

ISSUE 9

the-ancible.com

# THE Ancible

Your portal to Sci-Fi and Fantasy Gaming



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.45 Adventure

Building and Painting the Khador Gun Carriage

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# THE Ancible



## View from the Command Deck

**T**hings just go from strength to strength on the distribution front. After the massive increase in circulation I thought that the recent hackers had substituted the magazine download with something more fruity and that word had got around causing the downloads to go into meltdown. After some investigation it turns out not to be the case. The Ancible download PDF continues to be all about sci-fi and fantasy wargaming, much to the disappointment of some of the staff. So what's going on at Ancible towers? We are off for a road trip in June. OK it's not a very long road trip but we will be at Games Expo 2011 in Birmingham on the Saturday and Sunday (see Games Expo article later in the magazine). Simon and Jez have done a lot of work on developing Simon's idea further and this will be the second public outing, last year being the first. We have all been busy helping Simon to create the most detailed underground lab to play the game in. If I remember I will try and get some pictures for a future issue. So if you are around why not come and see it for yourself in the blue zone and see how long you can survive.

I mentioned in the last issue that we were about to do something new and there would be an announcement soon. Well there was a bit of a delay but I can now tell you that we are going to be producing a podcast coming in June. Now what the format will be I cannot tell you at the moment but given the people involved I think it would be fair to say it will be a bit chaotic. I am hoping that we will be able to do things a bit differently and it should not just be us sitting about talking about things. I hope to be able to involve some of you guys out there. So buckle up be prepared and watch out for the announcement.

On the gaming front we have gone back to the old format and hopefully there is something in this issue for everyone however we have had such a lot of feedback on the themed issue that we are planning another themed issue for Issue 10, who would have thought it double figures.

We have picked up a few more writers and I should just take a couple of lines to welcome them and I look forward to future articles from them.

So here you go Issue 9, fully of gaming goodness, Enjoy.

**Our aim is to introduce YOU to the games you don't yet know**

*Kenny R*

## Magazine Team

**Managing Director** – Kenny Robb

[kenny@the-ancible.com](mailto:kenny@the-ancible.com)

**Production Editor** – Christine Carter

[christine@the-ancible.com](mailto:christine@the-ancible.com)

**Subscriptions and Merchandising** – Simon Parkinson

[simon@the-ancible.com](mailto:simon@the-ancible.com)

**Snr Review Writer** – Jez Fairclough

[jez@the-ancible.com](mailto:jez@the-ancible.com)

**Snr Staff Writer** – Ian Cook

[ianc@the-ancible.com](mailto:ianc@the-ancible.com)

**Snr Staff Writer** – Ian Barstow

[ianb@the-ancible.com](mailto:ianb@the-ancible.com)

## Contributors

Andy Walker, Spencer D Taylor, Marijn Bierhof, Roby Jenkins, Dev Sodagar, Timothy Colonna

## Article Submissions

The team welcomes ideas for articles and in the first instance you should contact Kenny Robb ([kenny@the-ancible.com](mailto:kenny@the-ancible.com)) for some handy hints on submission. Please note that while every care is taken with your submitted material we cannot be held responsible for any loss or damage that may occur.

## Artwork Submissions

Are you a budding artist or are you already established? You should contact Kenny Robb ([kenny@the-ancible.com](mailto:kenny@the-ancible.com)). We will take every care with any work you send us but unfortunately we cannot be held responsible for any loss or damage that may occur.

## Reviews

Manufacturers and publishers are invited to send in samples of their products for our team to review in the magazine.

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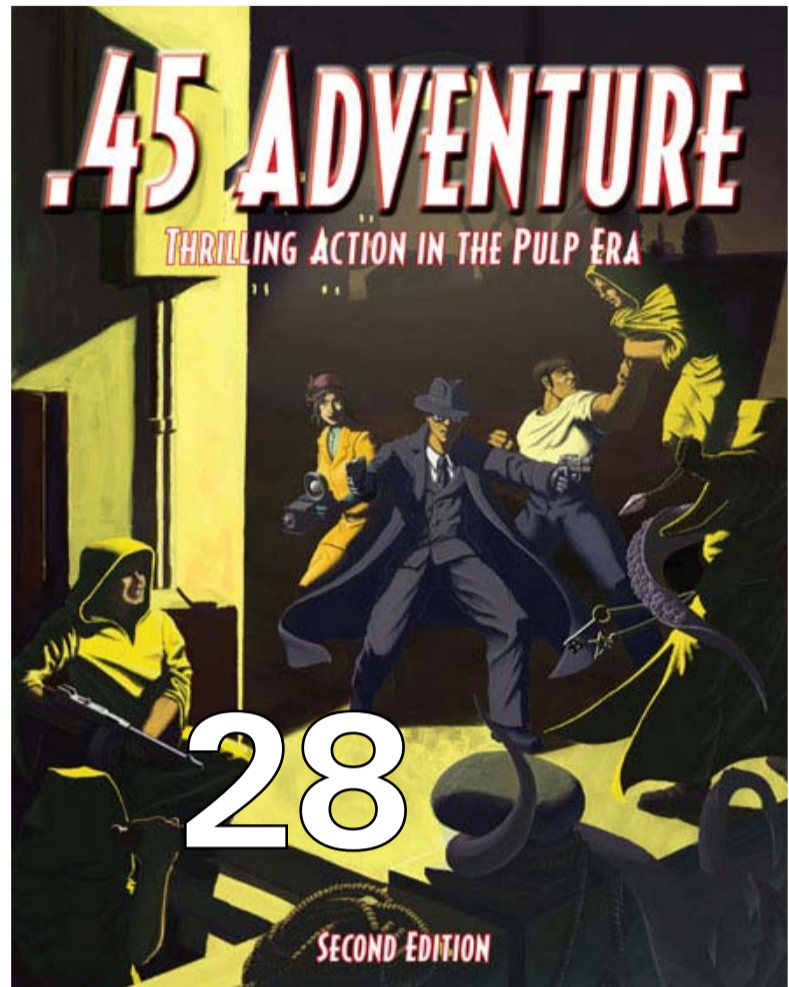
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The Clarendon Suites  
Sterling Road  
Edgbaston  
Birmingham. B16 9SB

Ticket Pricing - adult (held from 2010 rates):

Friday - £5.00 (allows gaming at The Strathallan)

Saturday or Sunday - £8.00

Weekend ticket (Saturday and Sunday) - £13.00

Extended ticket - Friday to Sunday - £16.00

Child and family tickets are also available to save you money.

## UK Games Expo 3-5 June 2011

Preparation is well underway for the 5th running of the UK Games Expo, to be held at the Clarendon Suites in Birmingham. Expo is organised and managed by four individuals, including a GP and game/book author, an IT and web 'guru' and a retired Police Officer. All 4 partners have many years of experience in different gaming circles, including roleplaying, board games and figure gaming. At Expo the work of the 4 is supplemented by an army of volunteers and GMs to make sure that UK Games Expo is like nothing you have seen before.

### What is new for 2011?

This year there will be a brand new and totally unique living dungeon. Expo has featured living dungeon before, but it was dropped in 2010 for logistical reasons. We are back in 2011 with 'Living Munchkin', the event is based on the hugely popular Munchkin series of card games, but features doors that the player can actually kick in. There will be life-size artwork and prizes that are sponsored by Steve Jackson Games. Slots are selling out fast, so if you want to play then get onto the website and book sooner rather than later. Go to [www.ukgamesexpo.co.uk](http://www.ukgamesexpo.co.uk) for full details of this and the host of other events taking place.

We are also expanding on our successful seminars, which were first held in 2010. This year we have role play game design, sci-fi and fantasy author readings, a board game designer panel and many more. Again the website will give much more detail. For 2011 there will be seminars held on both Saturday and Sunday of Expo weekend.

### What else is going on?

We have already sold every square inch of trade space, with around 80 traders from all areas of gaming bringing their wares for sale. Sci-fi and fantasy are strongly represented in the list; again further detail is on the website.

A feature of Expo that is continuing this year is the attendance of costume groups, there will be a Tardis and Doctor Who characters as well as our

renowned security team the Galactic Knights in full Star Wars regalia. A number of game companies will be releasing new product at Expo, including Cubicle 7 (Alien Creatures expansion set for the Doctor Who roleplaying game, and Icons, a roleplaying game described as "Superpowered Roleplaying" in the Marvel style), there will be a new module for Traveller and an advanced prototype of Ankh-Morpork from Treefrog Games. We have also struck a deal with Triple Ace for all roleplayers who book at least one slot to receive, free of charge, a brand-new roleplay game called "Ape Men and Dragons", specially written and produced for Expo, scenarios are included so you have everything in one free package.

As always, Friday is a games day from 10am at The Strathallan Hotel, you can play all day for the price of a single entry ticket. Then be up bright and early Saturday morning (well not too early, the doors open at 9.30am to let you in). We have also implemented some new measures to avoid the lengthy queues from previous years, there will now be a separate entry for those of you who pre-book to collect tickets from 8am onwards and enter the show from 9.30am. We have combined this with bringing in a car park team who will handle safety on the car park at the Clarendon Suite. We hope these measures will make your Expo experience one to remember.

I hope this brief glimpse at our show has whetted your appetite to come to Birmingham and experience our show. If you go to our website (have I mentioned the website yet?) at [www.ukgamesexpo.co.uk](http://www.ukgamesexpo.co.uk) you will find an online booking system, allowing you to book entry and session tickets for all kinds of events. Maps and descriptions of how to reach us, suggested hotels within an easy walk of the venue and much more. Pre bookings and sales are already well up on 2010, so get in quickly.

We hope to see you in Birmingham in June. All the best

*Richard, Tony, Mick and Pat.*



# Watching Paint Dry

By Andy Walker



**This issue we say hello to Andy Walker in the first of what I hope will be many wonderings through the world of miniature reviews with a bit of a twist. Andy is actually going to paint the miniatures and share some of the techniques he has picked up over the years. My hope is that as well as being informative you might even pick up a tip or two for your other miniatures.**

I've always admired the Anima Tactics line of miniatures from Cipher Studios, and when Kenny asked me if I'd like to do an article on painting a couple of them I couldn't wait to get my paint-stained hands on them. Up until very recently I've almost exclusively only painted miniatures from Games Workshop as they've been the games I've played, so it's been nice, as well as a challenge, to paint something more than a little different.

This is my first ever article, so please be gentle...

## **The Box, its Contents and Pre-painting Preparation**

Anima Tactics do some serious packaging – inside a cardboard sleeve is a solid cardboard box. Inside this box is two substantial pieces of foam, between which can be found the two miniatures (in two parts each) plus bases, their stat cards, the quick start rules, some blue tokens and a D10 (I haven't seen one of those in a while...). I don't think I've ever seen miniatures so carefully packaged before! The miniatures come with 30mm round lipped bases, plain and functional, but a little more stable than the 25mm bevelled bases.

## **Kronen Roxxon**

This chap is a big chunk of metal, a fully armoured knight with a long flowing cloak. The double handed sword is a separate piece that fits snugly on to the main part of the miniature with little filing required to



get it to fit, or any gap filling afterwards. On the whole the casting is pretty good, with some visible mould lines that were easily

removed, certainly nothing like I've seen from other manufacturers. The model fit into the base OK, but appears to lean backwards a little, which might be deliberate in relation to the pose of the miniature.

The pose is a little "odd". As can be seen from the pictures, while the pose is quite dynamic, it's also very two-dimensional, and not a pose you would expect for a knight wielding a two-handed sword. He appears to be using it like a spear, thrusting forward with it. As this type of weapon gets its power from being swung, it's strange why they chose to position him in this way.



Detail-wise the armour has some nice style to it, with both ornamented plate and chainmail. The sword is an interesting design, double bladed, with a third rounded blade at the end of the sword (so it can be used as a thrusting weapon I would imagine), the grip and hilt look "techy" rather than medieval. There is a lot of cloak, which would have benefited from some ornamentation and/or some more fraying and



holes to make it more interesting to paint. All in all, Kronen is a miniature that looks fun to paint.

### Saint Evangeline



As the pictures illustrate, Evangeline is very different to Kronen. She's of a much more "realistic" scale against the "heroic" scale of Kronen, a far more delicate miniature. Again the casting is pretty good, with few visible mould lines, that were reasonably easy to remove. There was some flash on the hair, but this is understandable with the fine casting.

The forearms and "bird" are a separate piece and slotted in OK (small lugs and holes), but did require some filling underneath one of the cuffs. The base fit OK, but the tab is only half the length of the base slot and required some filling either end. The short tab also meant that care had to be taken when gluing to the base to avoid any leaning of the miniature.



The static pose of the miniature is livened up by the wind blown hair and robes. It's a far more natural pose than Kronen, and I'm a big fan of the way the lower portion of the robes billow out. I also like the closed eyes and the look of concentration on the face.

Detail-wise the miniature is fairly plain, the robes are simple with some ornamentation - the pendants and the buttons on the lower half of the robe are delicately sculpted which will be a challenge to paint. The hair is textured nicely allowing for some good contrast between shadow and highlight. The bird is a little two-dimensional, it may have benefited from having the wings swept back a bit, but this would have taken focus away from the face of the miniature.

### Basing

I started off by gluing some "slate" pieces from the Games Workshop (GW) Warhammer 40K basing kit using PVA glue, then filled in around these pieces with basing sand. The positions of the miniatures meant that a lot of the base would be exposed and I didn't want these areas to look flat. The idea was

that after painting and before I varnished the models, I would add in some static grass/foilage between the rocks. Hopefully this would give the feel of a mountainous region, i.e. somewhere you would locate a monastery of some sort.

## Painting

### Brushes

Both of these models have large "blocks" of the same colour, so here a filbert brush (I have a Daler-Rowney system3 size 4) is a real help when applying the base coat - the flat brush makes everything a little quicker. GW's wash brush is used for...well... washes unsurprisingly, I use a system3 round size 1 for the "donkey work" and a Windsor & Newton Series 7 does the fine detail work. Also I used both sizes of GW's drybrushes for the rough stuff.

### Paints

Due to my long addiction to Games Workshop (GW) I've nearly always used GW paints. While trying not to sound too much like a GW fan boy, I love the subtle colours of their foundation range, and especially their coverage over a black undercoat. Their washes have brought about the end of my soul destroying struggle with inks as a shading medium, and are both lovely to use as an overall wash, and for more targeted shading. So all the paints I've used on Kronen and Evangeline are from GW's range.

### Kronen Roxxon

"Kronen is an outstanding warrior with outstanding combat skills. Wearing heavy full plate armour and a gigantic sword that only he can wield, he is an indomitable force." ([www.animarpg.com](http://www.animarpg.com))

There are three major elements to Kronen, the armour, the sword and the cloak. For the sword, I had wondered about a "dark iron" colour, but in the end a bright shining steel blade felt more appropriate for a "heroic knight". I'd decided on gold for the armour so that the steel sword stood out - silver armour would have been too much, and it would have been difficult to distinguish the sword from it.

I went for a dark green for the cloak, which I've always felt goes well with gold. Of course by using green and gold, it's best to avoid red and white as well, otherwise things can get a little "Christmas-sy".

The studio paint-job for Kronen used non-metallic colours for the armour and sword. When done well, by a skilled painter, non-metallic metal (NMM) looks superb and I'm in awe of the people who can pull



it off. I've tried NMM once before and it looked average at best, so I went for metallic paints on both sword and armour.

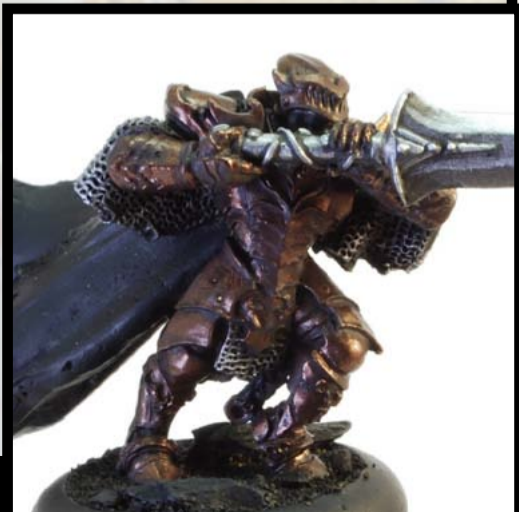
Kronen had my only "What the hell is that?!" moment in this exercise. As the quality of sculpting and casting has increased through the years, "What the hell is that?!" moments have decreased considerably, so this one came as a bit of a shock. There are some plaits hanging from the miniature with rings attached to the bottom of them. I had and still have no real idea what they are – are they hair? Are they leather? Sticking with the colour scheme of the miniature, I imagined they were just armour decoration and decided to paint them the same green as the cloak.

Although I painted the sword first as I wanted to get that right before I did anything else, I would normally have painted the armour to start with as it's the largest block, so I'll deal with it here first. Gold is a colour I've found tricky to paint well in the past, but in recent months I've got a method that works well. Stage by stage, it goes like this:



Base coat: I use a flat non-metallic base coat (in this case Scorched Brown) – this helps give the armour a more aged, weathered look – I've never been a fan of bright shiny armour, and it didn't seem appropriate for Kronen (especially with the frayed cloak).

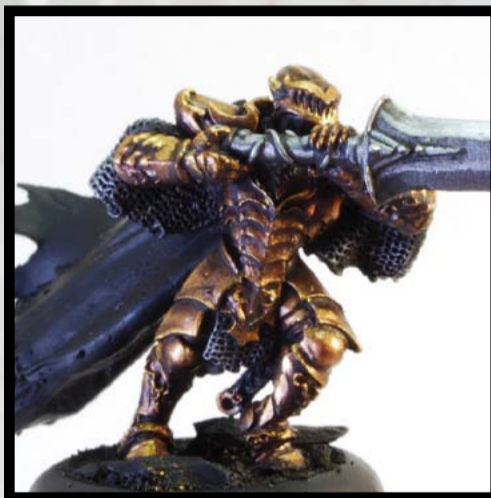
Shade: A wash of Devlan Mud gives some depth to the shadowed parts of the armour



First highlight: Tin Bitz is applied as a general highlight, painted on most of the armour apart from the deepest recesses



Second highlight: Dwarf Bronze is blended in



Third highlight: Shining Gold is blended in to all the raised parts, being careful not to overdo it



Final highlight: I mixed in some Mithril Silver to the Shining Gold and applied that to the uppermost edges and points of the armour. This extra-light highlight to the high/exposed parts of the armour really

helps the details "pop" out from the rest of the armour. Painting the armour this way gives good contrast between the shadow and the highlights, and by using a flat colour as the base coat, there is no glitter in the darker areas to mar the aged effect I was going for.

Now on to the sword, which really is the focus of the miniature (Kronen must have some serious arm muscles to swing that thing about). The problem I had with the sword is that there is a lot of surface area on the blade that could look flat and boring if not painted carefully. Therefore I tried to make the central face of each side of the blade (i.e. the bits in the middle without the sharp edges) look slightly concave, avoiding a solid flat block of silver at the focal point of the miniature. For bright steel/silver I go through these stages:



Base coat: Again I used a flat non-metallic colour, this time Charadon Granite, for the same reasons that I used Scorched Brown for the gold. The blade would be shiny, but it had to have an aged quality to it too, matching the armour

Shade: A wash of Badab Black is liberally applied over the whole of the sword (including the hilt and grip)

First highlight: Boltgun Metal was painted all over the sword, apart from the recesses around the detail on the grip and hilt, and avoiding the tight curves of the blade, at both the hilt and the point

Second highlight: Chainmail is blended in to the Boltgun Metal, avoiding the lowermost parts of the sword

Third highlight: Mithril Silver is blended in to the Chainmail on the uppermost parts of the Sword

Fourth highlight: A 3:1 mix of Mithril Silver and white is applied to the top edges and points of the sword as an extreme highlight

I painted the chain mail around Kronen's arms in the same way, but drybrushed rather than blended. On some miniatures I'm happy to paint/blend the highlights on chain mail, but on Kronen the chain mail is so fine that drybrushing was the most effective way to paint it and keep my sanity (what's left of it...). Once that was completed I quickly did the attached rings in gold.

The cloak was the last of the major elements to paint. As mentioned before, my major grumble about the cloak was the large amount of flat-ish area on the "inside" of the cloak, where a logo or image would be unlikely and it could potentially look dull, which would be a shame as it's the counterbalance to the sword on the miniature. Fortunately there was just enough of a ripple to the cloak to keep it interesting.

Base coat: Orkhide Shade was used – again one of GW's foundation paints, which gives a nice solid base in a couple of coats

Shade: Devlan Mud (again)

First highlight: Orkhide Shade was reapplied avoiding the most recessed areas.

Second highlight: A little Dheneb Stone was mixed into the Orkhide shade and this was blended in to the raised areas

Final highlight: A little Orkhide was mixed in with the Stone and applied as a top edge highlight, particularly on the holes and frayed parts to make the cloak look worn.

With the cloak finished, I then painted small area of face visible. This was simply a base coat of Dark Flesh and then Tallarn Flesh blended in as a highlight, this gives a more tanned skin tone, which is hinted at in the artwork on the packaging.

With the miniature painted, the last thing to do was the base. The gravelly areas were base coated with Charadon Granite and the rocks were painted Khemri Brown. This was all washed with Gryphon Sepia, then drybrushed with Khemri Brown and Dheneb Stone. Once this was all dry I dabbed some PVA glue amongst the rocks and added some light coloured grass flock from the Gale Force Nine range of basing material. Then I just tidied up the rim of the base with some black paint, and spray varnished him with Humbrol's matt acrylic spray varnish.

All in all the Knight in golden armour was fun to paint. The only tricky bit was getting the sword looking right, and I'm pleased with the result. The way the armour has been sculpted meant it almost painted itself, lots of lovely definition where you can pick out the shadows and highlights nicely. It looks like it's a special suit of armour that's been handed down through generations and I'm particularly pleased with that.





## Saint Evangeline

"Evangeline is blessed with special abilities which make her different from other people. Under the severe supervision of the church she has developed her mystical powers to serve the 13th Bishop." (www.animarp.com)

Not a complex colour scheme for Evangeline either, with only two major elements, the

robes and the hair. I really liked the studio colour scheme, particularly the red hair, which really

showed off the delicate sculpting, so that was an easy choice to make.

The robes however were a different story. White is NOT a colour I enjoy painting at all, and I had seriously considered trying an alternative colour scheme – a "Nun's habit" was tempting, as the black is far simpler to highlight and cover up flaws/mistakes. It also would have made painting the jewellery around her skirt easier. In the end though, she's "Saint Evangeline" which suggests purity and holiness, therefore white had to be the colour of her robes. The one choice I then had to make was the colour of the type of white the robes would be. On a medieval style fantasy miniature I would have gone for a beige hue, but as the Anima Tactics range veer more towards sci-fi than fantasy (from what I've seen of their range anyway) I opted for a blue tone.

A few things I've learned about painting white on Evangeline:

The undercoat had to be white, as black gives you a mountain to climb right from the start. Grey would have been acceptable, but as the miniature is 75% robes, a white undercoat made sense

Thin the white even more than you would with other colours, and apply in lots of coats. White also suffers badly if the coat isn't smooth, multiple thinner coats will help with that

Paint ALL the other elements first. White shows up all the accidental wash splashes and any brush slippage from other colours, which are difficult to clean up without staining the white

Don't go too dark with the shading, the majority of shadows should almost be an off-white. The darkest shadows can be more pronounced – on Evangeline I kept the darkest shadows to the undersides of her robes and the most recessed creases

I've found





Games Workshop's foundation paints to be a god-send, their improved coverage over normal paints is very helpful and a little Astronomican Grey mixed in with the white helps the initial base coat cover any overlap from other colours

Usually I would paint the most prevalent colour on the model first, but as that was white, I had to change the order I painted this miniature. The second largest block of colour would be the hair, and as this would be the darkest colour on the miniature this was the first part to be painted:

Base coat: Dark Flesh – I wanted a coppery tone, rather than bright orange, and Dark Flesh gives a nice solid base for this

Shade: A wash of Devlan Mud - like a lot of miniature painters I use Devlan Mud a LOT. It serves a multitude of purposes and I would buy the stuff in bulk if someone decided to sell it

First highlight: A heavy dry brush of Dark Flesh brings the base coat back, leaving the darker shadows in the more recessed areas

Second highlight: A lighter dry brush of Solar Macharius Orange, helps define the hair better

Final highlight: A very light dry brush of Dheneb Stone mixed with a little of the orange, picks out the top edges of the hair.

Additional shading: Devlan Mud is applied in a more targeted fashion to add some depth to the hair

Next up was the skin of the face and hands. At this point I was SO happy to see that her eyes were closed, her face is so small and having the bird in front would have made painting the eyes a real pain:

Base coat: Tallarn Flesh – good for an "average" skin tone, for a lighter tone I would use Bleached Bone or Dheneb Stone

Shade: A Gryphon Sepia wash shades the skin nicely without going too dark. As with painting white, it's important to keep the shading subtle on skin

First highlight: Tallarn Flesh is reapplied to all but the most recessed areas

Second highlight: Elf Flesh is blended in to the raised areas

Final highlight: Dheneb Stone is painted on to the cheek bones, forehead, eyelids and the bridge of the nose

The buttons and the jewellery were painted next – these are incredibly small and it was important to

make them stand out against the white robes. They were base coated with Scorched Brown and shaded with Devlan Mud (yeah I know...). The cords were simply highlighted with Khemri Brown, and the metalwork highlighted with Shining Gold and then the Gold mixed with a little Mithril Silver.

Then came the white...

In theory this is how it should have gone, but this was a learning exercise for me, so there was a fair amount of "fixing" involved. As white is the base colour, it's almost painted in reverse compared to the other colours:

Base coat: The white of the undercoat needed cleaning up, and several thin coats were required to cover the various splashes and slips of the paintbrush

First shade: Astronomican Grey was blended in. In some areas pure grey was too dark, so a 1:1 mix of the grey and white was used.

Second shade: Shadow Grey was blended in on the undersides of the robes – this provided a nice shadow without being too strong against the white.





Of course it didn't happen as neatly as that, but with a lot of retouching I got the white to the point where I was happy. One piece of advice I've always remembered is "when you're happy with it, don't do any more".

I was happy, so I stopped.

With the white done the last thing on the miniature to do was the bird. As far as I could tell from the box art, the bird is the result or component of something magical, so it needed to glow. I did this by applying Thraka Green wash over a white base coat. I chose green here rather than blue, as I wanted the bird to stand out against the robes. A heavy drybrush of white was followed by another wash, more concentrated at the bottom of the bird, then followed by another drybrush of white. Finally the head and tops of the wings were painted with thinned white to create a solid highlight on top.

The base was done in exactly the same way as for Kronen, and she was also sprayed with matt acrylic varnish, which took the shine off the white nicely.

Evangeline was a challenge to paint. I'm pleased with the way her robes came out, and even though painting that much white was a lot of work, I'm glad I took on the challenge of painting them white rather than taking the easy route of another colour.

### About the Author

Andy started in the hobby 22 years ago with Games Workshop's Advanced Heroquest, and progressed onto Warhammer Fantasy Battle just as the first box set came out. His interest in the hobby faded when he went to University, but around 2008 he remembered how much fun painting little model soldiers was and he hasn't looked back since (which annoys other drivers a lot for some reason). Learning a lot from forums and blogs on the internet, and having won a couple of painting competitions at the local GW store he entered Golden Demon in 2009 where a group of evil looking Chaos Space Marines made the final round of judging in the Warhammer 40K squad category.

When not staring intently at small bits of metal, resin and plastic with a paint brush in hand, Andy does technological things for one of the few respectable financial institutions left in the world. He lives in Swindon with a despairing but understanding wife, as well as two cats from whom no miniature is safe...

Oh, and he has a painting blog he occasionally updates: <http://lairofthebreviks.blogspot.com>





COBRIDGE OLD CONTEMPTIBLES PRESENT

# STOKE CHALLENGE

**NEW DATE**  
**SATURDAY 17TH SEPTEMBER 2011**

**10AM TO 4PM**

**COBRIDGE TA CENTRE**  
**STOKE-ON-TRENT**

Stoke Challenge wargames show is now in its 4th Year and hosts competitions for Wings of War, DBMM, Armati, Flames of War, Warmachine, Wargods and Warhammer 40K.

There is plenty of free parking at the TA Centre, Bar & Food, Bring & Buy and a show raffle with prizes kindly donated by traders and sponsors.

Entry to the show is just £1 per person which includes entry to the Stoke Challenge Raffle with all proceeds donated to The Army Benevolent Fund.



Traders include Lesley's Bits Box, Ironclad Miniatures, Dreamholme Scenics, Black Pyramid Gaming, Products For Wargamers, Stafford Games Figures in Comfort, Dreamholme Scenics Dave Lanchester Books and Crusader Publishing.

A Detachment 202 Field Hospital (V)  
Territorial Army Centre  
Waterloo Road, Cobridge,  
Stoke on Trent, ST6 3HJ

**For further information on the events check out the web site at**  
**[www.stoke-challenge.co.uk](http://www.stoke-challenge.co.uk) or contact Jonathan Murphy.**

**Email: [jfmy1962@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:jfmy1962@yahoo.co.uk) Phone 01782 783976**

**CRUSADER**

**STAFFORD  
GAMES**





# HEAVY GEAR ARENA

GEARS, GUNS, & THE GLORY OF THE GAME

by  
Spencer D Taylor



The world of Heavy Gear can be a dangerous place, and the planet of Terra Nova is locked in a constant power struggle between the North and South with Peace River caught in the middle. For all the excellence of Heavy Gear Blitz, it may not appeal to everyone. Perhaps you don't want to lead an entire army, maybe you want an up close and personal feel with the pilots of your Gears, or maybe you just want something a little more visceral and dangerous. Sounds like you want to lead a team in the arenas, and Heavy Gear Arena gives you just that chance.



Heavy Gear Arena is a stand-alone game from Canadian game company Dream Pod 9 set in their Heavy Gear sci-fi setting. Unlike its big brother, Heavy Gear Blitz, Arena focuses not on militaries but rather on running a small team of duelist who fight it out in the arenas for the fame and glory. It can be pretty neatly summed up in the game's tagline: "Gears, guns, and the glory of the game." Indeed; Arena is all about getting famous and making other teams look like chumps.

The first obvious difference between Arena and Blitz is the number of models. Unlike Blitz where you command an entire army which can, depending on point limit, be several

dozen models, Arena focuses on a much smaller group with no more than 6 models per side. This gives the game a much more personal feel, and also means you don't need to buy as many models to start playing. In fact; when you first start you'll more than likely only have 1 or 2 pilots and Gears, and that's if you're frugal about it.

Due to the smaller size of things the game feels like it has more weight to the actions you take. You have to pay your duelist, buy their Gears, buy weapons, pay for repairs and all the other trappings of running a team. You, as the player, take on the role of the team manager, much like an old fantasy football game of yore. There are 6 different types of managers for you to pick from: talent agency manager, noble, military officer, engineer, gangster and independent. Each type of manager has three skills: contacts, negotiation and organization. These are used to try and hire new duelist, mechanics, set up contracts with various gear and weapon manufacturers and so on. These skills can be upgraded by spending experience points to make you better at certain tasks. Each manager type also has a starting funds allocated to them to purchase Gears, weapons, and pay your duelists. It may seem like the obvious choice to take the Noble and his 1,750k starting funds as opposed to the Independent and his 900k, but each manager type also has special rules. The Independent may not start with as much cash, but he gets three free pilots as opposed to the Noble and his one. So it





becomes a thing about weighing benefits against each other and picking your style. Different managers also have different starting endorsements. These endorsements can get you cheaper Gears, cheaper weapons, extra cash, or possibly even help you on the black market. Each manager also has a talent tree available to them which can net them new contacts and give them special bonuses.

Much like managers there is a wide selection of different duelists to pick from to make up your team. You can hire military, professional, underground, test pilot, rally racer and young guns to pilot your Gears to victory. Like managers duelists have different skills for doing different things: gunnery, piloting, dueling and rally. Gunnery is used, obviously, for making ranged attacks. Piloting is used for making, and defending against, melee attacks as well as defending against ranged attacks. The Dueling skill is used for a new mechanic added to the game; combo chains. Finally rally is used to pump

up the crowd and rally team mates during matches. Duelists also have varying hiring thresholds which determines how hard it is to get them to sign with your team, and they also have a base pay listed which you have to pay (unless otherwise stated by a special rule or ability) when you first hire them. Much like managers duelists have a talent tree they can pick talents from to help them in the arena, but they also have another set of skills; their combo families. Duelists can pick from certain combo families which will allow them to unleash deadly combo attacks against enemies.

Even the Gears have gotten a bit of an overhaul. They retain some of their original stats such as size, the movement values, detect, sensors, armor and damage boxes. What's different is they now have a fire control stat which is used for shooting. They also have a new maneuver score which is used in melee. Perhaps the biggest change is the use of the new slot system. Each Gear has 5 slots; types 1 through 4 and manipulators. These slots determine which types of weapons and equipment you can put on a Gear. For example a Gear that has 2 type 3 slots can be outfitted with two pieces of type 3 equipment. This means you can't arm up some Gears with some weapons, but it also makes you think of how you'll outfit your Gears based on the available space.

Much of the core mechanics of the game come from Blitz, but with some minor variation to accommodate new terms and rules. The attack and defense scores from Blitz have been replaced by gunnery and piloting, but the basic idea is the same. The attacker rolls a number of 6 sided dice based on their gunnery skill and adds any modifiers, the defender rolls a number of dice equal to their piloting skill and applies modifiers, and the highest result on a single die wins. Threshold rolls play a much bigger part in this game than they do in Blitz. Pretty much everything has a threshold value; duelists, sponsors, support personnel such as mechanics, the combo chains and other such things. This is accomplished by rolling a number of d6 associated with the corresponding skill, applying modifiers and trying to beat the Threshold score.

The core mechanics on how you make an attack may have stayed the same, but there have been some change. Weapon ranges are the most notable. In Blitz there are several range bands





which confer various modifiers, but in Arena range bands have been cut down to three; short, medium and long. This is taken right out of DP9's online magazine Gear Up which introduced this set of ranges as an alternative in Blitz back in issue #2. This has simplified range modifiers to simply no modifier at short, a -1 at medium and a -2 at long. I must say I do prefer this range setting over the original presented in Blitz as it just makes it so much easier to figure out the modifier instead of browsing over several numbers trying to figure out the modifier. Movement modifiers have also changed a bit. When shooting at a target you get a modifier based on your speed in relation to your fire control. Stationary nets to fire control +1, combat speed is fire control with no modifier and top speed is fire control with at -1. This, again, helps to streamline and simplify things to make Arena more fast paced and brutal than Blitz. Things like cover and weapon accuracy have stayed the same, but those didn't really need any streamlining or simplifying if you ask me. Defense modifiers have also stayed much the same, as well as rate of fire and ammunition.

Arcs of fire have gotten a slight overhaul. Now there's just forward, rear, left and right. So weapons mounted in a Gear's left hand can

fire forward and left, right hand forward and right. However if you hold a weapon in both hands you can only attack out of the front arc. I like this more than the four basic arcs plus the fixed arcs in Blitz.

It feels

smoother, and a little less cluttered.

Close combat has gotten a slight change as well in Arena. While it's stayed very similar the addition of the maneuver score adds another modifier to be considered during combat. Also melee range has changed. In Blitz a model has to be in base-to-base

contact to make a melee attack, but in Arena models have a melee range which is the pilot's dueling skill(although the flow chart on page 12 of the rules says it's dueling skill plus 1 inch, but that must be a typo since everywhere else only says equal to dueling skill) with things like reach on some weapons adding to that. So a pilot with a dueling skill of 2 will have a 2 inch base melee range, and if you give them a weapon with the reach rule they get an extra 2 inches bringing that to a 4 inch melee threat range! There's also a modifier for making attacks in close combat that don't have the melee rule, giving you a -1 to your attack. Attacking with a weapon that lacks the melee rule also incurs a free strike. Free strikes are a free action which is gained by an enemy doing certain things such as attacking with a weapon lacking the melee rule, fumbling a close combat attack or ram, combo chains and even a model fumbling a free strike(it should be noted that free strikes and rams exist in Blitz as well, so these aren't an entirely new thing to Arena; I just forgot them in the Blitz article in issue #8).

There's still special actions such as reaction fire(holding an order to fire during an enemy's activation), standing by for forward observers, and rallying the crowd. Rallying the crowd





is the most noticeable since it doesn't appear in Blitz(it would just be strange if it did). Rallying is done by rolling on a duelists rally score against a threshold of 4, and if you succeed you gain reputation points for the team.

Reputation is perhaps the most interesting of the new mechanics introduced in Arena, but it's essential to making your team better. Rep points are earned by rallying the crowd, winning matches(although even if you lose you still gain some), completing combo chains, destroying enemies with combos, knocking down bigger enemies and other similar events. Rep points can be turned into XP at a 1:1 ration which can then be spent to improve the manager's skills and talents as well as improving skills and talents of duelists. Rep points are also used to help with corporate sponsorship, unlock harder to get Gears and equipment, and hire on support crews and the likes. Rep points has added a whole new layer to how the game works, because you need to spend it wisely.

Another thing that's been added is sponsors. You can't just get any Gear you like; you have to have the right connections. There are 7 Gear manufacturers in the game; NorthCo, Territorial Arms, Paxton Arms, Shaian, Dynamic Systems, Keimuri Gears and Mandeers. Based on which company you can get to sponsor you will give you various options of what Gears you can buy and use. All of the well-known Gears from Blitz are in the game under various companies, and there are even a couple of new Gears that have been added like the Boa and the Gladiator. Different Gear manufacturers won't work together, though, due to whatever in setting reasons. Obviously NorthCo and Territorial Arms won't work together because of the war between the North and South. The manufacturers are divided into 2 categories; major and minor. NorthCo, Territorial Arms and Paxton Arms are the major Gear manufacturers while the rest are listed as minor. The three major companies offer more Gear selection, but also tend to be harder to get a sponsorship from as well as costing more.

The most drastic change to combat in Arena is Combo Chains. Combo chains are exactly what they sound like; the ability to link a series of attacks against opponents to do a little extra damage(and gain some love from the fans). Each duelist has combo chains they can pick from, and every duelist has access to the standard combo form. To pull off a combo a duelist declares they wish to attempt a combo, and how many combo moves they'll attempt. The number of combo moves a duelist can chain together is their dueling skill +1. Each combo family has levels with varying threshold scores which must be beaten with a dueling roll. If you succeed you pull off the combo and gain a free action to attempt the next part of the chain. The second you fail to pass a threshold test in a combo chain the combo ends. These really add a new bit of flavor to the game, and add a bit more risk management to

what could otherwise just be a brawl.

Building a team in Arena can seem a little complicated, but that's mostly due to some odd layouts of the rules. The first thing you do is pick a manager type; picking the talents available to that manager you want. Next you get your duelists; either by attempting to hire them or getting them free as a manager perk. Next you need to buy them their Gears. All managers have access to any common and uncommon Gears, but uncommon gears are bought at market price x3 (unless you have a fixer which brings it down to x2, but never lower than that). Once you sign a contract with a gear manufacturer then you may not be able to use your old Gears anymore, so be sure to think ahead in regards to what Gears you purchase. Next you just need to equip your Gears and assign them to pilots. Once you've done that it's time to hit the arena and start earning some rep!

Arena offers 11 different match types, which can either be chosen by the players or picked at random by rolling on a table. Each match type has a model allowance per team, turn limit, winner and loser purses, weapon restrictions and special rules. This adds a nice variety to games instead of every single game being a straight up brawl. I love things like this because it adds some random

element to the game.

The last thing in the book is Hired Guns, named duelists you can hire who come pre-experienced.

These guys are expensive, but come well





experienced and with their own Gears. Really there's not much else to say about them, they are what they are.

OK so your interested? There are several ways to get ahold of the rules for this game; you can buy the book, you can buy the pdf, you can buy both, or you can buy the two player starter set. I opted for the route of the starter set, and I am quite impressed with it. The rulebook you get in it is a smaller, black and white, version of the rules, but its smaller size makes it easier to stash in a bag. The rulebook has a fair number of typos, and there's some stuff blatantly missing (like number of actions a duelist gets –it's 1 in case you're wondering). However I am reliably informed that this is all going to be addressed in the next issue of Gear Up, so it's not too big of a deal. Most people on the forums seem to know the basics of what's going on (since many of them were play-testers) so getting the info you're looking for isn't too difficult.

Rulebook issues aside; the starter set is a fantastic deal if you're looking to get into the game. You get four hired guns miniatures, the book, tape measure and 4 dice for \$65 USD. You can

also opt for a two player starter set which include a code to get a pdf copy of the rulebook for \$80 USD, but I didn't see the need for the digital copy.

The miniatures in the set are really quite nice: well detailed and with plenty of parts to put on the Gears. They also have a nice heft to them since their entirely metal, but them being metal has also made them slightly more difficult for me to assemble since I have a very bare bones modeling set up in my house. The Gears you get are a Hunter XMG and Grizzly team, and a Dart Jager and Black Mamba team. The models are built a bit differently than the standard Blitz models, the arms attaching via a ball and socket joint instead of a simple pin joint to allow for a little extra posing. While I love this extra posing option, the socket joints feel a little too small and makes attempting to glue the arms on a bit of a hassle (although once you get them on the Gears look great). I would suggest for the close combat weapons that you, provided you have the equipment, drill out a hole in the fist and slide the weapon in because I tried the method of cutting the weapons where the fist would be and trying to then reassemble them around the hand and it really didn't work so well. It doesn't look too bad with the swords, but the Grizzly's axe sits kind of tilted on mine because the way the hand is designed.

The hands all tend to be turned slightly out from the body, which can make attaching the included shield a bit tricky unless you cut the entire stock off all the guns included. Don't get me wrong; these are nice models, but they aren't very beginner friendly if you're new to the whole assembling miniatures thing.

The biggest thing about the included miniatures is that the teams seem sort of lopsided. The Black Mamba is not the Southern equivalent of the Grizzly, and the Grizzly seems to tower above the other three models despite the Black Mamba's still impressive size.

Overall the box set is a fantastic deal, and the game is really quite solid. The biggest selling point to me is the amount of customization you can do with your Gears. It really does remind me of something Games Workshops Mordhiem, but with robots. If you like Heavy Gear Blitz and want something a little more intimate, and a little more brutal, then I highly recommend grabbing Heavy Gear Arena. And hey; this is the perfect excuse to buy that Blitz model you've always wanted but could never find a use for.





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Construction and commentary mostly by Kenny Robb with help from Andy Walker



As the boss here at The Ancible, I tend to let the team have all the fun when it comes to reviewing new stuff however, when Privateer Press (PP) released the Khador Battle Wagon I put my foot down and said "this one is mine". I fully expected to have a fight but they just ignored me as usual and went about their own tasks. So when William Shick of PP sent in a sample of said Battle Wagon, I grabbed the box and quickly retired to my painting table and started the build process.

Before I start I just want to say one thing about the article. This is not meant as a painting tutorial, it's simply me sharing the way that I would paint the model. But before we get down to that, let's take a look at what you get and how it comes packaged.

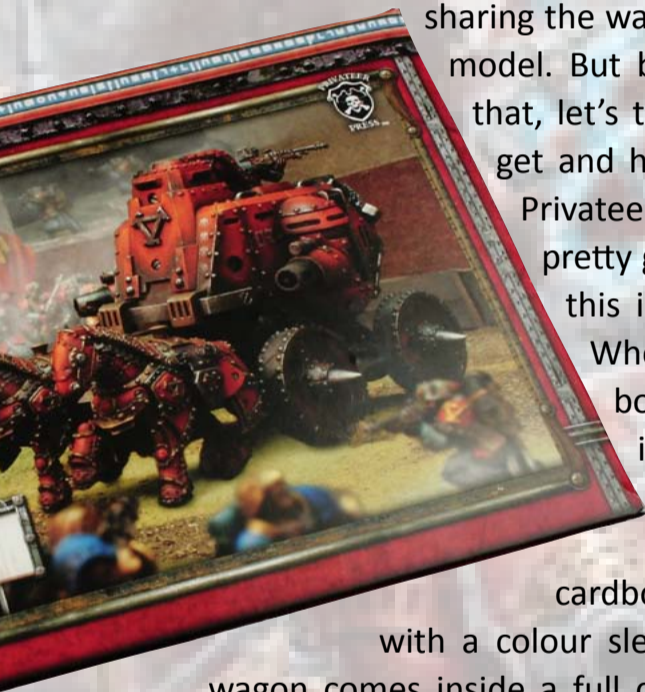
Privateer Press normally does a pretty good job of packing and this is no exception.

Where the usual box sets are in plastic containers inside a cardboard box with a colour sleeve, the battle wagon comes inside a full colour box with a sectioned cardboard inner box. Some of the metal components are inside the standard plastic container in one of the sections. The other sections contain the resin bits that go to make up the bulk of the model.

Once all the bits, are unpacked and laid out, there are in total 17 pieces, including a very large base

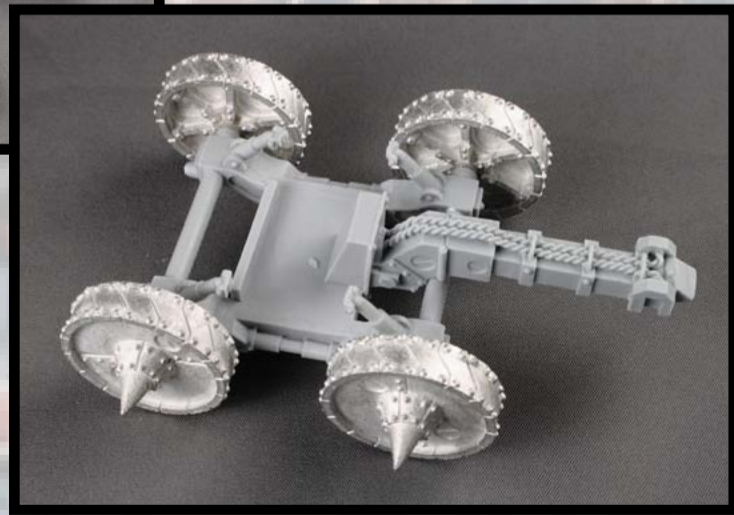
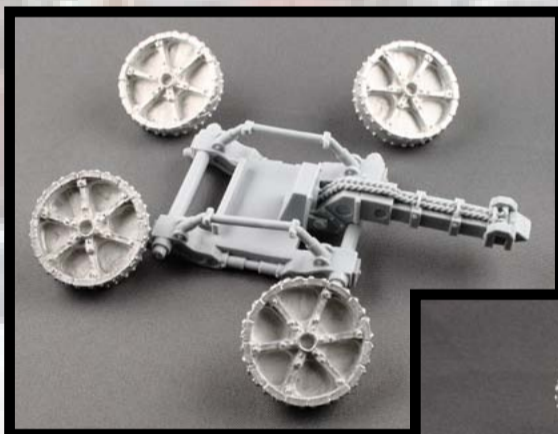
and a stat card so you can use the model in the game (why else would you have the model?)

So having seen the resin bits, the first thing I did was wash them to get rid of the release agent. I learned this lesson the hard way, after an ugly incident with a river troll. While I was at it, I gave the white metal a rub down with a toothbrush and white spirit.



### Let's Build

The first thing I did was to clean and assemble the running gear, a fairly simple process of sticking the four metal wheels onto the resin chassis. The wheels fit well and as a result, they sit nice and square which gives the



model a good firm base. While I was waiting for that to dry, I cracked on and assembled the main part of the body. Not much to it apart from the two gun barrel assemblies and the rear hatch. With that out of the way there is not much left in the way of assembly, apart from the horses and





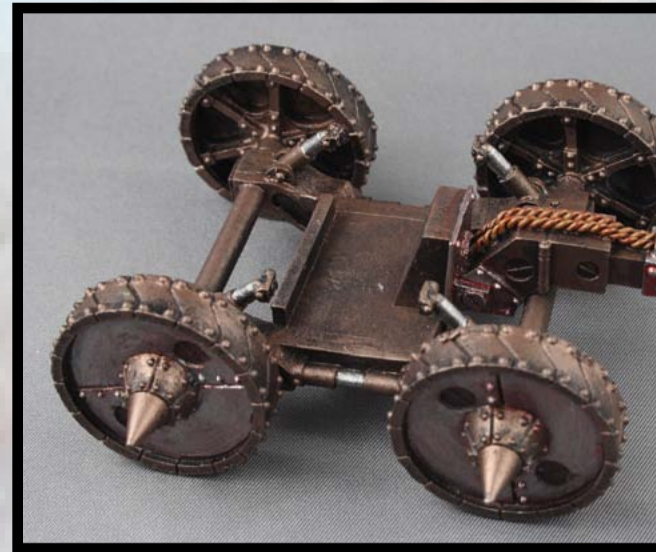


the rifleman who is shooting out of the rear hatch, so I stuck those as well.

It's all very well talking about the assembly

On the gun carriage, I dry-brush with Vallejo Tinny Tin as I like the dark colour that signifies the base metal that I think Khador use for all their war machines. (You can guess that

I might have painted some other warjacks the same way). Once I have done that and it is dry, I use Games Workshop green ink (watered down) to give a worn and rusting look to the metal. Any parts of the gun carriage that are going to have red armour on them I dry-brush with Vallejo Gunmetal Metal. I think this gives a good base colour for the next effect. Next, I move onto the main body of the gun carriage where I gave it a good coating of Gunmetal Metal. While I am waiting for that to dry, I do the horses in the same way, black undercoat and Gunmetal metal.



process but let's talk about the quality of the components that go to make up gun carriage. The resin parts are well cast with lots of detail and hardly any flash; there were a couple but nothing to write home to. The metal bits have hardly any flash and a quick rub down with a file gets everything looking smooth and ready for painting.

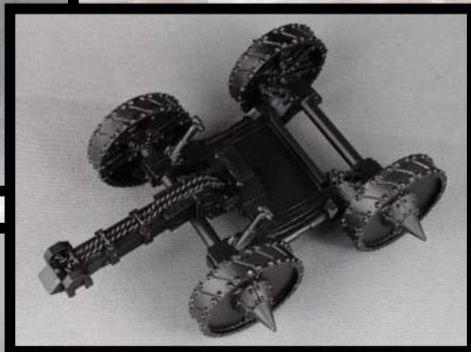
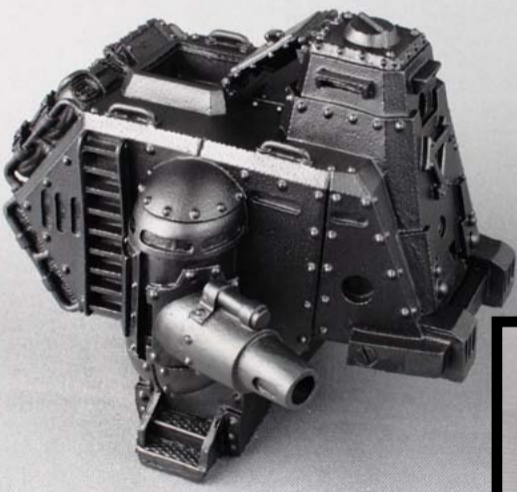
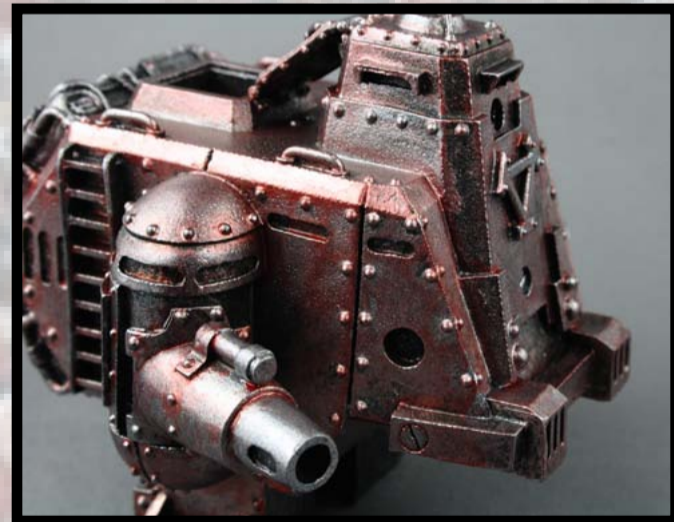
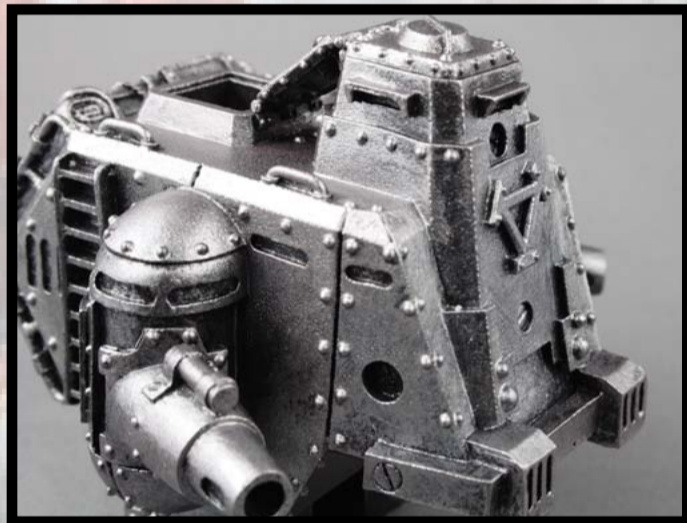


The horses on the other hand, require a bit more preparation and when the two halves are stuck together there is a bit of filling required, but it's nothing an average modeller couldn't deal with.

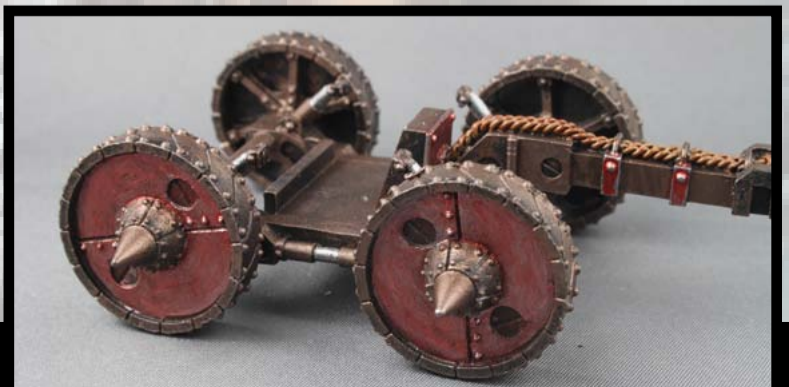
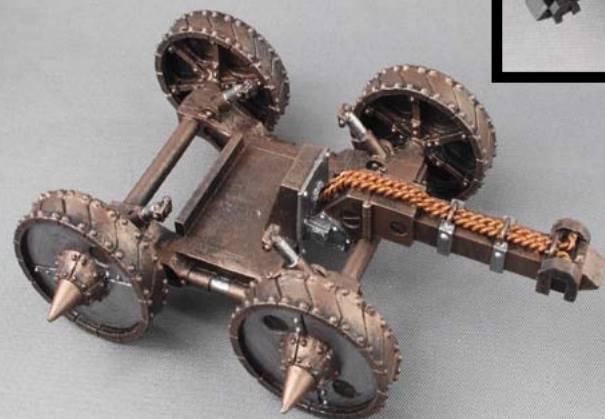
### Onward to Paint

Some people prefer grey undercoat, some people white. Me, I'm a traditionalist and given what I am about to do, black is the best colour. I feel a bit of a footnote

The next bit just requires a bit of time and patience. I take red ink, again Games Workshop, and paint the entire upper section with it. My tip, if I am allowed to give one, is that I put a little (and I mean a very, very little) washing up liquid in the ink. This ink is watered down a lot and it usually takes about 3 or 4 coats to get it to the required effect. I have tried putting on less watered down ink but that just doesn't seem to work too



coming on. I really like this technique and I discovered it by accident through an over use of Ink.





well. I also do the ink on the bits of the lower carriage that need doing.

At this point it is probably worth mentioning that I haven't put the carriage together yet. I should also tell you that the inking process is quite messy and can take time to do, but if you have a sunny day and you can find a spot of sunshine to put the model in between coats things will go much faster.

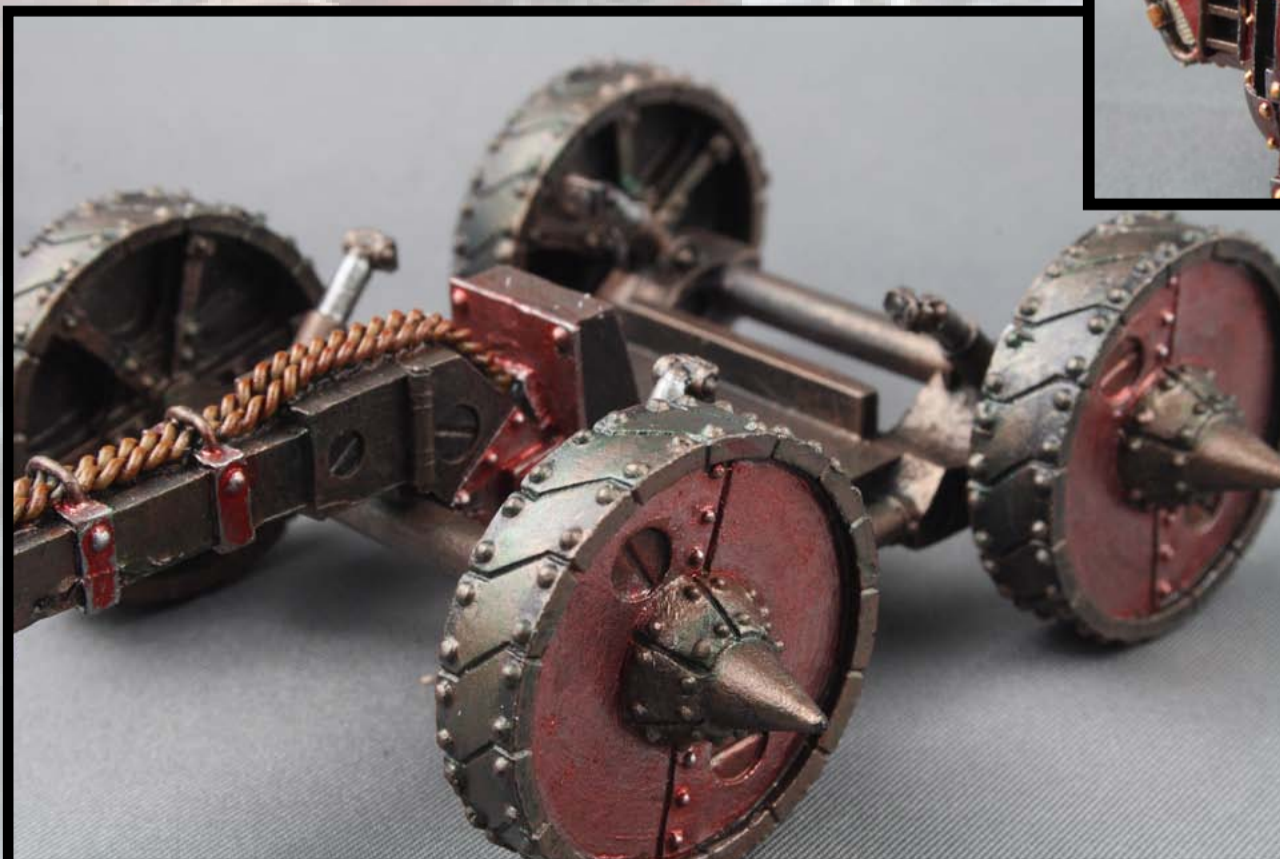
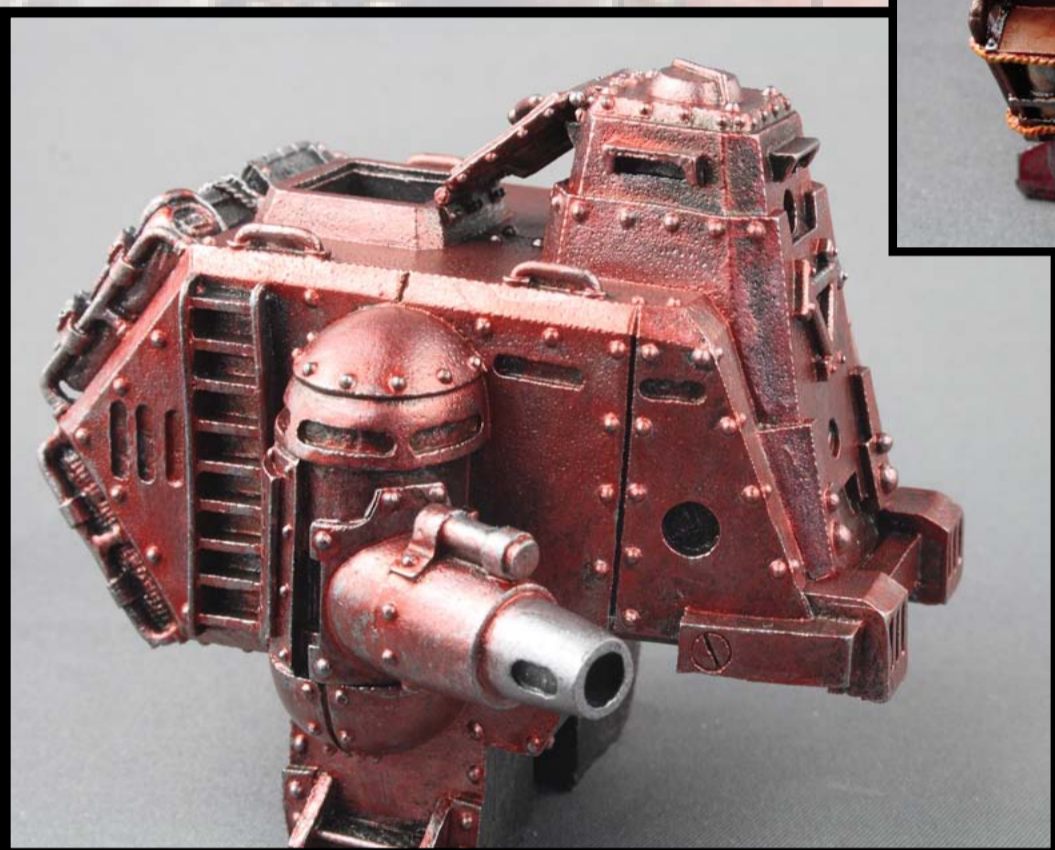
Finally all my ink coats are all done. The nice thing about doing it this way is that where the ink has run off the edges and left them more gunmetal than red, it looks like the edge is worn, highlighting without highlighting. Now it's time to move onto detailing.

On the back of the battlewagon is a whole load of nice looking luggage and stuff, so I got stuck into that using combinations of paint and inks. The next bit is a bit of a personal touch to fit in with the rest of my Khador models, and that is gold. I use gold for the Khador Symbols and all of the rivets on the battle wagon.

Ok, the time has come to construct the Battle wagon and see how it looks. I have by no means finished it but for the next stage I really need to have it together so I can start the weathering process.

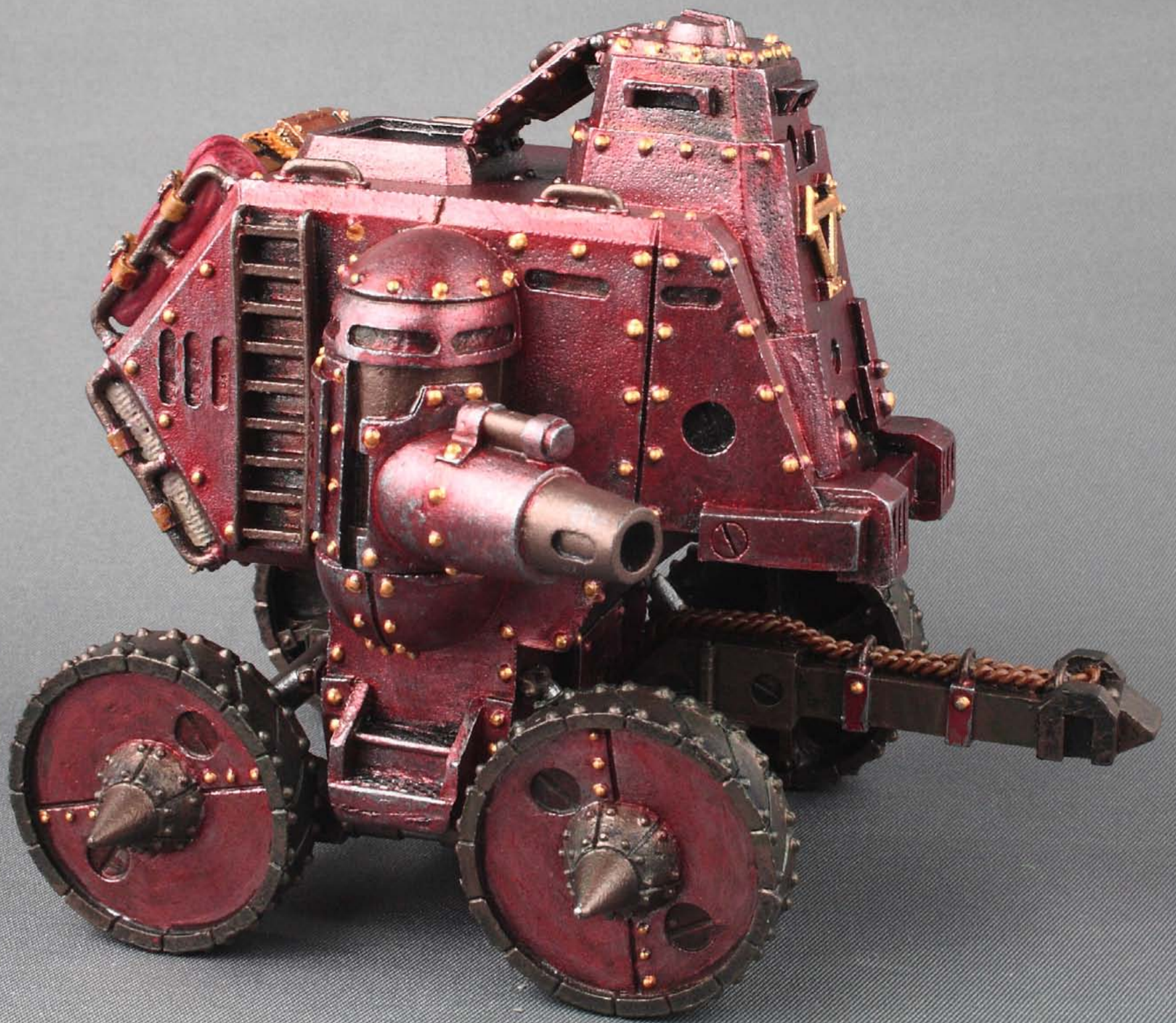
So we have a very shiny, straight out

of the factory looking Gun Carriage which, if fielded on the battlefield, would scream "newbie" and we can't have that. The first thing to do is to get some Gunmetal



Metal paint and with a very thin brush make score and scratch marks in the red paint. These would normally be at the edges but basically anywhere things might bounce off the paintwork. If I had more time I would have scored the basic model before we started with a Dremel grinding wheel or something similar, but I didn't so paint will have to do. Once the Gunmetal has dried I use some brown ink to cover the bits I just scored. Again using watered down ink just to make it look like rust.





It's getting near the end of the process and it's starting to look pretty good, even if I say so myself. It's time for a test fitting to see how it is going to fit on the base, and to see if I have to make any last minute base adjustments in order to get a good fit. As you can see, it all fits together pretty well and I'm happy to move to the next bit. Weathering is always a bit of mystery, and even though I have used weathering powders in the past I'm not going to as I think it may be too much with the metallic type armour effect. I'm just going to get a very big brush and do it old school with dry-brush black. I have, like all of us have had, some interesting mishaps with dry-brushes. Therefore, I am really careful to try and wipe off all the paint and really only leave it as a dirty brush and take my time to build up the layers. The effect takes time and you can't always see it coming, because it may take 3 or 4 layers, but when it does it is grrrrreat!







## Horse, Horse

In case you are wondering, I haven't forgotten the horses and I left them to dry with the gunmetal on them. I mix up some more ink and get to work. At this point I could try and pick out the details and only paint the ink onto what needs it, but that is going to take too long. I'll pick out the details in a bit once I have the base colours on them.

Now that the base ink is on the horse, it's time to pick out the detail with gunmetal and gold. (Ok I know you got a



sneak peek in the last photograph). Since I weathered the Gun Carriage, I decided to do the horses as well, but only 2 layers using the logic that they are moving all the time and therefore dirt won't stick. (Don't you just hate it when you are using logic to justify painting decisions?)





## All Done (Well nearly)

The main bits of the construction are complete and all that remains is to give everything (remembering not to stick it to the base just yet) a couple of coats of Testors Dulcoat. This helps to even everything off and dull down any highlights that may have gone astray. If you have never tried this varnish, then I would suggest that you go get some. Best discovery I ever made.

For the more observant amongst you (now you're all wondering what I am going to say) you will have noticed that the rear hatch of the gun carriage is open and I have done nothing with the gunner. Good spot! I decided to be lazy and give the gunner to Andy Walker to do while I was doing the gun carriage, so all I need to do now is to stick him in the hatch opening and all is done.

## A Bit About the Base

The base that is provided is one of the biggest bases I have ever seen for a model that can be used in a tabletop Wargames. It is a whopping chunk of real estate which needs to be based, painted and finished. I decided on something fairly simple and went about constructing a rutted road across the centre of the base for the battle wagon to sit in. I used a combination of green stuff, plastic card, sand, cork rocks, grass and water effect (with a sprinkling of snow) to make the base. Hopefully it fits right in with the theme of my Khador Force. I have to come clean and say that I made a bit of a schoolboy error here in as much as I always give everything a good coat of Testors Dulcoat. Just as I was about to spray the base I realised that it would dull down the water effect. Luckily masking tape came to the rescue and with a bit of cutting the water effect was saved.







## Summing Everything Up

I present to you the Privateer Press Khador Gun Carriage as assembled and painted (in the main by me, with rear gunner by Andy Walker)

I have really enjoyed the whole process and think that the model is beautiful in its Khadorness. It required very little cleaning up and after a quick bath to remove the release agent, went together with no problems. I chose to paint it first, and then put it together, and I was glad I went down that route as I normally build and then curse a lot when I can't get my paintbrush into the tight corners. There is loads of detail all over the model to keep the painters out there happy.

If I had to be picky, then as a gamer the model would look great on the table, and at a points cost of 9 is not too bad. However, the big issue is the cost of the model to buy. At £50+ you could get 3 warjacks or a fair amount of troops for the same money. There is no doubt in my mind that it is very much a collector's model and a very fine one it is.







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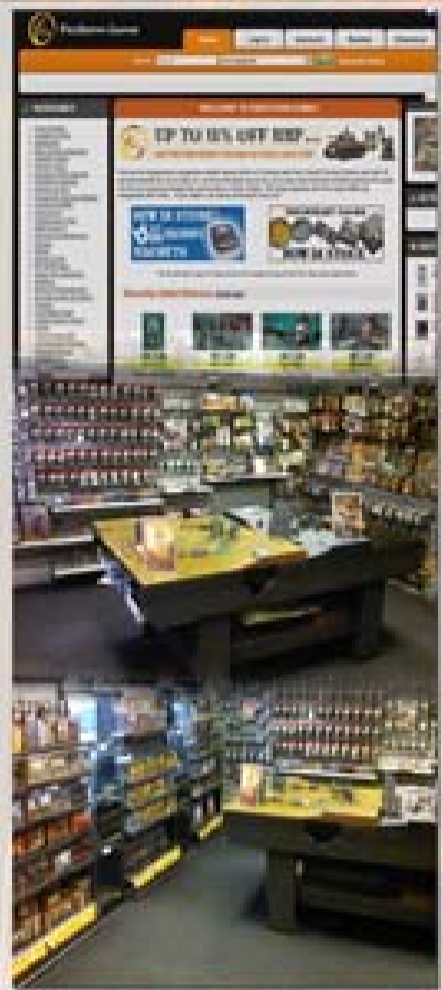
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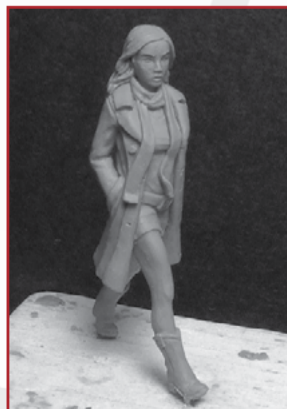


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# .45 ADVENTURE

THRILLING ACTION IN THE PULP ERA

BY MARIJN BIERHOF

## Are you ready for adventure?

*I remember it well. I was ten years old and me and my mate were in trance in front of the telly. We were watching 'Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom' and we loved it. From the banquet to the scene with the rope bridge, we wanted more. We saw the movie again the next day and then replayed it with Playmobil. We wanted to be Indiana Jones! It was my first experience with Pulp and it's still one of my favourite genres.*

## But what is Pulp?

A good question. Pulp originates back to the last years of the 19th century. Back then heroic stories of tough detectives and diabolical masterminds were printed on cheap paper made from wood pulp (hence the name 'pulp fiction'). The pulp stories became quite popular as they were cheap, easy reading material and featured real heroes and ultimate villains. It covers genres from detectives, to Indiana Jones, to the heralds of modern comic book heroes. It usually involves short

stories where the heroes try to solve mysteries, travel to mysterious and unexplored lands and fight with arch enemies.

Many publishers saw a growing market and released their own pulp magazines. During the first decades of the twentieth century pulp fiction became an important part of printed product and spawned famous characters like Doc Savage, The Shadow and Fu Manchu. After World War II the popularity slowly declined, probably due to mass production of televisions and competition by comic books and cheaper glossy magazines (also called 'slicks'). By the end of the fifties, pulp disappeared. But pulp fiction lives on and now many people are still charmed by the stories and characters. And fortunately for miniature gamers, there are also quite a lot of game systems for pulp gaming!

## Fighting crime with dice

There are all kinds of pulp games. Some of them, like 'Where Heroes Dare', focus on bigger groups of models and large vehicles like tanks or robots. Others, like 'Jimland' approach it from a more abstract point of view to make a longer campaign possible in a couple of



LLC



hours. And then there's .45 Adventure (45A). This game does a different take on the genre and is mainly about the characters. It involves only a handful of miniatures and plays on a small area (usually two by two feet). This makes it easy to get into as you don't need a lot of miniatures and scenery to get started. I got into 45A as I wanted to combine my love for pulp with miniature gaming. It seemed like a good way to get started. Back then the game was in its first incarnation. The first edition was first aimed at the detective-part of pulp (think of *The Shadow* and you'll get the idea). Rattrap Productions released several extra books with rules on weird wars, super science, dinosaurs and the Mongolian deserts. This way players could create stories for their favourite pulp genre. The downside was that you had several books which you needed during play. The rulebooks also weren't really attractive. The layout seemed to be done in Word and the pictures in Paint. Not the fanciest stuff. But hey, if the rules are great then we would be happy as gamers. And although I liked the rules in general, it wasn't exactly my thing. Too many rules, too many

skills and too many hassle to create characters. So when I heard that Rattrap Productions would be releasing a second edition I was interested.

When it became clear they would condense all the rules into one book, make a lot of stuff easier to work with and streamline the whole product, I became very interested. So I donned my fedora, holstered my .45 and grabbed my whip. Time to take this one for a ride and see if it's worth the purchase.

### Less is more

When the envelope arrived at my home four days after ordering I quickly tore it open. I was surprised to see a slim book of only 84 pages. Wow! Going from seven books to one book with only 84 pages is no small feat. The cover is real spiffy with three main characters facing off against evil cultists. Yes, Rattrap Productions also added rules for Lovecraftian monsters and spells. The Mythos fan in me is happy. On the backside there is a snapshot of a newspaper with the villain 'The Jade Hood' on it. A nice detail. So the cover looks great. The book's inside pages are also nicely done. First, the book is full colour. It has colour photos and all chapter titles are in colour. The whole product looks a lot better than its predecessor.

The book is divided into several chapters that go through the rules bit by bit. Fortunately, there is an excellent table of contents at the start, so it's easy to find the rule you're looking for. The chapters are short and are easy to read. You know what to find at each one.

But there are some nit-picks too. First, the book misses an introduction. After the table of contents, the book goes straight to the rules. I had expected to see an introduction by the writer, Richard Johnson. Next up, there are quite some typos in the rules. These aren't big ones, but small ones like 'adn' instead of 'and'. A spell check in a word processor should have taken care of most of these. Although they don't make it hard to read the rules, they take away some of the charm. But enough about layout and editing...let's take a look at the rules.

### Shiv and Heaters

Like I said before, 45A is about characters and the stories they make. The game is for two or more players and each player controls one or several characters. These characters can be lowly thugs or even heroic archaeologists. On one side are the good guys and on the other side the bad guys. You can introduce as many players to the game as you like. Players can control one character or maybe a group. It's all up to you. The characters are divided into three 'grades', from grade 1 to 3. Grade 1 are the lowly minions, while grade 3 are the real characters. The higher the grade, the more skills the character has and the better its characteristics are. Next to the regular players, the game works well with a gamemaster. This player controls the scenario, the random elements and introduces new and interesting things during play to surprise everybody.



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Each character has several characteristics to define its abilities during the game. These are: Defensive Rating (DR), Brains (BR), Will (WP), Brawn (BW), Guts (GT), Shiv (SH), Heater (HT), Dodge (DG) and Speed (SP). Each characteristic has a value and the higher, the better. A smart character probably has a good Brains value, but its Shiv (its ability to fight in hand-to-hand combat) usually is on the low side. A gun freak has a high Heater value, but its Brawn (physical strength) may be lower. So these values set the different characters apart.

So how do these characteristics work? There are two ways: a stat test or an opposed roll for combat. Whenever a model needs to make a stat test, he rolls a ten-sided die (D10) and adds the score to the result. If the total score is 10 or more, the test is passed. In combat, both the attacker and defender roll one or more D10, add the relevant value to the highest result and compare it with each other. The one with the highest result is the winner. If the attacker has the highest total

value, then the defender is hit and otherwise the attack is dodged.

If a model is hit, the attacker rolls a D10 to see what body location he hits (head, torso, arms or legs). You then compare the Weapon Strength with the location's Defensive Rating. If higher, then a wound is inflicted.

If more than twice as high, two wounds are inflicted. If the Weapon Strength is lower, then the target gets a save which may deflect the hit.

A character has its own sheet with hit points for all locations. As the characters

are wounded, their abilities are lowered and they will have a harder time during the game. For instance, a character that has taken a blow to the head has its Brains and Will reduced, making it harder to investigate clues. The higher the model's grade, the more damage it can sustain. The grade 3 models can take quite some damage, while the grade 1 characters can be taken out by one attack. So yes, the bad guys should take along many cheap minions to throw at the heroes!

The game uses all kinds of weapons and the book even included a small card with their statistics. It's a handy tool during the game. So you can have models firing rifles, pistols, blow guns or throwing knives. It's all in the book. In addition to weapons, the game also has rules for regular equipment which models can use in scenarios, like digging tools. And if you're missing something, it's easy to create it.

The system is easy to remember and has loads of possibilities. You want a character to examine some strange Atlantean glyphs? Make a Brains stat test. A character wants to kick open a door? Make a Brawn test. So whenever a player wants to do something new and unforeseen, use the most logical characteristic and make a stat test. Great stuff for a Gamemaster. Encourage your players to grab that vine and sling across the piranha infested river!

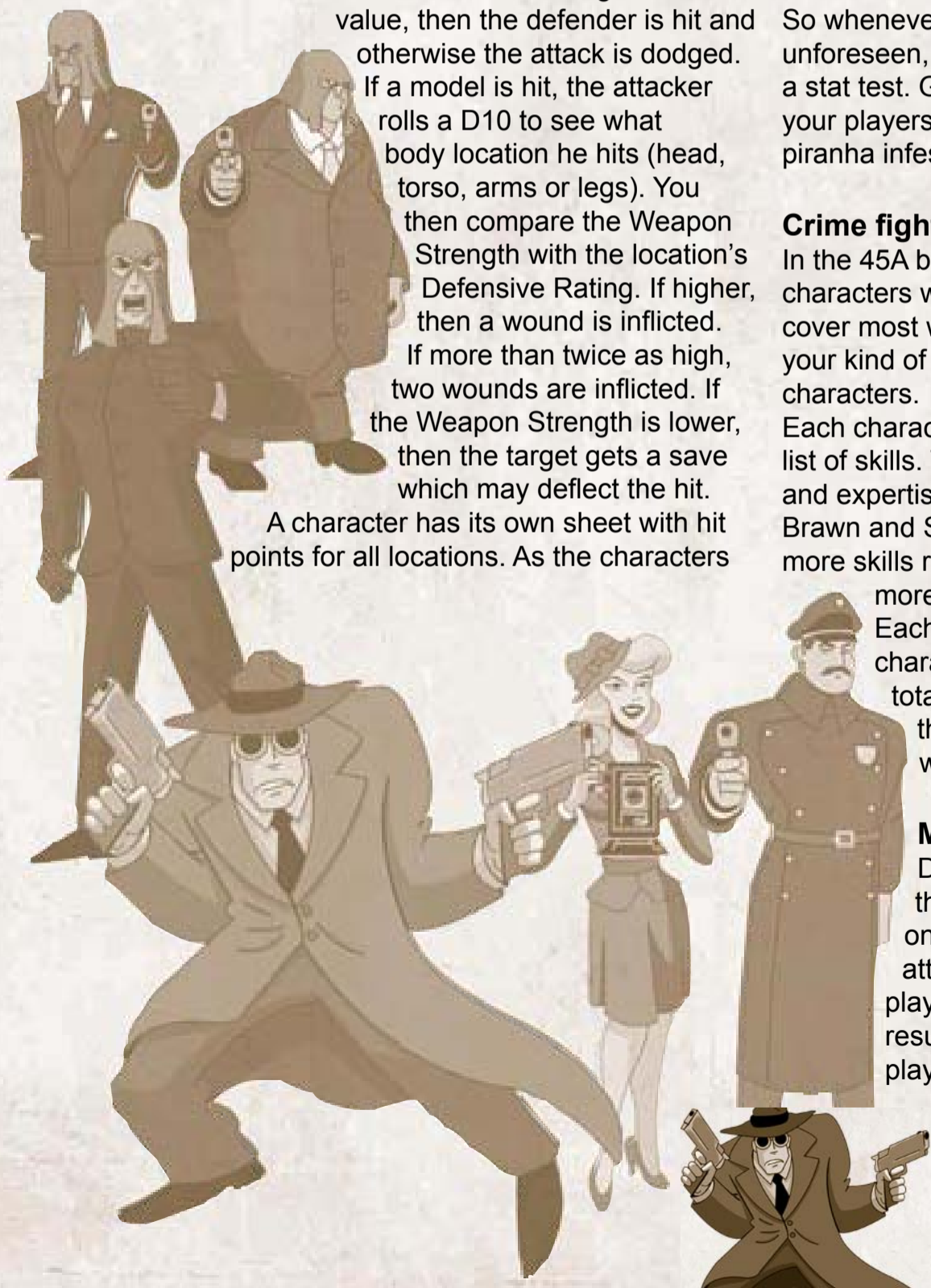
### Crime fighters and professors

In the 45A book there are all kinds of profiles for different characters which you can use for your games. They cover most well known types but if you are missing your kind of hero, there are rules for creating your own characters.

Each character has its own characteristics and has a list of skills. These skills let you add even more flavour and expertise to your character. A prize-fighter has more Brawn and Shiv-related skills, while a professor can pick more skills related to his Brains. These skills let you roll more D10 during combat or give certain bonuses. Each player can choose his own skills for his character. So even two prize-fighters can be totally different from each other. It also allows the players to personalise the characters the way they want them to be.

### Moving and doing stuff

During a game turn, all players can activate their characters. All characters can take one of several actions, from moving to attacking and interacting with scenery. The players roll a D10 and the one with the highest result can activate one model first. The next player then activates one model and so forth.



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The characters activate by grade, so first all grade 3 characters activate, then grade 2's and finally the grade 1 minions. This means your heroes and super villains can also activate before the rest. Since the game usually use only a handful of miniatures, a game turn goes quite fast. Once all characters have activated, a new game turn begins. So as a player you never have to wait long before you can use a model. Both players are into the action and can play actively. Good stuff.

### Super science

The rulebook has several chapters to give you rules for interesting things like super science items (robots, freeze rays, etc.), occult creatures and spells and simple rules for vehicles and flying. Like all rules in 45A, these are kept simple and straight forward. So they are easy to implement in your games, without slowing them down too much. The players and gamemaster can agree on how much of these stranger elements they add to the game or how realistic they want to keep it.

### Scenarios

The game of 45A is centred around the characters and the stories, so scenarios are very important. The rule book has some good tips on creating scenarios and how to combine these in a longer campaign. In a 45A scenario the characters usually try to find something, do something, rescue someone, etc. To simulate this, the game uses clue markers. These markers are placed on the playing area and they can be interacted with. Once a model

gets close to a clue marker, the player flips it over and checks what it is. Sometimes you find nothing, maybe you find your goal or if you're unlucky you walk into a trap! The gamemaster can think of whatever clues he can think of and place them on the field. The rules state these shouldn't be able to kill the characters outright, but wound them or maybe give them a boon (hey look, a spear of destiny!). Once a model has found the goal of the scenario, the game immediately changes its pace as it quickly becomes a race for the finish. This gives nice games, but I think you do need a gamemaster who knows how to create a good scenario and give it some interesting plot twists. Without a gamemaster it can be hard to keep the balance. The gamemaster can keep the game at that movie-like experience. The good part is that you can use any pulp novel, comic book or a movie as a start point and take it from there.

If you want it to the next level, you can create a campaign. You link the scenarios together and create a longer story in which your characters travel across the globe, meet all kinds of creatures and characters, face off against occult creatures and madmen and in the end maybe decide the fate of the world.

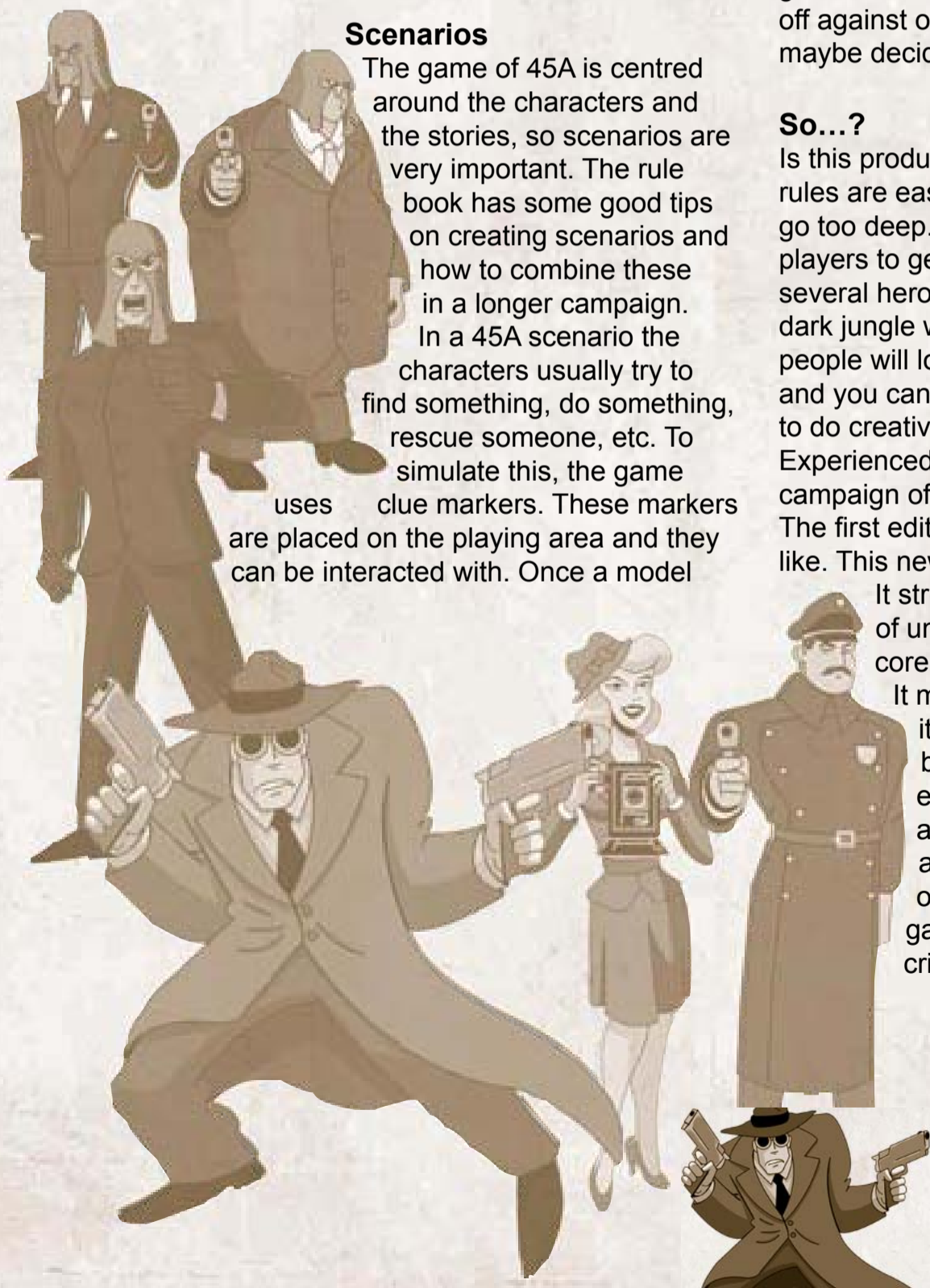
### So...?

Is this product worth the \$20 tag? I sure think so. The rules are easy to follow and understand and they never go too deep. This makes it a great rules set for new players to get into. Just make a simple scenario with several heroes fighting off against antagonists in a dark jungle with many nasty surprises and I think many people will love it. Thinking off a scenario is easy stuff and you can easily implement new rules, let people try to do creative things and games don't take that long. Experienced players should be able to play out a short campaign of 3-4 games in one evening.

The first edition of 45A had some shortcomings I didn't like. This new edition really made it into a great product.

It streamlined the rules very well, removed a lot of unnecessary rules and makes for an excellent core product.

It may not be the fanciest gaming book and it has quite some typos. But it's hard to beat for its price and offers a great gaming experience for all kinds of gamers. So if you are looking for adventure and want to have a rules set with which you can play out your own pulp fiction, I can really recommend this game. So whip out that Tommy gun...there is crime to fight!



# RATTRAP PRODUCTIONS LLC



# Infinity Miniatures New Releases

## March New releases

### Magister Knights (PanOceania).

New release! A new Infinity unit box. With this release you can build all the different weapon options of the Magisters and compose an Infinity Fireteam of this fierce warriors of God. The Magister Knights are picked out between the most fanatical members of the Military Order to which they belong. Specialized in close combat, the fearsome Magisters are armoured monks with a mission: to fight and to kill in defense of God and PanOceania.



INFINITY

### Khawarijs (Rifle + Light Shotgun).

An old and discontinued release has come back! The Khawarijs, literally the "Red Turbans", are the members of the Haqqislamite Supersoldier program. Their biogenetically enhanced skills provided them a superior mobility, being able to jump amazing distances and altitudes. The Khawarij of the old Haqqislam Starter Pack is release now for all the new and recent Haqqislamite players who cannot take it. Get rid of your enemies by surprise with this extraordinary light assault trooper!





**Dozers, Field Engineers (Akrylat-Kanone).** New release! The Dozers are the Ariadna's field engineers and the responsables of the robotic Traktor Muls, in both versions, the unarmed de-mining/transport and also the campaign light artillery carrier. But, in Ariadna, even the engineers have to fight in frontline, by this reason, the Dozers carry the Akrylat-Kanone, a weapon capable to stop the most powerful adversary without damage his armour or equipment, so, later, they can recover and recycle it!

**Dasyus (Hacker).**

The cyberwarfare specialist of the ALEPH's stealth unit is one of the most fearsome adversaries for any technified army. The Daysu Hacker can be deployed hidden in the game table thanks to her Infiltration and Thermo-Optic Camouflage Special Skills combination, making her a valuable attack and ambush troopers. Let you be hacked by this sexy and dynamic female operator!





**At Salute 2011, I was walking around the show saying hello to people I know and being introduced to new people. While on the Taban stand I got talking to Frank Brusset, who introduced me to a delightful young lady named Valerie Bruere. It turns out that she had done some painting for Smart Max who were in the stand right next door. Valerie and I got to talking about painting and the like.**

**KR: So tell me a bit about yourself.**

VB: I live in France near Paris and I am a career advisor. I help people, based on the skills they have, to get the best jobs available, or if they are lacking certain skills I help them get the best training.

**KR: What makes you happy and sad?**

VB: Well, many things can make me happy or sad. It's a complicated question but I'll give it a try.

Everyday little pleasures or big moments of life can make me happy. The simple and pure moments of joy, when I'm feeling ALIVE, forgetting about everything else, just being happy to be HERE, in the moment. I appreciate the beauty of nature, the gift of life, and feel like a (little) part of it all. Those kinds of moments make me feel both very humble and serene at the same time.

Sharing things with someone else can be wonderful too, be it feelings, emotions, interests or thoughts. And last but not least, when I look at myself and realise that I'm proud of the person I am makes me feel positively happy too.

Wickedness and violence that harms or oppresses others repulses me, and can make me feel deeply sad and angry. I tend to

think that under certain circumstances any human being can be very mean and selfish and I don't like to see that.

I also tend to think you don't find happiness, you choose it, or build it yourself, often for yourself. It is also really great to make someone else happy, which is something I really like to do. But I also think that in the end, everyone chooses their own happiness. We should live life as it comes and keep ourselves open to all those great gifts that life can put on our path!

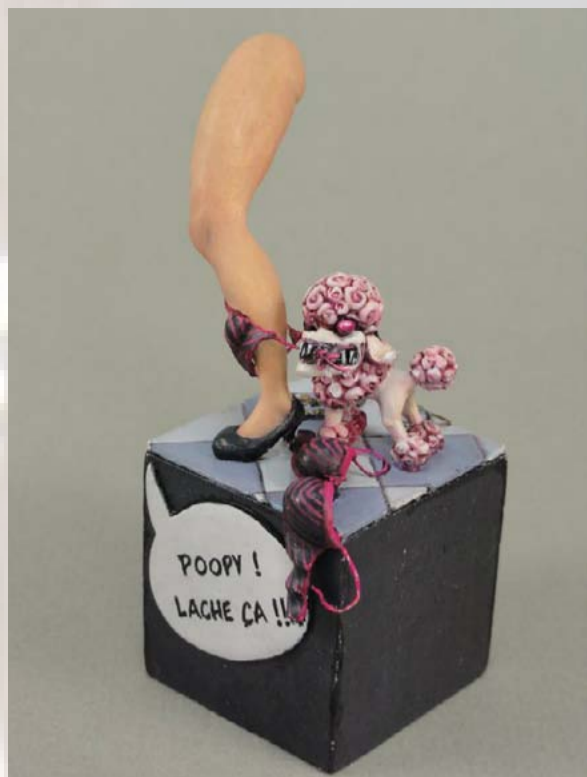
**KR: How did you get into painting?**

VB: My boyfriend has been playing Warhammer for years, and was painting his own armies. I was never interested in playing or painting armies, but thanks to him, that's how I discovered minis. I wasn't interested until about two years ago when I decided to go through a big occupational retraining. I had more free time and I decided to invest it into something for me...something creative. I use to draw a lot when I was a child but had stopped a long time ago, so I decided to try minis painting.

I began by entering a mini at Games Day in France. This really was a big project for me as a beginner, as it involved a lot of sculpting and conversion work. I did the best I could and created my mini "Gnoblar Attack," representing a giant surrounded by gnoblar. When I look at it now from a technical painting point of view, I have come a long way, but







because it was my first mini, I am still very much attached to it. Unfortunately I didn't win a prize, but I had taken the first step, and that encouraged me a lot!

I had painted 3 or 4 little minis before, but for me, it really began when I was both painting and sculpting. I soon realised the pleasure and personal satisfaction I got from doing it and from getting the result I wanted. Mini painting and sculpting is now a very important activity in my life, and it's bringing me a lot of pleasure and happiness!

**KR: How old were you?**

VB: I was 29 years old, unusually late to begin painting minis, right?

**KR: Who got you started?**

VB: I think I got started all by myself because I wanted to. I can be very focused and hard working when I put my mind to it, though there were a lot of people who helped and encouraged me along the way.

## Poopy! Lache ça!!

Poopy is a cute and funny mini from the french company Ammon Miniatures. It was love at first sight with Poopy, I adopted it instantly, and I immediately knew what I would do with it: a slightly sassy mini, painted in very girly colors, to please both guys and girls!

I like to put those kind of funny little minis in scenery, and build an elaborate set around it to make the miniature the real "star"!

Moreover, this gives me the opportunity to sculpt unusual things, like a miniature bra in here, which is always a lot of fun to do! Does anyone here have experience in sculpting mini bras? No? You have to be creative all by yourself.

I also wanted to give the mini a "cartoony" feel and, as I always do, integrate the title in the scenery. That's how the idea of the bubble came about and of course I wanted her to be french, so she's speaking in French and as she is tid up in her underwear by her dog, which prevents her to completely leave the "cube", it seemed normal that she's a little pissed, right?

My boyfriend, Viktor, was the very first one to encourage me to do it. He made it possible by giving me the time and resources so I really have to thank him for that! I have also been lucky enough to have had advice from several very good mini painters.

I first went to the painting workshops of Jeremy Bonamant, who's an excellent teacher, and this gave me a very strong grounding. You can make significant progress if you listen and learn. I found that my use of colour started to bring my minis to life.

I also received great advice from the German painters, Ben Komets and Matt Cexwish, whose friendly advice, encouragement and good painting tricks were really useful when I began painting.

I had the chance to be taught sculpting by Allan Carrasco, whose work I like a lot. This was a priceless opportunity and I appreciate it a lot. He is just such a wonderful and talented individual.

Many others, painters and friends, encouraged me or gave me good advice. It's not easy to go through names, as I will inevitably forget some! So I prefer not to go in there, to avoid offending anyone, however on the sculpting front I'd like to name Matou, the sympathetic manager of Maow Miniatures,

## Coffee Break

The star of "Coffee Break" is the little Godzi from Maow Miniatures. Little fantasy monsters, put together with normal life objects, like a cup of coffee in here, is an idea I like a lot and I thought about this one for a long time and tried to make it seem normal that you might see this in normal life.

So, when I saw Godzi, with his little duck rubber ring, I immediately felt like he had what it takes to fulfil my expectations and he did not disappoint me.

I like the difference in scale which adds humour to the piece and using object in this way adds to the overall look of the finished article. In Coffee Break, Godzi is shamelessly using this cup of coffee as a swimming pool! Lucky him, a very efficient to wake up in the morning!

This mini was nice to do and very easy to paint and I had a lot of fun doing the false coffee and the false sugar. I was really wondering when I started this how to proceed and have it look realistic but in the end it came out very well and I was satisfied with the end result.





## Little Alice

Little Alice is a mini from Smart Max, a very known and beloved mini brand. It's definitely without hesitation, my favourite mini brand as they do some really great minis with amazing sculpts from their very rich and interesting universe. Sorry for all the enthusiasm, but I told you, I just love their minis.

Alice is one of the only minis I would never considered converting in any way as I like to do a lot of work to make the mini fit the secenario I have come up with.

I decided to paint Alice just the way she is, alone in her base, with her white rabbit in the arms with only the light from the street lamp. The painting job makes her look a little like a ghost, on purpose of course, as she's actually a dead little girl... Oooh creepy creepy...

This mini was a real pleasure to paint, as the sculpting job is of very good quality and very precise. And of course, it's very pleasn to achieve good results a pleasurable experience!

for choosing to market the second mini I made. It was a little piggy bank mini, which sold for only one Euro. It was really great to see this mini sold.

**KR: What do you find the most challenging aspect of painting?**

VB: It's not the hardest in a technical point of view, but the thing I like the least is painting metal. I prefer to paint skin or clothes.

**KR: What is your favourite model of all time and why?**

VB: It's really hard to choose, as there are so many great miniatures out there. But if I have to choose one, it will definitely be a unique model from Allan Carrasco called "Mickette". I like it because of the high quality and realism and for the idea behind it...the ugly face hidden behind a childhood hero.

**KR: If you could achieve one thing in miniature painting, what would it be?**

VB: I really don't have any claim or personal objective in mini painting. Modesty is one of the first qualities I value, and I sincerely believe it's the best way to make your road, be it in life, or mini painting. I really take pleasure in doing some funny minis or trying to envision or play with ideas or concepts, but as I'm a girl, if I can make more girls interested

I think a very challenging aspect to painting is to choose the right colours. It is often difficult to get the right balance so that the colours match and compliment each other, while bringing attention to the parts of the mini you want to highlight. On larger pieces, it is a fragile balance that is not always easy to achieve.

**KR: What is the model you have painted the most number of times?**

I don't really paint armies as such, so the most I have ever done is a unit of five Ork bikers. I think I am happy painting the single miniature and I try to stay away from having to paint units.



## Piggy

Piggy is the second mini I have sculpted and it started on evening when I was looking for something to keepme busy. I thought it'd be very easily and quickly done, but even though the shape of Piggy is simple I had to make sure the mini was geometrical, symetrical and the outside was smooth. This in the end took a lot of sanding of the milliput but in the end worked out just fine. The idea was to make a mini imitating of a piggy bank into which you can insert a single euro No More. So the idea is this: it's a piggy bank for money crisis or to keep your counter for the supermarket trolley if you want!

The good thing with Piggy is that you can paint it in any colors you want. Like the cows sculptures I saw in several European cities streets. Each one of those cows is painted by a different artist. I painted many versions of it as I was having different ideas.

You can also get and paint your own Piggy from Maow Miniatures.





in painting miniatures I'd be very happy. Mini painting is clearly a male dominated field at the moment, but I think there's definitely a place for a more "feminine touch"! Moreover, in general, guys are really happy and welcoming about having girls painting!

**KR: What is your one piece of advice to people who want to improve their skills?**

VB: Have fun! Do what you want and what you like! This can sometimes be different from what others want you to do. I think it's important to be proud, for yourself, and of what you've achieved. If you are proud it will show through in the quality of your minis.

Keep an open mind and be receptive to what people have to tell you about your minis. It's the best way to make progress. The only way to get better is to take advice from people. Share and interact with others in the painting field when you've reached your own personal "best". Painting competitions are the best way to meet people so I recommend you do that. Internet and specialised forums are great as well. But most of all, paint your minis for yourself, and do it for pleasure! I also think it's important to paint regularly, to "stay in the groove", as it's always hard to pick up the brush again after a long break.

**KR: Give us one secret to good painting that you have.**

VB: Have fun, share, and always aim higher!

**KR: What is on your painting table right now?**

VB: What's on my painting table? A big mess, like on most of the painting tables! It's a great concept, a lot of space on the table at the beginning, but then you add stuff, a lot of stuff, until you ending up painting in 20 square centimetres! (even on my knees sometimes!)

**KR: If you had to be stuck in a lift with someone who would it be?**

VB. Wow, hard question! Someone I can talk to about interesting things. I suppose it would be better with someone who shares some common visions or is open minded with



## The Wedding

I had been playing with the idea of putting a mini on an over exaggerated big base.

A wedding cake was perfect to do that, and the whole idea built itself quietly in my head until I had the detailed concept and a good idea of how I wanted it to look.

I could have had the cake even bigger, but I wanted it to still be a mini. Believe me, it's big enough as it is. It tricky to carry too big for most display cabinets.

I used Games Workshop Trolls as the centre piece and once I had decided on the position I set about converting them.

"The Wedding" entered the open category of the Games Day painting contest, and it was really surreal and offbeat compared to the other mins.

There was a of lot of thinking went into the the minis and the scenery. I put a lot of detail into the overall look and feel of the model: the flowers of the bride, the marriage wedding rings, the facial expressions of each of them, the pieces of cake the two characters have on their faces.

I sculpted a lot of little objects to have them look like a real "just married" couple, and it was all about trying to find the right balance.

This mini is telling a story, and I hope my little story is quite obvious.

a good sense of humour, because we would need it in that situation. Someone who also makes me feel comfortable by being calm, serene and secure. It'd be funny in this situation to meet someone I want to see again after, or someone I don't want to leave when the doors are finally opened!

**KR: If we were making a film of your life, which famous actor would play Valérie Bruère?**

VB: I was often told that I look like the actress Winona Rider or the French one, Juliette Binoche. People do that for fun, looking for resemblances! So of course, it would be an honour, to see one of them play "Valérie Bruère" in this great "I-don't-know-what" film, hahaha!





## Gnoblars Attack !

I already explained a lot about this mini in the interview before. As I said, it was my first real painting project, and this mini means a lot to me. I was surprised that so many people have seen it and tell me, months after: hey, you're the one who made this giant!

The Games Workshop giant is really a nice mini, and I saw many versions of it, each one better than the last. It's a quite spirit-stirring mini, that you can really use in many different ways. It's a perfect mini for conversions.

I liked the Gnoblars because they are really funny little creatures, you can have them do anything! It doesn't matter that they're little, as long as they are numerous! And what I wanted was many little ones fighting a giant one, like in Gulliver, but more messy!

I had a lot of fun at imagining what those Gnoblars could invent to torture this poor giant. This part was particularly nice!

I changed the position of the giant, to have him more dynamic, walking and fighting. And I transformed the Gnoblars a lot, to have them very dynamic also, according to what they were doing. It's really funny to try to find every one of them in the mess of the battle. They are very funny, and I like them a lot!

## Flutin le lutin

Flutin was the first mini I sculpted.

I've often converted minis I wanted to paint, by sculpting differently parts, but I've never sculpted one before Flutin.

In the beginning, Flutin was only an excuse to practice my sculpting after getting lessons from Allan, which was a great honour for me. To have someone take me through the creation process was a precious experience and really helpful. I know I was really lucky but I would also just like to point out that Flutin was my idea and I was the one who did all the sculpting.

Flutin was inspired by an illustration of Monge that I found in an art book at Allan's place. I liked the drawing, the position of the character, and the atmosphere, both melancholic and joyful at the same time. So for this reason, even if people asked me, Flutin is not intended to be a commercially sold mini. Even if I say so myself Flutin turned out quite good and I have done a few limited copies of it for close friends and painters who liked it.

It was also very satisfying to have my own version of Flutin painted. It's quite something to paint your own sculpt for the very first time!







## Orky Rider

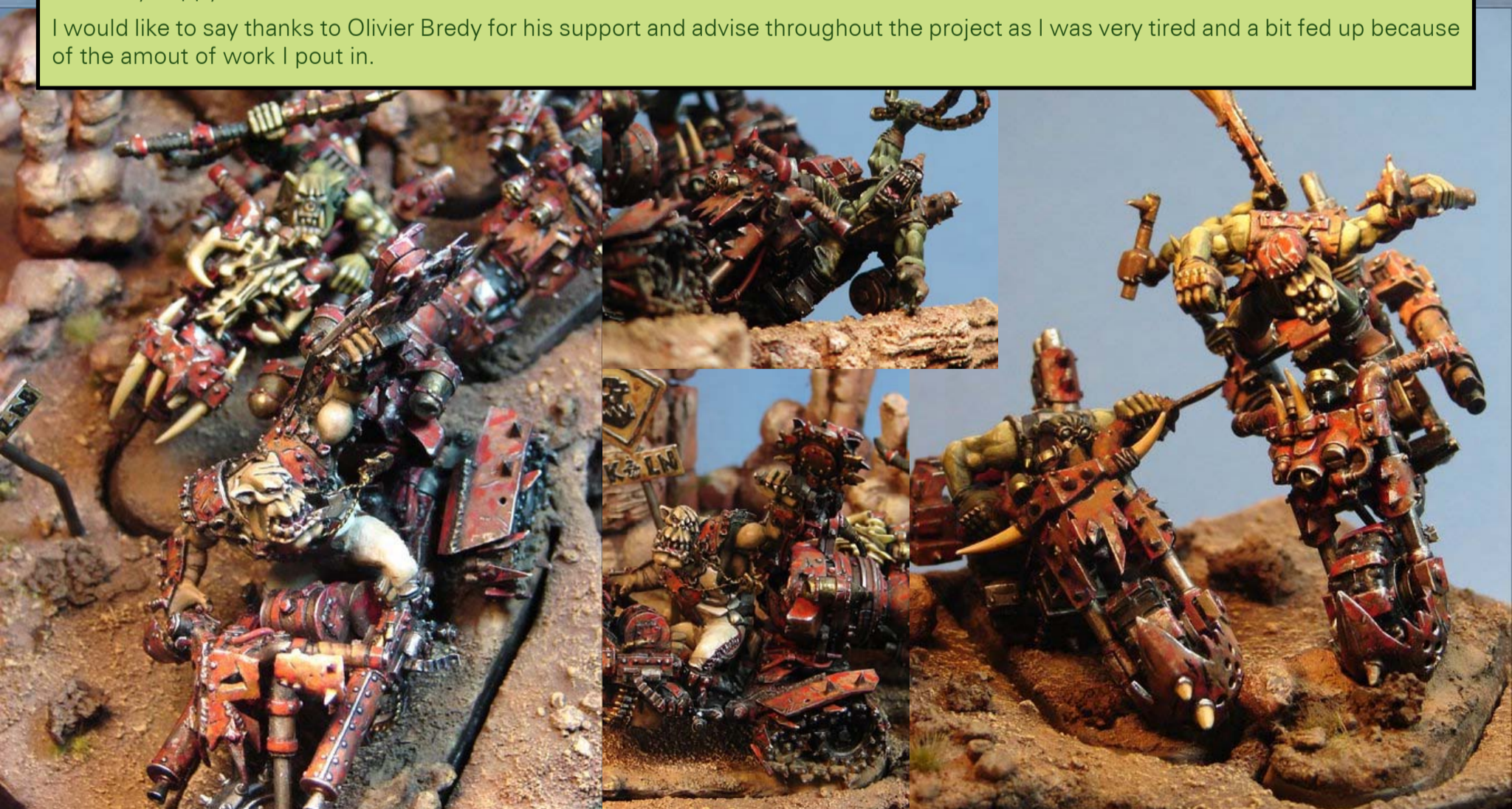
I liked those Ork motorbikes a lot when I saw them the first time so much that I considered making a diorama with a unit of them for the Games Day painting contest however just apinting them was not enough of a challenge so an idea started to form for what I could do to make them more interesting.

I wanted them in an deserted land and I wanted the motos red (as it goes faster when it's red of course) and very rusty. A big contrast between quite basic colors: mainly yellow red and green and above all, the most important is that I wanted to simulate a big crash! So, to have the motorbikes less static, I cut them in pieces and rebuilt them in the right positions in order to make them look more dynamic. I also changed the positions of the Orks, to have them falling and riding in varied and interesting positions.

I build them a real cinematic set for their track race and tried to make them look funny while still maintaing their own personalitles.

This project was really a lot of work, especially because of the motorbikes, and was way more work I was thinking of doing at first but I am very happy with the end result

I would like to say thanks to Olivier Bredy for his support and advise throughout the project as I was very tired and a bit fed up because of the amout of work I pout in.







A VICTORIAN FANTASY



I made this mini for the first painting contest organised by the brand Smart Max. It's my favorite mini brand, that's why I found it motivating to do something special for this event.

The idea of minis miming letters – like some kind of strange cheerleaders- came right from the start.

But the idea to exactly imitate the SMOG logo itself, building the structure, and integrate the minis in it, suspended in the air, came in a second time. I was already working on the transformation and sculpt of the minis at that time. I was searching for quite long how to put them together, but when the idea of the structure popped it my mind, everything became suddenly clear, I HAD to do it this way!

I made it and finished it. But there's really a point when I seriously wondered myself if I would not just give up, as it was so complicated and bloody annoying! It was that especially complicated because of the metallic structure: the perfect precise length for every element, have everything aligned,

whatever is the angle you look at, have it all glued, holded together but also to the several minis, paint every mini separately with a little part of the metallic structure hitched to, and had checked that it can be glued again to the rest after...

Yes, I think can tell it: I really like to do it, but I also really suffered on this mini! It was a lot of work and investment of time. But I'm very very proud of what I realised in here, and also happy to have been able to give life to my crazy idea!

This project was also supposing a lot of sculpting work: except for the clock (the "O") every mini was transformed to simulated the "letter", so every positions were changed and some important sculpted parts were integrated.



I choosed to paint some part of the minis burgundy to help see the letters easier and have them fit better together, and to create a certain atmosphere. There was also very interesting and nice painting work to do, like the freehand parts on the two billboards of the "M", or the bloody parts of the "G". I liked those parts a lot.



**KR: If people want to see more of your work, how would they do that?**

VB: I don't have any personal website yet. Maybe I will one day, but for the moment, I don't feel any real need to have one. I regularly participate in painting contests mainly in France. I find this is the best way to look at other people miniatures as I am not very good at taking photographs, a skill which I need to learn.

I use my Facebook profile, under my real name, to systematically show my minis as I think it's a quite efficient way to showcase what you do. I'm quite open to new friends when I see they're coming for "mini friendship" and I can see what they do as well. At least, it has been up till now, and hopefully it will stay that way.

I also started showing some of my minis on the famous website "coolminiornot" under the name "Val", but right now, there's only one on my profile. I will show more in the future, I just have to take some more time to get the pictures on there.

**Haaaaaahloween !!!**

This was a lot of fun to do. It is the only mini I have done that has never been entered in a painting competition. In fact it has never left my painting room and the only pictures I have shown to the world are on my facebook pages at haloween. I saw it as a sort of "event mini"!

The idea came to me after my friend Dirk Stiller gave me some of those mini pumpkins you use for decorating cakes so it was only natural to convert them to look like evil Haloween pumpkins.

I had started the base a while ago so when I got the pumpkins a lot of th work had already been done.

I wanted there to be a big contrast between the very desolated ground and some flashy orange, strange and crazy pumpkins, coming from nowhere! The idea of the lost dwarf with the map came after I found the perfect character in my boyfriend's big collection of unused and unpainted minis and adapted it for the scene. This way the pumpkins where having a goal: surprise the poor dwarf by coming discreetly from behind. Like children suddenly shouting : "BOUH!!! Hey I got you!". I wanted it all very childlike and offbeat.

**Stein, Schere, Papier (Rock, Scissors, Paper)**

In this scene I used some more Games Workshop Trolls as I like them a lot, but I wanted to convert them into something funny.

So I converted them to play the famous game Rock Scissors Paper. It was my first experience at sculpting little objects, so in this case: a rock, scissors and... a mini toilet paper roll for the "paper"! Very technical work!

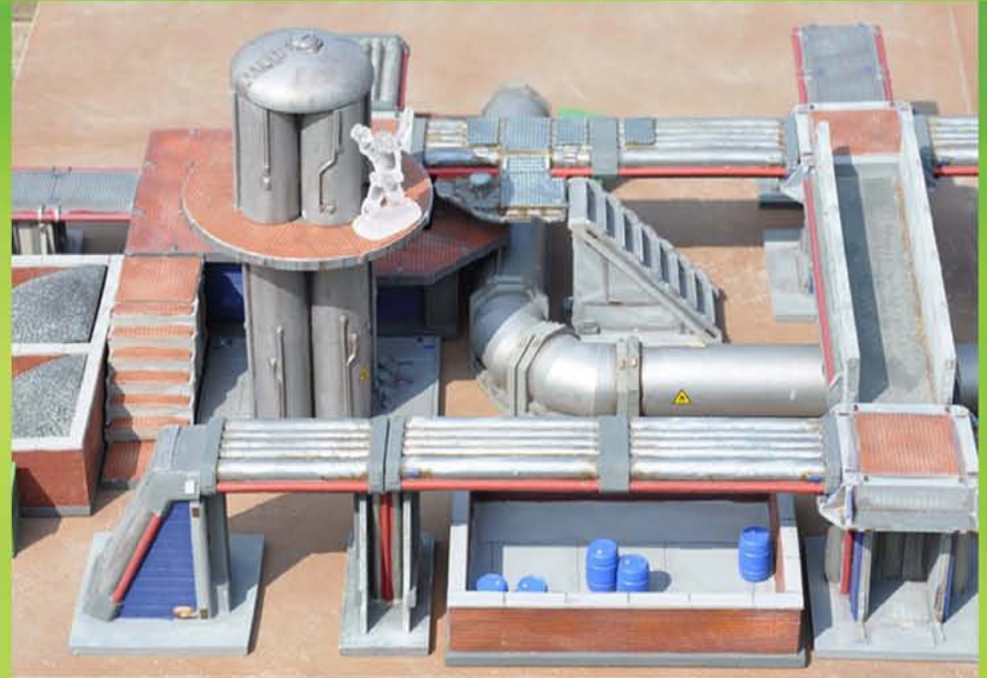
I also made a lot of changes to the Trolls positions, to have them look at each other and hold their respective weapon. The most complicated was for the scissor, to have the arms, the two parts of the scissors, and the head and look perfectly fitted in the right position.

Moreover, those Trolls are made of metal, so it was really tricky to cut and re-position. I promised myself that I would not do this again with metal minis. That said the very next project was "The Wedding" which used, yes you guessed it, metal minis. I did however choose them carefully so as not to not have to change their positions too much!



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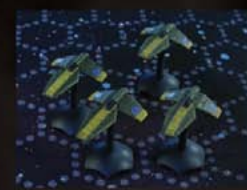
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# “We’re going to take over the world”

By Robey Jenkins

**A** In the first part of this series of articles, I shared with you, gentle readers, a few hints and tips on how to get a tabletop gaming club off the ground. In the second part, in a state of somewhat-increased agitation, I gave dire warnings and portents of how to spot if your club is in trouble and what to do about it if it is. This month, though, I am biting my shield and getting myself good and frothing in preparation for a berserker rage of an article that will, I hope, leave even old Uncle Bomber diving for his sandbags with a cry of “I say! That’s a bit much!”

What can it be, you may ask, that can get this mild-mannered paragon so excited? What topic in the field of tabletop gaming clubs can be so incendiary that it ignites his passion to a white-hot fever? I can explain in three words:

## Fear of change.

The truth is that I do understand, I truly do. It takes time and effort to get a club off the ground. You started the club because you love playing games, not because you like running a club. Once it’s working, all you really want to do is turn up and play games. It’s bad enough that someone has to interrupt the annihilation of his opponent to collect the money. So why can we not just leave things how they are? We’ve got enough tables to fill the room and enough people every fortnight to fill the tables. We’ve got enough money coming in to pay the rent. You should be allowed to just enjoy the fruits of your effort and to turn your attention to finishing that Saxon army for the new edition of WAB, or fine-tuning your WOTR list ready for the next tournament.

Of course you should...

NO! NO, YOU SHOULD NOT!!

Sorry, did I get some spittle on you, there? My apologies, but if you started a club just because you wanted somewhere to play then you got into this project with the wrong frame of mind and you now have a simple choice: either change your attitude or stand aside for someone who will. Because tabletop gaming clubs that are nothing more than somewhere for friends to come and play games every week are nothing more than a black hole of nothing into which you get to dribble your time and money.

Tabletop gaming clubs have a contribution to make to society beyond knowing how many inches a company of Imperial Guard can move or what score on a dice you need to penetrate the armour on an enemy tank. There are so many paths a club can follow to make it more than

the sum of its parts, whether it be teaching planning and leadership; reaching out to the isolated or disabled; raising money for charity, or any combination of these things and much more besides.

Adults who left school with no maths skills or who are barely able to read have been inspired by tabletop gaming. Children with low self-esteem can learn confidence not only through winning victory of much older opponents but from seeing and learning how to lose with grace. Craft skills are honed building terrain and painting tables. People with no career prospects get their first taste of responsibility in a club committee position. Local governments, retailers, small manufacturers and charities can reach out to people through your local wargaming club.

## Are you thinking what I’m thinking, Pinky?

The most common refrain I get from this particular rant is “but we just want to play games”. If I allow my battle rage to depart, extract my teeth from my shield edge, wipe the froth from my chin and calm down a bit then I have to confess that I understand that. I really do. If you’re a gamer – one of the herd, strolling along to your local club every couple of weeks with army-case in hand and a packet of Haribo in your back pocket – then it is absolutely right that that should be all you want to do. But if you’re a gamer with just the tiniest bit of vision, whether you’re a club manager or not, then read on, because it’s time for me to tell you how to make sure that your club is about more than just toy soldiers.

## Do your homework

Now, I’m not one to blow my own trumpet (I have a young bugler to do it for me), so step forward, young Bulger Jones, and give the nice people a rendition of “Read The Last Two Articles”. Good lad. Because weak, wobbling, declining clubs can’t do this thin and clubs in that position need to concentrate on all the things I discussed in the last two articles. Once those things are in place, though, you have a few things to be thinking about.

Don’t force yourself to think about all of them at once. One at a time is fine and, as each idea matures, you can assign a suitable club member to look after each one – see “Delegate & Conquer” in Part 2.



## Out Grow your Cloths

Too many clubs refuse to actively pursue new members because they are already accommodating as many people as they can manage. But a club that isn't growing is already dying – it just hasn't noticed yet. When it comes to letting out those trousers, clubs have a lot of options.

### Change Venues

This is often the most obvious step that clubs consider when they think about growing. But finding a good venue to start with is so often one of the hardest parts about setting up a club, and moving too painful an idea to countenance. But whilst it can be hard, don't give up until you've tried any of the following:

- 1. Canvass your members. By far the best way to find a venue is by referral from a member who's already visited or seen a venue they think might be suitable. The perfect solution is if they even work there! Teachers, church volunteers, scout leaders... If you've got any of these in your numbers, then they are a great place to start. But asking in a club newsletter, on the club forums or at a club EGM or AGM is ideal.
- 2. Contact your local council. Community halls and centres are often woefully under-used resources, populated by lacklustre youth groups and knitting circles. But many community halls have multiple suitable rooms, storage and low(ish) rents for voluntary groups. They also tend to come with parking and permanent supervising staff. My experience has been that the longer you can occupy such a venue and the more reliably you pay them every month and keep your room clean and tidy, the more flexible they will be. I've known council staff to arrange extended hours, dedicated storage and other benefits for reliable, popular clubs. A word of advice, though: some (not all, but some) councils can be funny about clubs with the word "war" in their title. This is one reason that, in my role as a GCN rep, I tend to talk about "tabletop gaming" rather than "wargames".
- 3. Keep your eyes open. From the moment you start a club, you should be on permanent look-out for a better venue. Think storage, parking, access, space and location. In under a year you should have a list of at least a dozen potential venues, if you're prepared to think outside the box.

### Change your hours

I've said it before and I'll say it again: the best nights to have as club nights are Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.

Choose any other night and you're immediately competing with other things, be it TV, sports, bank holidays or just family time. But if you only meet once a month, consider meeting once a fortnight. If you only meet once a fortnight, consider meeting once a week. If you've already meet once a week... how about twice a week? Or three times?

If you do meet on multiple times every week, with healthy turn-outs at each one, then you're in the perfect position to start an all-day meeting, ideal for club tournaments, massive games, campaigns and all-in hobby sessions. An idea I liked was having an all-day event to build and paint terrain for the next all-day event, with contributors to the first getting free or discounted access to the second.

### Expand your vision

If you mostly play games from the Warhammer Big Three, then check out the Games Workshop Specialist Games range. If you're mostly historical, then consider expanding your fantasy and science-fiction focus. If you mostly play miniature games, then what about strategy card games or role-play games?

The line between tabletop wargames and board games has grown increasingly blurred with new games from Fantasy Flight, like the Horus Heresy board game and Chaos in the Old World, but there are old staples – Settlers of Catan and Small World being the most obvious – that clearly would enjoy a place in any tabletop games club. From there, yes, it's a short journey to Risk and Monopoly. But can you imagine anything more fun than playing Monopoly against the sort of mind that devised that army list that chewed up your High Elves last week?

### Grow younger

Today's annoying ankle-biter is tomorrow's innovative game designer. Like it or not, children are the future of the tabletop gaming hobby as they are of everything else. You may not like them, but if you want a club that out-grows its clothes, then you need to recruit some members who are out-growing theirs (and I mean vertically, not at the waist-band!).

As well as being a selfless commitment to raising the good sportsmen and -women of the future, recruiting members under the age of 16 has two other likely advantages: (1) parents and (2) siblings. When one plays, there's a good chance that another will, too, so you get two new members (or even three) for the price of one.



## Combined Attack

If any of the ideas above have sparked some flights of fancy in your own imagination, then think about how you can make more than one of them work for you at the same time.

Expanding into a new room gives you somewhere to corral those roleplayers who need a bit more peace for their game. Starting a second night gives you the opportunity for an “over 18s” night where appropriate beverages may be consumed and the adult-language brakes removed. Moving to a new venue opens up new pathways into local schools.

## Think Broad, not Deep

Tabletop gamers are good at thinking deep. By that I mean, that they are good at looking at a game and seeing how to make it more engaging – enormous battles, lengthy campaigns, skirmish rules and tournaments are all examples of “deep” thinking.

But if you want to build a club with a contribution to make to a better society, you need to think broad and that means taking games out to people who might never have even considered tabletop games as a pastime.

Local councils, schools and charities are the obvious first steps, here. Councils often run open-days to advertise the resources available for people in their area, giving you a chance to show off tabletop gaming to a wider audience. Schools, from the last year of primary (Year 6), and upwards are often surprisingly open to demo games at school fetes or as an end-of-year treat – a time when primary schools in particular are often keen to open the social horizons of their leavers before plunging them into the shark-infested waters of secondary school. Charities for the disabled are similarly invested in winning access for their members to mainstream activities.

It’s a two-way street. All of these activities are ways of recruiting new members, which is good for any club that wants to grow and evolve in a healthy way. But they are also a way of putting the tabletop gaming hobby into the public eye, dragging it out from the fug of body odour and shouting in which it usually languishes. It’s a way of making the hobby give something back to the society that birthed it.

## Quit

If you are a club manager, and you know that you are never going to do or even think about doing any of the things I’ve described above, then quit. And I mean that with complete seriousness. If your club dies as a result, then you’ve

ignored my previous two articles and, frankly, your club was going to die anyway and you were only prolonging its agony.

But if any of your members have read these three articles, then I’d be prepared to bet that someone among them will be ready to step up to the plate and, even if they aren’t, there’s likely another club not far away that is and you can all go there to get your gaming fix and, guess what? You won’t even have to interrupt your game to collect the money.

## Last Word

In a very real sense, we are coming to the last word, because this is the last of my articles on the subject of tabletop gaming clubs.

I suspect I’ve ruffled a few feathers. I certainly hope I have. If you’re a club in my area and you think I’m talking about you, then you’re certainly right because I can’t think of a single club in my area that does everything I suggest doing. But in the spirit of total honest, when I ran a club, I didn’t do all of those things. It took my successor to show me how a good idea can be more than a pipe dream and that a wargame can actually change lives for the better. But even he would admit one important thing: running a good tabletop gaming club invariably means that you play fewer games. And I think that’s a good thing, because if you really want to play those games – and who amongst us doesn’t? – then your focus should be on handing over the reigns of responsibility to someone better than you.

If you’ve read these three articles and you still don’t know how to make sure that happens, go back and read them again.

Semper sexti!

Related links:

<http://gamingclubnetwork.org.uk>

<http://wargamingclub.blogspot.com>

<http://precinctomega.co.uk>

About the Author

Robey Jenkins is a retired Army officer, the director of Precinct Omega Studios, former Club Leader and Treasurer of York Garrison Wargaming Club, area rep for the Gaming Club Network in Gloucestershire and author of a number of wargaming articles and short stories published in a range of outlets. He lives in Cheltenham with his wife and children. And if you really want to see the plasma cannon, you can look him up on Facebook.



The Faction Wars ([www.factionwars.co.uk](http://www.factionwars.co.uk)) miniatures first got their grand start at last year's Warfare show in November.

The Agostino Grand Family box set will contain 9 individual characters, 4 aerobots, plus bases and profile cards for each model. The total points game wise is about 700 so enough to get you started.

Each hero is unique so no multi-sculpts in the set to act as filler's though a few of them are of the same game style.

The models are 28mm and in many cases you could easily use a few of the models in other game systems and why shouldn't you. Let's have a look at each model though;



### Deadros Agostino

Reading this guy's fluff you can tell from the off he's a bit wayward to say the least. The pose is nice with the gun raised in one hand and his body bent like he's looking around something.



### Luthor Agostino

Have to say as models go I kind of like the quirky nature of Luthor he kind of reminds me a bit of a cross between Davros from Dr Who and Jimmy Saville (Sorry for those people who don't get that J). The cool look of him sat in his high-tech wheelchair is pretty good. The only thing I could complain about really is you can't take him out of the chair. I'd love to see a multi-part version in later releases. But I can cope.



### Captain Richelieu

Now this is a man with strong arms the huge Pulse Rifle in his hand must be straining that aim to breaking point. It's a heroic pose so whilst it might look a little odd it works as it's supposed to. What I don't get is the fact his right hand is behind his body as if he's hiding the pistol he has gripped there. Just looks a little un-natural to me and I feel it might have looked better just by his side.





### Guardsmen Bonner, Asher, Hayes, Jolie, Dubois

Now whilst these might be the grunts of your force every attention has been made to make sure each one looks different from the other's. Mainly this is done by using different poses to make them look individual it's a simple thing that works. They also all haven't different weapons so it's going to be easy to find that face in the crowd.



### Varda Krrk – Mercenary

Every good Family needs a hired hand or two to make sure they fill those trade gap's. Varda is a Heavily armoured model with a Pulse Rifle strapped to his back. The pose is pretty simple, but it's these little things that make the models capable of transcending into other game systems.

Over all the models are well sculpted with a few add on elements to pad them out, be that a holster or pouch. If you didn't see these on models I think we'd all start wondering where they keep the spare ammo or change for the parking meter. They don't have the flare of some companies I could mention but that is very much reflected in the cost. The whole set will set you back a mere £27 and considering some game systems that might by you 1-2 models you really aren't getting short changed.

If you haven't picked up Faction Wars you're missing out on a nice game so maybe you should have a look and see if they are models you might enjoy as I have myself.





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[spikydavid@gmail.com](mailto:spikydavid@gmail.com)

**Guildford Games Club**

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[benjaminlee422@gmail.com](mailto:benjaminlee422@gmail.com)

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Poldark Inn, Delabole Cornwall, PL33 9DQ

Thursday 6.30pm-10pm

[s6.zetaboards.com/Beasts\\_and\\_Bionics](http://s6.zetaboards.com/Beasts_and_Bionics)

[Hendybadger@aol.com](mailto:Hendybadger@aol.com)

**Calne Gaming Club**

Church House, 30 Church Street, Calne SN11 0HU

Monthly - see website

[www.calnegamingclub.com](http://www.calnegamingclub.com)

[themonthlygrunt@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:themonthlygrunt@hotmail.co.uk)

**Dice and Dagger Gaming Club, The**

Stratton Hall, Union Hill, Stratton, Bude, Cornwall, EX23 9BB

Sunday 5.30pm-10pm

[www.diceanddagger.110mb.com](http://www.diceanddagger.110mb.com)

[celtofkernel@aol.com](mailto:celtofkernel@aol.com)

**Exeter Inquisition**

Fountain Room, St. Sidwell's Centre, Sidwell Street, Exeter, Devon, EX4 6NN

Tuesday 6pm-10pm

[exeter-inquisition.org](http://exeter-inquisition.org)

via website

**Rygas Roughnecks**

Whipton Institute Social Club, Whipton Village Rd, Exeter, Devon EX4 6AW

Wednesday 6pm-11pm

[www.rygasroughnecks.com](http://www.rygasroughnecks.com)

**Swindon and District Wargamers**

Moredon Community Centre, 1 The Street, Swindon, SN25 3ER

Wednesday 7pm-11pm

[www.sadwargamers.com](http://www.sadwargamers.com)

[warren@gleesonclan.co.uk](mailto:warren@gleesonclan.co.uk)

**West Cornwall Games Club**

St Just Methodist Church Hall, Chapel Street, St Just, Penzance, Cornwall, TR19 7BB

Thursday 7pm-10pm

[www.wcgc.webs.com](http://www.wcgc.webs.com)

[neilasharp@aol.com](mailto:neilasharp@aol.com)

**MIDLANDS****1st Company Veterans**

Warhammer World, Nottingham, NG7 2WS

Thursday 6pm-10pm

[www.1stcompanyveterans.net](http://www.1stcompanyveterans.net)

[matt\\_rs2003@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:matt_rs2003@hotmail.co.uk)

**Celler Dwellers**

Laser Zone, 29 St Johns Road, Huddersfield, HD1 5DX

[www.cellardwellers.info](http://www.cellardwellers.info)

[aLYsaudoe1@hotmail.com](mailto:aLYsaudoe1@hotmail.com)

CGN Club Directory



**COGS-Chesterfield Open Gaming Society**

The Parish Centre, Stonegravels, 91 Sheffield Road, Chesterfield, S41 7JH.

Alternate Wednesdays 7pm-10pm

[www.c-o-g-s.org.uk](http://www.c-o-g-s.org.uk)

[awb1@btinternet.com](mailto:awb1@btinternet.com)

Market Hall, Chesterfield, Derbyshire S40 1AR

Monday 7pm-10pm

**Da Wot Notts**

Warhammer World, Nottingham, NG7 2WS

Wednesday 6pm-10pm

[hancockoliver@hotmail.com](mailto:hancockoliver@hotmail.com)

**KIA Games Club**

Kirkby-in-Ashfield Library, Ashfield Precinct,

Kirkby-in-Ashfield, Nottinghamshire, NG17 7BQ

Alternate Saturdays 10am-3pm

[www.kiagamingclub.net](http://www.kiagamingclub.net)

[kiagamingclub@hotmail.com](mailto:kiagamingclub@hotmail.com)

**Nuneaton Model and Games Club**

The Cube, Methodist Church Hall, Edward

Street, Nuneaton, CV11 5RH

Sunday 10am-3.30pm

[www.nuneatongamesclub.co.uk](http://www.nuneatongamesclub.co.uk)

[b.mccormack@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:b.mccormack@hotmail.co.uk)

**Sutton Immortals**

All Saints' Church Centre, Belwell Lane, Four Oaks, B74 4TR

Thursday 7pm-10pm

<http://z7.invisionfree.com/SuttonImmortals/>

[dabarker\\_382@hotmail.com](mailto:dabarker_382@hotmail.com)

**Tamworth Games Club**

Central Methodist Church, 18 Glyndebourne, Tamworth, B79 7UD

Wednesday 6pm-9pm

[philhannigan2002@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:philhannigan2002@yahoo.co.uk)

**Warlords of Walsall**

Hatherton United Reform Church, Hatherton Road, Walsall, WS1 1XS

Friday 6pm-10pm

[www.freewebs.com/warlords-of-walsall](http://www.freewebs.com/warlords-of-walsall)

[warlords\\_of\\_walsall@hotmail.com](mailto:warlords_of_walsall@hotmail.com)

**Derby Wargames Society**

Royal British Legion, 85 Chellaston Road, Allenton, DE24 9AF

Monday 7pm-11pm

[derbywargamessociety.com](http://derbywargamessociety.com)

[bencurry@derbywargamessociety.co.uk](mailto:bencurry@derbywargamessociety.co.uk)

**Ripley Terror Troopers**

Ripley Library, Grosvenor Road, Ripley,

Derbyshire, DE5 3JE

Alternate Thursdays 5.30pm-7pm

[judith.hawcroft@derbyshire.gov.uk](mailto:judith.hawcroft@derbyshire.gov.uk)

**Leicestershire Warrior Wargaming Club**

Arnesby Village Hall, Mill Hill Road, Arnesby, Leicester, LE8 5WG

2nd & 4th Wed 6.30pm-9.30pm

[www.lwwc.co.uk](http://www.lwwc.co.uk)

Via website

**NORTH****Doncaster Wildcats**

The Leopard, 2 West St, Doncaster DN13AA

Monday 6pm-10.30pm

[sixthkraven@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:sixthkraven@hotmail.co.uk)

**East Cleveland Warsmiths**

St Margarets Eductaion Centre, Brotton, Cleveland, TS12 2PJ

Sunday 6pm-9.30pm

[james.borders@live.co.uk](mailto:james.borders@live.co.uk)

**Hulls Angels**

Unit 2, Grimston Street, Hull, HU1 3HG

Wednesday 4pm-9pm & Saturday 5pm-9pm

[hulls-angels.co.uk](http://hulls-angels.co.uk)

[ross@hulls-angels.co.uk](mailto:ross@hulls-angels.co.uk)

**Leeds Games Club**

Headingley Community Centre, Inner Ring Rd, Leeds, LS6 3HG

Thursday 7pm-10.30pm

[www.leedsgamesclub.co.uk](http://www.leedsgamesclub.co.uk)

[Webadmin@leedsgamesclub.co.uk](mailto:Webadmin@leedsgamesclub.co.uk)

**Leeds Nightowls Gaming Club**

Headingley Community Centre, Inner Ring Rd, Leeds, LS6 3HG

Sunday 10am-3pm

[www.leeds-nightowls.co.uk](http://www.leeds-nightowls.co.uk)

[admin@leeds-nightowls.co.uk](mailto:admin@leeds-nightowls.co.uk)

**Middlesborough Gamers Club**

St Marys Centre, 82-90 Corporation Road, Middlesbrough, TS1 2RW

Tuesday & Thursday 6pm-10pm

[www.m-gc.co.uk](http://www.m-gc.co.uk)

[kevin.gibson4@ntlworld.com](mailto:kevin.gibson4@ntlworld.com)

**Northumbrian Adventurers Guild**

St Cuthbert's Church Hall, Bridge St, Blyth, Northumberland NE24 2AA

Sunday 12pm-7pm

[www.anythingbutaone.com](http://www.anythingbutaone.com)

[contact@anythingbutaone.com](mailto:contact@anythingbutaone.com)

GEN Club Directory



**Redcar Ironbeards**

Coatham Memorial Hall, 7 Coatham Rd, Redcar,  
Cleveland TS10 1RH  
Monday 7pm-10pm  
www.ageofstrife.com/redcar-ironbeards  
ian.widdowson1@ntlworld.com

**York Garrison Wargaming Club**

Burton Stone Community Centre, Evelyn  
Crescent, York, North Yorkshire, YO30 6DR  
Tues & Wed 6.30pm-9.30pm  
www.yorkgarrison.co.uk  
warboss@yorkgarrison.co.uk

**NORTH EAST****Gobstyks Gaming Club**

St Andrew's Church Hall, Garmston Street,  
Lincoln, LN2 1HZ  
Thursday 6pm-10pm  
www.gobstyks.co.uk  
info@gobstyks.co.uk

**Lost Boys Wargaming Club**

Ainsdale Methodist Church, Ainsdale, Southport,  
PR8 3NQ  
Tuesday 5pm-10pm  
hez14badkarma@blueyonder.co.uk

**NORTH WEST****Coppull and Chorley Knights**

St Mary's Parish Centre, West Street, off  
Devonshire Road, Chorley, Lancs. PR7 2SJ  
Thursday 7pm-11pm  
cack-wargamesclub.net  
jt\_y@btinternet.com

**Winsford Warhawks**

The Edge, Winsford, CW7 1QS  
Tuesday 6.30pm-9.30pm  
winsfordwarhawks.forumotion.com  
winsfordwarhawks@hotmail.co.uk

**WEST****Gatekeepers Wargames Club**

The Gateway Education and Arts Centre, Chester  
Street, Shrewsbury, SY1 1NB  
Friday 6.30pm-10pm  
www.gatekeepers.me.uk

**Telford STAGS**

Hadley Scout Hut, Cyril Hayward Court, Hadley,  
Telford, TF1 5NB  
Alternate Sundays 12pm-4.30pm  
www.freewebs.com/telford\_stags  
qkg@btconnect.com

**SCOTLAND****Dunfermline Wargaming and Roleplaying Fellowship**

The Del Farquharson Centre, Netherton Broad  
St., Dunfermline KY12 7DS  
Friday 6pm-9pm  
www.freewebs.com/thegamesclub  
dwarfclub@aol.com

**The Gaming Kingdom**

The Meeting Place, Keith Crescent, Leuchars, St  
Andrews, Fife, KY16 0JX  
Monday 7pm-11pm  
www.thegamingkingdom.org.uk  
krissherriff@hotmail.com

**Kirriemuir Wargames Club**

The Guide Hall, The Roods, Kirriemuir, DD8 4EZ  
2nd Friday of the month 7pm-11pm  
www.kirriemuirwargames.co.uk  
daledsmith@btinternet.com

**Livingston Battleground**

Lanthorn Community Centre, Kenilworth Rise,  
Dedridge, Livingston, EH54 6NY  
Saturday 9.15am-12.15pm  
www.battleground.org.uk  
info@battleground.org.uk

**St Aidans Warriors**

St Aidans Scottish Episcopal Church, Mearns  
Road, Clarkston, Glasgow, G76 7EU  
Sunday 7pm-11pm  
www.ukclubs.org/info/StAidans  
staidans@ukclubs.org

**Stirling Wargamers**

Ochil Community Hall, Ochil Crescent, Stirling,  
FK8 1QJ  
Thursday 6pm-10pm  
stirlingwargamers.50webs.com  
info@stirling-wargamers.org.uk

**WALES****Bridgend Games Club**

Gilead Chapel Hall, Coity, Nr. Bridgend, Bridgend  
County CF35 6AU  
Sunday 5pm-9pm  
castlegamesclub.tk  
kyinpie@hormail.com

To get your club into the GCN register, contact  
robey.jenkins@gamingclubnetwork.org.uk.

GCN Club Directory



# Infinity Miniatures New Releases

## April New releases



### Haramaki Zensenbutai.

New release! A new Infinity unit box. With this release you can build most of the different weapon options for the Haramaki and compose an Infinity Fireteam of these aggressive Japanese swordmasters. The Haramaki are samurai warriors with servo-powered armor, intrepid storm troops devoted to the Bushido code who form the spearhead of Yu Jing offensives in the most dangerous war zones.



### Al Hawwa' Unit (Hacker).

New release! The Al Hawwa', the 'Snake Charmers', are the secret security service of the Qapu Khalqi spaceships. Hidden amongst crew members or passengers, they always attack from surprise. These camouflaged infiltrators are cyberwarfare specialists and the spearhead of both the Qapu Khalqi, the Sultan's Sectorial army, and the main Haqqislamite forces.





### Bakunin Überfallkommando.

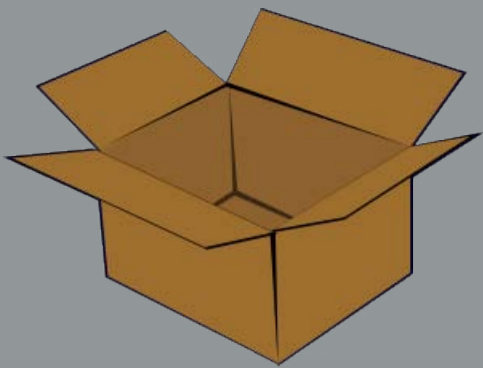
New release! Composed of a Chimera, a human with bizarre combat modifications, and a group of Pupniks, illegal human-animal hybrids genetically designed for fighting and sex, the Überfallkommando riot control unit is the scourge of the clandestine fight circuits. In this box you will find a female Chimera (Winter Vixen version), and also 3 Pupniks (Evil Ram, Mad Fox and Wild Cheetah versions). Do you want a bloody Nomad victory? Then, just unleash the wildest and most bizarre unit that comes from the darkest side of Bakunin!

### Noctifers (Spitfire)

The alien Shasvastii are experts in hiding and deception - and the Noctifers are one of the most dangerous examples of their species. There is no trooper more fearsome than an invisible Noctifer armed with the powerful and versatile Spitfire. Thanks to its Thermo-Optical Camouflage Special Skill, a Noctifer can be deployed hidden and shoot from surprise, leaving few options for his target to survive, and even fewer to reply to his treacherous attack. Spread panic amongst your adversary's troops with this alien stealth soldier!







# IN THE BOX

*with Dev Sodagar*



**Welcome to what is the first in hopefully a series of articles covering games that provide all you need in one box. These games will range from starter sets for wargames (assuming they include both forces and the rules) to some of the more adventurous board games out there that come with some miniatures in the box. This month I'll be looking at a real classic: Battletech. Only a small elite of game systems has survived the test of time, the machinations of GW being the strongest among them, however for many, there is no greater monument to sci-fi wargaming than Battletech, born of the '80s, this game is celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary and Catalyst Game Labs has joined the party with the release of a special Battletech introductory boxed set.**

## What's in the Box?

This new set comes in a medium square box, roughly the same dimensions as many of the new wave of board games. The artwork is gorgeous and printed on the box in high-quality Looking at the box itself, it's a fair amount larger than the currently

available introductory boxed set, with high-quality laminated paper used for the box artwork overlays. The box comfortably contains all of the contents with space for

some added foam protection if you choose to paint up the 'mechs provided (and why wouldn't you!). Despite the apparent room to spare there is an impressive array of written materials, along with 26 miniatures, a pair of dice, and two 18" x 22" double-sided game maps to get you off the ground.

## The Miniatures

Inside the box you will find 26 different plastic miniatures are included with the set, the basic 24 have been available with previous incarnations of the Battletech Introductory Box Set. The figures are made of a softer plastic than standard wargaming plastic kits, but not so soft as to be considered the "bendy" plastic used for many collectible miniatures on the market. Painting them is not impossible but care has to be taken during preparation to ensure that the paint won't start peeling. I would strongly recommend that after removing mould lines and the like taking an old toothbrush and scrubbing the figures with washing up liquid and warm water to get rid of any surface chemicals and to slightly scuff the surface for the primer.

The detail on the figures is descent but some of them suffer from the moulds aligning badly making trying to clean up the figure without losing a lot of





detail very tricky. This is fortunately only the case on a couple of figures. Also a few figures were not fully assembled when they arrived but this was not an issue once I had worked out which parts go together. There are some aspects to the figures that could do with some improvement aside from the alignment issues, the soft plastic will annoy a lot of wargamers and new comers to the Battletech universe may well struggle to identify the different 'mechs because they have no name on the bases and the supporting documentation provides artist's work next to the 'mech descriptions rather than a photo of the actual figure.

## The Rules

There are six books included with this introductory boxed set to help get players into playing the game quickly and give them some guidance on tactics as well as some additional materials for those who

wish to delve further into the wealth of Battletech gaming sourcebooks that are available in addition to those found in this set. Of the six books included with this set, five are full-colour printed on very good, glossy paper. The sixth





book, the 'Mech Record Sheets booklet, is printed in black and white on plain paper. All of the books are centre-bound and are full of very nice photos and illustrations that really make them a joy to flick through.

**Quick-Start Rules (12 pages):** If, like me, you are new to the world of Battletech, this is the best place to start. This ruleset gives you all you need to hit the table with a mate with the basics of movement and combat. There is a more comprehensive online version of this booklet that can be downloaded for free from the classic battletech website. The download version contains more scenarios, a few pages of fiction, printable maps and unit stand-ups, and the Quick-start vehicle and infantry rules that are found in the back of the introductory rules in this box set.

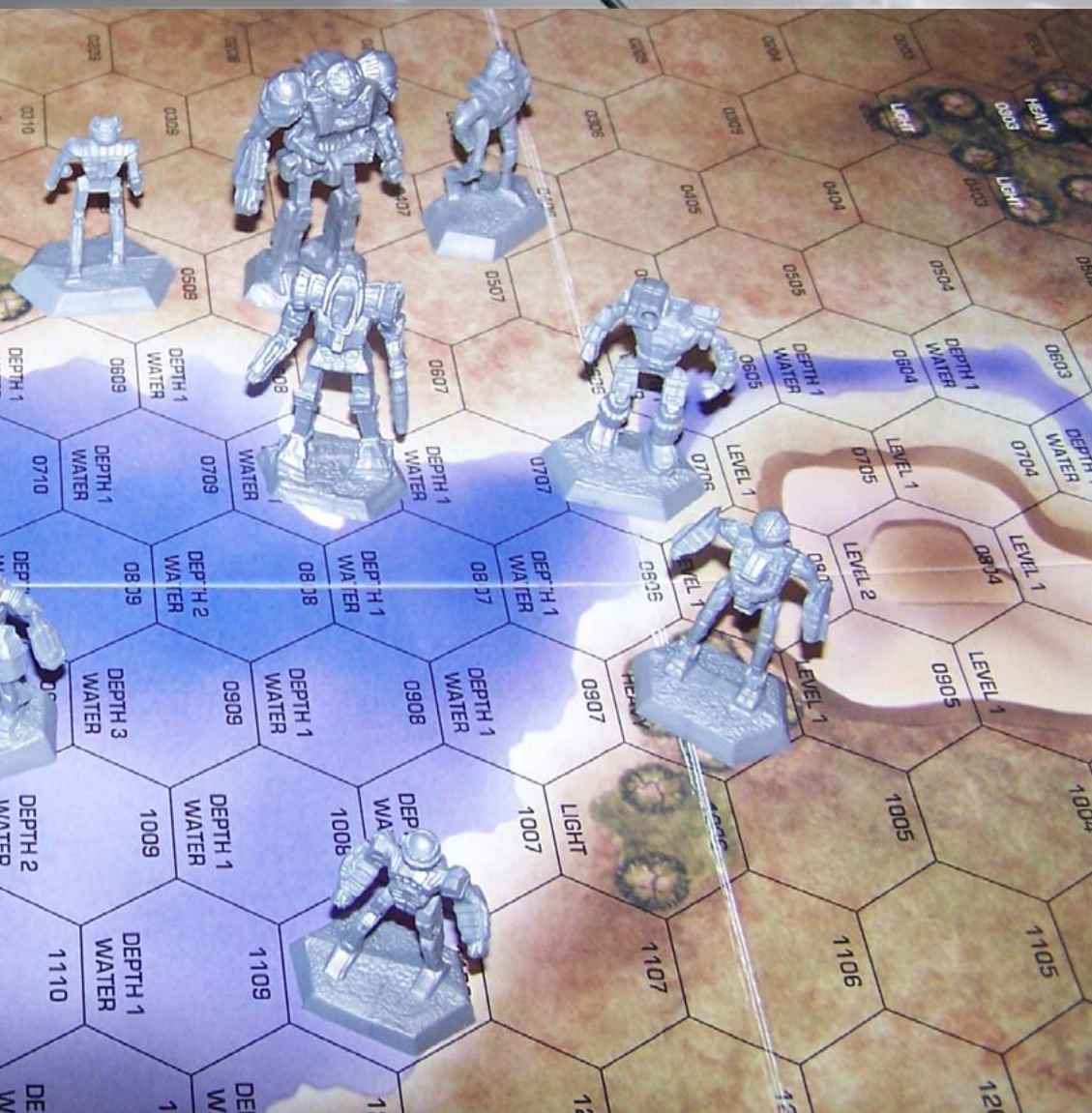
**Introductory Rulebook (80 pages):** The more comprehensive ruleset provided in the box, this expands on what players learned from the quick-start rules, providing some alternative methods of attacking your opponents figures, movement options, and introduce the core concept of managing the amount of heat generated by a 'mech while performing normal actions during combat. There is also some basic rules for using more conventional vehicles (such as tanks and personnel carriers) and infantry at the end of the rulebook. These rules are still not particularly comprehensive although this is hardly surprising given that the full rulebooks run at a couple of hundred pages each.

**'Mech Record Sheets:** This little black and white booklet contains the game stats and damage records for each of the 24 "basic" 'mechs and two variants for each of the Thor and Loki special 'mechs which allows you to track changes to the status of your mechs as you play. In addition to the stats for the figures in the box, the booklet contains 12 quick-start game 'mech, vehicle, and infantry records, and the quick-start game charts.

**Inner Sphere at a Glance (56 pages):** For a gamer like me that loves his fluff, this is one of the most valuable books in the box set. It was actually the first thing I sat down to read on opening the box. Inner Sphere gives players a brief look at the story behind the development and deployment of battlemechs, along with the Battletech universe's political history and factions. There is also some additional fluff on each of the 'mechs included in the box.







of the full rulebooks that are out there. The fact that this box set needs to dedicate 8 pages just to explain how to progress in the BattleTech universe is both terrifying and quite impressive to show just how far this game has developed. Having spoken to more experienced players, this guide really is essential for progressing in the game as later periods include additional technologies and it is often the case that gamers will stick to one particular period (much like historical wargamers).

## Other Goodies

The game comes with the obligatory pair of dice needed to play, but much more besides. There is a pair of reference sheets for players to use in-game to look up various modifiers that may come into play. The charts are pretty comprehensive and in reflecting so much of the BattleTech ruleset are written in a rather small font but are laid out well and assuming your eyes can take the strain, provide the information in a clear and convenient manner.

One other inclusion that I was thrilled to see is a large fold out map of the universe detailing the realms of factions according to the current (relatively early) period in BattleTech history. This is great, not just for the fluff lovers like me but also if you want to have a means of tracking the progress of a campaign and see it all unfold.

One of the main additions to this version of introductory box set is the addition of the two double-sided mapboards. These maps have a high-quality matte finish to them and are hard-mounted on thick cardboard. Each map is cut for ease of folding and storage, with the cuts being precise and the map panels lying flat with no warping and deformity that can often occur with boards like these. The maps laid out line up nicely and the printing of hexes means that there is no need to use tape measures when gaming but simply work off of the hex measurement rules.



Painting and Tactics Guide (16 pages): The painting part of this

book provides some very basic advice on how to clean and paint the figures in the box including some common colour schemes of the main houses and clans. The second half of the guide provides a range of basic tactics that can be implemented in the game this is very much a gamer guide with rules that play on the mechanics which in some cases jar with basic logic.

How the Core Rulebooks Work (8 pages): This booklet gives newcomers a complete breakdown



## Playing the Game

As I haven't played a Battletech before and know very little about the game, I am the ideal target of this box set. How I have gone so long without experiencing this vision of humanity's future and gaming it is quite beyond me, but having got this game to the table I'm glad I didn't wait any longer. Being a good little boy, I started, not with the quick-start guide, but voraciously reading through all the fluff in Inner Sphere at a Glance, the

potential tactics in the Painting and Tactics Guide and of course finding out what I should purchase next with the How the Core Rulebooks Work. Having exhausted all avenues of procrastination (including prepping and priming the 'mechs) I cracked open the Quick-Start rules and played the single introductory scenario provided at the end of that book to see how the game would play. After reading the rules (which are nicely laid out and easy to read and follow), I set out the map and

two 'mechs to play the introductory scenario.

Playing through the Quick Start Rules was very simple, nothing that occurred during the game raised questions that couldn't be resolved with the aid of the book. Also, the layout of the book meant that the solutions were quickly found. As a new player, it took only an afternoon read through the quick start rules to be in a position to be able to play through the scenario at the back. The scenario played out in about 60 minutes which included all the initial set-up and flicking back and forth through the rulebook on the odd occasion we were unsure of something.

The next step was to progress onto the full 'Introductory Rulebook' included in the box. It was at this point that I realised just how much the quick start rules had left out. Reading through and digesting even just the key points in the Introductory Rulebook took significantly longer than it had to get to grips with the quick start rules. Some of the omissions, like physical combat, was understandable as it is not really necessary to the initial understanding of the game, however once I sat down to play a full bells & whistles game one omission stood out as being misplaced in its absence from the quick start game – heat. One of the fundamental tenants of Battletech is that most 'mechs are poorly designed and unable to efficiently dissipate excess heat. This





inability to cool 'mechs is particularly problematic when the 'mech is running around in the heat of battle. All actions beyond the most basic have a corresponding heating effect, these heating effects have to be managed at every stage or the 'mech will overheat and be unable to do anything until its systems have cooled to a safe level.

The significance of this in game play is that nothing can be done without some kind of trade-off, a balance that is completely lacking in the quick start game.

It may be that Catalyst were looking to provide players with as simple a play style as possible to ensure that the quick start game provided a good hook for new players, however I suspect the majority of people picking up this box will have heard something of Battletech, and be aware of the complexity they are entering into. Even if this isn't the case, the fact that the quick start game has only one scenario and 4 'mechs means that there really is very little replayability to encourage players to gradually introduce more complex elements, or even to simply allow them to stick with the basic play. To this end, it really is preferable to download the free quick

start pack on the Catalyst Game Labs' website and playing through some of the additional scenarios that are provided in that set.

The Introductory Rules provide 3 additional scenarios to play through, but as 2 of these are simply to eradicate the enemy, the variety is a little lacking, even if you allow for the fact that the recommended combinations of 'mechs for each side can be altered.

The third scenario is little better, being an escape/kill all scenario of one heavy 'mech against an array of smaller 'mechs. This rather narrow selection of scenarios, while well balanced from the plays I have had, don't really show what such a well-developed game is capable of.

game



## Conclusion

This 25th Anniversary Introductory Box Set doesn't have much beyond the 'mechs and mapboards for veterans of the game, but for us newbies the set offers a great value and high-quality components to suck us into a highly developed game and universe. If, like me, you've wanted a good way to get into the sprawling Battletech game system, this box set contains a load of stuff to help you quickly immerse yourself in terms of both back-story and game-play, and provides excellent value both in terms of box contents and potential gaming time. It is very easy to quickly begin playing your first game. The game

components are durable and mostly high quality (the miniatures being a little disappointing). A wide selection of 'mech unit types are included, allowing you to play a huge array of games and play styles. At only £39.99 the set provides really good value especially given the quality of components like the map boards. It can be difficult for new players to easily identify unit types and the alignment issue of some moulds is a little disappointing. The initial quick-start rules skip some aspects that are key to game play with the full rules. A few more scenarios would have really helped improve the quality of the Intro set.





As I know I must have said before Wargaming has more to it than just the game and the miniatures. Once you've spent time painting (Or if you are IanC dipping J) your miniatures you have to look after them. No matter how much varnish you throw at them the wrong thing bumping against another will cause that finely crafted paint job to end up in tatters.

We've looked at other cases before at The Ancible but for me looking at the KR Multicase (<http://www.krmulticase.co.uk/mainuk.html>) was great news. Now that might sound an odd statement but bare with me on this. My reason is pretty simple I've had a KR case for years so I know a good amount about the quality.

Daryl at KR was very nice in supplying us with a Standard card case, 3 F3H Format Trays (32mm High can hold 18 models) and 1 V7 which can carry all manner of things. I also have some N format trays from my own purchases that allow me to get 40 troops in subject to any cutting due to banner's etc.

So let's look at the various components and how they shape up.

### Card KR Multicase



Probably doesn't sound like it's going to really protect your very precious cargo but you'd also be very much mistaken. The card is thick enough that it prevents easy warping but still light enough that empty you won't overly notice what you are carrying about. I have had my case about 5 years now and it's been dragged to all manner of shows, demos and



tournaments and it is still in very good condition and I'm not noted for being very careful at times. The construction is great and because of the design I can stack them safely side by side or on top of each other. No dodgy logo making it all off centre and look like a leaning tower. The solid plastic handle makes them easy to carry as well.

I would say that the handle is nice but if you're going to use it a lot buy the Kaiser cover. The sides have additional plastic protection and it's also waterproof. The handy carrying strap also means you have both hands free to carry all the prizes you'll win. Or at least all the things you'll buy and claim you won. A helpful zipped area gives you a nice space to slip in rule books, rosters and other elements you're going to need. The Kaiser system comes in 1, 2, 3 and 4 versions which mean's you can get a lot of models in your bag and the fact you can just remove one of the card cases and insert another makes it easier as well. What more can any gamer want?

### Foam

Because of the process in making the trays at times they come apart and you might be forced to re-glue them. Now with my KR trays, this has never happened to me. That's not to say they are perfect and it never





happens, it has just never happened to me (I shall now hug a large piece of wood and pray my trays don't fall apart on the way home from club.) I have trays from other companies that are a mess due to the weight in them or very poor glue being used. The one that my jacks sit in has fallen apart more times than I care to think about and I know it will be replaced very soon and I'll get its replacement from KR just because the trays have always stayed together.

The foam is soft enough to protect anything you put in them but not so soft as to allow models to flop about and find a way to get damaged. Like any foam tray system it's easy to remove the walls between two locations to allow models with banners or other items to be easily carried. Though if you have a lot of this I would suggest you use one of the Kaiser pick&pluck foam trays instead. It could let you carry the models in a standing position and better protect them.

If you were at Salute and among one of the first five thousand through the door you are also now the proud owner of a K-Lite transport bag. It's not as good as the other Kaiser cover for starters no added protection in the sides and you can't adjust the shoulder strap. But being waterproof is handy and it has enough space after you've put your case in it to still be able to carry anything else you need for the day. The K-Lite can only carry one case but that still means you're carrying up to 200 models.

## Cost

With the economy the way it is everyone is looking for anything cheaper and miniature storage is no different. The standard KR case with the trays will cost you £22.49 not including the postage costs. If you buy 3 that price drops to £20.99 each and 5 would cost you £19.99 each. So it can pay to buy more. A Kaiser one costs £41.99 now that includes the card KR Multicase and the trays and postage. Compare those prices against other companies and you are going to see they are more than competitive.

If you are interested in the K-Lite they work out at £14.99 on there own or £29.99 with the card case and trays.

Now I've looked at a small part of the KR range. They also do the Aquilla which is designed for skirmish scale and can carry between 18 and 100 models depending on the option you go for and prices are from £12.50 to £25.99. The Aluminium cases give you great durability and loads of extra protection for your models, something worth considering if you have to ship them in the hold of an aircraft. The prices range from £29.99 to £94.99 depending on what size you go for.

So if you need a case to carry your precious cargo you could do worse than to have a look at what KR has on offer.





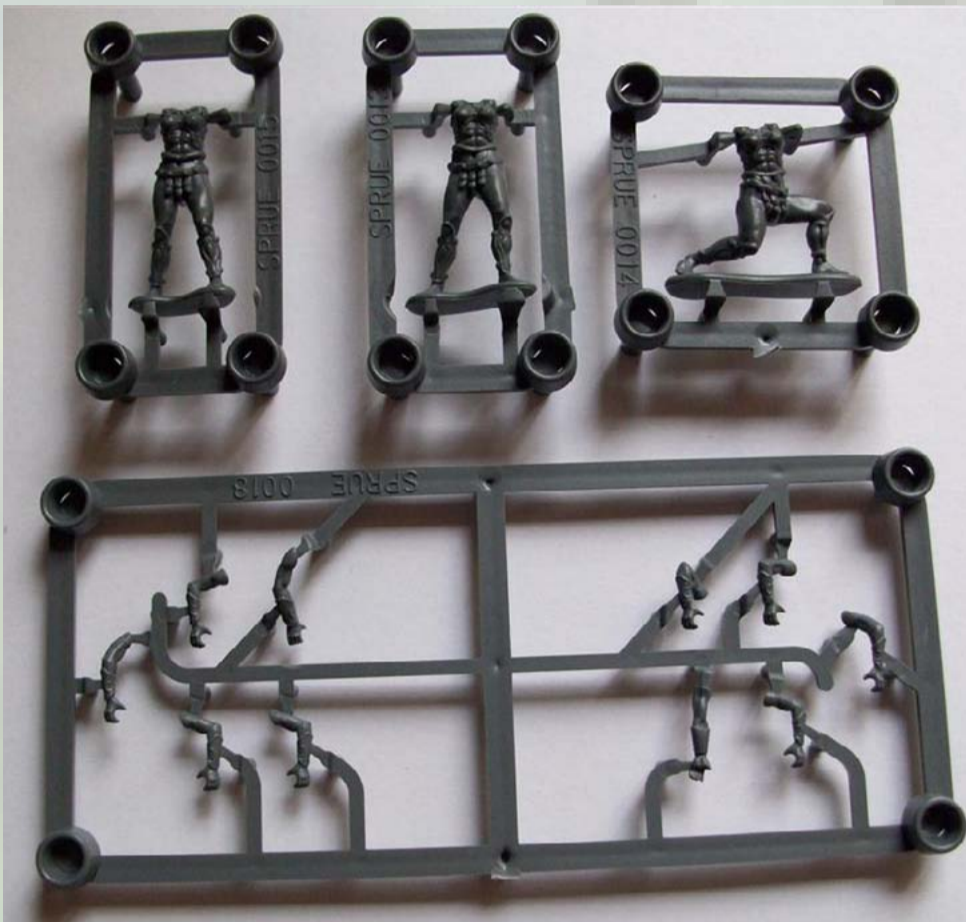
# AMAZONS!

***"The female of the species is more deadly than the male."***  
**by Timothy Colonna**

In my opinion one of the coolest and least represented armies in fantasy lands is that of the Amazons. Warrior Women honed to the peak of physical and military perfection. What's not to like!

need to redesign common items such as weapons or shields. In practice, however, the end product results in a great amount of wasted plastic, and it increases the difficulty in sprue organization.

The sculpts on these miniatures are very crisp and clean with little to no mold lines. Wargames Factory uses polystyrene plastic, so you can use plastic cement for assembly, but the plastic mix seemed a little harder to cut than normal. You also will want to use a good pair of flush cut clippers, as the bits will be ruined if you try to tear them off due to the poor location of some mold channels.



March saw the release of a new Amazon multipart plastic kit from Wargames Factory. This kit features 24 multipart-plastic Amazons sculpted in 28mm, with plethora of weapon and shield options.

Wargames Factory has manufactured multipart plastic historical miniatures for a few years now, and it recently expanded into the sci-fi and fantasy market. It is most notably recognized by its Shock Troopers Great Coat Infantry sci-fi miniatures. The Amazons join the Orcs in Wargames Factory's fantasy armies, and the Skeletons and Persians will soon follow.

The Amazons represent a departure from what most people are familiar with in multipart plastic kit design, which uses a mini-sprue system that allows Wargames Factory to reuse various sprues with other army kits. In theory, this reduces the







Wargames Factory captured the feel of the classic age with these miniatures, which is apparent in the army's weapons and shields. The box contains 24 of the standard round shield as well as some unusual shapes that have a nice feel with the miniatures, which lend a unique look without losing that classical look. (shields pic)

Two styles of helmeted heads are included in the box. My favorite are patterned after the Thracian helmets that the Spartan Hoplites wore (the brush down the middle helmet) with the others being a traditional helmet of the similar such as the Numidians may have worn. There are six different heads contained on the sprues that give you 3 different heads of each helmet style. Good news is there are 9 of these sprues allowing you to outfit the whole box with either style of helmet. There is an additional sprue with 4 non helmeted female heads as well. My favorite heads has a Thracian helmet pushed up showing the Amazons face in a yelling pose. Very

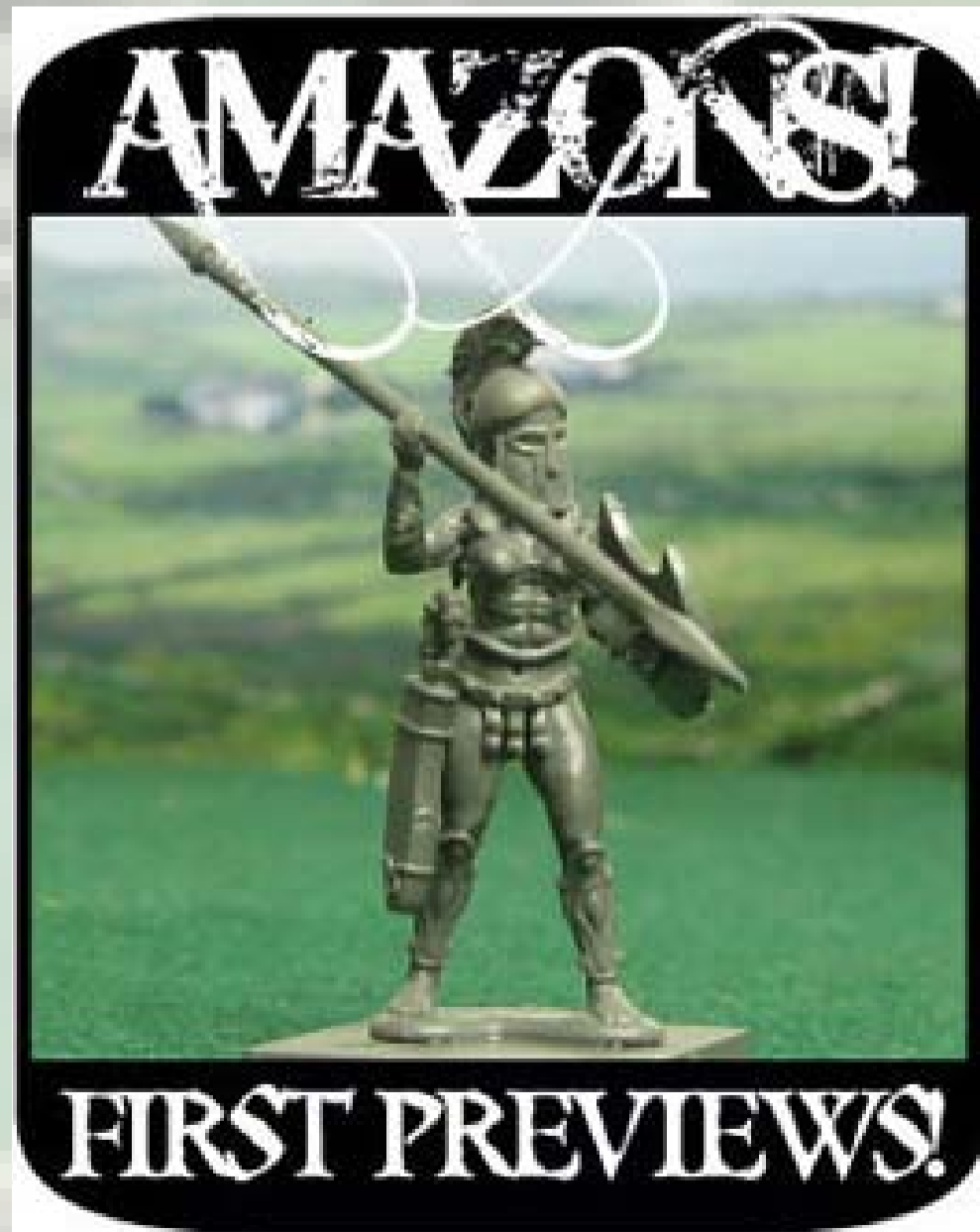
cool sculpt. helmet pic).

The three body styles do not allow for a lot of customizations, as these are not separate legs and torsos. The box includes ten of each of the two standing poses, and four of the kneeling poses. Would have been nice to see an equal distribution so you can create a nice kneeling firing line of archers, as 4 is a little sparse.

Weapons in the box are plentiful. I especially liked the look of the blades on some of the spears, which have a very ornate appearance. However, I would have liked more bows in the box (it only includes eight), as it is tough to assemble ranged unit from one box. The box includes 32 spears, 6 javelins, 12 pikes, 8 bows, 8 slings, 4 swords, 2 hammers, and 8 "ticklers" (which Wargames Factory describes as long claws strapped to the forearm use to get under shields and attack "tender areas").

Missing from the sprues were any options for musicians or standard bearers. A lot of systems utilize these concepts, so be prepared to raid your bits box or green stuff if necessary.

Bases are not included, but at \$19.99 MSRP for 24 models, this box set is a very good value.







# THE LAST WORD

WITH  
**UNCLE BOMBER**

## WYSIWYG

### **W**hat happened to friendly play?

I can understand an almost overzealous adherence to the rules during tournament play, when those few millimetres you would normally let go on a club night might make the difference between victory and defeat.

During a tournament you watch your oppositions every move and dissect every dice roll, mercilessly jumping on any infraction. You make sure every movement made is rule perfect, you make sure every angle measured is by the book and every range is spot on target. These things I can live with in a tournament, I expect a certain amount of mind numbing, boring, infuriating, religious, nit picky obedience to the rules.

But as a wise man once said, 'rules are for the adherence of fools and the guidance of wise men.'

On club night surely we become the wise men? We forgive the small infractions, we let the odd millimetre go. Who hasn't moved without measuring because they can see that the other persons unit is within range? Who hasn't used a D6 to decide something important, you know, top half I'm better looking than you, lower half my dog is better looking. (Out of interest my dog is better looking than Ted Chang – the dice prove it.)

So I have a problem with WYSIWYG or rather the fact that we no longer seem to apply it. This strange word has served me well for more years than I care to think about it saw me through my early years when figures weren't the same quality as they are today, and there wasn't the

vast range of different troop types available. My game playing was formed with WYSIWYG in those halcyon days.

Back then if a player didn't have a figure they needed they could easily stick one in to take its place, a figure with a gun, is a figure with a gun after all. And there it was, WYSIWYG, What You See Is What You Get. A panacea for anyone on a budget who couldn't afford the latest uber figure for their army. The instant answer for the figure left behind in your painting area when you left for the club. The game went on.

Now even the poncy colour or the fiddly war gear of a #! ^ @\* figure is apparently critical and you can no longer use WYSIWYG with impunity.

When was the last time any of us used WYSIWYG during a game that even came close to competitive? When was the last time that level of common sense prevailed during a normal night at the club, let alone a tournament? I miss the days of WYSIWYG. They harked back to simpler times, back when we used to carry our figures in blue or red metal tool cases, safely wrapped up in whatever rags we could lay our sweaty hands on. I miss WYSIWYG, and the attitudes that spawned it, times when kids were happy playing with cardboard boxes, and not the latest X Station Pod with remote control. I miss WYSIWYG. Besides I'm sure jeans used to fit better back then too!

Now as always you can feel free to disagree with me, they are my views and not those of the management after all. But you would all be wrong.

If you have any comments you would like to make or if you have a subject that you feel Uncle Bomber should tackle then please send your emails to [unclebomber@the-ancible.com](mailto:unclebomber@the-ancible.com)

Uncle Bomber



ISSUE 10

# THE Ancible

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