

IRONWATCH

The Mantic Fan-Produced Magazine



**Issue
02**

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Cover art and title by Mark Smith

ABYSSAL TIDINGS

A Message from the Editor

Welcome back to Issue 02 of **IRONWATCH**! We're incredibly grateful to Mantic for the inclusion of the link to **IRONWATCH** Issue 01 in the email newsletter, and for the overwhelming outpouring of support from all of you fans out there for the first of many issues to come!

When we first started accumulating material for the first issue, there were concerns raised that the immense volume of material we received was a one-shot deal, a lucky initial burst that would peter out very quickly. Luckily, this does not appear to be the case, and we have so much material that we had to set some on the back burner for next issue! In addition, Mantic's had a hectic month with the successful Dreadball Kickstarter campaign, as well as internal review and finalization of the Warpath Skirmish rules for public release as a Beta. They've done a wonderful job so far of responding to feedback from the initial play testers, and now everyone will be able to help make that an incredibly tight and competition-worthy rule set just as we did for Kings of War!

I would strongly encourage any of you who would like to help the **IRONWATCH** magazine in some way, however small, to please send us pictures! While we do strive to include lots of hand-drawn art, pictures of models and gallery showcases are always welcome, and once we start getting a strong enough stream of those submissions, we can start to feature a regular “Best of Mantic” showcase of **your** models to show off for the world to see!

As always, thanks for reading and Welcome to the Watch!

-Austin

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UPCOMING NEWS FROM MANTIC GAMES!

Mantic Fan Wiki Now Up!

Every great hobby has a great fan base and every great fan base needs a great Wiki!

http://manticgames.wikia.com/wiki/ManticGames_Wiki is a fan made Wiki for fans by fans, putting all Mantic Games related info in one place from Fiction to Gameplay its going to be there for you!

We just need your help to keep expanding and adding, so check liamgregg's profile on the Mantic forums for login details, or send him a PM to get involved!



*Kingdoms of Men Ogre Sculpts by Remy
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KoW Kickstarter Ogres!

The initial sculpts for the KoW Ogres from the Kickstarter way back in June are starting to be teased out! Compare the original concept art to the sculpts at the bottom of the page, and you can see the talented sculptor Remy has stayed incredibly true to the original art!

Stay tuned in the next few months, as they release further teasers, and look for the finished models to ship sometime in early next year!



*Kingdoms of Men Ogre Concept Sketch
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Dreadball Kickstarter has Finished.

As of the release of this issue of Ironwatch, the Dreadball Kickstarter has now finished, successfully funded with plenty of stretch goals as a reward for the outstanding outpouring of support for the funding. Just take a look to the right to see an example of the wide array of rewards and options for the “sweet spot” Jack level!

Even if you didn't pledge, keep an eye on the Dreadball Kickstarter and their upcoming sculpts, as we've glimpsed the Zz'or and Judwan team concept sketches, giving us a look for the very first time at these Warpath races!



*Zz'or Team Dreadball Concept Sketches
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DECAL SHEET

PLUS EVEN MORE TO COME! * ships Q2 2013

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THE LIVING WOODS

by Chris Livingstone - stlwarrior

Every man is born with the hunter instinct. Some choose to ignore it as they grow while a select few hone it to a sharp edge. Thorkell Silkbeard was one of the elite whose reliance upon his natural-survival instinct had saved his life on more than one occasion.

Standing isolated in the middle of a foreign forest that was densely packed with centuries old trees would have been nerve racking even for the hardest of adventurer, but Thorkell Silkbeard was anything but ordinary.

The hair on the back of his neck was already raised before he heard the rustle of leaves. Thorkell crouched at the base of a massive tree and raised his round wooden shield. He readied his spear and listened.

Birds chirping, tree limbs shaking, and wind blowing was all that Thorkell Silkbeard heard. But, he *knew* that something was watching him; stalking him.

He continued scanning the area in front of him in a desperate bid to find the cause of his inexplicable anxiety.



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Wait; was that a twig breaking over on the right? No. Was it back on the left? Why does it sound like the leaves are being stirred up? Am I going crazy?

Then, he saw it. The instantaneous feeling of relief that he had indeed heard something stirring was replaced with shock and dread. Two perfectly-shaped red circles were staring directly back at Thorkell from behind seemingly impenetrable vegetation.

What the hell is that...?

Before the dazed raider could conclude his thought the creature lunged towards him. The monster was a half-head taller than Thorkell, had thick-muscular green skin under its ancient-brown leather clothing, and had a long-protruded jaw that contained vicious sharp teeth. It emitted a ferocious growl as it raised a crude metal blade. No sooner was the weapon raised then it was powerfully swung downward.

Thorkell Silkbeard had the presence of mind to take the blow on the iron band that encapsulated the wooden shield that he carried. The violent collision produced sparks that temporarily blinded Thorkell. He knew he was in mortal danger.



By Austin Peasley

In a helpless state, the Northman thrust his spear in the general direction of the monster. Thorkell was not surprised that his attack had not found flesh, but he was bewildered when his spear was sliced in half. Shaking his head back and forth in an attempt to get his pupils functioning properly again, Silkbeard opened his pain-filled eyes just as the creature was cleaving downwards at his helmet-covered head for a second time. The attack, if it connected, would have split the northern warrior in two.

Thorkell defended himself when he ducked down underneath the protection of his large shield that he clasped tightly. The metal was stronger however, and the savage blade tore through the wooden-butted plank with ease. Luckily for Thorkell, the shield, while utterly destroyed, had saved his life.

With his chances for survival slimming every second, Thorkell opted to go for a sneaky defense instead of his usual brute attack that would obviously not work against this foe. He released the handle of the broken spear as he slid his rune engraved hand-axe out from his belt. Then, while the green-skinned monster grunted and raised his blade to finish off his prone prey, Thorkell reared back and snapped his wrist forward driving his hand-held axe into the exposed ankle of the nightmarish monster.

The hand-axe tore through flesh, cartilage, and muscle. But, even with Thorkell's superior strength, the throwing axe was unable to sever bone and instead it was buried into the base of the creature's fibula.

Thorkell Silkbeard had traveled and experienced more than any man that he had ever met. Yet, nothing in his journeys could have prepared him for the inhuman and unholy howls that emanated from the throat of the animal that was trying to kill him.

Amazingly, the beast, after dropping its barbarous weapon to the ground in agony, kicked the prone Ardovikian in the lower part of his larynx with his good foot. Immediately Thorkell's eyes bulged and his body shook in the effort that it took to gasp for life-sustaining air. When the main contingent of the raiding party finally reached Thorkell, he was breathing heavily and was unable to speak. However, after seeing his shattered shield and his broken spear the seafaring warriors all knew that their strongest champion had met his match.

Some of the others spread out to secure the area but no trace of the green-skinned monster was found. But after finding Thorkell in the state that he was in no one doubted the story that he told around the blazing campfire later that night.

Just what was that thing? And gods help us if there are more than a few of those creatures out there...▪



By "Pathfinder Pete McF"

ELVEN ARMY BOX SET REVIEW

by "Cornonthecob"

Hello there! This is a review of the original Elf Army box set, it's a little bit late (written when it first came out...yes I got the 'limited edition' Mage on horse). Here are my thoughts:

A relative noob to the whole 'Mantic' thing I saw how cheap the models were and how each major box set came with a copy of the free rules, I thought I'd give it a go. Probably wouldn't do much with them, use 'em as decorative pieces maybe.

I was wrong.

The boxed set came in the post with that 'holy hell it's massive' look that you get from an irritated Postman, taking it from him I tore into it, the cardboard barely surviving the opening process (every

gamer needs cardboard, movement trays are expensive). My initial reaction was 'damn'. Not bad damn, good damn. It was packed to the brim with sprue's. Giving the models a quick check before assembly I was quite surprised, the Elves seem to have some dislike online yet in the flesh they are incredibly detailed with ornate helms and wonderful armor. (Also glad for once that Elves aren't wearing dresses).

The Archers have minimal mold lines and nice cut joints, although their bows are somewhat fragile they make up for it with their multi pose options (only on arms and heads however). The Spear men are similar with fragile and somewhat confusing weaponry (the spears look...unique to say the least) however they do form up into a phalanx rather easily due to Mantic's clever modeling system. I also liked the nice distinction between champions with a simple cloak and multi head option. I did find the large amount of throwing cats and dead elves slightly confusing however (nice for



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bitz though) as well as the option for a musician (I could find the horn but not a hand to hold it ?).

The bolt throwers I enjoyed immensely, very easy to put together with lots of detail they formed a nice War Machine that didn't follow the 'giant crossbow' look that a lot of other fantasy games utilize (historically accurate is cool but they are Elves after all, let them have their own take on items), the crew were also nice as well.

The limited edition Mage is a surprisingly good model, from the initial picture on the box I was in somewhat of a forlorn mood, he appeared to look slightly dazed, looking to the left while holding magical fire in his right hand. However upon assembly he seemed a lot better. The horse was something of a pain though due to it's heavy metal body. This was expected due to all of Mantic's 'early metals having issues (now completely sorted and mostly resin).

Now onto the slightly disappointing models, the Scouts. I try to like the Scouts, they are the only non shield holding models with options, but they are just...lacking. I'm not sure what but I hope that the metal capes will add to them. Other than this mysterious 'missing element' they are essentially good miniatures.

Finally my 'free rules' were missing, at first irritated by this I then checked the box once more to find a small postcard stating that 'due to re-working of the Kings of War rule set they would rather not put their old rules in a starter set' instead they offered to send me a free rulebook just by posting the postcard. I was very happy, a surprisingly customer savvy idea.

So, aesthetically pleasing? Check. Multi-part options (including regimental command)? Check. Additional leader? Check. Free rules? Check.

That's a very good box deal. ■



By Boris Samec

ARGUN'S LUCK

Part 2

by Matt Gilbert

When we last left off, Argun and his orc band discovered they had unexpected Elven intruders in their hideout. Argun has headed off to fend off the fey invaders, but how tough could mere elves be?...

NO ONE HAD come back, but Argun had heard bellows and the sound of clashes echoing through the caves. He sighed. What was taking so long? In the corner of the room, the orclings in the cage on the wall had been getting more and more restless, their sniveling and whining getting on Argun's nerves. Spittle covered on the floor under the room's single burning torch, the flickering light barely reaching the opposite wall. His cleaver in his belt and his Ax in one hand, Argun took the torch from the sconce, knocking a fine cloud of old soot over the trembling orcling. "With me Spittle. If you want something doing properly, you 'ave to do it yourself". He kicked the creature causing it to squeak in alarm and hurriedly clamber up the orc's body to perch on his shoulder. Argun pocketed his dice. "Let's go play with the elves".

Argun knew something was wrong; he could sense it. There was something in the air. Something unsettling. It was like the feeling in the pool room had seeped out and was spreading through the tunnels; the air felt thick and oily.

The echoes of battle were coming in short, sporadic bursts. A shout. A clash of metal. A scream. As he turned a corner he stumbled across two orc bodies. Jurk had been



By Tom Welch

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impaled on a spear that stuck from the ground: one of the traps he'd been tasked with setting. The dead weight of his corpse had slowly dropped all the way to the floor down the wooden shaft.

Kruk had had his throat slit and had also taken a stab wound in the left shoulder blade. He'd taken one of the enemy with him though Argun discovered as he kicked the body over. Underneath the orc, the lifeless form of a young elf lay crushed and bleeding. Its smooth pale green skin was in stark contrast to the crimson liquid that leaked from the many cuts all over the body and one arm was almost severed at the elbow. The feline-like eyes stared coldly at the wall, cloudy yellow and bloodshot.

The lifeless form of a young elf lay crushed and bleeding. Its smooth pale green skin was in stark contrast to the crimson liquid that leaked from the many cuts all over the body

The Fey! Argun had heard about these elves but never seen one in person. Bound to the natural world and forest life, these faeries were a rare sight indeed. Spittle was routing through the pockets in Kruk's leather jerkin but was studiously avoiding the elven body. Well, they seemed to die like any other elf and they were going to pay for intruding in Argun's lair. He kicked the body savagely and growled. Ax and cleaver in hand, he stalked down the corridor towards the sound of battle.



By Neil Dixon

MEATHEAD WAS FIGHTING for his life. The tricky little bastards were running rings round him and his men, three of whom were already down. The elves had lost a couple of their number too but had the advantage of ranged arrow fire. The warband's Sniffs

were off with Jarl so Meathead could only respond by getting in close but the damn things kept dodging and striking, dodging and striking – darting in and out the sputtering torchlight.

Suddenly, to his left, Var-Terkan roared in triumph as he caught an elf bowman in his grip as it tried to duck past him, slashing with a small curved blade. Var-Terkan lifted the elf straight off the floor and smashed its head against the tunnel wall with a sickening crunch. The body went limp, but before it dropped to the floor Var-Terkan buried his Ax deep into the chest, once, twice, three times. Meathead bel-
lowed his approval and swung his own massive two-handed Greatax straight through the body of a spearman from shoulder to rib, spraying gore across the passageway.

Undeterred, two more elves ran in to take their comrade's place, one of them getting under his guard and ramming a spear into the meat of his thigh. Meathead howled in pain and fury as he watched Var-Terkan slain from the rear and two more orcs were felled behind him with arrows, the elves then fading away again into the gloom. All alone now, something in Meathead snapped.



"Meathead howled in pain and fury as he watched Var-Terkan slain from the rear and two more orcs were felled behind him"

By Boris Samec



By Neil Dixon

A redness seemed to spread across his vision; a fury building to a tumultuous climax. Ripping the spear shaft from his leg, he swung his Greatax in huge scything arcs and charged headlong into the dark.

Jarl was breathing hard. He'd taken a nasty stab wound to the ribs which was impeding his move-

ment. Hatred drove him on though: hatred of the elven race and what they had done to him. It mattered not that it was Twilight Kin who had captured him. Tortured him. Ripped out his eye. All elves were the same to Jarl, and murdering them gave some small measure of revenge. No number of dead elves would ever be enough for him though; his lust for blood consumed him totally. He was hunting now, stalking his prey - two surviving Fey which were eluding him.

He paused briefly by a body slumped up against the wall. Brekken. Some darkly humorous voice in the back of Jarl's head told him this was the first time Brekken had been able to sit down in ages, but Jarl dismissed the thought with a snarl and pressed on.

**Hatred drove him on though:
hatred of the elven race and what
they had done to him.**

Ahead, the corridor opened out slightly and had been hastily blocked with a collection of rubble and broken furniture; a makeshift barricade for the lone orc Sniff who stood behind it and had started trading arrow fire with the two Fey Jarl now saw swiftly moving towards him. He covered the ground quickly - two arrows barely missing him to impact against the wall, one chipping stone across the floor. He dived behind the barricade, rolling and coming to his feet in a fighting stance just before Fey leapt the obstacle and fell upon him.

Argun's weapons were slick with blood. He'd taken some minor wounds but in return had dispatched five Fey and one of the beings they called a Mage-Queen. She had fought savagely and with magic too – blasts of incandescent lightning smashing into the orcs around Argun and conjuring powerful gales which swept down the corridor, knocking them to their feet.

Many bodies, Spittle's included, lay scorched and battered before Argun managed to take the elf-bitch down, hurling his cleaver with all his might and burying it in her cerulean face. As he strode over to yank the heavy blade free he caught a glimpse of something at the periphery of his vision.

The silhouette of a large Fey, bracketed by the pale, unworldly glow which seemingly emanated from the being itself, paused briefly at the entrance to the tunnel leading to the pool chamber and then vanished in a blur. Argun retrieved his chopper and moved to follow the being down the passageway.

JARL'S HATRED KNEW no bounds. He'd killed the first elf quickly, his knife now pinning the faery against



"He'd taken some minor wounds but in return had dispatched five Fey and one of the beings they called a Mage-Queen."

By Boris Samec

the tunnel wall, through the throat and deep into the rock. The second elf was now weaving in and out of his reach and had twice breached his defense to score glancing hits while the Sniff was still rapidly loosening arrows from the barricade into the dark passage.

All Jarl's swings and blows were a fraction too late; the lithe elfen fighter seemed to have an almost preternatural ability to anticipate his actions. He was becoming increasingly frustrated and as a consequence he almost made a fatal error. The elf came in from the left and Jarl swung his Ax down in a vicious chopping sweep but his mistimed slice caused him to overbalance and the elf nimbly rolled right, under his weapon and then came to its feet, weapon chopping down and severing Jarl's arm just above the wrist.

Mid-air and halfway across the space, the elf launched a crystal tipped arrow shaft with unerring accuracy.

Argun heard the scream of rage as he rounded the corner and took stock of the picture in front of him. Down the corridor was a hastily prepared defensive wall from which a Sniff was desperately firing arrows at the iridescent figure speeding down the tunnel with an effortless grace and speed that couldn't be natural.

Clambering up the pile of rubble and hauling a comatose body behind him in one hand, Jarl appeared oblivious to the approaching danger. Now at the top, he hoisted the elf into the air and brought it down across his knee with a sickening crack. Contemptuously, he tossed the body aside and roared - a primeval venting of emotion that thundered down the passageway with an almost physical force.



By Neil Dixon

The shimmering Fey leapt, drawing its bow as it did so with an almost impossible agili-

ty. It contacted the wall and instantly flipped across the passage, acrobatically gaining height off the tunnel sides. Mid-air and halfway across the space, it launched a crystal tipped arrow shaft with unerring accuracy. The missile flew true - a cold and impassionate answer to the cacophony of rage emanating from the orc atop the blockade.

Jarl took notice too late, his brain registering the situation a split second before the arrow took his remaining eye. As he crumpled backwards to the floor the elf cleared the barricade, landing and taking the head off the Sniff with a single fluid motion and sweep of its razor sharp blade. Argun felt uneasy. Not fear – he'd never felt afraid, but he had a distinct feeling his fortunes were perhaps not running along their normal tack. This finishes now he thought and ran down the passage after the demon elf thing.

THE AIR FIZZED with the taste of magic. Argun approached the figure cautiously as it stood facing into the pool room. Tendrils of pale wispy light radiated from the elf-thing and drifted down into the pool, and motes of dust sparkled and flared as they floated into the rays. As Argun neared the Fey the light pulsed brighter and then suddenly dimmed. The temperature in the corridor dropped to a bone chilling low. Wall



By Neil Dixon

torches sputtered and died and a crackling frost spread across the stone walls. Argun's breath burned his throat and his breath smoked around him as the elf turned to face him.

Tall and slim with the stereotypical physiology of the race, the Fey had feline eyes and a catlike grace to match. Where the younger Fey had a pale green complexion, the older more powerful Fey were typically a brown-grey, their skin almost bark-like. This one however was surely something born from the Abyss. Its skin was a deep crimson and seemed to cast the space around it in a bloody red luminance. The face of a demon. It spoke, but Argun felt the sound in his head rather than hearing it through his ears.

Sparks flew as Argun fought a retreating defense, his world becoming a pattern of block, parry, block, parry.

“Your kind have defiled this place orc” the sound was soft, caring, and at the same time full of threat and menace “and we have come to cleanse the infection. The seedlings of the world-tree are sacred and you must pay for your ignorance.”

The fiend moved with a speed that seemed impossible. Argun had excellent night vision but struggled to pick up the elf's movement as it began a relentless assault, a whirlwind of flashing blades and stabbing strikes. Sparks flew as Argun fought a retreating defense, his world becoming a pattern of block, parry, block, parry.

Twice the elf got through his guard, once to slash down his left arm and again somehow appearing behind him to cut across his spine, barely missing his neck. The wounds in themselves were superficial, deflected and weakened by Argun's mail coat but many more would start to take their toll: death by a thousand cuts. Argun's own blows when he made them were skillfully dodged by the elf, the evasion becoming a seamless part of its flowing battle-dance.



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By Neil Dixon

Argun's cleaver was knocked spinning from his hand and he tripped and fell heavily over the leg of an orc carcass. As he landed, his hip jarred painfully and his pair of dice scattered out across the floor. The elf-demon slowed briefly, approaching the body Argun had stumbled over. During the brief respite, Argun realized where they were. The elf was about to step onto a trap trigger buried under the floor.

Somehow it had not gone off previously despite all the fighting but a spark of hope now flared in Argun's heart as time appeared to slow and the elf's foot stepped lightly onto the floor.

Nothing happened. Curse Jurk and his tardiness. The elf vaulted forwards to finish him off and he heard the voice in his head again, pure malevolence this time. "And now you die orc".

Argun scrambled back deflecting the blows raining down on him with his Ax as he backed out into the junction. Anger now boiled within him. He was not going to die



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like this, not killed by this Abyssal-cursed faery. Catching the elven blade on his Ax he opened up the elf's body and surged forwards, slamming his huge mailed fist into the side of its head.

The Fey staggered backwards and crashed into the wall. Before Argun could follow up, it pulled its bow free and drew an arrow in a blur of supernatural movement. It aimed, drew and then spun to the right as Meathead came crashing round the corner out the gloom, his Great-ax already moving in a huge

sweeping arc. Orc and elf struck at the same time. The massive Ax bit through the torso of the Fey, carving the demon-thing in two before crashing into the cave wall.

The elven arrow passed clean through Meathead's throat. The light went from both combatants' eyes as the momentum of Meathead's charge toppled his corpse into the bisected elf and they both slumped to the floor. Blood began running in an ever spreading pool across the stone.

ARGUN BLINKED AND shook his head clear. The faint glow from the Fey had quickly receded but a small point of light, intense like a miniature sun, rose from the body to the air before speeding down the tunnel towards the pool room, briefly illuminating the passage walls in a cool blue light before vanishing into the distance. Some degree of warmth returned to the air.

Argun used his Ax as a crutch to push himself to his feet. He walked over to the torso of the elf and prodded it gingerly with the toe of his boot. Satisfied it really was dead, he walked back up the passage and picked up his cleaver, slipping it back into his belt.

Looking around he spied his dice in a dark corner against the far wall.

This was a sign he thought. Perhaps from Garkan himself that he'd grown complacent here in the caves. It was time to move out; regrow his warband and his legend before both time and younger, ambitious Krudgers caught up with him. He was still lucky – of that much he was certain or he'd now be dead along with everyone else.

Stooping down he reached to retrieve the dice on the floor. As his weight pressed on his front foot he heard a click, and then felt the whoosh of air above his head as a huge blade span out from the wall and buried itself in the stone opposite. Jurk's trap had finally sprung.

He glanced at the dice. Double six. Scooping them up, he dropped them back into his pocket. Yes he thought as he made his way outside, still lucky. ▀



By Boris Samec



By Neil Dixon



A Dwarven War Cruiser (Ironwatch Horde) has been caught between an Undead Bloodletter Corsair above (Soul Reaver Regiment) and a Bonebreaker Cruiser below (Skeletal Archer Regiment).

By Austin Peasley & E. McIlraith

BLOOD FLEET

Naval Battles on the seas of Mantica

by Austin Peasley

This rules supplement allows you to play naval battles on the seas of Mantica, using the base rules and unaltered army lists from Kings of War. Crush your enemies upon the cruel waves of Mantica, and display your true supremacy of the seas!

Building a Navy and what Models to use:

You can build a Bloodfleet Navy in the same way as a KoW army, and using the same Army lists. However, instead of each block of units being represented, the different unit sizes each refer to the size of a single ship. The rules are, in general, the same as for KoW, but changes or modifications to the KoW rules are noted below.



The Dwaven Brockmarines (Brock Rider Regiments) are ignored by the Undead Fangwhales (Ghoul Troops) as they attempt to go after a more vulnerable target.

By Austin Peasley & E. McIlraith

The recommended ship size is based on the unit used. These values are approximate, but be sure to approve ship sizes with your opponent before playing.

Troops/Half-Regiments, 1 Large unit:
3cm long x 1cm wide (1" x 0.25").

Regiments, Individual H/M, War Engine, Large Troop:

6 cm long x 2 cm wide (2" x 0.5")

Hordes, Non-Individual H/M, Large Regiment:

9cm long x 3 cm wide (3" x 0.75")

For all ranges, measure from the closest point of the ship's hull (Ignoring overhanging sails, masts, and etc.)

Movement:

All ships have a minimum movement equal to their Spd-4 (If 0 or less, counts as 1). If a ship cannot move this far, move it the maximum possible distance. If it impacts an enemy or allied ship, count it as a Ram against that ship



An Undead Bloodletter Corsair (Soul Reaper Regiment) cuts off the lead boat of some Dwarven Harbor

Patrolboats (Ranger Troops)

By Austin Peasley & E. McIlraith

(Including impacting friendly ships such as due to forced movement).

Ships can not Halt or Change Facing unless Anchored (This includes Artillery ships). At end of turn, a ship can declare they are Dropping Anchor. This means entire next turn is counted as Halt and they may make a single Change Facing . At the end of the turn, an Anchored ship must decide to raise anchor or not and move as normal next turn. Models may make one of their available 45 degree turns before moving, and must move at least 1" between each 45 degree turn.

Half-Sails (Maneuver) uses normal Spd (With wind bonus/penalty) and 2-45 degree turns.

All Sails (At the Double) moves double the amount from a Half-Sail (So after applying wind bonus/penalty from initial Spd) and 1-45 degree turn. A ship can attack after making an All Sails movement but at -4 to hit from movement.

If you Ram (Charge), you must make an All Sails **or** a Half-Sails move into contact with the enemy. Do not turn ships to be flush with their attackers. Rammed ships may not move and count as having Rammed any ships they have contacted.



Undead Fangwhales (Ghoul Troops) pursue a fleeing Dwarven Harbormaster Flagship (Ranger Regiment) as another attempts to cut them off.

By Austin Peasley & E. McIlraith



The Undead Grand Destroyer (Zombie Horde) bears down after one set of Dwarven Harbor Patrolboats (Ranger Troops) while being attacked by another group of Harbor Patrolboats from the side.

By Austin Peasley E. McIlraith

Ships may never make Back or Sidestep moves, and may not move through friendly units.

Wind:

The prevailing Wind points towards a table edge (Mark the edge with a token or die of some kind). Roll at start of game, going from 1st players point of view: 1= their table edge, 2=enemy table edge, 3-4= right table edge, 5-6 = left table edge. At end of both player turns roll 1d6. On 5, it moves counterclockwise to next table edge, on 6 it moves clockwise to next table edge.

Moving with the wind (Movement towards the marked table edge) gives a bonus to Spd equal to Spd-4. Moving against the wind (Movement towards the opposite table edge) gives a penalty to Spd equal to Spd-4. There is no penalty or bonus for moving crosswise to the wind. (Towards either table edge adjacent to the Wind table edge). Penalties can never cause a ship to move less than 1 inch.

For example, if an Elven sailing ship with Spd 6 moves crosswise to the wind, they count as having Spd 6. If they move with the wind, they count as having Spd 8 ($6-4=+2$ wind bonus, $6+2=8$), and All Sails for this would be moving 16.

If they move against the wind, they count as having Spd 4 ($6-4=-2$ wind penalty, $6-2=4$), and All Sails for this would be moving 8.

If a Dwarven steamship with Spd 4 moves in any direction, they count as having Spd 4 since they never have a bonus or penalty to movement ($4-4=0$), and their All Sails would be 8.

Terrain:

Area terrain (Such as Sargasso seas) works as normal, but should be smaller to compensate for the smaller scale (Around 3-6" in diameter or so) and Blood Fleet does not use Obstacles. If a

model moves into contact with an area of Impassible Terrain, they suffer 2 damage.

Blood Fleet also introduces Dangerous Terrain, such as reefs or whirlpools: If a model moves over any pieces of dangerous terrain during any point of their movement, they suffer 1 point of damage. At the end of the movement phase, make Nerve checks for damage caused by Dangerous or Impassable terrain.

Shooting

All ships can see and fire in any direction, and can attack a single enemy in each arc (Left, Right, Forward, and Rear 90 degrees, as if imagining an invisible X through the center of the model) instead of just one enemy.

A ship always halves their dice when firing in their forward arc (This is before applying halving from needing more than a 6+ to hit) and quarter it if firing in rear arc (Again, before applying halving from more than a 6+ to hit). These apply to Zap and Flamer as well. War Engines ignore the penalty for firing in forward arc (But still quarter their rear arc shooting). Any rolls of 6 vs enemy Def cause 2 Damage instead of 1.

When shooting an enemy in their Rear Arc, your attacks gain +1 to Piercing (Or Piercing (1) if they weren't already).



*A Dwarven Brockmarine (Brock Rider Regiment) sneaks up on an unsuspecting Undead Bonecrusher Cruiser (Skeletal Archer Regiment)
By Austin Peasley & E. McIlraith*

If a model has no given Ra value or Ra weapons, it may make a Shooting attack using half of their Attacks (This is before applying other shooting penalties or reducing dice based on arcs or needing more than a 6+ to hit), and always count as having Ra 6+ and a range of 24".

Boarding (Melee):

Do not move 1" back if enemy is not Sunk (Destroyed). If they are destroyed, you can advance 1d6" (2d6 if going to-

wards Wind edge, 1d3 if going against) or turn 45 degrees.

The number of attacks from Boarding does not change depending on where you Rammed the enemy ship.

If you Rammed an allied ship, after both ships have made their Melee attacks against the other (To represent the initial force of impact), they may both make an immediate 45 degree turn. If this still leaves them in contact with each other, they count as having Rammed each oth-

er in your next turn, and will have to make Melee attacks again.

Nerve:

If the enemy suffers a Wavering result, they suffer the normal effects as well as gaining 1 additional Damage as panic and fires break out over the ship. Models that are Sunk (Destroyed) are removed from play as normal.

Banners and Musicians can still be purchased, as can other upgrades like Horses or a Pegasus. Banners might be an example of exceptionally brave or courageous crew, a tough ship, or inspiring colors, while Musicians might represent feared reputations or exceptional weapons. Horses or other mounts might represent reinforced hulls or exceptional sails of some kind or another.

Special Rules:

Dark Wind (Dark Surge): You may target this on enemy ships as well as friendly ships, applying the same 1" movement forward for each roll of 4+.

Fly: This model ignores Area terrain, but may not move over Impassible terrain and cannot move over friendly or enemy ships.

Headstrong: If this model successfully shrugs off the effects of Wavering due to a Headstrong roll, they may immediately



By Austin Peasley & E. McIlraith

remove 1 damage from the ship.

Individual: This rule has no effect, including the penalty to hit.

Nimble: Models with Nimble get an additional 45 degree move if they are not anchored.

Phalanx: The penalty to-hit applies to any Ramming attacks, not just those from cavalry or Flying models. However, the additional attacks may only be used in Melee and are not counted for Shooting attacks.

Scenarios and setup:

These are the same as for normal KoW. Perhaps the Objectives represent valuable wrecks or ships carrying important

members of government. Perhaps they might drift 1d3" per turn in the direction of the Wind, and the players are attempting to recover them before they are captured or run aground!

You could even include rules to link Bloodfleet rules into larger ongoing KoW campaigns, providing points bonuses in land battles for successfully delivering reinforcements or cutting off enemy supplies.

All ship miniatures used in these photos are from the game Uncharted Seas, produced by Spartan Games. ■



Malki's Prize A Kings of War Battle Report

By Neil Dixon

Malki's lips curled into a smile. He was expecting resistance, but an alliance of Dwarfs and Elves? The desperation of his opponents reeked of humiliation.

The order of the cleansing will never rest while life breathes. Now is the time of the hunters, the blood drinkers, the Vampires.

Malki looked towards his new born.

"Eldessa my child, take our infantry and devour their right flank on my signal. For victors of valour we shall claim our prize," he said.

The prize had been hidden from Malki for too long. He would find his Master's scattered armour and resurrect him to once again lead the Order.

His thoughts were interrupted as Lieutenant Arifficuss spoke.

"Sir, your commands?"

"Ready the cavalry. We will charge these fools into submission!"



By Boris Samec

This was a practice game for Clash of Kings, the Kings of War tournament in February 2013. 1500 points per side was the ideal size, but with 1000 points ready, I was desperate to field them in a Kings of War battle. With my Dwarfs boosted by 500 points of Elven allies, I took on Andy Harris, who blooded his Undead army for the first time.

After picking forces and setting up terrain, a "Pillage!" scenario was rolled with seven objectives. A force would count as winning if it had captured at least two more objectives than the opposing force; otherwise the game was a draw.

Undead

Andy Harris

I believe that Revenants are the best infantry unit in Kings of War, so I included two regiments as my mainstay. Skeletons and a troop of Ghouls served as cheap backups, and will give my opponent's missile troops a soft target to think about rather than shooting my Revenants. My characters were there to Dark Surge, with the Revenant King supplying some close combat prowess. Wights will support my infantry with added punch, as their nine attacks always wound on a two or more. As missile support I used two Catapults and a troop of Skeleton Archers with the Jar of Four Winds to extend their range from 24" to 36". I really want a hard hitting, fast column that could inflict serious damage by the second turn. I went for a troop of Soul Reavers, a Revenant Cavalry regiment and a Wraith troop.

SRT	Soul Reaver Troop (The Fog)	225
N	Necromancer	110
RK	Revenant King	120
AS	Army Standard Bearer	25
RCR	Revenant Cavalry Regiment (Full Command)	180
RR1	Revenant Regiment	110
RR2	Revenant Regiment	110
WT1	Wraith Troop	110
SR	Skeleton Regiment	70
SAT	Skeleton Archers (Jar Of Four Winds)	85
WT2	Wights	180
GT	Ghoul Troop	60
BC1	Balefire Catapult	65
BC2	Balefire Catapult	65
	TOTAL	1515



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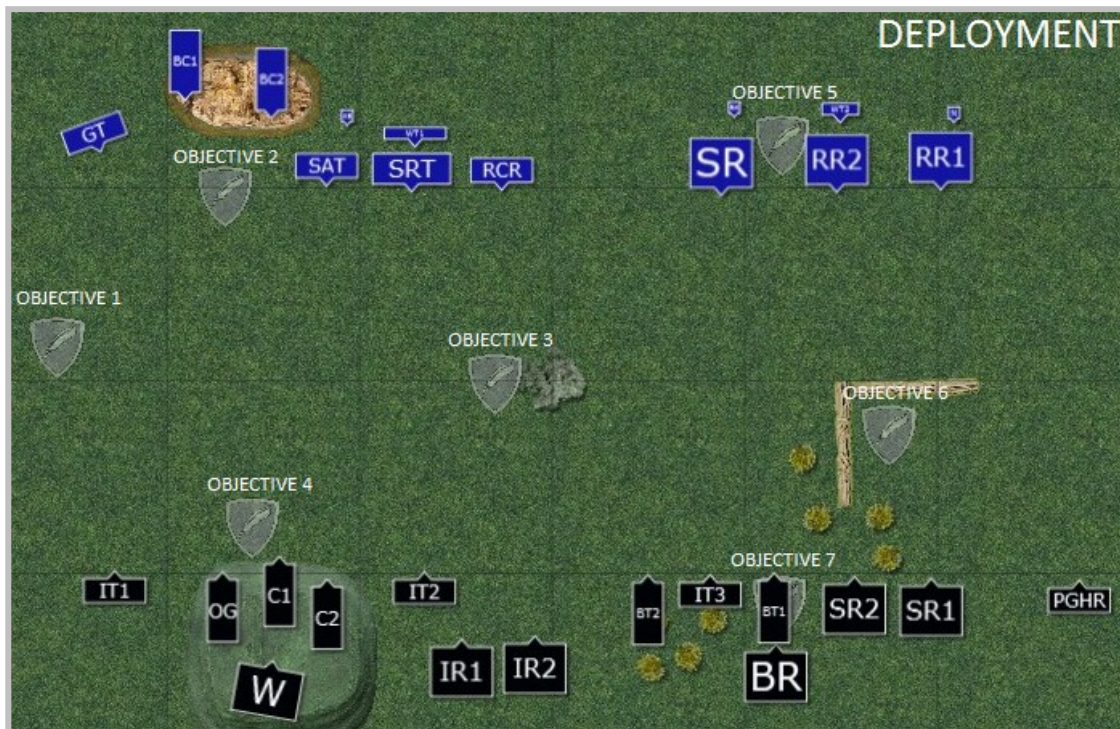
Dwarfs

Neil Dixon

W	Warsmith	75
OG	Organ gun	80
C1	Cannon	85
C2	Cannon	85
IT1	Ironwatch troop	100
IT2	Ironwatch troop	100
IT3	Ironwatch troop	100
IR1	Ironclad Regiment (Full command)	110
IR2	Iron clad regiment (Full command)	110
BR	Berserker Regiment (Full command)	170
PGH	Palace Guard Half Regiment (Banner)	105
SR1	Scout Regiment	140
SR2	Spearman Regiment (Full command)	135
BT1	Bolt thrower	75
BT2	Bolt thrower	75
	TOTAL	1495

I plumped for a missile themed force. Five war machines and a Dwarf Warsmith to give the Cannons one failed to hit reroll was a good start. With the Ironwatch and Scouts supplying extra shots, I was confident I could take out at least one Undead unit per turn before they reached my lines. My plan was to sit back and counter charge. Berserkers are excellent for this, as they have a 10" charge with twenty five attacks! Similarly, I had to take Palace Guard, as they are one of the best Elven combat units. A twenty model regiment is needed for each war machine, so I took Ironclad and Elf Spearman because they are both cheap and solid.





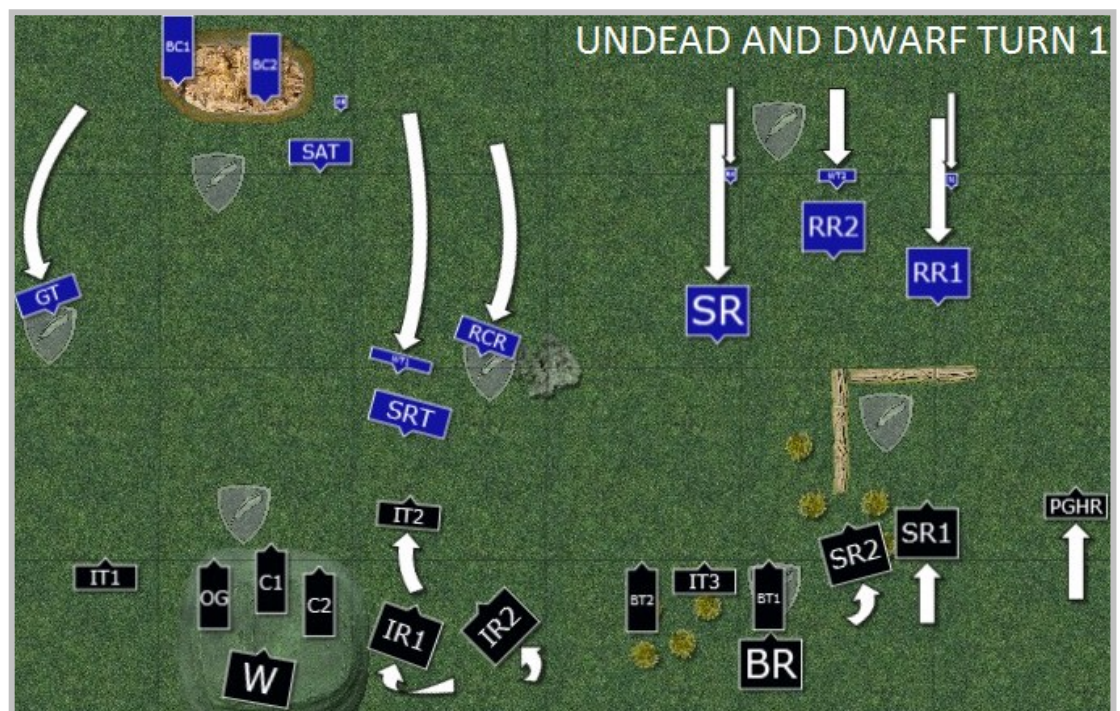
sult of a four or more, an extra inch is moved. Very useful, as Undead Shambling units cannot move At the Double. A duel with the Dwarf missile battery was issued by the Undead artillery, but only the Bowmen caused one wound on the Organ Gun.

Turn 1

The Dwarfs picked the table edge, and the Undead won the first turn

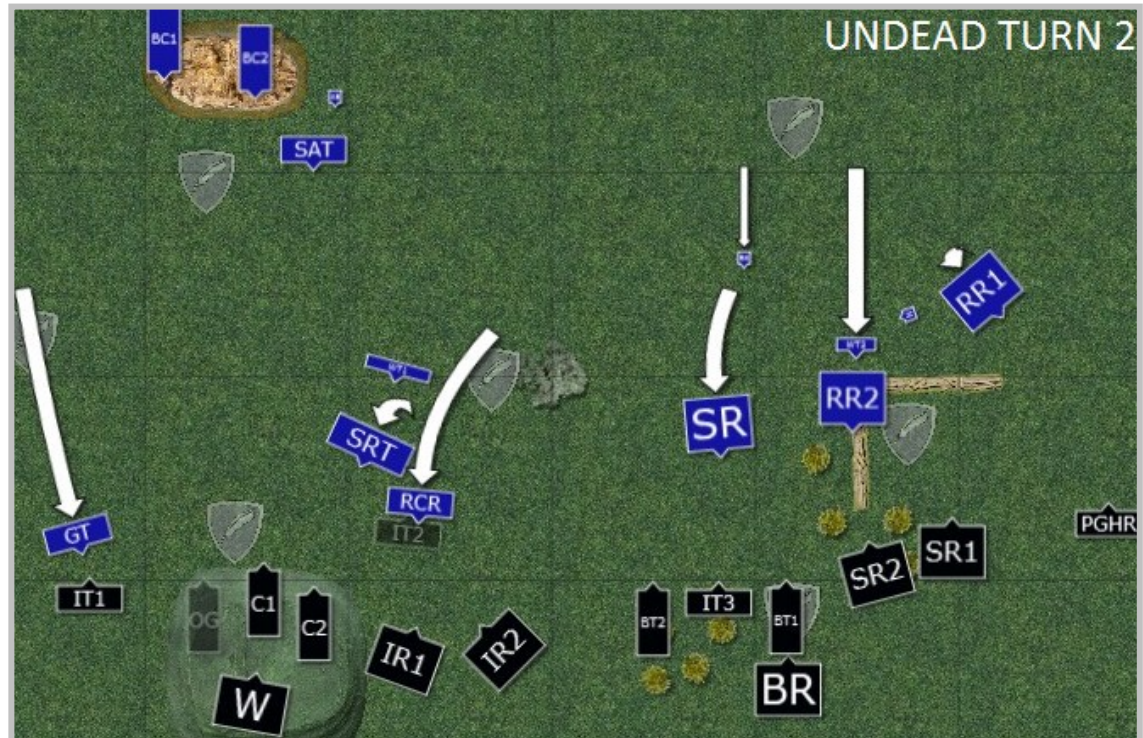
The Soul Reavers, Revenant Cavalry and Wraiths had no fear as they headed right towards the Dwarf lines at full speed! A suicidal move perhaps, considering the close proximity of the Cannon. The Ghouls moved up on the right in support. The infantry shambling forward on the left flank, aided by Dark Surge. A character rolls a set number of dice, and for each re-

The Ironwatch valiantly moved into the path of the Soul Reavers. Although it sacrificed their ability to shoot this turn, by receiving a charge it would mean the Cannons should get an extra round of shooting. The Ironclad looked on, manoeuvring so they could counter



charge the following turn.

Cannon balls were polished, kissed for luck and aimed squarely at the Soul Reavers. When the smoke cleared they were still standing! A Bolt Thrower had more luck, causing two wounds but it would not be enough to stop the charge onslaught next turn. The trend continued on the right flank, as the Revenants received one wound from a Bolt Thrower and an Ironwatch troop.



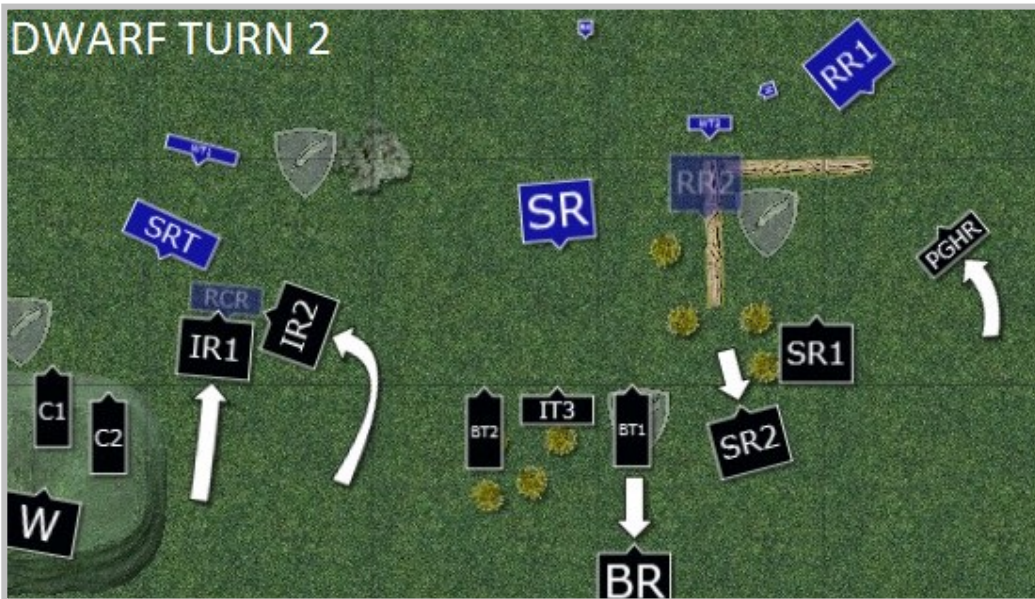
Turn 2

The Revenant Cavalry were the first to try and win glory in battle as they received the order to ride down the Ironwatch, who had conveniently marched into their path. Wraiths, Soul Reavers and Ghouls on the Undead right moved up in support ready to charge next turn. The Revenants, Skeletons and Wights on the Undead left advanced at a steadier pace, Dark Surges willing them on.



The Ironclad regiment reigned victorious over the Revenant Knights. The Soul Reavers and Wraiths pick easier but no less deadly targets—the cannons.

The Undead firepower again continued to target the Dwarf equivalents,



with one of the Balefire Catapults causing seven wounds and taking off the Organ Gun – ouch!

As expected, the Revenant Cavalry did their work with silent determination, causing seven wounds on the doubtful Ironwatch, making them run from the field. The nearby Ironclad sharpened their axes ready for revenge.

Crying out the names of their felled Ironwatch battle brothers, the Ironclad smashed into the Revenant Cavalry in front of the Cannons. Causing seven wounds and rolling ten for the nerve test, the cavalry were seen off – just!

On the Dwarf right flank, the Berserkers and the Elf Spearman were content to manoeuvre behind the Ironwatch, ready to counter charge the approaching Undead infantry.

Predictably, the Cannon completely failed to cause any hits. The War-smith may have to start looking for a new job after this battle! Luckily for the Dwarfs, their right flank had more success as the Elven Bolt throwers were proving consistently more reliable.

Combined with a hail of crossbow bolts from the Ironwatch, a unit of elite Revenants was destroyed.

Turn 3

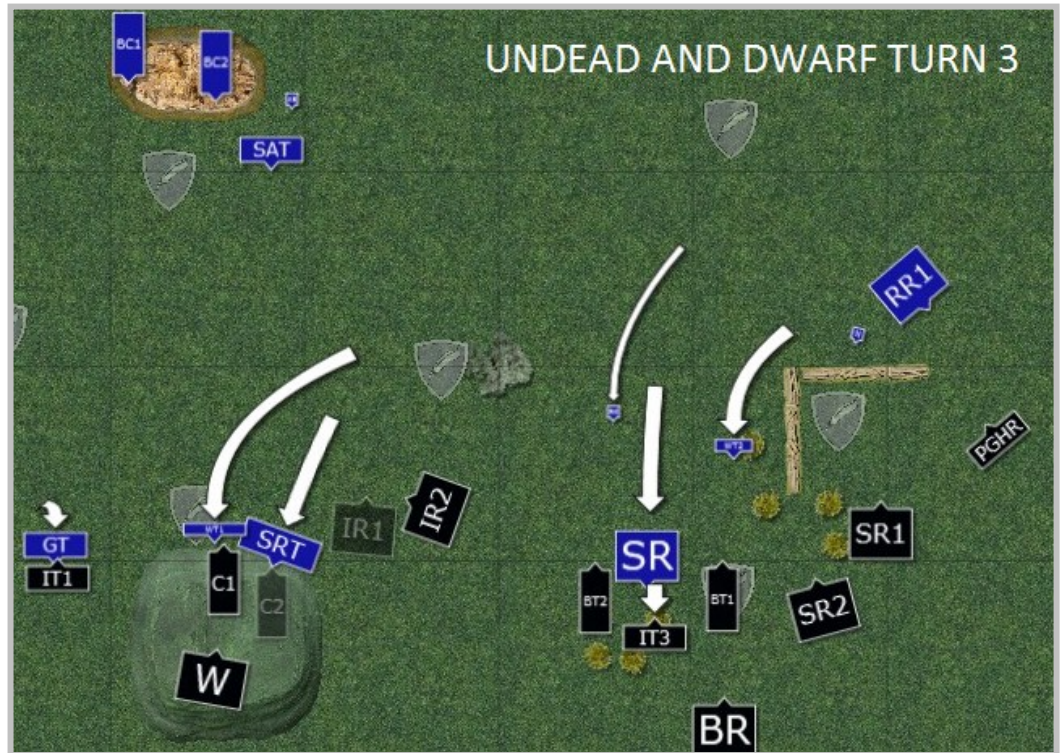
The relentless Undead infantry reached the Dwarf lines, as the Skeletons charged the Ironwatch, causing two wounds. On the Undead right flank, the Ghouls



*A Balefire Catapult overlooks the battlefield.
By Stuart Smith*

charged another Ironwatch troop, inflicting a respectable five wounds. The Cannon crew prepared to sell their souls dearly as the Soul Reavers and Wraiths finally got to grips with them. The Wraiths caused three wounds, but the hardy Dwarfs passed the nerve test and lived to fight another turn! The Soul Reavers showed the Wraiths how it was done, wiping out the other Cannon.

The Undead missile battery again proved their capability, causing eleven hits on an Ironclad Regiment. The remaining regiment looked on in disbelief as their



battle brothers pulled up their mail armour, threw down their weapons and fled the field!

The Ironwatch on the Dwarf left charged back into the Ghouls. It was turning out to be a bloody tussle, with four wounds caused on the flesh eaters. Meanwhile, the Ironwatch on the right decided combat was not their forte, pulling back to let the Bolt Throwers do their worst. Five wounds were caused, but it failed to send the Skeletons back to their graves.

Turn 4

The Undead got the chance to do what they do best; fight in combat. The Wights charge a Bolt Thrower, the Ghouls charge back into the Ironwatch, whilst the Soul Reavers charge the Warsmith.



The Skeletons charge the Ironwatch as the Wights descend upon the Bolt Thrower



The Skeletons promptly get wiped out by the counter-charging Berserkers, while the Elf Spearmen support their allies by taking on the Wights

The Ghouls finally win the upper hand, scoring five wounds on the Ironwatch, running them down and feasting on Dwarf flesh.

teen casualties. The Skeletons silently do their work against Ironwatch who retreated last turn, causing another five wounds, and running them off the field.

The Soul Reavers cause six damage on the Warsmith. With his remaining Cannon taken out by the Wraiths, he defies the odds stacked against him and hangs around for this turn at least!

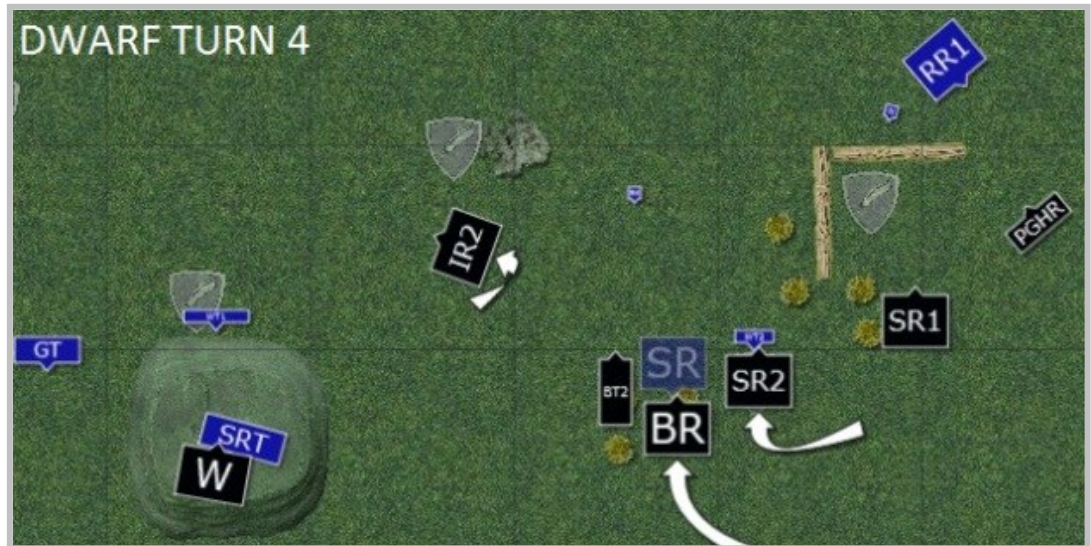
With battle cries of "Revenge!" the Dwarfs on the right flank counter charge. The Skeletons crumble to dust after an

On the Undead left, the Wights conclusively wiped out the Bolt Thrower, causing a very impressive thir-



onslaught by the Berserkers causes another twelve wounds. The Elven Spearmen try to match the blood thirstiness of the Dwarfs, but only cause three wounds on the Wights.

The Ironclad edge towards the central objective, wary that the Soul Reavers could charge down the hill at any moment.



Turn 5

The Revenants in reserve back away from the Palace Guard, noting the important objective to their rear. Three dead warriors rise from the grave, replenishing their numbers the Bolt Throwers worked so hard to deplete. With no

need to Dark Surge, the Necromancer named the regiment in his chants of the Heal spell.

The Revenant King charges the remaining Bolt Thrower, causing three wounds. The Elves remain steady, ready to fight again next turn.

The Wraiths scream in triumph, as the Warsmith finally succumbs. The Undead right flank is triumphant, as they have completely decimated all Dwarfs that stood against them.

UNDEAD AND DWARF TURN 5



On the Dwarf right flank, the Berserkers and Spearmen force the souls of the Wights back into the underworld. Five wounds were caused, resulting in a failed nerve test. The



Three wounds were enough to make the Palace Guard turn tail and flee. A costly mistake by the Dwarf player, and a very well played gamble by the Undead!

The Soul Reavers rush down the hill to clash with the Ironclad. They take the regiment to thirteen wounds, reaping

Scouts move to capture an objective and the Palace Guard advance towards the Revenants, remaining just out of range for their counter charge. Again, the Ironclad edge towards the objective in the centre, hoping they might be able to end the battle alive.

ing the souls of their third Dwarf regiment this battle. The objective the Ironclads jealously guarded is now open for the taking by the elite Undead cavalry if another turn is rolled.

The Berserkers charge the Necromancer, causing twelve wounds and easily annihi-

Turn 6

The Undead force receive orders to consolidate their positions, with the Bowmen moving towards the objective in their deployment zone, whilst the Ghouls and Wraiths both retreat towards their nearest objectives.

The Palace Guard had not been as careful as they thought as the Revenants mustered their dark energy to move. Eyeing the Elves, and ignoring the objective behind, they charge into combat!



By Neil Dixon



By Neil Dixon

lating the evil sorcerer. The Elf Scouts have less luck, not causing enough damage on the Revenants to win the objective.

Another turn is played on a D6 roll of four. The die is tensely rolled, as the battle is currently a draw, but could shift either way. The result is a five and the battle continues!

Turn 7

The Soul Reavers capture the objective in the centre, whilst the Revenants charge the Scouts. The Revenants cause four wounds, but the stealthy Elf warriors fight on, continuing to contest the objective.

After a lull, the Cata-

pults hope for a lucky strike in the dying moments of the battle. They target the Elf Spearmen but a double one is rolled for hits! With the regiment now on seven wounds, it remains steady after a nerve test.

The Revenant King valiantly takes on the Berserkers, but the Undead general fails to cause any wounds.

In the dying moments of the battle, the Berserkers ignore the Revenant King and capture an objective in the Undead deployment zone. The Scouts try to break the Revenants to win back their objective. They caused three wounds, but the elite Undead warriors remaining resolute.





The final objectives are counted, resulting in a win for the Undead!

Conclusion

Dwarfs

If only it ended on Turn 6! A draw slipped from my grasp as an extra turn meant the Undead contested the objective held by the Scouts and took the objective in the middle with the Soul Reavers. It was a closer result than the battle looked, as my forces were all but wiped out.

My left flank completely collapsed and my right flank struggled to get moving. In hindsight I should have deployed all my war machines in one big battery. Their luck was mixed, with my Cannons



By Boris Samec

failing to hit anything, but my Bolt Throwers had moderate success. If I could have combined my fire I may have caused more significant damage. Faced with that many missile troops, it might have meant my war machines did not have the Undead cavalry breathing down their necks!

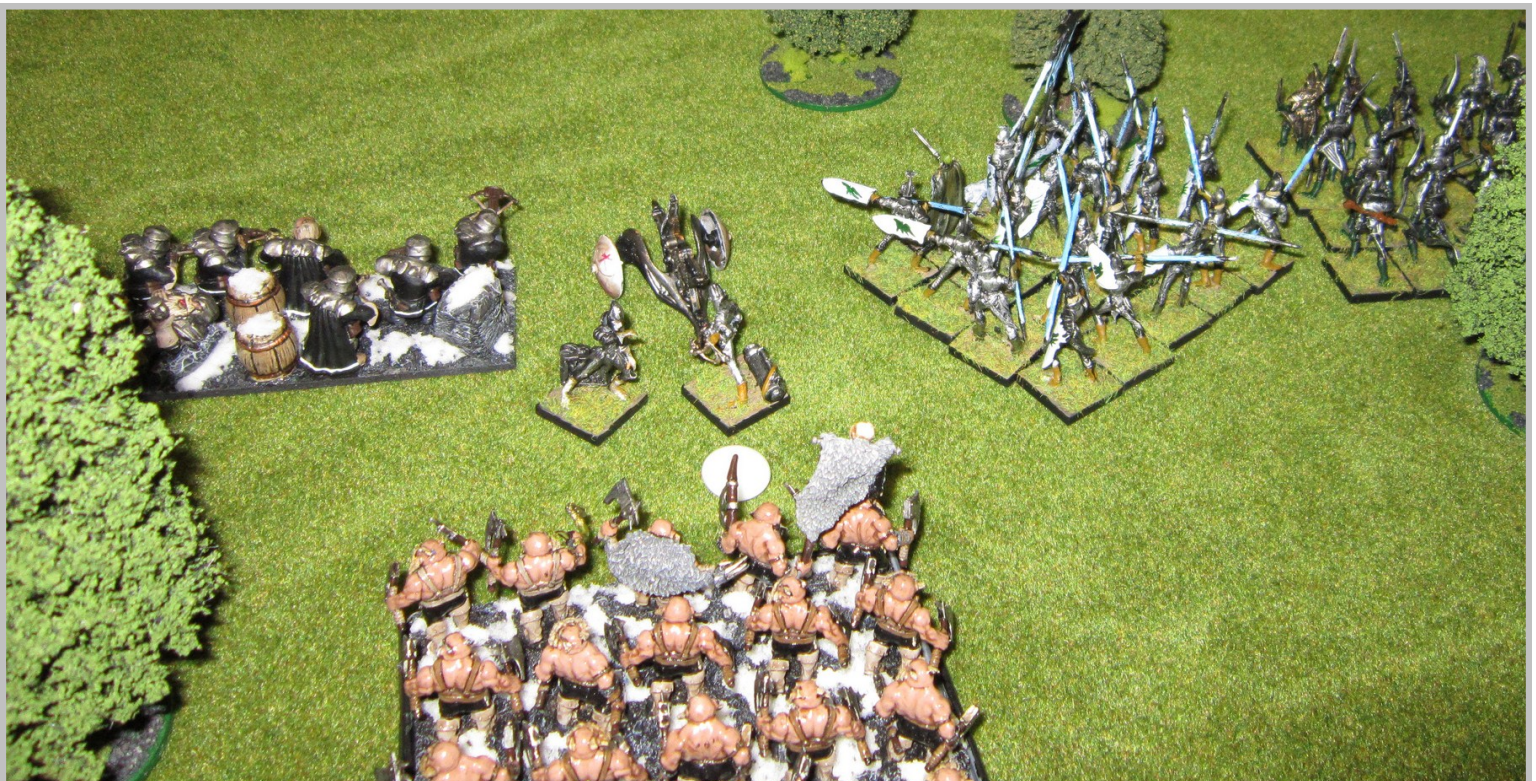
Again, wishful thinking, but my artillery may have had chance to cause more damage if I gained the first turn.

I have learnt that I need to definitely stack the odds in my favour when using a missile troop themed force. Cannons are better than Organ Guns, and I need to arm my Ironwatch with hand guns instead of crossbows to gain an extra plus two to the damage roll. With Undead Wraiths and Revenants being defence six

and five respectively, they are very hard to hurt.

Undead

I am very pleased with my Undead army, although I believe luck was on my side. The fast attack and artillery sections lead by the Soul Reavers cleared one side of the board whilst the opposite side was contested till the end. My regiment of the game was the Soul Reavers. Man, these guys are tough. A defence of six, hitting on a three or more, and adding two to the damage roll in combat from Crushing Strength, they certainly killed more than they were worth this battle. The Berserker Regiment would be the regiment to avoid in future. With twenty five attacks they are very nasty!■



By Neil Dixon



Abyssal Halfbreeds
By "Pathfinder Pete McF"

The Battle for Letherac

By Sharad Vora

Letherac; A long standing city of Men that has prospered due to being well positioned for trade routes. However, a mighty Ogre lord has raised an army and is looking south to expand his power base. Unbeknown to his followers, this lord of the Ogres has made a pact with the treacherous Abyssal dwarves! The Men of Letherac have long since moved to trade as the main stay profession and the Lords of the city have scant time to invest in the army. Knowing this, the Ogres and the Abyssal dwarves are

poised to strike! If Letherac falls, then trade routes in the whole of the West will fall and the lands of all stand to lose out!

Scenario - Hold the City!

The forces of Men must hold the city against the combined forces of Ogres and Abyssal Dwarves. Use the Siege rules on pages 60 to 66 of the KoW rule-book.

The ogres out-point the men by 2:1 and they can ally with Abyssal Dwarves, but only a maximum of 25% may be spent on Abyssal Dwarves and they must form a normal army in their own right (i.e. you must have a leader/general and you must have at least one solid unit).

The forces of Men cannot choose Ogres at all, but may have Batteries of Cannons, using the statline shown here.

If the Ogres breach the city walls and have a full regiment or horde inside the walls at the end of the game, then they gain an additional 500 victory points. There are no objective markers on the table. Victory points for routed units are awarded in the normal way (see page 46 - Kill!).

In addition, for each unit of Men that has a banner that is routed, the Ogres gain an additional 50 Victory points.

Cannon Battery — War Engine

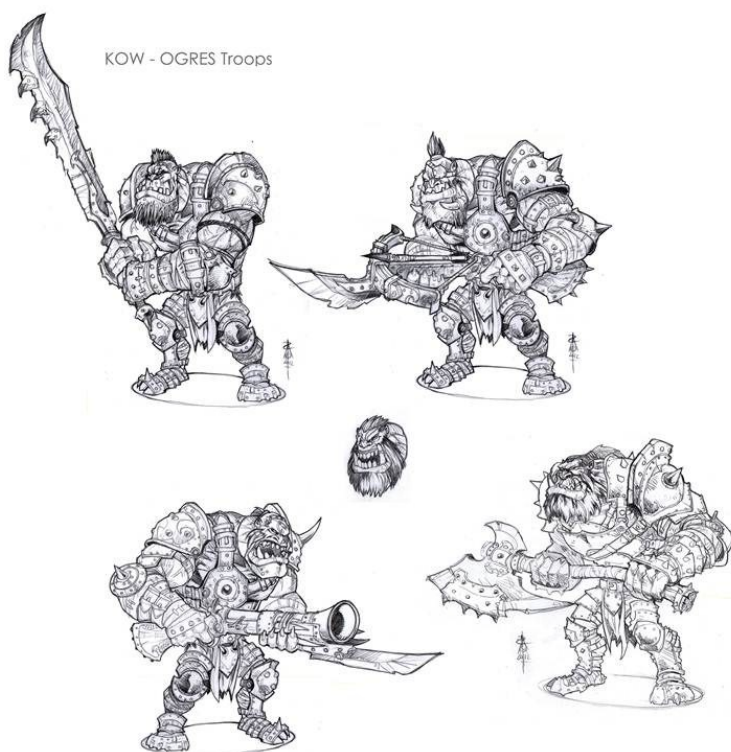
Units	Spd	Me	Ra	De	At	Ne	Cost
3	5	-	5+	4+	3	14/16	150

Special Rules:

Blast (D6), Piercing (3)., Elite (If within 6" of a n Artillery Master)

A Battery still counts as only a single War Machine choice. If it gains the Elite rule, it lay reroll up to 3 dice instead of 1.

After 5 turns, the Men get to roll a D6 - on a 1 or 2 the game ends. On a 3+, the men get reinforcements equal to 20% of the points of the whole army. The reinforcements arrive from any table edge and can move at the double and may charge in their first turn. All reinforcements arrive from the same table edge.▪



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THE OWL AND THE BLADE

By John Hoyland

Part One: The Sundering

I

“The gates are closed to you and yours.”
Such simple words. Such a weight of
meaning.

Such terrifying understatement.

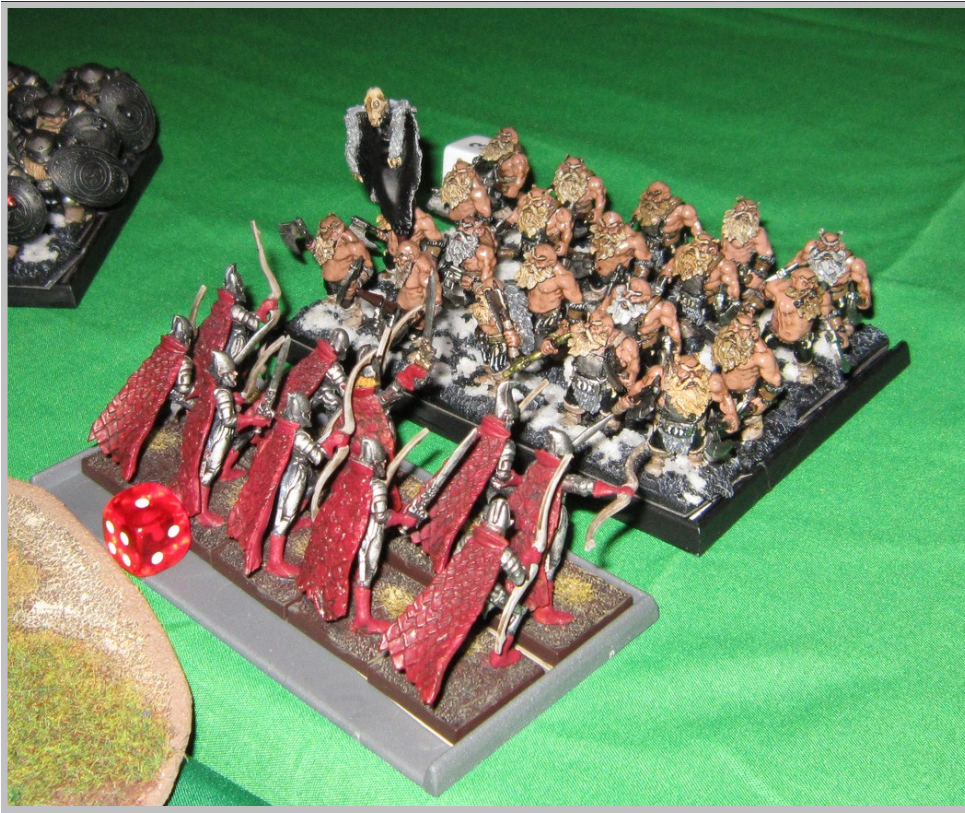
The *gates* were so much more than that little word said. They were vast, and carried the weight of a mountain above their lofty arch. They were stone, and carved from the mountain itself. They were closed, and could not be opened from the outside, whether by herald's plea or cannon's demand.

Deor Ule stared up at them, seeing as if for the first time the runes of welcome and of warding that were carved there.

Determination clamped Deor's jaw shut and melancholy ringed his eyes around with grey.



By Neil Dixon



By Neil Dixon

"I will make such a home," he whispered to himself, "That for a hundred times a hundred generations my people will be proud of their Hold and of their name."

"Husband." There was a softness to the voice; a kindness and also a longing. "Set your back to gates and your eyes upon the road. Your people would have you lead them."

Deor turned to his wife and offered her a wan smile and a shallow nod. He raised his hood, hiding his head from the sight of the gates. He was a stranger to the Hold now.

"Fare thee well, Deor the Owl," called the Warden of the Gates – he who had

pronounced them closed a moment earlier. "May the Shining Ones ever guide you on the paths you take."

"May they indeed," muttered Deor Ule. "May they indeed."

II

Let it be recorded and faithfully set down that the People of the Owl (those of the Clan of the Lord Deor Ule), whose number was reckoned at three thousand and seventeen souls, have, in good faith and by binding oath sworn and attested before the altars, departed and sundered themselves hence from this Hold. Never more shall their deeds be recorded in these annals as being the deeds of our people. Never more shall reverence be given unto their ancestors, nor praises sung of their deeds.

They are sundered from us and are numbered among the unHelded, until such time as heralds shall come forth from them bearing tidings of Settling. At such a time, and if presented with petition, the Lords of the Clans of this Hold will determine whether the People of the Owl should be considered Helded and thus a true people, worthy of accord and of trade once more.

Thus it is and thus it shall be, from this day hence until the world does diminish unto darkness.

III

The first day of journeying was damp and grey. Drizzle filled the air, soaking cloaks and beards so that they clung to flesh, and lending a despondent note to the songs of lament that the People of the Owl sang.

The second day of journeying saw the sun break out and the north road dry hard so that by the third day of journeying the column of dwarfs hiked in a cloud of dust.

It was the dust, drying throats and eyes, which set the People of the Owl to grumbling. That and the fact that three days of travel had seen the mountains recede to little more than purple-grey smudges at the horizon. Mountains which, until mere days ago, had been their ancestral home.

“Now the bitterness of our unHolding begins to bite,” the people said. “We are homeless and abroad in the wilderness. Where will we now call home and Hold?”

These things and others the elders brought to Deor, encamped in his tent at the center of a canvas city. The nightly setting of this city was already giving rise to streets and alleys, districts and quarters; here the merchants, there the artisans. Here the wealthy, there the poor. “The people grumble so soon?” asked Deor. “We will face much harder times in the days to come.”

“There are those of us here who are warriors,” said Breydd, commander of Deor’s cavalry and, berserker or not, a voice whose counsel Deor often sought. “And for us the journey is yet easy. But your people are all here and those who know little of the military life, or of life above ground – let alone of the long roads in the wilderness – those for



By “Pathfinder Pete McF”

whom life has been *easy*, are finding the reality does not match the romance in their heads.” The inclination of both head and voice made the target of his comments clear.

“You wish to level accusations, or merely insinuate?” snapped fat Areg, his cheeks coloring.

“I will spell it out as clearly as you wish, merchant,” growled Breydd. “You are

“The road will get much harder yet. You must learn to live without the comforts you knew”

rich, and your riches have made you soft. Do not think I am ignorant to whose voice leads the complaining.”

“Please,” Deor’s voice was soft, but rich with the authority of a Clan Lord. He sat hunched forward at his state table, elbows propping him up, fingers laced. He chewed a thumb nail. “Do not. Either of you. Areg; the road will get much harder yet. You must learn to live without the comforts you knew. This Sundering will be something of a leveler to us all. Breydd; you are a rare traveler among my people and few are as hardy. Do not measure others against your own hardiness lest you come quickly to despise



By Neil Dixon

your people.

“I will need you both in the days ahead. Both of you possess skills that the other lacks, as do all here gathered.” Deor looked up and around the table. “You are here – all of you – for your skills and your wisdoms. The one thing I ask of you – of all my people – is patience. Our road will be very dark at times, for we travel the wilderness. There will be great losses along the way, such hardships that it will seem the People of the Owl must surely be brought low.

“But we will endure. We are an ancient



By "Pathfinder Pete McF"

Clan with a proud history – the proudest! We will do more than simply endure; we will overcome."

"Tell us where we are going," urged Areg. "Let your people know!"

"Ah, that I cannot do," whispered Deor, "For I do not know. But I will tell you this; I follow the light of Ariadd, as I ever have. She will be my guide."

"You will follow a star into the wilds?" asked Areg.

"A star?" said Deor. "No. My star."

"It is enough," said Breydd.

"I am sworn to you," said Areg. "As are we all. It is enough for me also."

IV

Here begins the Chronicle of the People of the Owl.

Let it be recorded and faithfully set down that the People of the Owl are unHoled, a wandering people with neither home nor Hold.

We are thus because or Lord, Deor the Owl, made bad bargain with the Children of Man, who are a baseless folk and know little of honor. The bargain our Lord struck brought shame upon his head and upon his beard and thus brought shame upon his people. Thus it

was decreed by the Lords of our former Hold (the name of which shall not be besmirched by being given letter herein) that we – the People of the Owl – should set forth upon the road and that the gates should be closed behind us.

Let it be recorded that this Chronicle did not begin until one week of our unHolding had passed.

Let it be recorded also that it was on this, the seventh day since our unHolding, that the first of our Rangers returned nigh to our camp and knelt at our Lord's feet.

V

"The world keeps turning? Sun and Moon continue to chase one another across the dome of the sky?"

"They do my Lord."



By Neil Dixon

"Mantica cares little that we are unHolding."

"Indeed not, my Lord," Eolos the Ranger was never comfortable in the company of the great. He was never comfortable in company of any sort. The wilds were all he needed. To kneel at his Lord's feet, to feel the eyes of one so highborn upon him, filled him with something close to dread. He felt exposed and on show and Eolos the Ranger did not like to be on show.

"Tell me of the world."

Eolos the Ranger shifted his weight from one knee to the other. "I have seen little of the world, my Lord," he said.

Deor Ule smiled down from his dais. It was strange, Eolos thought, that the great should carry the trappings of their greatness with them when they journeyed. The stone dais – and the hard-wood throne sat upon it – seemed at odds with the canvas they were under.

But this, Eolos supposed, was no ordinary journeying. The People of the Owl were unHolding. Deor Ule had no home in which to leave dais or throne.

"Tell me of those parts of the world that you have seen," said Deor. "Tell me of the lands my people march across."

"They are claimed by a King of Men who is named Gratticus. His line have been Kings here for five generations. He is very proud of this. Among the Kingdoms of Men this counts as well-established royal lineage."

Deor smiled, though without humor. "I am well acquainted with the ways of Men and with their kings and kingdoms." "Of course, my Lord." There was an edge to Eolos' words that made Breydd shift at his Lord's side. It was an edge that said, *you do not know the ways of Man as well as you think; we are unHoled for that very reason.*

Deor held up a hand to forestall word or action from Breydd. "I know of this Gratticus, though only by reputation. What I have heard speaks of a harmful pride. I fear he will not let us cross his kingdom cheaply."

"More I have heard, Lord, even seen with these eyes, and would urgently share. The lands of this Gratticus are near overrun with orcs. He has three cities in his realm; two of them are destroyed. Only his capital is left. His people mutter that, even if the orc should be defeated, the Kingdom of Gratticus is ended."

Deor considered Eolos' tidings. "What number the orc?" he asked at length. "The people of this land say ten thousand."

"And when fear and rumor are removed, what then number the orc?"

"I would say no more than two thousand, from the evidence I have seen."



By Neil Dixon

“Two thousand. Thrice the number of warriors I have to command.” Deor lost himself to thought for some moments. Then he nodded. “Can you get word to Gratticus King?” Eolos nodded. “Then, Eolos the Ranger, I charge you thus; take word to Gratticus King that I, Deor Ule, Clan Lord of the People of the Owl, follower of the star Ari-add, unHoled but staunch in battle, shall rid his lands of the orc and as payment I ask merely safe passage across his lands.”

“It shall be so.” Eolos rose from his knees, bowed deep and turned from his Lord’s tent.

Deor looked to Breydd. “Battle and the orc call us,” he said.

A slow smile spread across Breydd’s face. “Then let us answer them,” he growled happily.

To Be Continued...



By Neil Dixon

SAGE ADVICE AND RANDOM MUSINGS

Hobby chatter from a hairy old
gamer.

Greetings all!

On the forums there is always a discussion on one house rule or another, with war machine line of sight rules getting some debate lately, I thought this might make a good topic for a column as house rules are something we all tend to use sooner or later.

House rules can be tricky to use especially if you game in many groups, clubs or play on the tourney scene, suddenly rules you are used to are no longer there, and winning tactics are now no longer viable.

Now to me if you find that you are heavily reliant on a particular house rule, I think you and your group should reassess it, as no house rule should be a "game winner". If you use them at all they should be a logical addition to the game, and depending on your group, can be simple rules re-interpretations or full blown new rules.

The re-interpretations are generally there to create realism, bringing the "simplified" game world closer to our own, so for example in a recent discus-



By Boris Samec

sion regarding trebuchets and exactly where you draw the line of sight from. The rules say "...look from the point of view of its barrel or other clearly identifiable aiming point". The easiest option is to aim from the fulcrum point or the pivot, it's the central area where the shot is thrown from but the highest. Others say that you should choose a point at the same level as the heads of the crew as they won't be able to see over intervening terrain and units and that going any



By "Pathfinder Pete McF"

higher is unfair.

So who's right? Well ultimately if your group cannot agree a solution roll off for it, stick to the results and move on, life is too short to be worried about little things like rules interpretations, and time spent arguing is time lost gaming in my book! But if you want to go a bit further and add in reason and common sense then in a way both are right!

How so? Well if you look at actual historical trebuchets they often have lad-foot pegs up the side of the frames (where they don't it's either because the frame has enough cross bracings to negate the need for one or a separate ladder was used), this is so that crew can retrieve the sling after each shot as it almost always wraps itself around the

throwing arm and cannot easily be released by the crew from the ground. This puts a crewman above ground level, enabling them to see and target enemy over the heads of troops and terrain, even if this wasn't the case, when searching for targets why wouldn't you use the large, stable structure next to you to get a better vantage point? Do bear in mind though that there should always be a bit of give and take to balance out house rules. Reason and common sense also says that if the trebuchet can see over those heads and terrain in front then it can also be SEEN by others as well which would of course include artillery and spell using hero's, suddenly that war machine behind your troops is more vulnerable. It's a sensible trade off and both sides win.



By Boris Samec

Other types of house rules can add whole new levels of complexity to the game, and can potentially unbalance the whole game system if poorly thought out, for example adding in a new, more complex magic system with more spells or multiple castings. Rules like this need a great deal of thought and discussion with other players to get balanced so no one army has a clear advantage as well as limiting the effect on the basic game system, after all if more powerful spells are suddenly introduced or you are casting more than one a turn, not only is this going to have a massive effect on other units but also it should make mages worth more points as they are able to effect the game in greater ways, more often.

Ultimately I have found that it's best to change as little as possible, making only those changes that, for your group, you ALL feel are necessary. This enables you to interact with other group's easier as you will have to make fewer changes to your game play, and makes sure that you are playing the game as close to the intended design, after all the beauty of KOW is its streamlined system, so adding more layers of complexity isn't always for the best regardless of the intentions. Well that's enough for now but as usual if you have an opinion on the column or something you'd like me to address, contact me at the mantic forums and I'll reply here for all to see.

Remember "The objective of the game is to win. The point of the game is to have fun. The two should never be confused."

-Bil



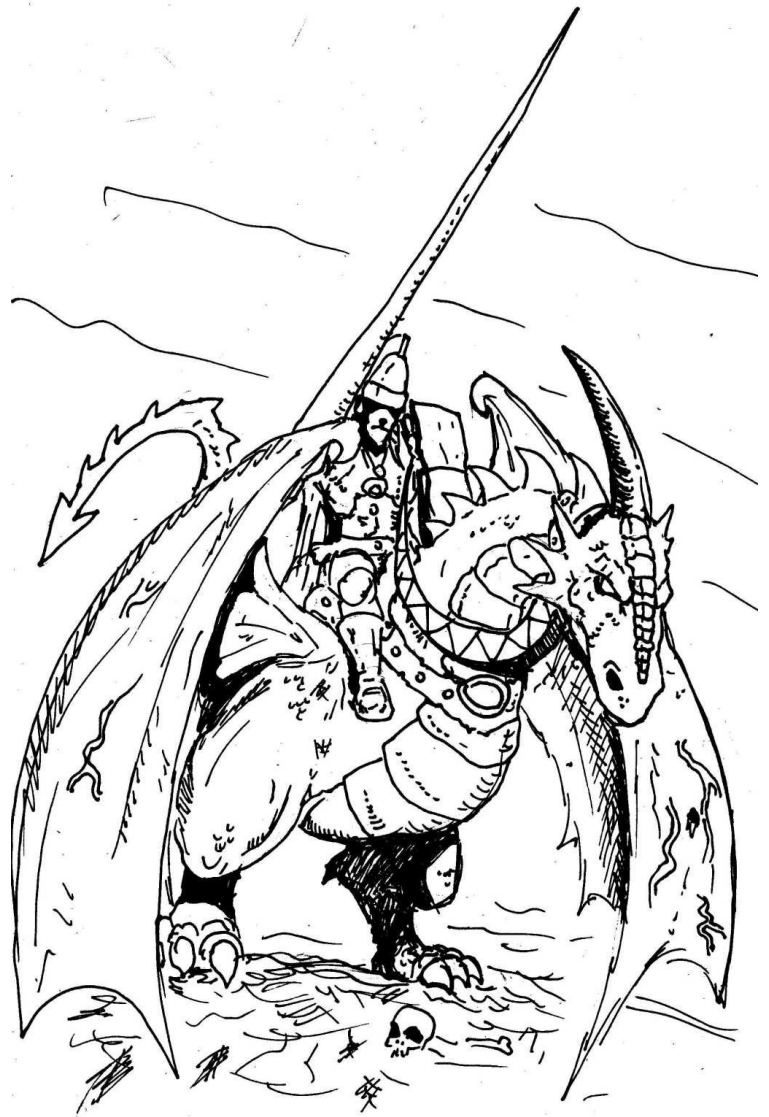
By Austin Peasley

THE AMULET OF ORIEL FIREHEART

By Stuart Smith

It was many long years ago when Oriel Fireheart was the foremost Mage Queen of the Elves dwelling in the Forest of Galahir. Beloved by the Elves, Oriel was also revered by the Dwarves of the Halpi Mountains. In awe of this great lady the Dwarves forged for her a wondrous and magical amulet of the finest emeralds set upon a slender silver chain. This amulet greatly enhanced Oriels magical powers making her one of the most powerful spell-casters of her time. Tragically Oriel was attacked and slain by renegade Orcs who stole the amulet, believing it to be nothing more than a pretty trinket. Years later the Orcs themselves were then attacked by one of the many tribes of Human Horse-lords who rove the Great Plains of the Mammoth Steppes and from there the whereabouts of the Amulet of Oriel was lost forever, or so it seemed...!

Recently however rumor has it that the secret valley that hid the burial places of the Horse-lords has been discovered and now a race is on to try and recover the amulet from the tomb of one of these long dead Horse-lords. Armed forces march northwards onto the Mammoth



By Boris Samec

Plains towards the once secret valley in a bid to claim the Amulet of Oriel Fireheart and to capture its magical powers.

Place the Terrain:

For this scenario you will need 6 burial mound shaped pieces of card, numbered 1-6 on the back. One player places the terrain in a balanced and open manner that would suit the Great Plains of the Mammoth Steppes. The second player then shuffles the burial mound cards and

then deploys them in a random order on the table top, placing them number down within the central portion of the table. Both players should now throw a d6 with the highest score choosing his table edge and deploying his first unit, (Deployment zones being the usual 12" in from the table edge). Players then take it in turns to place a unit on the table until both sides are fully deployed. Both players then throw a d6 once again with the highest score choosing whether he takes the first or second turn.

Duration:

This scenario lasts 12 turns, each player taking 6 turns. At the end of turn 12 throw a d6, score 1-3 and the game ends, score 4-6 and both players take one more turn.

The Burrows:

One of the burrows does indeed contain the Amulet of Oriel Fireheart. To try and discover the whereabouts of the amulet, players will need to 'explore' the burrows. They do this by getting their units (either an Individual or a whole unit of figures) to move onto a burrow. Turn the

Players deploy here as normal

*Place the 6 Burial Mounds
within this area*

Players deploy here as normal



By Stuart Smith

relevant burrow marker over and cross refer the number with the chart below...

1: This burrow is now inhabited by a unit/troop of 3 very angry trolls who instantly attack whoever disturbed them. If they survive this first clash, the trolls will always attack/charge the unit nearest unit to them.

Unit	Spd	Me	Ra	De	At	Ne
Large Infantry (3)	6	4+	-	5+	9	11/13
Special Rules:						
Crushing Strength (2), Regeneration						

2: a Deranged Dwarf Driller now dwells in this burrow that he has mistaken for a mine. He immediately attacks any unit who investigates his 'mine'. If he survives

this first conflict he will always attack/charge the unit nearest to him.

Unit	Spd	Me	Ra	De	At	Ne
Dwarf Driller	4	4+	-	5+	2d6	10/12
Special Rules:						
Crushing Strength (1), Individual						

3+4: are completely empty apart from a few old bones, grave robbers have beaten you to this one.

5: The first unit to search this burrow is hit by a fall of rocks as the ancient entrance caves in on them. The unit suffers 2xd6 attacks at 4+ with Crushing Strength: 1. The burrow is devoid of anything of value.

6: This burrow contains a rotting human corpse still clasping the wondrous Amulet of Oriel Fireheart. If the amulet falls into the possession of any character/individual that can cast spells the amulet has the immediate, following effect...

The bearer of the amulet may cast two different spells per turn and the power of the amulet also protects the bearer from harm, negating each hit scored against them on a d6 score of 5+. The amulet can be taken from enemy characters by defeating them in melee and if the amulet falls into the hands of a normal unit then they may pass it on to any friendly character.

Victory:

The winner is the player who is in possession of the Amulet of Oriel Fireheart at the end of the last turn.

Designer Notes:

Of course the contents of the burrows can easily be changed to suit your own figure collection, you could make the encounters less brutal or even more so! When I ran this scenario as a multi-player game at our club the players certainly seemed to enjoy the surprise element of what each burrow contained with the good guys on the receiving end of all the nasty stuff and the evil guys snatching the amulet (boo, hiss!).▪



By Stuart Smith

A Power Arisen

By Maxwell McDouglas

Death is the province of the south. Most would whisper that this is due to the Ophidians mastery of necromancy, but they were neither the first inhabitants of the desert nor the first to master that black art.



By Neil Dixon

West of Ophidia, in the deepest reaches of the dunes, lies the city of M'henkhara.

Predating the god war by a thousand years, the city was the largest of those that had rose across the desert's only river. In time, it came to dominate its rivals and become the center of human culture in the south. Ruling from their vast copper sheathed pyramid-palace, the kings

of M'henkhara commanded armies of thousands.

Once a metropolis of life and vibrant with culture, the god war brought the city of devastation.

The sorcerer-kings of M'henkhara were the first to practice necromancy, although it was not called such then. They spoke with the spirits of their ancestors for guidance and preserved their dead. In this they served their god, the celestial Horek'kha, who had power over the sands and prophecy.

Then came the prophecy. The spirits muttered of dark days ahead, and the prince of the city was woken by a nightmare of blood and fire raining from the sky as the gleaming figures of giants



By Austin Peasley



By "Pathfinder Pete McF"

fought. The king in desperation invoked Horek'kha for his wisdom.

To him appeared a figure made of gold in the form of man with the wings of a falcon. The god-being told his subject of the coming war, and that to protect the city and the people the king would have to cage him within the capstone of the pyramid and await a "golden-masked man, who will bring m'henkhara glory renewed."

This the sorcerer-king did. Words of power were inscribed upon the capstone and filled with silver. The king retreated to his throne to await the golden one, even as his viziers bound the avatar of Horek'kha within the glowing peak of the pyramid.

The elves of Moon-pool eyrie, sensing the massive flux of magic needed to complete the ritual, attempted to dispel it. The ritual however was too far gone to halt. Horek'kha was imprisoned, but

To protect the city and the people the king would have to cage him within the capstone of the pyramid and await a "golden-masked man"

the magical backlash caused by the elves interference made the sands rise up and bury the cities of the desert.

Thus was the M'henkharan empire laid low, but horek'kha saved from inevitable destruction by the actions of Calisor. Thus did M'henkhara sit, buried for two millennia until the coming of Kha'sebek.

A human of Basilea looking to restore the peace of a bygone age, Kha'sebek had sought out the faceless one,

Mhorgoth, to learn the ways of the dead. He became the first and most powerful of the great necromancers pupils.

Kha'sebek excelled and eventually rose so far in his masters crazed eye that he was allowed the ritual of the mask, becoming faceless like his master, and released from tutelage.

Having read of m'henkhara among the bloodied tomes of Mhorgoth's library, Kha'sebek journeyed into the deserts, his magic sustaining him, until he came to stand before a massive sand dune. Dwarfing its neighbors, there could be no doubting the resting place of the pyr-

amid of M'henkhara.

Drawing all his power to him, the lich-lord released it in a titanic spell which blasted away the sand of millennia. The excess magical energy invigorated the corpses within the city and its surrounds, drawing their souls back from ages within the grey twilight.

Entering the city through its great central gate, kha'sebek was greeted by the remains of a thousand years of royalty, who as one bowed to him. Thus was the city of M'henkhara revived, and its new golden-masked king crowned. ■



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**FROM GOLDEN ORCY
TO IRONWATCH
An Undead Skeleton Horde's
painting progression**

As my contribution, both in this magazine and the following ones, I'm gonna show you my Undead army, whose creation has been made possible thanks to amazing and cheap miniatures made by Mantic!

The first troop I was involved with painting was a Skeleton unit. Actually, the first Mantic model I ever painted was

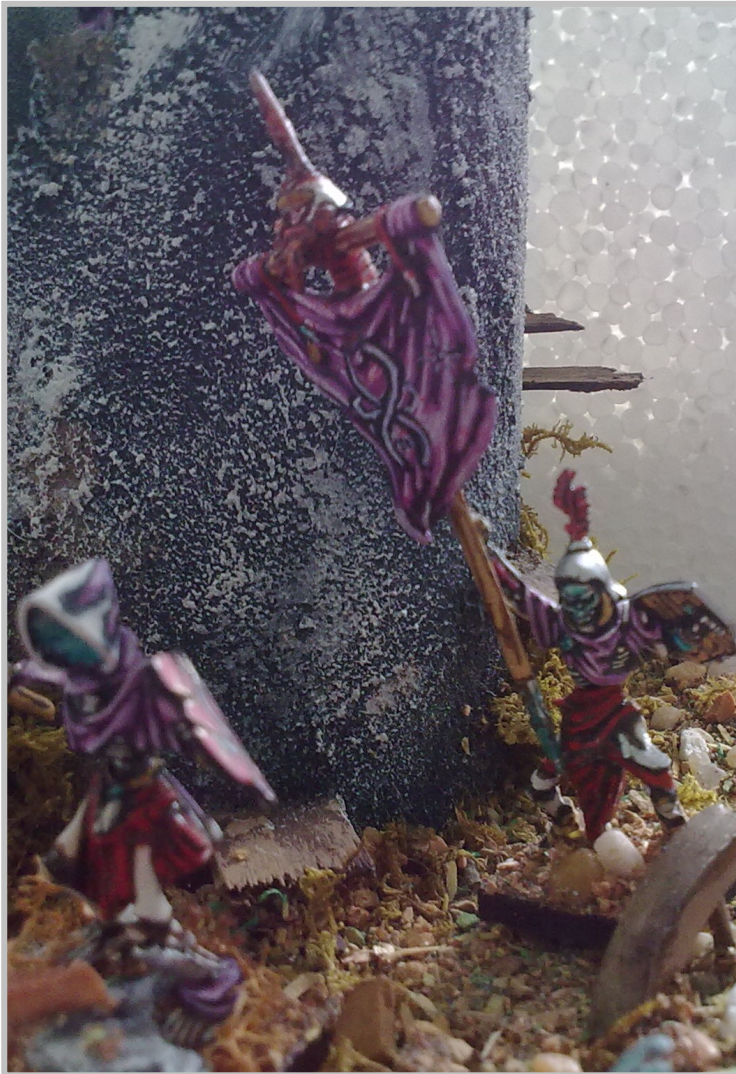
just a Skeleton, which is now the Champion of the Horde I'm talking about.

I arrived second in the Golden Orcy contest, but I discovered a good feeling about these walking bones and, miniature by miniature, I've completed the entire unit (and I'm working for finishing a second horde...).

For painting my skeleton (and the whole army too), I've chosen a very bright color scheme, since it's complementary to my painting technique, with the use of a lot of white for highlighting. The main color







is the purple, with red, white and brown as complementary. One of the most characterizing thing is of course represented by the "glowing eyes and blades", made with a bright teal. These color are a little inspired by Warcraft's undead, I have to admit!

Now, this unit always come with me on battlefields. I can't start making an army list without giving it the first place, supported by a Necromancer of course.

In the end, one of the thing I love to do after finishing painting a unit is to provide it a proper hero. In this contest, I used my "Executioner", the Revenant King leading this Skeleton Horde (*Pictured below*) He was the one who raised the skeletal corpses that make up the unit. It's an old toy I've found in my room, with just a few addition and a nice paintjob.

That's all, see you on next issue for the focus on another troop.

-Alex "reVenAnt" Visentin

To see more pictures of Alex's models, be sure to visit www.WarGamesForum.it



Winter Warriors — Infantry							
Unit	Spd	Me	Ra	De	At	Ne	Cost
Troop (10)	5	4+	-	4+	10	10/ 12	45
Regiment (20)	5	4+	-	4+	10	13/ 15	80
Horde (40)	5	4+	-	4+	20	20/ 22	150
Special Rules:							
Banner (+15 pts); Musician (+10 pts)							

Winter Temple Guard — Infantry

Unit	Spd	Me	Ra	De	At	Ne	Cost
Troop (10)	5	4+	-	3+	10	10/12	45
Regiment (20)	5	4+	-	3+	10	13/15	80
Horde (40)	5	4+	-	3+	20	20/22	150

Special Rules:

Crushing Strength (1).
Banner (+15 pts); Musician (+10 pts)

Ogres — Large Infantry

Unit	Spd	Me	Ra	De	At	Ne	Cost
Troop (3)	6	3+	-	5+	9	12/14	115
Regiment (6)	6	3+	-	5+	18	15/17	190
Horde (12)	6	3+	-	5+	36	22/24	360

Special Rules:

Crushing Strength (1).
Banner (+15 pts); Musician (+10 pts); Exchange shields with two-handed weapons (Lowering Def to 4+ but gaining Crushing Strength (2)) for free

Frontier Watch — Infantry

Unit	Spd	Me	Ra	De	At	Ne	Cost
Troop (10)	5	5+	5+	3+	10	8/11	25
Regiment (20)	5	5+	5+	3+	10	11/14	45
Horde (40)	5	5+	5+	3+	20	18/21	85

Special Rules:

Banner (+15 pts); Musician (+10 pts); Can purchase Bows for +30pts, or Crossbows for +40 pts (Gain Piercing (1) and Reload!)

Mounted Huscarls — Cavalry

Unit	Spd	Me	Ra	De	At	Ne	Cost
Troop (5)	8	3+	-	5+	8	11/13	95
Regiment (10)	8	3+	-	5+	16	14/16	175
Horde (20)	8	3+	-	5+	32	21/23	335

Special Rules:

Crushing Strength (2).
Banner (+15 pts); Musician (+10 pts)

Mounted Warriors— Cavalry

Unit	Spd	Me	Ra	De	At	Ne	Cost
Troop (5)	9	4+	-	4+	8	10/12	70
Regiment (10)	9	4+	-	4+	16	13/15	125

Special Rules:

Crushing Strength (1).
Banner (+15 pts); Musician (+10 pts),
Can purchase Javelins for +10 pts (Gain Breath Attack (5))

Wolf Warpack — Large Cavalry

Unit	Spd	Me	Ra	De	At	Ne	Cost
Troop (3)	9	3+	-	4+	3	10/12	50
Regiment (6)	9	3+	-	4+	6	13/15	65
Horde (12)	9	3+	-	4+	12	20/22	120

Special Rules:

None. Suggested models for unit are one Wolf Pack Handler (A big fella in wolf pelts mounted on a beastie would look good I reckon!) and ranks of Wolves

Werewolves — Large Infantry

Unit	Spd	Me	Ra	De	At	Ne	Cost
1	9	3+	-	6+	3	10/12	70
Troop (3)	9	3+	-	6+	6	12/14	150
Regiment (6)	9	3+	-	6+	12	15/17	285

Special Rules:

Crushing Strength (1), Nimble

Bolt Thrower Battery — War Engine

Units	Spd	Me	Ra	De	At	Ne	Cost
1	5	-	4+	4+	2	10/12	75
2	5	-	4+	4+	4	12/14	150
3	5	-	4+	4+	6	14/16	225

Special Rules:

Blast (D3), Piercing (2).

A 2 or 3 size Battery still counts as only a single War Machine choice., and can reroll a number of dice for Elite equal to the Unit size. A size 1 Battery does not gain Elite

Winter Lord — H/M

Unit	Spd	Me	Ra	De	At	Ne	Cost
1	5	3+	-	5+	4	13/15	110

Special Rules:

Crushing Strength (1), Individual, Very Inspiring.
Mount on a Horse for +10 pts (Increase Spd to 9) or mount on a Dire Wolf for +40 pts (Loses Individual but gains Spd 9, Att 6, and Nimble)

Winter Lord on a Winged Beast— H/M

Unit	Spd	Me	Ra	De	At	Ne	Cost
1	10	3+	-	5+	6	15/17	190

Special Rules:

Crushing Strength (2), Fly, Very Inspiring.

Huscarl Champion H/M

Unit	Spd	Me	Ra	De	At	Ne	Cost
1	5	3+	-	5+	3	10/12	50

Special Rules:

Crushing Strength (1), Individual.
Mount on a Horse for +10 pts (Increase Spd to 9) or mount on a Dire Wolf for +20 pts (Loses Individual but gains Spd 9, Att 6, and Nimble)

Battle Captain [1] — H/M

Unit	Spd	Me	Ra	De	At	Ne	Cost
1	5	3+	-	5+	3	11/ 13	200

Special Rules:

Crushing Strength (1), Individual, Very Inspiring. True Leader. True Leader — Any friendly Frontier Army units within 6" ignore Damage and enemy Musicians when forced to damage. This ability does not apply if the Battle Captain is Wavering.
Mount on a Horse for +10 pts
(Increase Spd to 9)

Army Standard Bearer — H/M

Unit	Spd	Me	Ra	De	At	Ne	Cost
1	5	4+	-	4+	1	9/ 11	30

Special Rules:

Individual, Very Inspiring.
Mount on a Horse for +10 pts
(Increase Spd to 9)

Ogre Captain — H/M

As per the rules in the Kings of War rulebook

Lord of Cold — H/M

Unit	Spd	Me	Ra	De	At	Ne	Cost
1	5	4+	-	4+	1	10/ 12	60

Special Rules:

Breath Attack (6), Individual, Zap!(3)
Mount on a Horse for +10 pts (Increase Spd to 9) or mount on a Dire Wolf for +20 pts (Loses Individual but gains Spd 9, Att 6, and Nimble)

Winter Temple Master — H/M

Unit	Spd	Me	Ra	De	At	Ne	Cost
1	5	3+	-	5+	4	13/ 15	110

Special Rules:

Crushing Strength (1), Individual, Heal (3).
Special: You may only have a Temple Master if you have at least one Solid unit of Temple Guard
Mount on a Horse for +10 pts
(Increase Spd to 9)

An Example Frontier Humans List:

1 Horde of Mounted Huscarls with Command Group – 20 Knights – 360 Pts

1 Regiment of Mounted Warriors with Javelins & Command Group – 10 Cavalry – 160 Pts

1 Horde of Winter Huscarls with Command Group – 40 Huscarls – 245 Pts

1 Horde of Winter Warriors with Command Group – 40 Warriors – 175 Pts

1 Regiment of Temple Guard with Command Group – 20 Temple Guard – 105 Pts

1 Regiment of Winter Warriors with Command Group – 20 Warriors – 105 Pts

1 Ogre – single model – 45 Pts

1 Werewolf – single model – 70 Pts

Total 25+340+900 = 1265 Pts▪

Asset Procurement

by Michael Grey

PART 2



By "Pathfinder Pete McF"

Klein had Theta Squad move down the corridor in standard formation, Marines leapfrogging each other's position in swift duck walks, ensuring no quarter was ever left uncovered. Haskomb treated the whole thing as an exercise, striding between the team, berating sloppy movement and offering sparse praise if a junction was negotiated to his approval.

Klein stayed between them, eyes shifting from his tac-com to the ship around.

Other than the hexagonal shape of the passageways everything else was rounded smooth. The bulkheads where corridors joined seem to grow into one another, and the pipes which ran along sections of wall and the gantry they walked on seemed melded into the structure. And it was black. Completely black. Whatever the alloy was, it was uniformly without color, a torchlight-eating matt throughout each corridor.

At unmarked sections they would pass a room. None had doors they could see, and each was empty of furniture or clues as to what they may have once been used for. A pile of grey dust settled on the gantry of one room, sifting between

the slats when Klein walked to investigate, but what little he managed to gather gave him no indication to its origin.

"Thoughts, Sergeant?" he asked as they negotiated a long stretch of corridor.

"I ain't paid for them, sir," Haskomb sniffed.

"But you have them, nonetheless, and I'd like to hear them. Consider it an order if that helps."

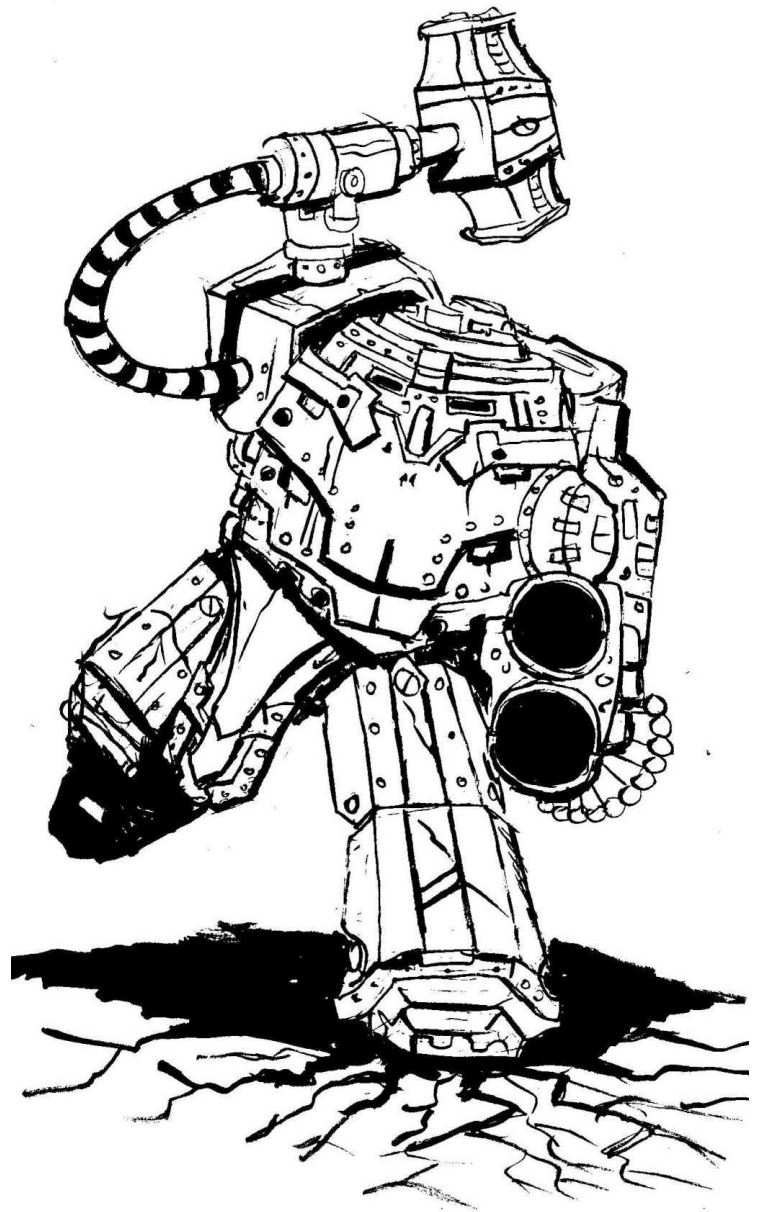
Haskomb thought on that a second, before saying, "I don't like it, sir. Nothing about this sits right, if you get my meaning. It just sitting here, and for how long? The mapper going off chart just as

"Weapons free. I repeat; weapons are free. We have hostiles on board"

it passes it, and them Enforcers... they wanted on here, sir. They wanted on here bad, and they knew where they were going, too. No, I don't like this one bit."

"Klein? Theta, come in," chirped Klein's radio.

Klein switched it on, watching as Haskomb's face set, and wondered if he



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would be able to carry on the conversation later. "Klein here, Captain."

"Klein, pass the order; weapons free. I repeat; weapons are free. We have hostiles on board. Copy receipt."

In the still darkness the words carried and Klein saw their affect immediately. Torches no longer scanned, they leapt

from spot to spot with purpose, while a few marines risked Haskomb's wrath to look at their Lieutenant.

The urgency in Winters' voice prompted a dry swallow. Klein suppressed it and activated the radio. "Copy Captain, weapons free. Anything we should know?"

"We found Delta. Or signs of Delta. Two rifles and Garcia's tac-com. As of now

we have to assume hostiles are active on this vessel. I want extreme caution from here on, Lieutenant. Report anything you find, copy?"

He could hear the solid clacks of magazines being checked and a bass thrum as the plasma rifle was charged to ready.

"I copy. Orders remain?"

"Roger that, and continue on your sweep. Winters out." The radio crackled to silence.

He looked at his men. Haskomb hadn't interjected and some still looked at him, fear and trust fighting for dominance on their faces and Klein was glad he'd control the swallow.

"For those of you who didn't hear; weapons are free. Feel free to shoot at anything that moves. Clear?"

"Aye, aye," the squad responded, some with more enthusiasm than others. He could hear the solid clacks of magazines being checked and a bass thrum as the plasma rifle was charged to ready.

"What the Lieutenant means people, is that we carry as on before, and woe be-



By "Pathfinder Pete McF"



By "Pathfinder Pete McF"

tide anything that crosses our path. Can I make myself any clearer? No? Then let's go! Sluzinski, you take point." Haskomb's bark grounded Klein's imagination, and he felt guilty when the Sergeant looked in his direction with a tacit check for permission.

"As you were, Sergeant. Let's wrap this up."

They swept another deck. Klein was aware he was checking the tac-com's map obsessively; watching as it traced the decks and walls around them with harsh white lines, and willing it meet up with the Incisor as they made a slow loop around the ship, and when they could launch back to the *Andromeda*.

He had lost count of the rooms they had logged when Sluzinski, at the squad's head, held up a fist.

The affect was immediate. Marines crouched where they stood and the air was crisscrossed by rifle lights checking the all clear.

When nothing launched itself from the darkness Klein edged up to Sluzinski, Haskomb at his behind.

"What was it, marine?"

"Noise, sir. But not close."

"What kind of noise?"

Sluzinski hesitated before answering. "A boom, sir. Like a grenade going off. I felt it through my boots, too. Loud, but far away."

Klein looked back to Haskomb and found his eyes trailing down to the rounded fragmentation grenades at his

belt. Haskomb saw and nodded concurrence. "Anything else?"

He shook his head and Haskomb slapped him hard on the back before heading back with Klein. Back in position Klein went for his radio, but Haskomb's hand was on his wrist before he could flick it on. Klein looked at the older Sergeant as he leaned in close and said in a whisper low enough not to carry, "We don't know what's going on here, sir. Could be the outer structure disintegrating after the 'Openers landed, and anything you say's gonna be heard by the lads. There's no need to go spreading panic."

The darkness suddenly held more than the possibility of clues or survivors

Klein regarded Haskomb. He was right. If Sluzinski had heard anything it was too far away for them to do anything about it. But fear made Klein reach up, pluck Haskomb's hand from his own, and click on the radio.

"Captain. This is Theta, come in."

"Report, Lieutenant," said Winters' voice in a distant crackle.

"We heard explosions, Captain. Most

likely personal munitions size. Most likely on a different level. Copy?"

Klein flicked off the transceiver and waited. No answer was immediately coming and he saw the tension grow along Haskomb's jaw line. Then, "-mmit. Say again, Klein."

"Munitions, Captain. On another level."



By "Pathfinder Pete McF"

Another pause. “Roger –at. Hold position.” Once more the radio went silent.

“His signal’s breaking up,” Haskomb said. “Structure’s playing hell with the radio.”

Klein nodded but said nothing. Instead he looked over Sluzinski’s shoulder and into the pitch black beyond. The darkness suddenly held more than the possibility of clues or survivors, and in spite of the cool, dead air he felt sweat prickle his brow.

When the radio chirped up a moment later he nearly jumped. “Klein, Beta isn’t responding to hails. Have you had any contact?”

Klein looked into Haskomb’s eyes as he answered. The old Sergeant’s steadier gaze helped keep his voice under control. “Negative, Captain. What about Gamma?”

“Still not checked in. I don’t like this. The mission’s changed, I want you and your squad back at the Incisor as soon as is safely possible. Copy?”

“Copy. Klein out.”

He didn’t need to look at the squad to know they heard everything. The air held an expectant quality; tension radi-



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ating from each Marine. He checked the tac-com and could have cursed. They had completed over half of their sweep, and now the swiftest route back ran through un-mapped territory.

“Going ahead could be risky, Lieutenant,” said Haskomb, looking over his shoulder. “No telling if there’s even a way back that way. Could be dead ends from here to the arse end of nowhere.”

On a logical level Klein agreed. Emotionally, all he saw was the shorter distance between them and their flight back.

“We go on, Sergeant. As before.”



Enforcer Captain

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Klein thought for a moment Haskomb would say something. Instead he said, "Aye aye, Lieutenant," inflecting his words so Klein could not help but know what he thought of the decision.

They moved down the corridor, covering intersections with multiple rifles and giving each room the most cursory of checks before moving on. Klein periodically re-checked the tac-com, willing the walls it drew around them to meet with the Incisor which still seemed so far off. Then Sluzinski stopped and held up his fist again.

Once more the squad responded, dropping to one knee and covering the pe-

rimeter, daring anything that stayed in the darkness beyond their lights to come at them.

Klein edged forward and held up a hand to Haskomb when the sergeant went to follow. That last thing he wanted were his decisions questioned again.

"What is it, Sluzinski?"

"What is it, Sluzinski?"

"I'm not sure, sir. Just... something."

He didn't answer straight away, but kept gazing forward, moving his head gently, not following the path of his torch, as if he could scent something.

"I'm not sure, sir. Just... something."

Klein looked over Sluzinski's shoulder into the darkness. "What kind of something?"

"I'm not sure sir. But something isn't right here."

You're not wrong there, he thought. Instead he squeezed his shoulder and told him to hold position. Sluzinski nodded and went back to

his vigil. Klein went to move back to the rest of the squad, but stopped midway. Sluzinski had good instincts, and enough of this fubar'd mess gave him the creeps that he wasn't about to go ignoring them now. He needed a soundboard, but seeing Haskomb's glowering expression, brooding at being excluded, made him reach again for his radio.

"Don't do that, Lieutenant."

The voice was deep and low, came from a direction his mind told him should be empty, and was accompanied by an unmistakable metallic click.

His hand froze midway to his radio. When no other orders were forthcoming he took a guess he was not going to be shot, and risked turning his head to where the wall should be, and looked down the void of a gun barrel. Klein forced his eyes to move beyond, and at first could not see a sign of where the gun came from, but by degrees he made out the glint of a shoulder plate, the vague border between two shadows became a bulky thigh, and then the parts as a whole became Kaige.

"Thank you for your compliance, Lieutenant," he said.

There was another, rougher click, and a shotgun barrel was at Kaige's tem-

ple. "Drop it, sir," said Haskomb.

But Kaige just turned his head, his armor staying in its place, and looked down to Haskomb. "I wouldn't if I were you."

And then they were surrounded. Klein couldn't say where they had been before. It was a straight corridor section, one like they had passed through a dozen times before; with no doors or adornments; but the Enforcers were there. Around them, and, among them; Kaige.

The Marines reacted as well as could be expected; maintaining their positions but careful to make sure their weapons didn't wander in the direction of any Enforcer. Haskomb, though, pumped his gun's



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action and moved the barrel an inch forward. "Now, if you wouldn't mind."

Kaige didn't take his eyes from Haskomb, but lowered his gun nonetheless. Then reached up with his other hand, placed a finger tip on Haskomb's shot gun, and gently pushed the barrel downwards.

Haskomb looked ready to bring it right back up again, and Klein spoke up before he had the chance. "You mind telling me what's going on here, Kaige?"

"Of course. That's why I stopped you before you could spoil everything. You can have your men stand down, by the way. We've swept this area and I can promise you it's quite safe."

Klein made no move to do so and Kaige moved on, unconcerned to whether Klein did so or not.

"You're a good man, Lieutenant. Your potential has been noted and has been transmitted to Corporation Central, but you are not equipped to aid in what we're doing here."

Kaige's lips curled into a grin Klein would not quickly forget.

"We're hunting."

"And what is it you're doing here?"

Kaige's lips curled into a grin Klein would not quickly forget. "We're hunting."

"Hunting what?" Klein's pulse quickened and he almost called his men to station. "Us?"

Kaige chuckled. "No. No, nothing so mundane. Mapper ASX609 noted this derelict with its last transmission burst. Its position and structure were



By Boris Samec

noted to fit certain parameters, enough so its discovery was communicated among the right people. That it was ASX609's final transmission was enough proof that something Central had been wanting for a long time was resident on this vessel. That's why we're here, Lieutenant."

The realization struck with enough force that Klein nearly shouted, sending his words down the corridor, and damn whatever heard them. "We're *bait*?"

Kaige nodded with no sign of shame. "I am glad you were not caught, Lieutenant. You will have quite a career ahead of you, and the first step along that career is keeping off your radio." Kaige's eyes went to the handset on Klein's chest strap, emphasizing the quasi-order. Klein grasped it like a talisman.

"And Captain Winters?"

Kaige said nothing.

Haskomb looked between the Enforcer and Klein. He could see words behind the sergeant's face, urgently wanting to be spoken, but the man held his tongue.

"I see," he said. "And what would be required of us?"

"Nothing." Kaige stepped to one side as



By "Pathfinder Pete McF"

if to let him pass. "The route to your pod is open. You will return to the *Andromeda*, the original mission will proceed as planned and when you return to Central you will be rewarded for your assistance."

Klein looked at Kaige in his hulking ar-



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mor, dominating the corridor, then to the Enforcer's surrounding them, then finally his men. He nodded.

Kaige inclined his head and turned to leave.

"What is it you're hunting," Klein said to his back. Kaige paused, and then turned back.

"Do you believe in fairy tales, Lieutenant?"

"What?"

Kaige stepped forward startlingly fast,

making almost no sound. "Did your mother tell your stories at bedtime? Of creaks in the night and hidden teeth which keep to the shadows? Always on the prowl for the feet of little boys which get out of bed at night?"

"Did your mother tell your stories at bedtime? Of creaks in the night and hidden teeth which keep to the shadows? Always on the prowl for the feet of little boys which get out of bed at night?"

"We're after the grown up kind."

Klein nodded, unsure where the questions came from and not liking where they were going.

Kaige leaned in. "We're after the grown up kind." And he turned, walking passed Haskomb and the squad, by the rear guard and into the darkness. The marine at the back raised his rifle to follow a fraction later, and Klein was only partly surprised when it showed nothing but an empty corridor. It was only then he realized the rest of the Enforcers had gone

also; slipped away from notice until only his squad was left in a pool of artificial light, trapped between two seas of night.

Haskomb came up to Klein in a stormy rush. "Lieutenant, you can't mean to-!"

Klein held up a warning finger. He did not look to the sergeant. His eyes were still on the patch of black which swallowed Kaige, searching the corridor.

He was impressed. Kaige's armor was monstrous, yet the man moved with a dancer's step. And if he could hide amid a full squad, an empty corridor would hold no challenges.

Slowly he brought his finger to his lips. Haskomb's neck went red as the words he obviously needed to say gathered in his throat, but still Klein waited. Would Kaige still be out there? He wasn't sure. That was the problem, he didn't know anything. Whatever he did from now on was pure guess work.

But Kaige had said they were hunting, and as good as said Captain Winters and Alpha were the bait. And if they intervened to stop him stumbling into their trap, then surely they would need all their numbers together.

He hefted the tac-com and took his bearings. "Sergeant, ready the men to move

out. We'll be going fast, and pass the word I want chatter to a minimum."

The sergeant looked ready to swear. "I wouldn't have thought that would matter if our way back to the pod was clear."

Klein stowed the tac-com and pulled his pistol, checking the action. "We're not going back, Sergeant." Afterwards Klein realized that was the first time he had seen Haskomb smile.

END OF PART 2

Tune in next Issue for Part 3!

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By Neil Dixon

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