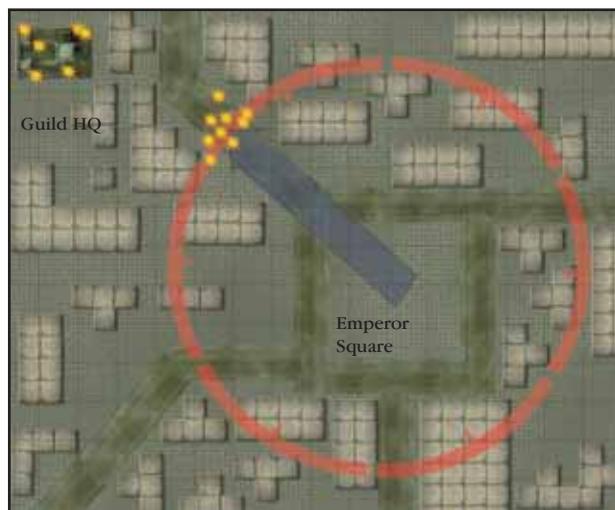
Map showing the initial attempt at containment of the Ork landing (shown in red) and the inevitable Ork breakthrough and subsequent loss of the Guild HQ (shown in blue).

TOPOGRAPHICAL ANALYSIS

The Guild HQ should be positioned at least 120cm away from the centre of Emperor Square. The Orks deployed in the centre of the city in Emperor Square, then proceeded on foot to the Navigator Guild. Although the exact layout of the city is somewhat irrelevant, it is important that the Guild buildings and Emperor Square are suitably represented. Also, there should be a reasonable number of buildings between the two to prevent Ork artillery from simply destroying the HQ from afar. A mix of ruined and intact buildings will be fine – the main point to bear in mind is the battlefield was close and confined with little room for manoeuvre. Forge World make a superb range of Imperial buildings, and simple towers and houses can easily be made from foam-card or stiff cardboard. This mission is best played on a 6' x 4' board, although a 4' x 4' board will suffice at a pinch – expect plenty of assaults on a smaller board though!


War, huh – what is it good for?

IMPERIAL DEPLOYMENT AND FORCE DISPOSITION

The Imperial player has the following forces under his command.

- Captain Barik's 4th Mechanised Infantry Company
  - *1 Supreme Commander stand*
  - *12 Infantry stands*
  - *7 Chimeras*
  - *2 Sentinels*
- Captain Hatton's 5th Infantry Company (Conscripts)
  - *1 Commander stand*
  - *18 Infantry stands*
  - *3 Commissar stands*
- Captain Jackson's 1st Armoured Company
  - *1 Command Leman Russ*
  - *6 Leman Russ*
  - *3 Leman Russ Demolishers*
  - *3 Hydra Flak Tanks*
  - *3 Hellhounds*
- Colonel Urix' Baneblade Detachment
  - *1 Baneblade*
- 3rd Gehennai Fire Support Detachment
  - *4 Fire Support stands*
  - *4 Fire Support stands*
  - *2 Sniper stands*

The city is split into four quadrants – NW, NE, SE & SW. Each quadrant must contain at least 2 formations at the start of the battle, to represent the fragmented nature of the Imperial troops. In addition to this, no Imperial formation may set-up within 50cm of the centre of Emperor Square – see the diagram for allowed set-up locations. A formation can consist of a minimum of 6 troop stands (inc. transports), 3 tanks, 1 Baneblade or 4 fire-support stands – you may split the companies up into smaller groups if the above limits are observed. Snipers & Sentinels do NOT count as formations for the purposes of this condition. Imperial troops may start in their transports or inside buildings according to the controlling player's wishes. No air support or reinforcements are available for the Imperial commander.

The Imperial player has the first turn.
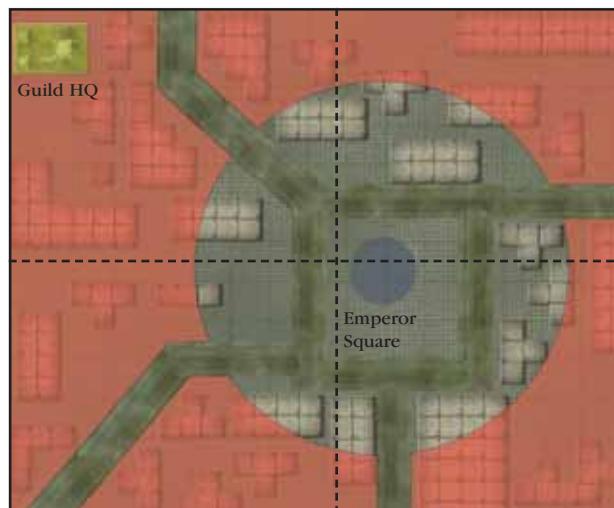
The alternate colour coded quadrants indicate Imperial set-up zones

MISSION OBJECTIVES

The primary objective is to prevent the Orks from entering/destroying the Navigator Guild HQ in the north west of the city. To do this, the Imperial player must attempt to stem the tide of Ork reinforcements arriving in Emperor Square. Each turn, the Ork player will receive reinforcements in the form of Ork Landas arriving from orbit. At least three Landas will arrive every turn, with the possibility of more depending on how many defence lasers were destroyed in the 'Planetfall' mission. If the Imperial player can destroy enough of the Ork Landas the Ork leaders will realise their plan isn't working and change tactics, buying the Navigator Astropath time to warn Armageddon and request aid.

This mission has, in effect, limitless turns. Since the Orks receive more reinforcements every turn the Imperial army needs to capitalise on its initial advantage in numbers to take out the Landas – the longer they wait in doing this, the more Orks will land until eventually the Imperial forces have no possibility of stopping them. Every Ork Landa destroyed will reduce the number of subsequent Landas appearing by one, to a minimum of one per turn. When the total number of Landas destroyed reaches the limit specified, the Imperial player will have driven off the attackers. Until then, they keep on coming!

IMPERIAL GUARD CONSCRIPT INFANTRY				
Type	**Speed**	**Armour**	**Close Combat**	**Firefight**
Infantry	15cm	None	6+	6+
Weapon	**Range**	**Firepower**	**Notes**	
Lasgun	(15cms)	Small Arms	—	
Autocannon	45cm	AP5+/AT6+	See Below	

Notes: Only one unit in every two has an autocannon. Count up the number of infantry units in the formation that can fire at the target formation and divide by two (rounding up) to find the number of shots you may take. Also, any Blast markers the unit has count double against conscript units.

Consult the following chart to determine how many Landas must be destroyed to win:

Landas per turn	Kills to win
2	4
3	5
4	6

ORK DEPLOYMENT AND FORCE DISPOSITION

The force under the Ork players command is variable, and is derived from the following formations.

- Formation 1 – Boyz Warhorde
  2 Nobz stands
  6+D6 Boyz stands
  2 Grot stands
- Formation 2 – Mekboyz Warhorde
  2 Stompas
  or
  D3 Killa Kans
  D6 Dreadnoughts
- Formation 3 – Stormboyz Warhorde
  1+D6 Stormboyz stands
  1+D3 Kommandos stands
- Formation 4 – Speedboyz Warhorde
  1+D3 Deth Koptas
  2 Buggies
  or
  2 Deth Koptas
  1+D3 Buggies

The Ork player may choose two formations from the choices above at the beginning of the battle – these troops represent the first wave of troops landing in the city. They may be positioned anywhere within 25cm of the centre of Emperor Square, and infantry may be deployed within buildings if the Ork player wishes. Every turn, the Ork player receives two Landas worth of reinforcements deployed in their starting zone, with an additional Landa for every defence laser installation destroyed in the 'Planetfall' mission. For example, if the Ork player destroyed two defence laser batteries they would receive four Landas worth of troops every turn. At the beginning of every turn, the Ork player should roll a D6 for every Landa they are eligible to receive then consult the following chart:

D6 roll	Formation
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	Player's choice
6	Crash!

If a "Crash!" result is rolled, defensive anti-aircraft fire elsewhere in the city has damaged one of the incoming Landas and it crashes into the ground with a terrific explosion. The Imperial player may take the barrage template and position it anywhere on the battlefield, then roll to scatter the template 2D6cm. Anything caught under the template, even partially, will be destroyed unless they can make a saving throw. Buildings caught under the blast will be destroyed on D6 roll of a 6, and any troops within will be automatically killed. Remember to place the Landas for that turn in the deployment zone as well as the reinforcements – the Imperial player is trying to destroy them!

MISSION OBJECTIVES

The Orks' primary objective is to destroy or capture the Navigator Guild HQ in the north west quadrant of the city. They can do this in one of two ways. Any Ork infantry unit may enter the building by making an Assault move against it and reaching it in base-to-base contact (NOT firefight range!). Alternatively, an AP weapon may attempt to damage the structure of the building to the point of its collapse. If a unit with AP capability opts to shoot at the building, make a to hit roll with a +1 modifier (it is a large, inanimate building after all). If hit, make a saving roll of 3+ and any failed saves result in the loss of a Structure Point. After the building loses 10 Structure Points it collapses, killing all occupants and the Orks win.

There is no time limit on this mission – the Orks will receive reinforcements for as long as it takes them to destroy the HQ building or the Imperial forces to eliminate enough Landas.

Battle Aftermath

Although there is no limit on the turns, make a note of the turn that the Ork/Imperial player wins this battle and the remaining forces they have – only count units with 50% or greater unit strength. These hardy survivors may be able to lend a hand in the final climactic battle at the star port!

Authors	Dave Candlish is an enthusiastic Epic and Blood Bowl gamer. When he's not busy writing and organising gaming tournaments you can often find him online as 'Indigo'.
Further Information	The Epic: Armageddon rulebook and accompanying range are now widely available from all good hobby stores. Contact your nearest Games Workshop or visit the website for details. (See the How to Order pages on page 94). See the catalogue page for more information of Epic drop ship and flyer models.
More Epic Websites	See page 68 for Look to the Skies
	www.Epic-Battles.com

Taking It To The Streets

A Mordheim Primer by Mark Havener

So you're looking to get into a new game. Walk into the local store, and you're assaulted with the selection. All the pretty boxes, all the lovely titles, which one to buy? You ask the guy behind the counter, and he suggests that Mordheim is a good choice if you want to try something new. So you take his advice and buy yourself a new game, but now that you've got it, how exactly do you start using it?

The rules, the rules, always read the rules!

This may seem obvious, but the book that comes with the game really needs to be read. Many players try to get by with having someone show them how to play, promising the'll read the rules later. There's nothing wrong with doing this, though you may miss the finer points, and some things inevitably get lost in translation (even those sales guys don't remember all the rules all the time!). Fortunately, the rules

for Mordheim were written with the understanding that most people want to be playing games not reading rules, and so they're as entertaining as possible. They're also broken down into 5 sections – the introductory (story) bit, Rules, Warbands, Campaigns, and Optional Rules. The sections you really need to read are Rules and Warbands, though the introductory section is highly recommended before you start as well, as it gives much of the backstory

Human Mercenaries

There are several minor (provincial) variations within this list, but they're all basically the same thing – human fighters from one of the provinces of the Empire. Human Mercenaries should be viewed as the 'baseline' warband: they aren't the greatest at any given thing, but they can do most things well. They have reasonably priced Heroes, decent warriors and very cool specialists. Marksmen can take some really nice missile weapons, and Swordsmen have a great Weapon Skill for humans, and get to re-roll missed attacks when they charge!

You should decide when you buy your warband whether you want to emphasise shooting, close combat, or a mix of both. If you favour shooting, you will want to choose Reikland as your warband's home province, as all your Marksmen will be more accurate (+1 Ballistic Skill). If you want to emphasise close combat you'll probably want to go with Middenheimers as their Heroes are stronger than other humans (+1 Strength for their Champions and Captains). If you want a mix of both you'll want Marienburgers, as they are from a wealthier province and therefore get more starting cash to recruit with (600 Gold Crowns rather than the normal 500… not too shabby!). Personally, I normally choose Marienburgers when I play Human Mercenaries, as they fit best with the flexible strategy I like to use.

Averlanders and Ostlanders

In addition to the three types of Human Mercenary in the rulebook (opposite), two more types appear in the pages of the Mordheim Annual 2002. Each follows the same basic format as the Human Mercenary warband, with a twist of its own.

Averlanders are restricted to only one each of Youngbloods and Champions (called a Sergeant in this list), but gain Bergjaegers, expert huntsmen who have the ability to set traps. Instead of Warriors and Swordsmen, they have Mountainguard, who have the Weapon Skill of Swordsmen but lack their re-rolls. The warband also has access to Halflings, who are excellent shots (keep them away from combat though, as they are kind of puny).

Ostlanders lose Youngbloods entirely, but gain the Priest of Taal, God of Nature. This Hero is able to use the Prayers of Taal (nature-oriented powers granted directly from his god). The warband loses Swordsmen, but gains Ruffians (guys that are so drunk that they ain't afraid a nuthin'), and an Ogre!

behind the game – your 'motivation' if you like. There is also an example at the back of the book (in the appendices, between the Playsheet and the Designer's Notes) that may prove very helpful if you've never played this sort of game before.

That may still seem like a lot to read before you even start to play, but never fear! You don't have to read all the Warband rules. Instead, just read the first couple of pages (pp 64-65) where it explains how to set your warband up, and then look over each warband (especially the intro on each one), decide which warband fits your personality best, and then read through THOSE rules thoroughly. Most of the warbands have rules that span just a few pages, so it'll go really quickly, I promise! In fact, in order to help you out, I'll be including a few words on each warband from the main rulebook and Mordheim Annual 2002 (in other words, the main references for the game, and easiest to find) in this article. Hopefully this will make the job of picking the right one for you even easier.

The Players

So who are these warbands that you're supposed to be looking at, and how do you decide which one to play? Let me start by saying that I'm not going to tell you which warband is 'best'. I've been asked that countless times, but the honest answer (and the one I always give people) is that the game is well balanced enough so that no one warband is 'the best'. Some warbands have certain advantages, but these are balanced by inherent disadvantages, or the advantages that the other warbands enjoy. See the comments in the boxes thoughout this article.
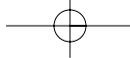
Hired Swords

Many of the best warriors in the game aren't regular members of any single warband's roster. They are Hired Swords – warriors who will work for nearly anyone (for a fee). Between the Rulebook and the 2002 Mordheim Annual there are 10 Hired Swords to choose from.

Hired Swords are probably best introduced into a campaign rather than one-off games. They have a lower starting hire fee than their abilities indicate, but this is balanced by an 'upkeep' cost. However, if you are not playing in a campaign, there is no upkeep cost, so they just end up being a better option than most of the warriors in your warband. Another thing to keep in mind is that while these folks are not overly choosy, there ARE some warbands that even they won't work

for (or that would refuse to hire them). Skaven and Ostlanders in particular have a very short list of Hired Swords to choose from, in fact Skaven can ONLY hire the Warlock, and Ostlanders can ONLY hire the Ogre Bodyguard.

Speaking of the Warlock, this snake charmer is one of my personal favourites, and a standard addition to my Mordheim roster. Not only does he give warbands access to spells (nice if you're running a warband that doesn't normally get spellcasters), but he also starts with 2 of them, not just 1 like most of the spellcasters. He has access to Lesser Magic, which gives a nice range of powers. My favourite spell from the list is *Silver Arrows*, which can take out the toughest of enemies if you're lucky. Since the spell requires a shooting 'to hit' roll, take a BS upgrade if you can

Orcs & Goblins

Players that love a bit of wackiness and risk should enjoy this warband. Orcs are certainly no great thinkers, but they're always entertaining. Orc warbands tend to favour a direct, close-combat strategy, perhaps supported by a few Goblins armed with short bows. Their Shaman's magic shares the same brutal and direct qualities as the Orcs themselves.

To further support the idea of the warband as a blunt implement, we get access to a Troll. While quite expensive, Trolls are very hard to put down, and as long as you keep him near the warband's leader, he'll probably do what you want him to (he's also subject to Stupidity, unfortunately). A nice side effect of his Regeneration in campaign play is that a Troll need never roll for Injury after a battle… even the worst wounds will regenerate eventually. While most of the big guys you can take for the other warbands are also quite pricey, there's a certain advantage to having the one that can never be killed!
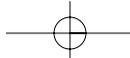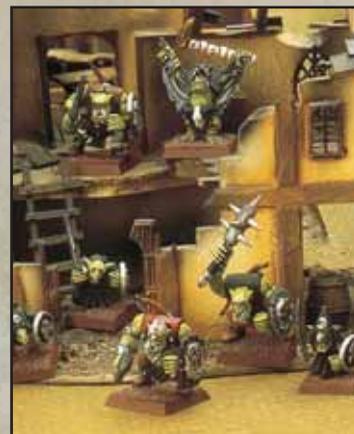
get it. Also, *Luck of Shemtek* and *Sword of Rezhebel* are an awesome combination if you can manage to get them both working at the same time.

The Dwarf Troll Slayer is a great addition to any warband that is concerned about Psychology tests. He's quite mad, and so doesn't need to take those tests. He can't take armour, so get him into combat as quickly as you can!

The Freelancer is a dispossessed noble or second son of a noble. Quite good if your group uses the Mounted Creatures rules (which are optional), but he may seem a bit overpriced if you're not. Armed with heavy armour and shield, he'll be better protected than most of the warriors he'll meet, and more mobile if he's mounted.

The Elf Ranger is a nice addition to any warband. Not only is he wickedly accurate with his Elf bow, but his Seeker skill allows you to modify one of your Exploration dice by +1/-1. In a campaign, this can be critical for rolling the multiples that you need to find the really good stuff. He is a standard feature in my warbands as well.
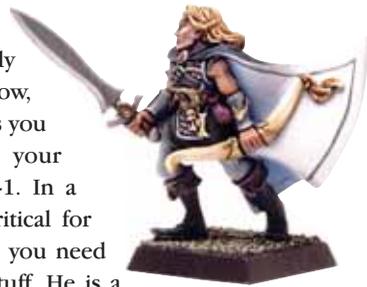
The Halfling Scout, while quite cheap at 15 GC, probably isn't a best first choice for your warband. He's a decent shot with his bow, but his most useful trait is his Cook skill, which lets you increase the maximum size of your warband by 1 warrior. This skill really comes into play late in a campaign when you've filled up your roster and cannot hire any more (aside from Hired Swords who don't count towards this limit).

The Pit Fighter is quite good at what he does, at least for a human. He's got a decent Strength (4), Toughness (4), and Attacks (2), and some interesting and different equipment (a morning star, helmet, and a spiked gauntlet which counts as both an additional hand weapon AND a buckler). At 30 GC he's a good deal, but he doesn't have any useful skills and his lowly 1 Wound and mediocre Ld mean that he doesn't often make it into my warbands.

The Ogre Bodyguard on the other hand, woohoo! Here's a big guy that doesn't have a typical big guy price tag (80 GC, which is about half what you'd normally pay for a big guy who is part of your warband). His upkeep cost is pretty high though, and in a campaign that can be critical as lots of

Witch Hunters

Mercenaries aren't the only humans scouring the ruins of Mordheim. The Order of the Templars of Sigmar has been drawn to the city as these nutters view the cataclysm as evidence of corruption that must be purged. If you like the idea of a bunch of torch-wielding fanatics, these babies are for you! This warband combines some tough characters who hate spellcasters, a Warrior Priest who can fight and use the Prayers of Sigmar (powers similar to the Prayers of Taal, but more militant in nature) to help out his warband, crazed Flagellants, cheap Zealots, and even cheaper (and faster!) Warhounds.

This warband is more specialised for close combat than Human Mercenaries. While you can take some missile weapons, they aren't as widely accessible, and the selection isn't great (few of the cooler gunpowder weapons are available). On the plus side you get cheap fast Warhounds for tying up the enemy and keeping THEM from shooting, Flagellants that will NEVER run, cheap Zealots to provide numbers, and decent characters.

upkeep tends to keep you from expanding your roster. I like to add an Ogre if I roll a Special Encounter that lets me take him for free. On those (relatively rare) occasions, I can even use him as a 'meat shield', standing in front of my other warriors, soaking up missile hits with his 3 Wounds and Toughness 4, while I use the rest of my warband to pick the enemy apart.

The Imperial Assassin appears in the 2002 Mordheim Annual. While he's as human as the Pit Fighter and Freelancer, he has some special skills that make him worth considering. First of all, while he has his own, he can be given any weapon that doesn't use noisy gunpowder. This is important, because normally you cannot alter a Hired Sword's equipment. It is also important because it plays well into the Assassin's other special ability: Poisoner. While poison can be purchased as equipment for your warband, it's not cheap (and it cannot be given to a Hired Sword). This guy gets it for free. An Assassin with a double-handed sword and Dark Venom becomes stronger than a

Troll in close combat! Assassins can also choose from a couple of nice skills as they gain Experience, which allows them to strike from the shadows and hit the enemy when his back is turned.

The Tilean Marksman (also from the 2002 Annual) is the final Hired Sword on our list. If you need to add some good solid missile fire to your warband, this guy might just be the thing for you. He's armed with a crossbow, has a good Ballistic Skill, and has two skills that allow him to ignore negative penalties for range and cover. Not bad for a measly human.

Tips and Tricks

Okay, so now we know who's involved, and we've read the rules, how do we beat everyone else who's been doing the same thing? Well, there are a few things you can do to improve your chances of making your fortune and striking fear into the hearts of your enemies.

Sisters of Sigmar

The next group of humans we should look at is the Sisters of Sigmar. These ladies were in the city when the cataclysm struck, and while most others have left, these 'fighting nuns' have decided to make their stand here. Obviously this warband is all female, so if that concept appeals to you, you'll probably enjoy playing them. As with the Witch Hunters, these ladies worship Sigmar, though that doesn't mean the two groups get along! Also as with the Witch Hunters, the Sisters are more combat-oriented than Human Mercenaries. In fact, the members of this warband have only one missile weapon available to them – the sling. While shorter-ranged than most missile weapons, slings DO have the advantage that they can be fired twice in a turn. Double the firing rate does have its advantages!

Slings aren't the Sisters' only advantage. Steel whips are a specialty of this warband, and are one of the nicer close combat weapons as they allow a warrior to attack an enemy model in close combat before she closes (risk-free attacks!). While they do not enjoy the henchman selection that most warbands get, their choices are a decent basic trooper (Sigmarite Sister) and a second, cheaper trooper to provide numbers. However, it's in the Heroes category that this warband really shines, particularly the Matriarch and the Augur. The Matriarch is the leader of the warband in both martial and spiritual matters, this gives her access to the Prayers of Sigmar, just like the Warrior Priest above. The Augur, however, is quite unique. While physically blind, an Augur has the ability to see the world around her through Second Sight, gaining re-rolls when rolling Characteristic tests or attempting to hit. If your mission requires a Characteristic test be passed to succeed, the Augur is the lady for the job.
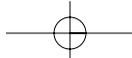
Dwarf Treasure Hunters

Dwarfs are traditionally very tough, and that is as true in Mordheim as anywhere else. Because of their hardy nature, Dwarfs can be very hard to keep down – they are only taken out of action on an injury roll of '6' (as opposed to the normal 5-6 for everyone else), and ignore the special rules of bludgeoning weapons. They gain extra treasure at the end of a game, as they are better at sussing out precious minerals than everyone else. They also Hate Orcs and Goblins, and they suffer no movement penalties for wearing armour.

To balance these advantages, they naturally have some disadvantages. For starters, they are one of the slowest races around. While a sprinting Dwarf can (barely) beat a zombie in the 100-metre dash, at normal walking pace they fall behind everyone. This can be a critical weakness in scenarios where the goal is to recover a certain item or gather up the most wyrdstone shards. They also have one fewer Hero available than most human warbands when first recruiting. They have a maximum warband size of 12 warriors and their warriors are more expensive than humans. All this means Dwarfs can be outnumbered, outpaced, and outmanoeuvred by a cunning player.

Before you decide against them though, the warriors a Dwarf warband does have access to are worth the price. The warband is led by a Noble, who is tougher, more inspiring, and a better fighter than his human counterparts. The Engineer can help all the warband's missile weapons shoot farther. Finally, the warband can take two Troll Slayers, who are tough as nails and utterly unafraid of death.

Keep in mind that, at its most basic, your goal is to search the ruins of the formerly glorious city of Mordheim for this stuff called 'wyrdstone' – fragments of the comet that struck the city and devastated it. This is important, because it means that you don't always have to beat the enemy warband in combat to win the game.

Equipment Advice

There is a wide variety of equipment available in Mordheim, and a new player may be uncertain about how to kit out his warriors. There are a few basic principles I try to follow when equipping my warband.

As a general rule of thumb, don't load down henchmen with lots of expensive equipment. A lucky shot can take a henchman out of action, and when you roll for injury for the luckless sod at the end of the game, you'll lose him 1/3 of the time. I try not to equip my henchmen with more GC worth of equipment than they initially cost (or thereabouts). Heroes are a better location for equipment – your incentive for keeping them intact is greater, and they are more likely to remain on your roster at the end of the game if they DO get taken out. A warrior who gets removed from your roster takes all his equipment with him; remember this.

Shadow Warriors

Shadow Warriors represent the High Elf contingent in Mordheim, sent to investigate rumours of a growing Chaos threat. They specialise primarily in ranged combat, many having higher Ballistic Skill than average. They can also take Elf bows as starting equipment and have many new skills and spells to help them move around the shadows or strike down their enemies from a distance. While they aren't any tougher than humans, they are quicker and more highly skilled, which all helps in close combat. However, this is usually a last resort, and their Movement rate of 5 helps them avoid close contact with the 'lesser races'.

The Undead

Okay, we've gone through the 'good guys', so it's time to go through the rogues (yes, I hear all you evildoers crying 'We're just misunderstood!'). The Undead in Mordheim represent warbands sent from Sylvania, a dark corner of the Empire where the dead do not rest. The Von Carsteins are the powerful vampire family who rule that land, and they have sent parties in search of wyrdstone to augment their powers.

The Undead are completely close combat-oriented and NONE of their henchmen get access to missile weapons at all. To balance this out, most of the warband causes Fear (which can halt an enemy warband in its tracks or stop them hitting your warriors when they get up close), they have some of the fastest models in the game (Dire Wolves have 9" Movement!), the Necromancer has some nifty spells, and the Vampire is quite frankly one of the toughest leaders available to any warband. As an added bonus, this is one of the few warbands that allows you to buy a replacement leader for your warband (after all, it's just a pile of bones without the vampire, right?).

Another preference I have is for multiple weapons over armour. Armour in Mordheim is a rare commodity, so to give your warriors a decent Armour save usually costs an arm and a leg. You can actually equip your Heroes with Toughened Leathers (2002 Annual, p.16) after their first game for a very reasonable 5 GC, but as it's a piece of equipment as opposed to proper armour, you cannot do the same for your henchmen (henchmen cannot carry Miscellaneous Equipment, only armour and weapons). On the other hand, equipping a warrior with two weapons is VERY easy to do in Mordheim. Two weapons doubles a warrior's chance of hitting when he attacks, and similarly increases the chance of getting an all-important Critical Hit. Critical Hits are the great equaliser in Mordheim, as even the best warrior can be taken down by a lucky shot. Keep in mind that everyone who uses weapons starts the game with a dagger, so you only have to add one more weapon for him to have two.

If you can equip your warriors with short bows or slings, do it. Short bows and slings are both dirt cheap compared to other missile weapons, the warrior using one can move and shoot, and the additional firepower as the warband moves forward can often turn the game to your advantage.

Don't be afraid to give equipment to your Heroes. As explained before, Heroes tend to be more reliable than henchmen, so there is less risk involved. And you really want your Heroes to stay in the battle for the entire game. At the end of a campaign game, you get 1 Exploration die for each Hero in your warband who was involved in the battle and not taken Out of Action (and the winner receives a bonus die as well). These dice are added together to determine how many shards of wyrdstone your warband found, and what special locations you discovered (which often leads to more treasure!). More dice is definitely better, so keep your Heroes protected.

Aside from Toughened Leathers, some of the items that I generally like to include on my roster are the Lucky Charm, the Holy Relic, and Caltrops. Lucky Charms allow the bearer to ignore the first successful hit he takes, and are essential to protecting important characters. In fact they are so darned useful that many groups use house rules to limit them a bit (increase their cost or make them one-use only). If you have your character properly surrounded by henchmen, it can take a lot for the enemy to hit him at all, and it just adds to the frustration when you explain to your opponent that that hit did nothing (an evil man would find humour in this). The Holy Relic allows your warband to automatically pass the first Rout check they are forced to make in a game. This gives you at least one more turn to accomplish your goal before you have to take off. Caltrops (2002 Annual, p.86) are a one-use item that reduces an enemy charge by D6"; this is especially great for a character that specialises in ranged combat.

The Possessed

When the comet struck, many hidden cults emerged from the shadows and into the ruins. The horror of the cataclysm and the warping effects of the wyrdstone that inundates Mordheim have combined to draw new members into the fold of many of these groups. These are the Possessed!

Possessed Warbands tend to specialise in close combat. While the Magister, Mutants, and Brethren can all carry missile weapons, that is not really their strength. Possessed (the Hero type for which the warband is named) are mortals who have given their bodies over to daemons, and they are quite hard in close combat. They cannot use equipment, but in exchange they get access to Mutations. Mutants can obviously take mutations as well. Darksouls are truly insane, and are afraid of no one. Beastmen are very tough and are one of the minority of creatures in the game who start with more than one Wound. As if this weren't enough, the leader of the warband (the Magister), has access to Chaos Rituals, which are magicks that tend toward the destructive.

Other Hints

Protect your leader as most warbands can't replace him if he dies. If you only purchase one Lucky Charm in your warband, give it to him! Also, when running Human Mercenaries I will often give my leader (and no one else) a brace of pistols. The ranged combat is nice, but more importantly it gives him Strength 4 (which is a boost if he's not a Middenheimer). This may seem small, but it's important to give him a chance if the enemy does reach him.

Try to make your warband as large as you can afford. If you can, try to get your warband to a number that is just above a multiple of 4. So if you have 8 in your warband, try to figure out a way to save some gold somewhere and add a 9th. Why is this important? Simple: Rout checks are taken when a quarter of your warband has been taken Out of Action. With 8 warriors, you start taking Rout checks after two casualties. With 9 the number of casualties jumps to 3. That difference can be critical.

When playing in a campaign or league, buy as many Heroes as you can, right from the start. This not only gives you a better chance at getting advances for them more quickly, it also maximises your Exploration dice from the first game of the league. Do not underestimate weaker Heroes like Youngbloods. These types of Heroes usually start with low amounts of Experience, which means they tend to advance quickly. I've had many a warband where a Youngblood eventually became more impressive than my Captain!

If you have missile weapons, take the high ground. Shooters who are elevated get to pick their targets, instead of having to fire at the closest enemy.

Also, always remember the goal. This is especially true of campaign or league play. Be prepared to take the fight to the enemy, but if you can win by avoiding the enemy warband and capturing the objective (be it wyrdstone shards, one or more buildings, or something else), then do that. Scenarios like Occupy, Hidden Treasure, Breakthrough, and the Lost Prince favour a fast warband if the player keeps his focus. Use this to your advantage.

Skaven

The ratmen have much in common with Shadow Warriors (though don't tell the High Elves I said that) – they are on average no tougher or stronger than humans, but quite agile, and they have a high Movement rate. While they lack the Ballistic Skill and Leadership of Shadow Warriors, they make up for this in numbers… and the Rat Ogre. As with Ostlanders and Kislevites, Skaven get access to a 'big guy': Strength 5, Toughness 5, Movement of 6, 3 Wounds – a Rat Ogre is a killing machine. If you buy one though, keep a Hero nearby; a Rat Ogre without a Hero within 6" becomes subject to Stupidity, and that can be very bad for something with a Leadership of 4.

As impressive as that sounds, Skaven really work best as a combined-arms force. They have access to some unique equipment and skills that aid them both in close combat and in shooting. The ability to take large numbers of cheap Verminkin and Heroes armed with slings and other missile weapons, supported by a Rat Ogre and a mass of dirt cheap Giant Rats, allows the warband to overwhelm enemies with missiles and numbers. The Eshin Sorcerer's Magic of the Horned Rat tends to be short-ranged and deadly, which suits the Skaven tactics well.

Also keep in mind that if you ARE playing in a campaign or league, the after-the-game activities can be as important as the activities during the game. Sometimes it's better to cut your losses and run when you have enough warriors Out of Action to Voluntarily Rout. This is especially true if you've been careful and not lost any Heroes. If you know you've lost, let your opponent take the victory. I've seen many games where the losing warband was better off than the winning warband after the post-game activities had been sorted out! At that point it all comes down to who does better on the Serious Injury and Exploration rolls, and whose warriors have racked up the most advances. This is actually one of the things I like most about league play – losing a game is not always a bad thing, and there is always something to look forward to after the game ends. In fact, watching your warband advance can often be as satisfying as fighting the actual battles.

The last piece of advice I can give you is this – when you set out to build a warband, pick one that you LIKE THE FLAVOUR OF. I cannot stress this enough. If you don't like the way the warband plays, you will not have fun playing it in the game. Some people were meant to play Dwarfs, and others meant to play Elves. Figure out which warband suits your personality best, and play that one. Too many players are fixated on playing the 'best warband/army' in a game. The secret to success in Mordheim is to learn the strengths and weaknesses of your warband, to play to your strengths and try to exploit the opposing warband's weaknesses. Remember that every player loses sometimes; it's important to choose a warband that you'll enjoy playing even when you do.

Hopefully a little of this has been useful to you. It's meant to be a starting point… the best way to really learn the game is to get a few of your mates together, collect some warbands, and play the game!

Author	*Mark was one of the original Mordheim playtesters and has written for White Dwarf and Town Cryer. Mark is also on the Mordheim Rules Review.*
Further Information	*Mordheim and warband boxed sets are available to buy Games Workshop Direct (see the How to Order section on page 94). The new mounted character are also released this month, see the News pages for more information.*
Website	*www.Mordheim.com*

INQUISITOR

VINDICARE ASSASSIN

'In the darkness I wait'

by Andy Hall

Of all the weapons an Inquisitor can bring to bear, an agent of the Officio Assassinorum is one of the most deadly. Unfortunately, as prone to infighting as the Inquisition is, it has not been unknown for an Inquisitor to become a target himself.

Officio Assassinorium killers are death machines trained in the hidden temples scattered throughout the Imperium. The Vindicare Temple teaches the art of the sniper, and all Vindicare Assassins are expert marksmen who can shoot the eye out of a target from more than a mile away.

Once assigned a target the Vindicare are meticulous planners and researcher. Depending on whether a mission is time-sensitive or not, the Assassin will choose his sniper's roost carefully, often lying still for days or even weeks waiting for the target to appear. To keep hidden Vindicare Assassins will often wear cameoline cloaks which take on the colour and appearance of their surroundings. All Vindicares are armed with custom sniper rifles, which are personalised and modified making each one quite unique. Whilst a Vindicare will rarely carry a close combat weapon, he will also be armed with any number of short range weaponry in the unlikely event he is discovered before the target is eliminated.

Vindicare Assassins in Games

Vindicare Assassins use the stat line or random generator, Equipment and Special Abilities given on page 141 of the Inquisitor Rulebook.

In addition to the rules in the Inquisitor Rulebook I've included some recommendations that will tailor the Assassin to the Vindicare Temple. Note that the following are not 'official rules', it's just my take on creating a Vindicare Assassin for a campaign or warband.

Equipment: Long rifle (Customised - 2D10 Damage at ranges over 35 yards only) with range finder and laser sight; autopistol, Advanced Auto Senses with built in infrascope in enclosed helmet; Cameoline cloak, Assassin bodysuit (Armour Value 4); conversion field.

Additional Special Abilities: When on *Overwatch* (see page 34 of the Inquisitor Rulebook) the Vindicare does not treat the shot as a snap shot, so gains all positive modifiers if he aimed as normal; *Ambidextrous; Deadeye Shot; Nerves of Steel; Quickload.*

Gamesmasters

An Assassin from one of the Officio Assassinorum temples is a very powerful character that could greatly unbalance the game if not treated correctly. As shown in the scenario accompanying this article, they are best used as a GM-controlled character either to hinder or help the players. However, it is realistic to expect that players will want them in their warbands either temporarily or on a more permanent basis. This is well within the realms of the background since the two organisations have a history of working together and their remits often cross over. In such a case the Gamesmaster should be aware that the Assassin may well have a large impact on the game (much the same way as a Space Marine does) and this can be counted by upping the Power Level of the rival warband or whatever foe the Gamesmaster has prepared!

The Scenario

The scenario is an example of how the Assassins can be used in your campaigns. The setting is very generic and so, with a little bit of modification, can be fitted into your existing campaigns. The scenario is also a great 'one-off' game whether it's to test out new characters or you're just in-between campaigns. As always the GM should reward clever thinking for disposing of the Assassin rather than the obvious 'shooting in his direction and hoping for the best'.

Author	As well as the constant grind of monthly publication Andy is currently working on a series of online campaigns for Inquisitor, which he hopes will get updated monthly.
Further Information	The new Assassin model is now available to buy. Contact your nearest Games Workshop or visit the website for details. (See the How to Order pages on page 94). Expect to see the Eversor model next issue.
More Inq	Turn to page 47.
Website	www.Exterminatus.com

SCENARIO – KILL ZONE

Threat Level 4

The Inquisitors are led into the sights of a Vindicare sniper.

Setting: A shanty town or derelict industrial zone with plenty of cover. One end of the board should have a raised area wich is the highest part of the gaming board. This can be a hill, either natural or man-made, or some kind of structure, such as a crane or tower. The Vindicare is located here, waiting for his target, but do not place the figure on the table yet as he is hidden.

The warbands (if more than one) should enter at opposite ends of the table (although not on the same side as the sniper's nest). How they enter will depend on your current campaign, so they could come on guns blazing or have met for an uneasy parley; it's up to the GM how he has engineered this meeting.

Objective: To survive and/or incapacitate the Assassin.

Special Rules: After the second turn the Assassin will start firing at a random character each turn. The GM should make a big deal about randomly deciding which character is the target just to wind the players up! Characters can make Initiative tests to determine the direction of the shots, although this is at a -50% due to the silencer on the Assassin's rifle. The chances of determining the direction increase by 5% every time the Assassin fires. Cover will work as normal. Do not place the Assassin figure on the table until he has been detected.

Alternatives: Instead of a deserted area you can use the new Citizens models and create a more public area, such as a settlement plaza. Maybe the Assassin has gone a little 'crazed' (which is why the Inquisitors are tracking him) and is shooting into the citizenry, as well as the warbands, creating mass panic and hindering the Inquisitors even further.

Warbands enter here

Warbands enter here

Vindicare
Assassin
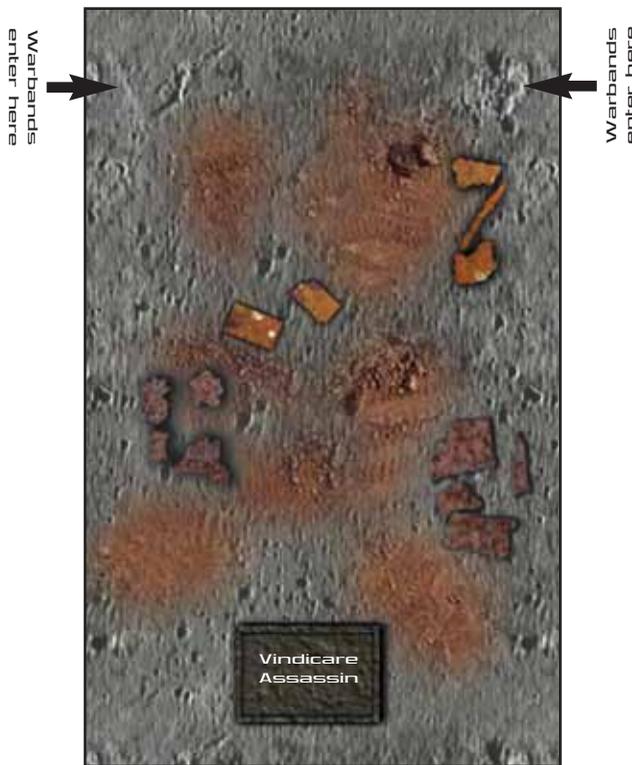
"Psss... here... I'm here... psss... no, here... it's your last chance... here... well, I had enough of playing now..."

BLOOD BOWL RULES REVIEW

By Jervis Johnson, Dean Maki, Stephen Babbage, Milo Sharp, John Lewis, Chet Zeshonski and Andy Hall. A big thank you to all the playtesters on- and off- line for their help and feedback.

For those of you that don't already know, every October the ominously named Blood Bowl Rules Committee (or BBRC for short) get together to carry out a review of the Blood Bowl game rules. We discuss matters that have arisen over the last year, for example, are any of the experimental rules we've published ready to become official, and do the game rules themselves require any new errata? We also update the Blood Bowl FAQ with any new questions that have arisen over the year. As an aside, we hold similar reviews for all of the Specialist Games.

The Blood Bowl review is carried out 'virtually', via e-mail, as the members of the BBRC are scattered all over the world – we have members in the UK, the US and Australia! Apart from Jervis and Andy, all of the members of the committee are members of the 'Blood Bowl community', in that they play Blood Bowl as a hobby rather than working for Games Workshop professionally. This mix of hobbyists and professionals allows the BBRC to discuss things at both a hobbyist and business level.

Each week the committee has an agenda of items to discuss. These are talked over (and over!) until a decision is reached. If we can't all agree on a matter (and we often can't), then a vote is held to decide the issue one way or the other. However, while the BBRC is broadly democratic, the lead designer for Blood Bowl (Jervis) does have a right of veto over any decisions that are made, which he can use if he disagrees vehemently with the conclusion. We've done three reviews so far, and Jervis has only vetoed a couple of times, so this very rarely happens, but it is important to understand that the BBRC exists to help the lead designer make the right decisions rather than decide these things for him. This also means that, at the end of the day, the buck stops with the lead designer, and so, if there is anything that you disagree strongly with in this year's review, you should blame Jervis rather than the other members of the committee!

This year's review was dominated by heated debate on two or three subjects, and broad agreement on all of the other matters discussed. The area that created the most discussion was deciding as to which of the new teams we'd published should be made official (which means anyone can use them and they will not change), and which should remain experimental (which means that an opponent's consent is required in order to use the team, and that the team may be subject to change as a result of further playtesting). What made this especially fraught was that Jervis had announced that miniatures could no longer be sold for experimental teams. The reason for this is simply that many coaches find it confusing and frustrating to buy a team, and then find out that there are no official rules around allowing them to use it. To avoid this occurring in the future, experimental rules will now be published on the Blood Bowl website, where coaches can download them and test them using 'stand-in' models for the team, and only once they are ready for use will they be published properly with a supporting range of miniatures produced to go along with them.

Anyway, this put the committee on the horns of a dilemma, as we knew that any teams that we didn't make official would go off sale. On the other hand we couldn't make a team official unless we were happy that it was balanced and fair. Fortunately most of the experimental teams were felt to be just fine as they were, or could be fixed with a very minor tweak. The two teams where this was not felt to be the case were the Vampire Counts and the Ogre teams. Both of these teams are typified by having access to some very powerful players (Vampires and Ogres!), and this makes balancing them against other teams very difficult. After much discussion, we decided to keep both teams as experimental. This means that the Vampire Counts team will no longer be on sale, but will return later once we feel the rules are balanced enough to become official. Fortunately it is possible to keep the Ogres in the Blood Bowl range, as they are also used to represent Ogre players in other teams.

While on this subject, you can find the latest playtest versions of the Ogre and Vampire Counts teams in the grandly named 'Blood Bowl Playtesters Vault'. The Vault is part of the Blood Bowl website at *www.BloodBowl.com.* To try out the rules, go to the Vault, and download them to your computer. The Vault is linked to the Blood Bowl forum, which includes a special area for discussing the experimental rules that can be found in the Vault. Your feedback would be very much appreciated, and you can also comment on the rules review if you wish.

The other issue that caused a lot of debate was the rule for the Wild Animal trait. One thing that everybody did agree on was that the rule, as it stood, did not work and needed to be fixed. However, deciding what was the right way to do this caused a lot of discussion, which is still going on after the review itself has finished. The new rule for Wild Animal, that you will find on page 28, is the version that received the most support, and we're confident that it is much better than the last version of the rules for Wild Animals. However, we will be returning to this subject in next year's rules review, and would appreciate feedback from coaches on this subject.

But enough explanation, and onto the rules review itself. The rules review is split into three sections:

The first is **Experimental Rules** – all previously published rules have been reviewed by the BBRC and their status changed to one of the following: Official, Remain Experimental or House Rules.

The second section is **Errata** – this is corrections and changes to the core rules.

Finally there is the **Q&A** – The BBRC have answered the most frequently asked questions put forward by the Blood Bowl community.

It is worth noting that the changes to the game system are minor and are little more than tweaks. This is quite deliberate, as we want the core rules system to remain stable so we don't confuse the large element of new Blood Bowl coaches. As already noted we would appreciate your feedback, and we'd also like to know if there are any subjects you think should be discussed at the next review. You can contact us either on the Blood Bowl forum at the Blood Bowl website at *www.BloodBowl.com*, or via email at *fanatic@games-workshop.co.uk*, or by post at *Fanatic Studio, Blood Bowl Rules Review, Games Workshop Ltd, Willow Road, Nottingham, NG7 2WS, UK*. We'd love to hear from you, so please get in touch.

EXPERIMENTAL RULES UPDATE

Khemri Team – Official. (As printed in the 2003 Annual. Change the Blitz-Ra cost to 90k and Blitz-Ra AV to 8. See the Rules Review PDF in the Resources section.)

Zara – Official. (As printed in BB Mag 9. See the Star Player Card PDF.)

Ramtut – Official. (As printed in BB Mag 9. See the Star Player Card PDF.)

Halfling Chef – Official. (As printed in BB Mag 7. See the Rules Review PDF in the Resources section.)

Dwarf Runesmith – Official. (As printed in BB Mag 7. See the Rules Review PDF in the Resources section.)

Necromantic Team – Official. (As printed in the Blood Bowl 2003 Annual. Change the Razor Sharp Claws on the Werewolf to Claws. Change Wight Allocation from 0-4 to 0-2. See the Rules Review PDF in the Resources section.)

Kicking Rules – House Rules.

Secret Weapon Rules – House Rules.

Allied Team Rosters – House Rules.

Nurgle's Rotters – Official. (As printed in the 2003 Annual. Replace the Beast of Nurgle's stats with: 120K, MA4, ST5, AG1, AV9, Big Guy, Really Stupid, Mighty Blow, Foul Appearance, Tentacles and Regenerate. The Beast of Nurgle is the only Big Guy that will play for the team. See the Rules Review PDF in the Resources section.)

Ogre Team – Remain Experimental. (As printed in the 2003 Annual. Change Ogre allocation from 0-8 Ogres to 0-12. Change Goblin allocation from 0-8 to 0-6. See the Blood Bowl Vault).

Elf Team – Official. (As printed in BB Mag 8. Replace Leap on the Catcher with Nerves of Steel. See the Rules Review PDF in the Resources section.)

Vampire Team – Remain Experimental. (See the Blood Bowl Vault).

ERRATA

(All page numbers refer to the printed handbook)

Page 19: Change the second sentence in the Sweltering Heat entry to: Roll a D6 for each player on the field at the end of the half and after each touchdown.

Page 24: Replace the races in the Ogre Allied Teams entry with: Chaos, Human and Norse.

Page 25: Replace the Wild Animal entry with: Wild Animals are uncontrollable creatures that rarely do exactly what a coach wants of them. In fact, just about all you can really rely on them to do is lash out at opposing players that move too close to them! To represent this, when you declare an action with a Wild Animal, roll a D6, adding +2 to the roll if taking a Block or Blitz action. On a roll of 1-3, the Wild Animal stands still and roars in rage instead, and the action is wasted. Note that the Wild Animal no longer has to move first and that he can now use assists. Also note that no dice roll is required for the Wild Animal to turn face-up when stunned.

Page 34: Replace the entry for Hypnotic Gaze with: Hypnotic Gaze – The player has a powerful telepathic ability which he can use to stun an opponent into immobility. The player may use the Hypnotic Gaze in place of a Block.
The player may turn his Hypnotic Gaze on ONE opposing player in an adjacent square. Roll a dice: if the score is 2 or more, then the victim is hypnotised and loses his tackle zone for the rest of the team turn. On a roll of 1, the Hypnotic Gaze has no effect. Hypnotic Gaze is a racial characteristic that applies only to players that start with it on their team list. It may not be gained by other players, or lost by players that start with it. Note, that the player no longer has a free action.

Page 35: Replace the entry for Piling On with: Piling On – The player may use this skill after he has made a Block, but only if the victim was knocked over. If the Armour roll has failed the player may decide to 'pile on' to the victim. If so, then you may re-roll the Armour roll. The Piling On player is placed prone in his own square – it is assumed that he rolls back there after flattening his opponent (do not make an Armour roll for him as he has been cushioned by the other player!). If the player has pushed back his opponent before knocking him over, then he must follow up the block before he can use this skill. Piling On does not cause a turnover unless the Piling On player is carrying the ball.

Page 35: Change Pro from a skill to a trait.

Page 79: Change the Wight allocation in the Undead team list from 0-4 Wights to 0-2 Wights.

FAQ

Q: Are you allowed to pick an action for a player that they cannot possibly carry out? For example, could I take a Foul action even if it was not possible to foul anyone?
A: No, you may only pick actions that it is possible (no matter how unlikely) to carry out.

Q: Does the team get a new Leader re-roll at the start of overtime if they field a player with Leader?
A: No.

Q: If my Pass roll is failed so the pass is not accurate but a member of my team still catches it, is it a turnover and/or completion?
A: It is not a turnover, but it is not a completion either for purposes regarding SPPs. Note, that a fumble, even if recovered by a player on your team, is still a turnover.

Q: Is it an illegal procedure if you forget to roll for Bonehead or Really Stupid before you move the player?
A: No, hopefully your opponent will remind you if you keep forgetting!

Q: Can you use re-rolls when rolling for Shadowing and Pro?
A: Yes.

Q: If you knock over a Death-roller does it roll for Armour and Injury as well?
A: No, see page 31 of the handbook for more information on how the Death-roller works.

Q: Do tackle zones or Foul Appearance affect a Hail Mary Pass roll?
A: No.

Q: Can you fire coaching staff, such as Assistant Coaches Cheerleaders and Apothecaries and, if so, do you get your money back?
A: You can fire your coaching staff, but you don't get your money back.

Q: If I get 2 MA stat increases and then suffer ageing or a serious injury that removes a point of MA can I gain MA again?
A: Yes.

Q: What happens if I can't set up at least 3 players on the line of scrimmage for a Kick Off?

A: You can either concede the match (see pages 15 and page 44 of the Blood Bowl Handbook), or you can carry on playing. If you decide to carry on playing, you must place as many players on the line of scrimmage as possible.

Q: What happens if all my players have been taken off the field as injuries?

A: This is a rare event, but if it happens, you should play on as normal. The coach of the team whose players have been removed from play should move his Turn marker at the start of the turn and immediately declare his turn over (unless he has a Wizard handy!). The current drive ends as normal when the playing team scores a touchdown or the half ends. This won't be very much fun for the coach with no players, so we suggest the opposing coach scores as soon as possible, takes the 3 SPPs, and gets ready for the next Kick Off!

Q: On the Fan Factor table, does the +1 for inflicting 2 or more casualties mean any injuries caused or casualties only caused by Blocks, as in gaining SPPs?

A: Only casualties that count for SPPs.

Q: If a player with Strip Ball pushes a player with the ball into his End Zone is this a touchdown?

A: No, as stated in the rules, a player has to be standing and holding a ball to score. This doesn't happen with Strip Ball.

Q: Can a fireball hit a prone or stunned player if they are under the template?

A: No, only those that are standing.

Q: Can you Apothecary a player who is eaten by an Always Hungry player?

A: No, the player is in the Troll's belly!

Q: Does using a blunderbuss cause a turnover if the ball is not caught, and is it counted as the team's Pass action for the turn?

A: Although this is not clear, in the rules a ball shot from a blunderbuss does count as the team's action that turn. So, if it is not caught then it is a turnover.

Q: Can a player who has no tackle zone assist Blocks (assuming he is not in an enemy tackle zone)?

A: Yes.

Q: Can a player who has no tackle zone prevent opposing players from assisting Blocks (assuming opponent is not in another tackle zone)?

A: No.

Q: If a player with Multiple Blocks gets "Attacker Down" which of his opponents gets the casualty SPPs?

A: The defending coach chooses one of his players to be awarded the SPPs.

Q: What happens if a player holding the ball commits a foul and gets ejected by the referee?

A: The ball scatters from the ejected player's square.

Q: If a player has Multiple Block, can they use skills like Claw, Piling On and Mighty Blow on both opponents or just one?

**A:** All above skills can be used on both opponents during the block.

Q: If a player is thrown using the Throw Team-mate trait, but does not have the ball. Is it a turnover if:

a) The thrown player lands out of bounds?

b) The thrown player lands in the same square as an opponent?

c) The thrown player lands in the same square as a team-mate?

A:

a) No turnover, roll for injury and continue the turn.

b) No turnover, roll for Armour (and injury if necessary) on both players and continue the turn. Note that this situation cannot be specifically aimed for. This can only arise if the player scatters to an opponent's square.

c) Turnover. Both players require an Armour roll (and injury if necessary).

Note that it is a turnover in all three cases if the thrown player is carrying the ball.
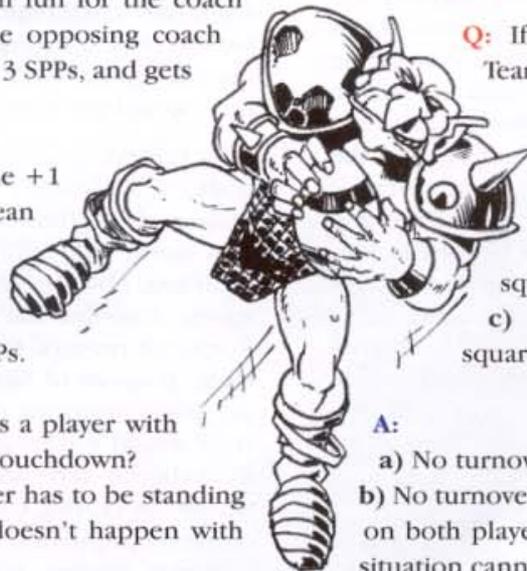
WARMASTER

STORM OF CHAOS

By Matt Keefe and Tom Merrigan. Map by Nuala Kennedy
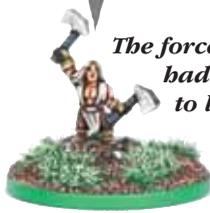
The forces of Chaos had long threatened a great attack upon the Old World. Their champion, Archaon, had long sought the most valuable treasures of Chaos which would give him the power he needed to lead this terrible invasion, and had gathered about him the host he would require to succeed. The Old World did not stand unready, but Archaon was strong, and preparations to resist his armies were not yet complete. As the Storm of Chaos was finally unleashed upon the lands of Men, Elves and Dwarfs, frightened voices began to ask, who now would save the Empire?

VALTEN'S TALE

It is from the greatest fears that the greatest of hopes emerge, and it is in the moments of darkest peril that the strongest champions arise. Such is the tale of Valten.

Little more than a year before Valten's emergence, a twin-tailed comet was observed in the sky over the Empire. As with all such phenomenon, all who saw it instantly realised it to be a great portent, but exactly what it foretold, or even whether its omens were of good or ill, was something of which few could be certain. In Sigmar's heartlands of the south and west of the Empire, talk was of the twin-tailed comet which had foreshadowed the coming of Sigmar himself, and thus there was much rejoicing and much talk of a saviour. In the east of the Empire, where the blasted ruins of Mordheim can still be seen by any foolish enough to venture there, and where such desolation is keenly remembered, talk was of the twin-tailed comet which had come not as an omen of redemption, but of destruction when it rained fire and death down upon the Ostermark and lay Mordheim low. In the north, where Ulric's influence and that of his favoured men of Middenheim dominate the land, many anxious voices arose, fearing the tide of fanatic lunatics which might be driven to commit mad deeds in the name of Sigmar.

In the halls of the Dwarfs, all of these things were remembered and yet all that could be told for certain was that a time for Men to decide the fate of the world had at long last come. In distant Araby, the wise amongst Men looked to their orreries and asserted the comet to be nothing more than the natural shifting of stars, globes and bodies, though such knowledge could do little to calm the superstitious minds of simple men the world over. More distant still, above the lands of the farthest east, this twin-tailed omen could be seen but faintly, and as the comet vanished westward most were comforted by the knowledge that this portent heralded not their own fate, but that of other, more distant men for whom they cared little.

What the servants of Chaos themselves made of this omen, if indeed they could see it beneath the endlessly burning skies of the Realm of Chaos, none know. Perhaps this sign was watched even by great Archaon himself. Perhaps this fire-tailed messenger told Archaon that a champion would soon arise to face or him, or a rival to challenge. Perhaps, indeed, it was the very sign for which he had waited...

Whether the comet foretold it, or simply arrived in time to see it, wretched times soon fell upon the Empire. A poor harvest, a harsh winter and a darkness of spirit pervaded the land, gripping the folk with fear and suspicion. Where now, would the frightened masses of Mankind turn?

They turned, as all Men would turn in such time, to their gods. The shrines of the Empire overflowed with desperate pilgrims, offering up donations or sacrifices they could little afford in this, their most hopeless hour. Such acts, however, are often the acts of the weak, and the strong amongst the faithful scorned these pitiful and desperate prayers. Foremost amongst them stood Luther Huss, prophet of Sigmar and self-appointed guardian of the faith, protector of the purity of the Cult of Sigmar. Huss would not set foot within any shrine or temple, for he believed fervently that Sigmar would not emerge within the cloying confines of affectatious, over-elaborate chapels populated by coward-preachers and fool-followers. Sigmar, Huss believed, would be found upon the field of battle, still waging war upon those same enemies he had faced, and defeated, in life.

Huss roamed the land in search of just such an epiphany. With the twin-tailed comet high in the sky, Huss trailed its course and followed what few clues he could find in the search for salvation. Huss heard tell of the blind-sisters of Bogenhafen who, although without eyes, could see any taint of corruption within the souls of their neighbours, and so had done much to drive Chaos out from amongst them; news came to Huss of the orphaned boy who would speak no words, but walked to and fro about the streets of Talabheim leading those that followed him to uncover deep-rooted nests of cultists, but none of these marvels could satisfy Huss. And then, at last, came the tales of the boy Valten, the simple youth who had seen a Beastmen warband descend upon his village and his home, and single-handedly slain them all. Huss found the young
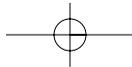
Valten in the village of Lachenbad. Valten stood broad, tall and strong, just as Huss always imagined he would. And there, amongst the astonished villagers, Huss fell to his knees in praise of what he felt certain must surely be Sigmar returned. Huss would not find his revelation popular with many of the Empire's powerful rulers...

The Grand Theogonist, Ar-Ulric, and some say the Emperor himself, greeted news of Huss' latest discovery with a mixture of caution, anxiety and disgust. Huss, all felt, needed to account for himself. They would not have to wait long.

Huss and Valten journeyed forthwith to Altdorf, all the while gathering about them a following of the most zealous, maddened adherents of the Cult of Sigmar. With such a rabble surrounding him, Huss inevitably found his way barred at the gates of Altdorf. The promise of Valten's alleged divinity found favour with many though, even around Altdorf, and soon sympathetic elements of the Reiksguard unbarred the way, forcing Altdorf's defenders to fight amongst themselves but allowing Huss and Valten to pass nonetheless. Quite unexpectedly, Huss and the boy Valten now found themselves face to face with the Emperor Karl Franz. Franz himself cannot have relished the task now laid before him...

Franz was the Emperor, none disputed that, but he was the Emperor of Sigmar's Empire, elected to rule in his stead. If Sigmar had returned, if this boy before him was indeed the nation's founder incarnate, then Franz would be forced to make way and restore Sigmar to his throne. To do so now, with Archaon's shadow looming large over the land and with Franz himself making ready to defend the Empire against the greatest threat for 500 years, was unthinkable. Yet for a man like to Huss to believe Valten to be Sigmar reborn clearly showed that others too would all too quickly embrace the boy as a saviour, and should Franz ignore him he would find these very same followers of Valten turned against him, against their own Emperor, perhaps even against their own nation. Franz knew only one path lay open to him – offer up what power he could to Valten, without forsaking any of his own control. So it was that the hammer, Ghal Maraz, true weapon of Sigmar passed from the Emperor to Valten, appointing him warrior and leader in Sigmar's name while Franz would remain ruler and marshal in the service of that same god. A time divided had come to an end, and the Empire stood readier than ever, and at their head not one, but two great men. Whether the comet foretold it or not, Archaon must have known that a new power now stood arrayed against him...
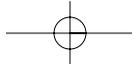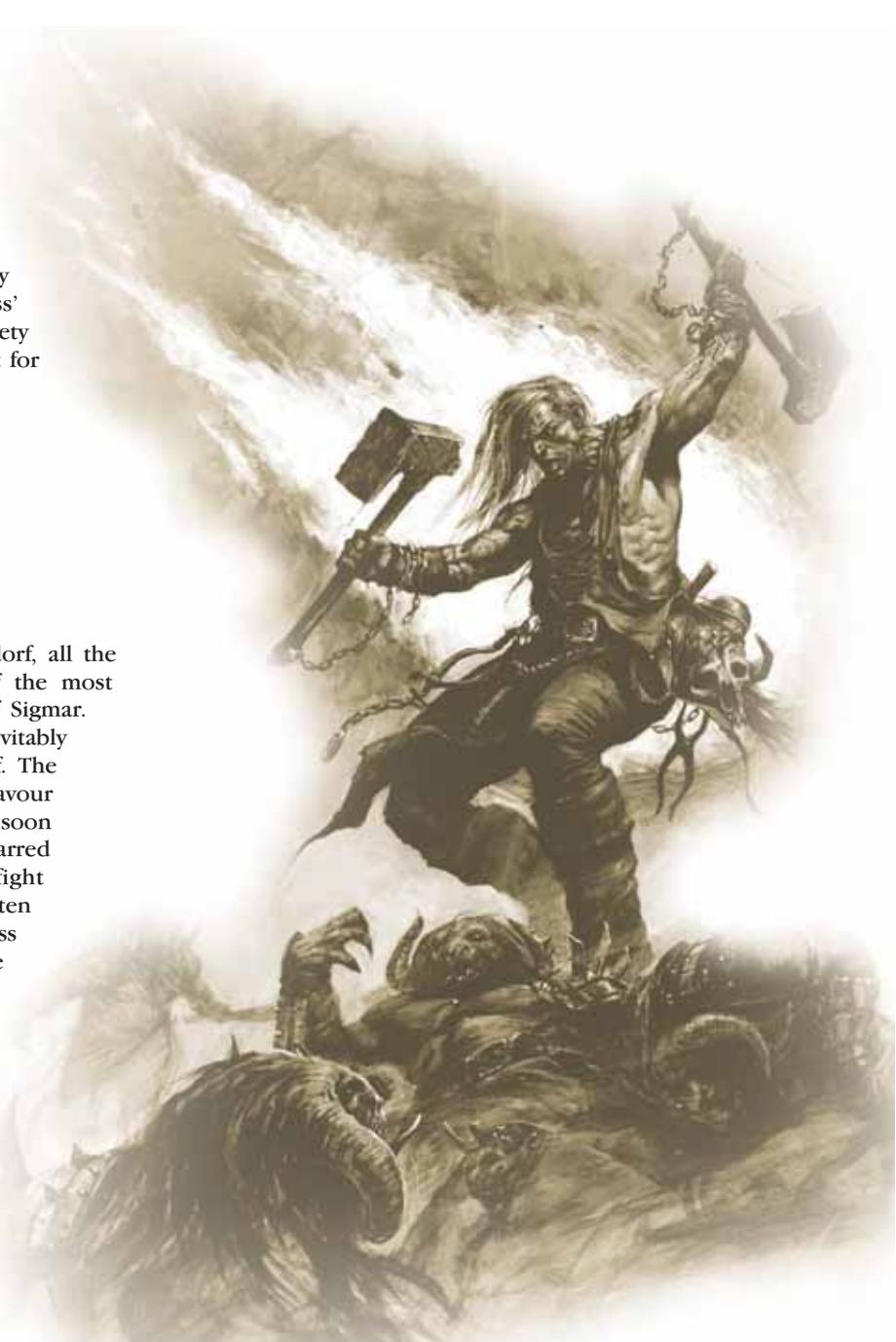
THE STORM UNABATED

Darkness descended on the Old World and Archaon's Hordes rolled on. It was clear now that he had but one goal – Middenheim and the precious Temple of Ulric. Where they could, the people of the Empire resisted Archaon's advance, but by now the Emperor knew the greatest chance of success lay in a single, certain defence of Middenheim, and so the Empire's armies marched on, much as it pained many to leave the hinterlands to their doom. The Empire's fate was far from decided, and even the mind of Archaon yet felt the heavy burden of doubt with his forces divided, and no certain way yet forged through the Empire. The battle of Middenheim was yet to begin, and whilst the armies of Karl Franz and Archaon marched there, battle raged across much of the Empire…

GRIMGOR IRONHIDE

With the Storm of Chaos in full flow, Grimgor marched westward, intent on reaching Middenheim in time to join the battle sure to occur there. Of course, being an Orc, Grimgor could not march straight to Middenheim without finding as much trouble as possible along the way, and so followed a rather erratic, but pleasingly bloody route through the Empire, most crucially crossing the River Upper Talabec even with the army of the Elector Count of Ostermark arrayed against him. Now deep within the Empire's heartland, Grimgor marches on, and as Archaon draws nearer and nearer to his goal, Grimgor marches on not far behind.

GARAGRIM IRONFIST

With the Dwarfs still battling hard to maintain their defence across much of the Worlds Edge Mountains, and most crucially at Peak Pass, few remained free to contribute to efforts elsewhere. The Slayers, however, chose to seek out the enemy somewhat more actively and a great red-crested army was mustered at Karak Kadrin under Garagrim Ironfist, son of the Slayer King, himself having recently taken the Slayer Oath. This somewhat unusual Dwarf host marched north to Kislev, striving to do what they can to both aid the beleaguered Kislevites and find a glorious death in battle. With all manner of Chaos abound in the north, the latter will likely prove somewhat easier than the former…

VLAD, VAMPIRE COUNT OF SYLVANIA

With lead elements of Crom's horde at last crossing the Worlds Edge Mountains, the dread realm of Sylvania soon fell under the heel of Chaos. As withered and decayed as Sylvania may have appeared, it was certainly not without defenders. The powerful Vampire Counts have ruled Sylvania for centuries, and Mannfred, current encumbent of Sylvania's throne, has remained one of the Empire's fiercest enemies throughout his unnaturally longlife. Mannfred had no intention of allowing Crom to attack the Empire if the conquer intended to do so by crossing Sylvania, and as Crom approached that dread land he found an army of the dead stood against him. Worse, another army lay about his feet and soon rose up to meet him...

The Storm of Chaos, 2522.

GREEN RIVER

"Der'z nuffin' half as wurf doin' as rucking around in boats. In 'em or outta 'em, it don't much matter as long as we'z ruckin' around in boats."

- Madrat Bormogg, Toadie to Grimgor Ironhide

With Archaon's ultimate goal of Middenheim now clear to all, Grimgor gleefully began to hack his own way across the Empire to make sure he didn't miss out on his chance to show all concerned just who was number one in a ruck.

Orcs being Orcs, Grimgor's route across the Empire was a little… unconventional to say the least (well, if humies would keep running off, he just had to chase 'em), and despite setting out from the northernmost border of the Empire, Grimgor found his army halted at the bank of the river Upper Talabec. Having keenly followed news of Grimgor's approach, the Elector count of Ostermark rightly anticipated that the Orcs would have made no sensible plans for crossing the river, and in all likelihood had no idea they were about to reach it. In an attempt to capitalise, the Count asked the Emperor's permission to detach a portion of the marching column headed for Middenheim. Permission was granted, and the Count's men made camp on the other side of the river, ready to catch the Orcs on the back foot should they foolishly attempt to cross the river in plain sight of the Empire army. Predictably, the Orcs did just that (cunning maybe, clever they ain't).

The Empire army quickly mustered on the far bank, waiting for the Orcs to come into range. Cannon, handgunners and crossbows took up firing positions, hoping to pepper the Orcs with shot before they could completely cross the river while halberdiers and cavalry stood ready to sweep the Orcs away once they landed, but before they could properly organise and continue their attack. Even in this apparently fail-safe trap, the Count had to be cautious, since even the foolhardy Orcs would turn back if brought too heavily under fire during their crossing. Rather, the Count was forced to hang back until the Orcs had begun to put their crude boats (or 'floterz' as Grimgor proudly named them) afloat and then seek to advance at just the right moment to leave the Orcs unable to either turn back or advance without suffering horrendous casualties.

FIGHTING THE BATTLE

This battle was fought across both banks of the Upper Talabec river between the Empire forces of the Elector Count of Ostermark and the Orc Waaagh! of Grimgor Ironhide, though it could equally well be re-fought using any two other armies. Orcs make especially good attackers, since it's particularly easy to imagine them being stupid enough to take to the water in ramshackle heaps of wood and nails in plain sight of an entire Empire army!

Choose one table edge as the south bank of the river, and one as the north bank. The south bank is no more than 30cm wide at any point (ie, the river must be within 30cm of its south bank), but obviously it can meander nearer than this at certain points along its course if you want. The river itself is 30cm wide down its entire length – no more, no less. The remainder of the table is the north bank. The river runs from the east to the west.

The Orc player deploys his entire army first, anywhere on the south bank, then the Empire player deploys his entire army on the opposite bank, within 20cm of his own table edge. The Orc player takes the first turn must attempt to cross the river, using the rules for boats from the Warmaster rulebook. You don't actually need boat models, you can just push the individual stands in a unit across the river imagining they are in invisible boats. As soon as an Orc unit reaches the edge of the river, it is assumed to take to boats, although its current move always halts at the edge of the river, and a further order (either in this turn or a subsequent one) will be needed to actually move the boats out over the river.

Empire Deployment

30 cm

Orc Deployment

30 cm
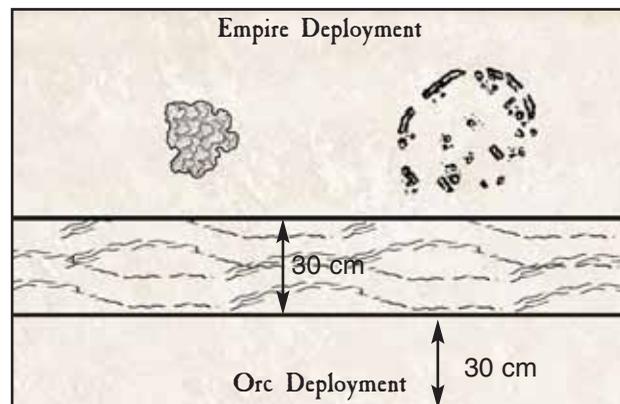
Boats and Confusion

In the Warmaster rulebook, we didn't make it quite clear whether boats were affected by confusion or not. Well, any situation in which confusion would affect the unit being transported by the boat can also affect the boat. Any boat which becomes 'confused' ("Am I a boat? Am I a dinghy? What am I gonna do with my life… I just don't know!"), instead capsizes and any stand on board is lost.

FLOTERZ, ORDERS AND BLUNDERS

Orcs often claim that Mork never trusts water, while Gork loves it, and hence half of all Orcs fear water, while the other half can't get enough of the stuff, considering it the ultimate medium on which to propel a Waaagh! forwards. Grimgor's captains hence faced the unenviable task of trying to fill boats with some Orcs so desperate to get to the other side that they paddle like mad-things and an equal number of Orcs so keen on splashing about a bit that they get distracted and start trying to ram each other with their new toys.

What this means is, that unlike the rules for boats presented in the Warmaster rulebook, Grimgor's floterz must be given orders. This is partly to represent the difficulty of loading hordes of reluctant Orcs into what amount to little more than floating crates, and partly because we reckon it suits the scenario better. The advantage is that the dinghies have the potential to move more than once in a turn (and thus cross the river more swiftly) as the eager Orcs paddle frantically towards the battle.

When giving orders to units in boats, blunders can be particularly catastrophic. If you do happen to blunder when giving orders to a unit of boats, don't use the normal Blunder chart, instead use the one presented opposite.

BONUS VICTORY POINTS

Victory Points are not used for this battle, instead the battle is fought until one army withdraws. If the Orc army withdraws, but has more surviving units on the north bank it is an Empire victory – the Orcs are broken, and easily slaughtered or drown in the river as they flee. If the Orcs are broken by have more surviving units on the south bank than on the north, it is a draw – the Empire trap has been sprung too early and the surviving Orcs are able to regroup and carry on their march via a different route, forcing the Empire's commanders to think about a foe on two fronts. If the Empire army is broken it is an Orc victory.

**D6   Blunder**

1-2   "Paddle faster, you maggots!"
The boats are swept up by the current, their crews unable to paddle fast enough to resist. The boats do not move forwards, but move 10 cm directly downstream. This move counts as a drive back, so if the boats are swept into another unit you should roll for each of the units becoming confused.

3-4   "Keep in time, you bleeders!"
The rowers are unable to keep pace and the boats turn ominously to one side. The unit moves at half pace then turns 90 degrees (left, if the blunder was a 3, right if the blunder was a 4)

5-6   "Sit down at the back!"
The boats lurch ominously, caught in an unexpected current or overbalancing dangerously and taking on water. Roll a dice for each boat in the unit. If you roll under the boat's Armour, the boat is unaffected. If you roll over the boat's Armour it capsizes and the stand on board is lost.
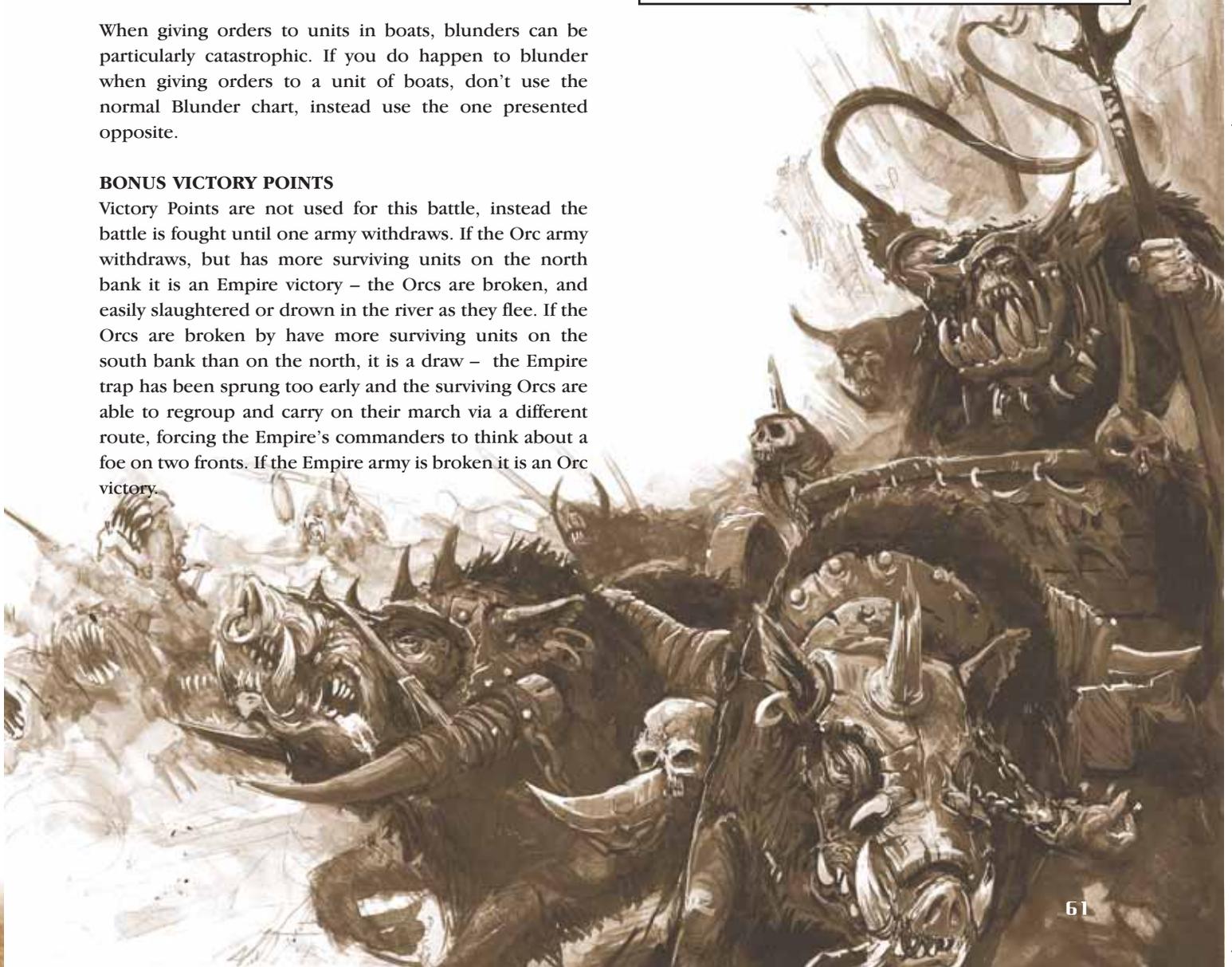
THE DWARFS MARCH FORTH

The Dwarfs battled long and hard to resist the enemy in the East, holding Peak Pass with the kind of stern determination only Dwarfs can muster. To the Dwarfs, however, this was a mere obligation for which they deserved no praise, so to truly show the strength of their allegiance, the Dwarfs of Karak Kadrin resolved to march against the enemy in the north.

Karak Kadrin has long been ruled over by a line of Slayer Kings, indeed many obervers have claimed it will always be so, since thus far the Oath of the Slayer has proven impossible to fulfil by any Dwarf who (quite rightly) continues to try and uphold his Oath of Kingship. In an effort to overcome this, Garagrim Ironfist, son of the current Slayer King Ungrim Ironfist, took the Slayer Oath, unusual since his father and current holder of the Oath, still lives. Nonetheless, Garagrim's Oath follows the line of his father's and so if Garagrim, free from the restrictive Oath of Kingship, can find his death in battle, the shame will at long last be lifted from his family.

As news of Garagrim's Oath spread, thousands of other members of the Slayer Cult gathered at Karak Kadrin, these normally solitary Dwarfs banding together under Garagrim's banner for the march north in search of a glorious death in battle.

Garagrim and his Slayer army arrived in Kislev as the country already lay overrun by all manner of unspeakable things which had descended south from the Troll Country. Marauder raids were at their height, and already the vast horde of Archaon was rumbling indefatigably southward. Garagrim and his slayers would have plentiful opportunity to find the glorious death after which they sought...

FIGHTING THE BATTLE

This battle took place somewhere in Kislev (in many places in Kislev, in fact, since Garagrim's army engaged in numerous battles throughout Archaon's invasion). The battle was fought between Garagrim Ironfist's Slayer army and elements of Archaon's Chaos Horde - either Daemonic Legion or Chaos armies (or even Hordes of Chaos, see opposite page). This scenario is designed specifically for Dwarfs as defenders, but they can equally well be opposed by any attacking army. The main feature is the unique composition of the Dwarf army., consisting, as it does, of many more Slayers than would normally be expected.

Chaos Deployment

80 cm

Dwarfs Deployment
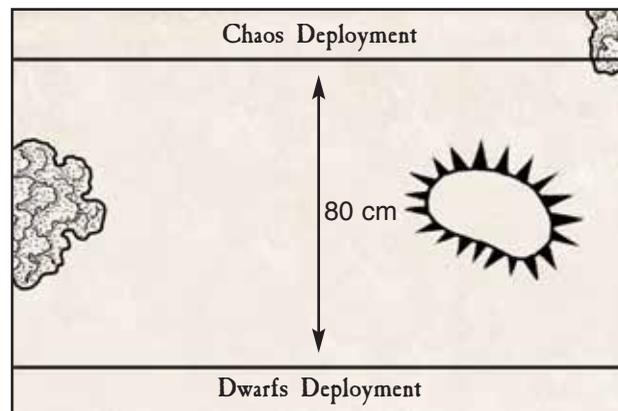
HORDES OF CHAOS

The forces of Chaos are perhaps slightly unusual in having two separate armies – Chaos armies and Daemonic Legions – to represent them. Of course, the division is not nearly so simple as that, and armies will often exist which contain a mixture of mortal and daemonic followers of Chaos (and even Beastmen too, of course – no models for those yet, though!). I don't really see the need for a separate army list to represent these mixed forces (that would rather complicate things), but at the same time I'm sure there are players who would like to use such armies in their games. To do this, we recommend you simply use one list or the other (Chaos or Daemons) and then use a selection of models from the other army as 'counts as' units for your army. To avoid any confusion, you'll find a list of suggested 'counts as' conventions below. What's more we've even decided to include a few Beastmen units on the list, in case anybody out there is mad enough to have modelled up units of the damned things to complete their Horde of Chaos.

Chaos Warriors or Daemonic Hordes or Beastmen Gors
Chaos Knights or Daemonic Cavalry
Chaos Hounds or Daemonic Hounds
Chaos Chariots or Daemonic Chariots or Beastmen Chariots
Dragon Ogres or Daemonic Beasts
Harpies or Daemonic Flyers
Greater Daemon or Hero on Chaos Dragon
Ogres or Minotaurs

Obviously, all of the units are reciprocal for counts as purposes, so in a Chaos army you might replace a few units of Chaos Warriors with Daemonic Hordes, while in Daemon Legions you could do the reverse. We haven't included everything from all armies on this list, since some of the units quite rightly have no direct counterpart in other Chaos armies (if they did, we wouldn't have needed to do two lists would we!). So, yes, this does mean that there's not really any sensible way to include Marauders in a Daemonic Legion army, for example, and quite right too!

In this game, the defenders (Dwarfs) set up first along their own table edge. This represents the Slayers moving into position early enough to taunt the attackers as they march onto the battlefield. Roll a dice to determine which side takes the first turn.

The Dwarf army is unusual in that it is actually a Slayer army, and must include a minimum of two Slayer units per 1,000 points, and may include up to four. The army may not include any handgunners, flame cannon or gyrocopters. It can still include Warriors and Rangers, which can be imagined to be units already abroad in Kislev, now joining with their red-crested kin in battle. Cannons may also be included, and can be imagined as representing one of the crazed inventions of Malakai Makaisson or a similar once and former engineer.

All characters in the Dwarf army are considered to be Slayers and as such may not retreat up to 30cm when moved through by an enemy unit. Instead they will seek their doom and attempt to die honourably in battle. As such, any Dwarf character moved through by an enemy unit will automatically be captured and killed.

BONUS VICTORY POINTS

The battle is fought until one side withdraws. However, this is not used to determine victory – victory is decided solely on victory points, since the rather contrary nature of a slayer army means that even in breaking the opposing army they may well be rather disappointed in finding themselves alive at the end of it!.

The army with the most victory points wins the game.

If all the Slayers die, however, the Dwarf player has every right to claim the moral victory, no matter the outcome of the actual battle.
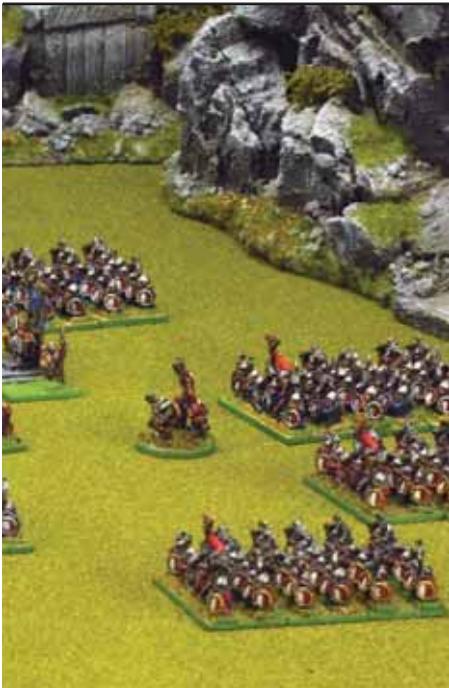
THE DEAD MUST FIGHT AGAIN

The Dwarfs did what they could, but as the Storm of Chaos loomed ever larger over the Old World, even their staunch defence finally failed and Crom's horde at long last broke through the once impenetrable barrier of the Worlds Edge Mountains. The Dwarfs' efforts had not been entirely in vain, however. Crom was unable to attack the lush hinterlands of the Ostermark and Averland in as greater numbers as he had perhaps wished. Instead, much of the Conqueror's force drove westward through the cursed Land of Sylvania, seat of the Vampire Counts.

As Crom drew near, Mannfred von Carstein, the ruling Vampire Count of Sylvania roused from his slumber and made ready to defend his lands. At the border of his realm, Mannfred mustered his army and made ready to drive off all would-be invaders.

Crom's army was huge, and against them stood fewer than Crom had expected, but Sylvania is not defended as other lands are. To an outsider, the land, trees and skies of Sylvania seem every bit as dead as the evil which lurks within, but to the Vampire Counts these things are the spies, heralds, scouts and sentinels of their armies.

The land of Sylvania is littered with the bones of the dead as frequently as outposts, watchtowers, beacons and garrisons might be scattered throughout other lands. Crom's army assembled amidst this mass of unseen, unliving defences and as the armies of Death and Chaos prepared to face one another, Crom found his enemies all about him, indeed, the enemy lay right under their feet...

FIGHTING THE BATTLE

This battle took was fought on one of the many barren plains which lie amidst Sylvania's otherwise heavily forested landscape (indeed Mannfred and Crom's forces clashed more than once as Crom attempted to break through and attack the Empire's heart to the west).

The attackers (Chaos) should have twice as many points in total as the defenders (Vampire Counts). The defender's break point is equal to the total number of starting units in their army.

This scenario is only really suited to Undead as defenders (though you could substitute Tomb Kings for Vampire Counts). Other armies can easily be used in place of Chaos as attackers. The main feature of the battle are the units of Skeletons and Zombies which the Undead are able to raise from the ground and encircle the Chaos army and that the Undead army begins with an army half the size of their enemy.

Chaos Deployment

80 cm

Vampire Counts Deployment
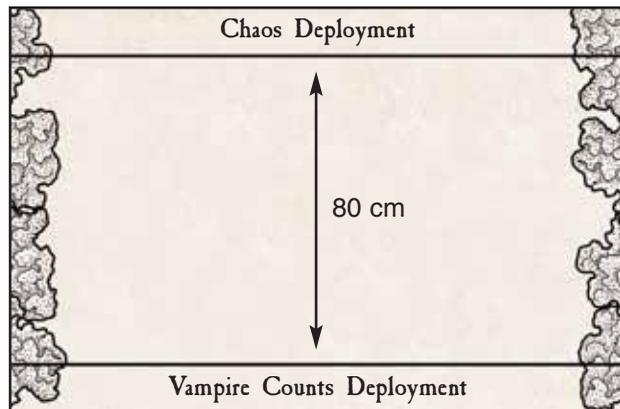
Terrain can be set-up in any mutual agreeable manner. The only absolute must, is that the short table edges (ie. the flanks) should be forested. The defender can also place one additional forested piece or a graveyard for each full 1,000 points of his army. The defenders deploy first on the chosen long table edge. The attackers then deploy on the opposite long table edge. The attackers take the first turn.

During their own Command phase, the Vampire Counts may attempt to raise the dead bodies which have been left scattered across the dread realm of Sylvania over the centuries of Vampiric rule. Unlike the unwilling and ill-prepared corpses which a Vampire or Necromancer might animate hurriedly amidst the confusion and strife of battle, these corpses are former servants of the Vampire Counts, many of them carefully prepared with ritual symbols and invocations before being committed to a shallow grave. Many of the dead have served their masters countless times before, rising up and fighting on the very same battlefield, falling back to a broken slumber at battle's end. As such, these loyal spirits are somewhat easier to raise.

Any character in the Vampire Counts army which is capable of casting magic can try to raise the dead during the Command phase. This is done by issuing a successful order. Nominate any point on the battlefield within the character's Command range and make a Command check as though an Undead unit was present at that point, taking into account all the normal modifiers (raising a unit counts as the first order to the unit, so for the most part only the modifier for distance from the character will apply). If the order is successful, a new Undead unit is raised, which immediately moves using the order just given (ie, no new Command check is necessary). If the order is failed, the unit is not raised, and the character may not give any further orders, as normal for a failed Command check. In all respects, orders given to raise a unit count as a normal order. After a unit is raised, you may of course continue to issue additional orders to it. A unit can be raised directly into combat, but the -1 Command Penalty for enemy within 20 cm will apply when attempting to issue the order to raise them The type of unit raised depends on the command roll used to raise it, and where it was raised.
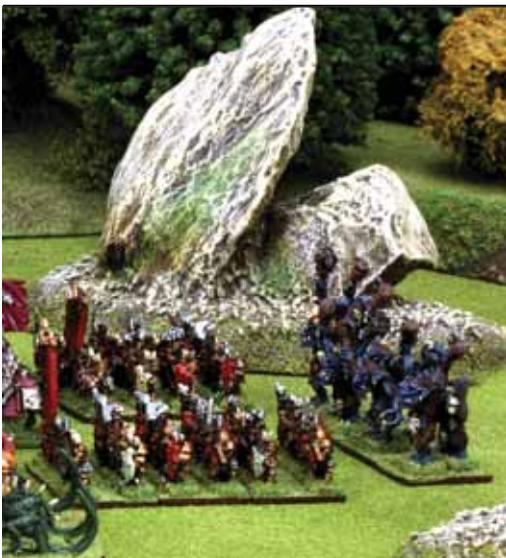
Skeletons
If the Command roll to raise a unit is an even number, the unit raised are Skeletons.

Zombies
If the Command roll to raise a unit is an odd number, the unit raised are Zombies.

Dire Wolves
If the unit is raised within 20cm of a forest, you may choose to 'raise' (or rather muster) a unit of Dire Wolves with a successful Command roll.

Ghouls
If the unit is raised in a graveyard, you may choose to 'raise' (or rather muster) a unit of Ghouls with a successful Command roll.

Grave Guard
If the Command roll to raise a unit is a double, the unit raised are Grave Guard.

Grave Knights
If the Command roll to raise a unit is a double **2**, the unit raised are Grave Knights.

Ethereal Host
If the Command roll to raise a unit is a double **3**, the unit raised is an Ethereal Host.

If you raise a unit which you don't have the models to represent, you may instead raise a unit of Skeletons or Zombies (your choice). If you don't have any models left to represent Skeletons or Zombies, tough, you don't raise the unit.

Bonus Victory Points
This battle is fought as normal, with both armies seeking to break each other. The defenders' break point is determined at the start of the game, and is equal to the total number of starting units deployed in the army (ie, not half that number as would normally be the case). The actual units destroyed can come from either the original army, or from amongst those units raised during the course of the game – the Chaos player need only destroy enough units to break the Vampire Counts, it doesn't matter where they come from. The attackers can only win by breaking the enemy.

# CONVERTING DAEMONIC CHARIOTS

With the release of the Daemonic Legion army list in Fanatic magazine issue 1 we thought we'd show you how to convert the one unit that we are not planning to release any models for in the immediate future. Tom Merrigan converted two units of Daemonic Chariots for his Daemonic Legion army that were used during playtesting. Here he explains how he went about it.

The Daemonic Legion list includes rules for chariots, and these can be styled to any of the Chaos Powers. In fact, the list gives a number of examples of the different types of chariots that are commonly seen within a Daemonic Legion army. For reference they are:

- **Chariot of Khorne:** Bloodletters pulled by Flesh Hounds or Juggernaughts of Khorne
- **Chariots of Tzeentch:** Flamers pulled by Screamers of Tzeentch
- **Chariots of Slaanesh:** Daemonettes pulled by Steeds of Slannesh
- **Chariots of Nurgle:** Plaguebearers pulled by Beasts of Nurgle

My own Daemonic Legion is themed around Khorne, as these were the first Daemon models released by Fanatic. Consequently, when I set about converting a unit of Chariots, I went for Chariots of Khorne. As Flesh Hounds were already part of the Warmaster range and would be easy to get hold of I decided to use them as the chariot mounts.

This conversion is a relatively simple undertaking and three chariots (enough for a unit) can be completed within 30-40mins. In order to make these Daemonic Chariots of Khorne you will need the following:
1x unit of Chaos Chariots, 1x unit of Orc and Goblin Wolf Chariots, 1x unit of Daemonic Hounds of Khorne, 1x unit of Daemonic Horde of Khorne.
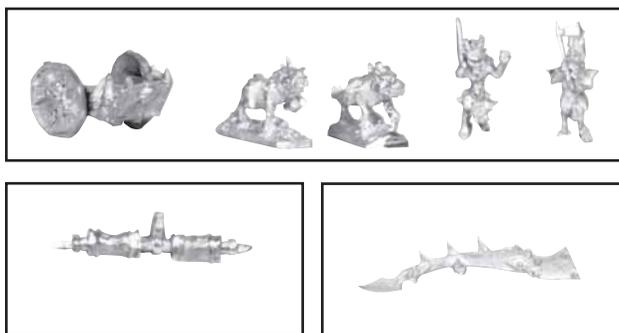

I know this sounds like a lot of stuff to make just three chariots, but most of these packs provide more than enough parts, and if you plan on making more than one unit you'll find you have spare pieces left over which will reduce the number of packs you need to buy for your second and subsequent units.

STAGE 1: THE CHARIOT
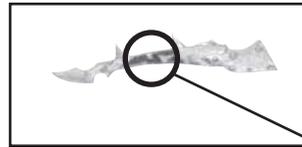
Start by taking each haft of the Chaos Chariots. You will notice that there are three spikes along the length of the haft and two studs that join the haft to the Chaos horses. Remove the centre spike and both studs from each haft and file down the area smooth. Once this is done glue the haft and the Chaos Chariot base and wheels together.

Next take the yoke from the Goblin Wolf Chariots. This piece will form the bridge between the haft of the Chaos Chariot and the Flesh Hounds. You will need to trim the yoke down (where it would attach to the haft of the Goblin Chariot) by removing the locator peg. This will allow the yoke piece to fit flush to the position where the middle spike was removed from the Chaos Chariot haft. Once this is done glue each yoke to the hafts of the Chaos Chariot. With this done the most difficult and intensive part of the conversion is complete.
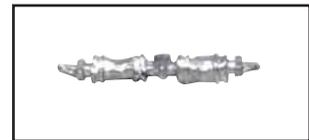
STAGE 2: THE MOUNTS

Clip the base of the Flesh Hounds in half so that each model is a single piece. You will require a total of two Flesh Hounds per chariot. The important thing to bear in mind here is that the yoke fits flatly across the backs of each pair of Flesh Hounds. As the Flesh Hounds are sculpted in different positions you will need to test pairs of models together with the already constructed chariot. Once you have done this put the Flesh Hounds to one side ready for painting.


STAGE 3: THE CREW

For the chariot crew you will need to cut out individual Bloodletters from the Daemonic Horde of Khorne unit. When removing each model from the metal strip it is important to make sure that the models will stand-up straight in the back of the chariot. This may result in a few feet being clipped short on individual models, but once
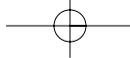
the Bloodletters are painted and stuck into the back of the chariot no one will notice if this is the case.

When I converted my first unit of Chariots, I failed to distinguish any model as the leader in the unit. For the second unit I converted I added the banner bearer from the Daemonic Hordes of Khorne unit. This would make it easy to distinguish whether the unit was in column or line formation when brigaded with other units of chariots. It also looked aesthetically pleasing.

THE END BIT

By this stage the models are ready to be painted. I painted each piece (chariot, mounts and crew) individually and glued them together afterwards. Believe me, this makes things easier and quicker then if you stick the chariots together before painting. Once the chariots were painted I stuck each model together and mounted them on Warmaster bases. I then textured and painted each base, and finished with a coat of Citadel Purity Seal to protect the paint from chipping during gaming. The end result – a striking and easy to convert unit for my Daemonic Legions army.
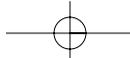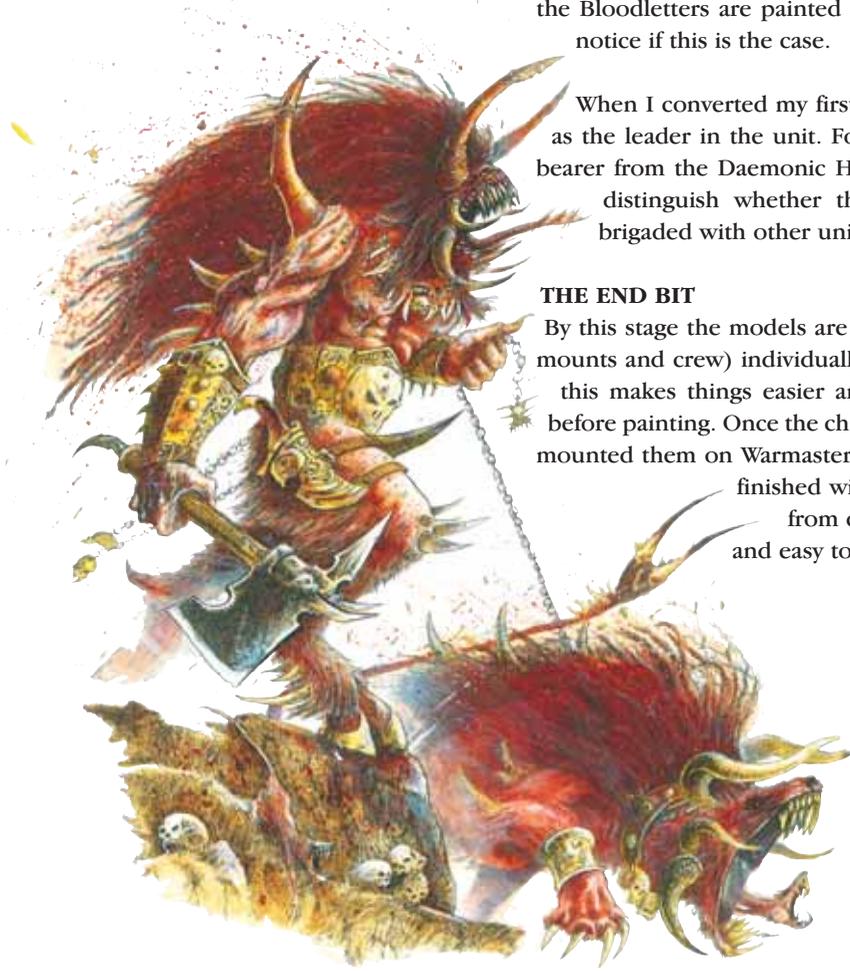
EPIC

LOOK TO THE SKIES!

by Carl Woodrow & Jervis Johnson

For me, one of the most appealing aspects of Epic Armageddon is the diversity of units at my disposal, whether they are tanks, infantry, aircraft or massive war engines. It is the combination of all of these vastly differing elements that make Epic such a challenging game.

Developing stratagems against a ground offensive may leave you open to assault from the air and conversely overburdening your forces with air defences wastes resources that could be better spent strengthening other formations. Balancing all of these conflicting requirements is what makes a good commander. In previous editions of Epic, aircraft have generally been treated no differently to other units and just considered as another fast moving formation. With the ability to retain the initiative in the new edition, flyer formations can play a much larger role in supporting ground offensives, reinforcing defensive fronts and neutralising long-ranged artillery. For me at least they have become every bit as important in my armies as tanks and Titans.

Aircraft in Epic have two attributes that make them very useful formations to include in your battle plan. They can strike anywhere on the table, having an unlimited movement distance, and they ignore all terrain. These abilities alone make them a very handy formation for silencing enemy artillery as no matter where your fiendishly cunning opponent hides them, a quick ground attack from a bomber wing can soon ruin their day. Naturally, to counter this, most shrewd commanders will attach a few flak units to their precious assets in the hope that, if not a deterrent, revenge can be exacted on the attacking pilots.

Aside from artillery suppression, flyer formations can also be used to drive the enemy away from holding onto an objective. With strategic objectives playing a large part in the victory conditions of a game, denying your opponent control of an objective is every bit as important as controlling it yourself. Using squadrons of bombers as a way to quickly maul a controlling formation can sometimes be enough to break them and force a hasty retreat as well as deny the enemy control of the objective. Both of these lightning strike tactics work well against small enemy formations. However, against larger formations, such as large Ork warbands, the impact can be somewhat less effective. Choosing the appropriate target and timing for a Ground Attack mission is one of the many skills a good general needs to develop.

Close Air Support

When I first started actively making use of Marauder Bomber formations in my games, I had them tearing around the skies all over the table, picking off what I thought were the most threatening formations. Unsurprisingly, I always ended up wondering why they ended most sorties as a smoking crater on my opponent's side of the table. Using them as a sacrificial unit to strike deep behind enemy lines is all well and good, but only if the target is worth risking your precious aircraft for. There are only a number of times I can put up with my opponent making 'crash and burn' gestures with his hand whilst grinning like a madman at the demise of my bombers.

"Deployment complete Captain!"

A tactic that is more likely to prolong the life of your squadrons is to use them in the role of 'close air support'. Let me give a few examples of what I mean. My opponent is in position to assault my Steel Legion Infantry Company with a large Warband of Orks, an action that is sure to go badly for my Guardsmen, even with the assistance of some close tank support. As I am the one currently holding the initiative, I decide that the soon-to-be-assaulted Guard formation desperately needs some close air support to help soften up the Orks. I give one of my Marauder squadrons a Ground Attack mission, which they thankfully pass and are scrambled to lay down some ordnance right in front of my own troops, directly on the Orks. The Marauders dive in and after eliminating a few units of Grotz and Boyz, place four Blast markers on the formation. Cheered by the Marauders, success I elect to retain the initiative and activate my threatened formation. Passing the modified Initiative test to give them a 'Sustained Fire' action, the Guardsmen open fire and a couple more Boyz units go down. The combined effect of both strikes is enough to considerably weaken the Orks' numbers and the resulting assault is on more favourable terms to the Imperial defenders.

My opponent, renowned for being a quick learner when it comes to pinching tricks, didn't take long making use of this tactic himself in an attacking role. One advantage the Orks have over the Imperial Navy is the sheer number of aircraft they can muster and this can make for very effective close air support. Aggrieved at the failure of his warband in overrunning my infantry formation, my opponent activates a squadron of Fighta-Bommerz to conduct a Ground Attack mission against a formation of Rough Riders which is screening one of my precious artillery batteries. Unsurprisingly the small force of Rough Riders are somewhat spooked by the sudden attack of five noisy aircraft, and what's left of the formation falls back thoroughly broken. The resulting gap is quickly exploited by a Kult of Speed, which takes a Double action to tear through the gap and engage my now exposed artillery. Curses! Using Fighta-Bommer formations to open up holes in the Imperial lines is a great tactic that highly suits the larger formations of flyers that Ork armies can assemble. They are also very good at sowing Blast markers on Imperial formations just before they are assaulted by a warband, stacking the odds even more in the Orks' favour. As Orks receive an Initiative modifier for Engage and Double actions, retaining the initiative to assault the thoroughly pummelled Imperial infantry is a very real possibility.

Combat Air Patrols

In each of the above scenarios, the flyers have been used to enhance the actions of one particular friendly formation by acting as close air support. However there are other roles that they can play. Other than Flak, there is only one other unit that can cause a flyer problems, that being an enemy fighter. Combat Air Patrol (CAP) missions are designed to stop enemy aircraft completing their mission, and can be given in advance so that your fighters are in the air waiting to pounce on enemy bombers and transports before they get a chance to drop their payload. Intercept missions are purely offensive and allow your fighters to engage enemy flyers before they have a chance to disengage and exit the table. Naturally, Intercept and CAP missions are only available to fast-moving fighters like the Thunderbolt or Ork Fighta-Bommer, as there would be little point in sending a squadron of lumbering Marauders to intercept enemy aircraft: (unless you want the crews walking home of course). Other than the obvious opportunity to shoot down your opponent's aircraft and scupper his plans, there are a few other good reasons to place a squadron or two on CAP. Firstly, by doing so you will discourage your opponent's bombers from taking to the air unless they really have to. In addition, you will likely tie up his fighters in a Counter-intercept. The second reason is to attempt to rob your opponent of close air support if you believe that is their intent.

Air Cavalry

Laying waste to your opponent's forces by air is greatly satisfying. Of course, being able to deliver a formation to any point on the table is even better – which is where transport flyers come in.

Probably the most famous transport is the Space Marines' Thunderhawk Gunship with its impressive array of weapons, thick armour and cargo of the Emperor's finest. Capable of delivering troops to the most inaccessible parts of the battlefield, the Thunderhawk can be used to seize objectives and outflank enemy formations, or even drop troops directly into close combat.

Similar to the Space Marines' famous entry vehicle is the Ork Landa; not as stylish I admit, but every bit as deadly. Loaded up with Stormboyz or Kommandos, an Ork Landa can really make a mess behind Imperial lines where your opponent least expects an assault. Ork Landas are also a great way of outflanking an enemy formation to catch it in a cross-fire, which is precisely what I use them for in my own games. By dropping a mob of Storm Boyz close behind a formation, I want to advance on, I can effectively increase the impact of that round of shooting. A heavy Ork Landa suddenly deploying a mob of brutish Orks directly behind their enemy troops tends to have a devastating effect on the average Guardsman. In order to pull off the tactic, of course, you need to be able to retain the initiative and close the trap, which for Orks is no easy feat, but worth the gamble. Don't forget, however, that only the deployed troops can set up a cross-fire situation, not the Landa, unless it spends a turn on the ground. You can't simply fly up behind a formation and hover there expecting to disrupt them that way.

The most common missions transport flyers undertake are to recapture enemy objectives or reinforce strongpoints, both supporting roles to ground troops. Recapturing objectives deep in enemy territory is a favourite of mine and involves breaking the enemy formation holding the objective you are going after from a distance. If you manage to drive off or destroy the enemy with a few well-placed artillery barrages, it is then possible to follow up the action by using your Landas or Thunderhawks to quickly deploy a small formation onto the objective, effectively capturing it for yourself. The tough armour and damage points that most transports have ensures that they have a good chance of surviving light ground fire and making it to their target, no matter the location. As with other missions, the biggest threat to a transport is to be 'bounced' by enemy fighters on

Combat Air Patrol orders, which can bring a very abrupt and terminal end to your expensive flyer and its passengers. For that reason alone, if you know the enemy has flyers on CAP orders then either use your own Fighters to draw them out or, better still, keep that transport grounded for a turn!

Plugging Holes and Hunting War Engines
In any battle it is inevitable that holes will develop in your carefully marshalled forces, either from incoming fire or close combat. Using transport aircraft to help replace casualties or even reinforce a particularly weak point in your front line is a good way of keeping your battle plan on track and counteracts any unexpected losses. A similar tactic to this, which my regular opponents use to great effect, is using his transports to re-deploy specialist assault formations in support of other units, suitably modifying their combined close combat potential. This is particularly amusing and effective if your opponent least expects it, viewing the unmodified formation as little threat, an opinion he generally soon regrets once a dirty great Ork transport drops off several units of Ork Kommandos. Admittedly, this kind of devious behaviour is best left to Ork Generals who are likely to be viewed with great suspicion anyway. However, the tactic works equally well with other races, especially Space Marines.

Few aircraft can bring down something as large and well protected as a Titan, but nevertheless flyer formations make great Titan hunters when it comes to setting them up for a fall. The Imperial Navy is particularly adept at this and can be called upon to make gun runs against Ork Gargants, stripping away their protective power fields and leaving them very exposed to the Titan Killing attentions of a Death Strike battery or Shadowsword company. Quite aside from the actual tactics, there is also something quite engaging about shooting at war engines with aircraft. I

An Ork Landa and a Bommerz squadron storms the red skies of Armageddon.

don't know if its because I watched King Kong too much as a boy, or just because I know that one day one of my Thunderbolts will score a Critical Hit on a war engine sending it to its doom, and that has got to be worth a smile or two when it happens *(and it's Fighta-Bommerz attacking a Titan on the Epic rulebook cover, of course – Matt).*

Defensive Tactics

No matter how carefully you choose the target of a Ground Attack or Air Assault mission, whenever a flyer formation takes to the air it will be going into harm's way and runs the risk of getting shot down. This is unavoidable if your opponent has taken Flak units in his army. However, that's not to say that you have to just fly straight over any hot spots with reckless abandon. By carefully looking to see where the 'no-fly' zones are prior to barrelling across the table, its possible to circumnavigate the worst spots and increase your chances of getting more than a raid or two out of the formation.

Naturally you want to take the opposite view if you are on the receiving end of a bombing run and concentrate your anti-air capabilities to areas you really want to keep flyer-free. As there is generally less benefit in shooting down aircraft after they have turned your brave formations into smouldering wreckage, the best position for Flak units is in front of any fragile units where they can engage incoming raids before they get a chance to drop their ordnance.

It is also worth remembering that Blast markers and flyers don't mix as they modify the formation's Initiative roll and can make it very difficult for them to be given anything other than a 'Stand Down' action the following turn. For the pilots out there, it is yet another good reason to carefully avoid anti-aircraft and flak hot spots – the less you are shot at, the more you get to fly.

Ballistic Entry Vehicles (BEV's) like the Ork Landa are notoriously resilient against anti-air fire, so never leave fragile formations exposed or so far from supporting units that they can be picked off by an opportunistic air assault. If transport flyers, such as the Landa and Thunderhawk, have one weakness it comes in the shape of a Critical Hit. With the exception of Titans and Gargants, most war engines are destroyed instantly by a Critical Hit, and flyers are no exception. As the chances of scoring one are greatly increased by the number of hits a flyer sustains, flying an

Ork Landa directly into the face of heavy flak is sure to get both your expensive Landa, and, more importantly, cargo of elite Orks brought crashing down to earth with a painful bump.

It has been said by more than one opponent that they find flyer formations to be weak and ineffective compared to other ground based units. To this I say that any unit used in isolation will inevitably disappoint. Using different units to support a single plan of action comes as second nature in a game of Warhammer 40,000 because of the alternating turns sequence. In Epic Armageddon, however, players alternate between activating formations which can lead to thinking only in terms of one formation at a time. By considering your battle plan in advance, the actions of several formations can be combined as a chain of events, each executing a single part of the greater plan. These joint operations are where flyers really excel, whether it is softening up targets prior to an assault, or delivering specialist formations into hot landing zones. Using flyers for their strengths as opposed to just another cheap strike formation will almost certainly increase their tactical value tenfold. The tactics and suggestions I have covered throughout this casual look at flyers is far from exhaustible and I am sure there are many more, not least amongst them those of the Space Marines.

Getting the most out of aerospace operations in Epic is a trial and error process; sometimes your squadrons will perform magnificently and sometimes they will crash and burn. By following the basic tactics and principles I have covered here you will soon be developing your own stratagems to match your army specifically. By being prepared to experiment a little with the actions you have your flyers performing, and considering how they can be used in conjunction with other formations, you will turn a handful of gun-ho maverick pilots into a squadron of precision bombers, and air superiority will be within your grasp.

SCENARIO - PLANETFALL

"Damn you private! Bring 'em down, bring 'em down before it's too late…"

Colonel Stainer, Armageddon Primus.

Landing forces from orbit in order to gain a foothold on a planet has led to some of the bloodiest battles in the Imperium's long history. A defending force must fight tenaciously to stem the attacker's advance, while the assaulting forces try to expand and protect their landing zone.

Forces

Both players pick armies to an agreed points total between 2,000 to 5,000 points using the Tournament Army lists, as modified below. 2,000 points per side is really the minimum that can be used for a good game. Note that players need to specifically select forces that can undertake or fend off a planetary assault. Although it is possible for any army be the attacker, the scenario works best with Space Marines as the attacking force.

All of the attacker's forces must either be aircraft and units transported in them, or be capable of entering play using the rules for Planetfall (see 4.4). This means that the attacker will probably need to include a spacecraft in their army, and a way of getting units from the spacecraft to the planet's surface. The attackers may include Transport Barges in their army if they wish to (see the New Units section below). Each Transport Barge costs 100 points and is counted against the allocation of points allowed for aircraft in the army.

In this scenario the attacker is allowed to take up to two spacecraft for their army if they wish. If they do so then only one may be used on any single turn. If, for any reason, both arrive over the table on the same turn then one must 'sheer off' and cannot be used at all. The attacker may choose which spacecraft will sheer off if this should happen. In addition, any restrictions on a spacecraft's datasheet about which turn they can be used on is ignored when playing the Planetfall scenario.

The defender is not allowed to include a spacecraft in their army, as it is assumed that the attackers have gained at least temporary sub-orbital supremacy above the planet's surface. Instead the defender may take up to one defence laser battery per 1,000 points in their army (ie, a 2,000 points army could include up to two defence laser batteries). Each battery taken costs 50 points.

Gaming Area

Set up the terrain for the game in any mutually agreeable manner. It is recommended that the guidelines for terrain set-up included in the Tournament Game rules (see 6.1) are also used with the Planetfall scenario. Once the terrain has been placed, set up objectives as described in the Tournament Game rules (see 6.1.4).

Deployment

The defender must split his army into two parts. Each must include at least one formation. The attacker is then allowed to choose which of these two parts is deployed on the table at the start of the battle. The other part is kept back 'in reserve'. (The attacker is allowed to choose in order to represent his ability to land his troops on the weakest area of the defender's line).

The defender sets up all of the formations from the part of his army that the attacker chose, anywhere on the table that is at least 15cms from a table edge. Aircraft are not deployed at this time, and must be held back to enter play using the rules for aircraft (see 4.2). All other units in the part of the army chosen by the attacker must be deployed, including units with the teleport ability (which will stop them being able to teleport). Note that units from this part of the army may not be held back to enter play in transport aircraft.

No other units are set up on the table at the start of the game. The attacker's forces may enter play using the aircraft or planetfall rules. The defender's reserves enter in aircraft or as described in the Reserves rules section below.

Reserve Formations

All of the reserve formations in the defender's army are assumed to be advancing towards their table edge as quickly as possible. At the start of each turn, each player is allowed to bring on one or more formations, as listed below.

First Turn Arrivals: Any formation where the slowest unit in the formation has a speed greater than 30cm.

Second Turn Arrivals: Any formation where the slowest unit in the formation has a speed greater than 15cm.

Third Turn Arrivals: Any remaining formations.

Any Turn: Aircraft and units being transported in aircraft, formations that can teleport.

Formations must deploy on their turn of arrival. Each reserve formation enters play on a randomly selected table edge. The defending player must randomly select which edge the formation will appear on, and then place a unit from the reserve formation anywhere on that edge. He should then do the same for the next reserve formation entering play this turn, and so on. The unit shows where the rest of the units in the formation will

enter play during the turn. If several formations want to enter play at the same point (along a road, for example) simply place the units in a row one in front of the other, and measure their movement from the rearmost unit in the row. If you prefer, you can place counters or tokens instead of units, just a long as you know which token corresponds to which formation.

Reserve formations move onto the table in the Action phase. Formations that fail their Initiative test must choose to move as their Hold action, and will enter play with a Blast marker for failing the Initiative test. All formations must enter play on the turn of arrival; you may not keep them back off the table.

Victory Conditions

The attacker wins by having captured any four objectives in the End Phase of any turn. An objective is captured is

the attacker has units within 15cms of it, and the defender does not. If the attacker has not won by the end of the fourth turn, then the defender wins the game if the attacker has not captured at least two objectives. Any other result is a draw.

Authors	*Carl Woodrow is a dedicated Epic player who has helped in the devlopment of Epic Armageddon. His Epic website has been a fantastic resource for Epic players for many years.*
	Jervis is the Head Fanatic and author of Epic.
Further Information	*The Epic Armageddon rulebook and accompanying range are now widley available from all good hobby stores. Contact your nearest Games Workshop or visit the website for details. (See the How to Order pages on page 94).See the catalogue page for more information of Epic dropship and flyer models.*
More Epic	*See page 30 for the Geheena Campaign*
Websites	*www.Epic-Battles.com & www.dropship.org.uk*

NEW UNITS
The following new units may be used in the Planetfall scenario. Note that neither of these units is included in the Epic range (at least at present) and so they will need to be represented by suitable 'stand-in' or scratch-built models.

THE TRANSPORT BARGE

Transport Barges are unarmed orbital landing craft that are used to transport troops and equipment from orbiting spacecraft to a planet's surface.

They are not really designed for use on 'hot' landing zones, being lightly armoured and very vulnerable to enemy fire. However, desperate commanders have been know to use them to land troops straight into a battlezone.

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
War Engine, Aircraft	Bomber/Immobile	6+	–	–

Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes
None	–	–	–

Damage Capacity 2. Critical Hit Effect: The Transport barge's fuel explodes and it crashes to the ground, killing everybody on board. **Notes:** *Planetfall. Transport* (May carry up to 18 units of any type. War Engines take up a number of spaces equal to their damage capacity). Once the Transport has landed it may not move or take another action for the rest of the game. If forced to withdraw it is destroyed.

DEFENCE LASER BATTERY

Many planet's are defended by massive batteries of weapons designed to engage orbiting spacecraft. Although it is rare for the defence batteries to do serious damage to an attacking spacecraft, their

mere presence can slow down and hinder sub-orbital attacks. Most defence batteries are housed in heavily fortified bunkers, designed to be able to withstand anything less than a direct hit from a spacecraft's weapon batteries.

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
War Engine	Immobile	4+	–	–

Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes
Defence Laser Battrey	Unlimited	na	Defence Laser (see below)

Damage Capacity 3. Critical Hit Effect: Internal explosions destroy the batteries, command centre, rendering it inoperable (counts as destroyed). **Notes:** *Reinforced armour. Fearless.* May not take actions. However, each defence laser battery in play subtracts -1 from the Action test rolls of enemy space craft. No units may enter the bunker – it's off-limits!

BLOOD BOWL

DARK ELF PLAYBOOK

Excerpt from 'Vice and Viscosity', or Darkside of the Blood by Jaid Oubliette (Translated by Matt Brown)

"A right royal romp of truly epic proportions – and that's just his weapon!"
A. Nonnymus, Colleges of Magic

"A real page turner, I didn't have to lift a finger!"
Telekinetics Gazetteer

"… n' my fav'rite bit is where der woman-fing loses her clobber, Hur-Hur. No wait, dat wuz der diff'runt one."
Some idiot, in a street

"Soft, strong and very long. Perfect!"
Guild of Outhouses and Public Amenities

"Dark Elves are renowned for being evil and depraved – and that's just the Cheerleaders!". So begins the "Did you know…" for Hubris Rakarth, star blitzer of the Cowboys, and, as a Dark Elf coach of some time, I know the cruel fate that would befall me if I were to divulge too many of their secrets (not to say the number of games I would soon start to lose). However, the great God Nuffle (and his pet minion, Andy) doth compel me to speak, so speak I must. Here then are some thoughts on the Dark Elves. Of course, these are not exhaustive and you may well, should in fact, find yourself developing a few tricks of your own – but this will certainly get you off to a good start. Enjoy… and if Rakarth comes looking for me, tell him I've joined the Khemri Foreign Legion.

…"I sense fear in you."

"I'm surprised you didn't smell it."

"Yes."

"Erm, I'm here to ask a few questions about Dark Elf tactics?"

"Well, we are a very 'flexible' race, I personally like it like this…"

"NO! I mean Blood Bowl tactics."

"Of course you did."

"Am I going to die?"

"…Yes. But don't worry – I shall enjoy it very much."

"Please, I am just a poor scribe, show mercy!"

"I already have. Welcome to the Darkside…"

INTRODUCING…

Dark Elves are infamous for their worship of weird and deviant violence so Blood Bowl fits into this very nicely indeed. They are a cruel and incredibly vicious race, combining high intelligence and natural grace with an intense hatred for all things living and dead. Needless to say, this makes them superb Blood Bowl players equally at home throwing the ball or running with it, or simply forgetting about it entirely and smashing the hell out of their opposition, which, due to their evil temperament, they are wont to do on occasion.

Well that sounds perfect! Unfortunately, though this is true up to a point, for a starting rookie team it doesn't quite work out that way and you really have to be in this for the long haul to see any effort on your part rewarded on the playing field. For coaches new to Blood Bowl, the Dark Elves can be tough to take as a first squad, but don't let early setbacks put you off. The more you play, the more you'll learn and that really is the only solution to

improving your understanding of their game. Also, learn the rules well – when the rules are second nature to you, you can focus more on what it is you want to do without having to worry about whether or not it's allowed.

MASTERS OF MISERY

As you will quickly discover, Dark Elves do not excel at any specific style of play. You could be forgiven for thinking that being Elves with an all-round AG 4 you have a fantastic Passing game – you don't. If Passing was the reason you chose Dark Elves you are best suited to playing a Wood Elf or High Elf team instead where your instinct to throw the ball will pay off more often. Nor can you stick to running with the ball (in the belief you have a vicious team), for as soon as you come up against a 'real' running team you will quickly find yourself on the painful end of a severe pounding. Any attempt to rigidly force one particular playing style onto a Dark Elf team (such as 'a Passing game') is sure to end in failure. What Dark Elves excel at is the ability to adapt to the strengths and weaknesses of their opponents and exploit them with near perfection. Dark Elves are truly the masters of misery.

As coach you must learn to be flexible in your approach to each game continually adjusting your playing style as each situation arises. Your players' ability to do so is their only strength. Flexibility is indeed the keyword to success with Dark Elves.

MONEY, MONEY, MONEY

I'm not going to tell you what you should or shouldn't do in picking a starting team, that would defeat the whole point of it being your team, (and there's no right or wrong) but there are a few points worth considering.

Regardless of how you envision your team performing in the future, you will quickly find your starting million just isn't enough to buy what you would like and, when you compare what you do buy with what you could get for any other team, you may feel short changed – and well you might, for yours is the most expensive team there is.

Your starting sum will struggle to buy anything more than a first eleven. The cheapest player, the lineman, costs 70,000 alone and eleven linemen will cost 770,000 gps. Adding to this 1 Fan Factor (ruled minimum) and one Re-roll brings this squad to 830,000 gps and any team that starts with only eleven players is sure to need an Apothecary. Even then this might not be enough to keep injury and death at bay whilst you try to build the squad.

Now, the Dwarfs and other Elf teams that suffer like you from such expensive lineplayers get to purchase their 'position' players (throwers, receivers, blitzers, etc) for around 80,000 to 90,000 gps. This makes it easy to drop a few of those linemen for better players, and thus generate the core of their game. Unfortunately, you can't do this. Not only does a Dark Elf team have no specific 'basic game' to aim for, your position players are extra expensive to boot. With your remaining 170,000 you would have enough for just one of your position players (and a second Re-roll), or two if you opt for both Throwers.
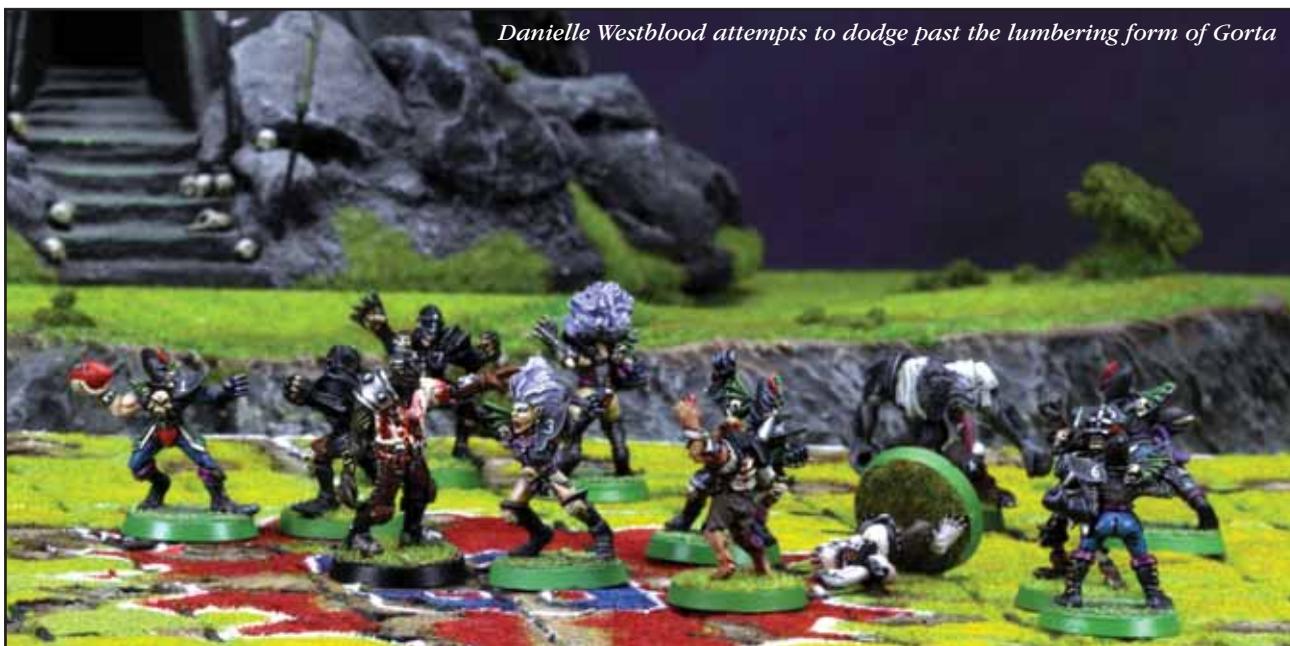
Danielle Westblood attempts to dodge past the lumbering form of Gorta

The Dark Elf potty-helmet joke didn't go down very well...

For me, this is too big a sacrifice just to have a twelfth man on the squad, and plumping for the Throwers just to get a 'position' player onto your team just isn't what Dark Elves are about – and in any case you could currently start an identical side to this using High Elves for less cash!

But to purchase your Blitzers and Witch Elves straight away (and so make your team uniquely Dark Elf) you will have to sacrifice those all-important Re-rolls/Apothecary/substitute players, and as a consequence you are almost sure to suffer.

My only recommendation is to save any money you might put towards a substitute player and spend it on an Apothecary instead. The Apothecary is cheaper than a player, and could potentially save several lives many times over before you have saved up the cash to buy anything more. Unfortunately, where other teams can get a fine selection of both players AND Re-rolls, Dark Elves almost certainly have to sacrifice some element of their team to begin with.

What you choose really depends upon the teams you are to face and the league format you are going to play. The sooner you get players, the quicker they can start picking up SPPs for those much needed skills, whereas the earlier you purchase Re-rolls the more reliable your team will be in general.

In league play I opt for players over Re-rolls. Players can develop, and a Re-roll will never be more than a Re-roll no matter how early it was bought. The doubled cost of later Re-rolls is of no consequence to your future costs because if you bought several Re-rolls instead of players at the start, you would be short of those players and therefore require the same amount to be saved for each (approx 100,000) and end up waiting a very long time before you get them for your team. Which in reality means you would spend most of the season not actually playing a Dark Elf team at all, just a squad of generic Elf linemen.

However, things are different for short-term tournaments intended to last only a few matches where the teams won't be used again. You will want good performances right away, whereby the extreme case scenario of 100% lineman plus Re-rolls does have its argument despite being very dull – the reserve means you can soak up a casualty or commit fouls without fearing Sent Off results, and the extra Re-rolls help your team play with an amount of early reliability – just no cutting edge. There is no easy answer to this player/Re-roll shortage (beyond playing a pre-season match or three against Halflings and Goblins); unless the rules get changed you are just going to have to tough it out for a while and hope for the best.

THE PLAYERS

With an Agility of 4 and (future) access to Agility skills, such as Dodge and Catch, your team is/will be equipped to escape tackle zones and move the ball about, thus enabling them to refocus the attack or rebuild the defence. This also means that the lineman who has spent the entire half fighting away in the midfield can just as suddenly peel off and become an open receiver

downfield. In fact every player in your team is a potential ball-handler. The Dark Elf coach more than any other must get out of any idea that his players have a specific job to do, that some are stars and the rest make up the numbers. There are no makeweights on a Dark Elf team. That then is the basic principle to which Dark Elves play.

HOW THEY PLAY

But don't think you're invincible, far from it, Dark Elves can't actually beat anyone at their own game but have the ability to adopt the alternative and beat them that way instead. In general, Passing teams struggle to run the ball and Rushing teams will struggle to pass the ball. Your job is to break up your opponent's game whatever it may be and force him onto the back foot, otherwise if you find yourself settling into a 'shootout' with a Passing/Speed team, such as Skaven, Wood & High Elf, or any other team tooled up to throw, you will invariably fall short of victory unless you can produce a better game, which isn't likely – this is their forte, not yours. Similarly, trying to beat Orc, Chaos and Undead teams in a fist-fight will produce equally unsatisfactory results in addition to a casualty list the length of your Team Sheet.

Dark Elves are capable of slowing fast teams down and beating them to a pulp. Whereas you can outscore the power teams with finesse and passing plays. Your key strength lies in this ability to switch between playing styles at any moment. Unfortunately this switching of play is something that cannot easily be shown on paper, but has to be learned through experience. The more games you play and the more teams you face the better you will get at recognising situations and making this decision. We all learn from our mistakes.

FLEXIBILITY IS THE KEY

Now some might say stopping the opponent's game is an obvious tactic, everyone wants to play on their own terms, but then that's the whole point with Dark Elves – your terms are 'no terms'. As soon as you can make the game degenerate into a mad scramble, you're in your element. Reducing your opponent to desperation tactics (ie, trying anything) draws him into playing the Dark Elf way, with the exception that you can and he can't. Whatever defensive tactic your opponent tries you can switch attack. If they stop your run you can pass, if they stop your pass you can run, and if you've just broke their game, you'll be playing both styles better. Whilst his team look like fumbling idiots, your team glide about the field in complete control playing (18 certificate) 'sexy' Blood Bowl (evil snigger).

MIXING IT

But it is a good Dark Elf coach that knows when to change tack. Don't think just because your opponent has a running game you should pass for the entire match (that's what Wood Elves try, are you a Wood Elf?). If your opponent drops back into deep coverage, you do not have the Throwing/Catching arsenal to beat it – but you could then run through the weak line and as your opponent sends help to reinforce (starts to defend the run) you whip a shorter pass into what would now be light coverage for a score. To execute this type of play efficiently, and capitalise on opportunities as they present themselves, you need the ability to coach all styles of play reasonably well and be comfortable playing them. It is no good threatening to run the ball unless you are actually capable of making good on that threat by running it in, else your opponent will ignore it and smash your receivers. This is the flexibility referred to on your part, and the reason why Dark Elves can be awkward for beginner coaches – you have to get an awful lot out of players that, on paper, don't look very deadly, and there's no Big Guy or Star to dig you out of trouble!

This is also why I have not included any starting formations (you need them all), as you're better off knowing and being able to apply the theory behind your team rather than being shown half a dozen formations that might be meaningless to you. But I recommend you read ALL tactics articles for other races and then apply their formations (be it passing or running plays) to your team.

KEY WEAKNESS

In a word, Numbers. This is partly where the cost of your players harms your squad. There is currently no way in which you can get those extra Blitzers and Witch Elves unless you've played for a good while and saved up the cash, in the meantime the other Elf teams can match you player for player and then outplay you with their affordable basic game. You have to wait for yours to pick up over time. But then, Elves improve with age… at least, they used to.
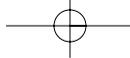
"Hey everybody, let's disco!"

A big problem faced by any Elf team is what to do about high Strength opposition. If you are to enjoy success with Dark Elves you are going to need to come up with something to stop Str4+ players bearing down on your End Zone, and more importantly, figure out a way to break a hole in a Str4+ defensive line.

Now, I'm not going to get bogged down in a long list of skills to take for several reasons. One; the skills you pick for your team should be to maximise your playing style or counter any weakness your game has, which you will be able to identify over time and will inevitably be dictated by the league in which you play – otherwise I would be forcing you to play in a style that does not come naturally to you and might be unsuitable for the league you play. Secondly, the development of your team is what will make it your team and there are so many possible permutations

that it isn't worth going into. Oh yes, and there's that little point that to write such a list would be a complete kop out on my part. Tactics should apply to every Dark Elf team. Giving coaches lists of 'must-have' skills does nothing to answer the basic need, "how to play that team better". Though having said that I will drop in a few pointers in case you haven't thought of them.

The problem lies in the fact that yours, despite being the 'mean and nasty, kick bottom' Elves, are the only team not to have access to Strength 4, or Big Guy players/Stars. In my opinion this is not an oversight. Dark Elves loathe anything and everything that isn't Dark Elf (and those are the easygoing ones) so you really shouldn't be looking for any non-Dark Elf players to add to your team anyway. You've got to do it with cunning and guile, or if that's not your thing, venom and cruelty.

Strong Teams are usually incapable of moving the ball about quickly, so against these you should be trying to spread the game out across the field and isolate pockets. You are more likely to survive (or even deliver) a beating if your opponent has his players split into two or more groups than when he has them all bunched together in support of each other. The diagrams below show this.

Diagram 1: Bunched Up
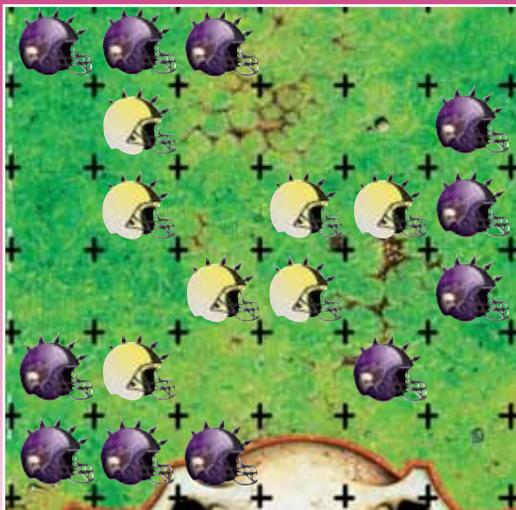
Diagram 2: Split Groups

Opposing Players

New Assist Opportunities

Assist Opportunities
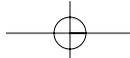
Note – Coaches of Strong Teams are gluttons for (delivering) punishment, so they'll often chase after your danger players in the desire to get big casualty numbers, relying on superior Strength & AV to protect them if they get separated.

If your team spreads its defence you will be able to single out such strays and pummel them, even if this means you are ignoring the ball. Your opponent will start to worry and send a few helpers, (he'll worry about not having the numbers to form his 'cage' in the next half, and if you actually clear these players he's done-for right now!) Tah-Dah! Split groups: one trying to score, the other is fighting. Now this is where your superior AG comes in (and Dodge when you can get it). Whilst leaving as few players as possible to tie the fighting crew in tackle zones (don't step every player out as you will nullify any advantage your AG gives you in that your opponent will not have to dodge to give chase) you refocus the assault against the now outgunned ball crew.

With a bit of cunning you should find an assist (or at least enough to cancel assists) and get fair blocks against the ball carrier squad (or force him into dodging).

Should the ball pop out, your opponent lacks the AG to win it back whereas you will be able to sneak it out (preferably with a Thrower) and with a swift pass upfield, or second manoeuvre of players, you'll be on the attack and your opponent will be in a mess. Without much in the way of Dodge, and very few Re-rolls, this does require a lot of luck from a rookie squad. So any skill that enables you to manoeuvre players or the ball are to be valued above others.

That's all fine regarding a high power, low agility team – but what about those one-off stars setting TD records on the ball handling teams? Well, one thing, you can just ignore them and focus your destructiveness on the weaker squad players. Remember, if your opponent can move well, he probably can't cope with many casualties and is focused on trying to outscore you rather than beat you up.

Anything that will give you a numerical advantage on the field (or the area of importance) will be a good thing, not only will this leave more space on the field to exploit, it gives you extra assists. With Frenzied Witch Elves you can push opposing players off the sidelines (or manoeuvre them to be pushed off) better than most other teams, just make sure you have an assist or Re-roll available for the blocks else you will find yourself flat on your face ("your woman-thing loses her clobber", you could say). If you adopt this tactic be careful not to leave your Witch Elf open to reprisal attacks – there is nothing more annoying than to watch your game plan get turned against you (Side Step and Block can come in handy).

A final word on Fouling. You are Dark Elves. If there was ever a race that should foul it's you (in my opinion they're Dirty Players at birth!). Even though the rules make fouling a very dangerous activity to take part in, especially for you as your game relies on keeping as many players as you can on the field, you should really try to get a few in, if only to play in character. Sadly, if you want to win the match with Dark Elves, committing Fouls is not a recommended tactic, as you will regret it much more often than not.

HAVE FUN

Dark Elf teams are late developers, expensive to start up and, due to the low skill/team Re-roll count and high casualty rate, slow to get going. But once your surviving players have managed to get a skill or two the deaths will be less common and hopefully you'll start to see the squad grow, and you'll be well on your way to enjoying some fine wins. But regardless of victory or defeat, and irrespective of tactics, if you're having fun with your team then you're playing it right in my opinion – it's a game, enjoy it!

Author	*Matt Brown is a veteran Blood Bowl coach and has been writing for Blood Bowl publications since the late 90's. Matt (along with jis brother, Carl) was the driving force behind the All At Sea (Blood Bowl on boats) articles.*
Further Information	*Dark Elf teams are available from GW Direct (See the How to Order pages).*
More BB	*Turn to page 52 for the Blood Bowl Rules Review.*
Website	*www.BloodBowl.com*

Privateer

by Matt Keefe

Over the next few months, we'll be publishing a semi-regular series of articles as part of a new series called Battlefleet Gothic: Privateer. This is designed to be an additional facet to the Battlefleet Gothic game focusing on pirates, corsairs, merchants, Rogue Traders and a number of the other hardbitten cut-throat types to be found in the universe of the 41st millenium. What unites all these factions is their penchant for raids and small battles, rather than the massed battles and fleet engagements covered by Battlefleet Gothic, so Privateer is intended to provide a variety of gaming material and ideas for smaller, more detailed games. To begin the series, we start with an overview of what's planned for the Privateer series, plus a synopsis of piracy in the Imperium.

What is Privateer?

Privateer does two things. Firstly, it provides background, rules and fleet lists for a number of the smaller fleets of the 41st millenium, such as pirates, Rogue Trader fleets, Imperial patrols, Chaos raiders – in short, the kind of unique and characterful details that are often overlooked when depicting the galaxy in the kind of broad brushstrokes painted by massed battlefleets and sector-spanning conflicts.

Secondly, Privateer provides rules for a particular form of campaign which focuses on the activities of these very same pirates, merchants and patrols. Rather than campaigns representing wars fought out across entire regions of space, a Privateer campaign is the story of the distant, isolated systems and highly valuable, but equally dangerous, trade routes which run like veins throughout the galaxy. Even if you are not interested in playing out a full campaign, Privateer provides gaming options for representing these smaller battles and raids in one-off games. These two facets are described in a little more detail below.

Privateer Fleets

The galaxy is unimaginably vast and even the least populous of Segmenta are home to billions of souls. To most sailors of the Imperial Navy, the massed armadas of battlefleets, such as Gothic, Armageddon, Bakka or the Bastion Fleets, are a seemingly impossible luxury. While in times of war a sector's battlefleet will muster together into

The raiders keep the escorts busy while they plunder the holds of the transport.

vast fleets capable of resisting wholesale invasion, most vessels spend much of their time dispersed across dozens of smaller patrol groups, flotillas, border patrols and frontier groups. These groups may consist of less than half a dozen vessels and spend years away from dock, even years without sighting another friendly vessel.

Likewise, the servants of Chaos rarely muster an invasion on the scale of those witnessed during the Gothic War or Abaddon's Thirteenth Black Crusade. For the most part these traitor fleets form small warbands scattered across the galaxy, acting as raiders who constantly harass shipping lanes, trade routes and commercial regions. Similarly, Orks, Eldar and other alien raiders are far more likely to be encountered as corsairs and pirates than they are in open warfare. Similarly, the Tau empire conducts its business in a variety of ways, many of which boil down to little more than authorised piracy.

What this all means, is that the battlefleets depicted by most of the fleets list published thus far are just part of the bigger picture. They are the largest and most striking feature, granted, but in the universe of the 41st millenium, privateer fleets (as these smaller, independent fleets are collectively known) are just as important. The new rules and fleet lists which we'll cover over the coming months are all intended to depict such fleets.

All of these fleets are completely usable in 'normal' games of Battlefleet Gothic – they're all completely official and

they're all just as balanced as any of the existing fleet lists. Some of them are designed to be small fleets and may well struggle in larger games unless used expertly, in just the same way that big fleets with expensive vessels lack options in smaller games. As ever, choosing which fleet list to use ahead of game is simply a matter of picking the right tools for the job.

Many of the fleet lists are presented here as pirates and raiders, in keeping with their history, but are actually just as suited to larger games with many thousands of points aside (such as Huron Blackheart's Red Corsairs which, while presented here as a small band of raiders, are really just an opportunity for us to present the much sought after rules for post-Heresy Traitor Marine fleets).

Other Privateer fleets appear here in their own right, but can equally well appear in larger games as allied contingents or mercenaries. Rogue Trader and Merchant fleets, for instance, operate on their own for much of the time, but will certainly seek aid from, or allegiance with, the Imperial Navy when they believe it to be beneficial.

There are also a lot of fleets which simply don't warrant a full-blown battlefleet of their own (minor alien races, wolf packs, Rogue Traders etc), and so Privateer gives us a very important opportunity to showcase some of the hidden gems of the 41st millenium.

Privateer Campaigns

You can play as either a trading fleet or a pirate fleet, both of which are collectively known as Privateers (since most traders are just pirates who keep getting away with it, anyway). Whichever side of the law you choose to stand (indeed, it's even possible to change as you go along), you can pick from a wide variety of fleet lists as described above.

Piracy in the 41st Millenium

By this means, pirates must stalk near to their preys most common haunts. The barren void of space will offer little to a pirate who chooses simply to wander blind through it in the hope of coming upon some potential target entirely unawares. Such pirates will almost certain find no prey at all, and so go hungry and unsuccessful as might a lone predator in a barren wilderness.

However, to simply prowl brazenly through the richest of hunting grounds – the bejewelled docks and ports of the most vibrant trading regions – would invite nothing more than swift destruction at the hands of the Imperial Navy. So it is that pirates must be cunning, and come upon their intended targets at the most vulnerable.

There are the true raiders amongst the pirates – the savage Orks, the inhuman Eldar and brutal reavers of Chaos – who habitually linger only in the most dangerous regions of space, amidst nigh impassable asteroid fields, deep within areas of space polluted by the most hazardous and unpredictable of gas clouds and debris. Such raiders are unabashed, falling upon any who stray near their haunts with a savagery quite unmatched by the regular armies of most races. Fortunately, most merchants have little reason to venture to such wild and dangerous regions, and so such overt raiders as these often find their choice of target somewhat limited. These kinds of brutes typically triumph only when surrounding strife allows their evil to sneak outwards from its usual hideaways and dens, such as during the Gothic War when many Imperial Navy patrols were forced to divert from normal duties and form into battlefleets to meet Abaddon's invading Chaos armada. Under such circumstances Ork pirates, Eldar corsairs and Chaos reavers can prowl more openly across space, striking out at shipping lanes which, under normal circumstances, would be far more heavily defended. Likewise, in times of strife, dependable shipping lanes may become untenable, forcing cargoes to divert through less frequently sailed areas of space, again opening them up to attack.

For other pirates, however, the best means by which to draw near to their intended targets is the façade of decency. Roguish privateers may well engage in sanctioned, lawful activity as the mood takes them, only to use the freedom of movement this gives them to expand their raiding activities. Masters of such duplicity are the Tau who's so-called 'Commerce Protection Fleets' are the scourge of the eastern fringe, choosing mostly to 'protect' their own commerce by attacking, crippling and claiming bounty from any vessel which they can find. Many Imperial agents behave little better, and outright piracy by the merchant families (often visited upon one another) is certainly no rare thing.

Between these two extremes, of pirates blatant and rogues cunning, there are of course the most well known face of piracy – the opportunistic wolfpacks who stalk cargo-laden merchant vessels at all the most vulnerable points of their journey. Ships translating from warp must do so in deep space, for to do so within the confines of a system is unimaginably hazardous for all but the most skilled pilots and navigators. There must then follow a hazardous, sub-light speed journey from these far reaches to the system of destination, and it is here that wolfpacks frequently strike. The vagaries of the warp can lead to a merchant convoy and its armed escort (if any) emerging from the warp some time apart, and if caught undefended in this manner, merchant vessels will prove easy pickings for the roving pirates.

Likewise, ships are only able to enter the warp with any degree of safety some distance outside systems, and routes leading from manufacturing worlds, mining colonies and other sources of great wealth to the nearest warp gate are tempting targets to most pirates. Commensurate with that, such routes are usually heavily

TALES OF INFAMY
Privateers of Note

Yriel

Yriel no longer follows the Path of the Outcast, and his so-called 'Raiders' have long since disbanded but, for a time, Yriel was without a doubt the most renowned pirate in the galaxy. Unlike most Eldar Corsairs, it was not through choice that Yriel abandoned the Path and took up the mantle of Pirate Chief. Yriel once commanded all of Iyanden's warfleets but even then showed himself to be a reckless and dangerous individual. Centuries ago, when Iyanden lay far distant from its present location, the threat of Chaos loomed large over the Craftworld and Yriel's fleets were forced to repel frequent raids from roving wolfpacks. Where a steady and considered defence was needed, however, Yriel instead rashly decided to take the fight to the enemy and led his own fleet in an attack against the pirate-infested worlds that surround the Eye of Terror. In Yriel's absence a much larger, more organised Chaos fleet launched an attack against Iyanden. Yriel returned just in time to save the Craftworld, but was nonetheless held account for his actions, judged to have abandoned Iyanden and stripped of his rank. Angry and indignant, Yriel turned his back on the Eldar Path and took to the stars at the head of small raider fleet composed of those followers who remained loyal to him.

For centuries Yriel ruled supreme as a renegade and a mercenary. Yriel was not above hiring out his services to other races during this time, and he achieved some considerable notoriety as a mercenary in the service of several renegade planetary governors. Over time other pirate bands joined Yriel until his own Raiders came to number nearly a dozen vessels. What ultimately set Yriel apart (and perhaps, what made him the consummate pirate) was the unusually calm and disciplined nature of his raids. Wanton violence and cruelty held no appeal for Yriel, and what's more he ceaselessly strove to quash such tendencies in his own followers. When Hivefleet Kraken descended upon Iyanden and threatened to almost entirely destroy his former home, Yriel returned, leading his raiders in a counter-assault against the Tyranids and ultimately saving the Craftworld for a second time. Welcome back into the fold, this most contrary of pirates thereafter returned to the Path and abandoned his wild years as an outcast.

The Imperial patrol discovers the Tau pirates hidden base and attacks.

defended, but as with all resources, the protection of the Imperial Navy is an expensive luxury which the badly overstretched Imperium cannot afford to offer to all. Many places of mineral or other material wealth lie in the loneliest and most desolate regions of the galaxy, and without nearby colonies to supply men, or provide a genuine need for security, many of these distant mines must fend for themselves. Here too, privateers profit, and pirate may well turn protector if the merchant families operating the shipping lanes, or the guilds operating the mining worlds, manufactorums and refineries decide it is in their interest to employ the would-be raiders rather than face them.

Even once under sail, having safely made it to warp, merchant vessels are far from safe. Locating other vessels within the warp is exceptionally difficult, and few pirates would attempt to unleash their ambushes amidst the hideous, roiling confusion of the immaterium, but few ships are able to travel directly to their destination via the warp. In many cases a viable warp route simply will not exist, and ships must translate to real space and travel some distance through connecting regions of space, perhaps many hundreds of light years from their destination in order to avoid some of the greater vagaries of warp travel. Where such departure or transit points become known, pirate wolfpacks inevitably flock to them as flies around a carcass.

Responses to Piracy

By their very nature, pirates risk defeat and capture with their every action. Space is a vast gulf where billions of miles of space lie undisturbed by even a single speck of matter. Pirates cannot simply roam through this void in search of prey, they must lurk close by the haunts of their targets and wait there ready to strike. What this means is that pirates must, for the most part, linger in a region for many months or years, and once pirate activity is noted in an area, the Administratum can be almost certain the threat will remain for quite some time to come. Under such conditions, pirates and those who would seek them out and destroy them are constantly engaged in a dangerous game of brinkmanship with gutsy pirate captains remaining in a lucrative region for as long as their possibly can, all the while aware that dallying there too long may well allow local forces the time they need to muster and defeat them.

Pirates cannot be dealt with as soon as their presence becomes known, however. The galaxy is a dangerous place, and piracy is far from the greatest threat faced by

the societies which occupy. Pirates may operate relatively undisturbed for considerable lengths of time if a greater or more urgent threat continues to occupy available forces nearby. Conversely, however, pirate activity cannot be overlooked entirely, even in times of war, since to do so invites disruption and breakdown, the like of which could very well prove fatal to even the largest of forces. Again, it is a contest. The wiliest pirates know full well that limiting their predations can keep the eyes of their enemies averted, but in doing so may well limit their own ambition. The opposing forces must also attempt to maintain a risky balance – valuable fleet and army assets

must be used where they are most needed, without allowing apparently minor threats like piracy to escalate to the point where piracy itself becomes the greatest threat.

To prevent this, threats are monitored by a series of Sector Stabilis Mandates which define at what point a threat becomes so great it must be dealt with. When used effectively, these mandates become a trigger mechanism by which the most prominent and dangerous of pirates are dealt with, both eliminating the problem and serving as warning to aspiring troublemakers in the region. Under the Sector Stabilis Mandates, separate attacks from different sources increase the sector's threat level only minimally, since a sector may well be assailed by a variety of smaller enemies, such as a cluster of alien races around its borders, without its stability really suffering (as long as those enemies themselves do not unite, that is). Repeated or coordinated attacks thought to be the work of a single group or alliance are used as a factor of multiplication when calculating threat levels, and so pirates responsible for multiple attacks are far more likely to find themselves brought to the attention of the authorities than those who strike only irregularly or without a coordinated plan.

Threat levels are measured in both degree and urgency, so certain factors may mean a relatively minor threat has to be dealt with immediately, while the tackling of other, seemingly much greater, threats may safely be delayed until proper preparation is made. When a threat exceeds the maximum level of tolerance prescribed by that own sector's Stabilis Mandate, action must be taken. Of course, individual commanders, planetary governors or other officials can act within their power well before this point, but are certainly not obliged to do so. Once the maximum threat level is exceeded, however, there are few servants of the Imperium who can ignore the call (indeed, only the Adeptus Astartes and the Inquisition are entirely free of standing obligations in the Mandate).

Huron Blackheart of the Red Corsairs

Once Master of the Astral Claws Chapter of Space Marines, Huron turned against the Imperium and declared himself Tyrant of Badab, his Chapter's original homeworld. The resultant crusade against began badly for the Imperium, as a further three Chapters defected and took up with Huron. Retaliation was swift, though at first it was all the Imperial Navy could do to maintain the shipping lanes upon which Huron and his Traitor Marines had begun to prey.

Huron was strong, and with four entire Chapters behind him, the Imperium faced a long, hard struggle to bring him down. But even Huron could not match the might which was brought to bear against him and eventually he was driven from Badab, where he and his followers fled into the nearby maelstrom. Many of those Marines who had sided with Huron during the uprising realised the error of their ways and returned to the Emperor's fold (albeit with much penitence to serve). There were, however, many who remained disgruntled with the Imperium and joined Huron in his flight into the Maelstrom.

With his homeworld lost, Huron and his Astral Claws obliterated all traces of their former allegiance, covering their armour with a gruesome red hue to hide the symbols of the Emperor they once served. Since that day Huron and his Red Corsairs have continued to prey upon shipping lanes, commerce worlds and other wealthy regions around the Maelstrom. Clearly some considerable allure still surrounds Huron, and bands of human reavers still continue to flock to his flag, bolstering his corsairs. More worryingly, it would appear that members of the Adeptus Astartes still continue to defect to the Maelstrom to take up a place at Huron's side. Small bands, or even individual Marines have all been known to turn and take up with Huron, symbolically reddening their armour to take up the Blackheart's colours. Why a traitor and a renegade like Huron would appeal to so many of the Emperor's most righteous servants is, worryingly, unexplained.

Even once the decision is taken to tackle a particular nuisance, responses will of course vary. Some regions will simply be granted increased patrols in light of Privateer activity, while in more serious cases battlegroups may be assembled with express orders to hunt down the pirates and undertake no other duties until they have done so.

Responses also vary based upon the enemy concerned. Eldar raiders will normally be dealt with by increasing security in a given region, since only a fool would attempt to actually hunt down or pursue such a swift race. Orks, conversely, are normally dealt with somewhat more directly, since their brutish nature allows them to be confronted rather more easily (indeed, often Ork pirates raid convoys solely with the intention of drawing nearby forces into a decent scrap). Less common enemies, including previously unknown xenos or raiders utilising hitherto unseen tactics, often present something of a difficulty for local forces. Indeed, on occasion the Administratum may even take the step of expressly barring the Imperial Navy from hunting down a newly emerged threat. In such cases, local forces will be ordered to stand down until an Inquisitor, Rogue Trader or other suitable representative can be found to lead the mission, lest contact with the enemy endanger Imperial forces, as can be the case when faced with traitors or aliens alike.

Even with such steps as these to tackle piracy, it remains the case that most Privateers find their ultimate end to be of their own doing. Cocky rogues become reckless or greedy, preying upon targets far beyond their means to overcome, or wantonly attacking the Emperor's forces to prove their might. Others too find themselves the slightly unfortunate, if not undeserving, victims of mishap or ill-timing. Privateers taking advantage of a strife-ridden area of the galaxy (perhaps engulfed in war or fallen under the shadow of an encroaching hivefleet) frequently find themselves swept away alongside their intended victims as events quickly escalate and attract vast forces, a foe well beyond the measure of even the mightiest privateer.

Memet Poralius

A true privateer, Poralius was born the son of Urbit Poralius, planetary governor of the world of Moracre on the Eastern Fringe. Memet grew restless in the long years of waiting to succeed his father, and so a wanderer was born. Poralius travelled far, and was soon introduced the emergent Tau empire. Poralius struck many illicit deals with the aliens and soon founded a trade route from Tau space all the way to his homeworld of Moracre. Thereafter, Poralius' wealth and fame grew immeasurably as he flooded the markets and bazaars of Moracre with all manner of illicit goods supplied by the distant Tau. Still not content, Poralius used his wealth to fund a rebellion against his own father, overthrowing the old man and assuming the throne with the blood still fresh on his hands. With his hold on power complete, Poralius turned to open allegiance with the Tau, and for a time great prosperity fell upon Moracre as the youthful Tau eagerly exploited their newly forged alliance.

But such ill-gotten gains could not last. Poralius' truck with aliens brought him to the attention of the Priesthood at a time when the Imperium was readying to itself for war with the Tau, and Moracre would serve as a fine example to those who chose alien over brother-man at this dangerous time. Battlefleet Artemis was dispatched to the regions, and swiftly severed the trade links which had for so long been the source of Poralius' wealth. With orbital supremacy secured they deployed almost three dozen Imperial Guard regiments to the planet's surface and Poralius's fate was sealed.

Or so it would have appeared. But Poralius had escaped, and to this day an embittered and vengeful Memet Poralius labours faithfully in the service of the Tau empire, commander of the Tau's most notorious commerce protection fleet, the Akunavash (a crude title, taken from one of the less eloquent races of the empire, many of whom serve alongside Poralius' fellow human exiles in his fleet). Poralius remains a dangerous man. No compassion for his fellow man remains in Poralius – an alien is as good a friend or ally to him as men are hated foes and betrayers. Where many of the Tau's privateers genuinely believe themselves to be nothing more than protectors of the Tau's trade rights, this is little more than an excuse to Poralius – one that allows him to frequently venture to within the Imperium's borders and, at the slightest hint of danger, unleash a remorseless and vengeful attack against his former people.

The Cradle

The Maelstrom

ASTRO TELEPATHICA DUCT 001/2.67832

The Eastern Fringe

S:B3/F74i

The Straits of Halk

IMPERIAL ASTRO STATION DC/784/86

RICH SEAS & GOLDEN SHORES
Centres of Privateer Activity

Privateers, being what they are, occur the galaxy over, but nonetheless there are a number of regions where privateer activity is far more prevalent, and the danger of piracy much greater.

The Eastern Fringe

The Imperium's eastern border, occupied by the alien Tau and the numerous other races which fall under the auspices of their Empire, is prime ground for privateers. Imperial renegades and Rogue Traders, keen to capitalise on the Tau's expansion, fraternise with the aliens with virtual impunity while the Tau themselves gladly further their aims under the guise of trade pacts and commerce protection. Independent alien nations provide mercenaries to the highest bidder while a number of the Tau's own subjects are not entirely unwilling to serve other masters in pursuit of wealth. The Ork presence which has dogged the Tau since their earliest expansion, and Eldritch raiders (themselves, a strong presence in the Tau's history) all add to this uncertain mix of allegiances, agendas and motives.

The vast lawless tracts of wilderness space which form a border between Man and Alien only serve to cement the area's reputation as a region where privateers, rogues and pirates operate freely, often with more than a little assistance from the so-called authorities.

The Maelstrom

No one knows how or when the Maelstrom came into existence. Like the Eye of Terror, it may well have been borne of some tremendous cataclysm, though it could equally well be the quite unintentional product of the very same forces that shaped the universe and gave birth to life itself. Regardless, it exists. It exists as a swirling mass of nebulous clouds of gas and dust, punctuated by pockets of incredible energies, breaking and resounding against one another much as lightning storm thunders through the heavens.

There are worlds within the Maelstrom, though whether they could really be described as planets is debatable, since few of them orbit any kind of sun or obey any laws normally ascribed to astral bodies. Instead, they seem almost to be spontaneous collections of solid matter, drawn together and sustained by forces it is impossible to understand. Unlike the Eye of Terror, whose landscapes visibly show a material origin corrupted and overcome by the Warp, the Maelstrom seems to exist in a unique third state, seemingly having its origins in neither the material universe or the Warp, but rather as a congress of the two.

A region of such uncertain properties as this is immensely difficult to chart or navigate, and offers easy refuge to those who wish their actions to go unseen. At least two dozen Ork empires, pirate kingdoms and other populations exist within the Maelstrom, all of them black-hearted cut-throats who all too frequently wander out from the Maelstrom to wreak havoc in nearby space. For reasons not properly understood, the Maelstrom offers easy access to the Warp, and many of the shortest Warp routes force those traversing them to journey through the Maelstrom, making the threat of piracy from within all the greater.

The Straits of Halk

The straits form the northwestern border of the region of Ultramar, domain of the Ultramarines. The straits are nigh uncrossable, and in no small way contribute to Ultramar's relative independence from other arms of the Imperium's authority (though, of course, the Ultramarines' own might remains the deepest root of their dominance). For millenia, the straits offered little to would be privateers, since all trade conducted in the region fell under the charter of the Regent of Ultramar, and hence benefitted from the protection of the Ultramarines themselves – an enemy too great for any pirate to contemplate an attack upon.

But the coming of Hivefleet Behemoth would change all this. The arrival of the Tyranids drew the Ultramarines' attention, and the bulk of their forces, southeastward.

Though the initial invasion was repelled at great cost, the continued Tyranid threat means that Ultramar must always keep a watchful eye to the east, and the resultant drain on resources effectively ended all patrols of the straits. The powerful Warp shadow cast by the approaching hive fleet also made navigation difficult in many of the outlying areas of Ultramar, forcing new trade routes to be opened away from the blighted areas, many of them passing close to the Straits of Halk and providing an enticement too great to ignore for the dozens of privateer bands that now lurk there.

The Cradle

The Cradle is the name given to a gargantuan, seething nebula deep within the galactic core. It is so known due to the prolific rate at which the nebula births new stars, and even new matter, making the region the apparent birthplace of much of the material universe. The astronomical energies at play here make the Cradle one of the galaxy's richest sources of precious metals, gems, gases and forms of energy (many of which are entirely unknown until first spewed forth from the Cradle's ever sputtering mass). It is certainly no coincidence that the Cradle is virtually the only area of human-controlled space from which the Demiurg are frequently reported, that race being expert and insatiable miners and harvesters of the universe's resources.

For other races, not least the Imperium itself, the Cradle is also a vital resource, and many of the galaxy's most lucrative trade routes are found in the region. It is not without risk, however. The vast quantities of matter present (arguably generated) there mean that the call of the Warp is weak, even to the most sensitive of Astropaths and vessels may become becalmed for weeks or months while their Navigators search for the faintest of Warp tides on which to set sail. A ship is in great danger when this happens, for it is forced to spend a great length of time in normal space, travelling at only sub-light speeds (very slow sub-light speeds in the case of most transports and freighters). All manner of pirates lurk around the Cradle's most lucrative mines, ready to pounce upon becalmed vessels before taking their booty and withdrawing to the depths of the nebula where the rampant electrical and nuclear energies make sensory detection unlikely.