WARHAMMER WARBANDS

Whether you're a new player just starting your first army or a seasoned veteran looking for a new twist on your favorite game, these warband rules provide a great way to play games of Warhammer that are small in scale but big on tactics.

Over the years, players and Games Designers have developed a number of ways of playing Warhammer on a small scale – from Chaos warbands, to Mordheim, to Skirmish, to *Path to Glory*, to Quest for the Grail, to Warhammer in a Flash. In this first of a short series of articles, we attempt to combine the best elements of all of these games and present a new warbands system in a scalable rules set that's 100% Warhammer and great for beginners, experienced players starting a new army, as well as veterans looking for a new twist.

Beastmen ambush the escorts of a Wood Elf noble en route to his forest home.

A Giant and his personal entourage.

While history and legend remember only major battles and great generals, it is often in smaller actions that the fates of nations are decided.

All have heard tales of the vast Undead hordes that assailed the Empire and were turned back in the times of the great Vampire Count Deitrich the Bold, but few know that this great victory could not have been won had the infamous Witch Hunter Gunther Mordrab and his followers failed to slay the many Necromancers and Vampires that plagued the hamlets and villages in the area.

Similarly, the Skaven attack on Dwarfen hold Karak-a-Kajerm was overwhelming, but even their great numbers would have amounted to nothing had a small team of Skaven saboteurs failed to open the gates of the keep.

The wily animal cunning of Khazrak One-Eye, bane of men in the forests of Middenland, is well known, and his name is used to frighten children throughout the Empire. Long before that twisted minion of evil ever sacked a town or terrorized the Empire, his ambushing skills and unorthodox tactics were honed by untold and unheralded small raids against villagers, militiamen, and travelers along the lonely roads through the dark forests.

It is a wise warrior who considers not only the size of the battle but the significance of its impact.

From the teachings of Bartolo Miachevelia, Advisor to Kings

There's a school of thought that holds that a game of Warhammer at any size is a wonderful thing. While many of us would agree with that statement in the abstract, more of us tend to fall into the rut of the 2,000-point "line 'em up and bash 'em" game that has become the common denominator of Warhammer. Games at 2,000 points are great fun, of course, but the enormous and imaginative scope of Warhammer doesn't have to be confined to a standard points size and straight-up competition. Over the next few issues, *White Dwarf* will feature a series of articles that detail rules and guidelines for smaller games of Warhammer. These rules are designed to be scalable. As your model collection grows, so too can your Warhammer warband...but we're getting ahead of ourselves.

While all the previous small-scale Warhammer rule sets opened many fun and creative gaming doors, none of them quite did it all. The rules for Chaos warbands and *Path to Glory* were great for players starting Chaos armies, but it wasn't possible to incorporate other armies into the system. Skirmish and Mordheim were fantastic rules for games with 10 or 20 models, but the rules weren't scalable and became a little unwieldy when the forces grew larger. Players who wanted to link a longer series of games and expand the size of their warbands as they went were out of luck. Enter Warhammer warbands.

WHAT ARE WARBANDS?

Warbands are simply scaled-down Warhammer armies. In essence, warbands are the same as standard tournament-sized armies but are simply in a growing stage. For our purposes, the term warband describes a Warhammer force in the range of 100-500 points. Warbands are not quite large enough to be called armies but are large enough for unit-level gaming (as opposed to gaming on the individual-warrior level like Skirmish or Mordheim). Players can imagine their warbands as patrols, reinforcements, special contingents sent off to accomplish specific tasks (e.g., raids, sabotage, assassinations), or simply a small force in the growing stages. When you think about the characteristics of the different armies of the Warhammer world, it's easy to imagine stories for the various types of warbands: an aspiring Orc Boss and his small mob of recruits, a young High Elf noble out to prove himself with a band of loyal volunteers, or a Captain leading a patrol through the wilds of the Empire.

An example of what a typical Vampire Count warband in the 450-500 point range might look like. The warbands of the Vampire Counts tend to depend highly on recuperative magic. Thus, a level 2 Necromancer is present to bolster the Skeleton unit's numbers with Necromancy. A large unit of Dire Wolves provides an excellent flanking force that causes Fear *to boot. The two stands of Spirit Hosts will harass and tie up tough enemy units.*

WARBANDS RULES

The rules for doing battle with warbands are exactly the same as those for playing standard games of Warhammer. Units fight in formation; ranks, standards, flanks, and so on count toward combat resolution; and only units with the *Skirmish* rule may adopt a skirmish formation.

The only differences, beyond specific scenario rules, are in the minimum sizes for each unit and the selection of your troops and characters. Once both warbands have been assembled per the warband composition rules, play progresses exactly as it does in a standard game of Warhammer.

Your choice of Commander is crucial to your battle strategy. Will you take an expensive and powerful Hero-level character or choose a Unit Champion as your Commander and use the saved points to field more warriors? It's a tough decision but one you'll have to make.

A Dwarfen patrol prepares to make quick work of Skaven saboteurs.

FOR SMALL WARBAND GAMES (1-199 PTS)

- Warbands must include at least two Core Units
- Warbands may not include more than eight units
- Warbands at this scale may NOT include
  - Special or Rare Units
  - Lord-Level Characters
  - War Machines
  - Chariots
  - Flyers
  - Magic Items of any kind
- Warbands must include one Commander model, which is nominated by the controlling player. This model can be either a Hero-level character worth no more than 75 points (including all equipment, upgrades, abilities, and the like) or a Unit Champion. If a Unit Champion is selected as the Commander, he must remain with his unit at all times. The Commander functions as the warband's General in all respects. (Vampire Counts and Tomb Kings armies, which normally require a spellcaster of some sort to animate the Undead, need not include such a model in a warband. Assume that the Undead have been animated by some spellcaster near the battlefield.)
- Warbands must obey the army list restrictions placed on the maximum number of certain unit types (e.g., Vampire Counts warbands may include 0-1 Bat Swarm, and Empire warbands may include 0-1 unit of Huntsmen).

UNIT SIZES

The minimum unit sizes in a warband are smaller than those in a standard Warhammer army to reflect both the small size of the force and the warband's tactical flexibility.

Base Size of Models in Unit	Minimum Unit Size (Not Unit Strength)
20 x 20 mm 25 x 25 mm	3 models
25 x 50 mm	2 models
40 x 40 mm 50 x 50 mm	1 model

FOR LARGE WARBAND GAMES (200-500 PTS)

- Warbands must include at least two Core units.
- Warbands may not include more than 10 units.
- Warbands may include up to one Special and up to one Rare choice. However, if the controlling player does not select a Rare choice, he may select an additional Special choice instead.
- Warbands may include 0-2 Hero-level characters, though their combined points cost (including all equipment, upgrades, abilities, and the like) may not exceed 150 points. Warbands may never include Lord-level characters.
- Warbands must include one Commander model (see the rules and restrictions listed in *For Small Warband Games*). If a Hero-level character is chosen as the Commander, his point cost counts against the 150-point maximum described above.
- Warbands may include 0-1 war machine or Chariot. (Note that this rule applies even when the Army book allows more than one such item per selection. For instance, 1-2 Goblin Wolf Chariots normally count as only 1 Special Unit choice. However, an Orc & Goblin warband could include only one Goblin Wolf Chariot.)
- Warbands may include one flying unit or creature.
- Warbands must obey the army list restrictions placed on the maximum number of certain unit types as described in *For Small Warband Games*.

This 200-point Empire warband is a great start to a new Warhammer army.

With a few more warriors, the warband has grown to 350 points.

The warband has now grown to 500 points with the addition of a couple of models and a mounted Captain.

WARBAND SCENARIO – A LITTLE WAR

OVERVIEW
This scenario describes a very general situation in which two rival warbands come into conflict. Though each Commander knows he must strive to destroy his enemies, his foes' purpose in this conflict is uncertain.

WARBANDS
Both warbands are chosen from the Warhammer army lists with the additional restrictions imposed by the Warhammer warbands rules.

BATTLEFIELD
This battle takes place on a 4' x 4' playing area. Lay out the terrain in any mutually agreeable manner.

DEPLOYMENT
1. Both players roll a D6. The player who rolls highest may choose the table edge on which he will deploy his forces and deploys the first unit. His opponent will deploy on the opposite table edge.
2. Taking it in turns, each player deploys one unit at a time within 12" of his table edge.
3. Unit Champions are always deployed with their units. Character models may be deployed with a unit if they will start the game associated with that unit or may be deployed on their own as a unit of one.
4. *Scouts* and other units with special deployment rules may be deployed per those rules.

WHO GOES FIRST?
Both players roll a D6. The player who rolls highest may choose to go first or second.

LENGTH OF GAME
The game lasts 6 turns.

SPECIAL RULES
Unknown Objectives. Battle has been joined, as the warbands are bitter enemies. However, each Commander can only guess at his opponent's tactical objective. Before deployment, each player should privately roll a D6, consult the Unknown Objectives Table to determine his objective for the game, and secretly write down which goal his warband must fulfill. At the end of the 6th turn, the *Unknown Objectives* are revealed, and a winner will be determined!

VICTORY CONDITIONS
Per the rules described on p. 198 of the Warhammer rulebook, calculate VPs for enemy units and models that have been destroyed, are fleeing, have fled off the table, or have been reduced below half strength. (Note that no VPs are scored for table quarters, slain Commanders, or captured unit or battle standards, unless one of these is an *Unknown Objective*.) In addition, a warband that achieved its *Unknown Objective* in battle may claim a bonus number of VPs equal to 20% of the enemy warband's starting points value. Use the Victory Conditions Table to determine the victor (D = Draw, V = Victory, M = Massacre).

UNKNOWN OBJECTIVES TABLE

D6 Result	Objective
1	**Assassinate.** Your warband must slay the enemy Commander.
2	**Invade.** At least one-third of the starting Unit Strength of your warband must end the game in your opponent's Deployment Zone. Fleeing models don't count toward this total.
3	**Capture the Colors**. Your warband must capture at least one standard from the enemy and control it at the end of the game. If, after deployment, you discover that your opponent has no standard, you must announce your original *Unknown Objective* and then secretly choose a replacement (choose – don't roll) and write it down.
4	**Annihilate.** Your warband must destroy the enemy by reducing the enemy warband to 50% of its starting Unit Strength by the end of the battle. Units or models that are fleeing at the end of the game or that have fled off the board count as destroyed.
5	**Hold Territory.** Your warband must attempt to control the battlefield. At the end of the game, divide the table into four quarters. You must control more table quarters than the enemy. To control a table quarter, you must have a unit at minimum starting size (see *Unit Sizes*) in the table quarter with no enemy units at minimum starting size in the quarter. Fleeing units don't count. Independent character models cannot control table quarters.
6	**Choose.** Choose any objective from those listed above for your warband.

VICTORY CONDITIONS TABLE

Difference in Victory Points	Size of Battle (Points)				
	1-99	100-199	200-299	300-399	400-500
0-24	D	D	D	D	D
25-49	V	V	D	D	D
50-75	V	V	V	V	D
50-99	M	V	V	V	V
100-149	M	M	V	V	V
150-199	M	M	M	V	V
200+	M	M	M	M	M

INVASION OF NHEMISIS MANOR

Sorceress Khordella looked over the misty fields of the manor, the family lands of Toht Nhemisis. The beautiful gardens that had once adorned the great Stirland estate had grown fallow, and many had been replaced by graveyards, Potter's fields, and barrows – grim evidence of Necromancer Toht's perverse experiments. Soon after Khordella ordered her Shades to advance up their left flank to take position in the wood, she spied some of the enemy – ghouls, zombies, and giant bats from the look of them – rise above the crest of a barrow mound. With a wry smile, she thought that perhaps this raid would not be as easy as she had first imagined.

To demonstrate the new warband rules, we decided to pit veteran Warhammer players Joe Sleboda, who would command a Dark Elf warband, and Rob Hawkins, who would lead a Vampire Count force, against each other in a little head-to-head action. The players would play the special warband scenario entitled A Little War. Because of the *Unknown Objectives* special rule in this scenario, the players would not know what their battlefield objectives would be as they crafted their warband lists. As such, Rob and Joe would have to design flexible warbands capable of fulfilling a variety of battlefield missions.

PLAYER THOUGHTS

Rob: I had to build a flexible 350-point force with expensive Vampire Counts models – not an easy task. I decided to start with two small units of Ghouls. Ghouls are relatively cheap troops (by Undead standards) and usually are well worth their points in small games. With the maneuverability of Skirmishers, Toughness 4, and 2 Attacks, the Ghouls should serve me well in the game. I decided to take a medium-sized unit of Zombies to bulk out my ranks. For my one Special choice, I went with two Fell Bats, which are both maneuverable and capable of targeting any small units, war machines, or individual characters that Joe might field. I also decided to field a Banshee. Though she's expensive and uses up a Rare choice, Banshees can be devastating in a low-point game in which units tend to be small and Leadership scores also tend to be low. One *Ghostly Howl* can cripple, *Panic*, or even destroy a small unit with low Leadership.

I thought long and hard about my choice of Commander. Because of the special warband rules, I was not required to take a Wizard, and I considered taking a Wight Lord with a halberd instead. With Ld9 and effective S5, such a character would be both a great leader and a fearsome opponent in combat. In the end, however, I decided to go with a level 1 Necromancer. Being able to raise the dead with Invocation of Nehek was just too good to pass up. With a few lucky spells, I could almost double the size of my force by the end of the game!

My plan is pretty simple: close with the Dark Elves as quickly as possible to avoid receiving a lot of missile fire. I'll use the fast-moving Ghouls on the flanks and try to keep my Necromancer in a central position so that the Ghouls can take advantage of his Leadership. I'll also use the Fell Bats and Banshee to seek and destroy small units, war machines, or independent characters. Now, on to battle!

Joe: I was overjoyed to be asked to help out with a *White Dwarf* battle report. However, I was a little hesitant, because the magazine staff asked me to bring a Dark Elf warband, which would not have been my first choice for a small-point game. Nonetheless, I dove in and set about drafting my army list.

My first choice was a 10-strong unit of Corsairs with full command. In a battle of this size, it'll be nice to have a unit with a rank and a standard. I definitely want to have that standard to help with combat resolution, as it's the one thing upon which I can absolutely rely (at least in the first combat the unit fights). Die rolls can go south; ranks can be taken away with flank attacks; wounds can be saved; and units can be outnumbered. With a standard, however, I would be guaranteed at least 1 point toward combat resolution. Plus, Corsairs are a great buy for the points, particularly because they get an extra Attack with their additional hand weapons.

I also decided to take some missile troops to pick on small units or independent characters. Shades fit the bill nicely. I also wanted a Dark Elf Sorceress to cast Chill Wind at the enemy (if I didn't roll this spell, I could always choose it as a replacement, as it's the first spell on the list). With both regular missiles and this *Magic Missile* spell, I'm confident that I'll be able to shoot something full of holes. I considered taking a level 2 Sorceress, but after I spoke with Rob about the game, we entered into a gentlemen's agreement to keep magic to a reasonable level and put a level-1 cap on spellcasters.

With the few remaining points I had left, I chose a second unit of five Corsairs. Since Rob will likely bring (or raise) at least one unit with a rank or two, it will be nice to have a unit capable of flanking and taking away ranks. I will use my two units of Corsairs as a one-two punch to try and take down any big units of Skeletons or Zombies that Rob might field. With this in mind, I'm off to the games table!

THE LEGION OF THE INFERNAL SKULL
(VAMPIRE COUNTS)

HERO	
Toht Nhemisis	
Necromancer, Level 1	65 pts
CORE	
The Shanks	
5 Ghouls	40 pts
The Bones	
5 Ghouls	40 pts
The Nameless Rabble	
12 Zombies	72 pt
SPECIAL	
The Blood Seekers	
2 Fell Bats	40 pts
RARE	
Lotte Saenger	
Banshee	90 pts
TOTAL	347 pts

THE HELLPIT STEEL REAVERS
(DARK ELVES)

HERO	
Khordella	
Sorceress, Level 1, Dark Steed	102 pts
CORE	
5 Shades	70 pts
10 Corsairs	125 pts
Full Command	
5 Corsairs	50 pts
TOTAL	347 pts

Rob Hawkins's Legion of the Infernal Skull

Joe Sleboda's Hellpit Steel Reavers

*Joe set up near the center of the board. His Shades (**Inset**) took the far left flank in a stand of trees.*

Rob deployed somewhat defensively behind the barrow mound.

BEFORE THE BATTLE/DEPLOYMENT

Before the battle began, both Rob and Joe had to generate spells. Both players rolled 1's for their spells. Thus, the Necromancer would have Invocation of Nehek, and the Dark Elf Sorceress would add Chill Wind to the Druchii arsenal.

Per the scenario rules, both players also had to generate an *Unknown Objective*, which, if fulfilled, would earn the players additional Victory Points at game's end. Joe rolled Invade, which dictated that a third of the starting Unit Strength of his warband would have to end the game in Rob's Deployment Zone. Rob rolled Annihilate, which meant that he had to reduce Joe's force to half of its starting Unit Strength. With these goals in mind, the players set about deploying.

Joe set up his two units of Corsairs centrally with his mounted Sorceress just behind them. His Shades, with the *Scouts* special rule, would deploy last.

Rob set up much of his warband somewhat defensively behind the burial mound in front of his Deployment Zone, where he placed the Fell Bats and the Banshee. Rob deployed the Necromancer and the unit of Zombies with which he was associated just left of center. The two units of Ghouls took up positions on either Undead flank.

Joe concluded the Deployment Phase by placing his Shades in the wood on Rob's far right flank, just outside of his Deployment Zone.

VAMPIRE COUNT TURN 1

Joe won the dice off and asked Rob to take the 1st turn. Toht Nhemisis ordered a general advance. The Ghouls on the left flank, the Zombies, the Fell Bats, and the Banshee moved directly forward and seemed to be heading toward the two units of Corsairs in the center of the battlefield. The Ghouls on the right flank climbed atop the barrow mound and strained to see though the wooded area on the right flank where the Shades seemed to be moving into position.

Toht ended his turn by casting Invocation of Nehek, which the Dark Elf Sorceress promptly dispelled.

DARK ELF TURN 1

Joe began his turn by advancing the two units of Corsairs and forming a somewhat diagonal battle line to face the oncoming Undead. The Sorceress Khordella moved between and slightly behind the two units of Corsairs. Joe's placement of Khordella was clever. The Sorceress had a small window between the two units of Corsairs. This window was large enough for her to gain line of sight on the enemy and cast her Chill Wind spell but small enough that no enemy could charge her. To end the Movement Phase, the Shades exited the woods and moved into a good firing position.

In the Magic Phase, the Sorceress called for a Chill Wind to blast the oncoming walking dead, but a quick gesture from Necromancer Toht dispelled it. To end the turn, the Shades took aim at the Fell Bats but missed.

The Undead shamble forward to take up position against the Dark Elf threat.

The warbands begin to close the distance.

VAMPIRE COUNT TURN 2

The Undead hordes continued their shambling advance. The Ghouls on the left flank and the Zombies continued to advance forward, but Necromancer Toht thought better of risking an engagement with the Dark Elves in close combat, left the Zombie unit, and hung back a bit. The Banshee, gliding silently for now above the misty battlefield, drifted between the Zombies and Ghouls and into the graveyard on the left flank. The Fell Bats flew directly over the Dark Elf battle lines and turned to face Khordella. The Ghouls on the Undead right flank moved off the barrow mound and made best possible speed toward the Shades. Toht again tried to raise more Zombies to bolster the Nameless Rabble, but the Sorceress, calling upon her own dark powers, dispelled the attempt.

DARK ELF TURN 2

The 10-strong unit of Corsairs declared a charge on the Zombies, but *Fear* overtook the troops. As a result, the Corsairs disobeyed the commands of their Reaver and refused to charge. The smaller unit of Corsairs, seeing their comrades frozen in place, only crept forward toward the enemy. The Sorceress, spying the oncoming Fell Bats, moved forward and behind the smaller unit of Corsairs to discourage the charge of the Fell Bats. She then raised her arms and called for a Chill Wind to blast the Bats, but Necromancer Toht's countermagics proved effective once again. To end the turn, the Shades shot at the advancing Ghouls and dropped one of them.

In a cunning maneuver, the Fell Bats swoop behind the Dark Elf battle line.

VAMPIRE COUNT TURN 3

Predictably, the Fell Bats charged Khordella, who failed her *Fear* test and would require 6's to hit in the subsequent Combat Phase. The unit of Ghouls on the right flank charged the Shades, who decided to stand & shoot but failed to wound any Ghouls. The Shades also failed their *Fear* test and would require 6's to hit the Ghouls. The Banshee moved out of the cemetery and into position slightly behind the large unit of Corsairs. Following closely on her heels were the Ghouls on the left flank, who seemed hungry for combat. The Zombie unit moved a few inches forward and wheeled slightly to keep both units of Corsairs in its front arc.

The Ghouls make quick work of the Shades.

Necromancer Toht's Invocation of Nehek was again dispelled by Sorceress Khordella. Thus far, magic had had no effect on the battle. For the first time, the Banshee opened her mouth and sang, but the *Ghostly Howl* had no effect on the large unit of Corsairs.

At last, the enemies met face to face. The Fell Bats injured the Sorceress, who did no damage in return. However, because Khordella was mounted, her Unit Strength was 2, the same as a 2-strong unit of flying skirmishers. Thus, she would not automatically break from the *Fear*-causing Fell Bats. Passing her Leadership test, she would remain to fight another round.

On the Undead right flank, the Ghouls fell upon the Shades with fury and were hungry to feast upon Druchii flesh. In no time at all, two of the Dark Elf Scouts fell, and their comrades in arms could do nothing against the wrath of the cannibalistic lunatics. The Shades automatically broke and were pursued off the table by the Ghouls.

Things look grim for Khordella as she tries desperately to fend off the bloodthirsty Fell Bats.

DARK ELF TURN 3

The large unit of Corsairs yet again tried to charge the Zombies but failed their *Fear* test a second time. They would not move this turn. To preserve what remained of the Dark Elf battle line, the small unit of Corsairs held their position.

Because the Sorceress was locked in combat against the Fell Bats, she could not cast her *Magic Missile*. There would be no shooting, as the Shades, Joe's only missile troops, had fled the battlefield. Thus, the turn quickly moved to the Combat Phase. The Fell Bats dispatched Khordella and paused briefly to taste the hot blood pouring from her wounds. With their mistress lying dead, the Corsairs gripped their weapons with grim resolve. They knew their fight was not going well.

VAMPIRE COUNT TURN 4

Sensing that the tide had turned in the Undead's favor, the Fell Bats charged into the rear of the small unit of Corsairs, who passed their *Fear* test. At long last, the Druchii were able to control their nerves. The Ghouls on the right flank – gobbets of Dark Elf flesh still dripping from their lips – reentered the board and looked for fresh meat. Their companions on the left flank moved behind the large unit of Corsairs, while the Zombies shambled forward a short distance. The Banshee drifted further behind the Dark Elf battle line and eyed the small unit of Corsairs with a detached, knowing smile.

Necromancer Toht, now that Khordella was dead, was able to call upon his Necromantic powers, and two fresh corpses rose from the ground and joined the Nameless Rabble. The Banshee opened her mouth, and an unearthly scream echoed across the field and killed three of the Corsairs engaged with the Fell Bats.

After the Banshee's howl took its toll, the Fell Bats were faced with only two opponents, who were quickly dispatched. The Bats then overran toward the Vampire Count Deployment Zone to avoid any charges by the one remaining Dark Elf unit, the 10 Corsairs. However, the last Dark Elves on the field, feeling that discretion was the better part of valor, *Panicked* and ran back toward their Deployment Zone.

The remaining Corsairs break and flee.

DARK ELF TURN 4

The Druchii turn was a brief one. The fleeing Corsairs rallied and turned to face the oncoming hordes of Undead. Even with the steely resolve of the Corsairs, who turned to face an enemy who greatly outnumbered them, only a miracle could save the Dark Elves' hopes for victory now.

VAMPIRE COUNT TURN 5

All of the Undead troops moved toward the lone unit of Corsairs. The Ghouls on the left flank charged in, and the Dark Elves passed their *Fear* test. Toht again cast Invocation of Nehek successfully, and 11 Zombies joined the ranks of the Nameless Rabble. To assist the Ghouls in fighting the Corsairs, the Banshee let loose a piercing *Ghostly Howl* and dropped one of the Dark Elves.

In the Combat Phase, two Corsairs fell to the raging Ghouls, who were reveling in battle now that they had finally shed blood. The Corsairs held the line bravely and killed a single Ghoul. Even in the face of the brave resolve of the Dark Elves, the Ghouls' nerves held, and they would fight again next round.

The Undead circle around their prey and prepare to close in for the kill.

Eager to feast on Elven flesh, the Ghouls press the attack against the rallied Corsairs.

DARK ELF TURN 5

Joe had no decisions to make, as his one unit was in combat. With higher Initiative, the Dark Elves would attack first. Although the Corsairs directed 11 Attacks at the Ghouls, only one fell. In turn, the Ghouls killed a single Dark Elf. However, with higher Unit Strength and a Standard, the Druchii won the combat, broke the Ghouls, and ran them down – a bit of payback at last!

VAMPIRE COUNT TURN 6

The Corsairs' pursuit brought them within charge range of the Zombies, who shambled forward to engage the Dark Elves. The Corsairs, failing their *Fear* test, had had enough and fled from the onrushing horde. The rest of the Undead troops moved into position around the fleeing Druchii, just in case Joe had any surprises up his sleeve for the last turn.

In the Magic Phase, Toht raised an additional two Zombies, and to end the turn, the Banshee howled at the fleeing Corsairs but had no effect on them.

DARK ELF TURN 6

The Dark Elves saved a bit of face by rallying on the last turn of the game. Turning to face the Undead, the Corsairs made defiant gestures and resolved to return one day to avenge themselves on the walking dead.

RESULTS

Though it was clear to all observers that the forces of Toht had won the day, there was still the matter of tallying up the Victory Points to get the final score and the definitive outcome of the game. Rob scored 222 Victory Points for destroying the Sorceress, the Shades, and the small unit of Corsairs plus an additional 70 Victory Points for fulfilling his Annihilate objective. Joe scored only 40 Victory Points for destroying a single unit of Ghouls and no bonus as he had failed to fulfill the terms of his Invade objective. With a difference of 252 Victory Points, Rob had achieved a Massacre!

PLAYER THOUGHTS

Rob: I'm pretty pleased with the results of the battle. I stuck to my battle plan, and my warband functioned as I intended. The Ghouls were fearsome in combat. The Fell Bats took out the independent character. The Banshee weakened small enemy units. *Fear* worked to my advantage, and generally speaking, I was able to dictate the terms of the battle to Joe.

I have to hand it to Joe, though. He played a good game, but luck was not on his side. Failing so many *Fear* tests, even with the Dark Elves' respectable Leadership of 8, certainly cost him the game. I also think that a Dark Elf force of 350 points is tough to play, because losing even a single Dark Elf model is a significant setback.

In retrospect, I wish I had gone with a Wight Lord instead of a Necromancer. The Necromancer was able to raise a few Zombies, but they had little impact on the game. If the Wight Lord had been able to charge in and do some damage, I think the victory would have been even more decisive.

Still, Joe played a great game, and it was a pleasure doing battle with him. Any time you'd like a rematch, Joe, you know where to find me.

Joe: Well that didn't go well at all! Though Rob played a great game and was completely relentless in pursuing his Annihilate goal, I think the real game winner was *Fear*. When my large unit of Corsairs failed to charge the unit of Zombies on Turns 2 and 3, I was pretty sure I was doomed. *Fear* also played a subtler role in a number of fights and certainly gave Rob the edge.

If I had to do it all over again, what would I have done differently? Well, I definitely would have passed those *Fear* checks when trying to charge the Zombies! If I could have charged and brought 11 Attacks, the extra rank, and the banner to bear, I would have likely beaten the Zombies and been able to move past them toward Rob's Deployment Zone and my Invade objective.

In retrospect, I think I definitely should have gone with a level 2 Sorceress by sacrificing a couple of Scouts and a Corsair from the big unit. With an extra Power Die, I might have had more success casting Chill Wind. Either that or I could have gone a whole different route and fielded two units of Dark Riders and a unit of Harpies. With the small table size and the small points value of the warbands, the maneuverability of these units might have won the day for me.

Ah well, there will be another day, Mr. Hawkins. There will be another day.

With renewed resolve, the Dark Elves repel the Ghouls but are faced with overwhelming odds.

Now knowing the level of opposition they face, the remnants of the Dark Elf raiding party fall back to plan their next attack.

With a gesture, Necromancer Toth raised the bodies of the Dark Elves that had fallen in battle. The corpses, suddenly jarred back to life, lumbered forward to join the ranks of zombies. Striding to the center of the battlefield, Toth spied the body of Khordella. Years ago, he might have found her beautiful, even though her corpse was bruised and bloody. Now, he saw her as nothing more than raw materials for his experiments. "Bring her," he commanded two of his undying soldiers. Slowly, two of his zombies lumbered toward the fallen sorceress to drag her body to their master's laboratory. Toth turned and walked with the corpses back toward his cold home.

THE FUTURE OF WARBANDS

This article describes the basic rules one needs to play one-off, competitive games of Warhammer warbands. Future installments of this series will detail army-specific rules, multiplayer games, leagues, escalation campaigns, and new scenarios. Make sure to check out next month's issue for more rules and great gaming ideas.

In next month's issue, look for rules that will help balance less conventional armies.