

THE ORACLE

ISSUE 3



Black Legion
Night Goblin Squiglobba
Portent Tournament 2004
Andy Chambers Letters
Man o' War Redux
And More...

Editorial

So we find ourselves at Issue 3 of The Oracle. Third time's a charm? Well, frankly, the Oracle staff have been doing a great job from day one, and this issue is no exception. This issue has some great stories, battle reports, and more, not to mention the great cover artwork.

Needless to say, I'm impressed and proud that this virtual publication continues to be produced by the Oracle team, I never imagined anything like this would come from the Portent community. Enough rambling, I'll let you guys get to the good stuff inside. Enjoy!

Pete Closs
Portent Webmaster

Oracle Issue 3 Contents

Article:

Page:

Oracle Staff Rants

3

A selection of the ugly mugs that put the webzine together for you lot, and what they have been up to.

Portent tournament 2004

4-7

Portent does Games Workshop HQ.

The Traitor's Corner

8

A series of articles about the life and work of the chosen of the Black Legion.

Doomlord III

9

Lord Lucifer Continues his Doomlord series.

Tale of Four Gamers

10-13

The third issue of this classic from white dwarf.

Tau vs Tyranids

14-17

Battle Report.

For Andy Chambers

18

A collection of comments about Andy Chambers's contributions over the years.

Alliance Report

19

news from the front lines.

Imperial Record Archive

20-21

This data tablet was discovered floating in sector 2456 by the imperial Cruiser Aeries...

Wanderingblade Letters and Misc info

22

Wanderingblade will be answering your letters in the comings issues. Here's the intro and other info.

Nightgoblin Squigglobba Rules

23

Does exactly what it says on the tin.

Tatica Imperium 2

24-25

More quality fluff from Brusilov.

Man'o'War Redux

26

heretic puts forth the beginnings of a new rules set for this game based on BFG rules.

Ten most feared units / models in 40k	27
----------------------------------------------	-----------

The deathdealers of the 41st millennium.

Limited	28
----------------	-----------

Zeb talks about limited edition minatures.

From Russia With Love	29
------------------------------	-----------

The Oracle needs you!

Closing Notes	30
----------------------	-----------

Final words by the staff.

Oracle Staff Columns

Anseur (Publisher)	Christine (To4G editor)	Lord Lucifer (Sub Editor)
<p>Well, I've been looking into alternate wargames for a while now, and I've had the pleasure of playing Hybrid, IK Warmachine, and some more recent Magic: The Gathering decks. Warhammer, 40k, and most of their spin off games all use a similar system, and it's interesting to do it differently. I guess that's why I liked BFG so much.</p> <p>On the non-wargaming front, I've been looking for a chair. Not just any chair mind. an office chair to sit at my computer on. I spend far too much time on my computer(s), so why not spend them on a decent chair? Thing is, the damn chairs are rather expensive. Looking at most of the sort I want (arm rests, head rest etc) your looking at £110+ for a decent quality one. If anyone know of any good online stores to order from in the UK, let me know.</p>	<p>Well this issue has been something of a mixed bag, I finally got to espouse my love of all things Russian in my article on Zvezda and in theory we would have been in for another great month of 4 Gamers - except theres only two of us. Lav and Toddy scarpered off somewhere (or maybe got arrested or killed, see my sig.) so it ended up being a stressful time on that front, and the delay in this issue can be firmly laid at my feet! *Apologises profusely*</p> <p>Still, at least I've been able to beaver away in my spare time building alternate epic scale eldar aircraft? Mad am I? Maybe they'll be good enough to fill some space in here sometime, you never know...</p>	<p>Arghh! Three months overdue? Ouch.</p> <p>It's like Heretic said "Alright, nothing will go wrong on anything but a '1'" and promptly rolled a 1 on his 2+ Oracle Save, and hence the Curse of the Oracle has once more struck, struck us most foul it has!</p> <p>Okay guys, make sure this time you remember to include "disaster-free Oracle" in your prayers to Sigmar/Ulric/The Emperor/heathen gods</p> <p>Fingers crossed we survive this mishap!</p> <p>Oh, and I've started a new army... a really cool one. Ask me frequently how it's doing, I've got a year to build it so keep on my case!</p>
Aaron (Figurehead)	Zeb (Staff Writer)	McHaggis (Staff Writer)
<p>It's a catch 22 situation, isn't it? When you have the time to paint models, you lack the funds to buy them. When you have the money to buy them, you lack the time to paint them.</p> <p>Well, after 5 long and enjoyable years as a no-good</p>	<p>Needless to say, things have changed since the last issue. The Tour has passed, and the Vuelta is in the final week. Bike season is almost over... I have had great succes painitng infront of the tv, so my Druchii army has gotten a new appearence and some new units. Now I have to fix some new characters and the new Regiment of Renown (Mengil and his bunch)... That's why we have soccer season...</p>	<p>This month I completed Far Cry, drawled over expensive Sony laptops, won £50 on the premium bonds, started my refusal to acknowledge the so called 'Storm of Chaos' campaign exists, scored #1 on the arcade game Chopper Challenge and discovered that in the year since I last saw my oldest nephew he has become a wimp. He now says I'm 'too scary' and the closet is 'too dark' before screaming. I'll show him the meaning of fear.</p>

student and I am finally entering the world of full-time graduate employment. This has given me the chance to buy myself a sizeable Warmachine army. If you have yet to try it then I can only suggest that you rush out and buy yourself the rulebook and a starter set straight away. It is a great game and an interesting experience for someone who has grown up solely on GW games like myself.

But with my new job, I am really struggling to find the time to paint. Luckily, Warmachine is firmly a skirmish game but my rate is still only about one model a week. I hope that my opponents do not mind a few "shiny" models!

Brusilov

(Staff Writer)

Since the last issue of the Oracle, I've been working mainly on the Imperial Guard (what did you expect?), trying as best as I could to stick to my own description of its structure and the information for the Imperial Armour book. The new edition was a welcome change for me, although it required a serious overhaul of all my armies and strategies. The few games I have played were all very rewarding. Besides that, my Sisters of Battle army is slowly growing and they rock, especially with the new rapid fire rules (but the acts of faith are just wonderful).

I'll take this opportunity to rant about the bureaucracy. I don't know how it is in your respective countries but the French bureaucracy has to be one of the worst in the world, second only to the Russian one (and trust me I know both). They are slow, inefficient and ask you for tons of useless forms or papers. It's so frustrating! I had to get this off my chest. But I guess this is but a small taste of the Administratum... *faints*

I'm not libeling anyone this time I think.

nick

(Tech Priest)

Hi everyone, well its finally here after a rather extended absence which can be blamed on a world cookie shortage [well it seemed a good excuse at the time]. As for my news theres been a few changes to portent which i've been working on including our submission system, some guilder perks and the usual routine maintainance. I've also started training up anseur as my replacement as I'm going to be away from things for long periods of time.

As for gaming, well I don't really get much time with a new job and everything but I'm trying to arrange some roleplaying sometime. I really feel I have some cool new ideas for situations to place people in from the last few years of life.

THE PORTENT TOURNAMENT 2004 REPORT

FROM SMALL ACORNS...

So where do I begin my account of what has become something of a nightmare for me? Does this tale start last August when I went to Warhammer World for the first time and thought that Portent should do an event there? Does it begin in September of last year when I started recruiting Portentors to take part in the first Portent Tournament? Does this tale even begin with the first Portent Tournament in November?

I think this tale really begins in January when I first began advertising the Portent Tournament 2004 on the website which we have all grown to love. Having learned a lot from the previous year's event, I was very optimistic that the Portent Tournament 2004 would be bigger, better, and would go vaguely according to plan. You will discover in time which of these three aims were achieved.

Four months of chasing people's money for the event and the Clarence Hotel group booking itself ensued, until at last we reached the month of May... the weekend we had all been waiting for. Feeling drowsy, I made my way to the coach station at what seemed a good hour at the time. Hefting a Charon Skirmishpack laden with trophies as well as my own backpack is not a pastime I wish to take up. To my relief, the coach that was to take me to London Victoria was late, so I managed to catch my breath and relax. From here I vaguely remember the seven hours between boarding the coach at Fareham and getting off at Nottingham, so either I was so absorbed by my music or I fell asleep.

When I arrived in Nottingham's coach station, I immediately made my way to the train station to meet up with the infamous

As the hordes amassed in Bugman's Bar for the third time, I began arranging the games for the final round of the day. Letting Pete announce the games, I somehow managed to accomplish the impossible task of separating Hywel from his drink. I'm not sure either of us knows how I managed it, but I think it should be considered a small miracle of some sort. Maybe Saint Lavfluris has a nice ring to it after all...

Minor miracles aside, Round Three began and by this point, many of the players were beginning to look weary. Regardless of this, the games were played in high spirit up until the very last minute. During this round, Pete began judging the painting of each army whilst I continued to work through the pile of the army lists. At this point I found that one of the players was fielding The Nightbringer even though it stated quite clearly in the Rules Pack that there were to be no special characters. I decided to let him continue fielding it, though in hindsight I think it's performance has encouraged the player to not use it in competitive gaming again.

With Round Three completed and the Result Cards handed in to me, the horde made it's way into the Bugman's Bar for the evening meal. Entertainment was provided by our News Reporter, Toddy, and the nurturing of Pete's corruption. My own corruption also continued. Looking back I think it was rather cunning of Hywel and redemptionist15 to get me drinking.

We were eventually thrown out of Bugman's as the barmaids wanted to go home. Feeling more sober by the minute, we followed Hywel as he marched to the nearest pub to fill up again. It is here that

PunkSpikeyDan, Hywel and Prince_Tyrion. When I arrived, PunkSpikeyDan was lurking in the darkest corner like I expected of him. After chatting to him before Hywel and Prince_Tyrion arrived, I found he was a really good bloke, not like how he portrays himself on Portent. Next to arrive was Hywel. Boy, was he annoyed that I didn't say which café we were supposed to meet at. Like Dan, Hywel was also a man you can warm to easily. We passed the time waiting for Prince_Tyrion by thinking of Wanderingblade's other habits, which for the sake of the general populace, I won't delve into.

After an hour of waiting and no Prince_Tyrion, we decided to make our way to the Clarence Hotel. Being the only one who vaguely knew where we were staying, I led the way to the taxi and eventually convinced the driver that the Clarence Hotel was real. Our quick tour of the area by taxi also showed us where Conrad's, the resident strip bar, was located.

Outside the Clarence Hotel we found redemptionist15 loitering about in his Manchester United hat. Again, he was someone I warmed to quickly. Wishing to get settled in, we made our way through the front door to find we were the first to arrive. Finding our way to our rooms, we waited for the other six and Prince_Tyrion to arrive.

Eventually, ZarkTheDamned, McHaggis and the others arrived, but there was still no sign of Prince_Tyrion. By now I was getting anxious that my second in command would not be coming, meaning I was to do a little more work than I anticipated. A cheap burger and a failed attempt to find Prince_Tyrion at Nottingham train station later, I found myself in my room drinking cheap vodka with McHaggis and Guido le wombat. Time sped by until at last, we dropped

Inquis. Jaeger and rozonus well and truly became part of the legend of Zark as they contributed as much to the conversation as Hywel. My chest has not hurt from so much laughing in a very long time, though I am sure almost the entirety of the crowd gathered at the White Hart can say the same. When Pete, Tom and Brimstone left for their hotels, our rabble made it's way to the Clarence Hotel for more drinking and another 4am bedtime.

And so began the second day of the Portent Tournament 2004. Hywel and redemptionist15's cunning plan of getting me to drink paid off for them as I decided to leave the Clarence Hotel at the time when we were supposed to be already at Warhammer World. Refreshing myself with coffee, I led the masses into Warhammer World for Round Four. It is during this round that the first and only argument of the Portent Tournament occurred. After two turns of heated interpretation of the rules, PunkSpikeyDan conceded to JGRSound and walked away from his table. Rather than take strong action against both players, I asked them both to drop it and they eventually apologised to each other after they had cooled down.

I think it was also during Round Four that my pile of army lists dwindled to nothing, much to my relief, as it seemed I was never going to complete them...

For the final time, we made our way into Bugman's Bar for lunch. During this time, Brimstone came up trumps with the Sunday Sport and the picture of Miss Chernobyl, which was ogled many times over by each person seated at our table. Again, Hywel was more than difficult to remove from Bugman's Bar for the last round.

Round Five was by far the most tensioned filled of the day, though each player still played as friendly as they could manage, giving that Round Five would strongly affect their final standings. As I moved

McHaggis off at his room and went to bed.

Going to bed at midnight was not good enough for Hywel, redemptionist15 and PunkSpikeyDan. The three banged on our door just after I was drifting to sleep and demanded we went down to the bar that would be open until 4am. Cursing, I got back into my clothes and went downstairs with Guido le Wombat. Two more hours of slowly succumbing to alcohol commenced, until at last, I managed to get to bed.

When I woke, it was the day I had been equally dreading and looking forward to, the first day of the Portent Tournament 2004. It was a struggle to convince Hywel that I had the right day, but eventually I managed to get him to go to Warhammer World along with the rest of the Portentors staying at the hotel. At Warhammer World, we gradually assembled in the haven that was Bugman's Bar until the hour had arrived when the first round began. More than nervous, I called out the first matches and let the players find the tables they wanted for Round One. By this time I had also appointed Tom, Brimstone's friend and the allocated driver for the pair, to take Prince_Tyrion's place as Warhammer Chief Judge. Having never played any GW game, Tom was more than happy to start learning.

Round One went rather smoothly and it soon dawned on myself and Tom that the weekend was going to be a big highlight. The level of sportsmanship between the players was superb as was the level of painting, particularly in the Warhammer Fantasy half of the event. Many of the games stretched the full two hours and beyond into lunch time, but I felt that almost all of the players were enjoying themselves already.

During lunch in Bugman's Bar, the myth of ZarkTheDamned was spreading to the less enlightened of us. Amidst the laughter and the devouring, Pete Closs made his entrance and immediately settled in with

from table to table telling the players who had been nominated for the Best Army award, I realised that this year's event had surpassed last year's event on so many levels. This is where I felt the most pride in what I had managed to cobble together

When all of the players had handed in their Result Cards, Pete took the role of Vote Master as each player voted for the Best Sportsman and Best Army for Warhammer Fantasy and Warhammer 40K. As I calculated each player's final score, Pete himself counted up the votes until we were both happy we had the correct results.

Taking my place before the stage to photograph the winners, Pete was left to announce the winners in the Awards Ceremony. In the Warhammer Fantasy half, Gorslang won Best Sportsman, Hywel won Best Army with the immortal words, "I thank alcohol, nicotine and insomnia", Tenoch won Third Place before falling off the stage, TheDreadKing won Second Place and Wez won First Place. Whilst in Warhammer 40K, Brimstone won Best Sportsman and christened the trophy with beer, KingM won Best Army, Erik Ford won Third Place, JGRSound won Second Place and Inquis. Jaeger won First Place. Of these, I think I managed to catch four receiving their trophies, whereas Hannah, Cloud Runner's missus, taped the whole Awards Ceremony. Every player went home smiling even if they did not win a prize, whilst I remained with the usual crew in Bugman's Bar before being shifted to the Rose and Crown and then eventually the Hard Rock Café and the Clarence Hotel.

I felt almost sad saying farewell to redemptionist15, PunkSpikeyDan, Hywel, Guido le Wombat, rozonus and McHaggis during the following morning, but I am happy to know that they will all be back again next January for the Portent Tournament 2005.

So, there is my report. If you are still reading then I would like to thank everyone

his Portentors. This is probably where his corruption begins, but like any good story, we'll get to that in due course.

Round Two saw the victors of the previous round square off against each other, whilst the yet to prove themselves sought to join the winners. Again, the level of sportsmanship and how much the players enjoyed themselves stunned me. There was no sign of arguing or heated tensions. During Round Two I set about the dubious task of sifting through every player's army lists and making sure it corresponded to the armies they fielded on the table. Of particular note was Gorslang's army, which although was 2000pts on his army list, he had only managed to paint just over half that amount. Even half strength, he still managed to defeat LooseMoose's Skaven horde.

who attended and managed to put up with me. I hope to see many, if not all, of you again next year, as well as many more players. If we can get players coming from overseas, then I feel I have managed to accomplish a new part of Portent's history that will continue for years to come.

Here's to the Portent Tournament 2005 in January,

Lavfluris

THE TALE OF A STUMBLING DRUNK

As my degree isn't nearly enough writing, I have been implored to record the 'gamers-eye view' of the Portent Tournament. Well, when I say gamers-eye I mean my eyes, which were either half closed wishing for sleep, or wide open desiring my next pint. This should truly go down as one of the great epic sagas of history as combatants from across the country gathered to get drunk. Well, some of the 'other ones' wanted to win their battles too - you'll have to ask them what the hell they were up to.

My weekend began on a quiet Friday morning. Bleary-eyed and hung-over, I staggered from bed and carefully packed my army, careful to ensure at least 50% of the models would travel without getting broken. After a lengthy walk to the train station with my bags I resolved never to walk more than five yards with them ever again, unless a pub be provided for recovery. I boarded my train - destination Nottingham, via the annoyingly non-smoking station of Birmingham (after a half hour train delay in which I could not drug myself up on nicotine I was a little tetchy to say the least).

When I arrived, angry from having to stand up most of the way on the crowded train and completely deprived of vices, I searched for Lavfluris and PunkSpikeyDan who were supposed to be waiting in the café. Were they ****. A calming cigarette later I went looking and soon found them at a different café, oh how very convenient! Then we settled down to awaiting judge number two, Prince Tyrion, occupying the time by inventing theories for his tardiness and ruminating on the 'habits' of Wanderingblade. The less said the better, this is a family forum. After half an hour we concluded Tyrion had been ejected from his train for wearing a dress with an overly daring neckline and strappy high heels so left to find the hotel and book in the hapless minions who awaited our

This game was truly a back and fore affair. Some effective shooting and charges had most of my army running away by about turn 3 along with the notable casualty of my general (you'd have thought he could handle Dark Riders, but when I said I was using a 'hand weapon' he misinterpreted it as a command to use his wet towel) and Chariots. I also had a Hydra rampaging through my centre. However, they then met my Warriors and Adam had an unfortunate spate of luck. Charging a Chariot and the Hydra into them, I was sure I was doomed but miraculously only one gentleman died and both Dark Elf units were broken, but escaped the pursuit. It was then that what was left of my army decided to actually do what they were told and with the mounted Daemonettes winning my left flank, the Chaos Knights finally deciding to pull their fingers out on the right and my Warriors pressing relentlessly forwards in the centre. The Elven infantry soon found they were no match for the Warriors and the High Born's Executioner unit that had burst through my lines found a Beasterd charging them in the rear with the Sultan and his Love Wagon piling into the flank. With a few Chariot charges and some irritating but well executed Shade action as Adam's remaining options the game came to a close with a massacre for me - not a bad start I thought, time to go and get drinking.

This is where my memory starts to get a little hazy and all the hours in Bugman's jumble into one long drinking session but I do remember salient points. Bugman's is a decent brew, they start serving at a very civilised midday and it's a steal at £1.80 a pint. Conversation was dominated by the fortunes of everyone's first battle and a few negatively muttered comments about various things. Overall though, the mood was very positive and as none of us really cared about winning we were able to forgive the (I must stress very rare)

guiding hand.

Noting the strip club up the road, our taxi found the hotel and outside was a shift looking character skulking about in a Man United cap - it could only be Redemptionist15. With a judge and the troublemakers united, we booked in and were astonished, amazed and even slightly aroused to discover the hotel bar served until 4am. This would give me time to finish painting my army AND get drunk afterwards - the weekend was looking sweet already.

After a few welcomed pints (be rude not to scout out the bar facilities) and some food PSD, Red and myself retired to our room to blitz the remaining 10 Chaos Warriors and the movement trays; grieved to have missed the invitation of anime porn due to our obligations. Under the dim light of a solitary six watt bulb, I sat on my bed with my painting stool and proceeded to speed paint my way to glory as Big Brother and Pub Ammo played in the background. Pub Ammo gifted us with the knowledge that there has only been one hermaphrodite in the porn industry and he was rather rare as he had a large vagina and a small penis, apparently the reverse to most hermaphrodites - either way, they can go **** themselves. A few stressful hours and many cigarettes later the warriors were done and Red had produced some glorious movement trays, many thanks again Adam - and also to Dan who chipped in until his eyes broke under the inadequate light.

Having decided the bar was more tempting than the cheap bottle of Chekov vodka we had, we soon descended to renew our acquaintances with those we had half-met earlier. For some reason, many of them had gone to bed and completely wasted the main perk of the hotel but each to their own - drinking till 4am and waking at 7:30am isn't everyone's cup of tea. Many pints, some poorly played pool and a fair bit of myth creation (involving dominion, milk and tentacles) consumed the hours until we

annoyances, as long as the beer flowed anyway. We moved in to an enjoyable meal in the canteen and the myth creation continued (by this point I think the milking had progressed slightly in detail). A few beers and cigarettes later and Lav was once again trying to coerce our merry band of stubborn drinkers into action; Brimstone, Toddy and myself being great believers in the enjoyment of a pint.

My second game was against the all-cavalry High Elf army of bjcontrast. Knowing this was probably the top table at this early stage and he had just massacred the Skaven of poor Loosemoose, I expected it to be a tough game, particularly as my army desperately lacks anti-armour units and my manoeuvrability would be largely neutered. The four Chariots were also something of a concern, my solace being they were pansy Elf ones. Bj turned out to be a very good player indeed in this Capture scenario mission. My plan was to await his cavalry behind a screen of Hounds, send the Spawn through the objective to try and hold something up on the other side, and move my Warriors and Knights onto the objective. Naturally, things quickly adopted the shape of the pear as my Spawn decided 17" was a nice distance to go when looking to be charged by Chariots and I realised he had sufficient magic and a Bolt Thrower to inspire me into moving forwards earlier than I'd have liked.

Not to worry, I thought, those Elves have to charge my screens sometime and then my combat units can get to grip with them. However, at this point I made a key mistake. I deliberately put my Warriors where a Silver Helm unit and a Chariot could charge them, hoping to experience the same luck they had against the Cold One Chariot and Hydra, leaving a charge line in for a second Chariot that should have been blocked by Hounds. Suffice to say, it was rather messy and some overruns and action elsewhere on the field left the Turn 2 battlefield looking rather more like

retired to bed, Hywel being promised an entire three hours of sleep...

OUTRAGE! Three hours sleep is too much for Hywel, he can make do with two! Insomniacs Adam and Dan awoke the sleeping giant to endure a barrage of abuse before we went to breakfast. Sure enough, there were all those who were mysteriously absent the night before, bright eyed and bushy tailed discussing the merits of something or other in 40K. A few choice words from Dan were aired against such enthusiasm as we nursed ourselves with coffee and moaned about the time. Then the hour had arrived - the hordes moved in on Warhammer World.

In the car park of the capital of Warhammer, I spotted a familiar face - Jon (Brimstone), gallant veteran of the original Portent Roadtrip and met his mate Tom (who turned out to be a stellar guy, make sure you get him playing for next year Jon!). As we regaled each other with our tales of the night before and unanimously agreed 9am was no time for sane people to be thinking of playing toy soldiers, we made our way to Bugman's with the Sword of Damocles hanging high over our heads. Entering into what would become our regular refuge from the carnage (special mention goes to Portent, PunkSpikeyDan, Redemptionist15, Brimstone, Tom, Toddy, and Lavfluris for many committed hours in Bugman's), we were delighted to spot the generosity we all associate with GW, well... Anyway, they can now do little wrong in my eyes as providing coffee and donuts was exactly what the doctor ordered and there we sat until an anxious Lav tried to make us go and play some games - them weirdoes who wanted to fight a tournament were at it again!

So, we arrive at my first game - a pitched battle against the Dark Elves of Redemptionist15. To give a brief idea of our armies I was fielding Slaanesh Mortals with a chunk of Chaos Warriors, some Knights, an Exalted Champ on Steed of

Turn 4. My Chariots and some other units still had something to say in the game but after the gutting of my centre it was rather more like scoring consolation goals, even though my Knights gave a sterling performance by surviving a charge we both expected to have destroyed them, before going on to cause more trouble. Ultimately however, my centre was gone along with a lot of unit strength, which made capture of the objective little more than a dream and the game ended in a solid defeat. Testament to the good atmosphere of the tournament was the fact I still thoroughly enjoyed the game despite my defeat and was high-spirited as I returned to the bar.

Getting me out of the bar for the third game was a task of biblical proportions and I still don't know how Lav managed it. Enough pints had settled to make me think I needed another ten, Toddy had just got a round, and I was beginning to feel the effects of two hours sleep and a third game of Warhammer seemed like an ordeal. I finished my pint and made my way to the table to find Tenoch waiting for me with a Cult of Slaanesh army. A bit different I thought, not seen one of them before and the aftermath of a Slaaneshi civil war should be interesting (because everyone loves that 'making up' sex). Surveying his army, I was relieved to find it was quite small - Daemonettes, mounted Daemonettes, Knights, Chaos Warriors and two units of Devoted. However, when the spell rolling began I realised my level one Sorceress may be slightly outclassed by eight levels of magic (judging by her dispelling performances, she could be outclassed by Paul Daniels) and resolved to nail as many of those, admittedly delightful, Sorceresses to a tree as possible. Therefore the plan was simple. Make use of my flanking advantage, kill the Sorceresses and use my manoeuvrability to deal with his infantry units one at a time. Hopefully I could match his Knights, despite the Aspiring Champion, and was confident the toughness three Devoted would succumb to my units, even with their soporific musk.

Slaanesh, 2 Chariots, Daemonettes on foot and mounted, a Spawn, a Beastherd, Furies and a bucket load of Hounds.

Redemptionist had Executioners, spear Elves, Bolt Throwers, Shades, Dark Riders, a Noble on Pegasus, some Chariots and a rather intimidating Hydra.

However, do you think Tenoch let me follow the plan? Oh no, he had other ideas...

By this point I had consumed a fair number of beverages, so I might not remember everything very well. In the early game I do recall that my sweeping right flank was encircling him unopposed and on the left my Knights were lining up on the Daemonette units. In the centre, my Beastmen went to live in the woods with the Warriors moving up in support in the open. Then Tenoch started doing stuff. Following on from my mistake in Round Two, I'd exposed a charge line I didn't want to and the mounted Daemonettes charged my Chariot, though they fortunately failed to break it. His magic easily overawed my magical defences and my Warriors were soon finding themselves whittled down. The Beastmen were stuck in the woods, unable to move and several Hound units were zapped.

THE TALE OF A STUMBLING DRUNK

Continued...

Soon after, my left flank really came alive. The Exalted Champion piled into the mounted Daemonettes to aid the Chariot, my Knights charged the foot Daemonettes and my Warriors gulped loudly as they realised there weren't many of them left. Tenoch's Chaos Knights had been magically frenzied and turned the Spawn into crabmeat. The right flank saw continuing encirclement and I effectively surrounded a Devoted and a Warrior unit. Also, my stars of the game - the Furies - had leapt into the backfield looking to sack the Sorceresses (NFL coaches should note flying helps blitzing!).

My left flank became a very chaotic mess of units slicing each other up as one might expect when you throw two units of Knights, two Champions of Chaos, a Chariot, Warriors and lots of Daemonettes into a square foot of battlefield. Until the end of the game, these units pretty much tied each other up and the only survivors were a handful of Tenoch's Chaos Knights. Their destruction of my expensive Warriors and Knights compensated for his outmanoeuvred left flank (my right).

So the story of the right flank must be told. After a miscast and a double 6, Tenoch's High Sorceress was out of action whilst my Furies along with some encircling Founds saw off the other two spell casters. The Devoted units were surprisingly tough to shift though my Daemonettes proved themselves adept in dispatching unarmoured troops and the Warriors were overwhelmed soon after. With a very tight game over we totted up the victory points to find it was a draw, a fitting conclusion to a very satisfying game. The fact I didn't ever think "sod it, I'm going back to the bar" is evidence of how much I enjoyed the

Moose got first turn and promptly destroyed a Chariot with his Warp Lightning Cannon and scathed bits of my army with warp lightning. It was already clear to me I'd need to do something about his long-range ability. Promptly, I put the plan into action and helped by a bit of bad luck for Moose which annulled much of his shooting and some magic, I was soon in the position I wanted to be (notably a Warp Lightning Cannon misfire went off in a random direction and nailed my lone Sorceress!). The right flank looked peachy with the Rat Swarms dead and the Giant Rats looking doomed, my centre saw my Warriors get shagged, but the Daemonettes managed to chase off and defeat the skitter leaped Plague Priest. The true gains were made on the left where the Knights and Lord managed to shatter a Clan Rat regiment and come about behind his army. With the collapse of both flanks and the death of two Warlock Engineers, the Grey Seer looked vulnerable. His Plague Monks carved their way through my centre (destroying the Warriors and going after the Daemonettes), but I was then able to bring my Lord, my Knights, the remaining Chariot and some Hounds onto the last Clan Rat unit while the Furies killed the Grey Seer who had tried to make a run away from the impending doom of his unit. The closing turns were a mop up operation with my Knight returning to aid the Daemonettes in destroying the Plague Monks. Without a Skaven left alive it was another massacre - must be something about early mornings. Another great game in my opinion and Loosemoose had my favourite Fantasy army there, his tunnelling Gutter Runners are great, particularly the tunnelling marker. As a side note to this battle it was around turn 2 when Dan turned up to regale us how he had conceded his game to someone he and others considered rather anal and apparently he

game and Tenoch as an opponent.

With that happy result it was back to Bugman's for another pint and boy did I need it. I was also delighted to discover the evening meal was a mixed grill and it was around this time that Inquis. Jaeger joined the barflies. Many beers were consumed along with the meal and the tabloids saw good action with Toddy as the announcer of various articles. After the 'reading' was done, they formed admirable paper planes in Dan's capable hands. What I remember of the next few hours was a lot of beer and me spouting vitriol - probably unfairly, but blame the supportive crowd that encouraged me to keep on (don't think Pete is a saint, he has a nasty side about him, which we nurtured). At some point during these hours we also managed to crack Lav and make him drink heavily, he was never quite the same again.

Eventually, Bugman's closed and we made our merry way to the nearby White Hart pub. With my thirst raging, I led the way, force-marching everyone and their bags, as I was the only one with the directions. The pub turned out to be amazing, with a capital everything, the best point of the weekend in my opinion. Nothing exactly happened other than a lot more beer and conversation, but what a conversation. This is where the myth creation really took off and developed into a true tale. The pig-like rows of teats were added, the cottage-cheese like... I'll stop there actually. Basically, I was laughing myself to tears and nearly dying from my lack of oxygen due to coughing and bellowing. I think most people were in a similar state - the sort of moment that can never be recreated and the jokes from which can never be repeated without seeming dulled or forced. It was the definitive bonding moment for the drunks. Unfortunately it was a moment ended by British licensing laws so we had to return to the hotel to drink, but we lost Brimstone, Tom and Pete along the way, so

called said opponent a piece of the female anatomy - I expected nothing less of Dan, and believe there were some interesting words on the results cards under 'sportsmanship'.

Once again it was back to Bugman's where Brimstone had emerged with the feature of the day - the Sunday Sport. I don't think I've ever seen a paper bring such amusement to so many people. Miss Chernobyl, the plentiful soft porn star, the two-legged disabled horse Grand National winner and the ridiculous crossword, which had Toddy and I going mad, were especially memorable. By the end of the day, I think everyone who entered Bugman's had seen Miss Chernobyl and her third buttock, one which I still think must be a bag of flesh containing an atrophied muscle as it has no leg. After a delightful roast dinner it was on to the final game against Firehound and his Bretonnians on the top table - great, I love all cavalry armies!

Firehound's army was very nice to look at, and the Pegasus Knight models are particularly good. Once again I decided to try the screen backed up with muscle as a way to stop cavalry with the addition of flanking elements. I thought the mounted Daemonettes would be key in getting to those wide flanks of lance formations, unfortunately, so did Wez!

My first turn was simply advancing on the Bretonnians, getting my Hounds and Spawn into his face with the hope of drawing a charge I could counter. Wez's first turn however saw an irresistible force 'Master of Stone' which destroyed my mounted Daemonettes - a serious blow to the overall plan. On my right things did not go well. The screen tactic somehow failed and Knights stampeded through my lines, taking my Warrior unit with them. On the left, my tactic met with more success, my

it was never going to be as fun. Atmosphere was comparatively dull but still a good laugh and more drinking was done. When we finally threw in the towel it was about 4am and when we hit the sack we passed out instantly.

That night we had a luxurious four hours of sleep, double the night before, and once again got to Warhammer World for 9am (needless to say along with the cursing and grumpiness that was soon associated with us). Despite having more sleep, by this point I was a zombie who could barely manage to drink coffee and smoke, never mind try two games of Warhammer. My first opponent of the day was Loosemoose whose army, quite frankly, terrified me. I'd not played against Skaven since their army book was released and certainly not one with eleven power dice (the feature of his army everyone mentioned...).

It turned out to be a very educational game. It dispelled all the myths I'd seen circulating about Ratling Guns being stupidly good and Skaven magic being devastating. They were potent, but his army was far from cheesy, in fact they were immense fun, as shall be revealed...

Moose's army had a few big blocks of Clan Rats, Plague Monks, Giant Rats, Rat Swarms, a Warp Lightning Cannon and tunnelling Gutter Runners - along with the magic circus and a Plague Priest. Being inexperienced against Skaven, I went for the simple plan of 'do something about his magic, hit the big blocks hard'. Not particularly imaginative but then I was playing Chaos, so it seemed appropriate. I was hopeful if I could get into combat my superior killing power and toughness would show through eventually. One of the main advantages of my army that I really appreciated in this game was I have a lot of units, particularly 'throw-away' ones when it comes to deployment. Therefore I can nearly always eat up the majority of my

Knights and Champion managing to charge the Questing Knight unit including the Bretonnian Lord. This produced a very exciting combat, which lasted for many turns. Eventually only my Champion and his Lord and Sorceress were left; a Chariot charge turned the combat in my favour and the resulting break allowed me to destroy both Bretonnian characters. However, this was about the only victory of the day. I did manage to hold the Pegasus Knights with my Daemonettes and destroy them with a Chariot but his Knights of the Realm unit with the Battle Standard Bearer resisted the charge of the other Chariot and the Beastherd and even his Peasant Bowmen saw off Hounds and Furies. It was still a great game with many tense moments but I really lacked the necessary punch to get through the Bretonnian armour and ward saves - never underestimate the Lady's blessing!

With a massacre against me, I accepted I wasn't going to be in the top 3 so set up my models ready for the Best Army votes (accompanied by an artistic conference between Dan and myself as to the best layout of the units). I then once again returned to Bugman's for beer. More of the same and then out for voting. The armies out on display were nearly all very impressive and in Fantasy especially, I felt there was a high standard of painting. Ultimately Loosemoose's tunnelling Gutter Runners won me over and KingM was a popular army among the 40k votes. With the job done on the voting front, there was time for a crafty pint before the presentations, well, I thought there would be but I got caught short and had to saunter in, pint in hand. I'm sure Lavfluris has mentioned the results somewhere else so I shan't dither too long. Of note for me is of course the fact I won Best Army and I'm grateful to all who appreciated the work I'd put in. It was the award I was after as my army had always been designed for looks and it's only recently that my painting has improved. All the late nights and expensive

opponent's deployment moves with a unit of Hounds, Spawn or the Furies and see exactly where his strengths lie. I think it is well worth sacrificing the +1 for first turn, particularly as I like having the second go with this army to claim table quarters and rally. Loosemoose's deployment stacked heavily on my left flank with the Rat Swarms and Giant Rats holding up my right. Therefore, I placed the mounted Daemonettes and a Chariot on the right. My hope was the high number of attacks from the Daemonettes could slice through the Rat Swarms and combine on the Giant Rats with the Chariot. To deal with the strong left, I placed my Lord and Knights on the extreme flank, hiding from the Warp Lightning Cannon behind a tower and lined up to go very quickly at a Clan Rat unit with their Hound screen. The centre-middle held my infantry: Warriors and Daemonettes, with the Beastmen covering their interior flank through the woods.

components seemed worthwhile and I had a trophy as proof!

Sunday night was not particularly remarkable in all honesty. Many had gone home, we were burned out and had no money - not to mention Sunday serving hours meaning our hotel bar closed very early. Some more beers, some chat and some farewells put a fitting end to the Tournament. I'll definitely be there next year in some capacity (doubt I'll get time to paint an army what with finals) and hope that more of you lot will be, would also be groovy if some of you strange foreign types could make it.

'Til next time everyone,

Hywel.

The results for the Portent Tournament:

Warhammer Fantasy Final Standings:

Player	Army Painting	Army Selection	Sportsmanship	Generalship	Grand Total
Wez	20	20	20	73	133
TheDreadKing	20	20	15	73	128
Tenoch	20	20	20	64	124
BJContrast	14	20	15	74	123
Hywel	14	15	20	53	107
Redemptionist15	14	14	20	40	88
LooseMoose	14	20	20	6	60
Gorslang	7	14	20	17	58

Warhammer Fantasy Best Army Votes:

Hywel - 12

BJContrast - 6

TheDreadKing - 4

Tenoch - 3

Wez - 2

LooseMoose - 2

Redemptionist15 - 1

Gorslang - 0

Warhammer Fantasy Best Sportsman Votes:

Gorslang - 3

LooseMoose - 1

Hywel - 1

TheDreadKing - 1

BJContrast - 0

Tenoch - 0

Wez - 0

Redemptionist15 - 0

And here are the results for Warhammer 40K half of the Portent Tournament.

Warhammer 40K Final Standings:

Player	Army Painting	Army Selection	Sportsmanship	Generalship	Grand Total
Inquis. Jaeger	20	20	5	97	142
JGRSound	20	20	10	80	130
Erik Ford	20	20	20	67	127
Vivi	20	20	0	83	123
Fella	20	20	0	80	120
Heldane	20	20	15	57	112
Guido le Wombat	14	14	20	60	108
McHaggis	14	14	15	60	103
DarkStarSabre	20	20	15	44	99
KingM	14	14	15	54	97
DCJ2	20	14	5	53	92
CloudRunner	14	20	10	47	91
PunkSpikeyDan	14	14	15	47	90
Anseur	14	14	5	56	89
Monstallion	14	14	20	40	88
Hideki	20	14	10	40	84
Brimstone	14	14	20	34	82
G8Keeper	20	20	15	26	81
Toddy	14	14	15	33	76
ZarkTheDamned	20	20	10	19	69
Ad-Hoc	20	14	10	23	67
BigJim	0	0	0	0	0

Warhammer 40K Best Army Votes:

KingM - 17

JGRSound - 6

ZarkTheDamned - 3

Heldane - 1

Fella - 1

Inquis. Jaeger - 1

Anseur - 0

Cloud Runner - 0

Warhammer 40K Best Sportsman Votes:

Brimstone - 3

Monstallion - 2

Toddy - 2

Inquis. Jaeger - 1

Guido le Wombat - 1

Tenoch - 0

Cloud Runner - 0

Fella - 0

The Traitor's Corner

user Submission by: karmacedon

A series of articles about the life and work of the chosen of the Black Legion, Abaddon the Despoiler.

I've had the honor of playing Black Legion for almost 4 years now, both in WH40k and in BFG . I will try (with the help of this article) to show to you, the readers of the Oracle, what it's like to own, assemble and paint a Black Legion army from my experience. I will also give some tips and advice about the fluff, tactics, and game play from my viewpoint. Of course I don't claim to be the best painter or player you have ever met, but I will try to share my ideas to save people from the mistakes I have done in my participation in the hobby.

The following subjects will be covered:

General background

For starters we will talk about the background of the Black Legion It all started about 10.000 years ago, when the Emperor created the 20 Space Marine Legions. Nine of those Legions betrayed the Emperor bringing about the Horus Heresy. One of them was the Luna Wolves, commanded by the Warmaster Horus himself. Shortly thereafter, they changed their name to the Sons of Horus, and finally the Black Legion as we know them today. Now, the Black Legion is lead by Abaddon, the former captain of the 1st Company of Lunar Wolves. Here I will describe the very basics that make the main story of the army

General advice on assembling and painting

The army I will describe to you consists of multi-part plastic models which in broad terms are painted black, like the name Black Legion implies. They're not the most expensive army to collect, but then again not the cheapest...however they can be

Game-play and tactics

The Black Legion army is a good example of an all-around army. They can outshoot armies like the Orks, while good at close combat against shooting armies like the Tau. Their greatest strength is the basic unit choice, the Chaos Space Marines. Of course it is up to the player to customize his army force to suit his style. I will try to speak only for the things I know, and believe me- I have learned the hard way, so my tips will be drawn from real-life gaming situations.

Sportsmanship and how to avoid cheese or min/maxing

Everyone has his/her own definition of cheese, min/max, beardy, and other clever descriptions about the bane of a gamer's life, power gaming. Here you will read about how to minimize power gaming in your Black Legion army.

Sample army lists

The last section of the articles will be the application of all the above [fluff, modeling, tactics, sportsmanship] in various Black Legion army lists that can be used in friendly (or not so friendly) games.

I will happily accept your feedback .Anyone who wants to contribute to this effort is more than welcome.

- karmacedon

painted easily. Later on, I plan to be more specific on these matters. Medium skill is required for the modeling part of the creation of Black Legion army, at least from my point of view. Everything you will read here will be about tabletop quality painting, the one you can achieve with minimum effort.

The Battle of Beeckerhoven

War came upon Beeckerhoven, woe and devastation trailing in its wake. The Doomlord, Dieter Helsnicht, had shattered the army of Nordland's Elector, Einrich Moltke, and was poised for the killing blow.

The sad remnants of the ounce proud army of the Moltke house regrouped in the town of Beeckerhoven, and set about weathering the inevitable assault. Their only hope lay in the messengers sent begging aid of any who could come in time. In a time of treachery and civil war, this seemed to most to be a false hope, and it appeared to the hopelessly outnumbered defenders that death was a certainty now.

The Elector Count was not about to go down without a fight, however, and his grim, iron will was an inspiration to his brothers in arms. The army kept its nerve and resolve. Defences were immediately prepared. The houses of the township were barricaded, hasty makeshift walls were erected, the town militia were mustered, and watches were kept by vigilant men.

The first sign of battle came in the form of an unearthly shriek, as a flaming skull crashed into the town. Dieter had picked up some interesting tricks in his time learning under Nagash, and had amassed for this battle skeletal chariots and a catapult that lobbed enchanted skulls upon the enemy ranks.

The unliving infantry, zombies and skeletons for the most part, were thrown into the fray first, pushing the Imperial defenders back by sheer weight of numbers. It was not long before the streets of Beeckerhoven were ringing with the clash of swords, and the will of the defenders was wavering.

The Count saw the danger of the situation, and led a desperate counter-attack at the heart of the undead ranks, but was quickly cut-off and surrounded.

The Battlefield

The battle is played on a 6 foot by 4 foot table, with the two long edges designated North and South (or Top and Bottom if you prefer)

The table is largely clear, with a few copses of trees close to the centre of the table, a forest in the north-west corner, and hills closer to the north-east corner. The outskirts of an Imperial town, Beeckerhoven, are to be found in the south-west corner of the table. This will consist of a few buildings, defensible positions, and walls.

The Nordlanders deployment zone is up to 12" onto the table on the south side, but not within 24" of the Eastern side.

The Undead deployment zone is up to 12" onto the table on the north side, but no closer than 24" to the Western side.

Roll off to see who starts deploying first, taking it in turn to place a unit, with all characters being placed as your last unit, split up throughout the army as you see fit.

Who Goes First?

Roll a D6. 1-3 Empire goes first, 4-6 Undead goes first.

Length of Game

The game lasts a standard 6 turns

Special Rules

Reinforcements – There are a number of reinforcements to be used in this game.

Firstly the Middenland army. The Empire player must decide before the game begins what turn to the Middenlander reinforcements arrive on, write it down on a piece of paper, and reveal it at the start of the turn they are to arrive (his turn obviously).

It was then that, against all expectation, reinforcements arrived from the south. A force of stalwart Middenlanders had been force-marching since receiving the desperate request for reinforcements that Count Einrich had sent out.

They immediately set about lifting the siege, and the Nordlanders took heart to see allies come to their aid, and pressed on with renewed strength. The tide of battle would have then swung in favour of the Imperials, had Dieter not held his chariots and cavalry in reserve. He now sent the hard-hitting shock troops of his army into the midst of the Middenlanders, and led the charge himself on the back of his mighty manticore. He singled out the Count of Middenland and his bodyguard of White Wolf Knights, in the hopes that with his slaying, Dieter could wrest control of the battle from the grips of uncertainty.

With the wind whipping their feathered banners, a host of Kislevites arrived upon the field, and with lightning speed assaulted the rear of the besieging Undead, throwing their attack into disarray.

With this moment of great fortune, Einrich Moltke seized his opportunity to fight his way clear of the town to engage the Doomlord personally. Dieter, however, was no easy target, and as he grabbed Einrich in a vice-like grip he assaulted the Elector with a spell of such potency, the soul of any normal would have been shattered by it.

The protective talisman Einrich wore blazed as it turned aside the power of Helsnicht's spell, the magical backlash leaving the Doomlord stunned and vulnerable. With a roar, Einrich lunged at the helpless necromancer, ramming his Runefang deep into Dieter's body, and the unliving host crumbled to dust as the Doomlord gave a final cry and slumped in his saddle.

No man of the Empire knows the final fate of the Doomlord, as his manticore bore his broken corpse away from the field of battle and it has never been recovered. Many fear that he still dwells in the Forest of Shadows, plotting the downfall of Middenland, and

They may arrive on turns 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5. The whole army arrives together, and moves onto the table as if they had pursued an enemy off the table in the last turn. They may move on from any point on the table within 24" of the south-eastern corner. The turn the Middenlanders arrive on will affect your victory points, so read over the Victory Conditions section before deciding what turn they will arrive on.

Undead/Kislev Reinforcements: Last issue we gave you the Death on the River Salz scenario. The winner of that scenario may bring the survivors onto the table on turn 4. If any units are/were reduced to below the legal minimum size in the Death on the River Salz game, they may be combined with other units of the same type. If no units of the same type are present in the army, then the unit is increased in size to the minimum legal unit size.

Alternatively, and in fact I encourage this option, you may play the first three turns of the Battle of Beeckerhoven fully, then on another playing area play the Death of the River Salz scenario to determine who gets the reinforcements. The extra uncertainty is definitely the perfect way to spice up a good game!

Victory Conditions

Players gain victory points for units fleeing, fled, or destroyed/halved in size as normal, and for capturing Unit/Battle Standard.

In addition, the Empire player gains 500 Victory Points if there are NO undead troops within 6" of any building in Beeckerhoven at the end of the game. The Undead player gains 500 Victory Points if there are NO Imperial/Kislevite troops within 6" of any building in Beeckerhoven at the end of the game.

If the Middenheim Reinforcements arrive in turn one, the Empire player deducts 500 Victory Points from his total.

If they arrive on turn two, the Empire player deducts 250 Victory Points
If they arrive on turn four, the Empire

certainly there are encounters enough to foster and support such opinion. The Empire will never, truly, be safe

Overview

A small force of Imperial Troops, refugees from their previous encounter with the Doomlord, and a small garrison force, must hold out against a superior enemy force until help arrives to even the odds.

Armies

The Undead may take an army up to 2,500 points.

The army will be led by Dieter Helsenicht, the Doomlord of Middenheim.

The only characters available are Wight Lords and Wraiths.

The army contains:

1+ Skeleton Regiments

1+ Zombie Regiments

0+ Sylvanian Levvy from the Von Carstein SoC list

0+ Sylvanian Militia from the Von Carstein SoC list

0+ Dire Wolves

0-1 Bat Swarms

0-1 Fell Bat Unit

0-1 Grave Guard OR Black Knights (one or the other, not both)

0-1 Ghouls Unit

0-1 Banshee

0+ Tomb King Heavy Cavalry (as Core units)

0-2 Tomb King Chariot Units (as Special units)

0-1 Tomb King Screaming Skull Catapult (as Rare)

0-2 Tomb King Skeleton Archers regiment (Core)

0-2 Skeleton Knights (see last issue of The Oracle for details, unit counts as Core)

The Empire player will have two armies, a 1000 point Nordland army, and a 2,000 point

player gains 250 Victory Points

If they arrive on turn five, the Empire player gains 500 Victory Points.

Special Characters

Einrich Moltke the Elector Count of Nordland 285points

Einrich Moltke has the same stats and rules as an Elector count, with the following equipment/Special Rules

Runefang - see Empire Army Book

The Crown of Nordland - the Crown of Nordland is a jewel of shining inner light that has been an heirloom in Einrich's family for many generations. Currently it is set in his helm, and appears to be a potent token of good luck. Grants a 5+ ward save and renders the bearer immune to the effects of Necromancy and Dark Magic Determined - These are dark days for the Empire, and many of its people have seen struggle and hardship enough for a lifetime. Einrich and any unit he accompanies is completely Immune to Psychology.

Einrich carries a shield and wears Heavy Armour which, combined with his Crown of Nordland, grants him a 3+ armour save in total.

Dieter Helsenicht, the Doomlord of Middenheim – 505points

Dieter is a level 4 Necromancer with all the associated stats, and is mounted on a Manticore

As Dieter has benefited from the tutelage of Nagash himself, his knowledge of necromancy is vast, more so than even the most powerful necromancers in the Old World. To show this, Dieter knows ALL the Necromancy spells, and with the aid of his bone-casting talismans, may cast The Invocation of Nehek, and Vanhels Danse Macabre as many times in his magic phase as he wishes, provided he has enough power dice.

Also, when casting the Invocation of Nehek, if Skeletons are summoned, Dieter adds +1 to each dice rolled to determine how many Skeletons are raised.

Middenland army.

The Nordlanders are to be led by Count Einrich Moltke, who will count as two Hero choices.

They may be accompanied by a Warrior Priest (either Sigmarite or Ulrican), or by a Captain, but no other characters.

The army is a standard Empire army, with the following exceptions:

- No Handgunners or Crossbowmen
- No Cavalry
- No Helblaster
- No more than two war machines may be taken
- No Dogs of War
- You may, if you wish, create a unit of 'walking wounded', survivors of the first encounter with Dieter Helsnicht (the battle detailed in Issue 1), using Avian's Unit Design Page found at <http://vault.portent.net/avian/rules/design.htm> to represent injured troops.

The Middenland army may be chosen as standard from the Middenland list given in the Storm of Chaos book, with the following exceptions:

- No Wizards/Wizard Lords may be taken
- No more than one Warrior Priest may be taken
- No Special Character other than Boris Todbringer may be taken. Although you may use Boris Todbringer, he is not actually Boris, but rather the elector of the time, Lothar Metternich.
- No Handgunners or Crossbowmen may be taken, nor may Huntsmen.
- No war machines at all may be used
- No Dogs of War may be taken

Also note that this scenario is supposed to be combined with that detailed in issue 2 of The Oracle, and the survivors of that scenario are to be used in this game.

Dieter has not yet fully gone over to Undeath, bearing still some of the vitality of the living. As such, he suffers no wounds for having lost a combat.

Dieter carries the Rod of Flaming Death... and back then, it retained more of its original power. Once per magic phase the staff may be activated. A flaming missile with a range of 24" and causing D6 strength 4 hits spews from the staff. A unit taking at least one casualty from the staff must take a panic test. This is a Casting level 5 Bound Spell.

The Blade of Necros – The origins of this sword are unknown, lost in the forgotten mists of time. The blade moves with great speed, allowing its bearer to counter-act enemy blows with ease, and take advantage of any opening. The blade grants +1 attack and a 5+ Ward Save in Hand to Hand Combat.

Finally, Dieter carries an assortment of charms that allow him to channel more magical power, and so adds +1 Power Dice to his total, meaning that the undead army, whilst Dieter is alive, has a total of 7 Power Dice to cast spells with.

Dieter Helsnicht may ride a Manticore at the cost of +190 Points. Full rules for the Manticore are available in *Warhammer Armies: Dark Elves*

A Tale of Four Gamers

Introduction and update

Crikey! Strewth mate! Stone the Crows and all that gubbins, yep its issue 3 again and that means another tale of four gamers article except this time it's just a little bit different.

Well those at the recent Portent Tournament may have noticed the distinct lack of Four Gamers, basically what happened was we started out full of gusto and excitement about the project and then the real world pressures of getting a magazine together overtook us. Its one thing to do a four gamers style series for a living and quite another to do it in your spare time (lets face it we all have jobs in the real world as well).

So yes then humble apologies to all for not making the tournament, of course this has meant that we have had to change our plan of attack somewhat and so the current premise for the series is that we'll carry on collecting our armies to the tune of 1'500 points a piece, and that for each issue we'll have £30 to spend. We also plan to get together and have a big battle at the end, probably at some tournament or another, maybe even one run by the Games Workshop!

Got all that then? We haven't died we are just re-inventing ourselves.

Now the other thing the more observant readers will have noticed is a lack of Lavfluris and Toddy from this months ramblings. And if you didn't I guess you're actually reading the article in order! Anyway sometimes even the mighty sub-editor can't get articles in time from their staff and even the threats of the Editor are as to naught and lets face it none of us is paid to do this! Anyway to the best of our knowledge Lav has been off gallivanting around the UK as part of the Portent

The Fellowship splits?

Well you may have noticed if you've read my signature recently, my staff rant or this issues Tale of 4 Gamers (what you mean you haven't yet?) that Toddy and Lav have been noticeably absent. So, because we all care about our readers here at the Oracle we felt an explanation was in order.

Toddy has suffered most heinously at the hands of the Machine God, obviously he had not been practicing his rights and burning machine incense when he used his cogitator since to put it bluntly his computers died. Understandably this has put a crink in his ability to write for the Oracle... hopefully normal service will be resolved later!

Lav meanwhile has gone the way of Andy Chambers; no, he hasn't been fired, had a falling out with us, nor is he working for a secret branch of the Oracle. Instead, other commitments have taken up his valuable time, with the result that he has had to bow out of our little group, of course this means we have a position open now so now would be a good time to shout if you want to work for the Oracle!

Chrissy
Tale of Four Gamers Editor

Roadtrip 2004 whilst Toddy is well... To be honest we don't know. My guess is he's being subjected to intensive scrutiny by the Inquisition before he assembles his troops (I can hear the screams from here!)

So a bit different this time but still plenty of Tau and Grey Knights to wet your appetites. Hopefully normal service will be resumed by next issue...

Chrissy

Tale of Four(2) Gamers

Dal'yth Tau Expeditionary Force
By Christine Moore

Well what can I say but it's issue 3 and another £30 threatens to burst from my pocket and wedge itself down the gullet of the Games Workshop, and what can I do but give in to the temptation!

So for this issue I sat down and had a look at what I needed, and then I had a look at what I wanted and threw half the list away. Looking at the Tau armies people have constructed since their release and having read most of the Tau threads on Portent I decided that a good solid fire base was essential (in any army I collect I always try to field two nice big squads of troops to soak up firepower). A box of Fire Warriors then is perfect for that one since you can't really argue with a 30" strength 5 weapon armed squad backed up by pinning test causing carbines.

So that's what I needed but the great Dice God had deigned to put me in a position where I could afford to buy a XV-88 battlesuit. With the prospect of railguns and the rattle of dice filling my skull I decided that this would be an excellent way of spending my money, besides it filled a heavy support choice.

Now a stroke of good fortune had put me down Southend way at the point where I had the money for this issue. Usually the only good thing about Southend is the fact my partner lives there but this time there was the added bonus of a very good independent games shop being based at Leigh, I do of course refer to Caliver Books.

Buying from Caliver I was struck (as always) by how different it is to spending my hard earned cash in your local GW, sure there aren't cabinets filled with gorgeous figures to while away the hours staring at and there isn't every type of GW figure they are, after all, an independent stockist. What you do get is no small children screaming their heads off, a staff with an average age over 20 and temptation in its purest form, more different games than you have ever dreamed about. Added to that you get boxes of loose miniatures you can buy from and prices that make you realise how expensive your local GW store can be.

I bought my Firewarriors at Caliver for about £13.99 and only picked up my battlesuit from the local GW store due to Caliver Books not stocking one when I visited. More than this for a time after the article I picked up from the loose miniatures box a kroot hound for 20p! I think even the most hardened cynic couldn't argue at the price of that one! Anyway before I start sounding like I'm being paid to promote the store (I'm not, honest!) I'll simply point you in the direction of <http://www.caliverbooks.com/HTML/calframe.htm> (their website) and you can make your mind up for yourself.

Then I sat down and painted the Firewarriors much like the ones before, taking time out only to design a chart for their unit insignia (this way I will know what the next squad I paint should look like and can keep everything 'cannon'). Suffice to say I'm happy with them and am especially happy with the simple conversion that allowed me to have the squad leader beckoning to his squad mates with his right hand. It required me to mess around cutting thumbs off hand and making a left arm into a right one - strange but it works.

Tale of Four(2) Gamers

Dal'yth Tau Expeditionary Force

The battlesuit meanwhile called for something special and it's at that point that I should say I really don't like the way it looks if you build it straight out of the box, something I think I share with a lot of other Tau players. I personally blame watching far too much giant robot anime shows to like the 'boxes on end of arms' style of mecha which I have come to associate with Western robot games. So taking inspiration from some long forgotten gamer who had the bright idea of pinning the railguns to the back of the fore-arms and mounting the missile pods on the back, I set about with my trusty clippers and files.

The railguns were then simply glued (as I am lazy) to the plastic arms as mentioned above and as you can see in the pictures. Meanwhile the missile pods were clipped away from the metal arms (and the remainder of the metal arms put in my groaning bitz box), filed smooth at the box to hopefully hide the worst ravages of the cutting process and glued in the same way you would usually attach weapons to the back of a battlesuit.

Why stop there of course? A few more changes and my Tau could have their own variant! And that's what I was thinking when I took the target lock and put this where the normal battlesuit head would go (the head was consigned to the bitz box). Now personally I like the look, it has fewer sensors and looks like it has less high tech equipment inside it which I don't imagine it would need as it's not going to be bouncing around the battlefield like a crisis suit. I'll let you form your own opinions about it though, some are going to hate it because well it looks a little odd but I expect that there are some like me who picked up the sprue and went 'hmm is that an alternative head?' the first time they looked at it.

Painting was easy but time consuming, I work over a black undercoat which means all the white areas need a grey undercoat first in order to have a decent look to them and of course where I am painting huge railguns that means an awful lot of painting areas twice. Still it's worth it and I am very pleased with my Dal'yth variant battlesuit.

All in all it's been a good time working on my Tau army for issue 3 and I must say I'm happy with the progress I'm making. Sure it's getting harder to feel motivated to paint them, however I think this is normal when collecting any army and highlights what a mammoth undertaking it really is. The end is in sight though and that's a thought that positively makes me purr with pleasure.

See you next time!

Chrissy

Tale of Four(2) Gamers

Before I start this issue I'd just like to bring to your attention that last weekend Simon 'Lavfluris' Tull was caught trying to bomb the houses of parliament.

Imagine my shock when I read in the new rules and saw that deep striking and infiltration were only allowed on a 3+. Fortunately after checking in codex Daemonhunters, Grey Knights can always deep strike even if the mission doesn't allow it, woo ha, my tactical plans remain unchanged.

Fresh from my ass whooping at the hands of Khorne I decided on the maxim 'More eggs, bigger baskets.' Plotting out the core of my new army, I would take a Grand Master, a bodyguard of 7 Grey Knight Terminators and a Landraider Crusader, this would be 722 points without upgrades. Alongside this I would have a couple of Inquisitorial stormtrooper units in rhinos to act as an ablative shield for the Landraider as it moved forward ready to strike. That's 18 attacks, 26 on the charge, probably hitting on 3's and killing on 2's, with the new rules even the terminators who don't get into combat will be contributing to this, the rest of the army will just support my massive armored phalanx.

"That's 18 attacks, 26 on the charge, probably hitting on 3's and killing on 2's"

Stop press.

Quote from an unedited Forgeworld email: 'For the next month, any mail orders placed with Forge World will be shipped anywhere in the world with free standard delivery! Yes that's right, zero shipping and handling, postage and packing, or whatever else you want to call it, till July 12th.'

While writing this I got an email informing me that it was Forgeworlds 5th birthday. After pondering if Forgeworld has ever had a price rise in those 5 years (answer: no) and wondering exactly how much the GW prices had risen in that time (answer: lots), I decided to crack one open for Forgeworld.

Plans for the most expensive land raider that has ever existed began to take shape in my mind. Unfortunately as I'm only on £30 a month and a crusader costs £35 I'll have to go light this month and then fiddle the books or something next month so I can squeeze in the Forgeworld bits. So anyway I'm now the owner of two units of storm troopers, one with plasma guns and one with melta guns. Sorry if my information on these units is rather limited, but my armies going to be rather one sided anyway, I just wanted to enunciate that.

Next week: I will write my entire article in rhyme, they don't call me M.C. Haggis for nothing.

Mc Haggis: Feltmk2@yahoo.co.uk

Tau vs Tyranids

Battle Report

The golden orb of the Sun rose slowly as Aun'shi's hooves crunched on small stones. He strode through the Tau camp to meet Commander On-k'ur. The camp consisted of several ruins, where the Kroot had settled to consume an unfortunate creature they had encountered earlier that day, and some roughly assembled precautionary barricades. Aun'shi knew that the day the Tau became unsuspecting was the day they would die. The campaign had, so far, been a success; the Tau forces had covered vast areas of land and soon the planet of Tash'var would become part of the glorious Tau Empire. The planet's luscious jungles were rich with minerals and several ancient artefacts had been uncovered. It appeared to have been an abandoned Imperial world for it was scattered with old Imperial ruins and icons, although most of these were now thickly covered in dense foliage.

However there was one strange thing about this world: there were no humans; it was as if they had just vanished. Aun'shi suspected that they had been re-assigned to another world by their so called 'Emperor God' for some other purpose, but he couldn't help but think that possibly there was another reason there were no Imperial forces on this mineral-rich world, a far more disturbing and sinister reason. Aun'shi suppressed these negative thoughts and continued to walk to Commander On-k'ur.

With seconds, Aun'shi's worst fears were confirmed; a pair of small organisms soared over his head and an ear-piercing screech emitted from a distant, but unmistakably huge creature. Although the sun had barely risen, the Tau forces were being ambushed. As he strode over to his bodyguard of fire warriors, he was glad that his expeditionary was prepared. At a swift movement from their leader's arm, the fire warriors levelled their pulse rifles and prepared to fire. The battle was about to begin...

Wez

The Tau have ventured a bit too far this time. Lets hope they regret their choice to attempt to conquer this world.

We'll be playing a game where the Tau, led by Aun'shi are ambushed at the break of dawn by a Tyranid host led by an new bio-engineered species; The Red Terror. I'm also taking this opportunity to test out the 4th edition rules. We'll each be using 1000pts each of our chosen army, with a free special character (Aun'shi and the Red Terror). The Red Terror gets the added bonus of being able to charge on its deep-strike; it would be a bit of an anti-climax if one of the main characters in the game popped its head above the ground as was torn apart before it could attack.

We're using a special scenario. It's pretty much a pitched battle, except that the

Reuben

For this battle I would have to have lots of fire power to take out all the gaunts Wez is bound to have. For this I'm taking 2 units of 11 fire warriors and a small scouting unit of stealth suits. Also, as I don't expect to kill them all before they get to assault so a large unit of 18 Kroot will do nicely. Tyranids are renowned for humongous scary monsters, so for this I'm taking a commander and 3 crisis suits all up to the teeth with plasma weaponry. I'm also taking a hammerhead equipped with a railgun and a smart missile system as this will deal with monstrous creatures or will kill gaunts in droves.

In this game I am deploying my fire warriors and Aun'shi in the ruins with the Kroot close at hand. This firebase will lay down withering fire and will also be hard to

tyranid gets first turn and this happens using night fight rules (as it's still dark while they sneak up). Also, as the Tyranid army, as it gets first turn, has to deploy 30 inches away from the nearest Tau units (bar infiltrators). The scenario uses the infiltrator and deep strike rules for the tyranid army, and the infiltrator rules for the Tau army (this represents the Tau scouts). The game lasts 6 turns and there are no special victory conditions. This scenario isn't really balanced for a lot of armies as it was designed only to represent Aun'shi's first meeting with a Tyranid swarm (we added the Red Terror, because we could just imagine Tau fire warriors blasting gaunts by the dozen, when suddenly the ground rumbles and there's a nasty surprise).

My plan is pretty simple: rush forward consuming everything in a spiky swarm of vicious blades. I'm taking a Hive Tyrant, not for his combat capabilities, but as a distraction. He has next to no combat upgrades and is relatively cheap. He'll be hiding in cover and is essentially a missile magnet. I gave him warp blast as the AP3 of this negates both crisis and fire warrior armour saves. I also took a cheap unit of warriors to soften up the Tau from range and hopefully kill some in combat if they make it. Lots and lots of gaunts with scything talons formed my troops choices. As I suspected the Tau would be cowering in cover, I gave them flesh hooks. A lictor and some gargoyles were there to ambush unsuspecting mobile small Tau units (such as stealth teams and drone squadrons).

4 leaping ripper swarms rounded off my force. They would advance down one flank as they did not need to be in synapse range to function properly.

Tyranid swarm

HQ

131 - Swarm Tyrant [74], Warp Blast [20], Flesh hooks [2], Implant attacks [8], Scything talons [8], Rending Claws [4] and

penetrate. The crisis suits were deployed so they will kill as many synapse creatures as possible. The hammerhead and stealth team were deployed to the left flank to confront the main concentration of gaunts.

Aun'shi's expeditionary force

HQ

112 - Shas'el On-k'ur,[50], 2 plasma rifles [32], shield generator [20], Hard Wired Multitracker [10]

Elites

228 – 3 Crisis suits [90], 6 plasma rifles [96], 3 Multi trackers [15], Team leader [5], Hard Wired drone controller [2], 2 gun drones [20].

90 – 3 Stealth suits led by Shas'ui T'io et [90] with burst cannons.

Troops

120 – 11 Fire warriors [110], Shas'ui [10], Pulse rifles.

120 – 11 Fire warriors [110], Shas'ui [10], Pulse rifles.

165 – 17 Kroot warriors [119], Shaper [28], Armour [18].

Heavy Support

165 – Hammerhead gunship [90], Railgun [50], Smart missile system [20], Target lock [5].

Total: 1000pts

an Extended carapace [15].
94 – 3 Carnowarriors [42], Enhanced
senses [6], Extended carapace [9], Scything
talons [6], Flesh hooks [3], 2 Deathspitters
[16] and a Venom Cannon [15].

Elites

80 – Lictor [80], Flesh hooks, Rending
claws and Scything talons.

Troops

170 – 16 Dread Gaunts [64], Scything
talons [32], Flesh hooks [16], Leaping [48]
and a Hive node [10].

80 – 8 Dread Gaunts [32], Scything talons
[16], Flesh hooks [8], Leaping [24]

94 – 12 Scythe gaunts [48], Scything talons
[24], Flesh hooks [12] and a Hive node
[10].

94 – 12 Scythe gaunts [48], Scything talons
[24], Flesh hooks [12] and a Hive node
[10].

64 – 4 Leaping Ripper swarms [40],
Leaping [16].

Fast Attack

80 – 8 Gargoyles [80], bioplasma and
fleshborers.

Free- Red terror with two sets of Scything
talons and a gut hungry for Tau,

Heavy Support

108 – 2 Biovores [80], Bio-Acid [16],
Poison [12].

Total: 995pts

For Andy Chambers

To thank Andy for all he has put into the games workshop hobby, we have compiled a set of memories and experiences than us wargamers have had and our opinions of him. The staff of the oracle would also like to thank Andy for everything, and wish him the best in his new job with Mongoose Publishing, working on their Starship Troopers Game!

My memories? Well, I remember the first time I saw some stuff from him. It was the Epic Knights. Yes, his first foray into the world of writing. Moving up from the Mail Order cave to the giddy heights of putting words on paper.

Love his work, hate his work. He has had a great impact on the hobby. He is one of the first names you hear, and everyone seems to find a reason to support or decry his actions over the years.

Sure, he had some fun stuff come out, and although I didn't play every game that came out, I do know a lot of people found his work helpful, or at least made the game better to play, or faster, or streamlined, whatever you want to say. Everyone has their opinion on that score.

Personally it will be sad to see the bugger go.

Because I know no-one will garner the same amount of talk as he did. I will miss his dodgy conversions, and his interesting style of battle reports. Dodgy conversions, well, it makes some of mine look not so bad.

Good luck to him, and I hope whatever reason caused his departure can be kept between him and GW. Just so he can get on with doing development for games, and supporting a hobby where I get the excuse to play with toys. User Submission: - "Naughty Nick"

My funniest memory of Mr. C was actually at last year's games day we were waiting in for Golden Daemon to open, coming from Scotland it meant we couldn't tell the time and were 2 hours early.

So there we are standing in the cold and a few more stores turn up mostly made up of 14 year nutters who let's say..... "don't get out enough" Well Andy turned up with his good lady, if I remember they had just got engaged or married I forget which. So there walking in and Andy stops to flick his fag but on the ground, then suddenly one of the 6ft monsters who seemed to think that life is 40k and 40k is life, begins to chant full blast..... "Bring back the Squats", "We want squats" now this kid has never seen a squat before he's too young to have owned the space dwarf boxed set.... Well Andy turned around flicked the kid the finger shouted "F**k Off" and walked inside. Now Mutant boy behind me was standing there mouth on the deck tongue tied round his right foot and hand up his ass.....just staring at where Mr. C had been. They couldn't get over the fact that Andy Chambers had just told them to beat it.

Later in the day I heard the same space monkey kid telling all his mates how he walked up to Andy and was giving him grief over killing the squats to his face I almost pissed myself laughing.

Having met him a few times he is the most down to earth GW employee I have ever met he wasn't mad into the game in a scary overbearing "oh my god he religiously structures his day round the times printed in the codex marines as to show a marines day, swapping weapons practice for *Red Pointy stick training*"

Andy also had time for anyone, at the seminar last year a member portent and

I've only ever met Andy Chambers at Games Days and once on a trip to Lenton. Nonetheless, without exception he was quite simply a nice guy to talk too and more than once asked how Portent was going, obviously aware of some of the tougher times the site's been through.

From a rules perspective he plainly created some great games that countless have enjoyed, my personal favourite amongst them being Gothic which I consider a great system that I've played far too little of. Andy, all the very best with your future endeavours, I'm sure we haven't seen the last of you and your wargaming creations - perish the very thought.

Pete Closs
Portent Webmaster

Andy Chambers. To me he was Warhammer 40'000 incarnate. Having played since the beginnings of the game I've always enjoyed hearing his thoughts on 40k because he was responsible for so much of it. I remember well his two articles concerning a campaign he was playing with friends (which debuted Orkish Tellyporta technology I believe), for me it was a fantastic show of what you can achieve with a bit of imagination, some friends and a little effort. Like many gamers I've followed him through the many phases of 'Andyness' and probably found him funniest in bearded Arch-Heretic mode.

So yes, a life-less-Andy for 40k and an uncertain future ahead. Whether he'll ever be replaced is doubtful but I for one will miss the influence he had on my favourite hobby.

Chrissy

the black gulf decided to get Andy into a debate on the physical possibilities of something he had done now this guy was getting his physics book out to prove to Andy that he was wrong and that the Overfiend had made a mistake. Now this went on for a while and after (I**d D**kb**de) cough cough had finished Andy just turned and said.....I wrote the rules so you are wrong.

Good Luck to Andy in his new life.

Mcbain

(Names deleted to avoid public beatings)

Thank you for all you're time, and helping in creating the world of Warhammer/40k.

Please give us an update of what you are doing? (So we know you are fine)

User submissionStr10_hurts

GALACTIC ALLIANCE STATUS REPORT

DELPHON III OFFENSIVE

TRANSMITTED VIA ASTROPATH NETWORK ALPHA

COMMANDER VERHON REPORTING

Fighting on Delphon III continues to intensify. While we have the support of the majority of the population, the local PDF forces reinforced by elements of the 327th and 235th Regal Hussars Imperial Guard regiments continue to hold key facilities along with the capital and major ports along the eastern coast.

Fighting in and around the area known locally as Guardian Gate is heavy with the 3rd and 7th legions trying to push forward. It should be noted that Commander Olso of the 3rd legion should be praised for his actions in the line of fire that saved a convoy of refugees fleeing the area.

The 9th legion has been rotated to the rear in lieu of reinforcements. They were hit hard in the dragonback offensive and sustained a 70% casualty rate but managed to complete their objective.

We have also been reinforced by 2 hunter cadres of the Vi'lora sept. I would like to thank the council for passing along my request for aid as their pathfinder teams have proven indispensable in finding weak points in the Imperial battle line.

Fighting has flared up around Harkonian pass with our units in the area being forced to retreat and regroup. We are anticipating heavy fighting in the days to come and I have ordered elements of the 20th legion to the area to reinforce the line.

We were recently able to retake the town of Altec and have fortified the area in anticipation of further attacks.

Our units in and around the Hurr area report that the Imperial forces there are planning a strike against our forces stationed at heruis port. In response I have sent the 3rd rapid response group to reinforce the line.

We require additional reinforcements to take the capital region and to put an end to the fighting. I recommend calling up the 39th and 17th legions, as I happen to know that they are stationed nearby and are at full combat strength.

I foresee an eventual victory for the Renaissance on Delphon III and another world added to our Coalition.

Commander Verhon reporting.

**GALACTIC ALLIANCE FLEET STATUS REPORT
TRANSMITTED VIA ASTROPATH NETWORK BETA
COMMODORE YEGAN REPORTING**

To my colleagues in fleet command. I submit this report detailing recent activities in my sector and a general readiness of the sector fleets.

First off though I must report that although reassurances from the yardmaster that production of the new Minkata class light cruiser will be delayed as the required parts have yet to reach the Darvos Prime shipyards. The convoy carrying the needed parts was set upon by Ork pirates outside the Demorious belt and several vessels were damaged and had to return to port for repairs. I have assigned units of the 49th tactical wing to search the area for the pirate's base of operations and see to the safety of future convoys.

Elements from the 40th Mycenaean Carrier Group have safely arrived and taken up positions in support of the Delphon III offensive. These forces are well received and were instrumental in the containment of an Imperial Navy offensive trying to drive a wedge into our lines in support of its ground troops. Also in response to the Carrier Groups arrival allowed the 50th tactical wing to be rotated to the rear for rearming and replenishment of crew and essential supplies.

The newly reformed 29th tactical wing has returned from the rear and is preparing to relieve the 56th tactical of its patrol duties on the Lohaan sector. Special notice should be made of Feet-Captain Curtis's use of the areas asteroid clouds to evade and contain Imperial efforts in the area.

Elements of Waaagh! Grimtoof have managed to break into the area and are being hunted down as I write this report. The ships that did break through the sentry ships lines soon "went to ground" so to speak, making tracking their movements difficult.

The following is a status report of the current fleet situation under my command:

<u>Active ships</u>	<u>Ships on patrol</u>	<u>Ships out for repairs</u>	<u>Ships in the rear</u>
40th Mycenaean Carrier Group	56th tactical wing	50th tactical wing	29th tactical wing
70th destroyer group	13th training wing	6th rapid response group	18th tactical wing
18th cruiser flotilla	17th training wing	21st training wing	31st cruiser flotilla
79th attack squadron	18th training wing		
101st convoy group	19th training wing		
23rd GA carrier group			

I have not taken into account vessels that are here on temporary assignment of under 3 months. For a complete list of vessels please refer to fleet report 167-beta.

Commodore Yegan reporting.

+++IMPERIAL RECORD ARCHIVE+++

FILE INQ5869-10***

**WARNING! FILES RESTRICTED TO
VERMILLION LEVEL CLEARANCE!**

+++Click Here To Proceed+++

My learned colleagues. I present this initial report on rouge activity around the fringes of the Tau Empire . I have collected a series of reports and after action reports from Imperial forces that have engaged this new threat. At the end is the latest version of my ongoing analysis into this problem.

Please review these files carefully and submit your findings to me at your earliest convenience.

Inquisitor Soehern

+++ AFTER ACTION REPORT +++
+++AUTHOR : FLAG LIEUTENANT KORVAN+++
+++ 551ST IMPERIAL COBRA SQUADRON +++

We were on long range patrol along the fringes of Tau space when it happened. Our astropaths intercepted an unknown astropathic transmission in the area.

By the time they had informed the Captain we had already detected the source, a small convoy of unidentified vessels was exiting from warp space.

We moved to intercept them while running standard identity recognition scans. While they appeared to be of Imperial design they appeared to be altered and did not register in the database. Assuming them to be pirates the Captain ordered the attack and we went to battle stations.

As we closed with the contacts the gunnery adepts warned of an incoming torpedo barrage, we took evasive action but the Imperialis took a hit full on and was soon hit by another barrage. We opened fire on the lead enemy ship but were unable to determine if any significant damage had been caused. We managed to finally close the distance and gave the lead ship a full broadside, this left it severely damaged along its starboard side but not before its retaliatory attack collapsed our shields along the port side and caused severe damage to the gun decks causing several sections to be closed off due to venting atmosphere.

The captain ordered us about for another pass when word came in about the Imperialis. She had been set upon by two enemy ships, and after a short exchange was reduced to floating hulk, she had managed to cripple one of the enemy in the exchange but it was soon limping out of the combat zone under assistance from another ship.

As we were about to come to a new heading, a volley of Lance shots that brought down our shields entirely and disabled our torpedo launchers bracketed us. It was then that our sister ship the Citadel reported taking heavy damage and was adrift after a torpedo strike hit the engines.

With our shields and weapons down, the captain was about to order a retreat when we were struck again, this time the bridge was hit and the captain, commissar, and a majority of the bridge crew were killed or severely wounded. Though wounded I took command and ordered the retreat.

We made several short warp jumps until we were sure that we were not followed then set about making temporary repairs and returning to base.

I would fully recommend returning to the area with a reconnaissance in force as these vessels represent a new and immediate threat to Imperial shipping in the area.

Your obedient officer,

Flag-lieutenant Korvan

+++ INTERCEPTED ASTROPATHIC MESSAGE +++

Unknown psychic contact in Lohaas sector, request tracker ID check. Possible Imperial contact, recommend fleet elements of the 39th Mycenaean Carrier Group, converge and investigate.

Unauthorized transmissions located. Recommend immediate investigation.

Psychic contact in Lohaas sector verified, Imperial contact identified as 551st Imperial cobra squadron, deep penetration into Renaissance space recommend immediate fleet assistance.

+++ ADDENDUM +++

these astropathic messages seem to concur with the recent appearance of what can only be called "pulse beacons" in the local area of the warp. I recommend immediate investigation of this anomaly.

+++ inquisition file : INQ7789-239 +++

+++MISSION REPORTS OF INQUISITOR JOVIAN +++

+++ ACCESS RESTRICTED TO VERMILLION LEVEL +++

+++ THOUGHT FOR THE DAY : EVEN THE DIMMEST LIGHT CAN REVEAL +++

I have recently returned from a voyage to the eastern fringes and I have interesting findings to report.

While investigating the disappearances of several Imperial navy vessels near the edges of Tau space I learned of a renegade faction calling itself the Great Renaissance. I was intrigued by this group and began to gather what information I could about it. I have so far been unsuccessful in penetrating its borders myself but in talks with local free traders I learned that they are a group made up mostly of Imperial Guard renegades and dangerous free thinkers who think that the Imperiums rule has become decayed and should be replaced.

After learning this I tried to learn as much as possible about this obviously heretical group and its composition, I was shocked to learn of the involvement of the Rubicon Alliance who had been the subject of a previous investigation of mine. I also learned of the Tau's involvement and how they traded with the Renaissance and that a number of its human auxiliary troops not only supported it but were wholly involved.

My investigations lead to the reason of the navy ships disappearances. In two cases the ships were destroyed after penetrating their space, but in at least one case the ship and personnel aboard them rebelled against the blessed Imperium and joined the Great Renaissance!

Clearly this group if left unchecked can pose a serious threat to the Imperium after time and I am preparing to head out once again to possibly penetrate their realm and see if there is any way to stop this threat from within.

Inquisitor Jovian

+++ ADDENDUM +++

Inquisitor Jovian's ship was later found abandoned and adrift in the Eastern Fringe. There was no trace of the inquisitor or the ships crew.

This could lend evidence that there is an Inquisitor working within the Renaissance. If so then the threat posed to Imperial security is undeniable.

Inquisitor Soehern

+++ ADMECH UPLOAD +++

+++ UPLOAD TO FILE ADMECH 493765-3934754* +++

+++ AUTHOR : TECH-MAGOS REIN-KLEFF +++

After initial investigations into the requested material I am posting this report.

I have succeeded in researching the material sent to me and can with a limited amount of certainty make the following conclusions :

the weaponry used by the group calling itself "the Great Renaissance" is of original Imperial design but at a more advanced stage. This suggests that they are advancing technological designs without consideration to proper procedure.

from what I have seen and from the scans made available to me the ships of the Renaissance seem to be non-standard and appear to be constructed from different cultures.

in exploring weaponry and equipment seized on Dorlan II , there is evidence of a "blending" of Tau and Human technologies. How this is possible is beyond me and will require further study.

their protective gear is more advanced then the standard issue Guard MKIII flak jacket and as such is able to repel more incoming force before it is breached.

I have also gained a sample of their "reinforced" armor. This armor is extremely resilient and while not as advanced, as power armor is able to take significant punishment before failing.

I have heard reports of the Renaissance utilizing bionic augmentation and genetic enhancement on its warriors. If these reports are true then they must posses a significant scientific base to achieve this.

I still have to finish my investigations and this is only a preliminary report. But if this is any indication then these blasphemies to the machine god must not be allowed.

Your devoted servant,

Tech-Magos Rein-Kleff

COMMIT TO : IMPERIAL RECORD

FILE : INQ5869-10**

CROSSFIE TO : RENEGADES

EASTERN FRINGE

TAU

INPUT DATE : 6384997 M41

INPUT CLEAENCE : INQUISITOR SOEHERN

AUTHOR : INQUISITOR SOEHERN

TRANSMITTED : EPSILON IX

TRANSMITTOR : ASTROPATH PRIMUS OLSVAR

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY: PURGE THE HERETIC

My colloques, this combined with my own research has lead me to these conclusions:

That the Great Renaissance is an established power in the Eastern Fringe.

They posses a technological level that meets or exceeds Imperial standards.

They have an alliance of some sort with the Tau xenos.

That they are not one whole power, a confederation of rouge enclaves that have banded together for mutual defense and it is assumed under a common goal.

They have an enticing message as is seen by the recent acts of Imperial Guard regiments and Naval personnel going rouge and joining with them.

Surely something must be done about this before it gets out of hand and we have a full blown rebellion covering the Eastern Fringe. While military action would be preferable, the recent events in and around the Cadian Gate, not to mention the continuing threat of the Orks, Necrons, and Tyranids, have our current military strength spread thin. I recommend that for now we cordon them off and began a military build up to eventually engage and destroy the Great Renaissance.

In addition I would also recommend that we begin seeding the area with our own agents to better gauge the enemy and to effect civil unrest that can be put to good use in the times to come.

I will continue my efforts to learn more and continue to keep compiling this report.

Inquisitor Soehern

Wanderingblade Letters

Be afraid. Be Very afraid.

Introduction

You might never guess it, but the Oracle boys (and girls) are actually quite lazy. In a vain effort to fill up more space in ways that don't involve them doing work, they've decided to use a letters page. I've been volunteered for the dubious honour of this task on the grounds that anyone who's made so many posts is likely to be highly verbose and fill plenty of web magazine. So this means we want all you lovely readers out there to send in lots of e-mails so it can suck up even more space. Its the very least you can do really.

- Wanderingblade

Dare you send a letter to Wanderingblade? It can be about anything Oracle, Portent, Games Workshop, or Wargaming related.

Remember, Wanderingblade does not hate you. He would just rather you didn't exist in the first place.[†]

Send your letters to Oracle @ portent.net with "Wanderingblade letter" in the subject line.

[†]*Disclaimer: The views of Wanderingblade are not necessarily those held by portent.net. We can accept no responsibility for any damage caused by him, including, but not limited to, emotional stress, trauma, psychological damage, GBH, assault, breaking and entering or murder. We'd ban him, but he'd probably hire a hitman to take us out.*

Nightgoblin Squiglobba

(by Syllass)

-[latest update: 07. May 2004]-

Last year, while building Snobgit's Goblin Waaagh!, I got a couple of ideas about new, selfmade units and rules modifications for a Goblin army. I had already published some of them on my website (maybe you remember the infamous "*Goblin Parachutas*" or "*Snobgit's Thundastickz*"), but a few others were never released to the public. Well, now it's time to present you another set of rules-modifications for Goblin armies:

The Nightgoblin Squiglobba (Special choice).....70 points

If your army is led by a Nightgoblin character and includes at least 1 Squigherd, you may include Nightgoblin Squiglobbas in your army. Basically, a Squiglobba is an upgraded or modified Rocklobba. It's doubtful if the changes made by the Nightgoblins are truly worth the term 'upgrade'...

Unit	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	LD	Special Rules
Squiglobba	-	-	-	-	7	3	-	-	-	<i>Squiglobba</i>
Nightgoblin	4	2	3	3	3	1	3	1	5	<i>Hatred against Dwarfs</i>
Squig	2D6	4	0	5	3	1	3	2	3	<i>Squigs</i>

Unit Size: A Squiglobba is a warmachine and each Squiglobba counts as a single unit.

Crew: 3 Nightgoblins & a cage (preferably a metal one) full of angry Squigs

Weapons & Armour: The Nightgoblins carry a collection of 'weapons' (forks, trumpets, whips or other random tools found in a well organized garden centre) used for both fighting off enemies as well as Squigs who escaped from the cage. In case you are wondering about the unusual selection of weapons, the original purpose for the sticks, torches, and all the other odd stuff is to prod Squigs from the cage into the Squiglobba-firing mechanism.

Special Rules: For most purposes the machine follows the same rules as a common Goblin Rocklobba (see Stonethrower for most of the details). Exceptions to the Stonethrower rules are listed below.

The biggest difference between a common Rocklobba and a Nightgoblin Squiglobba is the type of ammunition used: Well, you probably guessed it from the name, the Squiglobba fires groups of angry Squigs into the ranks of the enemy (or their own if something goes wrong...) instead of the normally used huge stone.

Note that the Squiglobba may not choose to fire a regular stone/rock. It'll **always** toss Squigs into the air.

Launching the Squigs:

Roll a D3. The number shown by the dice is the number of Squigs successfully prodded into the right position to be shot at the enemy.

Guess the range and roll the Artillery/Scatter dice to determine the spot where the Squigs will hit the ground.

Place the small template over the determined point. Every model hit by the template (base completely covered -> automatically hit; base touched -> hit on 4+) suffers a single S5 hit. This represents bites & attacks dealt by the 'landing' Squigs.

Note that the model under the centre of the template is automatically hit as usual. However, the strength of the centre-hit suffered by the Squiglobba is **not** doubled. Instead the model will suffer 2 hits (effectively giving you 2 chances to wound/kill it).

After the attacks of the Squigs are made, you need to check what'll happen to them when they finally hit the ground. Roll a dice for every successfully tossed Squig: On a roll of 4+ the Squig ignores the fact that no-one could survive a landing like that and starts bouncing like a 'normal' (as normal as a Squig can be...), loose Squig. Should a Squig survive, it'll always start bouncing from the initial impact point (see Squig rules in the O&G army book for details about bouncing Squigs). On a roll of 1-3 the Squig is removed from the game (Splat!).

Misfire: The Squiglobba uses the normal Misfire chart for Stonethrowers from the WHF rulebook (see page 120 for details) together with the following modification:

Everytime a misfire happens, a number of D3 Squigs manages to break free from their cage. The Squigs follow the rules for loose Squigs and start bouncing immediately.

The Squiglobba in combat: In case of the Squiglobba getting charged by an enemy, the Nightgoblins let loose the Squigs. A number of D3 Squigs will be freed from their cage and fight alongside of the Nightgoblins. When placing the crew/Squigs in combat always favour Squigs to be placed in combat first. If there's no more space for the Nightgoblins, place them in the second rank.

Should the crew break from combat, the remaining freed Squigs will turn into loose Squigs as usual. Just use the common rules for Squig herds here.

The Squiglobba and psychology: In case of the crew fleeing (e.g. failing a panic test), a random number of D3 Squigs will break free as well. Should the crew flee while fighting in combat, the remaining Squigs fighting alongside of the Goblins will break free instead. Again the rules for Squigherds are the ones to follow here.

The Squiglobba and Victory Points: Loose Squigs remaining on the battlefield will not affect the Victory Points your opponent gets for destroying the Squiglobba/killing the crew.

(by Syllass)

*[Special thanks to **WintersDark**, **Avian** & **Lord Lucifer** for giving me feedback about the first batch of rules and suggesting final changes/adjustments.]*

Tactica Imperium II

By Brusilov.

Tactica Imperium: Military branches

The Departmento Munitorum is a massive organisation in charge of providing everything the Imperial Guard needs to keep fighting. It is organised in branches, divided into the Fighting Branches of the Imperial Guard and Support Branches of the Munitorum itself. A serviceman is defined both by his unit and his Branch. His unit defines who he fights beside and works with on a daily basis. His branch determines what he does and what he will do later during his career. Branches are not units, they are associations composed of servants of the Imperium who share the same profession; for example, infantrymen form the Infantry branch, nurses and doctors form the Officio Medicae... Many branches include quasi-independent sub-branches named Corps, such as the Siege Corps within the Artillery Branch or the Stormtrooper Corps in the Infantry Branch.

FIGHTING BRANCHES

The Fighting Branches include every soldier of the Imperial Guard and are the reason for the Munitorum's existence. Together they form the armoured fist of the Imperium aimed at crushing the enemies of the Emperor.

Because of the doctrine of uncombined arms, the vast majority of regiments are composed of soldiers from a single Branch. Notable exceptions include the Mechanised Infantry Corps, which relies on cavalrymen to crew the Chimeras, or the Paratrooper Corps that relies on Air Cavalry Branch to provide the Walkyries for transport and Vultures for close support.

Infantry Branch

- The Fortress Corps is composed of a specific breed of soldiers. Fortress of the Imperium range from open fortification, sometimes protected by massive void shields to underground fortresses. Often, Fortress Corps units are drawn from Hive Worlds or planets where the population is forced to live underground because those soldiers may have to live for extended periods of time underground without suffering from claustrophobia. While the garrison of such fortresses falls to the Infantry Branch, manning the guns is the Fortress Corps' responsibility. Those soldiers have access to the largest land based weaponry available to the Imperium, such as macro-cannons. Moreover Fortress troops also operate the ground-space defences of a planet, lance batteries or missile silos that will be fired upon an approaching enemy fleet.

Air Cavalry Branch

Considering that after the Horus Heresy the Imperial Guard was barred from having access to air or space assets it may seem odd that an Air Cavalry Branch exists. However the Munitorum and the Imperial Navy both recognised the necessity to coordinate their actions in a theatre of operations.

While the Navy retains nominal control over all fighter, bombers and transport squadrons, effective command falls to the Air Cavalry Branch as soon as aircraft are based on the ground. This greatly simplifies things. Nevertheless the Navy can withdraw all assets at a moment's notice and the Munitorum cannot complain about it. However this arrangement has proved its efficiency on many occasions.

The Infantry Branch is the largest Branch within both the Imperial Guard and the Departamento Munitorum. Whether called grunt, trooper, doughboy, it is on their shoulders that rests the hardest part of the fighting. Only armed with a lasgun, flak armour and a few grenades, they are expected to do everything from guarding a compound to holding a position against the advance of the enemy to storming a fortress.

The Imperium provides its soldiers with disparate equipment to carry out its duty, such as plasma guns, lascannons and missile launchers to deal with enemy armour or flamers to storm rooms. The greatest asset of the Infantry Branch is its flexibility. Infantrymen can go many places where vehicles cannot, such as dense woodland or highly urbanised zones or swamps. However the Infantry lacks mobility. Indeed it is a slow lumbering machine, moving mostly on foot or transported in trucks when away from the battlefield. Indeed the majority of regiments lack any infantry fighting vehicles.

The Infantry Branch is divided into three Corps:

- The Mechanised Infantry Corps includes every regiment entirely equipped with infantry fighting vehicles, most often Chimeras. Those regiments originate from highly industrialised worlds, such as a Hive Worlds. They are precious assets to the Imperial Guard because of their higher mobility that allows them to move faster and coordinate with Cavalry units, while Chimeras provide supporting fire;

- The Stormtrooper Corps comprises of the most elite units of the Imperial Guard. They have access to the best equipment the Munitorum can offer: carapace armour and hellguns. They are highly trained within the Schola Progenium and competent in both

Hence the Air Cavalry Branch is relatively small and mainly composed of officers and mission controllers. The Navy provides the pilots, technicians and attached ground staff. But considering the importance of air superiority, the Branch remains a necessity.

Naval Branch

The water Navy is an often forgotten asset of the Imperial Guard. It is a small Branch with a deep sense of community that sets it apart from the rest of the guardsmen. An army fighting across the entire galaxy on dozens of different worlds has to be prepared for any situation and in this is the reason's for the Naval Branch's existence. The Branch has access to limited assets and works in close collaboration with the Imperial Navy in charge of transportation of all its equipment across interstellar distances. Because of this constraint the Naval Branch has only access to relatively small vessels. The largest ships are no bigger than destroyers. Most ships are gunboats, about 50 metres long, but they pack incredible amounts of firepower for their size.

The Naval Branch has one specialised Corps, the Submarine Corps. In a Branch already out of the ordinary, the Submarine Corps stands out even more. It has access to mini subs that work in close cooperation with the gunboats but also to a few large ballistic missile submarines that carry a payload of long range weaponry and constitute the main punch of the Naval Branch.

Engineering Branch

Soldiers of the Engineering Branch insist that they be considered as a Fighting Branch. Indeed Combat Engineers perform some of the most dangerous task on the battlefield. They build and destroy bridges, roads or buildings, construct trenches and tunnels or clean minefields often while under enemy fire. No unit of the Imperial

infiltration and high altitude drops. Stormtroopers perform covert operations and spearhead assaults;

- The Paratrooper Corps contains large units of light infantry able to launch airborne assaults. Those units work in close cooperation with the Imperial Navy that provides the transports and air cover for such assaults. Those units are also in high demand because they provide added mobility to Infantry assaults and can surprise the enemy. Moreover when Stormtroopers are unavailable they are tasked with covert operations.

Cavalry Branch

The Cavalry Branch is the fist of the Imperial Guard, and judging by its size the Imperium wields a mighty gauntlet indeed. Cavalrymen are tasked with breaking through enemy lines and providing close support to infantrymen. They also crew the reconnaissance vehicles such as Salamander Scouts or Sentinels and the Chimeras of the Mechanised Infantry Corps of the Infantry Branch.

The main asset of the Calvary Branch is the Leman Russ main battle tank, a rugged, easy to maintain, vehicle that has proven its versatility in thousands of battles. The design varies wildly throughout the Imperium but its weapons remain sensibly the same, a battle cannon as the main gun and a combination of heavy bolters and lascannons for infantry support. More specialised versions exist, such as the Vanquisher for tank hunting or the Conqueror with a lighter gun that makes it more mobile. The Branch also includes massive super-heavy tanks such as the Baneblade or the Shadowsword used for Titan hunting.

The Cavalry Branch has only one specific Corps, the Cavalry Corps. Although both the Branch and Corps share the same name, which can lead to serious confusion, they are quite different. Indeed the Cavalry Corps is composed of units of horseback riding soldiers. It may be surprising that an

Guard would make it very far without the dedication of those troopers.

Engineers are often the first soldiers on the field, paving the way for the Guard's offensive, and the last to leave since they have to destroy roads or bridges to prevent pursuit.

While there is only one specialist Corps within the Engineering Branch, the Sapper Corps, mine clearing is often considered the most dangerous job and soldiers specialised in this job have a great sense of community. Sappers are specialised in the construction of trenches and other defensive positions, as well as tunnels to sap enemy fortification. They work in close cooperation with the Siege Corps of the Artillery Branch as the sappers often build the position from which the siege guns will fire.

SUPPORT BRANCHES

Unlike the Fighting Branches, the Support Branches are rarely organised into regiments. Most often they are composed of companies or battalions attached to a specific brigade. This allows general officers to have specialists on demand should the need arise. Moreover general officers can request larger units to be temporarily integrated to their unit. There are three sizes of support units: support battalion, support company and the relatively rare support platoon.

The Support Branches include all the non-combat troops of the Munitorum, with some exceptions. Support troops outnumber combat troops within the Departamento Munitorum as they are required to keep the Imperial Guard running efficiently and smoothly.

The Support Branches are divided into two groups in the eyes of the soldiers of the Fighting Branches: those they can trust and those they don't. Most soldiers recognize the accomplishment of those Branches that provide tangible services, such as the Officio Communicae, the Officio

army like the Guard maintains large units of horse cavalry; however they have proved their use many times over. Moreover many less developed planets, such as feudal worlds, have a long standing tradition of chivalry or their local equivalent such as the riders of Attila. And the Munitorum has learnt to use every option available when battling the Emperor's many enemies

Artillery Branch

The Artillery Branch is of great importance to the Imperial Guard. The slow ponderous march of infantry has to be covered by artillery fire. Even the Cavalry Branch needs the extra firepower the massive guns of the Artillery Branch provide. If the Cavalry Branch is the fist of the Guard, then the Artillery is a merciless hammer. The main equipment of the Artillery Branch are the Basilisk, a massive self-propelled gun, the Griffon a self-propelled mortar and the Manticore, a self-propelled missile launcher. Larger artillery pieces such as the Deathstrike launcher also exist but they are much rarer. The Branch also crews the Hydra flak tank, the Guard's main anti-air defence.

Soldiers of that Branch take great pride in their work. They are often highly trained soldiers with excellent education because the Imperial Guard does not rely on technological assistance that can be jammed or break down to determine the variables of a barrage but on calculations made on the field. Nevertheless the Artillery Branch prides itself in impressive accuracy.

There are two specialised Corps within the Artillery Branch:

- The Siege Corps includes the soldiers that man the short range artillery pieces such as the Medusa siege gun, the Hellhound, the Thunderer or the Leman Russ Demolisher. This corps is specialised in the destruction of fortification and is used in close cooperation with the Engineering Branch, and especially the Sapper Corps to assault enemy strongholds.

Logisticae, the Officio Technicae and the Officio Medicae. But they distrust the Branches charged with monitoring the activities of soldiers and running the bureaucracy, the Commissariat, the Officio Administrae the General Staff and the Officio Cognitae.

Officio Communicae

The Officio Communicae must keep commanders in contact with their troops, decipher enemy communications, encode friendly ones and maintain the Munitorum's information network.

Individual squads often carry vox casters and those soldiers have been trained by the Officio. However the Officio's main task is to man the large communication centres at Headquarters that receive reports from all across the battlefield and keep the officers informed.

The Officio Communicae is divided into three Corps, the Field Communication Corps; the Satellite Communication Corps and the Combat Courier Corps:

- The Field Communication Corps maintains line of communications between units and between units and the HQ on the field. They are tasked with defeating enemy jamming and in turn jamming enemy transmissions. They usually rely on powerful vox casters but have been known to use such techniques as flag waving or installing cable telephones, depending on the local conditions;

- The Satellite Communication Corps is in charge of maintaining global coordination between all Imperial Guard units at a planetary level. It ensures communications across continents and with vessels of the Imperial Navy in orbit. To do so, it has access to a network of easily deployed satellites and antennas;

- The Combat Courier Corps operates in dangerous conditions. Often orders or reports are too sensitive to be delivered either by vox or any other meaning because of the threat of enemy interception. Combat Couriers transmit such information directly

and are experts at travelling undetected even in the most hostile of environment. They are accomplished soldiers and trained infiltrators who will stop at nothing to accomplish their mission.

Tactica Imperium II

By Brusilov.

Tactica Imperium: Military branches

(Continued)

Officio Logisticae

Logistics is the lifeblood of any military organisation. Without a constant stream of supplies, even the most powerful war machine will sputter and grind to a halt within days. The Officio Logisticae faces the added difficulties of managing the supply of massive armies across interstellar distances. To deal with this the Officio has access to a massive armada of transports and can subcontract the delivery of either goods or troops to independent merchants should the need arise.

The Officio is divided into four Corps:

- The Quartermasters Corps is charged with keeping the army clothed, housed and fed. This Corps also ensures that every item meets the strict standards of the Imperial Guard. To facilitate food and water supply, the Quartermasters Corps attempts to acquire all the goods locally through requisitions on the planet. The Corps often works with the Officio Medicae to ensure that local products are not toxic to the troops. However the real logistical issue the Corps has to deal with is fuel. Hundreds of tanks and transports consumed millions of tons of promethium every day. Although the Corps has 'portable' refineries to convert local fossil fuels into promethium with the assistance of the Adeptus Mechanicus it is often not sufficient;

While actual spying is sorely limited due to the nature of the enemy, from servants of the Dark Gods to monstrous aliens, the Officio Cognitae's Infiltrator Corps is tasked with being accepted within the enemy's ranks or sending back data to the Officio. This works well in the case of Orks who make great use of human slaves, although they tend to waste them quickly, and of the Tau, who accept humans that have apparently turned their back on the Imperium.

Officio Psykana

The Officio Psykana works in close collaboration with the Adeptus Astra Telepathica to provide military psykers to the Imperial Guard. Sanctioned psykers found in some Guard regiments have been trained by the Scholastika Psykana of the Astropathicus and have also received the same basic training as all troopers. They generally receive the rank of lieutenant in recognition for their special abilities but cannot pull ranks on guardsmen of inferior rank.

Sanctioned psykers provide a great variety of skills on the battlefield, from farseeing to long range communications to the ability to blast enemies with their minds, they all have a use to the Imperial Guard and as such are valued by the officers with whom

- The Transportation Corps attempts to provide the assets to ensure that every good is delivered in due time. While the Quartermaster's Corps is charged with acquiring the goods for the Imperial Guard, the Transportation Corps is tasked with making sure everything reaches the correct destination on time. Since transporting food, water, fuel and ammunition across interstellar distances for thousands of troops is a logistical nightmare, one can be surprised that things run so smoothly. This is a testament to the skill of the Adepts of the Officio;

- The Ordinance Corps keeps Imperial Guard units stocked in ammunition. To facilitate this, many weapons use energy cells, lasguns, plasma guns, lascannons, melta guns... These cells are collected after the battle and shuttled back to special facilities where they are reloaded thanks to massive plasma reactors. Nevertheless the Ordinance Corps still has to provide millions of shells every day;

- The Stablemaster Corps is charged with the training and feeding of the Imperial Guard's horses. Stud farms held by the Corps dot the Imperium where horses are bred and raised to provide replacement for casualties on the battlefield.

Officio Technicae

The Officio Technicae maintains and improves the technology of the Imperial Guard. They are in charge of repairing the vehicles of the Imperial Guard and retrieving damaged engines from the battlefield using Atlas recovery tanks. Most personnel consist of engineers and technicians working in field workshops. Those workshops are both repair facilities and small factories where spare parts can be produced using locally available resources if need be.

Adeptus Mechanicus advisors provide technological knowledge and ensure that members of the Officio Technicae do not overstep their bounds when doing field modifications to vehicles. It also provides

they work, even if they are distrusted.

The Commissariat is charged with making sure none of these sanctioned psykers falls prey to the predation of the Dark Powers of the Warp and have been granted the right to execute psykers at the first sign of daemonic infestation, explaining the fear and distrust of psykers toward the Commissars.

Commissariat

The Commissariat is, for good reasons, the most dreaded of the Support Branches of the Departmento Munitorum. In fact, considering its missions, the Commissariat is somewhere between a Fighting Branch and a Support Branch. The Commissariat is tasked with enforcing discipline within the Imperial Guard and this can sometimes be a daunting task.

To accomplish its mission the Commissariat is divided into four Corps:

- The Political Corps is the side of the Commissariat troopers will be in daily contact with. Commissars maintain the fighting spirit of the soldiers of the Imperial Guard, enforce discipline, guarantee the competence of officers and serve as liaisons with the General Staff.

Commissars are hardened veterans and zealots of the Imperial Creed with the power to execute anyone found wanting in his duties on the spot.

- The Legal Corps: while regimental Commissars deal with discipline on the battlefield, the Legal Corps enforces the rules and regulations of the Imperial Guard during rest periods or while troops are in transit. The Legal Corps provides judges, lawyers and prosecutors to deal with breaches of those regulations. Justice is as harsh as that of the Political Corps but at least troopers have the right to a trial.

- The Penitentiary Corps is charged with the administration of the numerous massive military prisons of the Departmento Munitorum. While Commissariat justice is expeditious, the Branch also recognises that it should not waste skilled soldiers.

Enginseers who assist the technicians in the more complex repairs but are often seen as nothing more than spies of the Priesthood of Mars. The Enginseers frown upon the modifications the technicians are sometimes required to do to keep vehicles running.

The Officio Technicae is often at odds with the Officio Logisticae and is notorious for blaming any problems experienced by a vehicle on substandard part and/or materials.

Officio Medicae

Where there is battle, there will be casualties, and where there are casualties, there will be a medic. The Officio Medicae is a full service medical system capable of treating almost any ailment or injury. The hospitals and clinics of the Officio Medicae has among the best facilities of the Imperium at its disposal, with considerable trauma and emergency response capabilities.

The Officio Medicae provides the soldiers of the Imperial Guard with the best treatment possible. They can grow organs but the difficult process is reserved to the higher officers. Troopers have access to replacement of a missing organ or limb by cybernetic prosthetics. Most are crude, again the best are reserved for officers.

The Officio Medicae has three Corps:

- The Hospital Corps is the largest of the three branches. It establishes and maintains field hospitals and evacuation centres to provide health care for units in the field. The Corps is also responsible for the long term care facilities. The Corps works closely with the Ordo Hospitaller of the Adepta Sororitas who provides both nurses and doctors, especially in war time when personel is often overwhelmed by the number of casualties;

- The Veterinary Corps maintains the health of the Stablemaster Corps' impressive animal herd. The Corps also include a small group of toxicologists who can be consulted should a soldier be bitten

Therefore many soldiers who have breached the regulations of the Imperial Guard but are too valuable to be executed are sent to the penal colonies. There they await a chance to redeem themselves by fighting in one of the many Penal Legions. The Political Corps and the Cerbers usually provide the cadres to such units.

- The Cerbers are the Commissariat Stormtroopers. Trained like regular Stormtroopers they are submitted to a strict screening by Commissars before being allowed to join the Cerbers. Those soldiers form elite units, charged with tasks of military police, the guarding of the camps and the overseeing of the Penal Legions.

(Author's note: the Commissariat shall be dealt in greater detail in a later issue of *Tactica Imperium*)

Officio Administrae

If the Commissariat is the most feared branch of the Departmento Munitorum, none is more despised than the Officio Administrae. Every large organisation piles up its faire amount of paperwork and the Munitorum is certainly no exception. The Officio is charged with this bureaucratic nightmare and has proven adept at managing the paper colossus.

The Officio includes countless clerks and bureaucrats, considered as nothing better than paper pushers and pen sharpeners by the soldiers of the Fighting Branches.

Indeed members of this branch would rapidly choke the rest of the Munitorum with triplicate forms.

However the Officio does a necessary job as it accounts for all the assets of the Imperial Guard and determine its needs. Without their work, the war machine would grind down to a halt.

General Staff

The General Staff is a bureaucratic body charged with the determination of the policies and strategies of the Imperial

or stung by an unfamiliar creature;
- The Biological Warfare Corps is a small group of elite researchers working in close cooperation with the Genetors and Magos Biologis of the Adeptus Mechanicus. They develop bioagents and the means to counter them and other bacteriological weapons. It is rumoured the Corps is researching means to destroy Orks while there are still in their fungus state.

Officio Cognitae

This branch of the Departmento Munitorum deals with intelligence gathering, sabotage, infiltration and assassination. It is a highly secretive organisation and the Praefects' Council knows little of its inner organisation. Moreover it is at odds with other Imperial organisations dealing with Intelligence, infiltration or assassination, such as the Officio Assassinorum and the Inquisition. Members of the Ordo Hereticus keep a close eye on the activities of the Officio to ensure it remains within the strict limits of its missions. Strong competition exists between the agents of the Officio Cognitae and the Officio Assassinorum. The Officio Cognitae's job is to provide intelligence to officers so they can make informed decisions. This requires analysis of satellite or air photos, observation missions on the ground to confirm the disposition of enemy forces.

But the Officio is also charged with sabotaging enemy installations. Usually the Officio takes care of the planning and subcontracts the mission to Stormtroopers. However the Officio also has its own field agents should more stealth be required.

Guard. Its members are both general officers commanding large units of the Imperial Guard such as brigades, divisions or corps, and the personnel assisting them in performing their duties.

General staff officers can be drawn from either veteran officers of the Imperial Guard or rise through the rank of the General Staff. Either way, they must spend time in the General Staff College. Staff officers can be of any rank, from lieutenant to generals. Often the sons of wealthy families are sent to the General Staff so that they may gain the prestige of a military career without the danger of fighting on the field.

While they are considered part of the military organisation, staff officers are barred by Munitorum standard policy from directly taking part in combat or commanding units directly. This policy is aimed at preventing general officers from gaining the loyalty of their troops, so as to prevent massive mutinies. However many generals drawn from the rank of the Imperial Guard continue to remain as close to the battlefield as possible. Usually they care much more about the life of their soldiers than generals who have spent their entire career as staff officers.

In the next *Tactica Imperium* article, I shall discuss the ranks and the structure of Imperial Guard units. As always, constructive feedback is welcome.

- Brusilov

Man'o'War Redux

Battlefleet Gothic. One of, if not, the best side-game produced by Games Workshop. Incredibly balanced, diverse, and complete, the product of Andy Chambers' thirst for a game in deep space. The game doesn't get half the coverage it deserves, even if it STILL is in WD to this day while other side games have gone by the wayside. The rules are easy to learn, the games are fast-paced, and the models are incredible. I happened upon the movie Master and Commander a few weeks ago, and it dawned on me- what ever happened to Man'o'War?

You see, I have recently begun to dip back into Fantasy, at least up until this september when 4th Ed. 40k was released. I started in Fantasy, and love the genre. Man'o'War was a side game GW created...er....um... a long time ago. Since then, it's fallen into the depths of the Chaos Wastes, and for now semmingly never to return. I'm an impaitent guy. I can't wait the 4+ years for MoW to come up in its cycle for revision, or spend weeks finding a rulebook or set of minis. So I came up with a brilliant idea. Or so I hope. Apply Battlefleet Gothic rules to Man'o'War!

I know what you're thinking- and no, you won't be firing a Nova Cannon at a Lustrian warship anytime soon. But we can take parts of the BfG rules, and modify them. After all, isn't the Warhammer world part of the 40k universe? (please, no hate mail). We'll take a little from one part, merge with another, and maybe add in a few things. You *will* need the BfG rulebook in order to use these modifications completely.

I'm going to divide this into 4 parts, however even after this section, you should be able to playtest games for yourself, using these rules and the BfG information. I welcome all feedback to developing this and subsequent parts.

PART 1: Introduction, movement, and basic combat.

PART 2: Magic and Boarding. Advanced combat.

PART 3: Standard ship types and creation.

PART 4: modeling and playtest results, conclusion.

So, here we go... part 1 of Man'o'War Redux (for lack of a better title).

In this version of MoW, there are 5 phases to a turn: Movement, Shooting, Magic, Boarding and End.

Movement.

With the exception of some ships in the Empire, water craft in the Warhammer World rely strictly on wind power. Thus, the direction they are facing will affect their movements in battle. Before a game, roll a scatter die. round the result off to the nearest table edge. If a HIT is scored, re-roll. This will be the direction the wind is coming *from*. if a ship has a profile 10/20/30, then the result would be as follows:

10 - when facing toward the wind, beating

20 - when sailing across (perpendicular to the wind), reaching

30 - facing downwind, running.

In the beginning of turn 3, roll the scatter die again. This represents a change of direction in the wind. if a HIT is scored, there is no change. If a ship is running at a 45 degree angle relative to the wind, it is considered reaching. A good tactic is to reach to sail upwind, and tack your way.

Ships moving can do so at their normal speed, unless they use the AHEAD FULL order. In which case the ship can move at twice the speed. just as in BfG, if you use this order, you will be unable to make a turn (without capsizing) nor will your shooting be as effective.

If you wish to halt, you can LUFF SAILS, which is similar to the BURN RETROS order. Using this order you can reduce your speed to below half or stop completely (which would actually be FULL STOP). You can turn like this, but will suffer a shooting penalty as the inertia and changing speeds tends to mess with aim a bit.

Turns are carried out just like in BfG, with larger ships not being able to change direction as well as a dingy.

the COME TO A NEW HEADING rule shall be used as in BfG, with the said shooting penalty.

Shooting.

These rules are so similar to BfG it's scary. All basic rules regarding shooting will be valid. TAKE AIM is the order which mirrors LOCK ON (as we don't have targeting computers). This special order allows you to re-roll any batteries or forward cannons. As of now, the gunnery table will remain the same, shifts on the table should be used accordingly.

Damage:

These rules mirror those of BfG. However, Blast Markers are now flotsam (floating debris). The following will replace the Critical hit table:

2D6 ROLL | EXTRA DAMAGE | RESULT

- 2 +0 Deck Damaged. The deck has been damaged in such a way as to prohibit the crew from moving around/firing/etc for the turn. As such, the captian is busy barking orders. Until it is repaired, the ship cannot use any special orders.
- 3 +0 Starboard battery damaged. Cannot fire until repaired
- 4 +0 Port battery damaged. Cannot fire until repaired
- 5 +0 Prow/bow damaged. Cannot fire bow cannons, nor ram until it's repaired, nor can the ship ram another without a -2 leadership modifier.
- 6 +1 Rudder/Stern damaged. The ship cannot turn until this is repaired.
- 7 +0 Fire! Better put it out. roll to repair in the end phase or it'll spread, causing 1 point of damage per turn.
- 8 +1 Sails damaged. reduce by 10cm until repaired.
- 9 +0 Quarterdeck destroyed. Leadership is reduced by 3
- 10 +0 Hull damaged. Toughness value is completely null, leaving the ship defenseless.
- 11 +D3 Hull Breach.
- 12 +D6 Hull Collapse. The ships starting to fall apart. I hope you can swim.

There are no shields in the Warhammer world. To keep it simple, I've given an toughness value in place for ships. They should be treated as shields, so for each hit, the TV is reduced by 1.

Flotsam acts in the same way as blast markers.

Catastrophic damage:

2D6 ROLL | EXTRA FLOTSAM | RESULT

- 2-6 1 Adrift. the mainsails are destroyed, the rudder's toast. the ship moves 4D6cm forward in each movement phase, leaving flotsam along its base after each move.
- 7-8 1 Ablaze. The fire is raging out of control. it's spread to the and on the deck and starting to move below. everyone's busy trying to put out the fire. the ship drifts 4D6cm as if it were Adrift. roll again on the table after your move.
- 9-11 SPECIAL some of the keg barrels explode. The fire has reached the Powder kegs. leave behind flotsam equal to half the starting number of hits every ship within 3D6cm is struck by a forward cannon type shot with strength equal to the ship's starting damage capacity, roll to hit as usual.
- 12 SPECIAL Massive explosion. the ship itself becomes a bomb, with all the gunpowder exploding at once. results are the same as above, except the flotsam is equal to the starting number of hits instead of half.

End Phase:

Very similar to BfG, roll to repair critical damage, as well as remove D6 flotsam from the table.

So that's the basics, now to create a couple ships to playtest.

Unlike BfG, Ships are to be based upon actual size. Thus the ships should be mounted on calvery bases to give a concise idea on firing arcs. Later on we'll work on minimum sizes for ship classes.

Classes are as follows:

Squarerigger (full rigged, 3 mast) = Battleship

Barque (2 masts) = Heavy/Battle Cruiser

Brig (2 masts) = Cruiser

Schooner (1 mast) = Escort/Destroyer

EMPIRE:

Use the BfG fleet list for point values in terms of command. For now, try to modify them to fit their FB counterpart- I'll do the same and playtest more. In more parts I'll refine these rules as I get more games. Using the above information, you can create ships to fight. Please be fair, in terms of playtesting. Remember, cannons in MoW are not like cannons in BfG. they're weaker, and plus the relative ship size is different. I've provided 2 examples below that are in playtesting right now.

Imperial class Battleship:

Type: Brigantine (250 points)

Hits: 8

Speed: 10/15/20

Turns: 45 degrees

Toughness: 2

Armor: 5+

Forward Cannons: 2

Port battery: 40cm FP: 9

Starboard battery: 40cm FP: 9

+++++

High Elf Shadow Heavy Cruiser

Type: Brigantine (255 points)

Hits: 7

Speed: 15/20/25

Turns: 45 degrees

Toughness: 2

Aarmor: 4+

Forward Cannons: 3

Port Battery: 35cm FP 7

Starboard battery: 35cm FP 7

So there you have it, an introduction into the Man'o'War conversion for Battlefleet Gothic. There's a lot of work ahead, and a ton more refinement. But it is possible with just a few modifications, and the satisfaction of seeing massive armadas duking it out on a tabletop ocean will make this all worth it.

I strongly invite any feedback or assistance, please contact me at nocturne@gmail.com

- h.

The ten most fear inducing models/units in 40k

Jack Nicholson breaking down a door was apparently the scariest moment in a film as voted by some people once, however in terms of 40k he's nothing, probably due to the bad mold lines.

With a team of highly trained experts around the world I have created a list of the scariest models or units that you as a gamer can encounter across the table.

Disclaimer: this list is a total lie.

10) Wraithlord

'Why are you only number 10?' I hear you ask, or if you were addressing the question to me rather than the Wraithlord: 'Why did you put it at number 10?' Well, because a Wraithlord on its own isn't really that scary, granted its toughness 8 and about 30 points too cheap, but it's certainly something you can deal with. Any feelings of fear when confronted by one of these may be just related to memories of playing 500pt games against them on a 4' by 4' table.

9) Callidus assassin

Like the best killers, Callidus assassins can remain untouchable until they strike and when they do, nothing short of physically creating a barricade around whatever their target unit is with other models will stop them. Even then the Callidus can fall back on her neuro-disruptor to clear a path and bring the pain. The best defense against one of these is to never remind your opponent about rolling for reserves, thus leaving the assassin off table and about as threatening as a beached whale.

8) Monolith

Almost indestructible Necron support

5) Archon with shadow field and Incubi.

The sight of the Shadow-fielded, drugged-up, agonizer-welding Archon rampaging through your lines is a timeless classic, probably the first really scary model introduced in the, then new, codexes of the 3rd edition. The addition of Incubi to it lowers the Archons speed but increases the total destructive capability. The unit will survive 4th edition since they will be able to disembark and assault from the open topped Raider. It may have trouble surviving the (alleged) culling of Dark Eldar as a race though.

4) Ominous single truck

Probably the smallest vehicle in 40k, as fast as a Dark Eldar Raider, yet carrying one of the largest units, a Warboss and 9 Nobs kitted out in mega armour. That's 21 wounds with 2+ saves and power claws ready to 'bring the pain' Wu Tang style. Best defense: indirect ordnance on turn one before they get off the start line. If lots of points are going into the squad you may expect to see a couple of ablative trucks or buggies blocking line of sight to it at all times before it pounces.

Caption: (Bonecrusher raps: 'I ain't never scared.' However Bonecrusher hasn't seen a C'tan.)

3) C'tan

Not only feared, but hated by some people, a C'tan, to some extent, prevents Necron armies from being turned over in combat. It'll also go toe to toe with any other single character in the game and usually walk out the victor, but then again it is a god; killing things is what it's supposed to do. That and create visions of itself inside oranges. If a C'tan was a human it would know exactly when you walk your dog and would

weapon with an ordnance attack, the ability to teleport and repair Necrons, deep strike without being destroyed and target anything within 12" of it.

Recommended defense: Repeatedly calling it a jewelry box or something and hoping your opponent will remove it in shame. E-mail me if you ever get this tactic to work.

7) Lemon Russ Demolisher

A more devastating ordnance blast than that of the Monolith that should instant kill most enemy characters as well as really frightening vehicles that get in the way. It's tougher than the marine equivalent, the Vindicator, and has secondary weapons, usually plasma cannons and a lascannon, which compensate for its main armaments' short range.

This colour chart isn't scary compared to anything in this list.

6) Hive Tyrant and bodyguard

With, or even without a decent sized tyrant guard unit around it, you've got 3 turns to get ready for its assault. Science has shown that only people who were standing on the ground lose models to Tyranid armies, logic now dictates to avoid casualties, avoid contact with the ground.

wait in the bushes taking pictures for its study later.

2) Daemon princes

This is a catch-all point for the hardest daemon princes, usually armed with a daemon weapon, demonic stature, something to increase its movement, something to increase its survivability, and something to increase its attacks. Usually these are in terms of a C'tan in close combat ability, however they are significantly faster. Consider this like accidentally dropping an electric header in your bath.

1) Death Company in rhino

The super assault of the Death Company in their rhino is soon to be nerfed, but feel free to enjoy the last few months having to keep from 27" to 32" away from the location of it to avoid being charged with perhaps the cheapest most effective unit in the game. In terms of real life this unit would probably be the equivalent of a hostile takeover of the city you live with an army of zombies.

I hope that none of you were pregnant or had heart problems before reading this; I don't want another death on my hands. Next month I'll be discussing the scariest possible situations that can occur during wargaming, such as nuclear terrorist attack and 'gerbil man'.

Mc Haggis: Feltmk2@yahoo.co.uk

Limited

It doesn't matter if the army is close to finished or if you're planing a new one. You want a General, someone special, that can symbolize you on the tabletop. You want something that stands out, not only because of the splendid paint job your're about to finish in your head, but to be special in many other ways too.

The Limited Story

If your're good at cutting, pinning, modeling 'green stuff' and gluing, this is not usually not a big deal. But not all of us are not that good, or haven't aquired the skills yet.

So we roam the stores, ebay, Games Days and other special events in search for that special piece.

Trust me I know about this, for I have the old Space Marine Captain from Games Day ('99?), the Emperors Champion (from WD), the Dark Angles Veteran Sergeant, and the Limited Edition Christmas box Space Marine Captian. It's funny really, since I don't play 40K...

I have fantasy stuff too, the Marco Columbo mini from the Spanish Games Day, the Chaos Champion from GD 2002, Malus Darkblade on foot, Pythrion (the High Elf), the Chaos Maruder, the Black Orc from GD 2000, and yesterday I got my hands on the Chaos Sorcerer.

Add a bunch of different limited edition Battle Standards, and you don't have to wonder why my girlfriend thinks I'm nuts...

But is it worth roaming the pages of ebay, or other auction pages, and pay a great deal extra for those little guys? (I'm eagerly waiting for a girl...)

Mostly NO!

And I just saw a mini go for US\$ 164.49 at ebay, unpainted. That's almost an Army Deal! The sheer amount of money you have to pay at an auction site to get the items you might be intrested in is ridicolous, often enough to start a new army.

Some of these models that I have aquired are bought from GW's own store, specifically GW's Local Mail Order/Online Store. It's a good thing they all look the same, for my Spanish and Italian language skills are decent (for an eight year old, but I'm soon to be 32), but my German is non-exsisting. But thanks to an almost identical format I succed, I can have the English version in one window, and the German in another.

There is another way you can get hold of that precious little guy... friends (Thank you, you know who you are.). I know a friend who sent stuff to a couple of other countries since he had the opportunity to get some nice minis.

Beware of the false statment **Limited Edition** tag found all over the place. Some of them aren't that limited, so check out other countries Online Store first. The Limited Ed Christmas box Space Marine Captian is a good example, it's for sale in the UK Online Store (#9947010120501). It's defenatly cheaper most of the time, and if you are a few people getting stuff together, shipping won't be that bad anyway.

Other Options

But what are the other options for your character? Well, you can order him/her from another company. But this will have a problem attached, you can't field it in a GW sponsored tournament, or play with it in a GW store. But for a self-organized games and campaigns at home or in clubs you'll do just fine- or maybe even better since most people will be interested in where you got the model.

Conversions

That leaves us with another option, cutting and gluing. I still remember my first conversion, a swap of sheild and a repos-sitioning of a sword. I'm still quite proud of it, and it made me think of what could be done with a miniature. So I started on my next prodject really fast (in my world that means in the next 5 seconds) converting a standard. That was also quite easy, and from there I was hooked. With the new plastics it's even easier, just look at the last GD in UK, 4/6 single minis were plastic to begin with.

I have eagerly awaited the new chaos plastics to come out. That means new banners for my ever-growing Druchii army, some new trophies, and let's not forget new weapons and shields. My Lustrian Expedition Force has sheilds from the Lizardmen box- simply adding a little character to the army.

For ideas I look onto the net, old White Dwarfs, Games Days etc. Then I sit with my models and bluetac, position and reposition stuff. It takes time and it's worth every minute.

Still, the best option is to use some of your own bitz. It's pleasing to see something grow up and evolve, something from your own mind. Of course, you have the option in baptising the model in your own blood as I did that with my last conversion (my general Cython (Serpent)). While finishing some last minute cutting, I slipped and cut my finger pritty bad...

From Russia With Love

A look at Zvezdas fantasy range by Christine Moore

Zvezda! A Few months ago it meant nothing to me, possibly if you'd asked I might have guessed at either Russian Vodka or a communist leader I'd never heard of. Of course, I'd be wrong on both accounts (which I guess you'd figured out already as I'm not going to extol the virtues of falling down drunk - yet), in reality I'm talking about a Russian company that now makes 28mm multi-part fantasy kits.

Zvezda started out making military model kits for the hobby market and, far more interestingly for us, have recently started making fantasy figures ranging from humans to orcs to dragons via pretty much all the standards you expect of a Tolkienesque fantasy world. As a gamer at this point you should be whooping with glee but I'll explain why later.

Now if you know my habits you'll understand that fantasy has never been my thing, the roar of the boltgun has always been more attractive than some nancy elf with a stupid sword (and yes I hate Eldar as well). But the chance to buy 21 multi-part plastic orcs for £12.99 or two dragons for the same price was enough to lure me into unfamiliar stalking grounds.

Having stumbled across Zvezdas fantasy range then in my local Toymaster, I picked up the afore mentioned orcs and dragons although I must say the undead siege box seemed very tempting (and hopefully the picture of the skeleton will convince you why).

Anyway first impressions then - the box art is very nice (see inset photo for the orc box) and is handily in Russian and English, which I must say made choosing much easier. Possibly the one area that lets the orcs down though is the painting of the models on the back but in my usual cocky manner I decided I would be able to do them more justice than their own painters had!

There's even a command sprue (no photo sorry folks - I had excitedly attacked it by the time I thought to write up Zvezda) which is particularly nice and includes a female orc! The sizes of the models are pretty much right in line with that of the Games Workshop which is nice, and I suspect you could exchange bits between GW sets and Zvezda with no real problems. Also worthy of a mention are the four bases for ranking up your orcs on and the rules sheet for the game that Zvezda sells (sorry you'll need to buy the rulebook though and good luck finding it outside Russia).

Meanwhile the dragons are pretty darn large though not as big as those of the GW range (having said that for roughly £6 a piece it's to be expected) and are able to be assembled as either flying or standing dragons.

My only gripes are the hideous colours the models are molded in (green red and blue anyone?) and the way that you have to insert the weapons into the hands of the orcs (open hands make for a pain despite the conversion possibilities).

So on to the other ranges then. I've spotted the boxes of wizards that Zvezda sell in several model shops which is a good sign and these tempt me, but at £12.99 for 6 wizards I think I'll carry on buying regiments even if they are multi-part wizards. The undead as you can see have a lovely undead-Roman feel to them, something I have not come across before and I really must try and track down the regiments

set for some Jason and the Argonauts action. The humans are probably my least favourite of the races I have seen so far, being classic medieval fare but with Zvezdas background in military kit making they still manage to look good.

Opening the boxes was a very nice surprise, as you can see the molding is what you'd expect, not great (but then not that bad either) with enough detail to get you by. You get plenty of orc, or dragon, for your buck. Particular note must be made of the multitude of weapons with everything from bows to spears and hatchets on the one sprue.

Want to know more? Wella good port of call is definitely:

<http://www.ringofrule.ru/eng/main.php>

It's owned by Zvezda themselves and is thankfully also in English and Russian.

So overall then grab you wallet, scream hoody hoo and providing you don't mind not having a tournament legal army (and lets face it how often do we play tourney play), get your sorry carcass down to the local model shop for a good dose of Russian fun (providing I haven't got there first!)

Dos Vedanya!

Christine

Closing Notes

...and there ends issue 3. We do apologize for the lateness of this article, and I'm not going to try and justify it to our readers, as I'm sure you don't want to hear it. Real life getting in the way mostly it seems.

With the Portent Tournament 2005 round the corner, and Games Day 04 almost upon us, we will have plenty of things to write about in the next few issues. Rest assured that we have hired more staff now, I we shall endeavor to bring you the next article in a more respectable time frame.

If you've seen Pete's announcement on the forums lately, you will know that it's struggling to keep afloat. If you enjoy portent, and want to continue using it, I urge you to join the guild to keep it running.

See you next issue.

Cheers,

- Anseur.

Portent Tournament 2005

**January 29th and 30th
2005**

**Warhammer World,
Nottingham, United
Kingdom.**

^

Advertisement