

Pseudonyme's
NON-PLAYABLE Warband AI Warcry Add-on
(for chaotic beasts and other mindless hordes)

Pseudonyme's NON-PLAYABLE Warband AI Warcry Add-on

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INTRODUCTION

The goal of this add-on is to add a simple AI to control a Non-Playable Warband (referred as **NPW** in the rest of the ruleset), to control chaotic beasts and other mindless hordes (Squigs, ghouls, ghosts...) in your regular games of Warcry. In addition to the AI, each NPW has their own specific rules to add flavor and hopefully « fun ».

This add-on is aimed at people who only have 1 friend who has only 1 warband, for people who wants to use models they shelved for whatever reasons and for people like me who are always looking for an excuse to buy more minis.

DISCLAIMER

This entire rule set might contain traces of sarcasm and trolling. Please take everything personally.

WHY THIS ADD-ON

When I first read the chaotic beast rules of activation, I was rather disappointed because it was just giving another option to the players, not that there is anything wrong with that, but I'd have rather preferred something uncontrollable, the game itself trying to decimate both players.

This idea came to mind after transposing multiplayer deployment for 3 players and reading an AoS White dwarf battleplan with an AI for Troggoths. And because I played Zombicide Black Plague, I came to the conclusion that there should be a simple way to do an AI for at least the non-human non leader models.

WHAT THIS ADD-ON IS NOT

A solo mode for Warcry. Yes, the following rules could be easily adapted in a survival mode with the maximum of turns to survive / maximum enemy waves to kill, but this is not the intent. A full solo/coop would require more in depth AI, at least to control the leaders and specific scenarios (Warhammer quest in a sense) and specific victory conditions.

Ok, ok, ok. If you really insist, the specific scenarios at the end could be played solo or cooperatively with a couple of tweaks here and there, that might appear in a future version of this ruleset.

THANKS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In no particular order: Eric Stonemonk for his play testing on the Troggherd scenario, Warboss kurgan for his blessing of for the « Ironjawz » special rules (please send him any complaint directly), Skyline from TGA for having photoshopped my 3 players deployment trigonometric transpositions, Amadeus Hopkins for his inspiring Troggoth custom rules before they had official ones and anyone who gave or will give me feedback. And obviously, The Wife, who just rolled her eyes without being too mean, each time I told her about the present ruleset.

CORE RULES

GENERAL RULES

This add-on is following the core rules of Warcry.

DETERMINING A NON-PLAYABLE Warband

There is not a single way to determine a NPW for your game, it depends on your state of mind at the moment, if you want some randomness or really want a specific NPW. These are proposals, do pretty much whatever you want.

1. Discuss with your opponent, agree on a NPW. Congratulations, you determined your NPW ! (You did get the sarcastic tone, didn't you ?)
2. You can't decide, because you think that every specific rules in this ruleset seem super fun (thank you by the way) ? Then, select the faction that has been shelved the longest.
3. Twist cards
 - a. When you reveal the Twist card for your game, if it is a Chaotic beast twist card, discuss with your opponent if you want to follow the twist card or, and I guess it is why you are reading this in the first place, go to proposition 1 and 2 (you didn't really think I would help you on that one, did you ?).
 - b. Print twist cards representing each of the NPW in this ruleset and include them in your Twist cards deck. Hopefully, someone will create a Twist card generator one day. Finger crossed.

FRIENDLY AND ENEMIES MODELS

NPW models consider all fighters from the players warbands as enemy fighters, even if one of the players is running the same faction as the NPW (which it is not advised from a narrative point of view).

TARGETING

Determining a target is done by adhering to both the below algorithm and the different targeting conditions described in each NPW specific rules.

At the beginning of each of its action, the NPW fighter is determining its target thanks to the following algorithm:

- IF the NPW fighter is in combat:
 - IF in combat with only 1 enemy fighter, the NPW fighter select that enemy fighter as the target
 - ELSE IF in combat with more than 1 enemy fighter, the NPW fighter select the last enemy fighter that attacked it in the previous battle round as the target
 - ELSE IF in combat but no enemy attacked in the previous round, follow the NPW primary target condition
 - ELSE IF select a model by rolling a dice
- IF the NPW fighter is not in combat:

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- IF there is no enemy fighter within 9 inches, select the closest enemy as the target
- ELSE IF there is only 1 enemy fighter within 9 inches of the NPW fighter, select that enemy fighter as the target
- ELSE IF there is more than 1 enemy fighter within 9 inches of the NPW fighter, determine the target with the targeting condition of the NPW.

SETTING UP THE BATTLE

This section explains how to include a NPW in your game.

THE NON-PLAYABLE Warband COMPOSITION

Once the NPW is determined, the players discuss and agree on its composition, respecting the Warcry core rules and adhering to the following rules:

1. The NPW shall not have any leader model, to keep the intent of the mindless hordes and mainly to avoid the difficulty of simulating the behaviour of a proper leader.
2. While agreeing on the composition of the NPW, the players keep in mind that the goal is to have fun and add an appropriate challenge.
3. As a rule of thumb and depending on the specific deployment rules of the NPW, the size of the NPW should be equal to half of the sum of the players warband sizes (i.e. 1000 points for a regular 2 players game).

Exception: some NPW have their own NPW composition rules, in that case, the method of constitution and deployment are described in their NPW composition section. The rule of not using a leader fighter still applies in those cases.

THE BATTLEPLAN

When using a NPW, check the deployment rule of the NPW to select the appropriate deployment.

BATTLE ROUND

Battle-round sequence

1. Hero phase
2. NPW phase
3. Reserve phase
4. Combat phase

NPW phase

The player who has the initiative rolls 6 D6 for the Non-Playable Warband. After processing the ability dice as described in the core rules, singles are processed as follow:

- 6 singles become 1 Quad (value 6) and 1 Double (value 5)
- (5 singles are impossible to get with 6 D6)
- 4 singles become 1 Quad (of the highest value)
- 3 singles become 1 Triple (of the highest value)
- 2 singles become 1 Double (of the highest value)
- 1 single is discarded

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Wild dice

There is no wild dice for NPWs.

Combat phase

All models from the NPW are activated at the beginning of the combat phase, before the players. Beginning with the player who has the initiative, the players alternate the activation of each NPW models.

Following the core rules, NPW models can only do 2 actions per activation and only one aptitude if possible.

For each action of the model follow the algorithm below (yes, I was a developer a long time ago):

- IF an enemy model respecting the Targeting conditions is in range for a range attack THEN the NPW model is attacking with their range attacks
- ELSE IF an enemy model respecting the Targeting conditions is in range for a melee attack THEN the NPW model is attacking with their melee attacks
- ELSE IF no enemy model is in range, move towards the closest enemy model

When an NPW fighter can use more than one aptitude with the abilities dice, choose the highest ability they can perform.

NON-PLAYABLE Warbands

In this section are described the special rules of eligible Warcry NPW

Squigs

NPW compositions

When composing your NPW, you may only choose cave Squigs with no grot in sight, so no sneaky snufflers, hopperz and boulderz.

Deployment

Use one of the 3 players deployment found in this document.
Deploy the NPW as the third warband.

Targeting conditions

Closest enemy model that is not a squig

Special rule

When a squig takes critical damages it bounces back. When a Squig bounces is back, it is moving by his move characteristic in the opposite direction of the enemy fighter that attacked it.

During the bounce back, if the Squig is stopped by any model, it performs 1 free melee attack. As an optional rule, if the Squig encounters an obstacle, it bounces back one additional time select the direction as if you were playing pool (respect the angles of the obstacle).

Flesh Eater Courts

NPW compositions

Follow the rules of NPW composition described in the Setting up the battle section.

Targeting conditions

Closest enemy model that is not infected

Special rule

For each attack inflicting critical damages to an enemy model that is not Death and not daemon, place an « infected » marker on the enemy model.

At the beginning of any battle round, and before the NPW is activated, roll a D6 for every model that have « infected » markers, add 1 for each « infected » marker on the model. On a 6+, the model becomes a Flesh eater court model.

Remove the markers and replace the infected model by a the most expensive FEC model which cost is inferior or equal to the previously infected model.

Deployment

Use one of the 3 players deployment found in this document.
Deploy the NPW as the third warband.

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BONESPLITTERZ

NPW compositions

Do not create a NPW following the core rules. Deploy the NPW as described below.

At the beginning of any battle round, and before the NPW is activated, deploy a number of Orruks equal to the number of critical attacks in the previous battle round.

For every additional Orruk, roll 1 D6, the result will determine from which board edge the Orruk come from: 1 is West, 2-3 is North, 4 is East and 6 is South. Place the Orruk model 3" from the middle of the relevant board edge.

Targeting conditions

Most expensive enemy model in range that is not yet in melee combat, closest enemy model otherwise.

Special rule

Not applicable

Deployment

Use any 2 players deployment from the official Warcry books.

NIGHTHAUNT

NPW compositions

Do not create a NPW following the core rules. Deploy the NPW as described below.

Each time a non-Death model is taken out (murdered model), roll 1 D6. On 6+ in the first battle round, 5+ in the second round, 4+ in the third round, 3+ in the fourth round and 2+ in the 5th and following rounds, replace the out of combat model by a the most expensive Nighthaunt model which cost is inferior or equal to the out of combat model.

Targeting conditions

The fighter who killed the model when he was alive. If impossible, the closest non-Death enemy model

Special rule

Not applicable

Deployment

Use any 2 players deployment from the official Warcry books.

LEGION OF NAGASH

NPW compositions

Do not create a NPW following the core rules. Deploy the NPW as described below.

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Each time a non-Death model is taken out within 6 inches of an objective, roll 1 D6. On 6+ in the first battle round, 5+ in the second round, 4+ in the third round, 3+ in the fourth round and 2+ in the 5th and following rounds, replace the out of combat model by a the most expensive Legion of Nagash model which cost is inferior or equal to the out of combat model.

Targeting conditions

Closest enemy model to the closest static objective of this model

Special rule

Not applicable

Deployment

Use any 2 players deployment and any victory conditions based on objectives from the official Warcry books.

TROGGOTHS

NPW compositions

Follow the rules of NPW composition described in the Setting up the battle section.

Targeting conditions

Closest enemy model in line of sight of the model (an enemy model not in melee combat with the Troggoth and facing the back of the Troggoth is not in the line of sight of the Troggoth)

Special rule

When attacking, turn the Troggoth to face the enemy model. If there is no enemy model respecting Targeting conditions, the Troggoth moves in a straight line.

Deployment

Use one of the 3 players deployment found in this document.
Deploy the NPW as the third warband.

INSECURE ORRUKS

NPW compositions

Follow the rules of NPW composition described in the Setting up the battle section.

Targeting conditions

Enemy model with the least Toughness characteristic. If 2 models in range have the same Toughness, choose the enemy point value.

Special rule

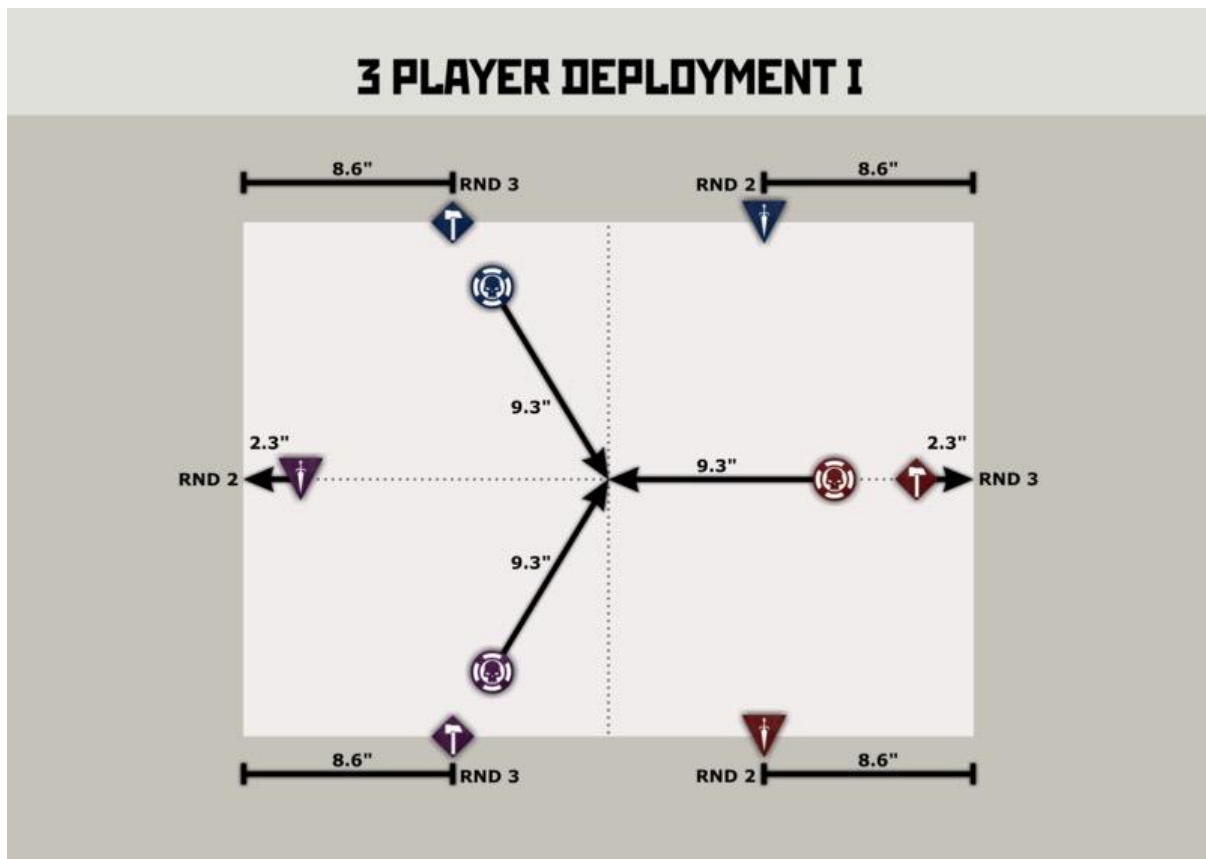
In addition to wearing thick armour plates, at their activation, Insecure Orruks are moving in the opposite direction of the closest enemy model which has most Toughness.

Deployment

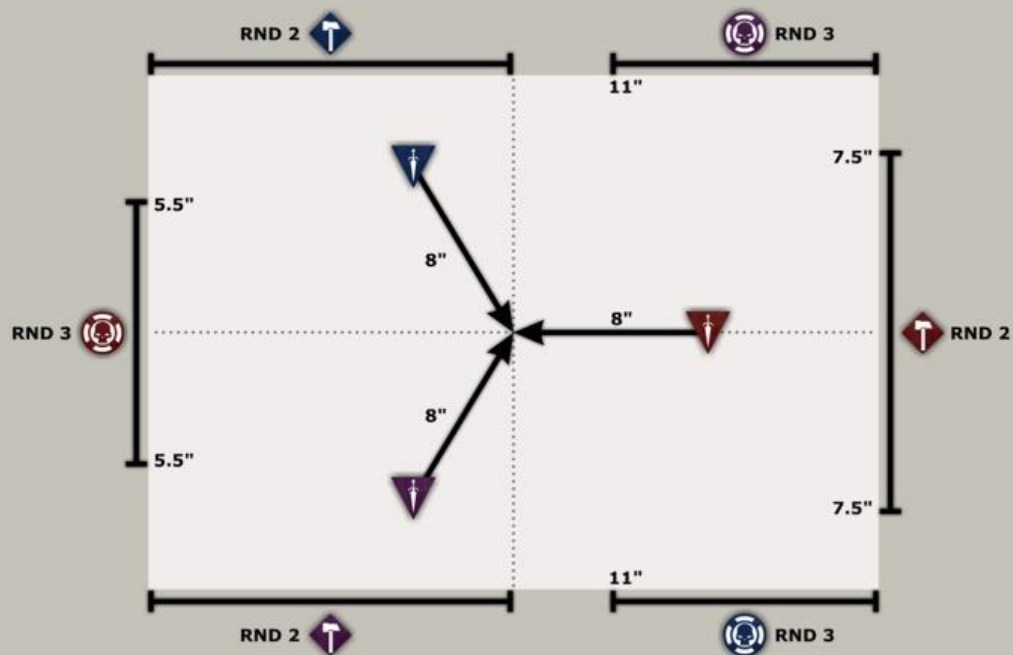
Use one of the 3 players deployment found in this document.

Deployment

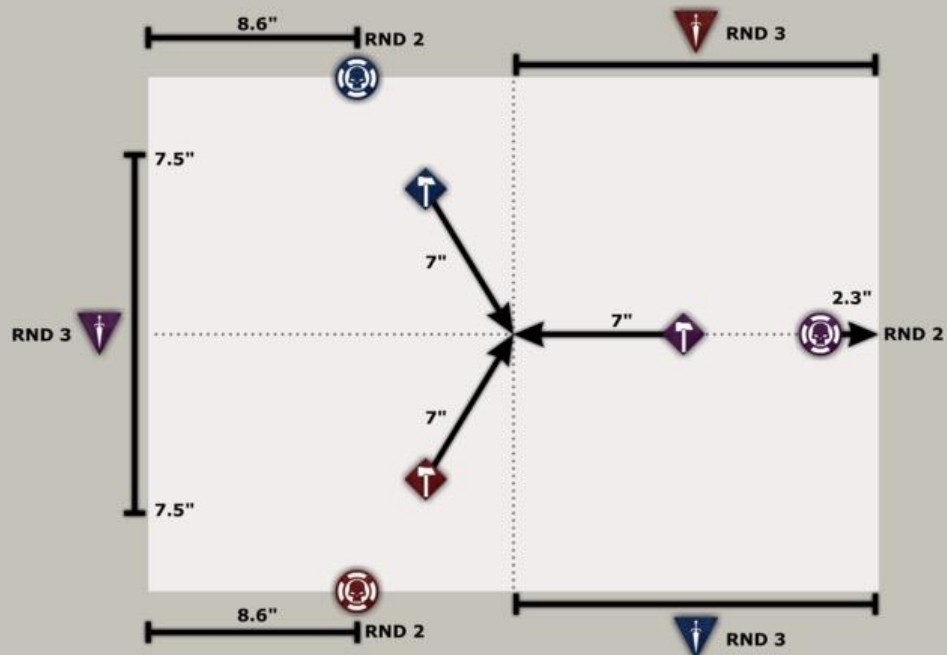
This section contains 3 players deployment for the NPW, that you can use in a regular 3 players free for all multiplayer game.



3 PLAYER DEPLOYMENT II



3 PLAYER DEPLOYMENT III



NARRATIVE SCENARIOS

In this section will be described specific scenarios trying to add even more flavour to the NPW.

TROGHERD!!!

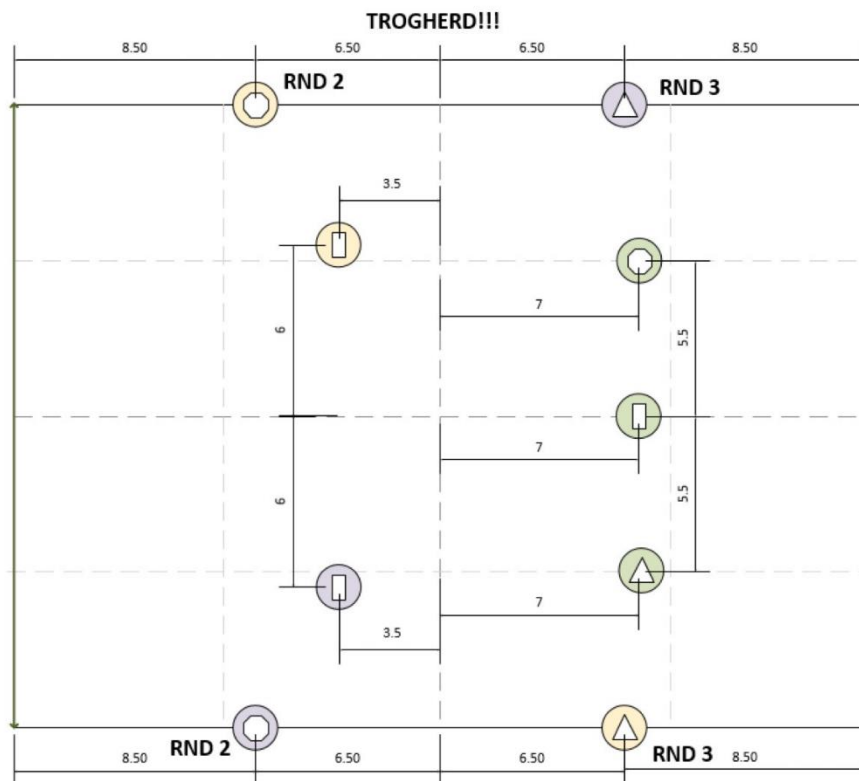
Twist card

- Replace the deployment card by the « TROGHERD!!!! » deployment card below.
- In addition to the victory conditions already drawn, add the « TROGGERD » victory conditions card.
- If both players have a friend lying around somewhere, said friend can play the Troggoth warband if he wants, following the Triumph and treachery rules. In that case, the AI is no longer to be used.

Victory conditions card

- The Troggoth NPW is winning the game if at least of its model is 4 inches from the board edge opposite to their deployment zone.
- If the Troggoth wins, both players loose the game

Deployment card



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

In this section you will find good old Frequently Asked Questions that will serve for the most part, as Designer comments and passive-aggressive sarcastic comments at the expense of the reader.

Q: How can I send you feedback?

A: Unless you know me personally or e-personally, please post your feedback on the topic I created on The Grand Alliance forum: <https://www.tga.community/forums/topic/26623-pseudonyme%E2%80%99s-non-playable-warband-ai-warcry-add-on/>

Q: Where can I find the latest version of this add-on?

A: On the topic I created on The Grand Alliance forum: <https://www.tga.community/forums/topic/26623-pseudonyme%E2%80%99s-non-playable-warband-ai-warcry-add-on/>

Q: Are you sure I can't include a leader in the NPW?

A: Yes, I am sure. Because if you do, you will complain about the AI not being intelligent enough. But, as you will do whatever you want in the end, and I won't be there to hunt you all down, do whatever you want. I am not your parents, you rebellious wargamer. Must confess that I am not proud of you.

Q: Where is the random behaviour table?

A: In other rulesets, I guess.

Q: But without randomness, it will be easy to game the system, won't it?

A: Well, yes and no. Yes, because as I tried to keep the AI as simple as possible, players will be able to predict the NPW behaviour. No, because this ruleset primary intent is not to give you a solo/cooperative experience, you still have to fight an (hopefully) intelligent opponent over the core victory conditions, the NPW is here to add an additional and hopefully fluffy challenge for, I hope, fun and memorable games.

Q: I still don't get why you didn't take inspiration from GW random tables for their narrative scenarios in White dwarf and their Roaming monsters rules.

A: That is because you're obsessive and don't think there is any other way to do an AI. But to answer your question, first, you must remember that GW are also selling dice. Second, rolling dice takes time and break the immersion, even after you learned the behaviour table by heart. Then, you have to consider the relevancy of this desired randomness for each NPW (i.e. what other behaviour than going straight into melee an Orruk would have? Maybe there is, But I must confess that I can't think of any). And finally, and most importantly, from my point of view, a random table with 6 to 11 entries (1D6 or 2D6 tables) is a cheap/lazy AI system. I am not saying that randomness should not exist, but it should be a minor aspect of an AI. As far as I know, the only AI with randomness that I would ever consider, is the one from Kingdom Death Monsters in which, as far as I understood, the enemy's patterns are programmed in a deck of cards. But this requires far more thoughts than I had made so far for this ruleset. It is a super cool idea to develop though, that's for sure.

Q: I followed your rule of thumb concerning the size of the NPW and it was just too much and it prevented us to play the victory conditions. What should I do?

A: Try decreasing the size of the NPW by 20% the next time you use that specific NPW.

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Q: I followed your rule of thumb concerning the size of the NPW and it did not have any impact in my games, it was too easy. What should I do?

A: Try increasing the size of the NPW by 20% the next time you use that specific NPW.

Q: I followed your rule of thumb concerning the size of the NPW, then I followed your answers to the 2 questions above, and I noticed that you have to increase or decrease the size depending of the NPW.

A: That is not a question, but I will still answer. Send your feedback and suggestions. The more feedback, the better this ruleset. Anyway, as stated in the core rules, discuss about the size of the NPW with your opponent, trust your experience and adjust if necessary.

Q: Why do the activation of the whole NPW is at the beginning of the battle round and not during the combat phase in alternate activation with the players?

A: Good question. The main reason is that it helps the NPW to be a presence to reckon with, even in the last turn. Secondly, it is also to keep the dynamic of the game between both players. Even if Zombicide Black Plague is a cooperative game, and that the enemy's activation is at the end of the battle rounds, that concentrated activation works pretty well in my opinion.

Q: What if I want to use alternate activations?

A: You're annoying, you know that? Go and check Doug 2+Tough Warcry add-on, merge the experiences and give feedback on The Grand Alliance topic.

Q: On the what?!

A: ...

Q: Can I use the NPW specific rules for the players' warbands?

A: Bloody hell I waited so long for you to ask me that question. Thank you. I would say yes. It will be chaotic, completely unbalanced, but I have the intuition that the game will be memorable in how much stupid it will get. You should try to do that in a multiplayer game to be even more insane. And please, post your feedback or even battle report on the TGA topic.

Q: Can I use 2 NPW?

A: Might be too much mate, but you can give it a try. Still, your question gives me an idea of a narrative solo scenario where 1 player must sneak in the middle a furious battle between to AI controlled warbands to get an artefact or whatever.

Q: Insecure Orruks? Really?

A: Yeah, really. Ok, because you insist and I don't want to see you cry like a little baby, you can rename the Bonesplitterz rules as Orruk warclans rules. You're better now? See how generous I am?