



HUMAN PLAYBOOK

by David Candlish

With the release of the new Human team David Candlish thought it would be prudent to write up a team Playbook. Read his words of wisdom.

Blood Bowl is played across the entire Old World with hundreds of teams from all races fighting for glory, but by far the most common race playing Blood Bowl today are the ubiquitous Humans. There is something about Blood Bowl that stirs the soul of the average man or woman and they apply in droves to join teams across the length and breadth of the Empire. Whereas many Elves sneer down their noses at the thought of wrestling in the mud, and most Orcs are too busy fighting in one of their countless inter-club feuds, to the average peasant or commoner Blood Bowl represents a break from the tedium that is their day-to-day life. Although the vast majority soon realise that they are not cut out for the fast-paced and gruelling life of a modern Blood Bowl superstar this still doesn't stop them from creating teams and leagues across the land.

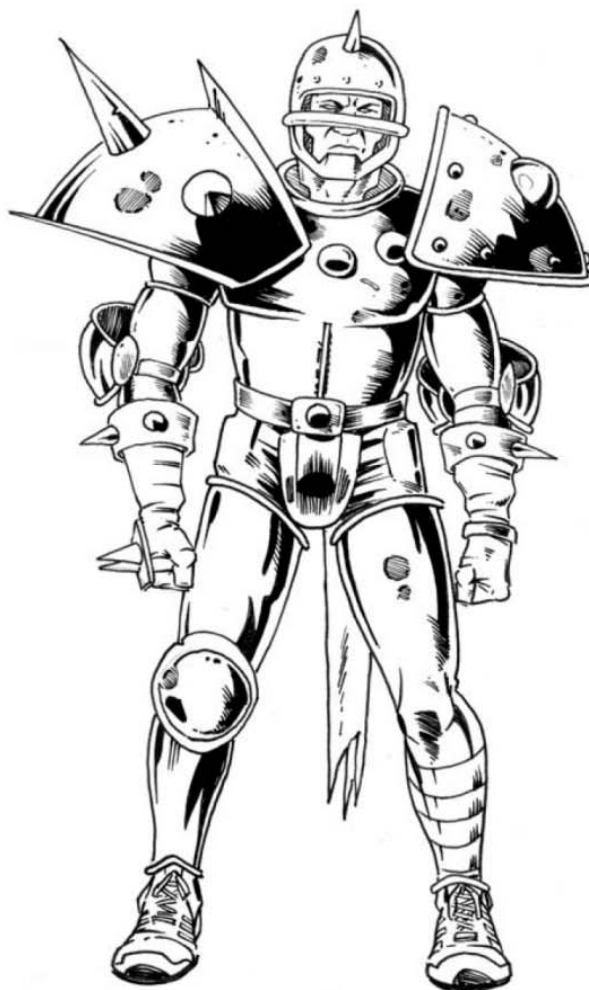
By and large, most Human players are decidedly average at the sport when compared to the players of other races. Every so often though, a Human star player comes along and makes people sit up and take notice – household names like the 'Mighty' Zug and of course Griff Oberwald spring to mind, with more recent on-pitch sensations such as Zara the Slayer and the superb young catcher Diego 'The Hand of Sigmar' de Mardona (currently playing for last year's Blood Bowl winners the Flatlined Annihilators). With Human teams, such as the Reikland Reavers and the Marauders, having won numerous major trophies over the years it is hard to deny that Human teams have a natural affinity for the game and as long as the burning enthusiasm for the game is in their heart, Human teams and their coaches will continue to enjoy success at Blood Bowl.

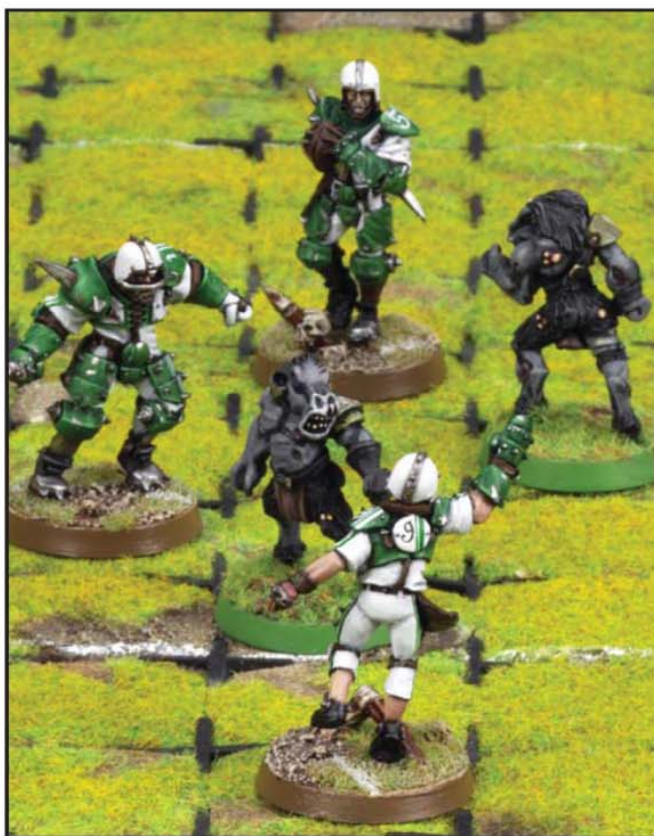
Introduction & Basic Principles

It's been a long time since a Human playbook article has been published and the tactics for this race have changed somewhat from Robin Dews' article way back in White Dwarf 177! As well as rules changes, the calibre of Blood Bowl coaches in general has improved meaning that common Human tactics are now outdated. What the Human coaches out there need is an up-to-date guide with advice appropriate to the current Living Rulebook that applies to both League and Tournament play.

Whether you're a Human coach looking for a few new tricks or you simply want to make sure you're ahead of the game for the next time you face a Human team, this article should hopefully have something for everyone.

It has said many times before, but Humans really are the most adaptable team in Blood Bowl. Many people think this versatility is only really useful to teach beginners the basic tenets of the game and that Humans should be dropped for one of the more specialised races as soon as possible, but this isn't true. Humans are an underestimated force. Although other teams such as Dark or High Elves appear to have a similar aptitude, their natural agility automatically makes them better at the





finesse game and most Elven teams develop down this route. Also, the high cost of Elven players dictates a style of play that requires caution and prudence when deciding how best to use your costly Witch Elf or Dragon Warrior. The Human coach has less to worry about in this regard which leaves them free to concentrate on the game in hand rather than worry about the safety of their players. All teams have their 'bogey' teams that they find hard to beat (Amazons vs. Dwarfs being the most obvious example), but generally speaking most races have some trouble facing Humans as often they are simply undecided as to how to best approach them. A good Human coach is one that can take real advantage from their

opponent's inherent weaknesses and the adaptable nature of the Human team is crucial to this. When faced with a bashing team, such as Chaos or Dwarfs, let them chase the ball and try to pull them out of position. Against Finesse teams, grind your way up the pitch and kill as many players as possible. Simple, logical advice, but it is hard to implement properly and it takes a skilled coach indeed to know how to play (and how NOT to play) against every different race in the game. Most other races will use the exact same strategy against everyone they face so the challenge and enjoyment of using a Human team comes when you learn how to face and defeat that tactic. It's hard, but rewarding.

As at ease with the bashing game as they may be, their lack of Strength or optimised blocking skills means they will only win a protracted fight against Agile teams. When faced with teams that relish the prospect of all-out war on the line of scrimmage it's best to tie them up with a few players you are less worried about losing (such as those who have picked up niggling injuries) and then proceed to outmanoeuvre them elsewhere. You will need to use your superior speed to avoid damage and disrupt their attacking plan. Using a similar philosophy, it is foolish to attempt to outrun Fast teams, so concentrate your strength and make them play on your terms. While this may seem like it is stating the obvious, many people assume that because Humans can do a little of everything they can excel at everything.

While you are focusing on the weaknesses of your opponent it is vital you don't allow them to dictate the match by maximising their own strengths. For example, I've known numerous coaches who are happy to let a Skaven team score quickly so they can then attempt their own two-turn touchdown after the kick-off. This is a mistake as a Skaven team is much more likely to consistently score in two turns than a Human team, so playing in this way is unnecessarily giving them an



advantage. Although it is unavoidable that you will be put in situations that favour the other team's style of play, by using your combination of speed, strength and agility you can put as much pressure on the ball carrier as possible in an effort to disrupt their plan. Once a coach is forced to think outside their habitual game plan they're more likely to make mistakes.

Ultimately, the trick to winning with Humans is recognising that whereas other 'balance' teams like Dark Elves or High Elves can rely on any of their players to pull off desperate long bombs or vital

dodges, Human coaches need to make sure they have the right player in the right place at the right time or they run the risk of burning re-rolls needlessly. It takes time and practice to realise how best to use and position your players to get the most out of them, but once it 'clicks' you'll find your game improves by a huge amount.

With these basic ideas in mind, and after a little practice, you can approach a game with some confidence knowing that you can both anticipate the strategy adopted by any given team and know how best to neutralise it. Good luck!



BLITZERS

90,000 gc

MA	ST	AG	AV
7	3	3	8

Starting Skills: Block.

Although the most expensive Human player, weighing in at 90,000gc, Blitzers are an essential part of any Human Blood Bowl roster and no team should be without a solid block of four Blitzers at its heart. With a movement of 7 and the Block skill they are useful defenders, good for plugging gaps and blitzing ball carriers, but as well as this they are also fearsome attacking players, especially when used in pairs to cover each other. Their natural scoring and blocking abilities often see them develop quickly, although this can sometimes be at the expense of other players, particularly Linemen. With access to General and Strength skills they can be fine-tuned into ferocious blockers or with the occasional double roll they can be given skills that develop them into highly prolific scorers.



Suggested Skills: Tackle, Strip Ball, (Stand Firm), (Dodge), Guard, Mighty Blow.

Pros: Fast, start with Block, up to four allowed on roster.

Cons: Cost can make them tricky to replace.

THROWERS

70,000 gc

MA	ST	AG	AV
6	3	3	8

Starting Skills: Pass, Sure Hands

Rounding off the list of Human specialist players is the Thrower. Although his stat line is identical to that of the Lineman, his skills more than outweigh his higher price and every team should start with at least one. His Sure Hands skill is simply essential to any Human offensive play as without them far too many re-rolls would be burned in simply picking up the ball. His Pass skill makes him a threat even when he is fairly deep within his own half, especially when the opposition has to deal with Catchers waiting for the ball. While it seems natural to always give him Accurate as his first skill, I've found that by giving him Block he becomes a much more versatile player for two different reasons. First of all, with Block he can act in unison with a defensive Blitzers to turnover the opposing ball carrier then recover the ball using Sure Hands to move it back up field. Second, with Block and Sure Hands he is effectively immune to 'Strip Ballers' (especially annoying Wardancers that have the habit of bouncing around your backfield). This means that not only does your opponent have to worry about marking your Catchers but he also has to be wary of a Blitzers-guarded Thrower running up the field.



Suggested Skills: Block, Accurate, (Leader), (Frenzy), Hail Mary Pass.

Pros: Useful skills, superb player after only a few upgrades.

Cons: Often a target, can be tricky to gain SPPs with passing alone.

CATCHERS**70,000 gc**

MA	ST	AG	AV
8	2	3	7

Starting Skills: Catch, Dodge.

Despite the unavoidable fact that as a Human coach many people will point and chuckle at the low ST and AV of your Catchers, they soon stop laughing when you have two of them deep in their half of the pitch waiting for a touchdown pass. Granted, their poor Strength and Armour makes them prime and easy targets, but the Dodge skill increases their survivability no end and once they gain the Block skill they become a real force to be reckoned with. Their relatively low cost makes them an essential purchase and easily replaceable, and although I would not advise buying your full allowance of four Catchers from the outset, having at least two of these versatile players is a must for any respectable Human coach. Many people tend to use them as an extra assist to get a 2-dice block in critical areas or for those desperate backfield defensive efforts. Both these tactics are viable but are not really using the Catchers to their full ability. The trick to getting the most out of these players is to laugh in the face of the vulnerability and throw them deep into enemy territory. Most coaches will then task at least two players to defend each Catcher, drawing strength away from other areas of the pitch. Although one or both of your Catchers may take a beating, more often than not they stay on the pitch, having distracted the defence long enough for your Blitzers to have smashed some heads and be launching an attack of their own. The worst mistake you can make with these guys is to be scared of using them!

**Suggested Skills/Traits:** Block, Side Step, Sure Feet, (Jump Up), Sure Hands, (Nerves of Steel).**Pros:** Very fast, agile & skilled.**Cons:** Prime target, low ST & AV.**LINEMEN****50,000 gc**

MA	ST	AG	AV
6	3	3	8

Starting Skills: None.

Average in every respect, your Linemen are the cheap cannon-fodder you inevitably use to stand up to those Black Orcs and Ogres while your Catchers and Blitzers are making a nuisance of themselves elsewhere. While it's all too easy to treat them as throwaway players, in the long term this is a mistake as the ultimate success of your team relies on having skills and strength across the board, rather than clustered on a handful of players. If you work on the principle that while the positional players keep your team going in the early stages of a league, you can invest in advancing your Linemen to guarantee success in the future. However, if there is a dirty job to be done (like a 1/2 dice block against a Troll or a 3 player foul) then that unskilled Lineman is your man! Although generally speaking Block is the best skill to give a rookie Lineman, if you roll a double then Leader, Kick or Guard are always useful provided you then take care of your investment!

**Suggested Skills (Traits):** Block, (Leader), Kick, (Guard), Dirty Player.**Pros:** Cheap.**Cons:** Limited skill choices, easy to overlook in favour of Blitzers & Catchers.**OGRE****120,000 gc**

MA	ST	AG	AV
5	5	2	9

Starting Skills: Mighty Blow, Thick Skull, Bonehead, Big Guy.

This Big Guy should always be considered a luxury rather than a necessity. While the idea of Strength 5 and Mighty Blow is tempting, their sheer cost and the eternally frustrating Bonehead mean Ogres should be bought if the circumstances allow rather than depending on them as a core player. That said, once an Ogre has Block, and better still Block and Frenzy, they soon become a nightmare for the opposition to deal with and will rapidly pay for themselves time and again. Look to buy one after your fifth or sixth league match, but don't even think about them in a tournament unless it's a TR110 occasion.

**Suggested Skills:** Block, (Frenzy), (Leader), Guard, (Stand Firm).**Pros:** Strong, intimidating.**Cons:** Expensive, Bonehead.



League Play & Long Term Development

There are many different ways of playing a Human team so ultimately your choice of roster will depend on your favoured playing style. However, I advise the roster below as it maximises skills in the short term while still having scope for future development.

4 Blitzers	360,000
2 Catchers	140,000
1 Thrower	70,000
4 Linemen	200,000
3 Re-Rolls	150,000
8 Fan Factor	80,000

Unless you permanently lose a player early on, your first purchase absolutely must be an Apothecary. Common sense it may be, but far too many people go for an extra Lineman or save for an Ogre only to realise the error of their ways once they lose a Catcher or Blitzer. After this, another Lineman or Thrower should be top of your shopping list, with an Ogre to follow that if your winnings permit. As is always the case for a league, you should try to start with as high a Fan Factor as possible to give you the winnings needed to enhance your squad. Although tempting to start with an extra Lineman and only 3 Fan Factor, this short-sighted approach is lacking and you will pay the price after a couple of matches. Don't bother going for extra re-rolls until you have at least thirteen fit and able players on your squad, and once you have four Team re-rolls and a Leader re-roll you should probably switch focus back onto buying players or Wizards if your league allows them. Finally, Cheerleaders and Assistant Coaches are usually so far down your list of priorities they should not even be considered until you've played about a dozen matches. Although the idea of buying a couple of each to win rolls on the Kick-Off table seems logical, the reality is that they are used so infrequently as to be essentially useless, especially when compared to a Lineman that can be used in every turn of every match.

During a match you should always be aware that your long term success depends on your Linemen gaining skills and because of this you should always take the chance to enable them to score or inflict a casualty should the situation present itself. This shouldn't be at the expense of winning the match, naturally, but your Blitzers and Catchers will gain SPPs at a faster rate without having to try too hard. At first this is a daunting proposition, but when a few Linemen have picked up MVPs or the odd CAS here and there it does get easier. When choosing your skills you should try to keep the innate flexibility of the Human team in mind and resist the urge to specialise too much. By this I mean avoid giving all your Linemen Block, your Throwers all Accurate, etc, and try to aim for a situation where many of your players can perform as many roles as possible. If you wanted a team that excelled in blocking then you should have picked a different race, and the same holds true for passing or running based teams. Humans only work if your team can exploit the weaknesses of your opponent and by specialising too much in one area you will inevitably suffer in another. That said, keep things in context – don't go giving your Catchers Mighty Blow on a double on the basis it would make them better blockers!

Humans & Tournament Play

The majority of tournaments are either TR100 or TR110 events, but whereas other teams simply use the extra cash to buy a twelfth player, the Human roster does have a couple of difference approaches for each type that are worth addressing. For skill progression and development I will focus on the overwhelmingly common "one skill after each match" format used by the vast majority of tournaments as well as the absence of long-term injuries between matches.

TR100 Tournaments

The optimum roster for Team Rating 100 tournaments is very similar to that of a league but is tweaked slightly to

take advantage of the fact that immediate team strength is more important than the long-term prospects of the squad.

4 Blitzers	360,000
2 Catchers	140,000
1 Thrower	70,000
5 Linemen	250,000
3 Re-Rolls	150,000
3 Fan Factor	30,000

By switching Fan Factor for an extra Lineman you have that little extra strength in depth that is so vital in tournaments. Although some people swear by using a high Fan Factor to be sure of winning every Kick Off roll, this seems like a foolish tactic if it results in a weakened force on the pitch – although Kick Off rolls do sometimes win the match for you, these occasions occur infrequently and basing your entire tournament strategy around them seems foolish in the extreme. You may argue then that you could upgrade a Lineman to a Thrower and stick with Fan Factor 1, but in my experience most other tournament rosters usually end up with about 3 Fan Factor naturally, so keeping a Fan Factor of 3 avoids gifting your opponent with cheap re-rolls and is vastly different from having a game plan that revolves entirely around winning Kick Off rolls.

Another common alternative is to drop a Lineman and take an Apothecary, or even trade in a re-roll. Considering the latter option first, unless you get a kick out of flying by the seat of your pants when the re-rolls have run out I advise sticking with at least three re-rolls. Whether or not you swap your Lineman is down to personal preference although I find the sight of a definite substitute more reassuring, even if the alternative could mean saving a 90,000gc player.

When choosing skills for my players I find that even if the order I allocate them varies, the underlying skills chosen do not alter much from tournament to tournament. Given below are the choices that I've found to be most efficient to date, although I do try to tweak them in each tournament I take part in.

Blitzer 1	Strip Ball
Blitzer 2	Strip Ball
Thrower	Block
Blitzer 3	Tackle
Blitzer 4	Tackle

Although this leaves the Catchers without Block, it significantly boosts the defensive strength of the team. Since Humans are naturally capable on the offence, increasing the rate of opposing turnovers is a major priority. With Strip Ball/Tackle on one player, your opponent is obliged to tweak their attack plan slightly, but it can be reasonably easy to pin these players and move down the opposite wing. With more than one player with these skills it then becomes a veritable nightmare – even if they break free down one wing they're faced with the

prospect of losing the ball to your defensive Strip Ball/Tackle Blitzers.

Giving the Thrower Block is the one concession to attacking play, vastly increasing his immunity to those players who seek to turnover the ball deep in your own half. As discussed earlier, this gives you the option to perform a grinding play up the field – a tactic that is particularly effective against low AV teams. If you'd rather adopt the "we'll score one more than you" approach then you could substitute Block on both Catchers for one each of the Strip Ball/Tackle Blitzers, but in all honesty if you like to play that way you should be using a Skaven or Wood Elf team. Besides, as any experienced coach will tell you... games are won and lost by a team's defence.

TR110 Tournaments

A TR110 tournament is simply a tournament that allows 1,100,00gc with which to create your team as opposed to the regular 1,000,000 TR100 alternative. There have been a number of discussions at www.TalkBloodBowl.com and

www.BloodBowl.net about the relative merits and drawbacks of each different format but, in

summary, TR110 tends to naturally favour high cost teams such as Wood Elves, High Elves, Dark Elves and Skaven. These teams find it hard to have more than 11 players at TR100, but at TR110 they can usually field 12

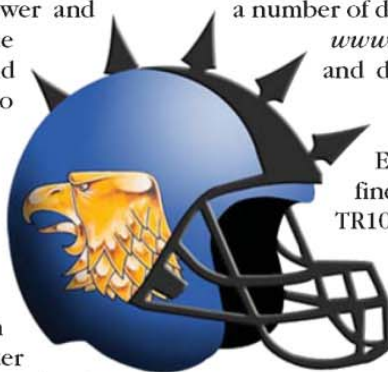
and occasionally squeeze in an extra re-roll. By comparison, most of the teams that do well at TR100 usually add a Big Guy or a re-roll to their roster at TR110.

Both types of team benefit from the extra cash, but the Finesse teams feel a bigger relative bonus. Since the Human roster at TR100 is fairly solid with a combination of skilled positional players and a little in reserve, playing at TR110 can be an excuse to go to town! Shown below is my sample TR110 Human roster.

1 Ogre	120,000
4 Blitzers	360,000
2 Catchers	140,000
2 Throwers	140,000
3 Linemen	150,000
3 Re-Rolls	150,000
4 Fan Factor	40,000

Who cares if those pansy AV 7 teams now have more players? With that Ogre you can just kill more of them! Also, having an extra Thrower gives greater flexibility and the chance to have more players with more skills on the pitch at any one time – a good thing, generally speaking. At first glance you may think that losing a Lineman at the expense of another Thrower will mean putting a more expensive player directly in harm's way, but in reality the Ogre attracts so much more attention that the Throwers remain fairly unmolested.

With such a different roster it is inevitable that the skill choices need to change and unsurprisingly the first skill should always be Block on your Ogre. Without it the Ogre will cause innumerable turnovers when he rolls double "Both Down" results and his Big Guy status prevents use



of a Team re-roll. The other skill choices could remain fairly similar as illustrated below:

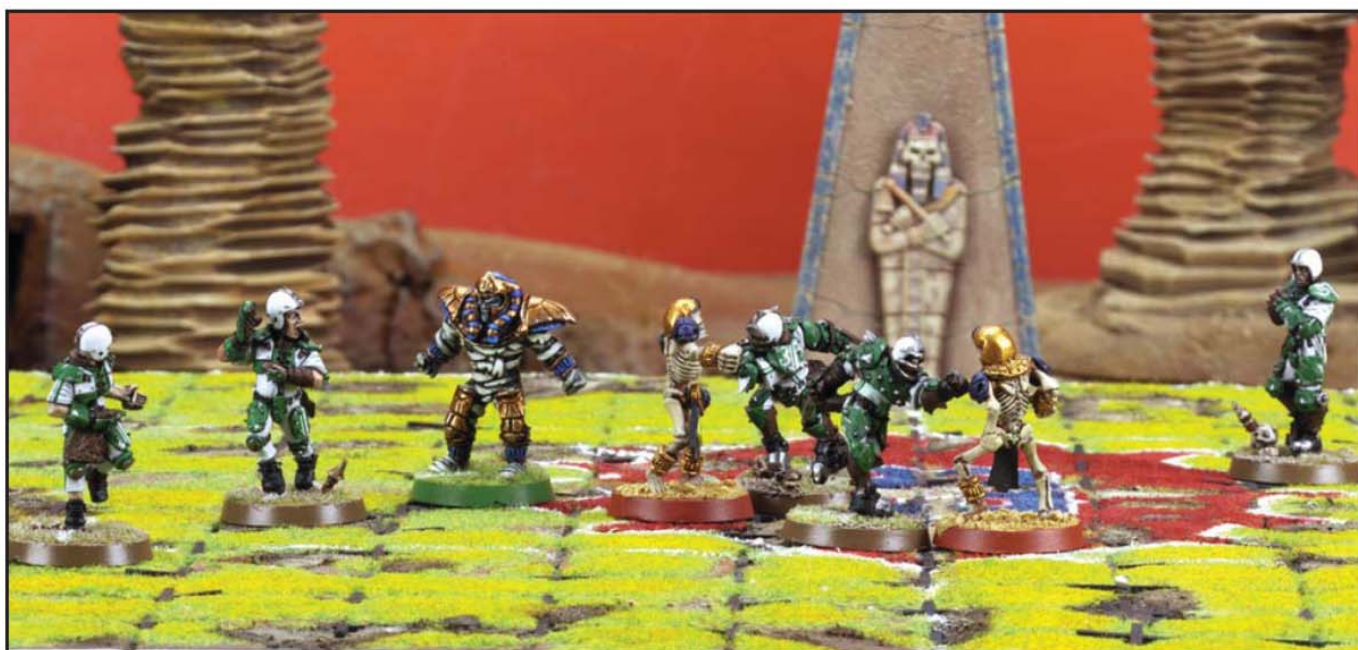
Ogre	Block
Thrower 1	Block
Blitzer 1	Strip Ball
Blitzer 2	Tackle
Blitzer 3	Strip Ball
Thrower 2	Block

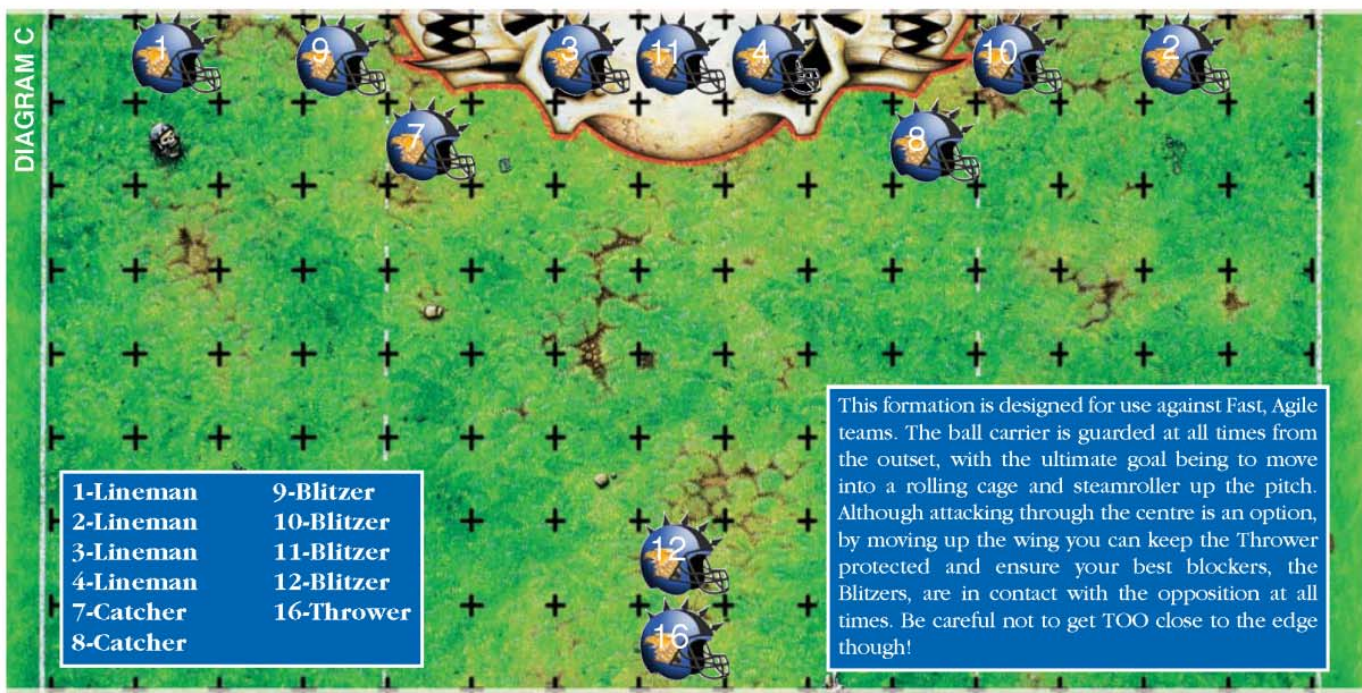
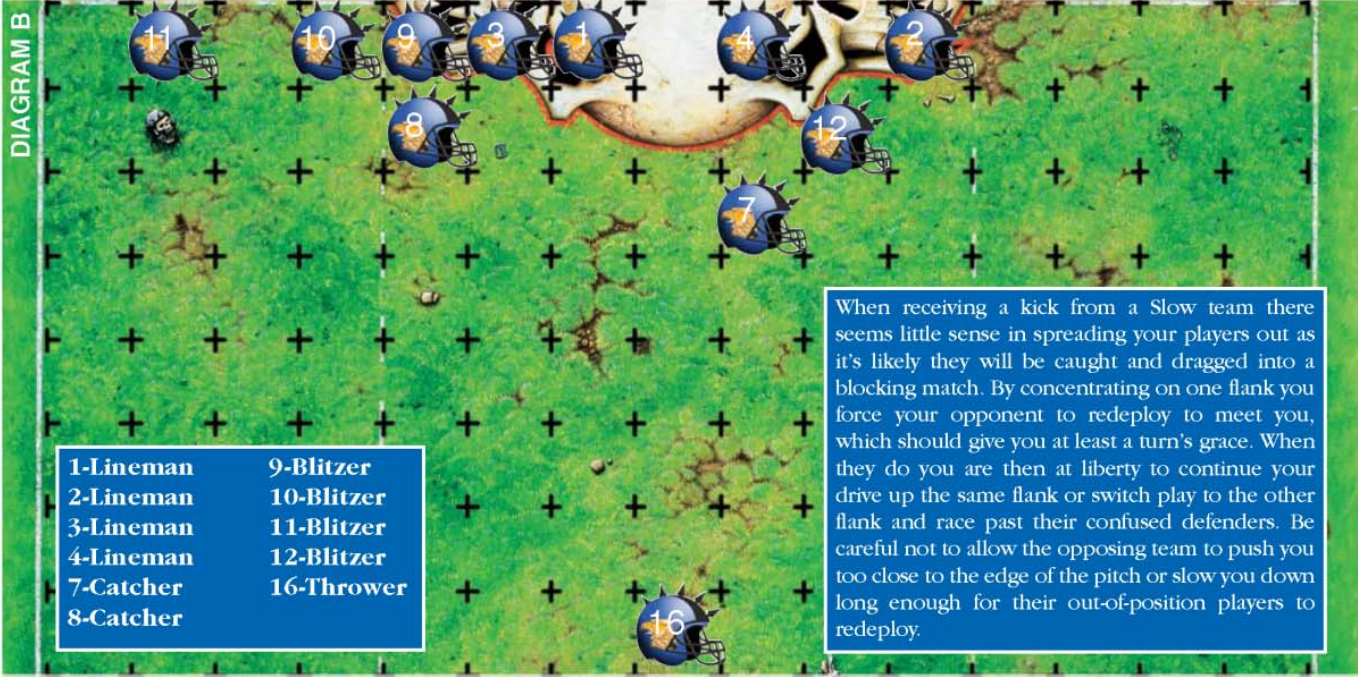
Once again, this choice of skills is tailored towards defensive play by giving the back field players abilities that are most suited to forcing the ball from the opponent. When both Throwers have Block it means you have no

less than seven players with the skill and at least three of those – the Strip Ball Blitzers and one of the Throwers – can be dedicated defensive players. This should give you a fighting chance of stopping even the most aggressive offence. A word of warning though: avoid the temptation to always perform the first block of the turn with the Ogre just because he's big and has Mighty Blow. Double Skulls without a re-roll really messes up a game plan when it's your first action.

Sample Human Kick-Off Formations

Shown below are a number of generic, balanced starting formations for Human teams when kicking and receiving.





In Conclusion

Hopefully this tactics article will give you some ideas about how to approach your next game and give you some faith that Humans can compete with the more specialised races. Although some experienced tournament players insist that the Humans do not have what it takes to win a major tournament, claiming the roster has key flaws that will ultimately hold it back, it will only take one skilled Human coach to prove them wrong. For all their versatility, getting the most out of the Human team requires long-term practice and dedication, but stick with it and soon you will be running rings around those Orcs and pounding the Elves into the turf with reckless abandon!

ALTERNATIVE DEPLOYMENT

By Matt Keefe

Matt Keefe offers up some updated rules for Siege engines and artillery in Warmaster. Look out for a rather cool scenario at the end of the article.

Back at the dawn of WarMag (this magazine's long since passed predecessor), we published rules for a number of specialised pieces of Siege Artillery, and released accompanying models. That was really some years ago, and back then the initial iteration of every set of rules were known as 'experimental' and had to go through a vigorous system of argument and counter-argument amongst the playing community before being gifted the deified title of 'official new rules'.

We never got around to making the rules for these pieces of Siege Artillery official (oops) and also managed to miss them out of not one, but two Warmaster annuals (oops, oops), so we thought it was high time these pieces of Siege Equipment got their own official rules (not least so that we could tidy up some of the slightly ropier aspects of their original experimental rules). It also seems that these rules are rather rarely used – perhaps because putting on a siege always seems like so much effort. With that in mind, we've also included a couple of new scenarios ideally suited to the use of Siege Artillery.



LARGE BASES

Many of the machines or pieces of artillery involved in sieges (and other battles for that matter, but predominantly sieges) are so massive in size that they require a larger, 60mm x 40mm base – a base with as big an area as an entire unit of infantry or cavalry!

In most respects, base size is unimportant, and you should find that units on these larger bases follow all the normal rules and won't cause any problems in games. Unless the following rules state otherwise, treat these large based units in exactly the same manner as their counterparts on 40mm x 20mm bases.

However, given that these units represent astonishingly huge artillery pieces and other arcane constructions, there are a few special rules which apply in order to account for their massive size, as well as a few considerations for dealing with tricky situations brought about by their larger bases.

Modelling Large Bases

The easiest way to make large bases for your siege machines is to take three normal sized, plastic Warmaster bases and glue them together along the long edges. This is quick and simple, but the bases are somewhat prone to wonkiness when stuck together, what with their bevelled edges and all, and might not lie too flat on the table.

More confident modellers would be well advised to cut appropriately sized bases from thick card or plasticard, available from most modelling shops.

Finally, yes, yes we know the Trebuchet doesn't quite fit on a 60mm x 20mm base (in fact, when the model was originally released, we advised players to base it on a 60mm x 60mm base). However, on a 60mm x 40mm it's only two slight protuberances on the sides of the Trebuchet which exceed the base size which isn't really any different to the normal levelled lances, outstretched swords and flailing horses' heads which normally stick off the edge of bases anyway.

Keeping the Trebuchet on a 60mm x 40mm base is much more convenient when it comes to using it in a game, since it allows units to be arranged around or against it in combat much more neatly.

If you want to brigade multiple Trebuchets together, just be sure to stick them to the base at different points so that their edges don't impede each other – brigades actually look more characterful this way anyway!

Units

Models on larger bases are arranged into units as normal, though obviously their extreme size means that ordinarily such units will consist of just a single stand, therefore having a unit size of one. The army lists indicate the unit's size in the normal manner.

Basing

As is normally the case for artillery, monsters and machines units on large bases should be oriented so that they are facing the short (in this case, 40mm wide) edge of the base.

It's also worth stating that large bases are a special provision for a few specific units – the large base isn't an alternative method of basing, or a way of basing multiple stands together or anything like that. The special rules for a unit will indicate whether a large base is needed – other units never use these larger bases for any reason.

Brigades

Units on large bases can be brigaded with other units in the normal manner. Up to four units may be brigaded in this way, and a brigade may consist of any mix of units on large bases, or the smaller, normal sized bases.

Orders may be issued to the brigade as a whole, but any successful orders can only be used for actions which all the units in the brigade are capable of. So, artillery on large bases (which are so large they cannot normally move) could not use a successful order to pivot (turning to face the target) if the rest of the brigade was composed of infantry (since infantry don't pivot). If the brigade was composed of multiple pieces of artillery on large bases it could use the order to pivot some or all of the units in the brigade – not all units have to take the same action following a successful order, they must merely be capable of it. Likewise, if a brigade consisted of a machine on a large base plus three units of infantry, a single order could be used to move all the units (since both machines, even ones on large bases, and infantry are allowed to move following a successful order).

ARTILLERY ON LARGE BASES

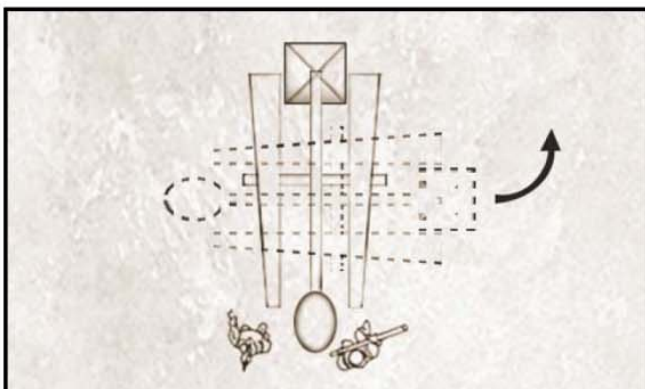
Artillery on large bases represent the largest and most destructive kinds of war machine, often used to batter castle walls and other fortifications, such as trebuchets, mangonels and bombards. Despite their size, these units still follow all the normal rules for artillery, so may shoot overhead, cannot pursue, and will be destroyed if forced to retreat. In addition, these exceptionally large pieces of artillery follow a few special rules of their own:

Cannot Move

While artillery is cumbersome and difficult to move at the best of times, these colossal weapons are simply rooted to the spot once deployed. They must be built or assembled on the spot and it may take many hours or even days to get them ready for use. Therefore, these weapons have no move, and cannot use their initiative. They may not be given orders, except to pivot, as described below.

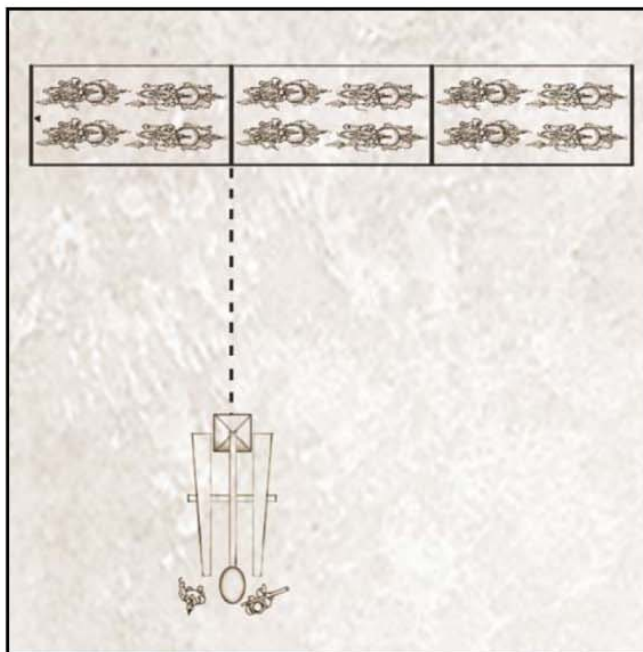
Pivot

During the battle, large artillery cannot be moved, except that it can be issued an order to 'pivot'. This allows the weapon to turn on the spot by up to 90 degrees to face a new target. This order cannot be a brigade order, unless several such weapons are brigaded together, in which case a single order will suffice for up to four weapons. If an order to pivot is failed, the weapon remains facing the original target and cannot shoot that turn.



Line of Fire

Artillery on large bases must always shoot 'straight ahead'. This is defined as directly forward of a line drawn from the centre of the base front edge. When first deployed the player must align the weapon so that it is facing the target. It is useful if the player declares exactly where the weapon is pointing when it is deployed, as this prevents any uncertainty should the model be accidentally knocked or picked up and admired.



Finding Range

When firing at fortifications such as walls, towers and gateways a 6 is normally required to score a hit with artillery. This is also the case for artillery on large bases, unless a hit has already been scored against the same target in a previous turn. Once a hit has been scored against a fortification target the weapon is assumed to have 'got the range' and any further shots against the same target in subsequent turns will hit on a 4+. This benefit is lost if the artillery pivots (and later pivots back) – only weapons which hit, and then remain continuously facing their target hit on a 4+ though they are able to shoot at different targets in the meantime (we can assume that the crew simply recall the necessary weight, amount of shot, elevation or whatever in order to return to their original range). In addition, any weapons in a brigade with a piece of artillery which has found its range are also able to hit the same target on a 4+.

Stand & Shoot

Artillery on large bases cannot shoot at an enemy that charges them. Such weapons are simply too big and cumbersome to stand their ground and shoot at rapidly approaching enemy.

Armour Saves

The incredible destructive force of artillery on large bases means that units never receive an Armour Saving throw when hit by a shot from such artillery – they and their armour alike are simply crushed, torn apart or otherwise gruesomely mangled by the ferocious shot.

SIEGE ARTILLERY

The following units represent Siege Artillery – units so preposterously massive that they could only practicably be used in a siege or for some other highly specific purpose. In a siege, the defender may purchase the following pieces of Siege Artillery from their army's points allocation.

BOMBARD

The Bombard is a primitive cannon, massive in size, firing shot several metres across, or else blasting out several dozen tightly packed cannon balls in a destructive spray of grapeshot.

Troop	Type	Attack	Has	Armour	Command	Unit Size	Points	Min/max	Special
Bombard	A	0/4+ bounce	3	0	-	1	90	-/1	*1

1. Bombard. The Bombard is a hefty construction, and must be based on a larger (60mm x 40mm) base. Consequently, it follows all the rules for artillery units on large bases, as explained on page 68.

Bombards are particularly large weapons, and hence have a range of 90cm when shooting. If shooting at a fortification at a range of 30cm or less, the Bombard may add +1 to the dice roll in addition to any other bonuses. Bombards are ferociously destructive at short range, but also very vulnerable to enemy action or counter fire.

When shooting against troops the Bombard gets a bounce exactly like any other cannon. This does not apply when shooting at walls/towers as the stonework will obviously stop the cannon ball and prevent it bouncing.

MANGONEL

The Mangonel is a colossal stone thrower, similar in design to the catapults and rock lobbers used by various armies, but capable of hurling stones so large that they can smash castle walls asunder with a single blow.

Troop	Type	Attack	Has	Armour	Command	Unit Size	Points	Min/max	Special
Mangonel	A	0/4	3	0	-	1	80	-/1	*1

1. Mangonel. The Mangonel is a hefty construction, and must be based on a larger (60mm x 40mm) base. Consequently, it follows all the rules for artillery units on large bases, as explained on page 68.

Mangonels are particularly large weapons, and hence have a range of 90cm when shooting. The Mangonel has a minimum range of 20cm as it is impossible to adjust its mechanism to shoot at closer targets. A target that is 20cm or closer cannot be shot at – units at less than this distance are also ignored for the purposes of firing at the closest target.

TREBUCHET

The Trebuchet is a very large weapon resembling a gigantic catapult or stone thrower. The Trebuchet relies on a weighted counterbalance (rather than the torsion of its ropes and firing mechanisms) to propel its load forwards, meaning that Trebuchets can far exceed the Mangonel in size. Trebuchets are typically used only in prolonged sieges, 'cause they take days to construct.

Troop	Type	Attack	Has	Armour	Command	Unit Size	Points	Min/max	Special
Trebuchet	A	1/6	4	0	-	1	120	-/1	*1

1. Trebuchet. The Trebuchet is a hefty construction, and must be based on a larger (60mm x 40mm) base. Consequently, it follows all the rules for artillery units on large bases, as explained on page 68.

Because of its immense size the Trebuchet has a range of 120cm. The Trebuchet has a minimum range of 20cm as the slingshot-like nature of the weapon makes it impossible to shoot at closer targets. A target that is closer than 20cm may not be shot at – units at less than this distance are also ignored for the purposes of firing at the closest target.

OTHER SIEGE EQUIPMENT

As well as the actually artillery and machines used to batter a castle's walls, besieging armies will also make use of a variety of novel means by which to get in where they shouldn't such as siege towers, ladders and so on. Sometimes more unique solutions to the problems of laying siege are found, such as employing Giants to bash the walls down or load heavy shot into the Siege Artillery at an inhuman rate! The following entry is a new piece of Siege Equipment which, like the other described in the Warmaster rulebook, can be purchased by the attacking player in a siege.



GIANT LOADERS

Chained and shackled Giants are sometimes employed as crew for the largest of siege engines and cannons, hoisting huge balls of iron around with the strength of a hundred men. Only machines or artillery on large bases can have Giant Loaders – smaller artillery is just too fiddly and the poor old Giant is liable to get his big clumsy fingers stuck in the workings or jammed in the barrel of the cannon.

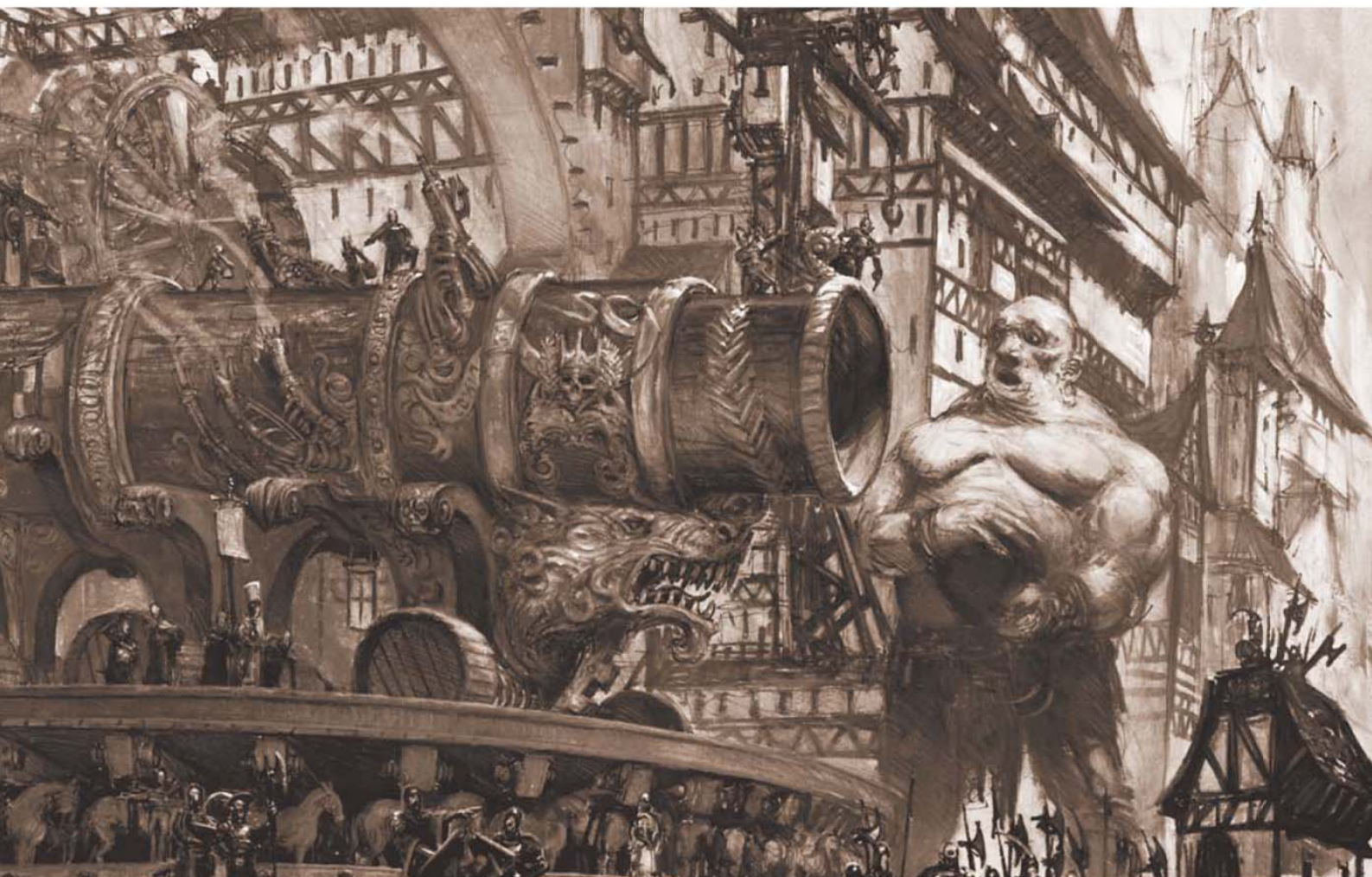
If a machine has a Giant Loader, the Giant is added to the machine's stand, and a suitable model should be included on the same base to represent this, in just the same way as artillery or machine crew are displayed on the model's base. The Giant and the machine count as a single stand in all respects.

The Giant can fight, but his shackles obviously hinder him somewhat, making him a (slightly) less intimidating proposition than the raucous, rampaging Giants that might be found elsewhere on the battlefield. Having been shackled for some time, he is also likely to be considerably less drunk – a substantial bonus when operating heavy machinery. For this reason, the Giant simply adds the bonuses to the machine's profile.

Troop	Type	Attack	Has	Armour	Command	Unit Size	Points	Min/max	Special
Giant Loader	S	+2	+1	-	-	-	50	-/1	*1

1. Giant Loaders. Giants are capable of lifting the huge ammunition required for massive cannons, pulling even the thickest of ropes to tension, cranking earthward the mightiest of levers or even dragging along the great machine itself. This makes the operation of Siege Artillery rather easier with a Giant in tow, which allows Siege Artillery with a Giant Loader to re-roll any failed order for reloading or pivoting. If the second roll is successful, the order is successful and the Orders phase continues as normal (ie, the character issuing the order can go on to issue further orders, etc). Orders for other types of action cannot be re-rolled.

Modelling Giant Loaders: Currently, we don't produce models of Giant Loaders so you'll have to convert one, should you wish to use it. There is, of course, a very fine Giant model in the Warmaster range (for the Orcs & Goblins and Chaos armies) which provides a perfectly suitable basis for conversion. Clipping the weapons from the model and sticking it onto the base of your chosen piece of Siege Artillery is easy enough, but additional detail can be added with chains, shackles or by repositioning the giant model, adding a cannonball to his hands and so on.



SCENARIO: SALLY OUT!

When attackers deploy siege artillery against a fortress, cannon and bowfire seldom possesses the range or power to repel it from the fortress walls. Instead, defending troops must sally out to strike at the enemy artillery and tear down the monstrous machines.

This battle (rather unsurprisingly) takes place around a besieged castle or fortress. Set up a castle or fortress on the defender's side of the board, not more than 40cm from the board edge. The castle does not need to cover the entirety of the defender's side of the table or anything like that, but it will need to be big enough to house a good portion of the defending army, as noted later.



Decide upon army size and pick your forces in whatever manner you and your opponent find agreeable (but remember the defender should have only half as many points available as the attacker). The attacker must also have at least one piece of Siege Artillery per full thousand points of his army.

First, the defending player must deploy at least half of his starting number of units within the castle.

Next, the attacking player must deploy all his Siege Artillery. This may be deployed as far onto the table as necessary for it to be within range of the castle. Simply measure out the maximum range of the weapon/s and deploy at this distance. Normally, this will be well within the attacker's normal deployment zone, so the artillery may still be deployed up to 20cm onto the table if this is the case.

Next, the rest of the defending army may be deployed anywhere within 20cm of the defender's board edge as normal. We can imagine that these units represent forces left outside the castle to guard the hinterlands, defend farmland or prevent the castle becoming encircled, or perhaps represent reinforcements arriving from nearby friendly cities.

The attacking player then deploys his entire army within 20cm of his own table edge and the game begins.

The attackers take the first turn.

During the game, the defender must attempt to destroy the enemy Siege Artillery. Since they are well out of range



of anything that can be fired from the walls, this will require a cunning counter-attack. The defender does have some troops already outside the castle, but these will be drastically outnumbered by the attacking army.

Instead, the defender will likely have to march out some of the units inside the castle to confront the attacking army. In addition, in this game, the defender has the option of making a sally with any cavalry housed in the castle, as described below.

SALLY

Sometimes a group of mounted troops may ride out suddenly from their fortified position to make a lightning attack on the besieging forces in the hope of driving them off, or at least holding them back temporarily, perhaps with the aim of allowing reinforcements or supplies to find a way through in the meantime.

Any mounted units may sally forth from their fortification during the Command phase. A sally is made on Initiative, and it is the only time Initiative may be used during a siege. The sallying units may charge any enemy units within Initiative 20cm of any gateway on the fortress. Once outside the walls, the sallying units behave exactly as normal.

Sallying troops may return to their fortification either by means of an order, by evading on Initiative or by means of a fall back after combat. If the distance of any such move is enough for the unit to completely cross the line of the nearest gateway, they are returned to the fortress.

At any time when sallying units emerge from or return to a fortress, it is obviously necessary to open the gates for a time to allow them to pass, though this of course runs the risk of a speedy enemy attacking the open gateway.

Whenever units leave or return to a fortress as part of a sally, the defending player must roll three dice and add the scores together. As long as the total score is less than the distance (in centimetres) to the nearest enemy unit, the gate is safely opened and closed before any enemy units can really respond. However, if the score is equal to or more than the distance to the nearest enemy, there is some delay or the enemy reacts especially quickly and you must leave the gates open. They can be closed by a successful order being given to any friendly unit on the gateway itself at any future point in the game.



Bonus Victory Points

The game continues until one army withdraws. Victory is then determined as normal, with the following special considerations.

Siege Artillery Still Standing If any of the attacker's Siege Artillery is still standing, the attacker can do no worse than draw (and in fact will be victorious, regardless of Victory Points, if he also broke the defending army).

Siege Artillery Destroyed If any of the attacker's Siege Artillery is destroyed at the end of the game, the defender can do no worse than draw (and in fact will be victorious, regardless of Victory Points, if he also broke the defending army).



SCENARIO: THE ARTILLERY TRAIN

Siege artillery pieces are massive constructions, tens or even hundreds of feet high, weighing in at several tonnes. Transporting such weapons is immensely difficult, slowing an army's march considerably, and often forcing it to take dangerous, open routes where the army becomes vulnerable to ambush since other, better guarded and less well seen routes, will simply be impassable with siege artillery in tow. Nonetheless, siege artillery must be transported in this way on occasion, since not every commander can rely on finding the materials necessary to build his machineries at his destination, nor can he rely on having the time to bring up such vast weapons before the enemy is upon him. When artillery is taken on campaign in this manner, it is formed into great trains at the rear of the army – sluggish and often poorly defended, these artillery trains are prime targets for attack.

In this battle, the defending player is a campaigning general en route to besiege an old rival, quarrelsome neighbour or other suitable target. The entire defending army (including the artillery train) is marching in column when ambushed by the attacking player. The defending army must include at least one piece of Siege Artillery for every full 1,000 points in the army. The battle takes place in a wooded valley – perfect for an ambush. Set-up the terrain as shown on the following map or in any similar way which you and your opponent can agree upon.

The defending army deploys first, in column, facing one of the short board edges. No defending unit should be closer than 50cm to any table edge and should form a vague 'column' in the middle of the table.

The attacking army may follow its targets for many days before springing its ambush, waiting to pick the perfect spot. The attacking player can therefore choose which table edge to deploy on and then deploys his entire army within 20cm of this table edge.

The attacking player takes the first turn.

The attacker is trying to destroy the enemy Siege Artillery before it can reach its target, while the defender is frantically trying to escape the ambush! Unlike in normal games, the Siege Artillery in this game can be moved, but cannot fire. Siege Artillery moves like a siege tower (ie, must have a unit in base contact with it, may only move once per Command phase). If a unit towing (or pushing) Siege Artillery is destroyed, the artillery remains in place and may be pulled by another unit. Siege Artillery being pulled in this manner moves at the speed of the unit pulling it, so cavalry can be used to draw up the artillery faster. However, only infantry, cavalry and monsters may be used to tow the artillery – never chariots or other artillery.

The game continues until one side withdraws, or all the Siege Artillery is destroyed.





ATTACKER'S VICTORY POINTS BONUS

All Siege Artillery Destroyed	Win!
Siege Artillery Piece Destroyed	+100 V.P.

For each piece of Siege Artillery destroyed, the attacker receives an additional +100 Victory Points.

DEFENDER'S VICTORY POINTS BONUS

Siege Artillery Piece Escapes	+100 V.P.
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For each piece of Siege Artillery which escapes via the short table edge indicated on the map, the defender receives an additional +100 Victory Points.



BLOODY WORK IS ITS OWN REWARD

Inquisitor warbands with a difference.

By Ben Dell

In this article, Ben Dell looks at Inquisitors who do not hog the lime light as great heroes of the Imperium. Infact some Inquisitors are just downright evil!

You were told that Inquisitor was a game of noble Inquisitors and evil villains. You were told that Inquisitors were the most incorruptible of Imperial servants. You were told that Inquisitors faced the darkness unafraid. (You were also told if bird-poo landed on your head it was good luck!) Everything you were told is a lie!

I want to show that not all Inquisitors are noble, that not all are staunch and powerful Imperial servants, and that not all face the darkness without doubts... and because of (not in spite of) these less 'heroic' qualities they can be some of the most interesting concepts and vivid characters in the game; and fun to play too.

The First, Last and Only Line of Defence

This article presents five sample concepts for slightly unusual

Inquisitor warbands along with their backgrounds and what makes them not just your average Inquisitors. The descriptions list a few plot ideas to get them involved in your campaigns and suggestions on how to model them.

Afterwards are some scribblings to highlight more facts which shows that Inquisitors aren't always the shining heroes we hoped – thoughts on the bloody work facing Inquisitors; how to use torture, prosecutions and investigation in your games.

So, without further ado...

1. Inquisitorial Agent to the Sector Inquisitor-Lord

• Concept

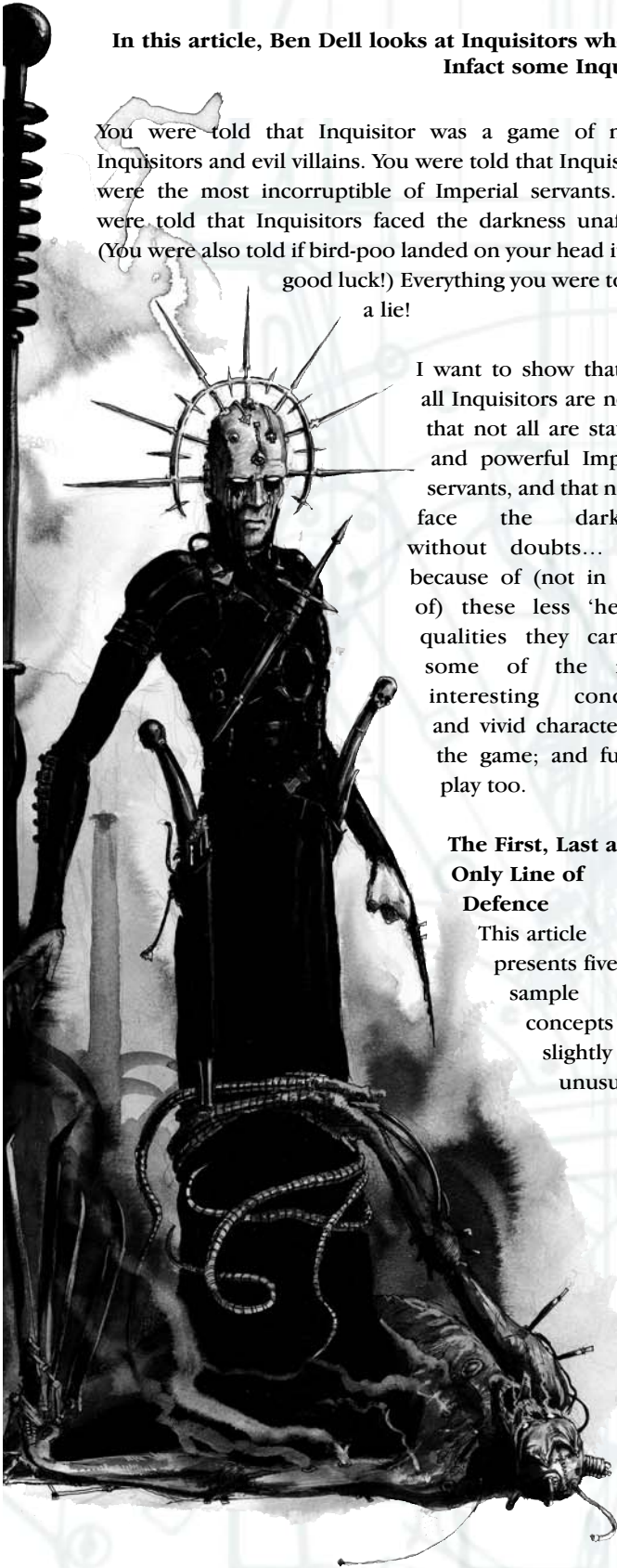
A recently-ordained, ambitious Inquisitor is becoming disillusioned because he serves the (often political) will of the Sector Inquisitor-Lord.

• Background

As an Ordo-Hereticus and an Amalathian this young Inquisitor is committed to maintaining a stable status quo, and believes in the system he serves. He has impressed his superiors from his earliest days and with much praise to his name it wasn't long before he was invited to join the retinue of the Sector's Inquisitor-Lord, as one of his Inquisitorial agents. Eager to perform well, he's undertaken increasingly difficult and sensitive missions, including bringing to task Radicals deemed to have gone too far.

One particularly sensitive mission to track a 'heretic' has caused him to question everything he once held true. The 'heretic' was a girl of eight whose only crime was to have been a concubine of a highly placed Ecclesiarch whose sermons on 'purity' had inspired religious purges in several systems. The Ecclesiarch and his purges were politically supported by the Inquisitor-Lord, so when the girl escaped and told people of the things she had endured it threatened the justification of the entire campaign. The Inquisitor-Lord quickly had to silence the girl and those she'd told. He dispatched his most trustworthy (and unquestioning) agent, thinking he was guaranteed to do whatever it took to maintain stability.

However, discovering the truth made the young Inquisitor falter and he spared the girl, smuggling her away. Since then, he has questioned his role and the motivations of his



master, looking back on those he hunted and the 'problems' he 'removed' and wondering if they were all heretics, or merely inconvenient to the Inquisitor-Lord's plans.

● Plot-Hooks

Will he become too disillusioned to continue his role? Will the Inquisitor-Lord discover the girl's not dead? What's become of her? Will the agent turn to a Radical viewpoint; perhaps becoming a Recongrigator, thinking it better to expose the scheming Inquisitor-Lord and the besmirched Ecclesiarch and risk the repercussions? Will he bury his doubts; becoming a cruel, uncaring tool of his master?

The warband can be given any mission the Inquisitor-Lord sees fit but the GM should throw in the odd 'moral dilemma' mission to push the Inquisitor one way or another; no one can swim in filth for long and still come up smelling of roses!

● Warband Members

The young Inquisitor has uncontroversial followers (no Daemonhosts/mutants) just one or two trusted colleagues; an old, roguish gunfighter and an Astropath. The rest of the team are made up from a squad of Inquisitorial Storm Troopers assigned by the Inquisitor-Lord (perhaps one or more of them have been set to spy on the young Inquisitor since the incident with the girl?).

● Modelling Ideas

The young Inquisitor agent would be easily represented by a simple Covenant conversion. There are acceptable models for the gunfighter (Slick Devlan) and Astropath (a Navigator conversion should do).

The Inquisitorial Storm Troopers would be well represented by the range of Imperial Guard models available, though stick to one or two body types to maintain a 'professional' look.

● Notes

The challenge of this warband is in charting the struggle felt by the Inquisitor. If a player can't handle a playing style that may see them trying to lose/fail in their objectives (as determined by the Inquisitor-Lord) or is just

playing the Inquisitorial agent with no ethical dilemma, then this warband isn't really suited to them.

● Resources

The prime resource for this group would be a Mentor. The Inquisitor-Lord is providing almost everything the group needs from Storm Troopers to ships; making it much more of a challenge should the Inquisitor turn against his old Mentor.

2. Training Xeno Kill-team

● Concept

A Xeno Kill-team used to train and toughen promising Interrogators before their final tests with their masters.

● Background

When trainees leave the Schola-Progenitum as Explicators and join their masters they undergo years of in-the-field training working to become Interrogators and, if they are lucky, Inquisitors. The Ordo Xenos Lord-Inquisitor for the sector has decreed that all worthy Interrogators undergo a period working for the Kill-teams; putting what they have learned into the bloodiest practice, before they can become Inquisitors. Some believe that the reason for this was that the Kill-teams were grinding up too many Inquisitorial Storm Troopers; regardless most now agree that the system seems to work very well and the mortality rate of the Interrogators isn't that high... really.

Each of the Kill-teams contain a small complement of Storm Troopers and 2/3 Interrogators. The most prestigious of these Kill-teams to be assigned to, is commanded by a Veteran Sergeant who has more individual confirmed xeno kills than the whole of most other Kill-teams (and incidentally, one of the best team survival rates).

● Plot-Hooks

Kill-teams are sent in when an Inquisitor requests them, so can be following any other Xenos Inquisitor's agenda. The Veteran Sergeant's specialities are seek-and-destroy missions deep within xenos infected areas. Very occasionally the Kill-teams will be loaned out to other Ordos with other missions in mind.



• Warband Members

The Veteran Sergeant will be a constant member of the group and cares about those in his command and in turning out Interrogators who have learned to command as well as obey. The other Storm Troopers will be veterans as well with their own specialities; a tunnel-rat pathfinder, a flamer trooper and demo-expert. The Interrogators will vary but might include a psyker and an all-rounder. Sometimes the Inquisitor who has requested the team will also accompany them. Vary rarely the team will work alongside one of the Deathwatch Marines.

• Modelling Ideas

The Veteran Sergeant is a Major Jaxon conversion, the tunnel-rat represented by Toothpick Murke and the flamer/demo-man by a Sergeant Stone conversion. The Interrogators could be any scaled down Inquisitor figure or a Slick Devlan or Enforcer conversion. Requesting Inquisitors can be any Inquisitor model and the Captain Artemis model is a Deathwatch Marine.

• Notes

One version of this warband you may like to try playing is using the team with younger versions of two player's Inquisitors (as the Interrogators) and using the adventures of the Kill-team to springboard into campaigns set later in the Inquisitor's careers; cue recurring villains and other great foreshadowing techniques.

• Resources

Followers can be appropriate for replacing Interrogators when they move on or wounded Storm Troopers with new recruits. Transport would be useful for the team as well.

3. Keeper of The Sepulchre-Library

• Concept

The Inquisitor is champion of a secret society dedicated to the protection of the Sepulchre-Library which includes tomes such

as one of the Grimoires of True Names and the Liberatus Necrosis.

• Background

For millennia a few of the most far-sighted Xanthites of the Ordo Malleus have met in a secret society to protect the many scrolls, tomes and items that their short-sighted brethren would destroy. The most senior of these Inquisitors know of and may visit the societies most valued asset; the Sepulchre-Library to help with their studies and their investigations. The society is controlled by the three most senior Inquisitors called the Sepulchral-Librarians.

Long-ago, the Sepulchral-Librarians decided they needed an Inquisitorial agent who served the Library only, who was unknown by any other Inquisitor and free to champion the causes of the Library; so it was that the role of Keeper of the Sepulchre-Library was born.

The current Keeper is a quiet, hollow-eyed man. He was marked at the Schola Progenitum and quietly disappeared in a 'freak-accident'. He was taken to the Library and his training became far more intense than even that of other Inquisitors, honing both his mystic and his martial prowess. Now he is ready to undertake the missions required of him by the Library that has come to mean more to him than even the Emperor. He knows that should he ever be caught by other Inquisitors he will not be recognised as one of their own and will be tortured and killed. The Librarians are confident he is ready and not a moment too soon; their auguries have identified great darkness in times ahead unless they act swiftly.



● Plot-Hooks

The Keeper can be dispatched for any number of reasons; to combat the evils that the Librarians have become aware of, to rescue an item of great significance to bring to the Library, to rescue a society member or silence him before he talks, etc. What are the secrets of the Sepulchre-Library? Why was it named that? Does it/did it serve another purpose?

● Warband Members

The Keeper's life is more lonely than other Inquisitors, no one outside the Society may know of the Library's or his existence so he may not have a retinue in the way that other Inquisitors may. He may, however, make use of those followers who will not betray his society; Servitors, Arco-flagellants, Daemonhosts. The Keepers are also trained in mental domination and often use it to create slave-allies from the weak willed for short periods (no more than a couple of hours).

● Modelling Ideas

The Keeper is a heavily converted Navigator figure, dark and foreboding. Other warband members may include Servo-skulls and Psyber-eagles (use giant eagles from WFB) as well as Servitors (converted Arco-flagellants) and a Daemonhost. Dominated slaves can look like any human figures (the Work Crew models would be particularly good).

● Notes

Because of his long relationship with the Library, the GM may decide to give the Keeper access to Chaos psyker powers (Inquisitor Annual 2).

● Resources

The most obvious resources for a Keeper of a library are Information and Base. The Keeper will also need Cover Identity to move around undetected.

4. Deranged Master-Mind Searching for 'Heroes'

● Concept

The Inquisitor, long presumed dead, works from the shadows proving his 'theory'

that by causing great catastrophes to the Imperium, even greater 'heroes' are discovered who will become the ultimate force against evil!

● Background

Heralded by many of his peers as one of the greatest Thorian minds in the Inquisition, this Ordo Hereticus Inquisitor commanded great respect. However, his last treatise was a radical departure where he claimed that every generation, hundreds were born with the potential to become something more than other humans, just like the Emperor (who would have been the first 'post-human', had he not been interred in the Golden-Throne).

These people could become great heroes; through their adversity they had the potential to be 'post-humans' discovering there were no limits to what they could do.

The only problem was that no one had yet succeeded in shedding all self-imposed limits, fears and concerns. Giving this speech in a crowded amphitheatre, the Inquisitor was ridiculed and called 'radical'.

The Inquisitor stormed out, then disappeared without trace and was not heard of again for decades. Now he's finished his (increasingly gruesome) experiments and is ready to prove his theories to those fools who mocked him! The Inquisitor's theories are based on a warped mix of Thorian and Istvaanian ideals; he intends to engineer catastrophic incidents on Imperial worlds, cause death to untold thousands to find those survivors strong-enough to start becoming a 'Potential', hone them into a fighting force and then push them as far as possible in hopes that one of them will become a true post-human and lead Mankind to its next state-of-being.



● Plot-Hooks

Scenarios that pit the Potentials against difficult odds and dangerous situations would be ideal for this Inquisitor. He can also generate plots for other teams as he tries to execute his catastrophes and recruit bewildered survivors. Do any of his Potentials have what it takes? Is he a genius or crazy? If he's right, what would a true post-human be like; a saviour? A monster without-compassion? Something beyond comprehension?

● Warband Members

The Inquisitor has Potentials he has been grooming since his experiments, and although they are impressive, he believes none of them will go the whole way. These first Potentials are scarred and have endured so much that they barely qualify as human anymore; drugs, conditioning, implants, torture have all been used to create these creatures. Experiments cannot go any further, he's decided it's time to test his theories in the field, so his newest recruits have not been subjected to such treatment as his first attempts though they may still undergo brainwashing. Potentials come from any walk-of-life; mutants, psychics, soldiers, shepherds, space-farers etc. Some examples are; a young farm-hand with vast psychic-potential, a mutant with incredible regenerative-properties, an ambitious Navigator accelerating his mutation-rate to become the greatest Paternova ever, and a psychotic experimental super-soldier.

● Modelling Ideas

The Inquisitor is old and wizened; an Eisenhorn/Scarn-mix conversion. The Potentials vary; the longer they've been with the Inquisitor the more enhanced and 'scary' they will be. The farm-boy is a Damian Bloodhound conversion with an Eldar long-las. The mutant and Navigator have acceptable models to convert. The psycho-soldier is a Sergeant. Stone/Arco-flagellant conversion.

● Notes

The Inquisitor may determine that one type of Potential is more likely to

succeed – perhaps all Potentials need True Grit or Heroic. The GM may decide if the Inquisitor's theories are true – if they are, and one of the Potentials approaches the threshold of being a post-human, will they develop unusual abilities? Perhaps there is no limit to their strength (Wyrld: Warp Strength) or they become resistant to damage (Daemonic: Invulnerable/Impervious).

● Resources

Followers would be important to the Inquisitor, as they would represent his team of Potentials. Deals could represent an interested group of backers, but why are they willing to help out?

5. Vengeful Blind Daemonhunter

● Concept

The Inquisitor is a fiery Monodominant who cut out his eyes after he was 'gifted' with Warp-sight by a seductive daemonhost.

● Background

This Malleus Inquisitor was staunchly Puritan and believed that all mutation/taint, no matter how small, was the sign of the daemon's hold on the heart, so he purged mutant and daemon with equal ferocity. What no-one knew was; the Inquisitor was plagued by dreams of a dark-eyed woman. He knew she was daemon, and that destiny had tied them together. Though he never recalled the dreams; every night he'd wake screaming and every morning he'd castigate himself, to drive the dreams out.

One evening in the private bed-chambers of his secure base the woman-creature appeared from nowhere by him and kissed him, long and sensually. Shocked, he stood there, discovering he was enjoying the tender touch.

Revulsion coursed through him and he pushed her away, reviling her with ancient-litanies. She looked





unperturbed, telling him he could never abjure her, for the fates had joined them, they were to be locked together for eternity; they shared one soul. Horrified yet fascinated, his words faltered, she told him he was not who he thought he was. Knowing in his heart she spoke the truth he spat out the word “liar” and with hatred he had never before known, hurled himself at her, unarmed. The daemon-woman was easily the stronger and laughed in his face as if they were playful lovers, finally she tired of the game and pinned him to the floor. She bent down and kissed both of his eyelids sending bolts of unimaginable agony through his brain; told him soon he would see the truth, see what lay in his own heart and beg her to come back and start their eternity together. With that, she disappeared.

The Inquisitor stood up slowly, his vision felt strange – his chamber looked flat, lifeless; he moved to his mirror and stared at himself. What he saw was not himself as he knew he looked; instead he saw his thoughts, feelings, his life-blood, his anima and an impenetrable black cloud he knew to be his soul. Looking at it made him sick and he dashed the mirror on the floor. His companions ran in, having heard the noise. He looked at them and all he saw was the colours of their thoughts, their emotions, the dark stains of their sins and guilt. With a heart-breaking howl, before anyone could stop him he grabbed a shard of mirror and cut his eyes out, cursing the creature all the time. Finally his companions restrained him and he passed-out.

The Inquisitor is now blind, no bionic parts have worked in restoring his sight and his eye sockets refuse to stop bleeding. He will not rest, and is feverishly working to track the daemon-woman.

● Plot-Hooks

The Inquisitor will travel across the galaxy for scraps of information if he believes it will bring him closer to the creature who cursed him. Who/what is the daemon-woman? Did she tell the truth? What did it all mean? Is the Inquisitor searching for her to kill her, or because he is obsessed with her?

● Warband Members

To compensate for his blindness the Inquisitor has commissioned a special auspex Servo-skull to help him and utilises another with a gun (he cannot use one). He has a shoulder-mounted MIU psi-cannon as the Warp-sight sometimes returns, particularly when he is around daemons. His companions are those who were with him when the incident occurred, those he hasn't alienated and driven away with his crazy talk.

● Modelling Ideas

The Inquisitor is easy to model; Covenant with a head swap; modelling putty (or food-bag ties) wrapped around the head over the eye sockets would be the easiest way to simulate bandages over the missing eyes. Remaining warband members are the most loyal of his old followers; Imperial Guard veterans, gun men, Enforcers etc.

● Notes

The GM should devise a test so each turn the player can determine if the Inquisitor sees anything with his Warp-sight; ie, on a D6 roll of 6 he sees everything with the Warp-sight (anything Daemonic is automatically seen).

● Resources

The Inquisitor has a secure base-of-operations from which to work, he also has a good spy network trying to find rumours of the creature so he has Information.

If any of these concepts have appealed to you feel free to use them; if not, then hopefully at least one small part has given you the inspiration for your own ideas. Now you have these Inquisitors, what do you do with them?

Investigations and Prosecutions

So, what do Inquisitors do all day when they aren't killing each other and blowing up barrels of promethium? Many Inquisitors, particularly as they get older, delve into research, teaching acolytes and writing papers. That's all well and good for those Inquisitors in semi-retirement but the bulk of most Inquisitors' lives are taken up with investigation.

Investigations

Investigations is a generic term for spying, covert surveillance, coercing, following rumours, chasing enemies, routing out evil-doers, looking for clues, researching in libraries and lots and lots of questioning people. Investigation is generally the bit that occurs before a game/battle when the Inquisitor is finding out what is going on and who it is he has to smite. Occasionally a battle or linked campaign will involve Investigation directly into the game. I can't present any systems for using Investigation in your games as there are too many possibilities, but they often involve making Sagacity tests or using the Awareness rules.

Unofficial New Ability: Augury

One way in which many Inquisitors aid their Investigations is with the use of Augury, the most common form being in the reading of the Emperor's Tarot. The use of Augury is not exactly a psychic phenomenon, more of a belief in the mystic and personal intuition but even the most ultra-puritan Inquisitor cannot object to the Emperor's Tarot. In game terms; for every action (up to a

maximum of five) spent consulting the Augury, the Augur can add +/-10% to any 1 percentile test in the next turn only. At the end of the actions consulting the Augury, the Augur must make a successful Sagacity roll to interpret it (if it is failed the GM can apply the bonus to any one roll of a character on the opposition team in the next turn). The whole amount must be used for the Augur's action (or those of anyone he can spend a minimum of one action communicating with, before the end of the turn the Augury was made in). Some Augury styles are: Emperor's Tarot, Rune-casting, Reading-the-bones, Crystal-gazing, Divining.

Prosecutions

Prosecutions are different from investigations because the Inquisitor already has evidence against a target and begins with the intention of bringing them to justice and proving them guilty. Investigations are speculative, and the perpetrators often unknown, prosecutions are definite and targeted against someone; prosecutions are the grudge-matches of Inquisitor. The tactics of pursuing prosecutions include; ambushes, honey-traps, raids, man-hunts and bounties, confiscations to seize evidence, impounding of transport, roadblocks and the excruciation and torture of suspects.

Unofficial New Rules: Torture

Torture takes many forms, from the purely psychological to the more DIY use of hammers and industrial-pliers, from hot pokers and thumbscrews to savage beatings. From the time of their apprenticeships, most Inquisitors are fully trained in the use of and uses for, a multitude of torture methods. Perhaps the most fiendish of all these items is the Excruciator. The Excruciator is the name for a multitude of torture machines using a range of (often quite high-tech) methods. They range in size from ones



that fill entire rooms, to ones installed in mono-tasked Servitors, to ones small enough to fit into a pouch. It is these small innocuous looking boxes that are most likely to turn up in a game of Inquisitor (see the new item below).

Torture

Most torture takes place over a period of time, sometimes hours, most often days or weeks. The rules for torture with any implement (except an Excruciator) are as follows: Every time period (GM decision whether this is hours, days or weeks) the Torturer selects a stat from the list below and the Captive and the Torturer must make opposing stat rolls. If the Captive wins, the Torturer may not select that stat for D6 time periods. If the Torturer wins the Captive loses 10% from that stat. If the Torturer wins five tests in a row the Captive is broken and will reveal everything. If the Torturer wins ten tests in a row they may begin to reprogramme the Captive. In addition, the tools used will give a +10% advantage to the Torturer in certain stat tests (see below).

As you can see things are heavily stacked so that eventually the Torturer will grind the Captive into submission. This may seem unfair but the point of torture is that it doesn't stop till you break the Captive.

Most torture will be done between games of Inquisitor, the most common reason for torture to appear actually during an Inquisitor game is in trying to get information from a Captive before a rescue attempt is made. In game terms; the time period for tests becomes turns, if there has been no out-of-game torture tested for, reduce D6 of the Captive's stats by 1-5 D10 depending on how long he's been captured (1D10-hours, 2D10-a few days, 3D10-a week, 4D10-weeks, 5D10-a month or more). Remember if the captive does break during the game, each action is only long enough for a short sentence to be revealed and the Captive may 'pause for breath' once a turn to delay.

Torture Tools

The stats which can be contested by Torturers and Captives are given below, in brackets are the techniques/tools which gain the +10% advantage.

Basic Torture Chambers Techniques

(Can be improvised in simple locations)

- **Toughness:** resistance of physical damage (Methods: Damaging Implements: Pliers, hammers, whips, beatings. In addition, for each time period of this torture add D6 to the Injury total of the Captive, regardless of test outcome).

- **Leadership:** to resist psychological torture (Methods: Psychological: humiliation, degradation, convincing of betrayal/abandonment by companions).

- **Initiative:** to avoid confusion and fatigue (Methods: Deprivation Techniques: starvation, bright lights, darkness, no sleep, temperature extremes).

Advanced Torture Chamber Techniques

(Require a more controlled set-up)

- **Willpower:** to resist chemicals and truth agents (Methods: Chemicals: depressants, truth serums, mild poisons, hallucinogenic)

- **Sagacity:** to resist aversion techniques (Methods: Aversion Techniques: sparking wires near the eyes, burns, electrocution when answers-back, partial drowning/asphyxiation. In addition, add D3 to the Injury totals of the Captive, regardless of test outcome).

- **Nerve:** to resist pain/fear of pain (Methods: Pain Infliction: Pokers, thumb screws, Iron Maiden. In addition add D3 to the Injury totals of the Captive, regardless of test outcome).

Unofficial New Equipment: *The Excruciator*

No two Excruciators are exactly the same and many are ancient pieces from the Dark Age of Technology but here is what a 'typical' one might do:

The bulk of the item is a black box, connected to it are a dozen wires ending in sharp, barbed needles. On one side of the box is a small data-pad screen. The box is connected to the body of the 'subject' (painful and damaging in itself as the barbed needles are big) some of the needles act as IVs delivering chemicals causing nausea, disorientation, truth serums and (as an occasional 'carrot') pleasure-inducing chemical cocktails. The remaining needles stimulate nerve-endings causing crippling pain without damaging the body. The screen monitors life signs and acts as a lie detector.

Excruciators work like all other torture techniques but hand-held ones get +5% to all opposed rolls (not +10% to just one type). Mono-task Excruciator Servitors get +10% to all rolls and room-size Excruciators get +15% to all rolls.

The Ones That (almost) Got Away

A compilation of scenarios forwarded by Jake Thornton

Jake: Over the last few months I've collected a few Mordheim scenarios that are fun to play, but just don't really have a home in the magazine. A single scenario's just too small to make an article on its own, but now I've got three of them to hand, I thought I'd make a sort of 'pot-luck supper' of them – a small collection of rather different scenarios, from three different contributors.

First up, we have the third of the Halfling scenarios that Mark Havener sent us with the Moot article (printed back in issue 7). At the time we had to lose one of them for reasons of space, but now, at last, we can finally allow you to join in the saga of Geefer Lugbottom and the Bindleberry pies...

Scenario: The Recipe

Geefer Lugbottom has stumbled upon an amazing new recipe for Bindleberry pie. It's rumoured that once a Halfling tastes one of Geefer's new pies, the poor sod will not be satisfied with pies of any other sort. The other chefs of the region have heard the rumours of this fantastic new recipe, and each has decided to teach Geefer a lesson in sharing. So, while Chef Lugbottom transports a batch of his new pies to market, plans are set in motion...

The game can be played by two or more players. Each warband has been hired by one of Geefer's rivals to kidnap the pie master and return him for some harmless 'questioning'. Any pies that are brought back intact earn a lesser reward, as they may be useful in recreating the recipe, even without their creator's input.

Geefer & The Guards

Halfling Guards

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

Special Rules:

Brave: Bolstered by a fine meal of Geefer's pies, the guards ignore any Psychology tests they may be called upon to take.

Equipment:

Bow, shortsword (counts as sword), dagger.

Geefer Lugbottom

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

Special Rules:

Bold: Geefer knows that the plans his enemies have in store for him are dire indeed, and his fortunes rely on getting his pies safely to market. He will not give up easily. Consequently, he ignores any Psychology tests he may be called upon to take.

Keep Him Alive!:

All attacks on Geefer suffer a -1 penalty to hit, as the attacker attempts to incapacitate the chef without seriously damaging him.

Equipment:

Rolling pin (counts as a club), paring knife (counts as a dagger).

At the end of each game turn, after all players have acted, Lugbottom and his guards get to take a special turn. The guards will not charge away from the cart, instead preferring to use the vehicle as cover and shoot at the attackers. If any guard is engaged by the enemy, roll a D6: on a 1-3 the nearest guard charges in to help, on a 4-6 the guards all continue to shoot. If Geefer is attacked in close combat, all guards who can legally charge warriors engaged with Geefer will do so.

TERRAIN

Each player takes it in turn to place a piece of terrain, either a building, set of hedges or walls, hill, section of forest, section of swamp, river or stream, or similar item or terrain appropriate for Empire in Flames. There should be a road that runs through the centre of the table, to represent the road to market upon which Geefer is travelling.

SPECIAL RULES

Geefer and his six guards are huddled around the chef's pie cart when the warbands approach. One of the pie cart's wheels has hit a large rock in the road and the axle has been damaged. The guards are attempting to repair the cart, but it will not be mobile before the end of this encounter.

At the end of each game turn, after all players have acted, Lugbottom and his guards get to take a special turn. The guards will not charge away from the cart, instead preferring to use the vehicle as cover and shoot at the attackers. If any guard is engaged by the enemy, roll a D6: on a 1-3 the nearest guard charges in to help, on a 4-6 the guards all continue to shoot. If Geefer is attacked in close combat, all guards who can legally charge warriors engaged with Geefer will do so.

LOOTING THE CART

Instead of attacking Geefer or his guards (or another warband), warriors may attempt to loot the pies in the cart instead. To loot the cart, a warrior must end his move in contact with it, and must do nothing else until his next turn (no shooting, no magic, no close combat, etc). A Henchman may carry one pie, a Hero may carry two; however, note that a model noted as an Animal (Hounds, Squigs, etc, may NOT carry any pies – they'd just eat them).

Any warrior who is attacked while carrying one or more pies must pass a successful Initiative test to not drop them (making them worthless). A warrior carrying pies may not cast spells, shoot ranged weapons, or attack in close combat. If a warrior who is carrying pies is attacked in close combat, he automatically goes last and loses one attack as he gently sets his pies down and prepares for combat (these penalties are ignored if the warrior failed his Initiative test, or chose to drop the pies – which has the same effect as a failed test). A warrior may walk at normal pace while carrying pies, but any warrior who runs must pass an Initiative test to prevent them from being dropped. There are 3D6+6 pies in the cart (roll at the start of the game).

SET-UP

All players roll a D6 to see who deploys first, with the player rolling highest choosing a table edge and setting up first. If there are two players, then the next player sets up on the opposite board edge. If there are more than 2 players, the remaining players choose sides and set up their warbands

based on the order of their dice rolls, highest to lowest. A player must set up his warband within 8" of his table edge, but not within 4" of a side edge, and not within 10" of another player's warband. Keep in mind that more than four players should be accommodated with a larger battlefield than normal (see the "Chaos in the Streets" article on multi-player games in the Best of Town Cryer, page 30).

STARTING THE GAME

Players each roll a D6 with the one that rolls highest going first. Play proceeds clockwise around the table (based on where players placed their warbands) from there.

ENDING THE GAME

The game ends when Geefer and his guards are all taken *out of action* and all warbands but one have failed their Rout test. Warbands that rout automatically lose. If one of more warbands have allied when the other warbands have all routed, they may choose to share the victory and end the game, or they may continue the game until one warband is victorious. If all warbands have been routed while Geefer or any of his guards are still in play, all warbands are considered to have lost.

In addition to normal Exploration money, the following rewards await the warbands taking part in this scenario:

A winning warband is considered to have captured Geefer (if two or more warbands decide to share the win, they have to decide which one gets to turn him in for a reward). Turning in Geefer is worth 5D6gc.

Any pies that have not been ruined may also be turned in. Any pies held by a warband which routed ARE kept by that warband when they run and may be turned in. Pies turned in are worth 1gc each for a non-winning warband, or half that amount, rounded up to the nearest gc, for a winning warband (they aren't as important if Geefer is turned in as well). A winning warband gets any pies which are held by its warriors, or still in the cart at the end of the game.

EXPERIENCE

+1 Survives. If a Hero or Henchman group survives the battle they gain +1 Experience.

+1 Winning Leader. The leader of the winning warband(s) gains +1 Experience.

+1 Per Enemy Out of Action. Any Hero earns +1 Experience for each enemy he puts *out of action*.

+1 Turns in Pies. Any Hero who turns in one or more pies +1 Experience.

Jake: This scenario has also been on my desk for a long time. It's built around a single simple idea which makes it a strong theme that people can easily grasp – often the key to a memorable scenario. Anyway, enough of me, here's Chris. Oh, and watch the skies...

Scenario: Happy Harpy Hunting Grounds

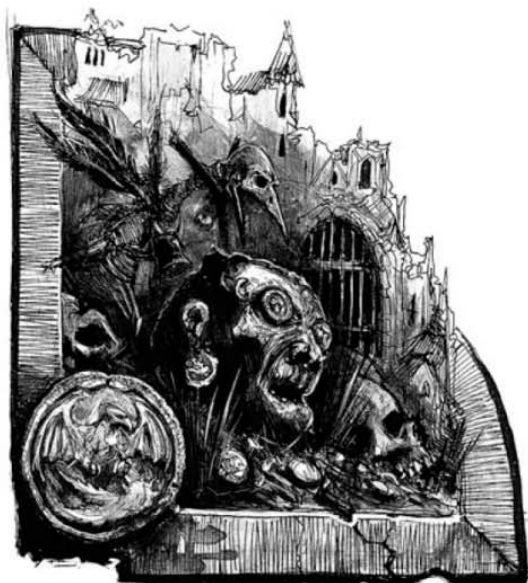
The ruined buildings of Mordheim are home to many strange and fantastical creatures, a number of which are the subjects of rumours about hidden riches. Occasionally warbands will attempt to discover whether these rumours are true. Most of the time these adventurers are never seen again, but often enough they return laden with treasures; often enough, that is, to convince the rest that it's worth a try...

A group of three Harpies have nested in one of the tall buildings in the edge of the ruined city, and their scavenging and attacks on unfortunate warbands has ensured a sizeable stash of valuables. In fact, the Harpies have been nesting on some rather sizeable shards of wyrdstone closely resembling eggs of a sort. Partially due to their maternal instinct and probably due to the corrupting influence of the wyrdstone the Harpies have grown extremely protective of their nest and will guard it to the death if need be.

Set-up:

The scenario is for three players, one of whom controls the Harpies.

Normal set-up rules for a Skirmish (rulebook p127) apply, but make sure you set one of the taller buildings (6" or taller) in the centre of the playing area. The top of this is where the Harpies have built their nest. Ladders may be placed in nearby buildings, but none in the building occupied by the Harpies.



Roll a D3 to determine how many wyrdstone shards are included. The nest is also full of various items. The winning warband may roll on the chart provided to determine what is contained in the nest.

The Harpies go first before any of the warbands.

Winning the Scenario:

A warband wins if all three Harpies have been taken out of action and the other warband has routed.

The Harpies win if both of the warbands rout before the Harpies have all been taken *out of action*.

Harpy Nest Contents:

Besides the wyrdstone the following items may be in the Harpy nest. Roll 1D6 per line. On the number shown, or better, the item is present.

D6	Item
5+	2D6gc
3+	Jewelled dagger
5+	Heavy armour
6+	Ithilmir sword
3+	Gems worth 30gc
6+	Wolf cloak (See 2002 Mordheim Annual)
5+	Straggler*
3+	Lucky charm
4+	D3 shields
5+	D3 helmets
6+	D3 swords

*Somehow this unfortunate sod was whisked away to the Harpy nest. What they had planned for him is unknown, but he may aid you in your Exploration phase either this game or next (see p136 of the rulebook).

Experience

+1 Survives. If a Hero or Henchman group survives the battle they gain +1 Experience.

+1 Winning Leader. The leader of the winning warband(s) gains +1 Experience.

+1 Per Enemy Out of Action. Any Hero earns +1 Experience for each enemy (including Harpy) he puts *out of action*.



Harpies

The Harpies are jealously protective of the wyrdstone in their nest. If any model approaches within their charge range then they will charge. The Harpies will try and coordinate their attacks so at least one stays back and protects the nest. Therefore, a Harpy may disengage from a fallen enemy model if there is an opportunity for one of its companions to charge another model.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Harpy	4	4	0	4	4	2	2	2	6

Special Rules:

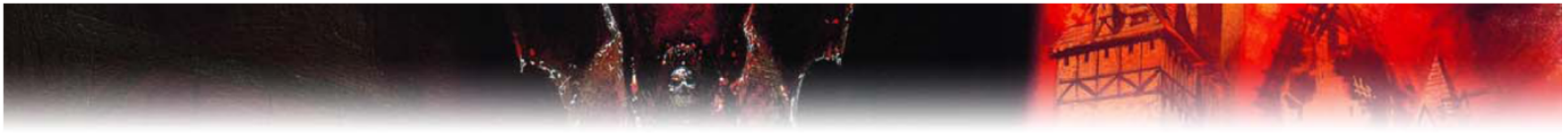
Fly: A Harpy may fly up to 12". After the Movement phase the model is assumed to have landed and may be charged. If on the ground, a Harpy may make a full move and then use its wings.

Talons: A Harpy has talons and is accustomed to fighting unarmed so does not suffer a penalty for doing so.

Drop Attack: If a Harpy is successful with both attacks in the first round of combat then the Harpy has successfully grabbed on to her enemy and swoops back up in the air to

drop the model allowing gravity to do the work instead. The attacks themselves do not wound, but the person controlling the Harpy immediately rolls a D6 and a Scatter dice. That is the distance and direction from the place where the attack took place that the model will rest. Next the player controlling the Harpy rolls another D6. This is the distance from which the model has been dropped. The result is the Strength of hit (Str 1 to Str 6). Normal falling rules apply. If a model falls into a building then count the fall to where they land and then determine if the model falls again if it is within 1" of the edge of the floor. Any model that is struck by the dropped model will suffer a S3 hit. Large targets may only be dropped D3 inches since their size and weight make them more difficult to pick up. Once its opponent is dropped the Harpy may continue flying and return to the nest, preparing for another attack. Models that are stunned or knocked down will not be charged as it is too difficult for the Harpy to fly that close to the ground and do a drop attack.

Will not rout: The Harpies have mistaken the wyrdstone in their nest for Harpy eggs and will fight to the death to protect them.



Jake: Finally we have the most bizarre of the scenarios I have for you today, but also in a way the one most fitting to the mad world of post-comet Mordheim. It's all about those big, smelly brutes so beloved of the Orcs: boars. Well, sort of. It might actually be about wyrdstone, or maybe it's just about having a good scrap. You decide.

Scenario: Round-up at the Mordheim Corral

Giovanni was a travelling merchant, and not a very good one. Perhaps it was his choice of wild boar as merchandise; perhaps it was his accent, but whatever the case he'd been kicked out of every town on this side of the Reik. Mordheim was his last hope.

He approached the ruined city with some trepidation, and the sprawled bodies near the gates didn't make him feel any easier. Mind you, beggars can't be choosers, and as there was nobody else about he examined a few of the bodies to see if they had any easily portable wealth. There were a few trinkets, but most intriguingly there was a handful of green stones that glowed with a faint inner light. This must be the fabled wyrdstone. Giovanni smiled. At last his luck had changed.

Whistling merrily to himself, Giovanni and his assistants herded his charges through the streets, looking for somewhere to put his boars on show. Soon he came across the old market place, complete with pens for livestock – the perfect site. He really was in luck today. Giovanni and his hapless assistant were attempting to guide the boars into an old pen when he slipped and fell. The boars may be thick-skulled, but they know an opportunity when they see one and they jumped on him.

His assistants tried to intervene; all but one were trampled, gored and tusked in the fray, and soon there wasn't much left of 'lucky' Giovanni and his men. The boars, on the other hand, were loose. Their taste of merchant mixed with the wyrdstone they had wolfed down at the same time (that had been hiding in the pockets of the unfortunate Giovanni) all added to their naturally belligerent, vicious and mean character making them even nastier than usual. On the other hand, word from the sole survivor soon travelled throughout Mordheim: there's a bunch of boars running around Mordheim with wyrdstone in their stomachs...

Terrain

Each player takes it in turn to place a piece of terrain, either a ruined building, tower, or other similar item. We suggest that the terrain is set up within an area roughly 4' x 4'. The centre of the area should be empty to represent a pen or open area for the boars to run off in a random direction. This could be a good scenario to set in the Market Square (located in the North-east section of Mordheim – see the map in either the old Necromunda magazine or on the website).

Set-Up

All players roll a D6 and whoever rolls highest chooses which warband sets up first. If more than two warbands, please use Mordheim Annual 2002 page 27 Diagram 1.

Starting the Game

Roll a D6. The player rolling highest has the first turn, and order of play proceeds clockwise around the table (based on where players placed their warbands).

Ending the Game

The game ends when all warbands but one have failed their Rout test. If two warbands are left they may ally together to end the game. This should be agreed before game begins. Routing can only happen by losing 25% of your troops. No voluntary routing.

Experience

+1 Survives. If a Hero or Henchman group survives the battle they gain +1 Experience.

+1 Winning Leader. The leader of the winning warband(s) gains +1 Experience.

+1 Per Enemy Out of Action. Any Hero or Henchman group earns +1 Experience for each enemy he puts out of action. This includes boars put *out of action*.

+1 per Wyrdstone Counter. If a Hero or Henchman group is carrying a wyrdstone counter at the end of the battle, he receives +1 Experience.

Special Rules

Once you have placed the terrain, place D3 + 1 boars for each warband involved in the game. All boars start in the middle of the table. The boars will go first.

In this scenario, boars move in one of two ways. If there is a non-boar model within 7" then they will charge the nearest one they can reach. Otherwise, use a Scatter dice and 2D6 to determine direction and distance of the movement of each boar. If a boar moves into a non-boar model anyway, then it counts as a charge.

Each boar must be killed in order to search for wyrdstone. No boar would allow anyone to perform a cavity search whilst it was alive...

When the boar is killed the warrior must roll a D6 to search for wyrdstone. On a 1-3 the warrior cannot locate the stomach of the boar and must wait next turn to try again (yuck!). On a 4-6 the warrior has located the stomach or intestines of the boar. He then rolls a D3 to determine how many shards of wyrdstone he's found. If more than one model is in contact with a dead boar the second (and subsequent) may try to find the wyrdstone if the first fails.

Wyrdstone can't be transferred to another warrior. Animals cannot carry wyrdstone, but can cause a kill. If a warrior carrying wyrdstone is killed, stunned or knocked down then place wyrdstone counters beside it to represent the dropped items. These may be picked up by anyone who's allowed to carry it.

War Boar

Large, ferocious and bad-tempered – a perfect mount for an Orc Warlord. Orc warbands occasionally make use of these noisome beasts while exploring the ruins of Mordheim and beyond. It isn't common though, as the bigger and meaner Orcs tend to take the boars for themselves.

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Boar	7	3	0	3	4	1	3	1	3

A boar has an Armour Save of 5+.

Special Rules

Ferocious Charge: Orc war boars attack with +2S when charging, due to their bulk. Note that this applies only to the boar, not the rider.

Thick Skinned: The thick skin and matted fur of the boar makes him very hard to wound. Boars confer an additional +1 bonus to the rider's Armour Save (making +2 total).

If an Orc Hero (not Henchmen) comes in contact with a boar he may roll 2D6 to try and tame it. On a 10 or higher the boar can be tamed and the boar will discharge D3 wyrdstone for the Orc Hero. Sounds nasty, but Orcs don't really care about the smell. Anyway the Orc would make a Goblin or Snotling clean off the wyrdstone for him.



Optional Rules

On the beginning of the war boars' second turn they may begin to mutate due to the wyrdstone they have swallowed. Roll a D6 per boar. On a 5+ they mutate that turn. Once mutated the boar will not mutate further. Roll on the table below for the mutation each boar gets:

D6 Mutation

- 1 Tentacle:** A tentacle emerges from the boar's body. It may use this to grapple its opponent in close combat to reduce his attacks by -1, down to a minimum of 1. The boar may choose which attack is lost.
- 2 Blackblood:** If the boar loses a wound in close combat, anyone in base contact with it suffers a S3 hit (that will not cause a critical) from the spurting corrosive blood.
- 3 Spines:** Any model in base contact with the boar suffers an automatic S1 hit at the beginning of each Close Combat phase. Spines will never cause critical hits.
- 4 Scorpion tail:** The boar's tail changes and grows a poisoned barb. It gets +1A per turn in close combat. This attack is at S5 (or S2 if the target is immune to poison).
- 5 Hideous:** The boar causes *fear*.
- 6 Scales:** Armour Save increases to 3+.

DUST FALLS

By John French & 'Harry' Harrington

Jake: This month we see some more of the gangs from the Dust Falls campaign, together with a couple more of the scenarios they've come up with. I think the guys have done a great job of adding extra character and detail to their gangs, giving each of them a story and a background which they can then carry over onto their models and even their styles of play.

THE BROTHERHOOD OF THE TRUE RESURRECTION

A House Cawdor Necromunda Gang

By Alan Bligh

When I was asked by my friend Harry if I would like to join in a Necromunda campaign I didn't have to think hard about a reply. It had been a while since my old gang, (an Escher outfit that went by the name of the Nightside Hellions) had last stalked the Underhive in search of guilder creds and glory, and it would be good to get back into gang warfare again. I'd always enjoyed Necromunda;

in particular I'd always liked its aspect as a campaign game and the fun that could be had clashing repeatedly with your mates to come out on top. So this would be an excellent chance for me come up with a new gang to play, get some use out of my shiny Underhive rulebook, pick up and convert some new miniatures (not that I ever need an excuse), and lastly (but not least) get some cool games in.

CHOOSING THE GANG

My first job was to choose who my new gang would be. Other than wanting to do something different to the Escher, I had a pretty open mind on this one. Now there

The Redemptionist spat a guttural mixture of obscenities and fevered prayers through the snarling mouth of his battered iron mask. He thrashed on the dusty ground in the circle of light, futilely trying to escape the bonds they had hog-tied him with, cursing into the darkness beyond.

"Be at peace brother," came the silken voice from the darkness, at once unknown and hauntingly familiar.

"Heretic!" The Redemptionist screamed. "Sinner! You will be cleansed! You will burn in the fire of the..." His voice trailed away as the black-draped figures advanced to the edge of the circle of light. They seemed to him perverse reflections of the brethren of the Redemptionist Crusade; their robes and equipment ash-blackened and grim, bone-skull masks covered their faces, silent and forbidding.

"Peace brother, peace." Again the voice spoke with such calm authority that it stilled the Redemptionist's thrashings. "You have come to us; it is the Emperor's will."

"You dare speak his holy name!" The Redemptionist screamed back at him.

"I am the true servant!" The silken voice roared with such force the Redemptionist could only cower and whimper helplessly in response.

"Soon brother, soon the veil that covers your sight shall be lifted. You shall know peace, you shall walk the path; you will cast off the falsehood of your liar-priests and know the Emperor's true will on this blighted world. Serve us, serve the brotherhood of the true resurrection, and serve him - the undying one."

"That is not dead which cannot die!" The terrible, dry voices of the other dark figures rasped in unison.

"Who... who are you?" The Redemptionist pleaded.

"I am Mathias, brother, and I am your saviour in His name. In us you will find life eternal in his service." The one called Mathias leaned forward, dozens of tiny silver aquillas tinkling against bone fetishes; he extended a gloved hand to the Redemptionist. "Join us and know the truth of the Emperor's work. Join us and do His will. Join us in our battle and if you prove worthy, receive the life eternal."

The Redemptionist gazed up into the empty black pits of Mathias' eyes and his blood froze in his veins as he realised that the black-robed priest wore no mask at all...



are a lot of different ways to decide on what gang/army/team, etc you're going to pick when coming fresh to a game. I know a lot of gamers have a preferred style of play (all-out aggressive, stand back and shoot, highly mobile, etc) and go for a force that will suit their style, while others make their decision based on the models they like best (which is no bad plan, because if you really like the models, you'll enjoy painting and gaming with them a whole lot more). There are some people who try to work out which is the all-round hardest army in any given game. This is, of course, somewhat inadvisable as a lot goes into balancing out GW games, and the 'undefeatable' force is a bit of a myth in my experience, particularly in Necromunda where positioning and manoeuvre can play such an important role in a game's result. Personally, I fall into that group of gamers that are very background orientated; I love good 'fluff' if I can put it like that, and often pick a particular force if the concept behind them appeals to me, and I like their fictional game background. So with this in mind I immersed myself in the game material to see what leapt out shouting 'play me!'. I had a good search through the Underhive rulebook, on the Fanatic website and through my back collection of Necromunda stuff, and while the shiny new Enforcer models appealed greatly I actually settled on the House of Cawdor. They seemed more grim and driven than the other House gangs, with their adherence to the Imperial Cult and covered faces setting them apart from the rest. I also liked the miniatures and already had a few (admittedly slightly insane) ideas about how I could do something interesting with them and make my gang a very individual force on the tabletop.

IT'S CAWDOR JIM, BUT NOT AS WE KNOW IT:

I'd had a few gaming ideas bouncing around in my head looking for an outlet for a while, one of which was to try and do something with the idea of Imperial Death Cults.

One idea that I'd had with this was to detail a cult of 'resurrectionists'; a sect that focused on the Emperor sacrificing his mortal life in battle, but overcoming death. Prophesying that the Emperor is going to get back up off the Golden Throne having 'defeated' death and enabling his followers to do the same in a dodgy sort of 'voodoo death cult' thing sounded cool to me. I'd had the idea of working these resurrectionists into an Inquisitor narrative (which I may still do), but when Harry mentioned his dark plans for a series of linked scenarios based on cult movies, I immediately thought of the resurrectionist idea I'd had. After all, there's always room for one more crazed mob of gun-wielding lunatics in the 40K background, and the nightmare of the Underhive seemed as likely place as any for them to thrive. It also fitted in perfectly with my choice of House Cawdor as, alone among the Hive houses, they took the Imperial Creed to heart, (after all they are the House of Redemption). I could easily see another schismatic take on the Imperial faith growing up secretly in their midst. I even toyed with using the Redemptionist rules, but disregarded the idea after looking into it as they didn't quite fit with what I wanted, and it felt too much like fudging things just so I could get some special abilities for them. In the end I was happier sticking to the basic Cawdor list as it's nice and straightforward, the skills and weapons suited the idea I had of them anyway and their place would be compatible with the background. So my gang for this campaign would be The Brotherhood of the True Resurrection; a House Cawdor gang that had joined the resurrection cult, but was still close to the ways of House Cawdor. I saw them set to guard the advance of the inner sanctum of the True Resurrection as it began to spread in the Underhive, and who knows, perhaps I'd get to write full gang rules for the dark heart of the resurrectionists some day.



PUTTING TOGETHER THE GANG ROSTER:

When I sat down to decide what would be in my starting gang, the very definite picture in my imagination made it pretty easy. I wanted them based on the idea of a cult hit squad, one of a number perhaps sent to take over a section of the Underhive on the edge of Cawdor held territory to secure an outpost base for the cult, with the resurrectionists spreading slowly like a cancer in House Cawdor rather than being like the fire and brimstone roving crusades of the Redemption. I would design my gang as an attacking force; more dependant on numbers and storm tactics than standing back with heavy weapons and letting rip, or approaching by stealth (ultimately all Cawdor gang-members also have access to ferocity skills so this also made sense). I wanted a solid core of Gangers to advance, guns blazing, with my Gang Leader – a cult fanatic at the head of the assault. Just to cover my bases with a little tactical flexibility I also wanted a back line of two or three models with rifles to provide covering fire and pick off priority targets at range. I also put into practice an old personal rule of mine for Necromunda – hold-outs: everybody, even lowly Juves, would get a back-up gun. This is because guns in Necromunda will fail when you least want them to, and I like to be prepared for that eventuality.

You will also note that my Heavy doesn't actually have a heavy weapon, which may strike you as a bit bizarre. There are a few reasons for this. For a start, the lack of the

big gun allowed me to spread some creds around. Move or fire weapons tend to lead to a static style of play which I didn't want for the gang, and the Heavy (with or without a very big gun) has access to different skill groups which I hoped to exploit as the gang developed (hence his inclusion rather than a cheaper Ganger for the same job).



My boss ended up with a chainsword and a flamer, making him a fairly scary prospect in a fight, while my Heavy benefited from the Cawdor access to a boltgun as a basic weapon (I chose laspistols as back-up for both of these because of the high likelihood of ammo-outages on their main weapon). As for the rest, I decided to spread about a good bit of firepower quite evenly around my six Gangers, including hot-shot shells, dum-dum rounds and frag grenades, with an autogun and a lasgun for a little supporting fire. Going against what I know is 'the done thing' with some players, I actually decided to give my Juves (just two of them in the end) some decent kit, reasoning it's better to have them as something more than just mobile sandbags for the Gangers.

On a final point, the students of mythology and weird fiction among you might recognise a few of the names I gave to my lads (and lass)!

SELECTING THE MINIATURES:

First off I should tell you that I'm an incorrigible 'cobbler' of miniatures. I love to convert stuff, and while I will make no claims to brilliance as a sculptor (far from it), it's an aspect of the hobby I really enjoy and I like to have a go. So I formulated a plan to bring my Brotherhood into being; my concept for the look of my gang was already set: black hooded robes, skull masks, pale skin, parchment seals and deathly iconography, but still recognisable as House Cawdor in origin. I also didn't want to just get Redemptionists and paint them black as that would have been very unsatisfying, so after ploughing through the Specialist Games catalogue and the Online Store I had a few ideas. The gang's Juves would have 'straight' Cawdor looks, the idea being that they are recent converts, while the Gangers, being full 'Brothers and Sisters of the True Resurrection', would be a mixture of Cawdor miniature conversions and robed and masked models made using converted Mordheim Possessed brethren (I've always thought these were gorgeous miniatures and the robes and skulls on many of them were too good to pass up). Also I planned to convert some of my own creations from the basis of Warhammer High Elf Archer plastics, (as these offer something of a blank canvas to work from by way of a suitable body), and I was planning to use some spare skeleton skulls I had lying round in my bits box for heads – making Green Stuff cowls to round them off. My initial idea for a leader was to use a converted Redemptionist deacon, but I had a sudden inspiration when talking about my idea for a gang to a colleague. Looking at my models he said 'are you going to add a top hat then?' referring to Baron Samedi (of voodoo and James Bond fame) and I was suddenly struck with the idea of the hat-wearing Witch Hunter Inquisitor model. With a slight tweak or two I could make the Inferno pistol pass for a flamer and set about the rest. My next stop was to get hold of some Necromunda weapons sprues to cover the guns I wanted for the gang and get to it!

Painting the Gang: I set out with a simple but definitive colour scheme in mind to unify the different converted miniatures in the gang: dusty black with bone detailing. The black in question would be Chaos Black drybrushed lightly with Codex Grey on the robes, cloaks and primary areas of clothing to indicate that they were hard-worn by the Brotherhood, rather than a shiny or high-contrast black (they are crawling around in the Underhive after all). The base colour for their weapons would be similarly dark – a one to one Boltgun Metal and Chaos Black mix, highlighted with Chainmail, with areas given thinned Flesh Wash layers to signify age and rust. Detail areas of cloth, such as face masks and wrapping, would be a bone-like off-white; a white built up from Vermin Brown with thinned Flesh Wash applied again to give a deliberately dirty appearance, while actual bone parts (such as the skull masks worn by some) would be Bleached Bone with a white highlight and possibly a gloss varnish to provide a polished look. I also had in mind to do some clothing sections in muted versions of the reds and blues associated with the Redemptionists and Cawdor, making them look like faded relics of the gang members' past lives.



DARK THINGS WALK ABROAD IN THE UNDERHIVE:

So there you are, my Brotherhood of the True Resurrection ready to bring the 'peace' of the Emperor to the Underhive, and I'm really looking forward to fielding them in battle. They go to show you can come up with an individual and unique force for a game by inventing an imaginative background and sticking to it when you design the list. As you can see, once I had in my mind 'who' the gang was the rest of the decisions about the roster, modelling and paint schemes kind of made themselves.



TECHKANA WARPARTY

When the guys here in the office decided to start up a Necromunda campaign I jumped at the chance to join in. Warhammer World has some really great Necromunda scenery and I love all our game systems that have a campaign structure whereby I can watch my gang/team/warband develop. When deciding which gang I wanted to take for the campaign I was torn between starting with a gang I had never used before, such as the great new Enforcers or Spyrers, or revisiting one of my old favourites. In the end there was only one choice I could make: my old favourites, the Ratskins. I have been telling all who would listen how they used to be my favourite gang, so now that we have new models and new rules how could I not use them in the campaign?

Ratskins have always been one of the coolest things about Necromunda and I have always tried to include a Ratskin Renegade in my gangs wherever possible. I love the Native American influences that the background and the figures imply and I feel it really emphasises the “old west” or “frontier” feel of the Underhive setting wonderfully. Of course, it helps that they are some of the best figures we have in the Necromunda range and that we have great new figures. This enables a cunning Ratskin Chief to arm his or her Ratskins for both close combat or for firefights as appropriate.

The Ratskin Renegade gang has been my favourite ever since their first appearance in the Outlanders supplement purely because I loved the imagery and the background for the gang. Whilst the new version of the rules has now

left my beloved Shaman out in the cold I have been assured that they will make a reappearance and I now have the Totem Warriors which more than make up for his (temporary) removal.

Ratskin Renegades are not like a regular gang in that they are Outlanders and so operate outside the law and outside the bounds of civilisation in the Hive. Since they are native in the Underhive they are immune to the effects of the Treacherous Conditions table and must, in fact, use this table during all of their games. This can make life very difficult for opposing gangs whose mobility may be limited, or whose shooting may become much less effective at range. This is one of the reasons why I like the Ratskin Renegades because this rule makes games much more interesting and will make for a different challenge in every game for your opponent as he or she battles, not only with your gang, but also in some cases with the Underhive itself!

As an Outlander gang, the Ratskin Renegades do not have much access to territory and income must be foraged after every battle. The good thing is that the Ratskins are quite good at foraging and so can be relied upon most of the time to find sufficient food for themselves to eat. Each gang member requires 3 creds worth of upkeep to be spent on them per Post Battle sequence. Now since each one, if sent to forage, generates 1D6+1 creds you can expect a Ratskin to be able to feed himself 83% of the time and will turn a profit, albeit a small one, 50% of the time. Now as we all know you can't assume all your gang members will be able to be active in the Post Battle

[illegible]

sequence, but as a rule this means you can be quite confident of being able to get by. A Ratskin will find sufficient food for two gang members 33% of the time.

Replacing deceased gang members or increasing the size of the gang can also be quite difficult, but this is counterbalanced by the natural resilience of the Ratskins. Whilst a Ratskin Hired Gun gets two rolls on the Injury table and gets to pick the best one, the Ratskin Renegades have a lesser version of this enabling them to re-roll a result on the Injury table should they not like the first. This means that it is much more likely that a Ratskin taken *out of action* in a game will survive to fight on. If you only use your re-roll on results of a 11-16 Death then the chance of death is reduced from around 17% to a mere 3%. This also means that if you consider the results 41-66 as "beneficial" result then you can increase the chance of getting a beneficial result from 50% to 75% although doing so will increase the chance of death. It is up to you to decide if the gang member is worth the gamble.

The final factors that made me fall in love with this gang are their ability to effect the scenario roll in the same way as a Ratskin Hired Gun does for regular gangs, and the fact that they all come armed with a free knife and a free club. This means that I can hire gang members that are perfectly able to function without any additional equipment purely as hand-to-hand specialists, and I can try to ambush those gangs with Archeotech Horde territories to drive them away from our sacred sites.

I decided that I would include a mixture of old Ratskin figures with a few new ones and some conversions to make my gang as unique and individual as possible. To that end I ordered one of each of the classic Ratskin figures, some new Ratskin blisters and a few figures and sprues to use in conversions. In the end I actually assembled and converted over 25 figures for the gang and am only using 14 of these for my starting gang. Essentially I just assembled what looked good and did not worry about how the models were armed. I then selected my starting gang from these figures.

I decided early on that I wanted to include at least one Totem Warrior in my gang as I really wanted to see how good they were and have a go with the cool new spirit weaponry. I have converted my Totem Warrior "Strikes from Shadow" out of Brakar the old Ratskin Hired Gun, with a large axe from the new Ratskin close combat sprue and an axe from the Warhammer Marauders of Chaos sprue which I had lying around in my bits box. "Strikes from Shadow" counts as being armed with a spirit totem in the form of the cool archeotech-looking axe and a club, meaning he will be awesome in close combat and will be able to absorb many enemy spirits as they depart their worthless bodies.

"Strikes from Shadow" will be accompanied by two Braves to soak up the flak whilst he charges in. Instead of using the normal Brave models, I decided to use some Giant Rats to represent my Totem Warrior's allies. They use exactly the same rules as for normal Braves, just different models. The best part is I can get away with counting their teeth as their free knife, and their claws as their free club.

I also set about converting the Underhive Scum model with the auto pistol and plasma pistol because I have always felt that he looks a little like a Ratskin with the beads in his hair or could in fact be a Goliath gang member with a little Ratskin blood in him. Either way he makes for a great addition to my gang and will be leading one of my close combat groups into the fray with his auto pistol and pick. The pick replaces the plasma pistol (which was simply clipped off) and is from the Chaos Marauder sprue as well.

When I first began to play Necromunda I took a Cawdor gang which contained very few members, but each was armed to the teeth with either grenades or back-up pistols should their main basic weapon armament fail its ammo roll. I soon decided this was a bad idea as my opponents would simply take a small group of my gang *out of action* and I would have to start making Bottle tests which I would eventually fail even if I was in a beneficial position. I now try to include as many gang members as I can to as to prevent early bottle outs and to work on the theory that "everything counts in large amounts."

I decided to carry the Native American stereotype through to my gang by naming them using the naming convention whereby they are named after something from the Underhive. This led me to names such as "Leaking Sump," "Drifting Ash" and, my personal favourite, "Old Gunk Tank." I have also decided to throw a few more natural sounding Native American sounding names in the form of "Dancing Shadow" and "Howling Wind" whilst still maintaining an Underhive undertone.

As the Ratskins progress they will gain access to Combat, Agility and Stealth skills. I intend to load up on Stealth skills for my Ratskins armed with longer range weapons such as autoguns and shotguns, and the close combat Ratskins and Braves will try to get an equal balance of both Agility and Combat skills. If necessary I will move weapons round in the gang to make sure the right person is armed with the right weapons.

I decided not to purchase any blindsnake pouches for the gang just yet, primarily because that would reduce the number of members I could include, but also because in early practise games very few people used *overwatch* to any great effect. We'll have to see if I change my mind once we start for real.

TRIAL BY FIRE

Ever wondered how people actually join a Necromunda gang? Is it like the school playground, where two gang leaders choose guys one at a time until the chubby kid who's not allowed to do sports is left? Or is there some sort of job centre for adolescent wannabe psychopaths who turn up for an interview?

Personally I think it's more likely that a group of juves turn up together and ask to join the gang. And Necromunda, being the hard-bitten sinkhole of the universe, I think it's highly likely that they would have to perform some task to prove their bravery and loyalty. This scenario shows such a Trial By Fire.

TERRAIN

The set up for the game is played on a normal board set for a gang fight, except there is one objective marker placed in the centre of the board.

GANGS

One player takes up to five Juves who may be equipped with up to 30 points of equipment each. The other player is the defender, and takes his normal gang.

The defenders place their figures first in groups of no more than three (with at least 8" between each group) and these groups patrol using the Sentry rules, all the models of a group keeping within 3" of each other.

The defenders do not get to sound the alarm until a Juve comes within spotting distance (Initiative x 2"), or an attacking Juve opens fire.

Once the alarm is sounded the defenders can move as normal and have no need to roll Bottle tests as they are at their base camp. Defenders who voluntarily bottle automatically lose a territory to the victors as their reputation takes a nosedive.

The attacking Juves start on random table edges. Roll separately for each Juve.

The attacking Juves do not take Bottle tests, nor do they roll All Alone tests. They know that this is make or break.

STARTING THE GAME

The Juves go first.



EARNING THEIR STRIPES

There are three ways a Juve can earn his stripes:

- 1: Put an enemy Ganger *out of action* in hand-to-hand combat (collecting some item or trinket to prove the kill).
- 2: Tag the base: spend a turn in base-to-base contact with the objective at the centre of the board (with spray can at the ready).
- 3: Wound the enemy Gang Leader. By taking on the best the enemy has to offer the Juve shows his true potential.

Once a Juve has completed one of the tasks he can leave the battle. Remove the model when it reaches the edge of the board.

ENDING THE GAME

The game lasts until the Juves are all *out of action* (likely), completed their missions and left the board (unlikely) or have defeated the entire defending gang (miraculous).

EXPERIENCE

Experience is awarded to Juves as follows.

- +5 pts Each enemy Ganger taken *out of action*.
- +10 pts Tagging the base.
- +15 pts Hurting the Gang Leader.
- +5 pts Getting safely off the board after your task is completed.

Defenders gain Experience as per a normal gang fight.

The harder the opposition the more Experience the Juves gain from their Trial by Fire. For every whole 100 pts over 1,600 the enemy gang's rating is, they gain a further +1 Experience; eg, a gang with 1,830 rating would mean each Juve would gain a further +2 Experience.

SPECIAL RULES

Any Juve captured by the defending gang may well switch allegiance to save his neck. Before rolling for injuries on a Juve who has been taken *out of action*, roll a D6. On a roll of a 6 he jumps ship and joins the defenders (keeping any equipment he started with).



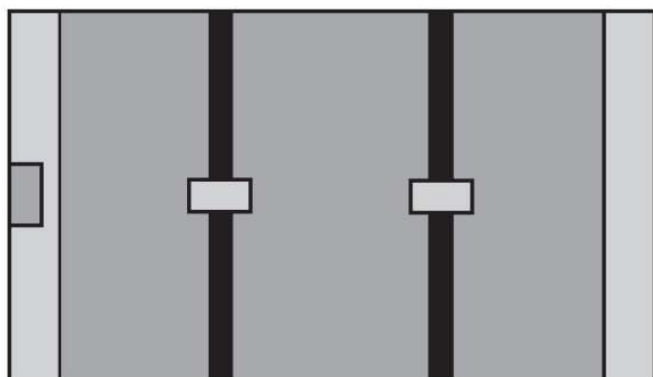
WAGONS ROLL

"Look I don't care whether you two gangs hate each other this contraband has to get through tomorrow. Now sort your differences out on your own time." The trader stood at the end of his table chewing the end of his expensive Ibo stick. "I want this to go well. Krieger, your guys are to take the northern checkpoint just as the caravan comes into sight. Dead Dog, your boys hold the southern checkpoint. Tatiana, you and your girls are close security on the delivery. If the caravan makes it through we're all rich; if it doesn't the deal's off and you're as broke as I will be."

This scenario is for veteran gamers, preferably as a finale to a major section of a campaign. It would suit a gaming club very well. It will take about twice as long to play as a normal game so make sure you're prepared for the long haul.

TERRAIN

You need two 6' x 4' boards (to make a 12' x 4' gaming area) for this game with plenty of terrain and two bridges across gaping holes in the floor (I use two 6" wide strips of black cloth to signify the chasms).



THE GANGS

The job's simple: get the caravan off the table. The only problem is that there are three gangs trying to stop you. This scenario is for six gangs (three attacking to break a path for the caravan, and three defending their territories). In addition you'll need something to represent the caravan.

The caravan sets up in the middle of one of the short board edges. The attacking gang that's been given the job of escorting the caravan sets up within 12" of its charge. The second attacking gang is deployed in the 18" zone at one end of the board (near the caravan). The third gang deploys in the 18" zone at the opposite end.

Three gangs have teamed up to defend their territory against 'the smugglers', as they see the trader and his caravan. The first two choose a bridge each, and set up

within 12" of it. The third defending gang is split into three parts by the owner and forms a reserve. Decide where you want each part of the reserve to arrive (any board edge), and then roll to see if they turn up at the start of each of your turns. If you can roll under the current turn number on a D6 then the group arrives. Roll separately for each group. Note that this means the reserves cannot arrive on turn one.

STARTING THE GAME

The attackers go first and at the end of their turns the caravan moves up to 9". The caravan may not cross any of the bridges unless there are more friendly figures than enemy within 6" of the bridge.

As they have a financial commitment to the mission the attackers get to re-roll their first failed Bottle test.

ENDING THE GAME:

If all the defenders or all the attackers fail their bottle rolls then the other side wins. Otherwise, if the caravan gets through to the opposite table edge the attackers win. If the defenders get four figures within 6" of the caravan, and there are no attackers in that area, then the defenders win.



EXPERIENCE

- +D6 pts Surviving the Battle: D6
- +10 pts per winning Gang Leader
- +5 pts Each enemy out of action: 5 pts

FINANCIAL

Gangs that were on the winning side and didn't bottle out get to split the proceeds from the caravan between them:

- 150 credits
- 3D3 rolls on the Rare Item chart
- 3 blindsnake pouches

You can choose to split this booty in whichever way is mutually acceptable to the Gang Leaders.



ELDAR TACTICS

By Dan Rothman

A comprehensive treaty on Eldar tactics in Battlefleet Gothic.

This section is intended as a guide for the aspiring Pirate Prince. Through discussion of some of the ups and downs of the Eldar, as well as reviewing some special rules, we'll discover what it is that makes the Eldar so special in BFG. One of the real successes Games Workshop has achieved with BFG is to imbue each fleet with a very individual character – the Eldar are a great example of this. They handle differently from any of the other races. You'll find that over time both the Pirate Prince and the Prince's victims learn this unique character and adjust their styles of play to accommodate the Eldar's peculiarities. Hopefully, we Eldar can stick together and ride up the learning curve ahead of our opponents!

SPECIAL RULES

When BFG was first introduced, the Eldar seemed to be a tremendous exception to all of the other rules. Since then, the introduction of the Space Marines, Tyranid, and most recently, the Necron fleets has expanded the universe of special rules – the Eldar seem a lot less of a bizarre exception than before. So, let us take a quick review of the special rules that apply to Eldar.

Movement

The Eldar style of movement remains unique. Eldar movement varies according to their orientation relative to the sun. At their slowest (moving directly sunward) they are fast. At their fastest (moving with the sun abeam) they are the fastest of all the fleets. Some points to remember about Eldar movement:

- A ship doesn't have to move, an Eldar ship may choose to remain stationary.
- Free turn at the beginning of movement.
- No turns during movement – the Eldar can't change their orientation after they've moved.
- Second movement during Eldar's Ordnance phase – during the Eldar's Ordnance phase, and after all other ordnance has moved, the Eldar may take another free turn and full move.

It's also worthwhile to note that the Eldar have some unique interactions with celestial phenomena. In *BFG Magazine 1*, Eldar ships were permitted a Leadership test (re-rolled for escorts) to ignore the effects of gas and dust clouds. They were also allowed a Leadership test (apparently without a re-roll for escorts) to partially avoid

the effects of solar flares partially (though "riding the storm" does blow ships that save 2D6 cm directly away from the sun). These rules are particularly important, because the effects of gas and dust clouds, asteroids, and solar flares are now not as big a threat. Instead they are quite useful...

Shooting and Weapons

The Eldar have some extremely sophisticated weapons and targeting systems. Eldar weapons batteries always treat targets as closing (so the target orientation is not significant), and lance batteries keep hitting (up to three times per lance) once they've started. Eldar torpedoes may re-roll misses, and Eldar bombers may re-roll the number of hits they achieve. Eldar fighters are also very durable, remaining on the field on a 4+, rather than having to return to refuel. Altogether a very powerful arsenal.





Defense and Shields

Eldar defences are also sophisticated – and they’d better be, because Eldar ships are very fragile. Eldar ships have two primary lines of defence, running away and holofields. Holofields convey a 2+ save against many attacks. Because the Eldar don’t have other significant defences, those weapons (which are increasing in number...) and phenomena that ignore holofields are very dangerous to the Eldar. Weapons that ignore holofields currently include weapons batteries (though the holofields do force an extra right shift on the Gunnery table), Space Marine bombardment cannons, Necron lightning arcs (which don’t take the holofield right shift), particle whip, and pulse generator. Imperial Nova cannons can be countered by one holofield save versus the entire effect of the Nova cannon, rather than a save against each hit. In addition, gas and dust clouds, Blast markers, asteroid fields, solar flares, and warp core implosions all ignore holofield saves (because they’re not targeted at the ship).

More significant than their defences, however, are the complete *lack* of defences in certain areas. Eldar ships do not have shields at all. They also do not have turrets (though holofield saves apply to ordnance). Finally, note that Eldar ships take criticals on a 4+, rather than the normal 6+, and all criticals are rolled on a Critical Hits table particular to Eldar.

Miscellaneous

One miscellaneous (but extremely important) element is that Eldar have a bonus to Leadership. Remember to add one to your Leadership value after you roll them – it can change the game!

Another miscellaneous element is the application of special orders. Eldar use Lock On, Reload, and Brace for Impact special orders as usual. The following special orders are unavailable to Eldar: Come to New Heading, All

Ahead Full, and Burn Retros. Eldar don’t ram (just in case you were wondering how to ram without All Ahead Full).

The ‘Cons’ of Using an Eldar Fleet

Playing Eldar can have a lot of downsides. Great respect should be shown to any aspiring Pirate Prince who will get into a ship without shields, a definite lack of armour, and no weaponry with a range over 30 cm!

Adding insult to injury, Eldar ships consistently have fewer Damage Points than ships of the same class in any other fleet. Individual Eldar ships are expensive, and Eldar are frequently outnumbered on the field. This is particularly true of ordnance. The Eclipse and the Void Stalker are the only Eldar ships with launch bays, and they are very dear. Eldar have no benefits in terms of boarding actions, and so boarding actions are very hazardous for the Eldar.

Finally, Eldar are not permitted to make a final sacrifice by ramming. Because Eldar ships are made out of balsa wood and tin foil, ramming manoeuvres probably wouldn’t be terribly effective anyway!

The ‘Pros’ of Using an Eldar Fleet

OK, good news last. BFG is about timing and concentration of fire, which is great because:

The tremendous manoeuvrability of the Eldar allow them to choose the time, place, and manner of engagement.

The high Leadership of Eldar fleets ensures that timing and coordination will be effective. Because of the advanced weaponry and targeting of Eldar weapons, any ship targeted by an Eldar task force is unlikely to survive.

Eldar are also likely to survive returning fire through a combination of manoeuvring (denying the enemy optimal targeting solutions) and the wonders of Eldar holofields.

Conclusion

When things begin to go badly for the Eldar, they go very badly. However, when used well, they can be a devastating opponent. Well-timed, surgically precise application of devastating firepower, followed by decisive disengagement allows the Eldar to dismember enemy forces at their leisure. That'll do it for the basics. Next, I'll go over each type of ship available to the Eldar player in the Fleet section.

THE ELDAR FLEET

The Eldar fleets are organized as raiding fleets commanded by Pirate Princes. The fleet list, however, is extremely flexible. The strict hierarchies of Imperial fleets are not observed, and it is possible to field a fleet comprised only of all capital vessels, or escort frigates. This flexibility allows you to model any fleet type you wish: a Pirate Prince's fleet, a Craftworld fleet, or whatever else you might imagine.

A quick word on Eldar capital ships. Keep in mind that, in addition to having fewer hits than other capital ships, Eldar capital ships suffer considerably more from those hits. Eldar capital ships take critical damage on a 4+, rather than a 6+ like other capital ships. These criticals are taken on a special Eldar Critical Hits table, though this is not an additional burden, because the criticals are neither worse nor better than the standard ones – they're just appropriate to Eldar. However, having suffered critical damage, the Eldar ship's lower number of Hits makes those criticals more difficult to recover from. In short, Eldar capital ships take more criticals, which remain in effect for a longer period than other fleets.

So choose a ship type from below and I'll let you know all about its particular strengths and weaknesses. Once you have finished learning about each of the Eldar vessels presented here, see how this knowledge can be applied by visiting the Basic Tactics section.

VOID STALKER

The Void Stalker is the largest standard Eldar ship. At 10 hits, it is a behemoth compared to other Eldar ships. The Void Stalker is still quite nimble though – spinning your battleship around and moving it 50 cm can really intimidate an opponent! This manoeuvrability, combined with its longer-ranged, broad arc weaponry make the Void Stalker fearsome.

The Void Stalker is also a survivor. Beyond what the 10 Hits indicate, the effect of holofields on ships with a greater number of hits is dramatic. Unlike standard shields, the holofield only goes down if it's broken in a critical hit. This means that it takes as many shots to inflict the sixth hit as it did the first. This is much different from

other fleets, in which the first hit is the most difficult (getting through shields). On the other hand, the frailty of Eldar ships is also highlighted in the Void Stalker. It is frequently the case that the Void Stalker is rendered useless long before it dies. The higher probability of criticals and the Eldar critical table combine to degrade the function of the ship fairly quickly. It's not unusual to see a Void Stalker either disengage or skulk in a corner to preserve its points values beyond its useful life.

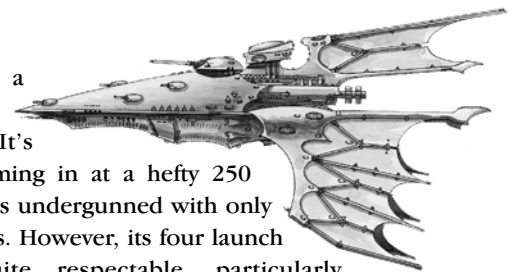
The Void Stalker has a unique role in the Eldar fleet. It is a carrier, providing ordnance support. While at the same time, it's a very effective weapons platform with both lances and batteries with broad arcs of fire and extended ranges. It's also one of the few Eldar ships that can mount a respectable boarding action. Remember, however, that the true strength of the Eldar comes in concentration of fire. The Void Stalker can be used toe-to-toe with cruisers of other races and fare pretty well, but its best effects are achieved in a combined action.

The Void Stalker provides some unique tactical opportunities. The Stalker's broad fire arcs provide unique opportunities for Locking On. This special order is useful to the Eldar overall, but the Stalker's flank fire arcs almost require the regular use of Lock On. Don't forget that fire can be split – the forward arcs of most Eldar weapons sometimes lead us to forget that fire can be split across different targets. Finally, don't forget opportunities for a parting teleport attack.

ECLIPSE

The Eclipse is a classic carrier platform. It's expensive, coming in at a hefty 250 points, and it is undergunned with only a pair of lances. However, its four launch bays are quite respectable, particularly considering the effectiveness of Eldar ordnance. Unlike a standard carrier, however, the Eclipse is neither ungainly nor particularly fragile. The Eclipse has the speed to keep up with the overall Eldar fleet and is as much a survivor as any Eldar cruiser. Most importantly, the Eclipse is the only element of the Eldar fleet, short of a battleship, that has any launch bays, which makes it an integral part of any Eldar fleet.

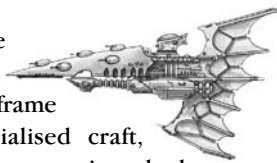
The Eldar don't really have the launch capacity to undertake a full ordnance-oriented fleet. However, others (especially the Imperials) do, and so ordnance defence is an important component of any Eldar strategy. As a consequence, the Eclipse plays a defensive role in an Eldar fleet, normally staying back from the fray a bit, possibly undertaking some mopping-up operations, but primarily focusing on fighter production.



The Eclipse has very few tricks up its sleeve, and it is probably the most straightforward Eldar ship. There are a few tidbits that are useful to keep in mind, however. First, remember that ordnance is deployed, though not moved, during the Shooting phase and that the Eclipse gets another move during the Ordnance phase. The Eclipse can advance, deploy ordnance, and then retreat again, effectively increasing the single-turn range of Eldar ordnance. Bombers can begin the turn in their launch bays, and by the end of the turn, attack a target as far away as 45 cm! Second, don't forget that the Eclipse is a capital ship. Although not an effective ship of the line, it can fire respectably, initiate boarding actions, and use teleport attacks. The Eclipse can act as an effective flank or mop-up auxiliary, particularly once its launch bays are exhausted and preservation of the Eclipse is less critical.

ACONITE

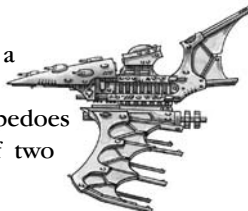
At 65 points, the Aconite frigate is a steal. Five firepower in an Eldar escort frame is amazing. This is a specialised craft, designed to be wielded like a surgeon's scalpel. A squadron of just two Aconites puts out firepower equivalent to that of most cruisers!



The Aconite fills two major roles in an Eldar fleet. Its first (and I would argue, most important) role is to provide a volume of fire in the line. Normally, escorts do not participate in the main offensive line, but Eldar don't fight like other races. The Aconite is ideal for hit-and-run tactics. Because Eldar "main engagements" are normally a one-turn strike on a segment of the opponent's fire line, the speed and firepower of the Aconite make it an ideal addition. The second role the Aconite plays is as an escort-hunter. The Eldar targeting systems make the firepower it possesses that much more effective on escorts than is at first apparent. Three Aconites firing at escorts will always get at least eight shots, normally enough to take down two or three enemy craft. Plus, the Aconite's manoeuvrability and speed mean that enemy escorts are seldom out of reach.

NIGHTSHADE

The Nightshade destroyer is a tremendous bargain at 40 points. The quality of Eldar torpedoes makes their smaller payload of two torpedoes very worthwhile.



The Nightshade is specialised as a flanking torpedo platform. Nightshades can sometimes play a role in a primary engagement, but firing torpedoes from the edge of a combat is really where the Nightshade excels. The Eldar ability to retreat after firing is a core manoeuvre for

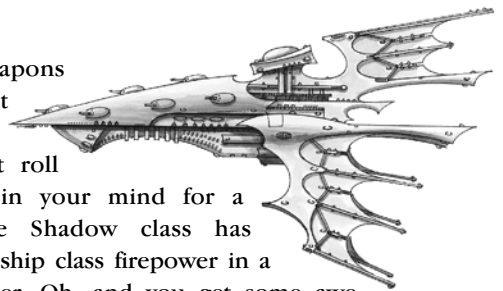
the Nightshade, particularly because Locking On is of little benefit when firing torpedoes. The main difficulty with the Nightshade is reloading. Once they've expended their ammunition on an unfortunate roll of doubles, they become a weapons platform with an unimpressive Strength of 1. Their best role at this point is two-fold: 1) preserve their points value (possibly disengaging) or 2) harass enemy escorts (use those holofields).



Nightshades have a number of tricks they can make use of. Most typical is to use their speed to put their torpedoes closer to the enemy. Like the Eclipse, the Nightshade can give its ordnance a "running start." It can also be occasionally useful to convert your flanking force to a rear assault, particularly versus Orks and sometimes other Eldar. Nightshade squadrons are expected to lurk on the edges of a battle and engage "edge-on." So, bringing a few Nightshades entirely around the battle to set up a crossfire can be a surprising and often disconcerting tactic. Remember that Eldar ships can survive Eldar torpedo hits by using their 2+ holofield save, much better than most other forces, and they also have the speed to clear out. This means that firing straight through an opponent's rear and thereby endangering your own ships is less "wrong" for Eldar than for anyone else.

SHADOW

Twelve weapons batteries that always fire as closing – just roll that around in your mind for a moment. The Shadow class has effective battleship class firepower in a standard cruiser. Oh, and you get some awe-inspiring torpedoes to work with as well. The Shadow is the epitome of fire concentration in an agile delivery system. Its 210-point price tag is also quite reasonable, considering it packs better fire potential and survivability than, say, two Aconites and two Nightshades.



The Shadow is a straightforward ship of the line, anchoring primary assaults. Get stuck in, blow the heck out of something, and run away. There aren't many specialised tactics to address here. The only element that regularly escapes attention is that the Shadow is in fact a capital ship, and players should remember to use teleporter attacks and boarding actions whenever applicable.

HELLEBORE

The Hellebore is actually the least attractive of the Eldar escorts, though it is certainly a worthwhile vessel. At a pricey 75 points, it has a variety of armaments. These being a pair of torpedoes, a lance, and one weapons battery.



Hellebores offer tremendous flexibility. They can provide additional fire support in the main assault line along with torpedo support. Although it's somewhat counter-intuitive, the fact that they are escorts rather than capital ships can prove an advantage, as they draw less fire when they are hit, they actually degrade more gracefully than an equivalent capital ship. For example, a squadron of four Hellebores that takes two hits will retain half its firepower and all of its mobility, unlike a crippled light cruiser. The Hellebores also do not suffer from hampering criticals, though admittedly, four Hellebores constitute an expensive squadron at 240 points. Also, the Hellebore can act as part of a flanking force, providing long-range torpedo support as well as defensive firepower for such a formation. A Hellebore can be a welcome addition to a Nightshade squadron, and a couple of Hellebores can be a great complement to an Eclipse cruiser.

The Hellebore doesn't have many tricks up its sleeve. Possibly the most surprising thing a Hellebore can do is to move from a flanking position to support a primary assault. Consider two Hellebores and two Nightshades as a flanking force. Entering from the end of the opponent's line, all of these ships loose their torpedoes to saturate the line, one turn ahead of a primary assault on the opponent's line. The Nightshades slip back away from the conflict, while the Hellebores, on the other hand, follow the torpedoes in towards the enemy line.

On the following turn, the Hellebores can Lock On and scream into the flank of the enemy line, while the body of the Eldar fleet engages the enemy from the front, all the while watching the torpedo wave wreak havoc. The main difficulty with this manoeuvre is that if the Hellebores Lock On, they won't have an opportunity to "wave off" but must either remain at 30 cm from the (dearly departed) enemy line or continue into whatever remains of the opponent's line.

HEMLOCK

I have to admit a particular fondness for Hemlocks, as my personal fleet includes twice as many Hemlocks as any other escort. A full squadron of Hemlocks firing Locked On is a death sentence for almost any ship in the game, except maybe a Necron tombship. I've killed any number of



battleships with a single furious burst of lance fire from Hemlocks. But enough rhapsodising, suffice to say that an Eldar lance on an Eldar escort platform for 40 points is extremely worthwhile. There is a downside to Hemlocks though, they are nearly hopeless in boarding actions!

Hemlocks are almost exclusively ships of the line. They swoop in with lances blazing then duck for cover. Full squadrons of six are normally a waste. A squadron of four is sufficient to at least cripple anything short of a battle cruiser, unless of course the dice hate you. Besides, splitting your Hemlocks into smaller squadrons gives you better manoeuvring and targeting options, as well as forcing your opponent to choose which squadron to target.

Hemlocks are straightforward and brutal. They are also unsurprising. Possibly the biggest surprise they can deliver is by targeting ordnance. Lances never run out. If the only target in range is ordnance, use the lances on them. The lances will only hit on 6s, and don't get to continue rolling when they miss, but using them this way can be a big surprise to an opponent who assumed his stack of bombers was safe skittering in front of the Hemlocks.

ORDNANCE

In particular, Eldar torpedoes and bombers are only destroyed by enemy turrets on a 6+, rather than the usual 4+. Also, Eldar fighters are unusually resilient, with effectively a 4+ save against enemy ordnance.

The advanced nature of Eldar torpedoes and bombers changes the precise tactics best employed with them. Because Eldar ordnance is so difficult to destroy with turrets, and because the rest of the Eldar fleet can be so difficult to bring under fire, Eldar ordnance is subjected to a greater degree of fire than the ordnance of other races. Ordnance in waves (whether bomber or torpedo) can be destroyed as a whole by a lucky lance or battery shot. The usual procedure of forming bombers and torpedoes into large waves can be counter-productive for Eldar. To kill enemy escorts with either bombers or torpedoes, I recommend splitting ordnance down into short stacks. These are more difficult to intercept, and torpedoes fill more space. Three Nightshades in a staggered formation (about 10-15 cm apart) dropping minimum-sized torpedo salvos can deploy three separate salvos of two on dispersed trajectories that will be hazardous to an escort squadron for two turns.

When deploying bombers at other than point blank range against capital ships, do not neglect fighter support. A capital ship with three turrets will probably take down one ship from a wing of bombers, so the fighter won't go to waste. The opponent must engage with waves of

fighters (an unusual practice) to negate a single fighter, because individual fighters must engage the Eldar fighter, which will survive each individual encounter on a 4+. On impact, a wave of two bombers and a single fighter will inflict an average of $4.5 + 4.5 + 1$ attacks on a capital vessel, losing the fighter in the process. These 10 attacks will generally average 3-4 hits, so use your bombers if you get the chance.

In terms of intercepting enemy ordnance, the Eldar are not very unusual. I just wanted to review for a moment the benefit of Eldar fighters. The operation of Eldar fighters was clarified in *Warp Storm*, under the Space Marines rules, where Thunderhawk operation was explained, and then stated to be identical to Eldar fighter operation. In summary, Eldar fighters can survive enemy ordnance on a 4+ many times but can destroy only one enemy ordnance counter per Ordnance phase. An enemy can overwhelm an Eldar fighter with multiple fighters of his own, safe in the assurance that he will only lose one of his own. Also, be on the lookout for clever use of enemy ordnance. A single enemy torpedo can be moved purposely into contact with an Eldar fighter, right before a large wave of torpedoes moves through the same space and effectively ignores the fighters and your defence!

Eldar are different. Very, very different from any other race in BFG. In play, they don't have the stately progress of the other races displayed through that feeling of inertia built into the Movement rules. They're quick and nimble but depend on the direction of the sun; which no one else does. All this adds up to a very unique character for the race, which demands very different tactics.

Have a Plan

Of paramount importance to the success of any battlefield tactics is that they fit into an overall battlefield strategy. The battlefield strategy is simply the overall plan for how to win the game. For Orks, 95% of the time their plan is "Charge, use lotsa dakka, then ram and board!". Simplicity has its merits, but this is not the case for the Eldar.

Formulating your plan generally requires identifying the greatest threats and determining what to do about them, while managing not to let the smaller threats nibble you away. Make no mistake, the biggest threats to Eldar are weapons batteries, particularly long-ranged ones. Just about everything else in the game permits holofield saves, but not batteries; they go through the balsa wood of Eldar ships like a hot knife through butter. If you set out to identify and eliminate all the weapons batteries, you're well on your way to winning.

Another important point is to keep the victory conditions in mind always. Most BFG scenarios are fundamentally based on Victory Points. Most of the recommendations that follow are tailored to these victory conditions, but for scenarios with more specific objectives (like Convoys, Blockade Runs, or Planetary Assaults) be sure to plan towards the objective. Recently I won a Blockade Run without inflicting or suffering any major casualties. I simply focused on the objective (exiting the board) while my opponent tried to kill me.



Evolve

Finally, your plan must evolve during the game, particularly after the first attack pass. Once initial contact has been made, there is a significant period of reevaluation. Are you in a position to re-engage, or will your opponent regroup and provide a reliant defence? I recently lost a game, because I poorly evaluated my opponent's ability to regroup. I got greedy and pursued a damaged cruiser out on the flank. My opponent employed a well coordinated set of special orders (some All Ahead Fulls, and some Come to New Headings) that permitted the healthy elements of his fleet to bear on my somewhat battered elements that were trying to run the damaged cruiser to ground. The evaluation and evolution of the plan are crucial and can make a good engagement decisive or reduce the impacts of a bad engagement. On the downside, a poor re-evaluation can cost the game.

With all the knowledge gleaned from the Eldar Fleet Basics and the Basic Tactics sections, we are now ready to delve into some more complex manoeuvres. Presented here are three unique tactics that you can use to befuddle, confuse, annoy, and then destroy your opponent!

Jumping the Line

Many fleets will attack in waves. There's a first line, possibly a second line, then there are support elements. The support elements are normally points-rich and relatively undergunned. These support elements include carriers, hive ships, and transports. Also, because these ships are support elements, the remainder of the opponent's fleet won't function very well without them. The Line Jump manoeuvre has as its goal the bypassing of the opponent's primary fire line to attack support elements. The manoeuvre depends on the Eldar's ability not to move, and everyone else's requirement to move.

The basic concept behind the Line Jump is to wait in cover (asteroid or planet) as the opponent closes. When the opponent's primary fire line is one turn away (ie, will be in your cover on his next turn) "jump" your fleet over the opponent's line towards the support element. Best case, the "jump" will put the Eldar fleet into firing range of the target (well, even better if the Eldar are Locked On as well!).

The second move is used to move further beyond the line, hopefully beyond range of reprisal. Overall, assuming the Eldar can get maximum moves and that the opponent starts out about 15 cm from the Eldar, even the Void Stalker can move 25 cm, fire, and then move another 25 cm a full 35 cm behind the enemy line. After the opponent's capital ships move their minimum distance, manoeuvre, and try to find firing solutions, only some of their 45-cm weapons will be able to bear, and those may well be on special orders (Come to New Heading being popular!). By then it's all too late...



Hiding in the Tailpipes

One of the safest places in the vicinity of an enemy capital ship is off its stern (preferably about 8 cm). The opponent must manoeuvre to find a firing solution, and frequently that will involve using Come to New Heading or Burn Retros special orders. Nearby ships may come around for firing solutions as well, frequently throwing them off formation. Although not as safe as retreating out of line of sight in a second move, running into the opponent's tailpipes offers some immediate protection and generates longer-term difficulties for your opponent. It is important to remember that this manoeuvre is counter-productive vs. ships with 90 degree turns, such as Space Marines strike cruisers.

There are several subtle aspects of this manoeuvrability that are somewhat counter-intuitive. First, it is frequently better to hide in the tailpipes of a ship other than your target. Normally the target of a coordinated Eldar attack will not be at full efficiency and Braced for Impact at least, if not crippled or dead. Other nearby opponents will normally be a greater threat, because 1) they will probably be more functional than the target, and 2) they will have a better firing position than your target. By hiding in the tailpipes of some nearby opponent, advantage 2 will be reduced.

A second counter-intuitive feature is that it's not best to hide directly behind the ship you're tailpiping. The opponent can achieve a fire solution – the goal is just to make it more difficult. If you sit at least 15 cm minus one-half their move behind them, it will be very difficult for them to bring weapons batteries to bear at under 15 cm (thus with a left shift on the Gunnery table) or within 10 cm for teleport attacks.



A third non-obvious result regards the positioning of several ships. Use a “fire sink” ship to draw fire away from the most valuable ships used in the assault. Although all that is needed to bypass the fire sink ship is a Leadership check, force your opponent to take that check. Particularly if several opponent ships/squadrons come to bear on the Eldar attack element, some fire will be redirected to the fire sink. If at all possible, the closest ships to the enemy should be chosen based on marginal points value (ie, how many points you will lose if the ship/squadron is damaged), with preference given to ships with holofields (if the holofields are down, the ship won’t absorb a lot of fire...). This normally means that the fire sink ships should be a single or pair of escorts or a disabled (not necessarily crippled) capital ship.

Set up Your Approach

Finally, positioning on approach can help set up for this maneuver. When starting the attack pass, position ships with a primary target, a secondary target (for the case where the rest of the attack element destroys the primary), and a separate tailpipe target. If the attack ship is not Locked On, this can mean driving into point blank with the primary target, with the secondary behind the primary, probably on one side of the forward fire arc, and with the tailpipe target on the opposite side from the secondary, probably in a beam fire arc. After the attack, in the second move, the attacker turns to the tailpipe target and moves to its stern. For Locked On ships, it will generally mean stopping 15-20 cm short of the primary target and being somewhat off-line with the primary target. The secondary target will normally be nearer to the attacker than the primary (yes, requiring a Leadership check) and on one extreme edge of the forward fire arc.

The tailpipe target will be beyond the primary target, slightly off centre-line (centreline is focused about 8-10 cm behind the tailpipe target). Following the attack, use as much (or as little) of the second move to enter the tailpipe area.



Ordnance Clearing

Eldar ships often have a manoeuvring advantage over ordnance. Eldar receive a 2+ holofield save and may be on Brace for Impact, conferring a further 4+ save. Ships’ moves are not impeded by ordnance. The ordnance clearing manoeuvre uses a ship to engage enemy ordnance voluntarily, to prevent that ordnance from attacking more valued Eldar targets. It’s also just a great deal of fun to watch your opponent’s face as your braced Hemlock converts pile after pile of bombers and torpedoes into Blast markers. It has a great psychological impact upon him, particularly if the ordnance clearing ship survives! This is even more fun when the Void Stalker that was the target of all that ordnance rips through the enemy’s fleet.

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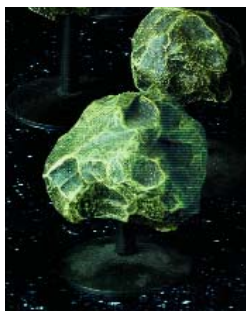
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CELESTIAL PHENOMENA

In general, Eldar prefer to fight on a crowded battlefield. Because of the Eldar's manoeuvrability and limited weapons range, any element that obscures fire lines is useful to the Eldar. Specific phenomena have important characteristics, which are all the more important because Eldar don't avoid celestial phenomena, they make use of them. So begin your journey to spacefaring enlightenment by choosing one of the links presented here!

ASTEROIDS

Asteroids are where it's at. An asteroid field is a navigation hazard (requiring Leadership checks to cross, but escorts are allowed a re-roll), with serious negative consequences for failure. But Eldar never fail Leadership checks. Right? Asteroids block line of sight, automatically destroy torpedoes, and endanger other ordnance. Asteroids also do not have gravitational fields. This is a mixed blessing, but it is positive in the sense that it doesn't offer opponents additional manoeuvrability. Asteroids are ideal for Eldar to lurk in and around, while they continually attack their prey.



A standard tactic is to use asteroid fields as explicit cover. Escorts can actually dodge in and out with relative impunity, hopping out to fire or drop torpedoes then dodging back in for cover. Capital ships have it a bit more difficult, as they are much more likely to take damage than the escorts. The capital ships must manoeuvre carefully to permit them to pop around the edges, retain arc of fire, and dodge back behind, not through or into, the asteroids.



Opponents must eventually commit to break into the asteroid bastion. Otherwise, the Eldar can snipe with relative impunity. As an opponent approaches, the Eldar can opt to lurk behind the asteroids and choose a flank to engage as the enemy comes around the asteroids or preempt the approach. If you choose to pre-empt the opponent's approach, there is a great opportunity to align ships in the prior turn and order a general Lock On. The opponent is signaled as to the target line of the fleet for one turn before the engagement, so they will have some opportunity to regroup.

If your opponent uses a lot of Burn Retros or Come to New Heading orders, remember that you haven't issued the Lock on orders yet (you've just planned to and signalled your intention) and can readjust your plan. Your opponent's adjustment may have left another segment of his fleet vulnerable. This leaves the Eldar player with the alternative of pursuing the original plan, using the Lock On order, and hopefully inflicting a lot of damage, or redirecting to the newly exposed enemy fleet elements.

BLAST MARKERS

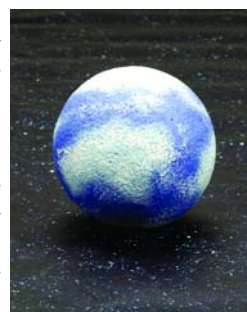
Blast markers are an important part of BFG and for Eldar in particular. The Eldar do not have shields. Thus, every Blast marker is a potentially damaging item, whereas for others, it is but an inconvenience. At the same time, Blast markers offer a modicum of cover (reducing the effectiveness of weapons batteries) and impairing the mobility of enemy forces. Moving through a Blast marker costs 5 cm of movement and will cause damage (1 in 6 chance) to a ship without shields (no holofield saves).



Blast markers are caused by all manner of events, but two in particular bear noting. First, any time a holofield save is effective, a Blast marker is placed in base contact with the ship (exactly as for shields); second, ordnance destroyed by direct fire (batteries or lances) leaves a Blast marker. Tactically, this means that when the fighting gets thick, so do the Blast markers. Managing those Blast markers to best advantage is a small but important part at the detailed tactical level.

PLANETS

In this segment, we're discussing anything that generates a gravity well and blocks line of sight. For the most part, this includes planets and moons but also extends to Ork hulks. The free turns offered by gravity wells offer endless possibilities for fancy manoeuvring – unfortunately, the benefits to non-Eldar are greater than those for Eldar. Finally, planets and moons can be navigated without hazard. This means that these phenomena offer no impediment to enemy commanders and reduce their effectiveness for Eldar as cover.



Moons and planets can be used as an effective cover for Eldar and allow them to hide out of line of sight, pop out to attack, and pop back in. Again, this tactic is useful to generate sniping ordnance fire. Though not generally devastating, this sniping will wear down the opponent's nerve and patience, largely because he will be unable to respond. Unlike asteroid fields, the planet or moon offers the opponent a greater advantage than the Eldar. If possible, attempt to engage your opponent away from the planet. Use the planet as cover as the opponent approaches (goaded by your sniping) and leap out to engage before your opponent can exploit the characteristics of the celestial phenomena. This can leave you farther out in the open than an Eldar Prince finds comfortable, but this position is less exposed than it might at first appear. As your opponent attempts to regroup around the planet, there is a great temptation to exploit the apparent disorder in your opponent's ranks. This is generally a bad idea, because the gravity well permits your opponent to reorient his fleet much more quickly than normal and present a significant threat to your fleet. Exercise patience, regroup your forces away from the gravity well, and begin executing a new plan.

A quick tip on gravity wells. The free 45 degree turn at the beginning and end of movement can be extremely useful to Locked On ships, because turns provided by the gravity well are not affected by the ship's orders. So a ship that did not appear to have a useful target for Lock On, by using their free turns, may manoeuvre for target solutions. They may also use the second free turn to reorient towards cover. Keep in mind, however, that these benefits apply to your opponent as well, and increase your opponent's capabilities more than they increase the Eldar's.

WARP RIFTS

Warp rifts are a relatively rare element on the battlefield and hopefully in the universe as a whole! Nevertheless, a good Eldar Pirate Prince should be prepared to make use of them. Warp rifts can be viewed as extremely dangerous asteroid fields – pass a 3D6 Leadership test or die (no re-rolls for escorts). All ordnance disappears on contact. Most importantly, the warp rift blocks line of sight.

Most of what was said concerning asteroid fields applies to warp rifts, though there is no real opportunity to dodge into and out of these phenomena. All ships must lurk around the edges, rather than bursting across. Because of this limitation, an Eldar Pirate Prince is fairly safe in assuming that an opposing fleet will “come around” the warp rift somehow. It is useful to leave extra space (about 15-20 cm) between your ships and the rifts to allow you to align your vessels to exit around the rift.

WARP EXPLOSIONS

I have had some very bad experiences with warp core implosions recently. I tied a game in which I lost very few ships to enemy fire, but many to warp core implosions. When a capital ship dies, you must roll on the Catastrophic Results table. Two of the possible results are warp core implosions and plasma explosions. Both of these results cause damage in a radius from the dying ship. The damage is equivalent to a number of lance shots based on the ship's number of starting hits. Unfortunately, the damage caused cannot be saved with holofields – tremendous explosions don't care if you're a few light seconds from where you appear to be. Because of the extremely short range of Eldar weaponry, the desire to converge on enemy ships for concentrated fire, and the frequent desire to move beyond the enemy's current position in the Eldar second move, Eldar are frequently at point blank range to the ships they're destroying.

I personally haven't discovered a good way around this difficulty. Murphy's Law seems to surround my best efforts at blowing up enemy ships. Any solutions to this would be greatly appreciated!

GAS CLOUDS

Gas clouds act in essentially the same manner as a Blast marker. Though they do not fully obscure line of sight, they offer an additional right shift to weapons batteries and possibly cause ordnance to detonate. Unfortunately, ill effects can befall an Eldar ship as well, because Eldar ships do not have any shielding. Fortunately, based on new rules in BFG Magazine #2, Eldar ships are now permitted a Leadership check to avoid these ill effects

(with re-rolls for escorts). Remember to roll for each ship in a squadron, using the squadron's Leadership. Note also that the effects on ordnance occur as soon as the ordnance touches the gas cloud, so ordnance launched inside the gas cloud may well be destroyed before it gets anywhere.

Gas clouds can be used as cover for Eldar in a pinch. The reduced effectiveness of batteries is useful, and the reduced movement for others is also useful if the opponent attempts to traverse the gas cloud (an effect avoidable by Eldar). If your Eldar fleet is lance-heavy, opponents in the gas cloud are vulnerable – the gas cloud slows them down, reduces their effective firing, and drops one of their shields. Lances, however, are unaffected. So let them have it!

KNOW YOUR ENEMY

One of the great appeals to BFG is the diversity and character of the different fleets. This makes each a unique challenge, requiring a different approach. Fortunately, the Eldar are diverse and adaptable, which affords the aspiring Pirate Prince room to tailor his approach. Select an enemy from the list below!

THE IMPERIAL NAVY

The Imperial fleet has the greatest variety of ship types to draw from, far too many to document here. Suffice to say, the biggest threats in a battle line Imperial fleet are mid-to-long-range, battery-heavy ships. A short list of the worst capital ship offenders follows:

- Emperor battleship – 60 cm batteries and launch bays, in a fairly inexpensive package. If your opponent knows you're playing Eldar and is going to bring a battleship, you can almost count on seeing one of these.
- Retribution battleship – 60 cm batteries and others, but the others increase the price beyond the impact on Eldar fleets.
- Overlord battlecruiser – optimised for Eldar hunting.
- Tyrant cruiser – the Tyrant would be awful for Eldar if it had either better range or better manoeuvrability. Fortunately, it doesn't have these things. Treated carefully, these are quite manageable.
- Dauntless light cruiser – the batteries on the Dauntless don't have the range of the worst of the Imperials, but the light cruiser platform is manoeuvrable enough to be a real threat to the Eldar. A couple of squadrons of two Dauntless can provide excellent support to a full Imperial battle line (though an equivalent weight in Swords is probably of greater concern to an Eldar player...)

Of the escorts, the Sword frigate is the greatest threat to Eldar in the Imperial fleet. In fact, of all the forces of the Imperium, Swords are the most effective Eldar-killing weapon available. Eldar should take steps early on to neutralise Sword squadrons (I recommend the application of four to six Hemlocks).



The basic weakness of the Imperium is its lack of speed and manoeuvrability. If the Imperial player has not equipped himself with enough long-range batteries or sufficient ordnance, the Eldar will simply snipe him to death from range, secure in their immunity from retribution. If the Imperial Commander has strong long-range weaponry, the Eldar player must commit to the destruction of these ships early – aggressive tactics will pay big dividends.

The Imperial fleet normally deploys in one of two configurations: a classic battle line, or a Carrier fleet. These are two very different fleets, requiring different approaches.

Battle Line

The Imperial battle line is the classic BFG fleet and one of the most common encountered. Again, consider the Imperial fleet composition when considering your plan. Frequently in tournament or pick-up play, the Imperial fleet will have a low (and avoidable) percentage of long-ranged batteries. In this case, a sniping, patient strategy is productive and conservative. If, on the other hand, the Imperial player is loaded for Eldar (either by design or coincidence) with a good number of mid-to-long-range batteries, then aggressive tactics must be used. Defensive play against such a fleet will only result in the Eldar getting dismembered from a distance, with little return damage to show for it. Remember, however, that such an Imperial battle line fleet has relatively low mobility and can't afford to guard its flanks or rear well. Ordnance waves, followed by flank and rear fire can be an effective means to engage and scatter a battle line fleet.

Carrier fleet

The Imperial fleet has the best and most diverse carriers in the game. Normally, an Eldar fleet is incapable of pumping out enough defensive ordnance to hold out against such a fleet. The only real solution is to engage carriers aggressively – early and often. The longer the carriers are out, the more bombers you'll have to contend with. Fortunately, the Eldar have the mobility to get to the carriers. A little creative Line Jumping and tailpiping can slingshot the Eldar towards the enemy carriers. A cautious

Imperial commander will actually bring his carriers into the heart of his line when fighting Eldar. If this happens, the only real advice I can offer is to go in early with everything available. The two turns following an Eldar assault on the heart of an Imperial line will dictate the outcome of the game. Either the Eldar will reduce the Imperial ordnance production considerably, or the Eldar will sustain too much damage in the attempt. Some of the tactics presented earlier can help tilt the balance of fate in favour of the Eldar, but much of the outcome will rely on dice rolling.

Don't take extra turns to flank or surround the Imperial carrier fleet. Each turn will see in excess of 18 Imperial bombers on the field. If nothing else, a rapid, brutal, and uncompromising frontal assault coming from an Eldar player may disorient and confuse the Imperial opponent.

CHAOS

As unlikely as it may seem, the Chaos fleet is probably the most threatening to the Eldar. Chaos ships are cheap like Imperials, faster and more manoeuvrable than Imperials, and seem to prefer mid-range batteries over any other weapons. Although not popular, the fragile Iconclast destroyer can be a threat in large numbers.

Unlike the Imperials, where major threats will be glaring and isolated, the Chaos fleet will normally bristle with too many threats to the Eldar. A strong attack pass to neutralise some threats will invite devastating retribution. The best advice is to formulate a battle plan based on scenario, available terrain, and exact enemy disposition. If the Chaos fleet relies heavily on lances, engage in hard-hitting, decisive conflicts. If the enemy is battery-oriented, employ very conservative sniping tactics and pursue scenario objectives.

In short, use caution and exploit your opponent's mistakes. Just don't rely on any particular weaknesses from Chaos.

ORKS

Orks are at a significant disadvantage when fighting Eldar. Orks have a shooting range comparable to that of the Eldar, but none of their manoeuvrability. Orks also have

an even greater shortage of ordnance than Eldar. Unfortunately, in BFG, Orky numbers don't count for much on defence.

Orky escorts should be cleared with torpedoes, batteries, and teleport attacks wherever possible. Because Ork Escorts actually have some considerable manoeuvrability and tend to arrive in hordes, it's usually worthwhile flanking, enfilading, and generally clearing away the escorts before engaging the larger capital ships. Though this may take a few turns and prove a bit tedious, it is important, because the Orks can do damage if not treated carefully – Big Gunz batteries and Brute Ram ships can reduce Eldar ships to splinters if they ever come to grips with the Eldar.

Lances should be reserved for Orky capital ships as should bombers. Massive saturation is required to take down an Ork capital ship. Their multiple hits should be respected in planning the demise of an Ork capital ship. It's going to take a greater volume of fire to take it down than feels sensible, and when they blow up, you don't want to be nearby. Don't make the mistake of sniping these guys – a decisive engagement with a lot of direct firepower is required to stop an Ork kroozer. Sniping at a distance will take a very long time to do any substantial damage to any Ork capital ship.

ELDAR

Fighting other Eldar is fun. It also tends to go quite a while with no engagement, explode into a bloody mess, and then go very quiet again. One of the difficulties is that the first player to engage frequently ends up on the wrong end of the stick. Eldar have no manoeuvre restrictions in formulating a devastating countercharge. In addition, a player planning to receive an opponent's charge can position his fleet for several good Lock Ons.

This difficulty can be mitigated somewhat. The Eldar vs. Eldar battle often goes to the player that can bring the most weapons batteries to bear most effectively; lances and ordnance aren't going to do it. To dismember your Eldar kin brutally, batteries are where it's at. An interesting consequence is that buffers of Blast markers can be used effectively as a weapon. Although your opponent can't readily be killed by lance fire, lance fire bouncing off holofields generates Blast markers that reduce weapons

battery effectiveness and provides a hazard to navigation. If you must attack another Eldar player, try using Hemlocks and Hellebores toward the centre of the enemy formation. Attack the flank side of enemy ships with lances and torpedoes to lay down a curtain of Blast markers, backed by a curtain of lance or torpedo-oriented inexpensive Escorts. Battery-bearing Aconites and Shadows should focus on inflicting crippling damage on a few capital ships and escaping as intact as possible.

An interesting consequence of Eldar movement is that no one is forced to move. An Eldar vs. Eldar battle often devolves into a Mexican Standoff at 62 cm. When this happens, no one is going to win; break off and find a new way to approach the problem.

One final note when fighting Eldar; it is always counter-productive to produce waves of ordnance. Eldar have no turrets and frequently have unused range attacks to waste on ordnance. Similarly, fighter support for bombers is only useful as a counter-intercept measure. You should also split fighters away from a bomber wing before they attack a ship. In a bombing run, the Fighter will be wasted and can be better used intercepting and harassing enemy ordnance.

TYRANIDS

I'd like to claim full disclosure right now. I haven't found a Tyranid opponent yet... but I've read up on them!

Tyranids do not appear to be a deeply threatening opponent to the Eldar. The Tyranids depend largely on very close engagement with large numbers of ships (either hordes of escorts or large numbers of relatively cheap cruisers). Ramming and boarding (or variants of boarding) form a very central part of Tyranid tactical doctrine. Unfortunately for the Tyranids, they haven't got the speed or manoeuvrability to match Eldar forces. The Tyranids' most effective doctrine against the Eldar will be to fill as much space as possible (limiting Eldar manoeuvring options) and absorbing casualties until they can force the Eldar to engage at close quarters. In addition, the Tyranids are very dependent on their hive ships to provide intelligent direction to their fleet. If the Eldar stay out of Tyranid front arcs and close range, the Hive Mind will spend a lot of effort redirecting instinctive behaviours.



For the Eldar, the main difficulty will be inflicting enough casualties to rack up significant Victory Points. A Tyranid player will surround his most valuable ships with inexpensive escorts while attempting to run the Eldar to ground, while the Eldar close, snipe, and retreat. The only real additional tactic I have to add to this is to recommend the use of minimum-sized torpedo salvos as a spore-clearing agent. Using sequenced minimum spreads of torpedoes at oblique angles to Tyranid ships can also displace whole clouds of spores to parts of the Tyranid fleet that the Hive Mind will find annoying.

Using fighters to clear spores is also a useful manoeuvre, although Eldar don't produce massive numbers of fighters, and the Tyranids may produce massive volumes of assault boats (which they'll need against holofields). If you do intend to use fighters to clear spores, move a fighter to about 20 cm (and off-line from your attack vector) in the end of the 'nid player's turn to draw the spores off his ship base (eg, clear the shields off), make your attack run, move the fighter away, and watch the 'nid player's spores move back into contact with his ship (if it's still around). Just have a care that your attacking ships aren't within 15 cm of the spores – remember that the Eldar second move happens after all other ordnance moves, so the spores will have an opportunity to attack the Eldar ships before they can move away.

NECRONS

Necrons are a fearsome opponent. If you're used to clearing off swathes of your opponent's ships during a game, you're in for a rude surprise against the Necrons. They're fast, and above all, they are tough. The Necrons also have a significant chunk of weaponry that ignores holofield saving throws, so they hit the Eldar hard when they hit.

In terms of tactics, I'll briefly summarise some very valuable lessons conveyed by Brad Bell in BFG #8. First, keep the Necrontyr off-balance. When lining for firing solutions, always have a secondary (and maybe even tertiary) target, particularly for lance armaments. Fire all lances until a particular ship/squadron has Braced for Impact, then proceed to lance the next target until it braces. Make as much of the Necron fleet Brace for Impact every turn, and use lance fire to do it. After you've exhausted lances, move on to concentrated weapons battery fire – backwards from the usual, but very useful for Necrons. Because of the special Necron Victory Points rules, there's great incentive to reduce capital ships to hulks. Keep in mind, however, that reducing the Necron capabilities is a survival priority. Any opportunity to cripple an additional ship should not be overlooked, even at the cost of granting a ship under the gun a temporary reprieve. Round out the attacks with ordnance. Necrons have limited turrets and no intercept ordnance. In spite of these inadequacies, their special hulls make them very resistant to ordnance.

Finally, remember that the Eldar are more manoeuvrable than the Necrontyr, if not much faster. The Eldar second move should be used to gain safety, either in cover, or by manoeuvring to force the Necrontyr out of good firing solutions.

A last word – always count the Victory Points with the Necrontyr. Part of the play balance of the Necron Fleet comes about through their special Victory Point rules – they may inflict disproportionate casualties on the battlefield, but they pay a disproportionate price for each Necron casualty.



SPACE MARINES

Space Marines are lance fodder. They deserve respect for their speed and manoeuvrability, but they tend to be escort heavy, and their strike cruisers have 90 degree turns with respectable firepower.

Unfortunately for the Adeptus Astartes, their greatest strengths are all either overkill for Eldar or neutralised by Eldar special capabilities. Though seemingly daunting at first, the bombardment cannon uses weapons battery rules, but always hits on a 4+. Eldar armour is a 4+, thus the bombardment cannon is overkill, acting as a very expensive weapons battery. All Space Marine ordnance is manned – boarding torpedoes and assault boats. Fortunately, both of these are saveable by holofields. Standard bombers are more effective against Eldar than assault boats. Finally, the Space Marines have a 6+ armour. Eldar torpedoes and lances really come into their own against high armour opponents.

Altogether, the Space Marines end up “overpaying” for their benefits against the Eldar. They are, ship for ship, less effective against Eldar than Chaos and don't get as many ships as the Chaos player. In fact, Space Marines and Eldar tend to field similar sized fleets.

Tactically, this should not be taken as license to ignore the very real threats the Space Marines present. Gladius and Sword escorts present a great threat. At close ranges, Space Marine capital ships are quite dangerous, and they are manoeuvrable enough to come to range if the Eldar commander is incautious. So, kill the escorts, then lance the capital ships into submission.

ENEMIES OF OLD

By David Candlish and Paul Gegg

To celebrate the imminent release of the stunning new Human Blood Bowl team, we think it only fitting that we should bring you a match report pitting them against their arch-rivals, the Orcs. These two races have a bitter enmity stretching back almost to the birth of the game itself, and over the years some of the best teams in the history of Blood Bowl have been Orc or Human. Complementing this racial rivalry is one of the deepest hatreds seen on pitches of the Old World; that between Human superstar Griff Oberwald and the behemoth that is Varag Ghou-Chewer.

Coaching these two teams today are David Candlish (Humans) and Paul Gegg (Orcs). Well known on the tournament scene, these two veteran coaches are also rivals in their own league, the ECBBL based in London (see www.irwilliams.com/ecbbl for more information). With so many grudges and so much pride at stake, the scene is set for a match of epic proportions – the winner reaping the spoils of success and the loser being tormented on Blood Bowl internet forums the world over!

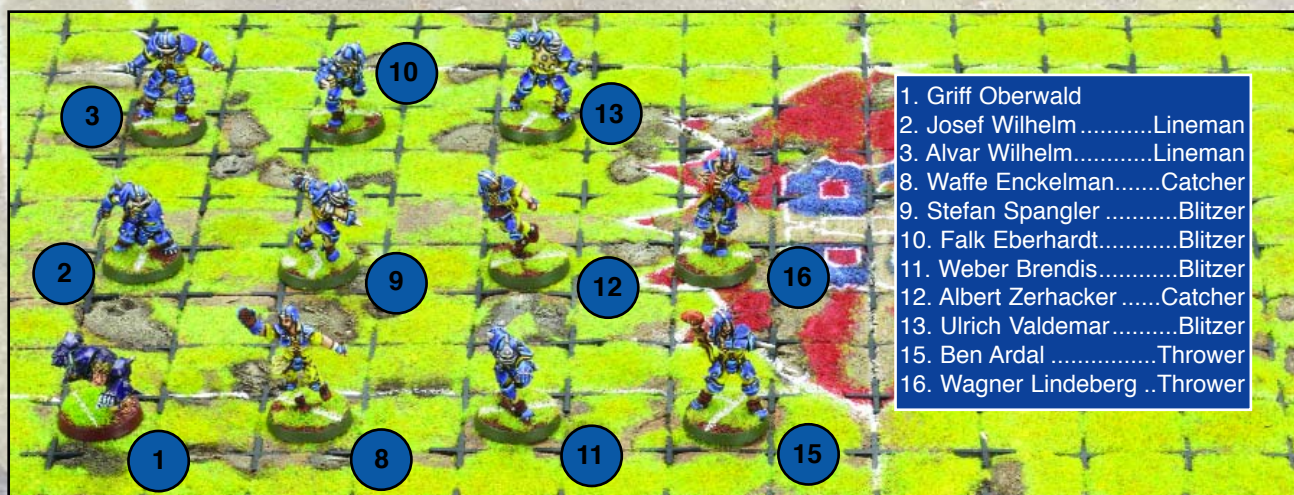
Neuberg Magpies

David: As usual, the mainstay of my team will be my four Blitzers. Given that I would probably be facing at least three Blitzers and a similar number of Black Orcs, not to mention Varag Ghou-Chewer himself, the Block skill should afford me some measure of protection as well as giving me a chance to maybe injure one or two of them in return. My other essential purchase was naturally Griff Oberwald. Although he's getting on a bit now, this legend of Blood Bowl would be key in my bid to defeat Paul's Orcs. However, I'm well aware of how big a target Griff is and he is sure to receive plenty of unwanted attention so my plan is to use him as a sweeper and move in when he spots an opportunity or isn't likely to get beaten up too badly. I followed Griff up with two Catchers and two Throwers thereby maximising the amount of skills I could have on the pitch. The Catchers are great for attracting attention when they are forward as most coaches recognise the danger and send at least one player to mark

them. This then means I can usually gain crucial numerical superiority in other areas.

My overall plan is to score quickly when I receive, which will then hopefully pressure the Orcs into going for an equaliser, rather than grind me down and score twice in the second half. Although I'd normally expect to have some problems against a grinding cage, with Griff around I should be able to leap right in and push the ball out into the open. No doubt Paul is well aware of this too, so keeping Griff alive is a top priority. Buying an Apothecary would help me to do this, but it would be at the expense of a re-roll and that is just too steep a price to pay.

The Neuberg Magpies have had an indifferent tournament history so far and this match is set to be their last for a while as I try my hand with other races. Let's hope they go out in style!





Trolltooth X-Press

Paul: Let's not muck around, Varag Ghou-Chewer is a great player. Orc Blitzers are pretty darn useful to start with, but give them Strength 4, and they can be unstoppable. However, Varag is a Strength 4 Blitzer that can stand up for free, re-roll half of his own blocks and has Mighty Blow to help cause those game-turning casualties. So for 160,000 gold pieces you have a real bargain. Give him leader and, well... I think I've made my point, he's just terrific.

So when I'm asked to renew the old rivalry between Orcs and Humans to celebrate the release of the fantastic Fanatic Human team, I'm on my way to the Studio faster than you can say Jack Robinson. It's 1,100,000 gold pieces and with Varag on the team-sheet, I'm already thinking that I can't lose. That is for the millisecond before realisation dawns – I'm going to be playing against the multi-talented Griff Oberwald. Ah!

What with all that heavy armour, Orcs are a resilient lot (especially against those Human pansies). I can therefore afford to pick out a squad of just twelve players. Any fewer players than that, and I go men down with just the one KO. Any more than twelve and I face leaving a good proportion of my team value in the reserves for the match. So twelve it is. Varag's leader means that the Troll is a bit less unreliable so he gets the nod. In any case, he'll be throwing his blocks towards the end of each turn and that Mighty Blow should make some sort of difference to the Human armour.

I'll be needing a Thrower (more for the Sure Hands than for the Pass skill; passing is only for when things have really gone wrong), I then go for three Blitzers, three Black Orcs and two Gobbos for their nuisance value and speed, leaving me with one line Orc. Two re-rolls (three assuming the Leader skill is used) makes me pretty happy. With a good deal of my team wrapped up in Varag, I would be happier still to have an Apothecary, but you can't have it all.

So without further ado, let me introduce the Trolltooth X-Press.

I learn the Magpies have only eleven players and no Apothecary. This comes as a bit of a surprise to me. One well-timed kick to Griff and it's probably game over for the Humans. Okay, without any tackle on my team, Griff is going to be tough to knobble permanently, but the rest of his team are looking a little precarious. And Griff can't win the game on his own, right?

With only the bare eleven, I'll have the numerical advantage with a couple of casualties. I'm therefore going to go toe-to-toe and try and knock him into next week (like the Orcs weren't going to do that anyway). I'm not going to be able defend the ball at the same time (especially against the leaping prowess of star Blitzer Griff), so I'm thinking that I want to start the game on defence, close in on his players and get a few blocks in. He may well score, and in fact I don't really mind if he does, as long as I can KO or worse one or two and get him to use some of his re-rolls. He'll then find it hard to turn me over when I receive the ball. I'll suck him in to base-to-base, and then slap him silly. All sorted.



Human Turn One

David: The Trolltooth X-Press opts to kick after winning the coin toss for the first half and fortunately for both teams the weather turns out fine. The Orc set-up sees the three Black Orcs and the Troll taking up position on the line of scrimmage, a single Blitzzer in each wide zone and, sensibly, Varag and the third Blitzzer deployed deep – they are clearly, and correctly, expecting an attempt to push forward and score quickly. Rather than meet the brute force of the Orc front line head on, I opt to consolidate my strength down the left wing, leaving only a token defender to hold the right.

With a great cheer from the crowd the match kicks off and the ball soars deep into my half. Fortunately it travels rather too deep and results in a touchback. Thrower Lindeberg takes possession of the ball and the first turn of the match starts in earnest. My first priority is to clear a route up the left wing, so Stefan Spangler blocks the Black Orc facing him on the line of scrimmage with the assistance of two team-mates and jostles him back towards the centre of the pitch. Now that he is free of his Black Orc marker, Valdemar pairs up with Eberhardt and together they blitz the Orc player on their right flank. A resounding crunch echoes around the stadium and the knocked-out Orc is quickly dragged off the pitch! Valdemar continues his advance up the field and ends his turn marking the Orc Thrower, Halfblade. With the way clear and potential Catcher-crunching Orcs marked, Catcher Enckelman races forward deep into the Orc half, ending his move in a dangerous scoring position. This is followed by my ball carrier advancing to within a few yards of the line of scrimmage.

Now my essential moves are over, I can concentrate on trying cause a little damage. Griff squares up against Black Orc Tuskface on the line of scrimmage for his first block of

the match. Clearly in his arrogance he has failed to warm up properly – a “double skull” sees him fall flat on his face! With a growing sense of unease at what might happen next, I opt to use a re-roll and throw the dice again. Another double skull!

Although his armour does him no favours, he is only stunned.

Orc Turn One

Paul: Laughing at an opponent’s misfortune is asking for trouble. Apart from looking like a git, Nuffle is very fickle and it won’t be long before the hob-nailed boot is very firmly on the other foot. However, you don’t often get quad-skulls and coming from the star of the game I do think a bit of a chuckle is demanded. It’s certainly one that my Orcs will remember for a while. Hilarity over, I’ve now got to make the most of the fact that the Magpies’ game-winner is on the floor, stunned and several of the humans are still in my tackle-zones.

The Orcs’ main priority, therefore, is to give Griff a good stamp. Before they do that and have the chance to be sent off (turnover), I make my free moves and then my safe blocks (two dice blocks with the Block skill with spare re-rolls). Enckelman, the only possible scorer, is marked with a line-Orc and Varag blitzes the idle Human Thrower at the line of scrimmage. Ardal is clearly not looking as the Orc Star knocks him out and keeps moving to close within blitzing range of a worried looking ball-carrier in the Magpies’ backfield. I do that so that the Magpies will have fewer options next turn. Now the Thrower Lindeberg may run off backwards if he doesn’t like the chance of being protected by his mates, but that’ll be fine by me as the rest of his team will be getting beaten up.

With the “free” stuff over, my attention turns to the first-turn foul that could possibly win me the game. Lineman Alvar Wilhelm is preventing a really good ganging up on Griff, so Black Orc Spinecrusher, standing next to him, pushes back the rather timid Magpie player. Spinecrusher doesn’t follow up, allowing him to assist in the foul. Gobbo Skuttlestuff races in for the foul with now two assists. I only need a 6 to break Griff’s armour. I roll a 5. The Magpie fans let out a big sigh of relief and I give Skuttlestuff a withering glare. It’s such a poor foul that the Ref isn’t even sure it’s a sending off offence, so the Gobbo remains on the pitch (probably best for him with the Orc bench screaming for blood). Griff was already stunned so I could have waited for the foul next turn instead. This way, I get the chance to stamp on him a couple of times (hopefully); besides David couldn’t prevent any of those lovely Orc assists this turn.

I can now focus on my unsafe blocks (two dice without block). A couple of hits later and half of his team are on the floor. My thoughts are that the Magpies will either run a screen down my left flank or try to force in a long pass. I therefore block with Bigfoot in my backfield, freeing up one of my Blitzers to respond to any threat (should I be given the chance). Across the pitch, Magpie players are marked or down, so the quarterback should have some tough decisions to make.

Note: It’s interesting that both teams wanted the Magpies to start with the ball. Obviously, players should be trying to do the things that make their opponents’ life difficult. Kicking to the Humans was exactly what they wanted so one of us has got our tactics wrong here; we’ll just have to see who it is...

Human Turn Two

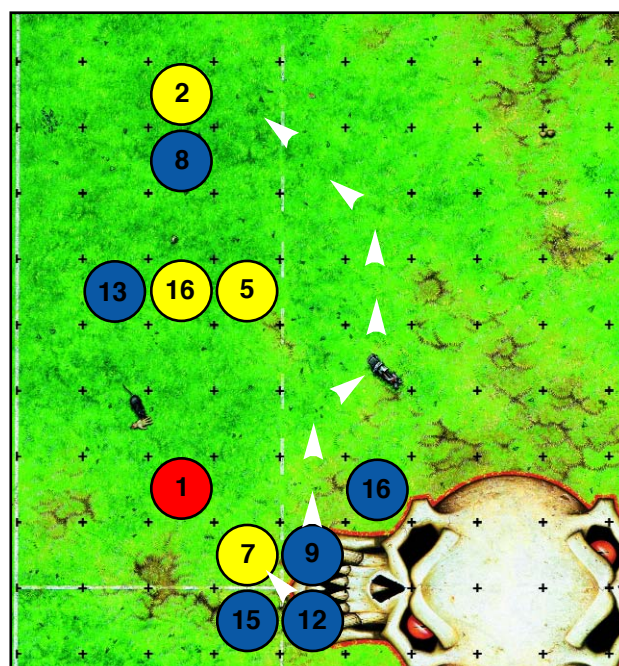
David: Ouch! The second turn of the match and I have already burned a re-roll, one of my Throwers is knocked out and Griff is lying on his face in the dirt surrounded by Orcs gunning for his blood. At this point, it feels like my best shot at recovery is to score this turn, as not only will I be ahead, it will also rescue Griff and give my KO’d Thrower a shot at recuperating. However, I simply don’t have the players to create a formation that will be able to recover sufficiently should my attack fail... it is an all-or-nothing plan!

First things first, I unstun Griff and Ulrich then stand up all my prone players. The next step is to attempt a risky one-dice block with Catcher Albert Zerhacker against Black Orc Blackscar on the line of scrimmage in an attempt to at least push him backwards and create a gap for my Thrower to run through with the ball. When the single skull lands face up I begin to think it’s going to be one of those games. I have to use my second re-roll and

this time it works a little better, with Albert sending the mighty Black Orc crashing to the ground. The next stage in my plan is to free-up Waffe Enckelman who is waiting deep, ready for the pass, but he’s hindered by the presence of a foul-smelling Orc. Stefan Spangler darts deep into the Orc half and needing a (worrying no re-roll left) Go-For-It, thunders into the marker, sending him flying backwards with a rough shoulder charge. Seeing his team-mate now free and in the open, Wagner Lindeberg runs across the line of scrimmage and throws a precarious long pass over the heads of a couple of intervening Orcs into the waiting arms of Waffe who wastes no time in sprinting effortlessly into the end zone. Touchdown!

As the players pause for breath and organise themselves for the kick, both teams KO’d players return, so the teams are back up to full strength. My brave (some might say desperate) plan has worked. I have eleven players on the pitch once more, but more importantly Griff is no longer at the mercy of a Goblin’s boot.

My team deploys for the next drive with four players across the centre, and with my Blitzers and Throwers guarding the wide zones. The Catchers hang back ready to pounce on any Orc players that make it into my half, assisted by Griff who is acting as a sweeper. Unfortunately, just as the final Orc player takes to the field a small band of Orc fans surge onto the pitch and swamp, rather coincidentally, Weber Brendis on the far right wing. When the match officials restore order and the dust clears, Weber is left lying on the turf dazed and confused, but otherwise unharmed. The ball is kicked deep into the Orc half and the Human team brace themselves for the onslaught to come.



Orc Turn Two

Paul: The over-commitment to foul Griff didn't work out. Sure the Magpies used two of their three re-rolls, but on reflection I should have used Varag to blitz his potential scorer rather than bear down on his quarterback. I felt that he wouldn't force the play so much so early in the game. I was wrong and although I half expected to be behind early and I have manage to force the use of re-rolls that I wanted, I feel a good chance to take the advantage has been wasted. Still, plenty of time for payback.

The ball lands deep in my half which is obviously not great for Orcs. I need to collect it and make it into a nice cage to be as safe as possible from Griff. The problem is that the players to form that cage are a long way up field at present. Conversely, it's so deep that I am not going to lose it if I don't pick it up this turn, so I can afford to leave that bit until later in the turn. Nevertheless, spare player Bigfoot races back to make sure a player is near the ball if it all goes wrong on the line of scrimmage.

Griff is standing idly midfield in the Magpie half of the pitch. He's also within easy reach of Varag, so after making a channel at the line of scrimmage and again making the free moves, Varag blitzes with assist from Gobbo Filfus Bluebottle. I need a straight POW to put Griff on his backside, but it's not that unlikely with the use of the Pro skill (46% actually). Double pushback, Pro, double pushback. Griff really is going to be tricky to damage, but I knew that. I'll get him though! Varag follows up. I don't really want to be in Griff's tackle zone, but Varag is a tough guy and I want Griff to dodge backwards if he is going to run towards my lumbering ball-carrier (though he can't reach him in one turn). Varag is now toe-to-toe with Griff and the Spike! Magazine lenses flash.

The rest of the squad hold the line of scrimmage awaiting the arrival of the ball. Halfblade, my Thrower, recovers it fairly easily and trudges upfield towards his mates. He's not really in any rush (or in any danger of being hit next turn). I'm not one for delaying the score for a few turns, but my safest play is a rolling cage. If that works, and I score in turn seven or eight, there isn't enough time in the half to concede again. Half the job will then be complete.

Human Turn Three

David: Now that Paul's Thrower is in possession of the ball, my main concern is to neutralise the threat posed by the Goblin and Varag. Launching Varag deep into my half essentially unsupported means the Orcs' Star is within reach of many of my players, so with luck I could take him down then mark the Goblin. As always, I begin by unstunning my players. Albert Zerhacker runs wide, then into the Orc half and towards the ball carrier, ready to reach him next turn. My Linemen struggle to their feet. Griff launches himself at Varag, but fails to do anything more than push the huge Orc backwards a step or two. I now have a number of tackle zones around both Varag and the Goblin, so with all my critical moves over I move on to the only option I have left — a midfield one-dice Blitz vs Blitz block. Normally I would not do this as a skull leaves me looking a bit silly, but in this case I reason I am only going to be pounded next turn when the opponent has an assist, so I roll the dice. Seconds later Karguk Tonguepuller is flying through the air and lands awkwardly on his neck. It is immediately apparent that he isn't going to be playing any more part in this match and he finds himself lying in a painful heap in the Orc casualty area!



Orc Turn Three

Paul: Losing a player is always tough, but on a one-dice block, it just makes you mad. The Orcs swear bloody vengeance for their fallen comrade. In the meantime, they are under a little pressure as one of the Magpies is running deep on my left flank and I haven't made my cage yet. Not to worry, Halfblade makes more progress up the pitch and into (more or less) the safety of a pocket behind the steadfast line of scrimmage. With all the defensive assists around, Griff is safe from a Varag block deep in the Magpie half so the Orc Star hits the easier target next to him, a Human Thrower, and stuns him. Sending Varag into a fistfight with Griff behind the Magpie line of scrimmage was arguably not too smart, especially now a few other Magpies have joined in the fracas, but at least Griff is busy in the Magpies half and not threatening to flatten Halfblade before he makes the sanctity of the cage. Once that's happened, and with the Humans down to one re-roll already, the Magpies' only real weapon to stop me will be Griff's leaping blitz.

Gobbo Bluebottle works himself free from the midfield tangle and heads downfield. Gobbos are so tricky that the Magpies will either have to use their blitz or send two chaps after him (helping my Orcs outnumber the Humans at midfield).

Human Turn Four

David: With the Goblin scampering ever deeper into my half of the field I'm now under increasing pressure to keep him marked and maybe take him down if I have the opportunity. Also, Varag is a constant threat so injuring him is another aim for this turn. Crucially, Varag is still beside Griff meaning I can block him and save my blitz for someone else. My main aim for this turn is to blitz my way through his pocket and get at least one tackle zone on the ball carrier, slowing his advance.

I move my Blitzers back to hinder that troublesome Goblin, forcing him to dodge on his next turn or be on the receiving end of two two-dice blocks. Griff faces off against Varag once more and this time plants a cunning sucker punch square on the Orc's jaw. Varag crashes to the floor, but he's taken worse blows than that in his career and isn't overly troubled.

Falk Eberhardt blitzes forward, teaming up with Albert Zerhacker to try and take down Black Orc Splot Blackscar on the side of the Orc pocket and get into the area where the cage will be formed. Another one-dice block and the Human fans let out a collective groan as Falk trips over his own bootlaces and begins to fall. Last re-roll used for the half (oops), but thankfully with surprising skill Falk manages to cushion his own fall and sweep the legs from beneath Splot. This gives the bit of space necessary to get a tackle zone on the Orc Thrower.



I am about to end my turn, but the sight of Varag prone on the ground is too much, so I opt to foul Varag with Waffe Enckelman. A well-timed kick to the groin sees Varag hobble off the pitch to sit very gingerly in the dugout, while my Catcher is let off with a stern warning from the referee. Things are looking up.

Orc Turn Four

Paul: My thoughts had been to roll the cage up the pitch slowly, sucking the Magpies in and getting a few blocks, before springing the score in turn seven or eight. With the loss of Varag (and the Leader roll that goes with him), I now have to score in turn seven so Varag gets two chances to return for the second half. Good news is that David's out of re-rolls, so Griff leaping into my cage is probably too much of a risk (especially as the "eye" is now on the Magpies and Griff would be fouled mercilessly should he fall).

Only one task of importance and that is to free up Halfblade, so Blitzzer Azhug blitzes my Thrower's marker (two dice, both down) and down goes the annoying man. Azhug continues his move up the pitch to be a cornerman for my subsequent cage. The rest of the cornermen run up and Halfblade takes up his position in the middle. The key thing for a good cage is that none of the players are in tackle zones or at the very least easily blockable. That means the blitz has to take out a cornerman and the ball-carrier is safe for another turn.

Bluebottle fails to dodge away from his markers deep in the Magpie half and it's turnover. I'm feeling a bit worried about two players off the pitch, but having formed the cage I should be okay.

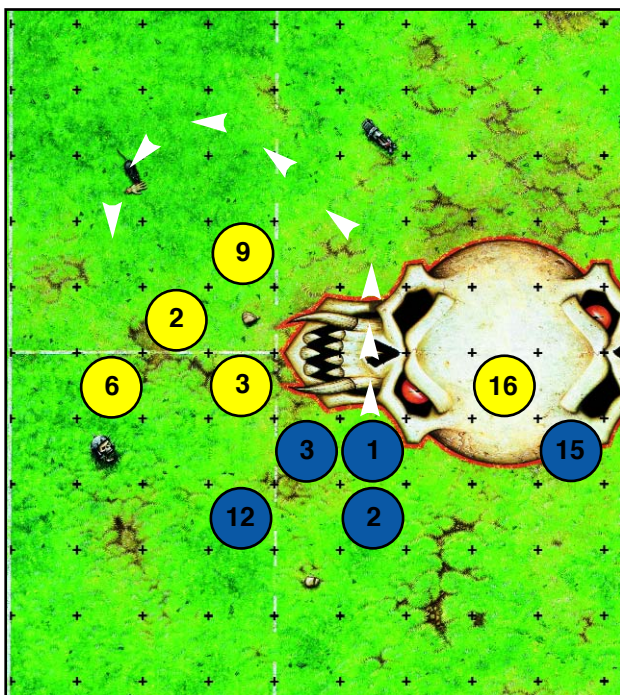
Human Turn Five

David: The Goblin failing his dodge is an unexpected bonus as it means I can guard him without fear of the score next turn. Had I not already fouled Varag I may have been tempted to put the boot in, but I can't risk losing the player if the ref spotted me. All that I have left is to hassle the cage in the hope of slowing the X-Press or dragging some players out of position. Most of my blocking is pretty uneventful until Griff leaps like a rocket at a cage cornerman, Gulash Sorestain, and bends his arm in a way no arm should ever bend. Gulash is carted off the field, howling in agony while the Human fans scream in delight at the carnage they see!

Orc Turn Five

Paul: Ah, I'm in serious trouble now. I've lost two of my best players permanently and Varag for a while too. Griff is standing next to my ball-carrier and my other seven players are mostly marked. I can blitz Griff away from Halfblade, but I can't get to a safe position from being blitzed back by the annoying chap next turn. The downfield Gobbo is so well marked that I'm not likely to score this turn either. I stand him up and move him, nonetheless.

The best I can do is to use my spare cornermen to force the direction from which Griff hits my ball-carrier, so the ball might scatter into a couple of Orc tackle zones should he go down. That's what I opt for. Away from the battle for the ball, Black Orc Blackscar KO's a Magpie Thrower after a both down. It's turnover and I am now open for the Griff blitz.



Human Turn Six

David: Losing a Thrower temporarily is unfortunate, but I still hold the numerical superiority. What's more, I have a direct route for Griff to blitz the ball carrier, and after repositioning my players to catch that slippery Goblin once more, a blitz on the ball carrier was exactly what I do. Although Griff's tackle takes Halfblade down with apparent ease, the ball slides towards the only Orc blitzer on the pitch. Unsurprisingly he fails to catch it, and the ball spins back towards Griff. In three tackle zones and needing a 6. Does he catch it? No problem! My dilemma now is whether or not I should attempt to dodge Griff out of harm's way, but in the end I opt not to roll more dice than is absolutely necessary. In hindsight, I should have made a couple of Go-For-It rolls and dodged, as I had skill re-rolls for both of these actions. At the time I forgot about Griff's Sure Feet!

Orc Turn Six

Paul: Now that's annoying. Without any re-rolls left, Griff's managed to catch the ball and will score what might well turn out to be the winner if he's still standing at the end of this turn. I've got to knobble him now. Although I have re-rolls left and at least two two-dice blocks against him, it's not good enough odds for me to expect to knock him down. However, I see that when I hit him, I can push him towards the sideline and maybe even off the pitch if I don't knock him down. That will give the added advantage of possibly putting him out of the game too.

Spinecrusher stands so that Zark's only got to roll for Bonehead (rather than for Really Stupid) for his block on Griff. Two dice and a push, followed by Tuskface's blitz (again two dice, push required) will leave Azhug, aptly named "the Assassin" to apply the coup de grace (one dice assuming Halfblade stands to cancel the assist). It's all too much for Zark and he predictably Boneheads. That makes it harder, much harder, but still possible.

Tuskface blocks Griff (one dice), pushes him back and follows up. Halfblade stands, blitzes Griff (again one dice) again pushing him back and follows up. Halfblade has one movement left and he successfully dodges behind Griff on fours. That was the tough bit and no re-roll needed as yet. He's standing there occupying the only space that Griff could go to when he is pushed back from his block from Azhug. At present it would be a half-dice block (two dice, opponent chooses) so Bluebottle dodges out of his downfield position and cancels the assist that Josef Wilhelm is lending. Now it's a one-dice block with only a push required. That's exactly what I get and Griff's off the pitch! Cue wild cheering...

That was three one-dice blocks with only pushes required and a dodge (though I would have preferred a POW! of course). Lucky? Yes. Desperate? Yes. But with Zark confused, I was only ever going to get three one-dice blocks wherever I pushed Griff, so I might as well have combined it with pushing him off. It's only now that I realise everyone has moved so I can't close in one where the ball will land. Still, Griff isn't going to score and he may never again if my fans rightly clobber him. Unfortunately, they only stun him. Worse is to follow when the ball heads towards my end zone and lands back in play at the feet of the Magpies' best-placed player. Damn!

Human Turn Seven

David: Well! Some spectacular, well-planned blocking from Paul saw Griff nursing a few bruises in the dugout. It could have been so much worse, and I am fairly lucky for him to come away unscathed. What is even luckier is that the ball has landed right behind my Catcher AFTER all the Orc players have moved. With only a few dice rolls I can score a second.

With no stunned or prone players to sort out, I start my scoring play straight away. My best bet lies in getting midfield Ben Ardal to pick up the ball with his Sure Hands and hand it off to the trusty Zerhacker. To free up Ben I need to throw a two-dice block with Ulrich, hoping for at least a pushback. Without team re-rolls, my heart is in my mouth when I see a skull appear on the first dice, but luckily Ulrich's Block skill saves him with the second dice and Ben is free to move. Ben runs through the gap in the Orc defence and scoops the ball up before handing it to Albert Zerhacker in one fluid motion. The swift Catcher wastes no time at all and dashes into the end zone. Touchdown!

Note: At this point, my Catcher could have easily outrun the Orc players and stalled the touchdown, only to score in the next turn, thereby denying Paul a chance to get one back before the half. In the spirit of fairness and competition I opted to score immediately rather than hold off.

Orc Turn Seven

Paul: Ouch! Neither Varag nor myself are happy chappies. The whole pushing business worked well, but the ball didn't bounce kindly for the X-Press and Varag shows his disappointment by not taking to the field for the next kick-off. This time the ball lands nicely near Halfblade's right hand in the middle of my half of the pitch. I need at least one player (preferably two) in scoring positions so first of all I send both Gobbos downfield (re-rolling a failed GFI); one on each flank. Halfblade picks up the ball needing his Sure Hands and heads up towards the line of scrimmage.



I make a point of only blocking with players I can afford to see both down. The rest are my screen against attack on the ball carrier. Halfblade is therefore safe, and David can't blitz both Gobbos so maybe I can score here.

Human Turn Eight

David: I have two Goblins that are potential scorers to deal with. What does surprise me is that Paul hasn't kept his Throw Team-mate option open — both Goblins are half way towards my end zone. I could blitz one of them, but before I do that I send two other players to guard the other Gobbo in a formation designed to make Paul roll as many dice as possible if he wanted to dodge away to score.

By blitzing with Griff I manage a three-dice block on Gobbo Sputum Skuttlestuff, although I fail to knock him over. With all my defensive moves completed I once again turn to causing damage, spurred on by the two casualties I have caused already. One swift "both-down" block later and my turn has ended... sometimes it's better to not block for the sake of it!

Orc Turn Eight

Paul: A very simple plan now. I need to blitz off one of the man-markers on my preferred Gobbo (right flank) and to do that Spinecrusher frees up Azhug by pushing away his marker. Azhug two-dice blitzes one of Bluebottle's markers, Zerhacker, and needs his Block skill with a both-down. The Catcher is KO'd. All this leaves is a Halfblade short pass, a catch in a tackle zone and a Dodge roll. All with re-rolls, so it's a good chance to score. Halfblade runs up the pitch, throws an accurate bullet pass, but Bluebottle initially fluffs the catch. The fans are on the edge of their seat. Re-roll used. Can he save the first half? No, it's down on the floor and the Orcs trudge off the field for their half-time Orca-Cola, more deflated than a flat pig's bladder.

Half-Time Thoughts

David: Well I hadn't expected to be 2-0 up at half time with two casualties in my favour. In fairness, I think my luck has held out pretty well, especially considering I used all my re-rolls by turn four. I was very pleased to score on the second turn as if I hadn't the Orcs would have taken my out-of-position team to pieces and Griff would have been in serious trouble.

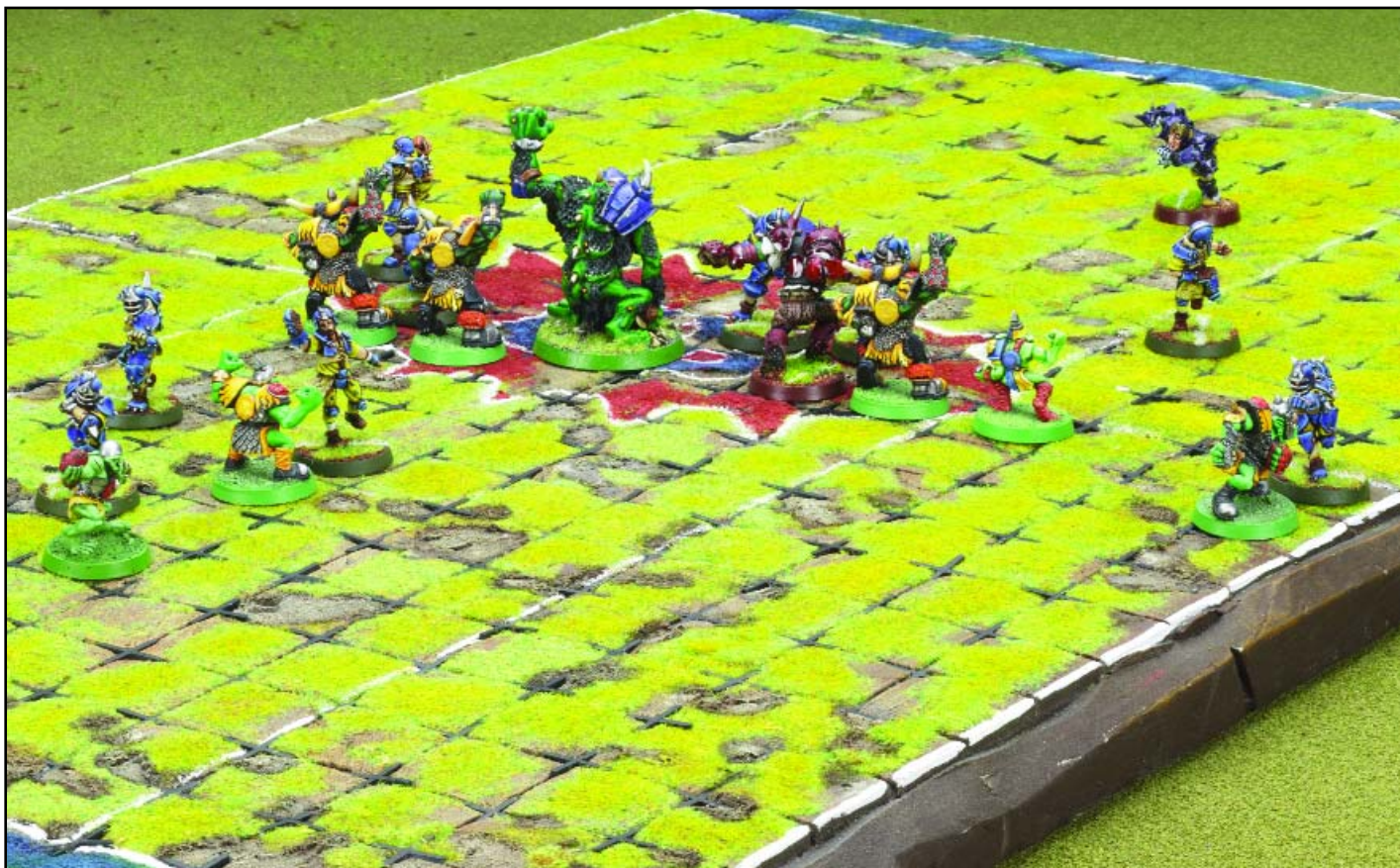
I think my defence against the Orc attacking was reasonable, although in hindsight I wouldn't try a one-dice block against a Black Orc just to get to his ball carrier, as I'd probably have been better off going for the Goblins. They squash easier! Griff is proving to be immensely valuable although thankfully not dominating the match completely as I'd feared he might — one of the flaws of stars is it can be easy to rely on them completely at the expense of using real tactics in your games. This is possibly because I've deliberately kept him back out of harm's way until I need him, and as turn six showed he can be relied upon to seriously upset your opponent's plans.

So what now for the second half? My knocked out players won't be returning from the dugout so I've only got nine. Varag returns, which goes some way to evening up the

sides. My main priority for this half is to avoid taking damage, even if it means letting him score relatively quickly. I can then try for another touchdown to make it 3-1 and secure the win.

Paul: I have to disagree with David here. I think Griff has had a massive effect on the match. Sure David hasn't relied on him and he hasn't scored (yet), but Griff's very presence got the Orcs to over-commit (whether mistaken or not) to allow the first score and he single-handedly turned me over to cause the second. He injured one of my Blitzers before he got in the game and took Varag down allowing him to be fouled and KO'd. Is there no end to his talents? Can I do the Old World a favour and get him this half? We'll just have to see.

Varag's recovery means I outnumber the Magpies which is something I've not been used too so far. Okay, so I've got an extra man, but the failed catch at the end of the half really hurts. As does the two lost Blitzers, but my real problem is that I have to score in three or four turns to leave enough time for an equaliser and then turn the Humans over and score again. Of course, the quicker I try and score with the Greenskins, the more that can go wrong and I can end up being totally stuffed. Still, got to try... what does the Kick-off table have in store?



Second Half

David: Hampered somewhat by the absence of two players, the Magpies unavoidably leave gaps on the wings. Griff still stays back from the line of scrimmage, poised just behind Wagner Lindeberg.

Paul: The Orcs' strength is spread out along the line of scrimmage and my fast players are poised to run down a flank. I'm thinking quickish score and then we'll see what happens. Halfblade pants as he wonders where the ball will land, but the Magpies have done their homework and get the "Blitz!"

Human Blitz Turn

David: The whistle to start the second half has barely been blown before the Magpies surge forward into the Orc half! Once the dust has cleared, Sputum Skuttlestuff is left nursing a broken leg in the X-Press dugout, and two Human Blitzers and a Catcher are charging towards the ball which is only yards away from the Orc end zone in the dead centre of the pitch. It looks set to be a long half for the Trolltooth X-Press.

Note: Many players go overboard on a Blitz, pouring players into their opponent's half. This can often lead to an overstretched defence and be counter-productive. In this situation I used fast players to pressure the ball while still keeping the majority of my defence intact.

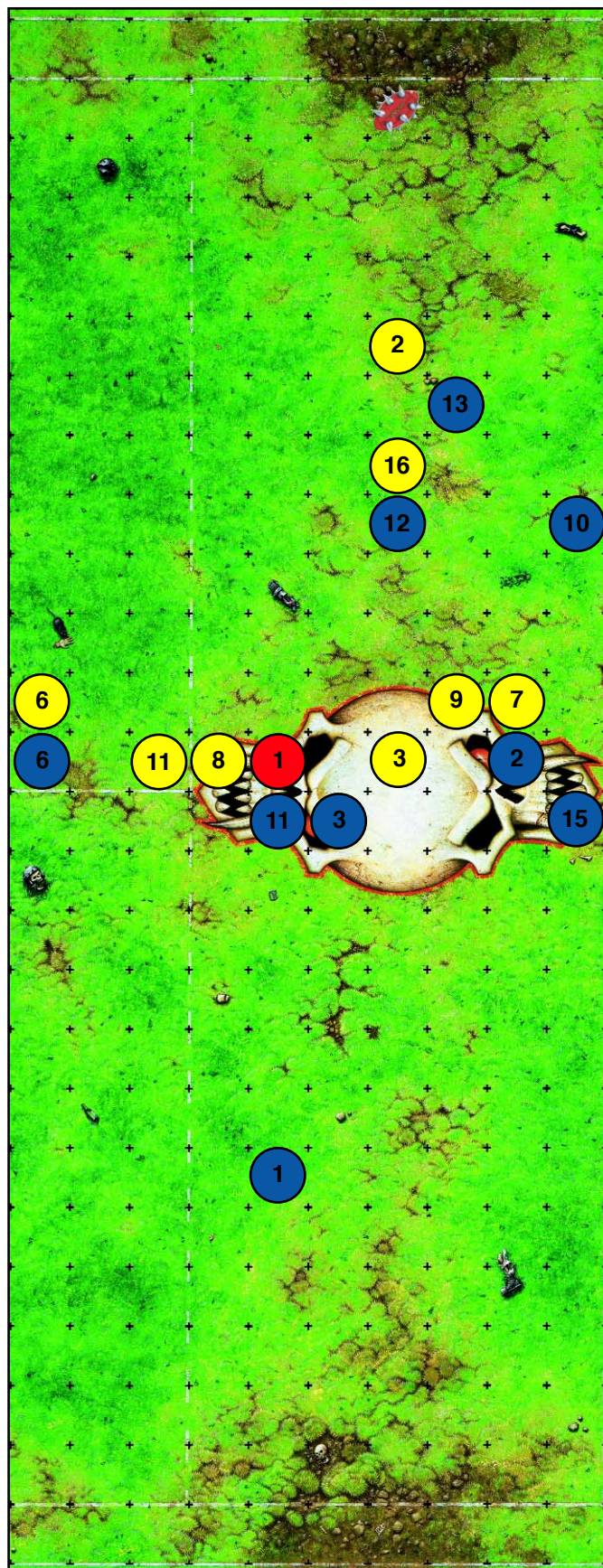
Orc Turn One

Paul: When I said a quickish score, I didn't mean a Magpie one! My first job is to try and stop them getting possession. That's not going to be easy.

All my players in the backfield are marked and I have to work my Thrower free, get the ball and then get him safe. First up, Black Orc Spinecrusher leaves the line of scrimmage and blitzes a Magpie Blitzer in my half needing two GFIs and thankfully KO's him (needing a re-roll). My sole remaining Gobbo can now assist Bigfoot in blocking away Halfblade's marker with a POW! I can afford to go after the ball now as the deep Magpie players cannot recover if I fluff the pick-up. That's just as well with a double one from Halfblade. The position is bad, but this drive is not dead yet.

Human Turn One

David: My front line is a bit of a mess and the players I sent after the ball are not going to reach it. Just as well I didn't go all out on the Blitz or I'd really be in bad shape now. With Varag standing all alone, he's an awfully tempting target, but the Orc Blitzer near the sidelines is even more tempting. After a quick pause to check that the battered front line have regained their feet, Falk





Eberhardt races across the pitch ready to push him into prime position for Stefan Spangler to knock him out of bounds, but falls flat on his face just before he can make his block. Turnover!

Orc Turn Two

Paul: I've lost three of my six Movement 6 players so far, so I need to get someone downfield with speed who might survive a Griff blitz. Remember I've got to be scoring soonish. Varag blitzes his Blitzer marker, but gets both down, leaving him stuck in a tackle zone. He fails his Pro check and I'm not prepared to make a dodge downfield with him so early in my turn with the ball loose near my end zone, so he stays where he is and wastes his remaining movement.

The rest of the team take a little encouragement from a mighty block from Blackscar and four Magpies get put on their butts. Halfblade even picks up first time and gets into a bit of a pocket. Zark ends the turn in style with a Bonehead with a rather nervous Magpie Lineman in front of him. Scoring is going to take at least another three turns and that's if I score at all. It's not looking good.

Human Turn Two

David: Griff, lurking dangerously in the Magpies' backfield, spies his chance. Filfus Bluebottle, the last Goblin is standing with his back turned just inside the Human half of the field. Taking the opportunity to put some serious hurt on one of the Orcs' last remaining realistic scorers, he piles into the Goblin with a ferocious neck-high two footed tackle. POW! Filfus keels over

instantly and is dragged from the field, his head hanging at an unhealthy angle. Another casualty for the "überwald"!

The rest of the Magpies hurriedly take up defensive positions once more and brace themselves for the inevitable Orc onslaught...

Orc Turn Three

Paul: I've lost another player and the Magpies are giving the X-Press a lesson in causing casualties. The X-Press are going to have trouble explaining this one to the fans. And Griff is lurking ready to pounce in the next turn should I not be able to get the ball away from him (and with movement 11, that's going to be tricky). It's do or die and time to throw the Orc playbook out of the window (not that it's done me much good to date). The Magpies' defence is centred around Varag on my right-flank as no-one in their right mind would see the Black Orc on my left flank as a scoring threat. Apart from me today, that is.

Before I do that, I need to get rid of his marker, so Bigfoot blitzes him off (and down). Halfblade runs up and hands-off to Blackscar who receives it with some surprise, but quickly turns and runs downfield. Halfblade can now be used to help Zark to move and between them, they set up the screen. Spinecrusher decides not to block, thus tying up a Magpie Blitzer. Varag double pushes his Lineman target, but then succeeds with his Pro skill and on the re-roll knocks him down. Pro — got to love that skill. Azhug finishes the rather successful turn by dodging out to complete the screen.

Note. Black Orcs aren't very agile, but they still catch three in four balls should a re-roll be available. That's not too bad odds when nothing else is on. They aren't very quick though so whether he makes the end zone before the end of the week is another matter...

Human Turn Three

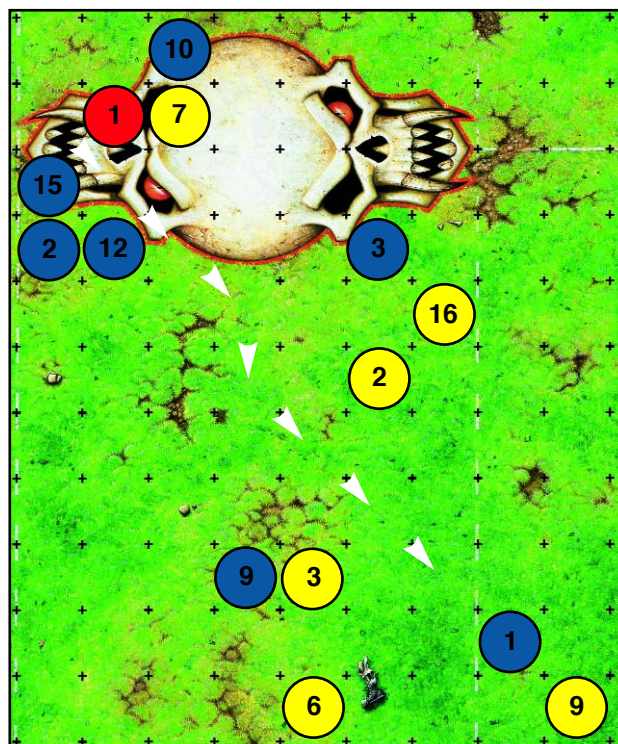
David: Handing off to the Black Orc! This was something I didn't expect at all, and because it's worked it has caught the Magpies completely off guard. I need to act fast and get tackle zones on the Black Orc, and preferably more than one. Paul can't rely on the Agility of this brute to save him too often, so putting two TZs on the ball carrier should buy me time to get more men in position. I have maybe a turn or two at the most to stop this guy. The prime choice for the first player to use is my Catcher as although he may be marked, his Dodge skill usually makes him pretty reliable. Not today... he crashes to the ground and my turn ends abruptly.

Orc Turn Four

Paul: I can't score this turn so I roll the Black Orc ball-carrier up the left flank and GFI one square so he can score without rolling for extra squares next turn (he might have to roll for something else as well, depending on how close the Magpies get). With very few players in tackle zones, the rest of play is defending the screen against the sure-to-come blitz from Griff.

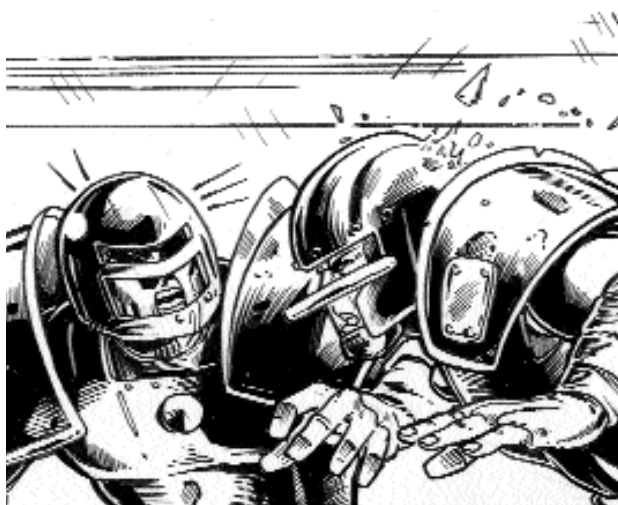
Human Turn Four

David: As I had feared, that Black Orc is now in a definite scoring position. I can see only one possible way to stop him and naturally I will need Griff to save the day. After a quick block to help clear the route, minimising the number of risky dodges I need, Griff begins his single-handed blitz all the way across the pitch on the well-guarded Black Orc steaming up my right wing. His first dodge fails as he trips on the outstretched leg of Varag, but he turns his tumble into a controlled roll and escapes harm (I use his Dodge skill re-roll). His desperate sprint continues, but what should have been an easy dodge away from the flailing arms of a Black Orc turns bad. Once again Griff's expertise and training save him and he continues on undaunted (now I've used my Team re-roll). In a show of sheer athletic excellence he leaps effortlessly over the clueless Troll before landing deftly on his feet. All that remains are a few desperate last paces before he throws his block... but he trips! I'm really sweating after I fail the GFI to Block, but Paul reminds me that Griff has Sure Feet. Nuffle smiles kindly on such benevolence as Griff makes the GFI and launches himself into a one-dice block only to be caught in the face by the outstretched fist of the towering Orc. It's a skull and Griff falls face first into the mud.



Orc Turn Five

Paul: What do I do now? I've got a touchdown just waiting to be scored, but Griff is lying on the floor helpless. If I foul and injure him, then Griff's out of the game. But if I get sent off at the same time, Griff's departure will be a hollow victory as I won't have enough time to score twice (and may not even score once — bringing shame on the team). I can only get two assists in so the chance of injuring Griff is roughly one in nine against one in six of being sent off. I decide against the foul, but with re-rolls to spare, I try to injure a couple of other Magpie players with safe blocks (two dice with Block). Armour rolls hold so Blackscar scores without incident. Touchdown! Whatever else happens, a Black Orc score has regained some credibility.



Human Turn Five

David: With an uneventful kick-off, things look reasonably solid. All three of my knocked out players are back and Griff is still alive and kicking. A full team and I get to receive. If I can score here I will seal the match. My plan is to emulate the first half — run deep, forcing him to chase my Catchers. I can then choose to either run the ball in with Griff, a Blitzter, or dodge away with a Catcher to receive the match-winning pass.

Things go pretty smoothly and my turn is almost finished with both Catchers deep, Griff distracting Varag deep in the Orc backfield and everyone else still on their feet. All that remains is to pick up the ball. Ben Ardal moves to collect it but fails, his eye caught by one of the cheerleaders at the edge of the pitch. Still, my team and formation are in good shape so I'm not overly worried.

Orc Turn Six

Paul: I have only eight players to defend against his eleven and I need to send at least one of mine into his half of pitch so that I have some sort of chance of getting an equaliser. Problem is that when you do that, your player becomes something of a target. So I send two, one on each flank and defend the Human offence with the remaining six players. I can't cover all the receivers so I'm relying on the Magpies throwing this away. With not much left to do I order a petulant one-dice block on Griff from Varag near my end zone. Varag Pros his pushback hoping for that elusive POW and rolls a skull. Stunned. Great. Turnover.

Human Turn Six


David: I had to smile when Varag knocked himself over. It may not have been quite as impressive as Griff's display of ineptitude in turn one, but it's always fun when Star Players fail disastrously. All I need to do now is get the ball into the hands of Griff downfield, so I opt for a long pass with my Thrower directly at him. Wagner Lindeberg, the more experienced player, gathers the ball easily enough. However, a gust of wind blows the ball off target and it comes to rest not too far from Zark the Mindless, near the corner of the field.

Orc Turn Seven

Paul: The ball is loose and I've players that can reach the Magpie end zone in the next two turns. It's not very likely, but I can still equalise. First of all Varag unstuns. I've got to get one of the two movement five players in his half close enough to score in turn eight and Bigfoot only needs a successful dodge, so I move him first. He makes his dodge and closes to within five squares of the end zone on my right wing. Whatever else happens this turn, I can still score in turn eight.

My only potential ball-handler, Azhug the Blitzter, is marked near midfield so Blackface blitzes his marker. It's a both down so I use one of my two remaining re-rolls. Azhug is now free to run back towards his own end zone to recover. The pick up is a bit of a worry without a re-roll, but he gets it. Looking downfield, the position looks bleak, but we've got the ball. Halfblade dodges out from his marked position in the Magpies half and comes back





to midfield (as I decide he won't get into scoring range with a player in his way, but he could be of use with his Pass skill at the line of scrimmage).

Black Orc Spinecrusher is forced to become the second possible receiver so he dodges (somehow) out of his midfield position and heads down the field needing two GFIs. A very lucky turn. David is probably now thinking that I might just be able to get that equaliser. My ball handler is definitely going to be blitzed by Griff, but as I've got Block and the Magpies don't have a re-roll, he's got a fair chance of staying on his feet.

Human Turn Seven

David: Going from a fairly likely looking chance to score and seal my win, I now find myself facing two players within scoring distance (albeit one of them a Black Orc). If I'm not careful he could equalise here. I pull everyone back to get tackle zones on both potential scorers, both to try and grab a lucky interception, but also to make him dodge away. Foolishly, I make the mistake of moving a player back unnecessarily when I could have moved him up to mark the Orc Thrower; a decision I could come to lament later.

There isn't much I can do defensively now, so Griff dives headfirst at the ball carrier. Frustratingly I don't manage to knock him down, but at least the player is marked. I've done as much as I can, let's see what these Orcs can manage.

Orc Turn Eight

Paul: Result. Azhug is still on his feet and Varag is within reach of Griff so he can knock the pigeon-helmeted star away from my ball-carrier. Varag jumps up, dodges out of his tackle zone and blitzes Griff. POW! Now I get him when I only need a pushback! Griff, however, is just stunned. Azhug runs up and hands-off to Halfblade at halfway. The last team re-roll is needed, but Halfblade safely gathers. Bigfoot dodges out from his marker's tackle zone deep downfield and runs into the end zone. Halfblade takes a deep breath and runs forward sending out a long pass. Needing a 5, he rolls a 4. Pass re-roll and it's a 6. Accurate! The Studio comes to a halt as the ball sails towards Bigfoot's open arms in the end zone. He only needs to catch it to equalise and force extra time. Is it caught? Oh yes. Touchdown! The fans go wild! The Orcs go wild! Even Tonguepuller with his broken neck in the Injured Box lets out a bit of a whimper.

Note: This is the sort of length of the field play that I expect from my Skaven, not my Orcs! Having said that, it's not that unlikely, about one in four. However, if David had marked my Thrower at the line of scrimmage, rather than put another unnecessary tackle zone on the eventual

scorer, then it would have needed a long bomb and an extra dodge aside from a tougher catch by Halfblade in the first place. It might not seem much, but it would reduce the odds to about one in fifteen.

Human Turn Eight

David: Disaster! I've gone from leading 2-0 to facing Sudden Death overtime. Losing a lead like this is pretty disconcerting, and I've the horrible feeling it will all get even worse in extra time. Since I can't score, I spend the last turn of normal play blocking as much as possible. The frustration at throwing away a near-certain win is too much for Alvar Wilhelm, however, and takes his anger out on the prone form of Zark the Troll. Although Zark is left unhurt, the referee spots Alvar and promptly sends him off!

Human Summary

David: Will I ever be able to live it down, losing a lead like that? In fairness I think I was a little unlucky not to score in turn six of the second half, but it was my own silly fault for not marking the Orc Thrower that facilitated the equaliser. So far it's been a hugely enjoyable match and extra time is sure to be as exciting and intense as normal time has been. I still have a slight advantage despite losing a Lineman, so hopefully I will receive the kick and score quickly. If I don't receive, I'm not sure I want to think about the outcome...

Orc Summary

Paul: Yep, it's extra time. I've got eight players, am outnumbered and am still playing against Griff. But the Orcs are still in this which is a bit of a result having been nearly 3-0 down at the start of the second half. It's been a terrific game so far and extra time without team re-rolls on either side is going to add to the excitement. That's if I can stand it.

With the luck I've had since I started using the Black Orcs as receivers, I'm thinking I can't lose this now... Join us soon to find out what happens...