

ISSUE 10

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THE Ancible

Your portal to Sci-Fi and Fantasy Gaming



INSIDE

In the Box

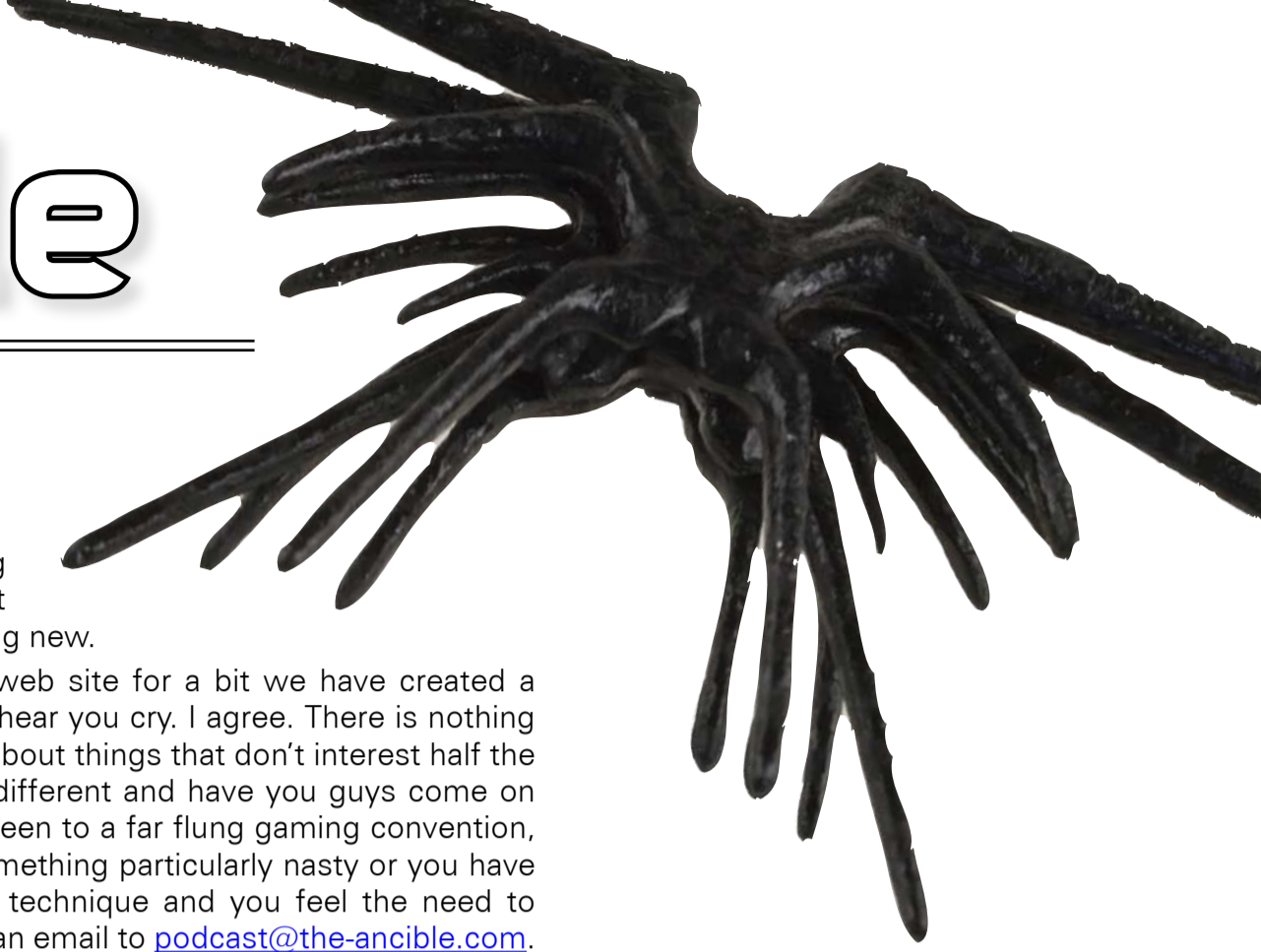
Watching Paint Dry

Dark Age

A Call to Arms - The old and the new

ISSN 2042-7727

THE Ancible



View from the Command Deck

Life goes on at Ancible Towers. We are constantly sending out the scouts trying to find new and exciting things to report on however we decided to try something new.

For those who have not been on the web site for a bit we have created a podcast. I know, not another podcast I hear you cry. I agree. There is nothing new in a bunch of guys sitting around talking about things that don't interest half the audience so my plan is to make things a bit different and have you guys come on and be the stars of the show. So if you have been to a far flung gaming convention, or maybe you role playing group just killed something particularly nasty or you have discovered some long lost arcane modelling technique and you feel the need to share with the wargaming world then drop us an email to podcast@the-ancible.com. Depending on response then I will pick the most interesting, funny or best offer of gaming goodness.

As well as that most of the team (Jez went on holiday instead) went off to Games Expo this month, more on that later, and have been generally busy with all the stuff that goes into making the magazine. I made the comment the other day at one of our production meetings that we have been a bit short on the battle report front so with their usual single tasking mentality everything else got dropped and they are all planning various battle reports. Oh the trials of the man in charge.

The big news is that Mantic have announced Warpath a new Sci Fi game written by allesio Calvatori. This could be very interesting and we wait to see what the guys over at Mantic come up with. Watch this space.

The two new features we trialled last issue have gone down very well and both Andy and Dev have agreed to continue to write their own little corner of gaming so I am looking forward to both of those.

I worry a lot about the forum and the lack of activity from the masses so my task is to see if it is the most sensible way to engage with the readership. I am open to suggestions on the subject.

So enough of this and more of what you have tuned in for.

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

Kenny R

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Article Submissions

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Artwork Submissions

Are you a budding artist or are you already established? You should contact Kenny Robb (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.

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

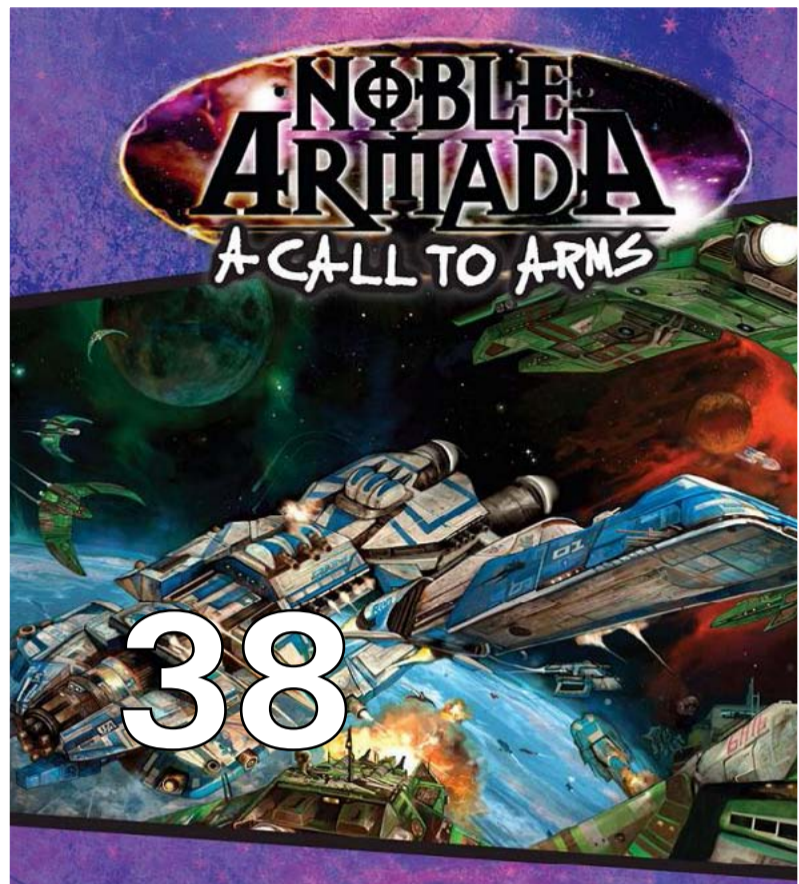
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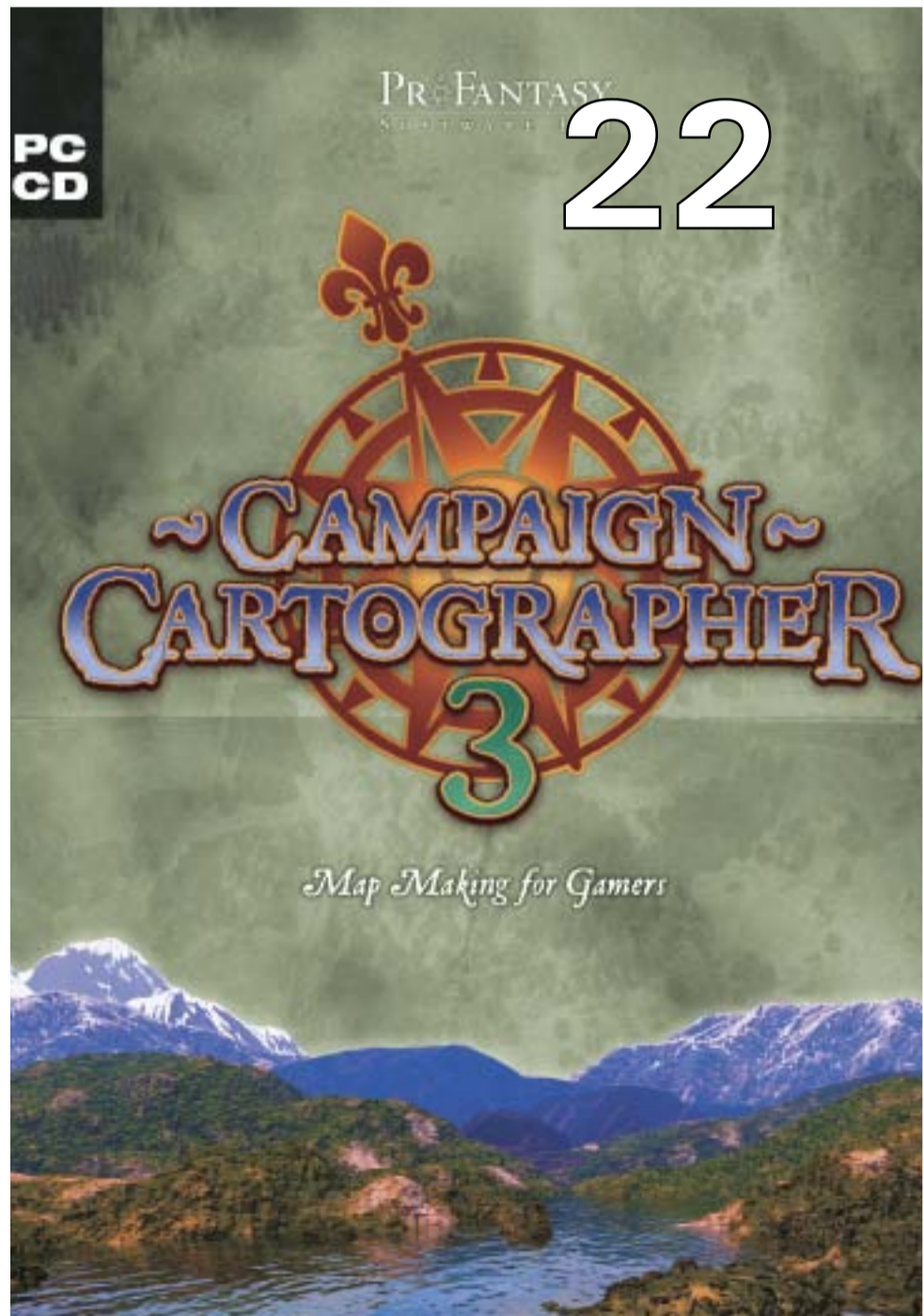
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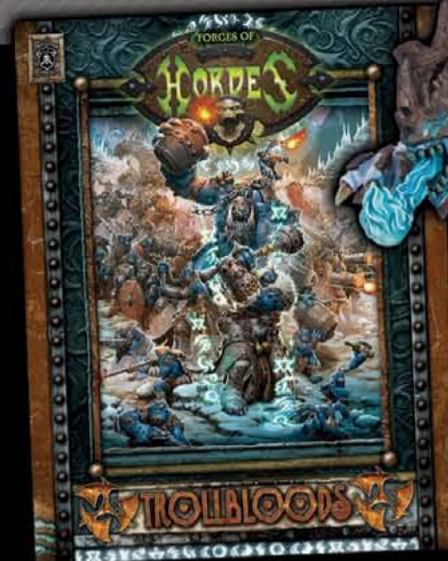
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Watching Paint Dry

By Andy Walker



So for the next "Watching Paint Dry", I've been given a fleet of spaceships from the game "A Call to Arms: Noble Armada" produced by Mongoose Publishing. This is something completely different for me for two reasons. Firstly this is the smallest scale I've ever painted – previously I'd painted a few things for GW's Epic game, but even that is "giant" scale in comparison to these spaceships! Secondly I'd never painted a "fleet" before – although they're still bits of metal stuck to bases made of metal or plastic, they require a different painting approach to the standard "humanoid" miniature.

The man in charge likes to give me a challenge it seems, and I'm not going to back down...

So Whats in the Box?

The box set I got my hands on was the "House Hawkwood Fleet Set". A quick perusal of the Mongoose Publishing website gave me some background on House Hawkwood. They remind me a lot of European (particularly British) royalty from a few hundred years back, very conscious of their bloodline and their history.

"This background makes Hawkwoods vain, headstrong and bigoted – but at the same time they can be courageous, charitable and progressive."

So my fleet are the Noble Armada version of the British Empire, huzzah! Strangely though the crest of House Hawkwood is a *lion* rampant – I would have thought a stylized bird of prey would have been more appropriate?

The next thing I looked at was the ships themselves, the box contains a complete fleet for you to play a game with:

- 1 Malcolm-class Light Carrier
- 2 Griffin-class Destroyers
- 2 Darius-class Galliot
- 4 Hornet-class Frigates
- 2 Wayfarer-class Explorers
- 4 Fitzhugh-class Light Fighters
- 4 Kestrel-class Torpedo Bombers



The Fighters, Torpedo Bombers and Explorers are tiny – in particular the Explorers could fall down between the cracks of the floorboards never to be found again. They range from just over 10mm, to just shy of 20mm. There's not a huge amount of detail on them, but areas like engines/exhausts, cockpits and weapons are obvious and defined. The Galliot are 30mm long and the Frigates just about push 25mm. Both types are more detailed, with some plates sculpted and more defined engines. the Galliot in particular have some lovely detail underneath. The destroyers and the light carrier are a "whopping" 50mm long and

are crammed full of detail. The destroyers are the only multi part models (discounting the bases for all the models) – the engines and rear “wings” are one piece that needs to be glued to the main fuselage, and the *tiny* turrets also need to be glued in place. The gluing surfaces here are flat, which was OK for the small size of the model and didn't require pinning, but on anything larger, pinning would be advisable to keep the pieces in place

Stands and Bases

The fighters and torpedo bombers come with little metal disc bases (18mm in diameter), which have a hole in the centre to accept a spigot on the underside of the ship. This actually works really well, and the completed piece is stable and solid.

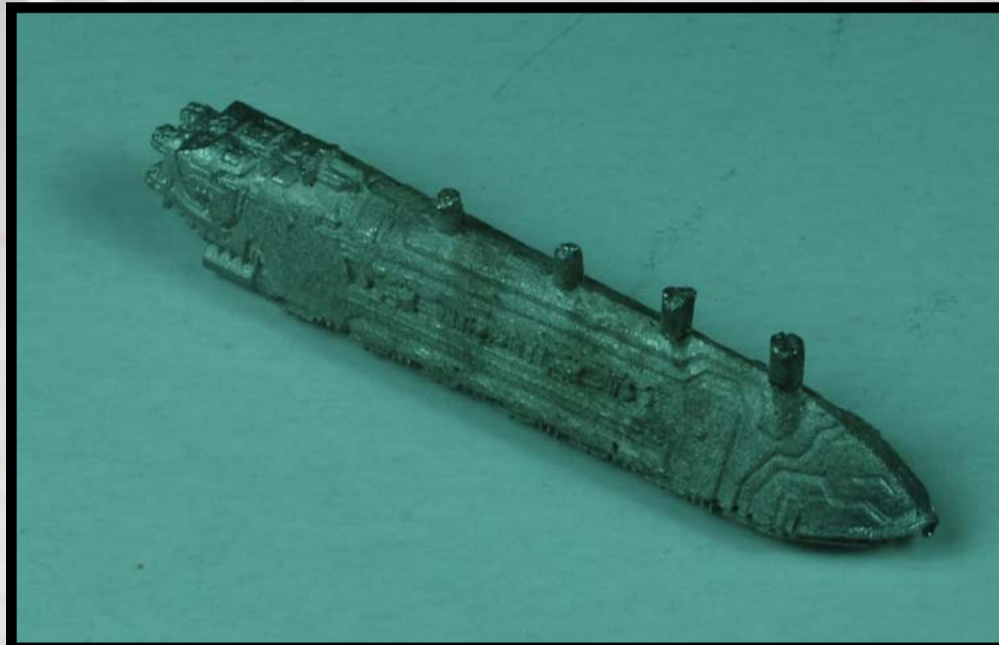
For the Explorers and all the other larger ships, the standard(ish) space ship/flyer base type is used, with a clear plastic column mounted in a clear plastic circular base. The one difference I noted from other flyer bases is the ball and socket mechanism at the top of the column. This has the benefit of being able to detach the models from the bases so they're easy to transport, and also so you can set the ships at “at dramatic or jaunty angles”. Obviously the good thing about the flyer stands is that they do help give the illusion that the ships are in mid air/space, but I have a few issues with them:

- While they work well with the Explorers, Frigates and Galliot's, the Destroyers and Light Carrier are particularly top heavy, and there's no way to add weight to the base to compensate
- The ball and socket mechanism is quite stiff, and requires some sanding down to be truly movable, I'm not entirely sure that the type of plastic used will stand up to too much connecting and disconnecting, as it feels a little brittle
- Being clear plastic, the last thing you want to do is get paint on them so while the column and stand would have been a really useful thing to hold while painting the ships, you're better off painting the ships separately
- The spigot on top of the socket piece, designed to go up into the ships to attach, are usually too big for the holes in the ships – this required a lot of filing or drilling to make fit

I really do like the concept of the stands, and when attached they look great, it just feels like the execution of the idea isn't quite right.

Flash and Mould Lines

So my biggest bugbear of the models is the casting – mould lines are quite obvious on several of the models and there is a large amount of flash, particularly on the light carrier and the frigates (see the images below).



On such small miniatures both the mould lines and the flash can be difficult to remove without damaging the detail on the model. On the Galliot's the top and bottom halves of both of the models were out of line, and cleaning this up effectively was difficult. I know I'm being overly critical here, but with models of such a small size, that amount of flash can make or break a project. The metal bases for the fighters and torpedo bombers also required some significant filing to remove large chunks of flash from the edges

Painting - Colour Choice

So to the colour scheme. The official “livery” of House Hawkwood is a striking combination of blue and white. It's fairly safe to say I'm not a fan of painting white, but by the end of painting this fleet I really

feel that I nailed the method. With this particular colour scheme I wanted to avoid making the fleet look like a combination of airliners and ocean liners – difficult with the large amounts of white on vessels that are designed to look like a cross between ships and aeroplanes.

Again I used Games Workshop paints exclusively for this project – this is mainly due to the fact that I know what colours and effects I'm going to get when I use them, and that their wash and foundation ranges are so useful.

Brush wise, I used only 3:

- My trusty (and now rather worn out) Daler-Rowney System3 size 1, was used for base coating larger areas on the models. As it's synthetic, the tip has degraded after a fair amount of use, but it's a useful brush for getting stuff done quickly.
- GW Wash brush – does exactly what it says on the handle...
- Windsor & Newton Series 7 size 0. This brush did most of the work, an absolute joy to use, it still amazes me how it can make painting easier and more pleasurable, I don't think I can ever go back to a cheaper brush

Some Thoughts on Painting Small Scale

When getting down to miniatures at this small a scale, you have to take a slightly different approach to painting. As the photographs show, some of these pieces are tiny, so the colour scheme has to be bold and eye-catching. Here are a few things I've learned over the course of painting the fleet:

- It's even more important to get the definition between different parts of the model right. The difference between shadow and light should *not* be subtle, and with a two tone colour scheme, the colours should be starkly different.
- Except for the largest ships, there really isn't too much space for a complex multi-layered approach – at most a base coat, with two stage highlighting gets the required effect.
- Metallics are better bright – the metallic elements of the ships tend to be small (the biggest bits are the engines), so to make them noticeable against the rest of the

model use a bright highlight, combined with a dark shade.

- Don't be afraid to "Black line" – while this approach can look crude on 28mm-30mm scale (or larger) models, using black as an "extreme shadow" really helps to define different areas on these tiny ships

One thing I noticed about painting the ships with the flying bases, is that you need to think a little about the undersides of the miniatures. Particularly on the Galliot, most of the interesting sculpting is on the underside. If the ships can be positioned at a "jaunty" angle, then those parts of the ships are going to be more visible than would be usual. Therefore nearly as much attention needs to be paid to these normally unseen areas as you would the normally visible parts. Although in space there is no up or down, top and bottom, I still painted the ships as if the light source was directly above the miniature, therefore the undersides of the ships will be darker. I know this doesn't necessarily "make sense" for *spaceships*, but from a gaming and display perspective, they are orientated as if they are planet bound (i.e. on a horizontal plane) and therefore it works better.

The Small Stuff: Fitzhugh-Class Light Fighter and Kestrel-Class Torpedo Bomber



I'll deal with these two together as because they were so small, I painted them at the same time. The Fitzhugh is a tiny, boxy fighter with an angular front section being the defining part of the miniature. The Kestrel Torpedo Bomber is a much more sleek, curvy ship, with a distinctive "tail" that makes it look a little like a fish.

As the Fitzhugh and Kestrel are mounted on the metal disc type bases, both miniatures were given an



all-over undercoat of black. As we all know, white is a tricky colour to paint over a black undercoat, but the white elements on both these ships were so small that it wouldn't make that much difference. I used some trusty blu-tac to attach

a number of the ships to a strip of wood and bulk undercoated them. When it comes to spray undercoats and me there are always a few recesses that seem to get missed (I have no idea why this is, I'm hoping someone will explain it one day...), so once the undercoat was dry (and the missed bits are then glaringly obvious), I went back over both models with a brush and some slightly thinned Chaos Black.

Now holding these tiny miniatures while trying to paint them would be a nightmare, so I used the blu-tac again to stick them to some old paint pots, so I had something to hold onto while painting. This is really a sensible approach for all miniature painting, anything that helps holding the miniature and the brush steady can only aid your painting.

The colour scheme on both these ships is very simple. I took a look at the studio paint jobs on the Mongoose Publishing website and in the rulebook and felt that the ships looked a little busy – I've simplified that down a little bit while still remaining fairly true to the artwork.



One little trick I use when painting something this small, is a quick grey drybrush over the undercoat. This just picks out the details on the model, and gives me a good idea where certain colours need to go.

The first elements to be painted were the metallics – on these two this consisted mainly engines and a few details. This was a very simple process, as there's no room to do anything fancy:

- Base coat: Chainmail
- Shade: A liberal wash of Badab Black
- Highlight: Mithril Silver



The combination of dark shadow and bright highlight really makes the metal parts stand out against the other colours, as you'll see further on.

Next up is the blue. I wanted the blue to be a little more grey than normal, more befitting a space fleet/navy than a bright royal blue would:

- Base coat: Thinned Regal Blue – the black undercoat helped to define some of the shadows in the recesses and a second coat of Regal Blue built up a solid base colour.



- First highlight: Thinned 1:1 mix of Regal Blue, Shadow Grey – this was quite a wide highlight, but having the paint thinned heavily helped blend it in to the base coat.
- Second highlight: A little Astronomican Grey was added to the mix of the first highlight and applied to all the upper edges of the ships. This helped pick out the details and edges of the blue elements of the ships.



The tricky bit was going to be the white.

- Base coat: Astronomican Grey. GW's foundation paints are my heroes here – it did take two coats to get a smooth finish, but that's still pretty good



- Highlight: Skull White. As always with painting white, lots of layers of seriously thinned paint. It seems counter-intuitive to thin white that much, but multiple coats (receding towards the top edges) on top of the grey makes for a nice graduated effect. With such small areas on the Fitzhugh and Kestrel, multiple generally means two

Once the white was done I then painted the thin stripes on the forward fuselage of the Kestrel in thinned Regal Blue. I then made sure I then highlighted those stripes with Shadow Grey, otherwise they would have looked oddly flat against the graduated white fuselage.

The final elements to paint were the exhaust flames and the canopy on the Fitzhugh. Initially I had painted the canopy silver, in a similar style to present day astronaut helmet vizors, but after completing several of the different ships it didn't look right, it looked a little bland. After a fair amount of to-ing and fro-ing about what to do to fix it, I chose to go for a yellow look, which added a nice splash of contrast colour to the ships. It's times like that when I'm glad I went with my gut instincts and made the change, as it greatly improved the look of several of the ships.

These elements were so tiny, that the paint scheme was simply:

- Base coat: Solar Macharius Orange. Again, hurrah for foundation paints, one coat of thinned paint did the trick here.

- Highlight/flame centre: Iyanden Darksun added as a dot to the centre of each exhaust, and on the top edge of the canopy of the Fitzhugh.



Medium Sized Workhorses: The Wayfarer-class Explorer, the Hornet-class Frigate and the Darius-class Galliot

With the small stuff out of the way, it was time to move on to the medium sized craft. The Wayfarer-class Explorer is another small ship, sleek and swept back in design with a nice looking V-shaped cockpit/bridge area. The Hornet-class Frigate is a little bland, looking a little like a ship from the original Battlestar Galactica, or a rebel ship from Star Wars – it's probably just as well the colour scheme wasn't all white...

The Darius-class Galliot however, is a much more interesting design, a nicely curvy and detailed fuselage with some chunky engines attached to the back. Underneath there is a *lot* of sculpted detail, which unfortunately won't be seen much as it's really hidden by the fuselage.



These ships required a different approach to painting them, for two reasons:

- The amount of white on the ships was greatly increased, therefore a black undercoat wasn't

appropriate. Small areas of white aren't too much trouble with a black undercoat, but once the surface area gets larger than 5mm square, it gets much harder to get a solid base coat

- The flying base stands – I really didn't want to get any paint on the clear plastic

To cope with the first issue, I decided not to have any white on the undersides of the ships and sprayed the undersides black. Once this was dry, I flipped them



over and sprayed the tops and sides with Humbrol's Matt Grey undercoat – I decided to use grey as it works well with both the white and the dark blue. I'd thought about a white undercoat for the tops and sides, but like painting white over black, this would have made painting the dark blue a longer process as more coats would be needed.

To deal with the second issue, I didn't glue the bases on until the models were completed, and used blu-tac again to attach the models to old paint pots, undersides facing up, to hold them while painting. This brought up another challenge, which I'll deal with later.



WARNING Don't use too much blu-tac, as it gets stuck in all the places you don't want it too, and it's a difficult and lengthy job getting the stuff off again. The most effective way is to take a ball of it, and dab it on the area to pull the stuff off, then use a tooth pick or cocktail stick to remove any left over in difficult crevices

I deliberately painted the undersides of the ships darker, as these were effectively in shadow anyway. For the metallics I used a base coat of thinned Boltgun Metal, washed with Badab Black and highlighted with Chainmail. For the Wayfarer and Hornet, the metal parts were limited to the engines and a couple of details, so this was a quick and easy job. However the Darius has a lot of metal parts underneath, so took a little longer to add the highlights.



With no white on the underside of the ships, I just had the blue to do, and again this was a particularly quick job, with a base coat of Regal Blue, followed by a neat highlight of Shadow Grey. Still keeping to the slightly darker colour scheme for the undersides, I didn't add a second highlight with Astronomican Grey mixed in.

With the undersides completed, I came to the next challenge. As useful as blu-tac is, it will still remove paint when you pull it off a miniature. This isn't a complete disaster when it's just the undercoat (and to be fair the Humbrol grey undercoat stood up pretty well to it, although I still lost some), but when you've

spent a fair amount of time on the paint job, it pays to protect it. Therefore I sprayed the undersides of the ships with Humbrol Matt Acrylic varnish, and let that dry before I flipped the ships over and re-attached them to the pots.

On the tops and sides of these ships, I'm working with a grey undercoat, rather than black. One of the advantages of a black undercoat is that lines between armour plates, and other deep recesses are already shaded for you. Obviously this isn't the case with a grey undercoat, so to rectify this I gave all three ships a generous wash of Badab Black, ensuring that none of this gets underneath on to the already painted sections. This creates all the shadows and black-lining required, without darkening the grey too much. The great thing about a GW wash is that you've got much more control over it than you do with an ink, and it's easy to push it into the places you want shaded and away from other areas you want to keep light. As you can see from the pictures, once this is dried, the detail of the model is now well defined, and already quite cool looking.

On the Hornet and Darius, there's a lot more surface area to paint than on the Fitzhugh and Kestrel. So the highlighting on both the blue and white had to be much more graduated, which obviously means more time, effort, care and attention. The Wayfarer was a pretty quick job as it has plenty of nice hard edges to work with, which made highlighting easy. It was also more blue than white which definitely helped.



(At this point, a small part of me was wishing I'd gone for a grey colour scheme, but this has been done to death in Sci-Fi, so I stuck with the blue and white)

Next up was the metals – this was painted in the same way as for the Fitzhugh and Kestrel (Chainmail – Badab Black – Mithril Silver), as this was the top side of the model and therefore should be brighter. With hindsight I should have combined this step with the step above, and painted the metal base coat before the overall black wash, as this would have saved time (and wash) – the benefits of hindsight eh?



The Hornet was hampered by the amount of flash I had to remove from the wings and the rough upper faces that I was left with from that process. Thankfully there's no particularly large areas on the model and the highlighting was reasonably straightforward, though there is much more white.

The Darius required the most time as it has a lot of large uninterrupted surface area. I've followed the Mongoose studio paint job here, by using the different colours to break up these areas, especially the central fuselage section. I think this benefited the overall look of the ship anyway, as that section is quite bland.

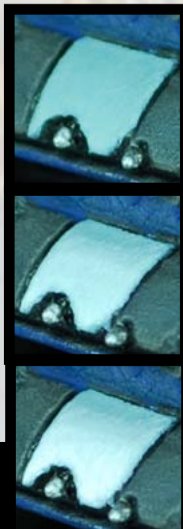
So with these larger surface areas, there needs to be extra highlight stages. For the blue, the process was now four stage:



- Base coat: Thinned Regal Blue – even with a grey undercoat this needed two coats to get an even finish
- First highlight: Thinned Regal Blue and Shadow Grey mix (1:1)
- Second highlight: Thinned Shadow Grey
- Final highlight: Thinned Shadow Grey and Astronmican Grey mix (1:1)

I resisted the urge to apply a final highlight of Astronmican Grey. As that colour was the base coat of the white sections, there was a risk that some definition may be lost when the shade of one section is the same colour as the highlight of the colour next to it.

For the white we now had a three stage process:



- Base coat: Thinned Astronmican Grey – this required two coats over the grey undercoat – I dread to think how many coats that would have been over black...
- First highlight: Thinned Astronmican Grey and Skull White mix (1:1)
- Final highlight: Thinned Skull White

For the highlight stages the paint was thinned to the consistency of milk and layered on carefully, avoiding flooding the area with too much paint, which will result in a thin white line between layers when it dries. These stages are where you really appreciate a decent brush and the control it affords you, both in the amount of paint you apply, and where it goes.

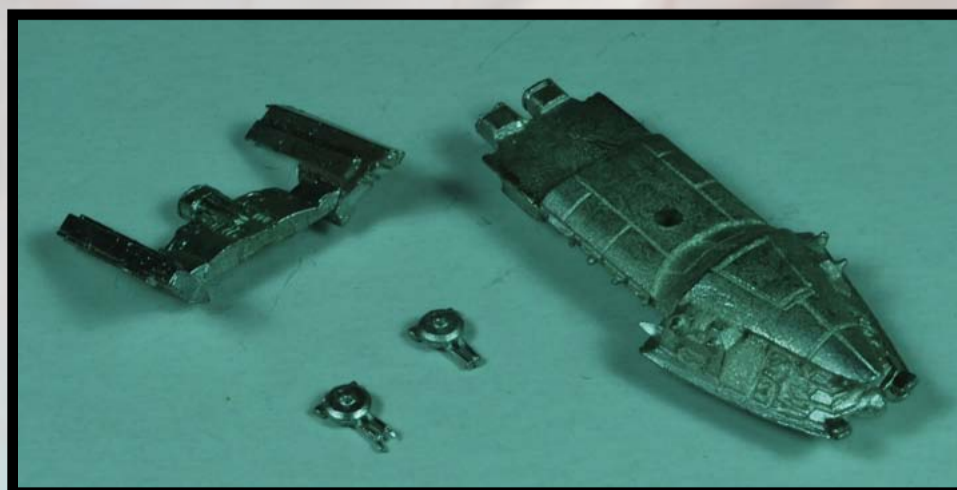
As always with white patience is the key, I've always found it the hardest colour to get right, and that was mainly because I rushed it. For a long time I wouldn't even try to paint anything with large areas of white!

Finishing up the three medium sized ships was exhaust flame and cockpit glass/canopy. Again the cockpits were originally painted silver like the Fitzhugh, but both the Wayfarer and the Darius look much better with yellow cockpit/bridge glass (like on the Kestrel, I have no idea where the Hornet's cockpit/bridge is...). Again these were not large areas to paint, so a base coat of Solar Macharius Orange followed by a highlight of Iyanden Darksun, was all that was required.

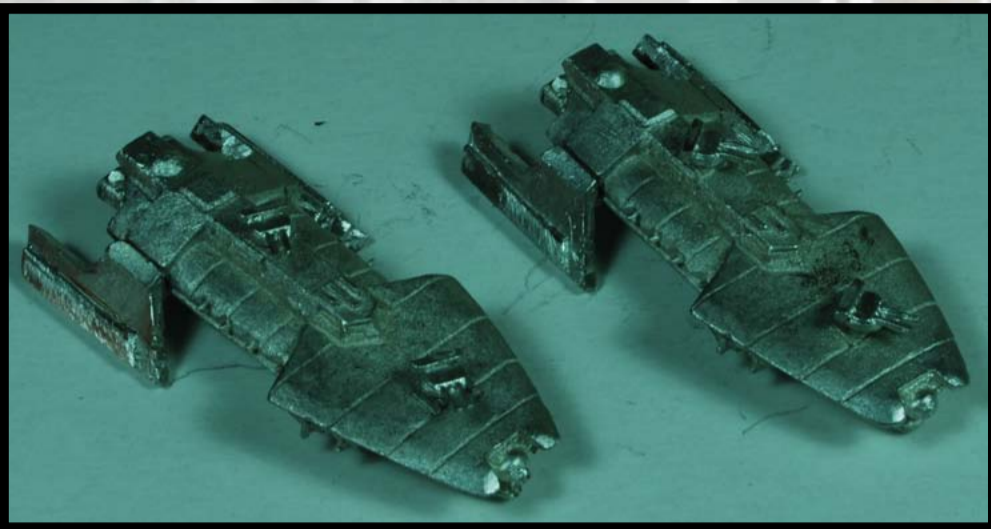
The models were varnished next and thena II that was left to do was attach the bases. The small socket piece fits up into the hole in the bottom of the ship (at least it does once you've filed it down to half it's size or smaller), and then the ball from the upright fits into the socket

The Big Guns: The Griffin-class Destroyer and the Malcolm-class Light Carrier

Finally we get to the big ships. As mentioned before, the Griffin-class Destroyer is the only multi-part ship in the box. The two main pieces fit together well with little to no filling required, and the gun turrets (did I mention how *tiny* they were?) fit nicely, although I am terrified of bending and/or breaking the guns, which are in positions where they are going to get knocked occasionally. For a little variety I positioned



the turrets to be pointing at something off centre, just so they look a little more "mid-battle" - nothing clever or fancy, it just gives the illusion of something happening.



The Griffin was painted in exactly the same way as I painted the medium sized ships, concentrating on the underside first, spray varnishing, and then flipping it over to work on the top sides. The Badab Black wash over the grey undercoat really helped define the hull plates, and is a lot easier than trying to paint in the lines with a fine brush. It also had me wishing again that I could have done a standard Sci-Fi grey colour scheme, as the Griffin looked superb already at that stage in the painting.

There is a lot of flat space on the model so I used strategically placed stripes of the blue to break up some of the larger areas. This also helped stop it looking too much like a mix of cruise yacht and airliner, which would have happened had I stuck to the white fuselage and blue superstructure and underside. There were still large expanses of white however, so the highlighting now reached 4 stages, with more and more white being mixed into the base coat, with a final highlight of pure Skull White.

If I'd had the time, some of the larger plates on the Griffin would have been ideal for some freehand designs, particularly on the large blue section at the back of the ship, or the large white front plate just behind the front



turret. Some Roman numerals or the House crest would look good. When I have some spare time (it will happen one day), I may revisit the Griffins with some detail work.

Perhaps after a campaign or two I can paint a record of their victories and kills on the sides of each ship...



The Malcolm-class (possibly the least interesting name they could have given the class, aside from calling it "Dave") carrier was painted in exactly the same way as the Griffin, but I wanted to make it the flagship of my fleet, and therefore it had to look a little different. So I decided to add a few gold elements to make it stand out, while still tying into the theme of the fleet - I didn't want the gold to overwhelm the blue and white. The main focus of the gold was the "face-shaped" area at the prow of the ship. Again as these are small areas the paint scheme was kept simple:

- Base coat: Tin Bitz
- Shade: Devlan Mud wash
- First Highlight: Burnished Gold
- Second Highlight: Burnished Gold and Mithril Silver 1:1 mix

This gives a nice yellow gold colour, rather than an orange hue, which wouldn't work very well with the cockpit glass and exhaust flame colour.

Like the Griffin, painting the Malcolm was made much easier by using the Badab Black wash over the grey undercoat, particularly around the gold elements, the recessed silver metal strip down both sides, and towards the back of the ship where there are a lot of plates to be defined. It's not a technique I've used a lot, but on anything small scale, light coloured and armoured, this seems to be a good way to get a decent looking effect done quickly.

As with the rest of the fleet, the last elements to be painted were the exhaust flames (the exhausts are pretty big on the Griffin) and cockpit/bridge viewing platform glass – again a simple orange and yellow paint scheme.

The larger sized flying bases were attached to these three ships after I'd sprayed them with matt varnish.

Conclusion

So that's a whole fleet completed! All the ships were fun to paint and I'm really pleased with the contrast between blue and white across the fleet. If you can get white to work, it really is worth the extra effort.

Having been used to painting whole armies (and taking a long time over it), it's nice to have a complete force finished in a short space of time. My painting experience was significantly lengthened by needing

to take photographs at every stage, by having white as one of the major colours, and by using multiple highlighting stages. Therefore I would say a fleet could be painted in a day by cutting the painting down to these stages:

- Metal: Mithril Silver base coat, Badab Black wash
- Blue: Regal Blue base coat, Shadow Grey highlight
- White: Astronomican Grey base coat, White highlight
- Gold: Dark Brown (e.g. GW's Scorched Brown) base coat, Burnished Gold highlight

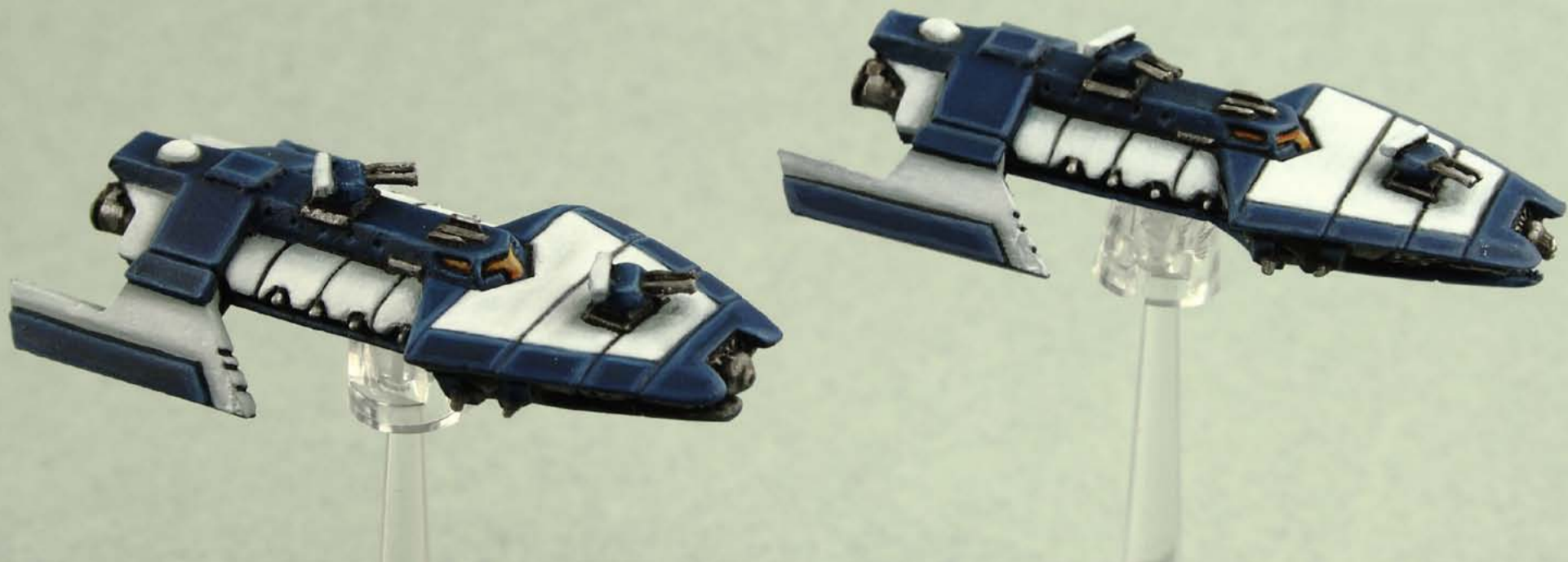
If painted neatly, this would look more than acceptable on the table top, and if House Hazat (black and red) or House Decados (black and green) fleets were chosen instead, it would be even quicker and easier.

The only downside of the models is the flash and mould lines which do take a lot of time to remove and neaten up. With such small pieces involved I guess it's unavoidable, and the fleet really is good value for money (a full group of 19 metal models for £25 is as cheap as it gets these days) so there's not too much ground for complaint.

With my fleet ready for war, it's time to look for a skirmish or two. I must admit I tend to be a little more Captain Zap Brannigan than Captain James T. Kirk, so victories may be few and far between...







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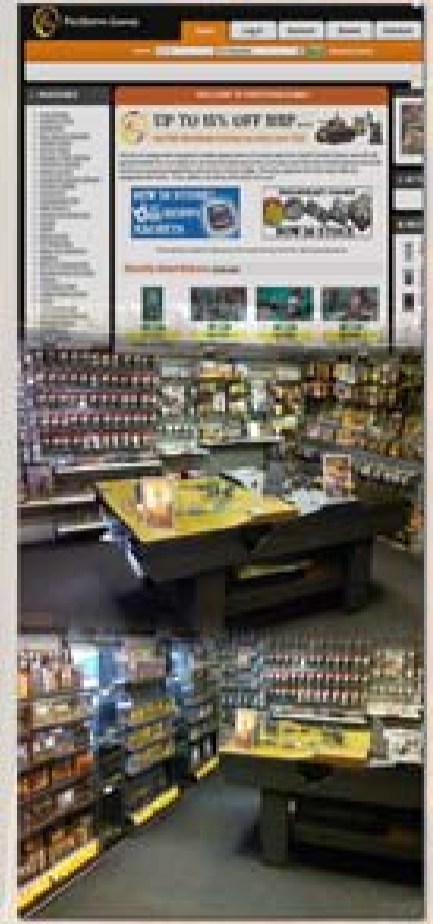
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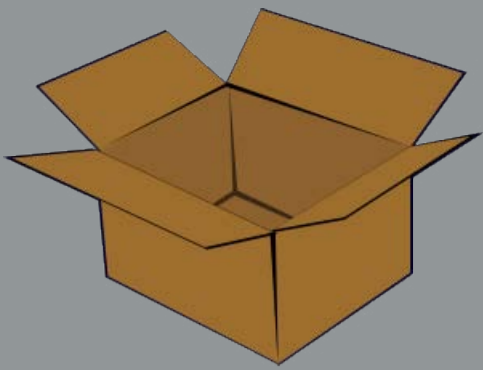
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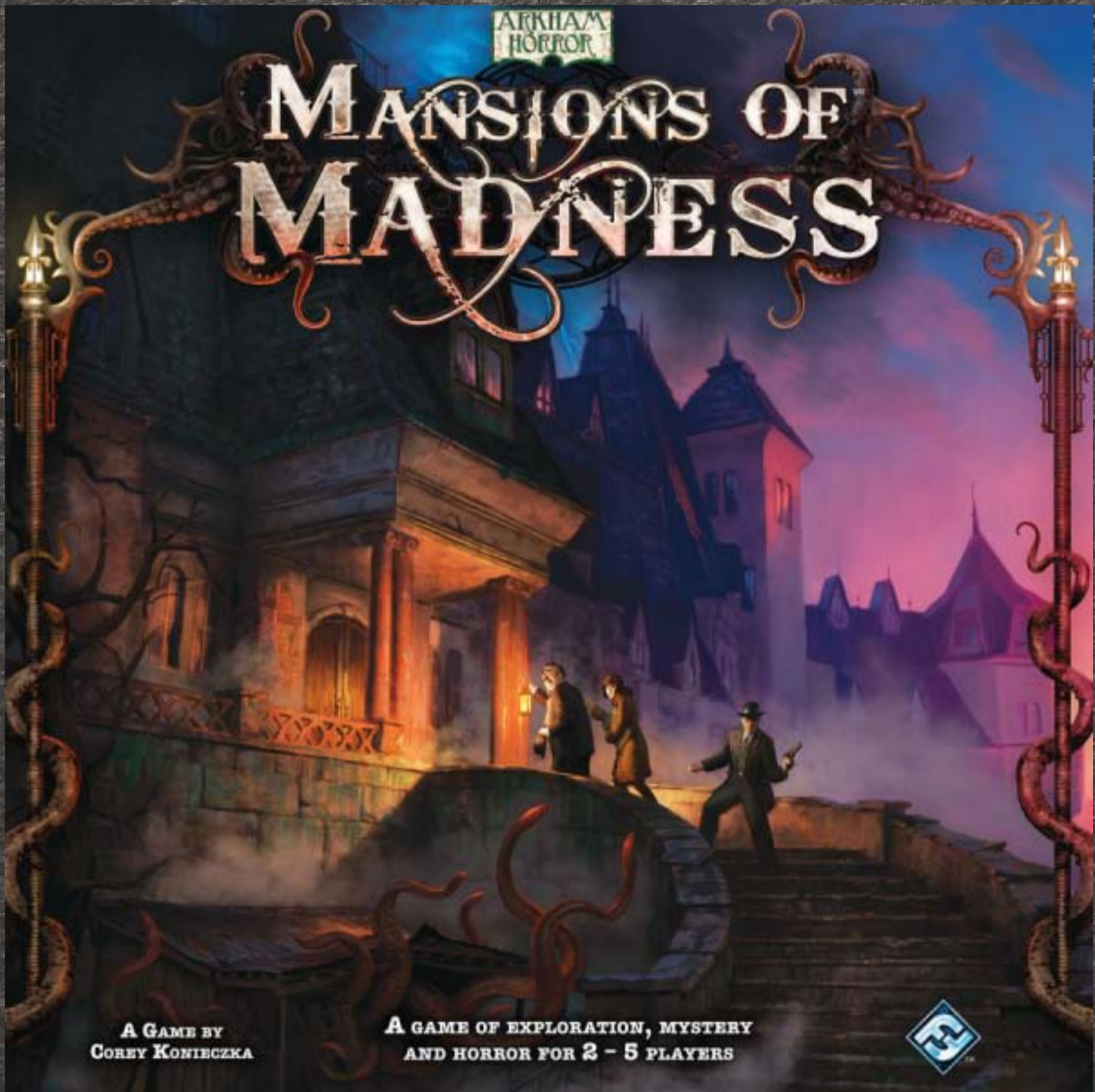
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IN THE BOX

with Dev Sodagar



Welcome to another All in the Box, this issue we are looking at a new game from Fantasy Flight Games: Mansions of Madness. A big box game that provides players with a simplified RPG experience as investigators delve through one of many scenarios whilst one player takes

on the role of 'Keeper' and attempts to defeat the investigators. This game is a great example of the quality of miniatures that can be included in a thematic boardgame to really enhance the gaming experience.

What's in the Box?

Mansions of Madness comes in a deep medium square box, the same dimensions as many of the new wave of board games but deeper to accommodate

consists of a selection of double sided room tiles that can be assembled in a variety of layouts. There are also some cards and tokens for the investigator items, keeper spells, combat and tracking various things. The best thing about the game are undoubtedly the figures that come in the box:

The Miniatures

Inside Mansions of Madness there are 32 plastic miniatures which include 1 for each of the investigators that can be played, and the rest are monsters that investigators may encounter. The monsters are all taken from Lovecraft's fiction and are in keeping with the theme of the game. They are classed into 3 levels - Human, Monster and Elder Creatures this corresponds to the combat cards that are used and gives an indication of how tough they are. The monsters included in the game include zombies, cultists, cult leaders, maniacs, witches, Hounds of Tindalos, Mi-go, Shoggoths and Cthonians. Quite an array of some of the most famous aspects of Lovecraft's writings. It also holds the promise of more to come with potential for Deep Ones, Spiders of Leng and more with the inevitable expansions that accompany any successful Fantasy Flight game.

the vast array of components. Fantasy Flight are known for doing very good artwork and Mansions of Madness is no exception, all the components are beautifully illustrated with lots of detail that sparks the imagination. The only slight down side is the amount of Artwork that has been replicated from their previous Cthulhu mythos game - Arkham Horror.

Whilst it is great that they have used the same characters, it would have been good to see them in some new poses.

As is always the case with Fantasy Flight, all the components are of the highest quality with Cardboard pieces being thick and with a great finish. The instructions for the game are in lovely full colour manuals that include a lot of thematic art. The game

The detail on the figures is very good despite being cast in fairly soft plastic, the mould lines are also not as prominent as is usually seen in figures of softer plastic. The figures also take paint reasonably well although they do need careful preparation to prevent the mould release that is used in the casting process from causing the paint to peel. They come with specialised bases

that are used to conceal information about the model including the special attack it performs and the health of the monster so that the Keeper can pick it up and check without the investigators becoming aware of what may happen if they attack the creature. Investigators can be told the health of the monster once it has taken some damage but they will only find out the special attack once it happens to them!



The Rules

The game uses the same structure as traditional Role playing games with one player taking on the role of Games Master (The Keeper) controls the scenario and any associated monsters in an attempt to prevent the investigators from completing the objective (if they are even aware as to what it is!). The rules are provided in the form of three books, one is the comprehensive rulebook which gives instructions on what the investigators and keeper can do in their turns. The other two books detail the scenarios. One, for the investigators, provides the introductory information that they can read and set-up the board, whilst the other is more comprehensive and allows the Keeper to tailor the scenario somewhat and ensure that the players are kept on their toes throughout the course of the adventure.

All the books are very high quality and clearly written making it very easy for players familiar with Arkham Horror or RPGs to pick up. If you are entirely new to this sector of gaming then the rules will take a little more careful reading and preparation in order to be able to play the game as the style is quite different to more conventional boardgames and wargames.

Other Goodies

The game comes with a d10 used by the investigators when they have to make checks to see if they are affected by something or if they attempt to do something,



particularly in combat.

As with a lot of boardgames of this style, there are lots and lots of

pieces, in fact there are 350 cards as well as a plethora of little card tokens used to track injury, madness and other effects that can occur in game. Whilst it can be frustrating to have so many game components to manage and above all, try not to loose to the vacuum cleaner.



The last inclusion in the game that really adds to the play mechanics are the puzzles. These puzzles provide tasks that the investigators must perform using tile shifting/switching/rotating to unlock or access clues or items or entry to rooms. These provide a great way of testing the investigators and forcing them to really think. These puzzles are a real departure from more conventional boardgaming mechanics but work very well and bring you a new and highly memorable dimension to the game play that works to draw the investigators into the game.





Playing the Game

As an experienced Role Player this game immediately made sense as a lot of the play style is very similar. The investigators are not required to have an in-depth knowledge of the mechanics in order to get the full play experience and if you have an experienced player that can act as the Keeper it is very beneficial. The game sees the investigators brought together to investigate one of a number of mysteries provided with the game. These scenarios will not play out the same way each time as during the set up the Keeper makes a number of decisions that will change the layout of the scenario, ensuring that the investigators don't necessarily know what will come up, even if they have played the scenario before. Once the Investigators have been given the prelude, they proceed to explore the building or area that they are in for the scenario and try to uncover the secret before madness/monsters take them.

The fact that the Investigators really don't need to know the mechanics puts more of the workload on the Keeper and to this end it really does help for the Keeper to be the most experienced player. The Keeper will be the one that is informed and will have much more control over the events so he is responsible for setting the atmosphere for the other players. It also means that in most of the scenarios it is easier for the Keeper to succeed with his objectives than the Investigators. This imbalance really doesn't make the game unplayable as it is very slight and also as this fits thematically with Investigators getting themselves involved with forces much greater than themselves and often not being aware of just how bad those forces can be.

The nature of the game means that playtime is quite variable especially if Investigators like to discuss plans and take their time with the puzzles, however most games play out in about 2hrs although it can be shorter if the Investigators loose prematurely as can be the case in a couple of instances.

Conclusion

With an RRP of £64.99, this is an expensive game, but the quality of the components and the quality of the game fully justify the expense. This is not a game that everyone is going to want to pick up, even if you love Lovecraft, you will only ever need one copy of this game in a gaming group as it really is a fairly long and involved game that is unlikely to attract interest from non gamers especially as a relatively long play. If you are wanting to try a simple roleplaying game, love Lovecraft or Arkham Horror then this is a must purchase for your group. If not, have a look at it anyway.



~CAMPAIGN~ CARTOGRAPHER 3

Review By Ian Barstow

Anyone who has been involved in gaming for a while, be it miniatures or roleplaying, will have drawn a map of some sort. It's almost a natural transitory step on your gaming development. However, like so many other gamers I used to look at the maps I drew, firstly on plain paper and then (showing my age here) with the arrival of hex sheets, thinking that my dreams were answered. Yet looking at professionally drawn maps compared to my best efforts, it was clear that I was no artist. I have drawn two really big maps by hand. One was a 4' x 3' hex map of Robert E Howard's Hyboria, the other, a similarly sized creation born of my own imagination. Each took months to finish and despite my best efforts contained errors, the signs of rubbing out and the colouring skills of a four-year-old. Then I covered them with adhesive plastic in order to mark the movement of armies and looked for a wall with enough space to hang them on. In other words, difficulties at almost every turn.

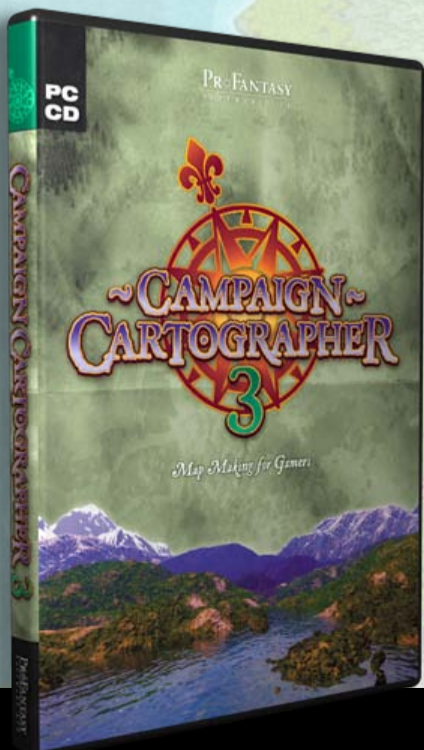
It was some time ago that I first heard of ProFantasy Software and their Campaign Cartographer system, but I was tentative about dipping my foot into the water. After all, how good could it be? Of course, the power of modern computers has changed so many things, and on one of my regular trips to the ProFantasy web site I saw examples of how good their maps could look. I still had my doubts though, being as whoever had produced these maps probably had years of experience behind them. However, I wanted to remake

my Hyboria map and the thought of hand drawing again was not one I wanted to contemplate.

In fact it was only a few months before I started working at The Ancible that I finally bought Campaign Cartographer 3 (CC3), and I started to dabble. Having worked for some years using Adobe InDesign and Photoshop I didn't think I'd be intimidated by the interface, but I was. The manual then told me that I had to forget everything I knew from Photoshop, because this software worked in a whole new way. It was close to a month before I built up the courage to try again.

However, I really wanted to make a new map, so I printed off the PDF manual and sat down to do the tutorial.

The first thing you learn about CC3 is that your work is divided up into sheets and layers. As the manual says, the best way to think of this is in the same way as one of those books that has sheets of transparencies that you fold over a page to see how Saxons baked bread and went to the toilet, or how the Babylonians built the Hanging Gardens. Layers, meanwhile, are like categories or headings, such as 'Furniture', 'Walls' or 'Traps'. I was used to layers in Photoshop which equate to sheets in CC3. The fact that CC3 also has a term 'layers' and it means something else is the hard bit to get over. The system is too long in the tooth now but I can't help wondering why ProFantasy didn't simply use the term 'layers' to mean the same thing for ease, but maybe they were unable to, for whatever reason. For me I would have preferred to have the term 'layers' left out of CC completely to avoid confusion, but the truth is that it does not take very long to get into the system and get used to the changes.





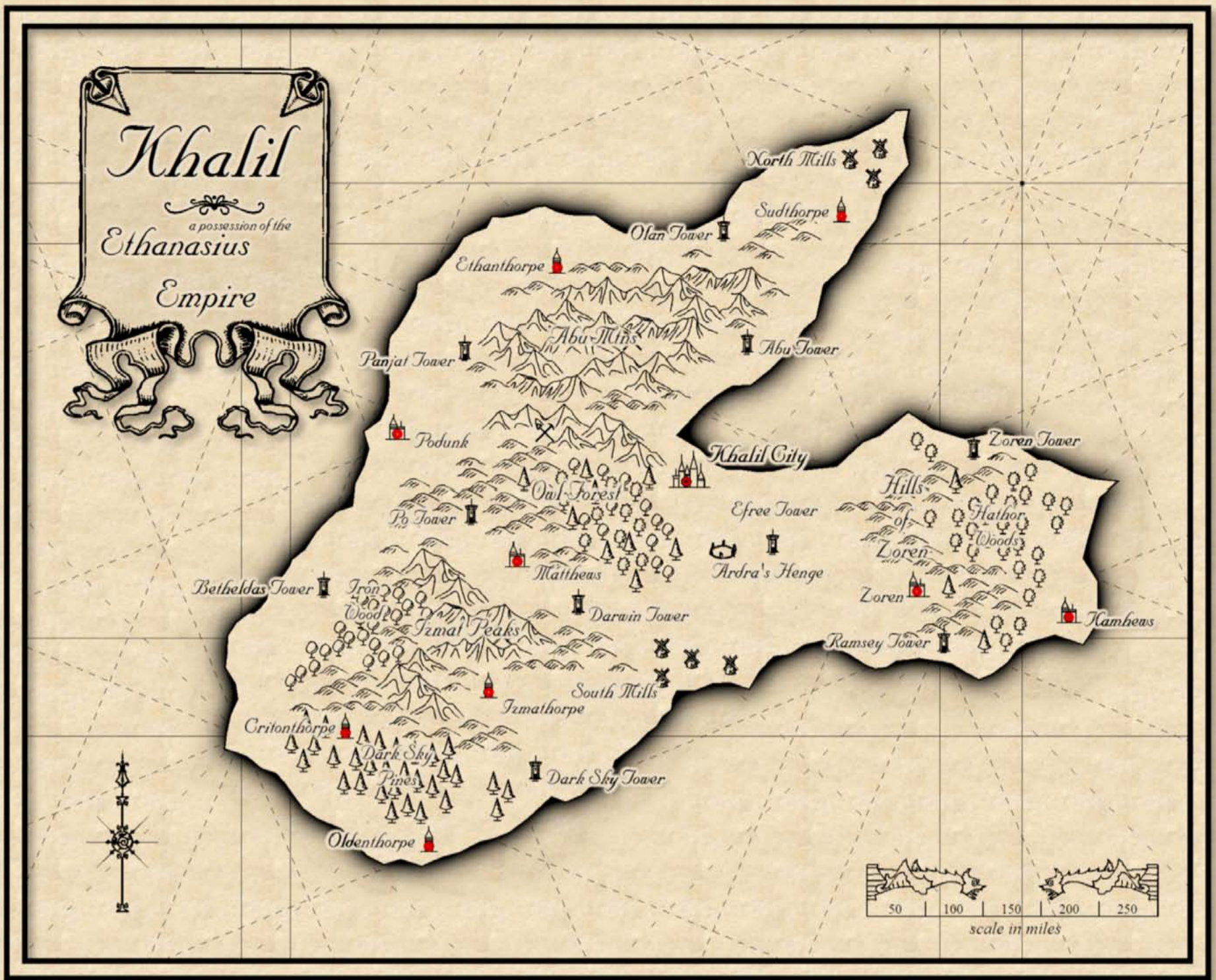
The learning curve for CC3 is steep but very fast, and if you follow the tutorial it becomes easy very quickly. Most activity is carried out by either a left-click or right-click of the mouse, although a bewildering array of options in drop boxes can appear asking you to confirm or cancel actions as well as any number of other options which you will need to access the Help guide to properly understand. Luckily, the guide is a mouse click away on the interface and very quickly the scary words take on meaning.

Within half an hour of beginning the tutorial I had completed my first map (I have not included in this review, rather I have left the examples to the professionals), with coastline, mountains, desert,

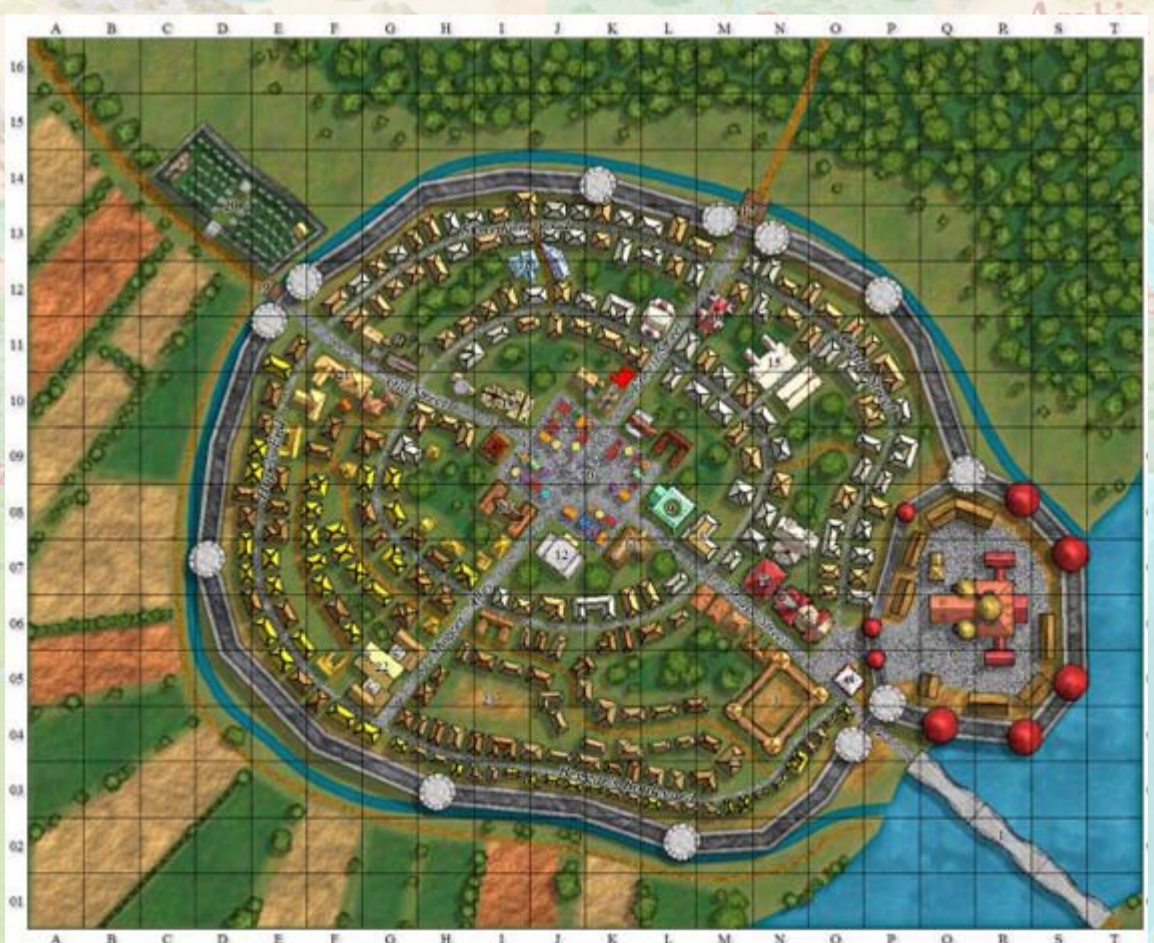


rivers and much more besides. I confess I was surprised myself. For a start it looked better than anything I had ever drawn and also better than many commercial maps I had come across within games. I guess it was at this point that I began to realise how much software power was at my fingertips.





Rather than give you a blow-by-blow account of what is available, it's easier to get you to look at the accompanying pictures of maps that others have created with CC3 and its add-ons, and to say that if you can imagine it, CC3 can probably do it. The initial system is primarily designed as a fantasy mapping system, but it is so versatile that you can create maps and plans from any period of fantasy, sci-fi or history. There are add-ons that allow you to easily draw dungeons, starships, sectors of space and gaming boards to put miniatures onto. You can also add hex or square overlays to any scale that you require.



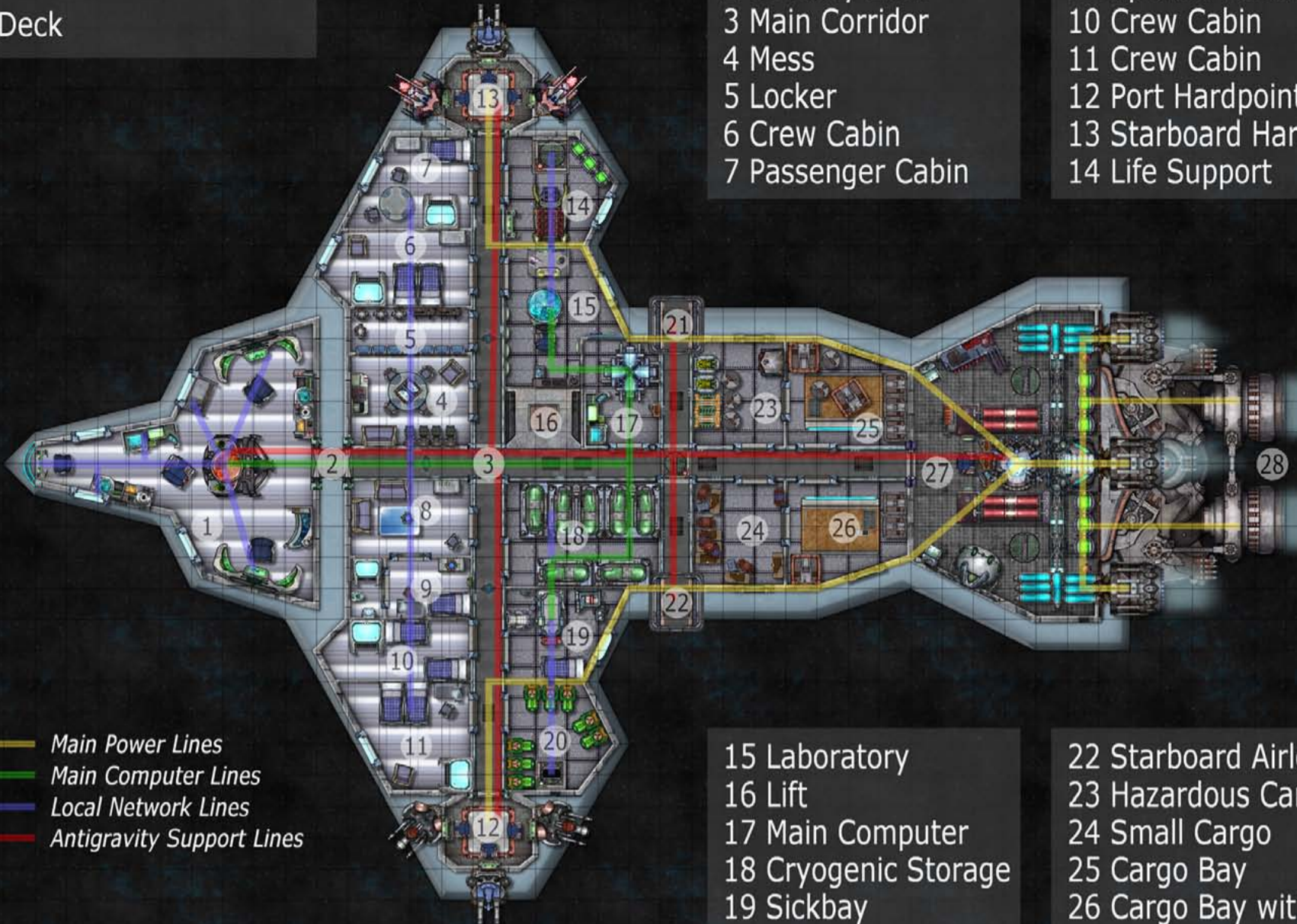
Kestrel-Class Armed Scout

Huxley's Pride

Main Deck

- 1 Bridge
- 2 Security Lock
- 3 Main Corridor
- 4 Mess
- 5 Locker
- 6 Crew Cabin
- 7 Passenger Cabin

- 8 Captain's Office
- 9 Captain's Room
- 10 Crew Cabin
- 11 Crew Cabin
- 12 Port Hardpoint
- 13 Starboard Hardpoint
- 14 Life Support



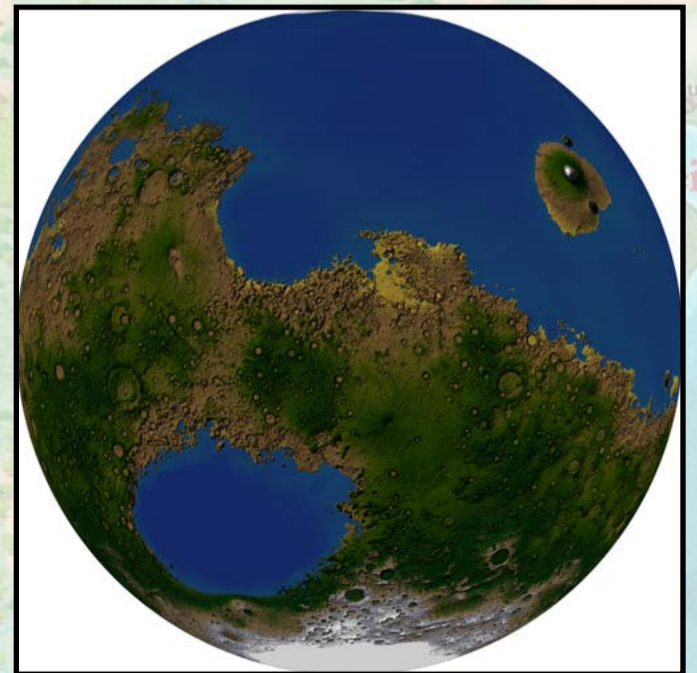
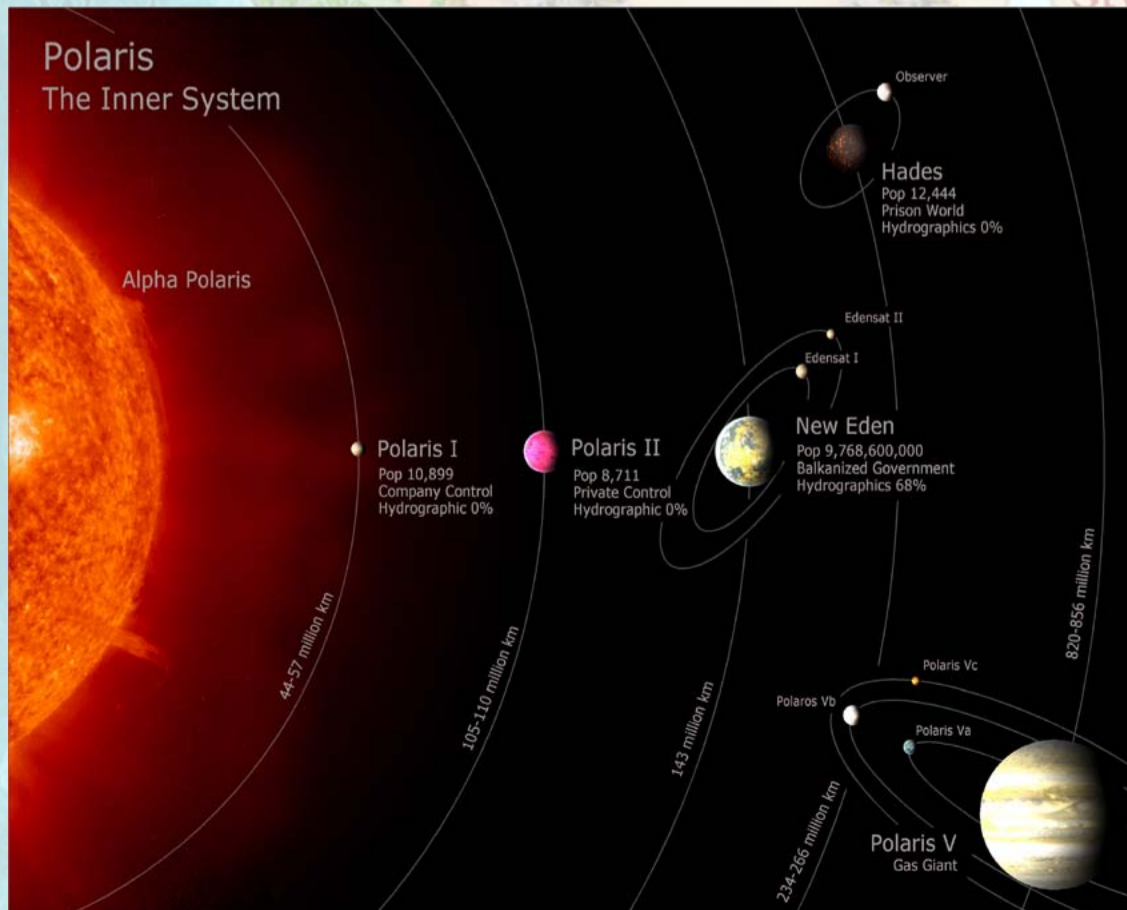
- Main Power Lines
- Main Computer Lines
- Local Network Lines
- Antigravity Support Lines

- 15 Laboratory
- 16 Lift
- 17 Main Computer
- 18 Cryogenic Storage
- 19 Sickbay
- 20 Bio Storage
- 21 Port Airlock

- 22 Starboard Airlock
- 23 Hazardous Cargo
- 24 Small Cargo
- 25 Cargo Bay
- 26 Cargo Bay with Lift
- 27 Engineering
- 28 Ion Thrusters



(c) 2010 ProFantasy Software Ltd



On top of all these things comes the realisation that now no mistake is ever permanent. Spell a name wrong on your handwritten map and it will be there forever unless you used a pencil. Make a mistake in CC3 and it's corrected in two clicks. Similarly, you can draw a massive map knowing that should you subsequently wish to change things you can do so, meaning that you can get on and design stuff without the hours of fretting over whether your Halfling village names really do look the part. In short, you can edit, re-edit and do it again. For me, this is huge, because if you have drawn a big campaign map then sooner or later things are going to change; land will be captured, cities destroyed and borders changed.

You can also create your own map symbols. The system comes with everything you'd expect, but the ability to create unique symbols, like gaming counters or markers for generals and armies is what makes your map unique. I spent hours in Photoshop creating flags and then counters based on flags for my re-imagining of Hyboria set in a fantasy renaissance period, and it gives a feeling of real satisfaction to

see these appear on the map. Because it is so easy to move symbols around (although you can freeze whole sheets to avoid moving things like mountains and forests) I have found that my initial plan of printing out the map and using markers has become old hat. Now I just look at the monitor and do my campaigning on screen.

Creating mythical worlds is almost as much fun as actually gaming, and to many it becomes addictive. I have found that I spend more time coming up with ideas and rules than actually playing these days. With this in mind one of the most amazing products ProFantasy do is called Fractal Terrains. In essence this allows you to create whole worlds, including temperature, rainfall and all sorts of other detailed minutiae that even a gaming geek like me doesn't understand. You can then import the creation into CC3 develop it into a completely unique creation all of your own. You can also reproduce these worlds in literally dozens of styles, from a full globe to a flat view.



KINGSPORT AND SURROUNDINGS LANDS



Som Bay

Point Forn



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The Knuckles

The Stormy Coast



The East Ocean

The Running

Kingsport

Castle Juran

Dragonbelch

Skull Plain

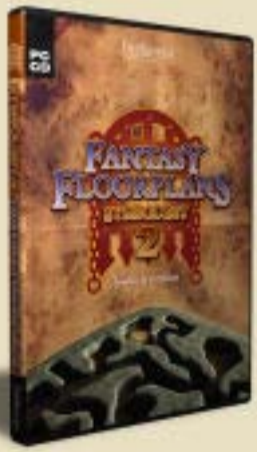
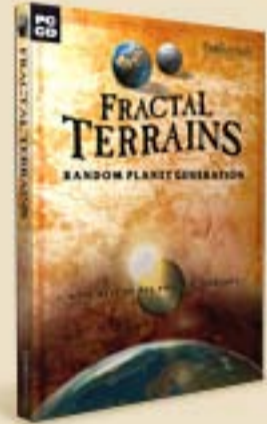
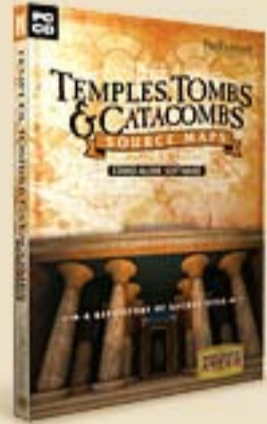
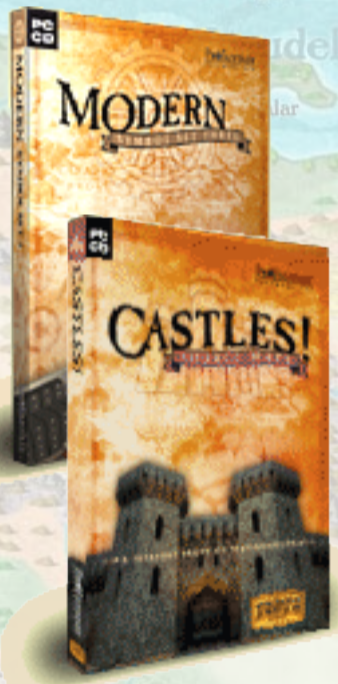
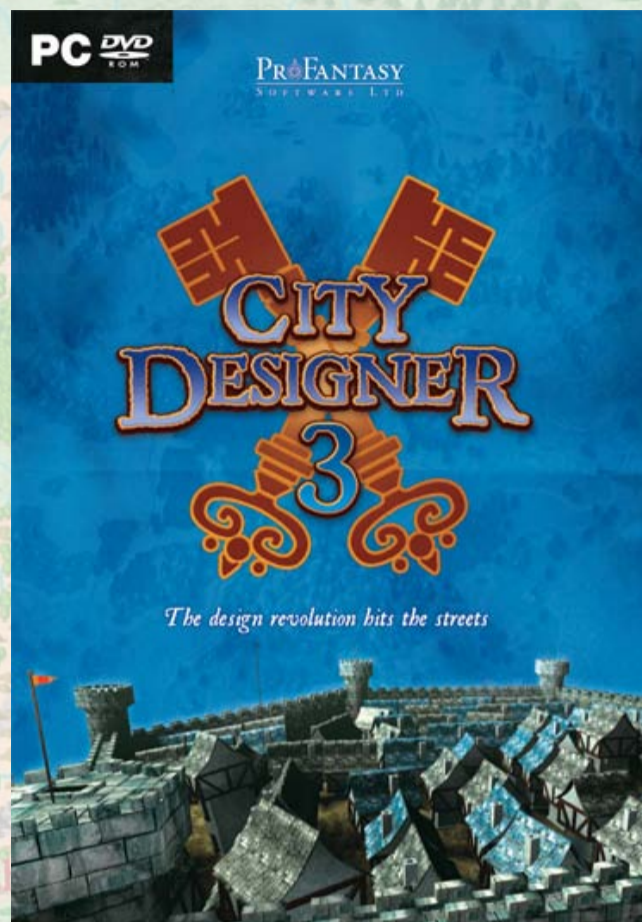
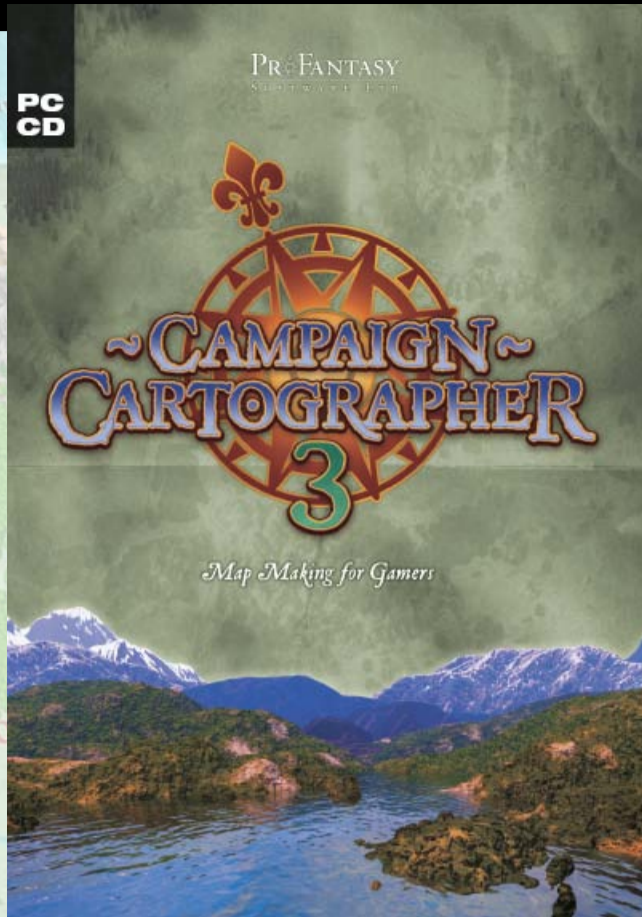
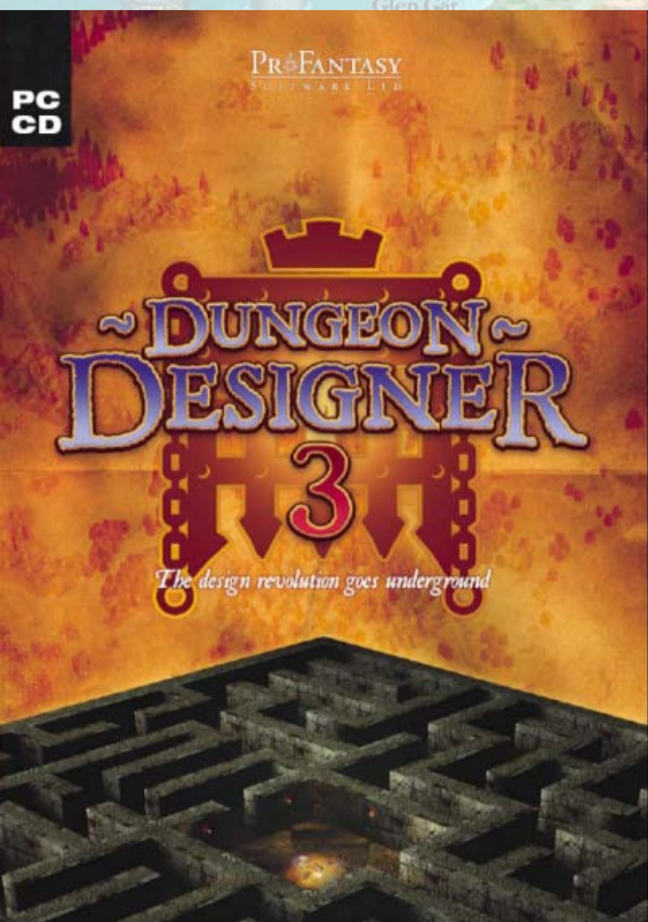
Kyrills Pass

Shadow River

Emerald Town

Shadow River Bay





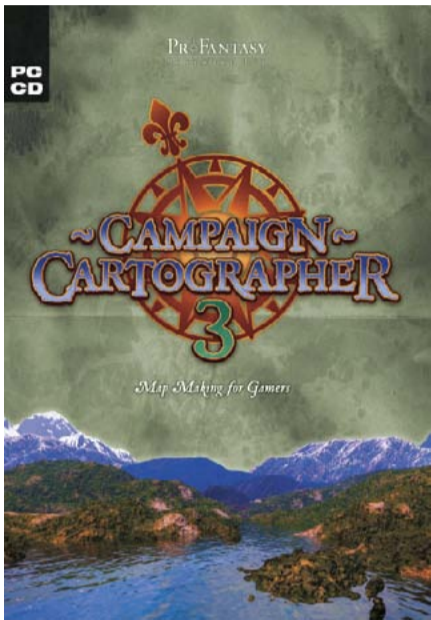
You just tell the system what sort of size, land masses, water depths and such like that you want and it then does the rest – and if you don't like the result, just click a button and it will generate another unique offering!

For further information or to dip your toe into the water go to <http://www.profantasy.com/> and you will

soon be wondering how you ever managed without it. Whether you are creating a playmat for Warmachine or a star system for a Games-System-We-Dare-Not-Mention, you will not be disappointed.

Unbelievably highly recommended (and none of it was a freebie!!!)

Campaign Cartographer 3 is the best mapping tool there is for gamers.



Whenever you need designs, whether it's role-playing games or war games, fantasy, modern or SF, Campaign Cartographer 3 can help you create them. From entire worlds and countries, to floorplans and furniture, Campaign Cartographer 3 can do it. You can map out your entire campaign world,

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community of like-minded designers.

We really listen to our users and offer support that's second to none. The latest version of Campaign Cartographer

incorporates great user suggestions. It's more powerful and easier to use than ever before. There are hundreds of user websites with a huge variety of maps. After many years of software manufacture, we bring you quality plus diversity.

We based Campaign Cartographer 3 on FastCAD, a powerful CAD engine used by half a million architects, engineers and professional drafters. It's written in lighting-fast assembly code, and has been tested in the real world by the most picky users around. But version 3 now goes beyond its CAD heritage by incorporating bitmap symbols, textures and drawing effects. It combines the speed and editing powers of CAD with the beauty of bitmap editing.



We have continually been integrating user requests and suggestions to make Campaign Cartographer 3's drawing interface ever easier and more accessible. One-click drawing tools let you create continents, islands, rivers and forests in a snap. Drawing styles let you create - and quickly switch between - new and unique ways for your maps to look.

Campaign Cartographer 3 gives you more than maps. You can link all your designs, from the world view down, creating a campaign atlas. Click on any area to open Windows files to manage your game information. Import vector files, add bitmaps to your designs, or export at high resolution.

System Requirements

CC3 will work with lower specs than these, in fact it will work on any machine which runs Windows 98 or better. However, if you want to use the new artwork without too much slowdown, we recommend:

- 350 MB hard disk space
- 256MB Memory
- Windows 98 or better
- An internet connection for installation.





RIP LYNHAM WARGAMES CLUB

by Ian "very sad" Cook

Into every life a little rain must fall, well it's raining now. I have just found out that my club is closing. My oasis, my refuge, my home from home. Who am I kidding it's more than a home from home, it's been the center of my gaming life for more than 15 years and it's closing. I can't really explain how I feel, it doesn't feel real. At least not yet.



Let me give everyone a little background. I'm in the Royal Air Force, based at RAF Lyneham, which is closing. We are based in a small out of the way building which we share with the sub aqua and flying club, we used to have the Rugby Club there, but after years of drunk people coming in and asking what we were doing they up and left months ago. We have two rooms of reasonable size, there are five tables with enough room for around 18 people to play, and there are three cupboards full of every piece of terrain imaginable, with even more piled on top of them. We have terrain tiles for everything from desert to ocean, also, there are a further 10 various filing cabinets and bookshelves full of everyone's games and figures (None of them locked, we have never felt the need) that's not counting what's in boxes and cases underneath the tables. It is the greatest club I have ever been involved with, the site of some of my greatest victories, and home to some of my most crushing defeats; it is the place I go to meet up with people who have over the years become my best friends.

But while the closure hasn't hit home yet, one of the

consequences has. What am I going to do with all of the models I have bought over the years; I do plan on bringing home one of the smaller cupboards so storage shouldn't be a problem. But, and it's a big but. My wife doesn't exactly know how many figures I have. I'm not saying that I have been dishonest about what I have spent over the years, but I haven't exactly been honest either. Let's just say that I was protecting her from the truth, I wouldn't want her to worry.

But, there has been a pleasant surprise, while going through my cupboard I came across a few old boxes I haven't opened in years, the 1st one contained Nurgle Marines, 50 or 60 of them, many of them converted in one way or another. And the adventure got better and better, the next box was small and covered in dust. But inside was a collection of Rackham archeron figures still in their blisters there was Sophet Drahas, a few ghouls, skellies and Gargoyle.

Crammed right at the back I came across two jiffy bags, with heart racing and sweaty hands I opened them up, to find one Russian world war two fleet (Yes they did have one) and an Italian fleet. These I had forgotten all about, along with my old Tomb King army.

The bottom shelf was the most interesting; here I came across an old metal tool box, as I gingerly opened it I was assailed by the smell of forgotten figures. Inside were a Games Workshop Daemon Prince and a Defiler (Yes Nurgle again, shoot me I like green). The next box contained a collection of Battlefleet Gothic ships, a grand cruiser and a few dozen assorted ships and escorts. (Guess which colour they were). I next came across my AT43 army, 4 boxes of unopened Red Bloc figures. But last and by no means least I opened a GW fantasy box, inside were a number of multi piece metal chaos knights, lord knows how long they had been sat there. (And they were unpainted, so no green to be seen here, move along please).

I also have a few shelves as well, you'd think I would know what was on these just by looking at them, but

to the casual eye they do look a little untidy. After moving an old Necromunda rule book and a few old army lists I found my old Babylon Five human fleet, complete with snapped stands. Underneath these I found the B5 box the rules and cards came in, this brought a smile to my face, inside the lid was the signature of none other than Claudia Christian (Ivanova to you Philistines) I met her at Mongoose Publishing, back when they had the licence for B5.

I also found a few old Ral Partha Battletech tanks; I had a vision of tanks standing toe to toe with battlemechs, maybe not a great idea but everyone else had Mechs, I wanted to be different. I also came across a few old Rackham figures, Kelts this time and their cards.

I found something else that brought a smile to my face. I once entered a Rackham tournament organised by UKCORD, I didn't win, but I was awarded the Most Brutal General award, winnings good, but knowing that I had killed more points of the enemies' figures than anyone else is very satisfying. And to prove it I have a dismembered Orc head based and painted lovingly by Jez Fairclough, along with a certificate. It is a head off a 28MM figure so it isn't big, but it means a lot to me. Oh and I do have two of these awards so play me at your peril Mwahahahahahah!

On going through the club I found a few more bits and bobs, I found several old tool boxes, all converted to hold figures, each containing something special. From a Flinloque dog force to a few hundred old Whiz kid pirate ships, Oh! And an uncharted Seas Human fleet along with a rule book for good measure.

I did find other things, old paint brushes and tools. I even found a few packets of magnetic sheets, I once used these to stop figures moving around inside metal tool boxes, how many of you younger gamers even new that they existed, or could see a use for them. One of the things that became obvious as I searched was that I have too many old rule books, I have rule books that were out of date 10 years ago, and they will be recycled into new rule books via the green bin.

All in all I was reunited with an old Ancients Mongol army, a few of the more recent plastic Battlemechs; still in boxes (My sons can have these), more Nurglings came to light along with a few more marines. I found an old bag which was home to more Spartan Uncharted Seas ships and a few monsters, keeping the Spartan theme was a boxed Sorilian fleet for their space game Firestorm Armada. There was also another surprise two fleets for Space Dreadnought 3000, let's hope the rule book surfaces at some point. Last and by no means least I found a Malifeaux boxed set and figures for Secrets of the Third Reich.

I am thrilled with what I have rediscovered, but when I think about the figures I do have at home, the ones I am currently playing or painting. I do wonder what I am going to do. Maybe my wife won't notice, I hope that the part of the brain that men shut off when our loved ones bring shopping home is also present in my wife. Fingers crossed.



Infinity Miniatures New Releases

May New releases



Guarda de Assalto. (PanOceania).

New release! It is said that PanOceania has the best technology in the whole Human Sphere, and here it is: a Heavy Infantry trooper with a synchronized Remote. Do you know what this means? Double the firepower in active and reactive turns, two models which only provide one ARO to the enemy... yeah, the word you are looking for is... nasty. Don't miss this blister with one Auxbot and one Guarda de Assalto, with two different weapon options: the basic MULTI Rifle and the Spitfire too!



Probots

With this box an ALEPH player can take control of the battlefield's data sphere and also have a tougher transport and combat Remote. The Probots are robotic support units who grant ALEPH superior access to information and intelligence data, allowing the AI to be more flexible and powerful in battle, granting supremacy in any environment.



Haramaki Zensenbutai (Missile Launcher)

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. Now you can provide greater firepower to your Haramaki Fireteams with the overwhelming Missile Launcher, the most powerful support weapon of all. Cry Banzai as you unleash a rain of fire over your enemy!

Señor Massacre (AP CCW, E/M CCW).

Here he is! Directly from Aristeia! Underground fight circuits, it's Señor Massacre! A superb assassin, proficient in close combat, and an expert swordsman and marksman. He is a highly skilled, wisecracking mercenary, who wields a pair of katanas with which he can beat the most powerful and heavily armoured adversaries. And best of all, he possesses the Regeneration Special Skill, so to take him out is extremely difficult for his adversaries. As said by some of his clients, Señor Massacre would be the perfect soldier if he could keep his mouth shut!



112, Emergency Services
 (Light Shotgun, CCW). The 112 collaborates with the Ariadnan army as an auxiliary rescue and medical assistance force. Their training as emergency response unit in the frontier territories of Ariadna turns them into field medics, as well as firemen and trackers. The 112 are the cheapest and easiest Doctors the Ariadnan players can line up. For the 112 members to be engaged in combat means a new opportunity to break things down with their hatchets and crowbars.





Dark Age Apocalypse

“Everything Dies”

by Timothy Colonna

The world of Dark Age is a brutal, unforgiving landscape rife with dangers from all sides. July marks the release of the latest installment of the Dark Age Games skirmish system: Dark Age Apocalypse. Set in the future on the planet Samaria, Dark Age Apocalypse is about one thing and one thing only - survival at any cost. Stranded on this world, the remnants of humanity cling to old and new technology alike just to make it through another day.

Before we talk about the game let's talk a little about the book. It is gorgeous. Hard covered and at 95 pages it is jam packed with the main rules, advanced rules, campaign rules, diagrams, pages of background, and is loaded with pictures and illustrations. The book is also filled with practical examples to help illustrate game mechanics. Dark Age Miniatures will release a second book with the force lists later this summer,

but all their miniatures contain unit cards with all the army stats, so the force book is not required. Moreover, Dark Age Miniatures offers unit cards as free download from their



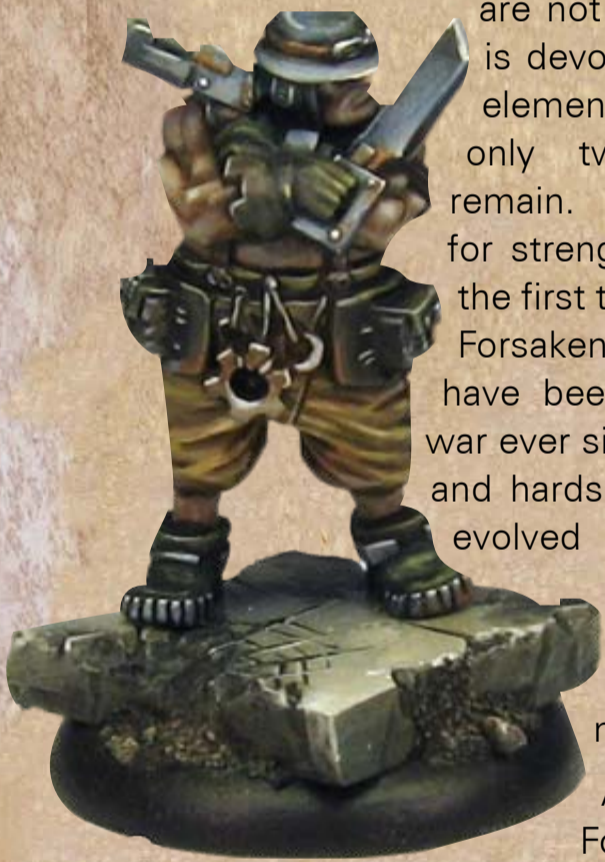
website for those who already own miniatures (www.dark-age.com). The book retails for \$19.95, which is a bargain for the quality and amount of information it contains.

Dark Age Apocalypse revolves around humanity battling for survival on this world against aliens, mutants, demons, religious fanatics, and biological monstrosities who attempt to lay claim to the scarce remaining resources by destroying others. There are five factions currently in the game: the Forsaken, the Dragyri, the Scarrd, the Brood, and the Outcasts.

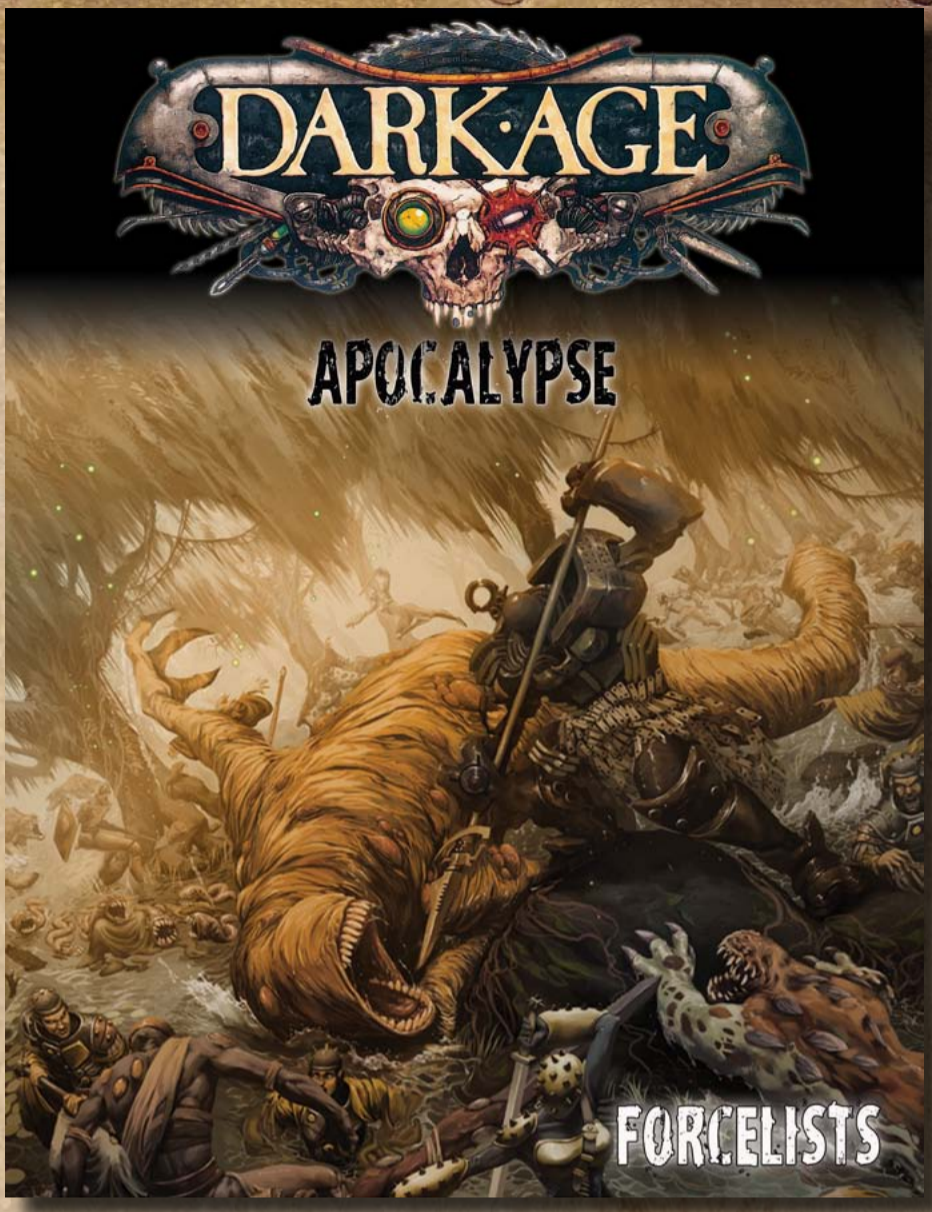


The Forsaken arose after the collapse of the United Worlds and the subsequent abandonment of all the outlying worlds. With the belief that religious faith will save them and by pull them from the brink of extinction, the Forsaken established itself as the last bastion of hope for humanity on Samaria. Self-proclaimed saints arose from positions of power, and with rediscovered technology, these living saints are now dispatched on a great Crusade to conquer the outlying areas and unearth new and powerful technology.

Another race fighting to survive on Samaria is the Dragyri, which consists of two difference species: the Trueborn and the Slaves. Trueborn Warriors hold nothing greater than honor, and it is believed that only those worthy may face a Trueborn in battle. Trueborn are always accompanied by a retinue of Slaves whose task it is to weed out all those who are not worthy. Each Dragyri is devoted to one of the four elements, but on Samaria, only two surviving castes remain. The Ice Caste, known for strength and patience, was the first to be discovered by the Forsaken, and the two groups have been locked in a bloody war ever since. After much strife and hardship, the Air Caste has evolved into a raiding force and in attempting to better its position on Samaria, has broken many Dragyri traditions.



As the religion of the Forsaken overtook humanity, some did not wish to follow this new fanaticism. They moved off into the Samarian wastelands and happened upon on the ancient factories



and laboratories of the United Worlds. While exploring these areas, the humans unknowingly exposed themselves to mutagens and radiation. Mutated, but more powerful than the mere humans they once were, they were joined by an outcast Living Saint named Johann. They renamed themselves





technology, the Brood is a living weapon that changes and evolves as its need for weapons arises. They remained isolated until the Great Crusade came and woke this sleeping monstrosity.

The Outcasts are true scavengers of the land, living off anything and everything they can either find or steal. The Outcasts live outside the hypocrisy of the Forsaken, choosing freedom over an iron rule steeped in fanaticism.

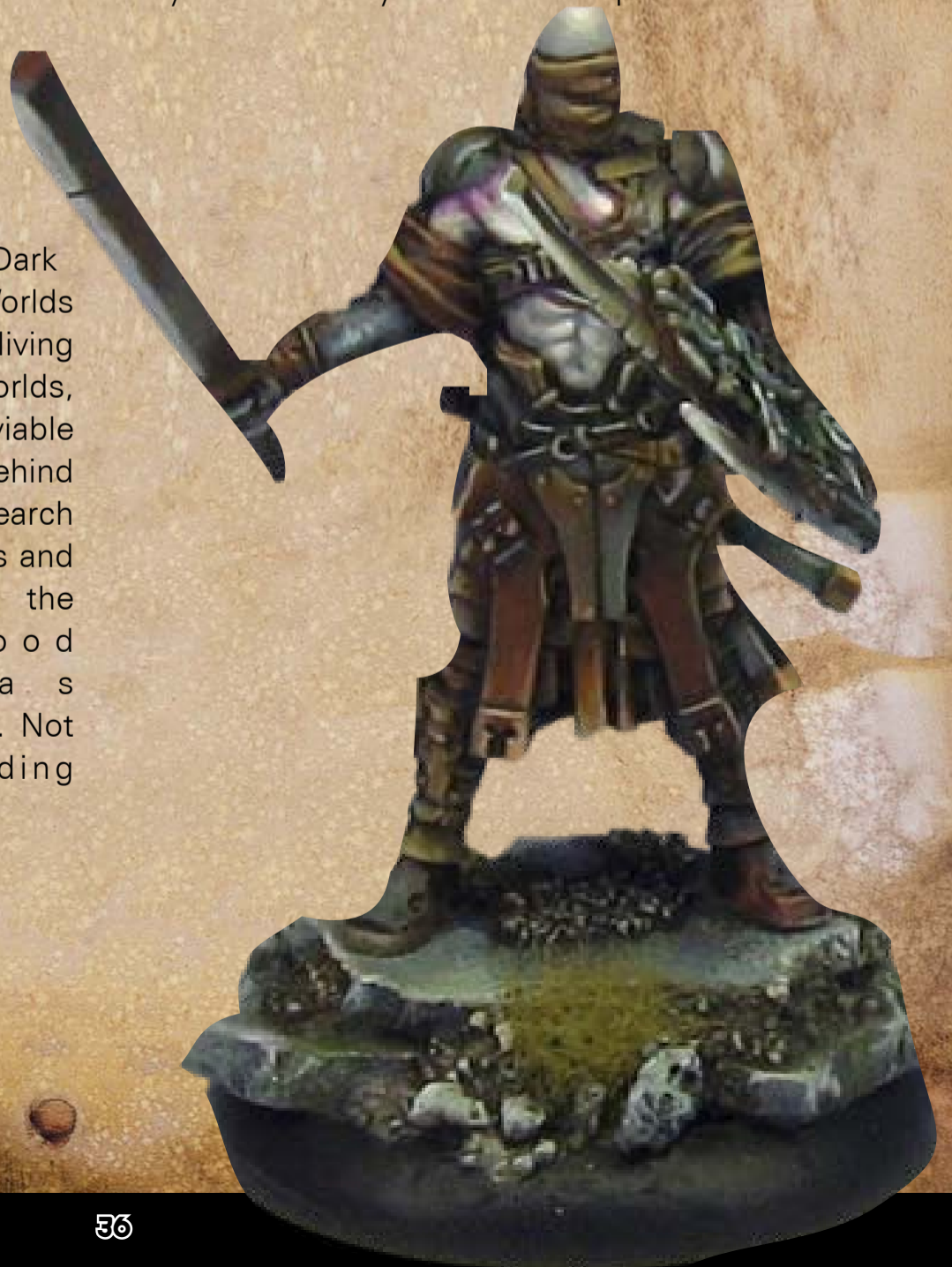
The core mechanics of Dark Age are quick and decisive. Strike first and strike hard. Wipe out your enemy before they have a chance to do the same to you. The game consists of a D20 system where you want to roll low versus high, which can be confusing. In our games, I don't know how many times we saw a 20 and were like YEAH, no wait that is a critical FAIL.

Using an alternative activation turn based off an initiative roll, the game has a dynamic feel. The tide of battle can turn in the blink of an eye as a lucky shot or charge will change your entire battle strategy. Units have an AP value that denotes how many actions they can take per activation.

the Scarrd, and now live upon the fringes in a tribal culture, turning their hatred towards the Forsaken.

The Brood is the Frankstein's monster of the Dark Age universe. Scientists from the United Worlds used the swamplands of Samaria to develop living bioweapons. With the collapse of the United Worlds, the scientists evacuated, taking only the most viable bioweapons with them. Those bioweapons left behind

developed intelligence and took over the research areas and thus the Brood was born. Not needing





These actions can be used to move, shoot, charge, initiate a close combat attack, cast a spell, etc. Once activated, the unit will not activate again in the same turn. Activation continues until all units have been activated, and a new initiative roll decides who will go first in the next turn.

After many games, I can say the system is very fast and furious. Most games we played were in the 500 point range (which was a leader plus two to four units) and lasted 45 to 60 minutes. This allowed us to get a few games in a single gaming sessions, which was nice. The speed of the game brought the enjoyment of the system to a higher level for me, as there was none of that sitting around waiting for a full turn for something to happen, which enhanced the gaming experience.

One of my favorite rules of the game is the critical miss rule with a lot of weapons can malfunction, causing you to possibly hit yourself with it. In one game, a rather large and nasty beastly was swinging an equally large axe (though it could have been a traffic sign or billboard or something owing to his size) and with a critical miss failed his malfunction roll and killed his own model. In my mind's eye I saw my model duck and the axe swung around and cut his own leg off. Full of win!

In playing the game, we also found that the armies were very well balanced. Games came down to tactics and the roll of the dice instead of who took the more powerful force. So far I have played my Forsaken against other Forsaken, Skaard, Outcasts and Brood, and they were all great games. Neither side walked away feeling that wonky rules or cheesiness ruled the day.

In addition to the rules, Dark Age Games has announced new starter sets and models in the future that will be added to its already vast miniatures line. These are some gorgeous models, folks - great stuff! An utterly unforgiving and all out brutal realm, Dark Age Apocalypse captures the flavor of a desperate landscape where a fight can mean the difference between life and death.





Out with the Old, In with the New?



by Jez Fairclough and Ian Cook

I feel that before you good people start reading this that you should understand the background. When Matthew at Mongoose go in touch to tell us about the new rule set for Noble Armada we all got quite excited because all of us at Ancible Towers used to play the B5 version of A Call to Arms, also by Mongoose so Jez and Ian both went off and started writing their respective parts in isolation.

Jez decided on the walk down memory lane and Ian grabbed the new shiny rule set and disappeared off to his fortress of solitude to pen his thoughts.

Only when I had the two pieces back did I decide to mere them together to give you what you about to read, cause I thought it might be interesting.

Out with the old

Way back in 1993 (yes I know that's a long time ago for some people), J. Michael Straczynski brought us a new Sci-Fi universe and a new way of creating a TV show. That show was of course Babylon

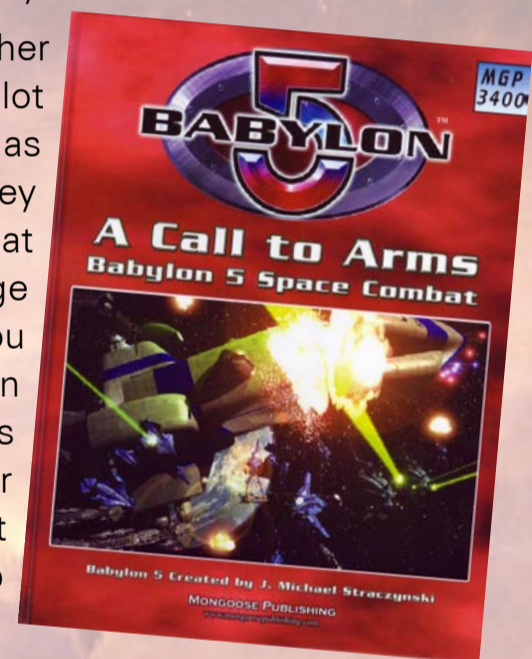
5 (B5). Unlike many shows, it saw the various races working together at times. OK, a lot of the time it



showed them beating each other senseless but hey we want action not romance.

It wasn't long until the TV series became a game owned by Agents of Gaming (AoG) before being taken on by Mongoose Publishing (<http://www.mongoosepublishing.com/>). The first version by AoG was good if not very heavy on the book keeping. Each ship having boxes for everything was very reminiscent of Mechwarrior. It meant that anything beyond a small skirmish was going to keep you very busy.

Mongoose, on the other hand, decided to keep it a lot simpler but as much fun as what AoG had done. They used a simpler combat system and made damage easier to track. Okay, you still have boxes and you can still loose effectiveness from weapons and other systems, but you didn't need an A4 sheet per ship anymore. (latterly we had it down to less than A5 laminated sheets per ship)



Babylon 5 as a game system brings together a lot of information that's easy to obtain through numerous online portals. Plus you can just watch the series and see the shape and colour of most of the ships the game uses.

Let's have a look at the second edition of Mongoose's B5, "A Call to Arms" space combat rules. Although the game isn't available directly anymore, it's still a very popular game and you can find copies of it on places like eBay. Some people I know have personal versions of the second edition rule set that were done as part of an experiment Mongoose did on publishing on demand so if you want to play the Kenny Robb edition of a call to arms then I know where to find that publication.

The main rule book is a solid 123 pages in black and white which I have to say is a bit of a

disappointment. I feel they missed a trick by not making it full colour. The Fleet book (which you really need) is in full colour and looks so much better. The book is broken into four main sections: the Rules, Scenarios, Campaigns and Fleet Lists. You will also find some counters in the back which you can copy and use until you get proper ships, or keep using if you want to keep your costs down.

The Rules

The rules system for B5 ACTA is very easy to get your head around. It's what makes the game great. There is no sitting down with some hot cocoa and reading for a few days to grasp the ideas of the rules. You can read through the rules in about 30-40 minutes and be off and playing. That's not to say the game has no tactical depth, far from it. Unique weapons with various special features like "double damage" or "linked" means that you do have to think about what you're doing as charging straight in isn't

but also a roll on the special damage chart. Damage from weapons isn't the only way for your ship to stop working. Running into another ship or damaged caused by systems like Engines, Life Support can add to your woes very quickly. It just takes a nice shot to critical your reactor and you explode. All of the expensive ship systems and the training of the crew are over in a few seconds. Some fleets are going to make you worry as the weapon systems used by the Minbari or Vorlons and Shadows in the TV series can cut ships to bits. In the game while they don't have the same effect (thankfully) they can seriously damage a ship and leave it a mess floating about for a while.

As with a lot of games, the crew does play a part and B5 ACTA is no exception. You can roll randomly for crew quality and this can affect a lot of things, though its main game element is when you are playing campaigns. Added to this are the special orders

going to work...

well, unless you're playing Narn's then it's the normal tactic for them. Elements like movement and turning are simple and use principals used in many fleet (Space or Sea) based games, bigger ships turn slower than smaller ones.

Weapons are easy, and each one gives you an amount of dice to roll to try and cause damage on the enemy. Individual weapons have an arc so damage in some areas can mean you will have to change a ships tactic to ensure that you can use it effectively. A lot of games rely on ships having the main armament in the port/starboard arcs for broadside style attacks and ACTA is no different. Though beware, those ships that have everything in the front and just come head on at you.

Damage is easily dealt with as for each weapon that hits, you roll a D6. A 1 means its structure, 2-5 is a loss in damage points and crew, and a 6 is like a 2-5

which can allow that silly move you made last turn to be slightly reversed as long as a check is made. Special orders really add to the game, but you need to remember them as it is a bit late when saying "I should have",

when you're a smoking hulk floating in the void of space forever.

Rules for Fighter's and Bombers are included and are fairly simple to use, like many other elements in the game. They aren't going to be game winners unless you take them in bulk, and I mean a huge bulk, but they can keep enemy Fighters/Bombers away. Boarding pods are also included though why any sane creature (not including Narns) would want to be shot at an enemy ship and try and take it over is beyond me. At best they will do a few points of damage and maybe sabotage a good system. That alone could make them look like they are worth while



if you're willing to take the risk that the enemy fighter screen or a ship's Anti Fighter system won't eat them. You'll also find rules for using space stations like B5 itself or others like the science station at Ragesh 3. Unlike ships, space stations can take a fair amount of damage and some of them can dish it out as well in every direction. You can take space stations for use with your fleets or even into the campaigns, but as they don't move it's hard for them to run away when your finely crafted battle plan goes awry.

The final part of the rules is dedicated to taking Admirals and other noteworthy commanders from the series like Sheridan. While these bring a lot to your fleet, you'll be losing out on fleet points so you will have to decide if it's worth taking them over extra guns. It's a hard choice but I know what I'd pick.

Scenarios

Unlike some games B5, ACTA has a lot

of scenarios in it. Some are simple engagements, while others are those famous battles seen in the series like the Narns attack on Ragesh 3 or the attack in Quadrant 14. For me, this gives you a lot of flexibility rather than just facing off against each other and seeing who can lose his fleet the quickest. Some of the scenarios can be used in the campaigns as well so that gives players some great flexibility. It brings to mind a funny story that happened at one of the Mongoose open days where they were regularly visited by one of the stars of the TV show Claudia

Christian. On this occasion the team at Mongoose were playing out one of the scenarios and Claudia was taking part and was playing the part of her character and was in command of some of the ships. One of the other players, who was obviously so excited to be standing next to one of the stars of the show went into a great long explanation of the scenario, obviously aimed at ms Christian, explaining all the detail about command structure and way the battle had played out as per the TV series to which she simply turned round to him and smiled and said I know, I was there when they were filming it. I guess being star struck know no boundaries.

Campaigns

The main rule book contains a very good campaign system. Using a simple map created by the players and then randomly rolling for what is in each area you can begin fighting over the various elements. How much you fight for is up to the players. The more you add the longer the campaign can go on. Small amounts keep the size of fleets down and make it very brutal. Lots of things to fight over can mean some fleets will get very big and other players can be beaten down because of it. It's a choice those individuals playing the campaign will have to make.

Each area you hold will give you points to either buy new ships or repair the damage sustained to the ships you currently have. If you can't fully repair a ship, you will have to decide to either use it in its already damaged state and less crew, or leave it in space dock for the next game. Each area can also bring added elements like jump gates.

You can also buy refits for ships making them unique. If, however, you decide to go this way, you really need to get your hands on the fleet book as it contains all the refit information for each races fleet. The two books really could have been combined into a single book, but every company does it a little different than others.

In my experience of playing, it is sometimes better to turn tail and run, refit your ships and try again than stand and lose the lot. If you do you're going to find that you can't hold on to anything for long and before you know it the campaign will be over for you.

Fleet Lists

The rule book only covers fleets from the four main races: the Humans, Narns, Centauri and Minbari. If



you want to play anything else like Vorlons, Shadows etc, you will need the fleet book (yes there is a Kenny Robb special version of that too). Though to be honest you need it anyway, as the choices are pretty limited. Each fleet list gives you seven ship choices and that only covers a very small amount of what you could have.

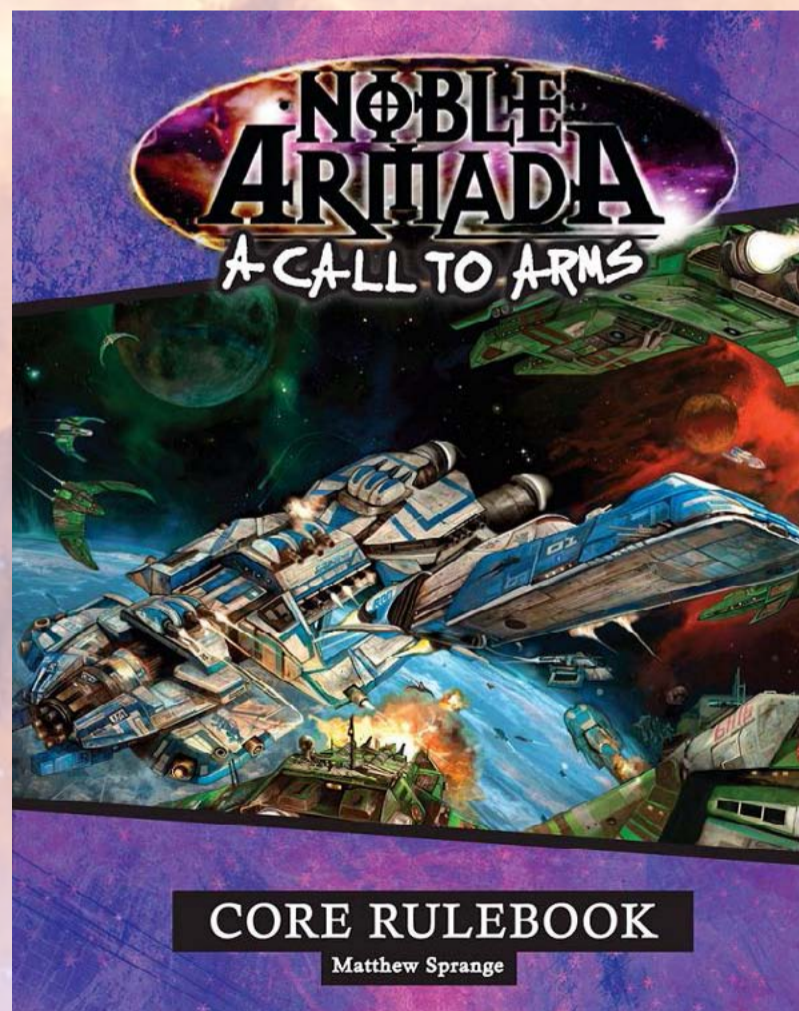
When I was talking about the scenarios, I didn't mention the priority level. This decides how much fleet you can use in the battle. The game allocates each ship to the following priority levels: Armageddon, War, Battle, Raid, Skirmish and Patrol.

Working out what you want is pretty easy. At War priority which is the common scenario choice, I could take one war level ship or I could split that into two points of Battle and take two battle ships. Or, I can split one or more battle points into two raid level and so on. The idea being is that lots of smaller ships are worth the same points. While this is a simple system, some of the ships when faced with others of the same priority level, are going to get chewed up. I would never send a lone war priority ship against a Minbari Sharlin class ship. Its beams are capable of re-rolling hits on a 4 or more and can really rip a ship to shreds. Other advanced features like its cloak mean it needs teamed up on before you have a chance to take it down, and if the other player has more than one you are in for the fight of your life. The only exception to this would be the Shadows where these ships are so powerful and so costly that you would rarely have more than one. That's the way they are meant to operate.

So in summary, despite some complaints about the quality of the book and a few things that I feel could

have been done better, it's a pretty good game. The only difficulty today is tracking down the book and models to play it, but places like eBay and gaming shows are your friend for that. I'll be interested to see how the game system has been transported for Noble Armada's ACTA and Star Fleet battles ACTA as well.

And in with the NEW.



Ladies and Gentlemen! Boys and girls! I give you the latest Mongoose rule book. The Noble Armada A Call To Arms Core Rulebook.

The Core Rule Book

It's an A4 sized 117 page rule book, at first view you see a glossy cover depicting a fierce space battle, ships exploding and manoeuvring for position. The pictures within the book are mostly in black and white, with plenty of the pictures being illustrations. I didn't find this a problem as all of the illustrations were of a good quality, and the black and white added a real sense of drama. The page edges were all bordered with a faint grey decorative image. But it doesn't overpower the lettering, and it does add another dimension to the overall book.



which cover all the bases including advanced rules, Special Actions and stellar debris. On reading through them they do seem to have a bit in common with the old Mongoose Babylon 5 rule set. Lets hope when we come to do the battle report in a future issue that some of the unbalance in the B5 rules have been addressed. Watch this space.

The timelines and the histories appear on page 29 with the back-story well presented and engaging, something that really makes me enjoy a rule set. It helped to paint a picture of the universe and its peoples. On page 31 they have also listed all the major events in the universe in chronological order, a nice touch.

The section on the universe finishes with a few pages



The index page is laid out pretty much as you'd expect nothing new or cutting edge here. I can't help but compare it to the Hammers Slammers book, their index page was very good with an original way to tie in all the information so you could find it easily. Now this may not translate to all rule books but with rule books all starting to look the same it is these sort of information organisation innovations that make one rule set stand out above another.

As you would expect the rules themselves are well laid out, though the more surprising thing is that there are only about 27 pages in the core rules



on Starship Technology, two pages of on information on Shields, Tractor beams, Marines, Jump-gates and think-machines, more information is always a good thing if it is going to feature in the game. Nothing annoys me more than information that has no place in the game.

Factions

We then move onto 12 pages which delve into the major players. The star spanning human Empire, then we have the Church and its climb to prominence, The





Merchant League comes next covering what it will do to protect its interests. And not forgetting all the resident alien races and the fight they have to wage, to stave off the expansion of the humans or to throw off the yoke of slavery. These pages will give you all you need to choose which faction best suits your playing style, unless it's the ships that make that decision for you, if so we will touch on that a bit later.

Scenarios

There are 16 pages of every scenario a budding admiral needs to enjoy himself on a club night. If you have played the B5 game before, these will be familiar to you, very familiar and quite comprehensive.

Campaigns

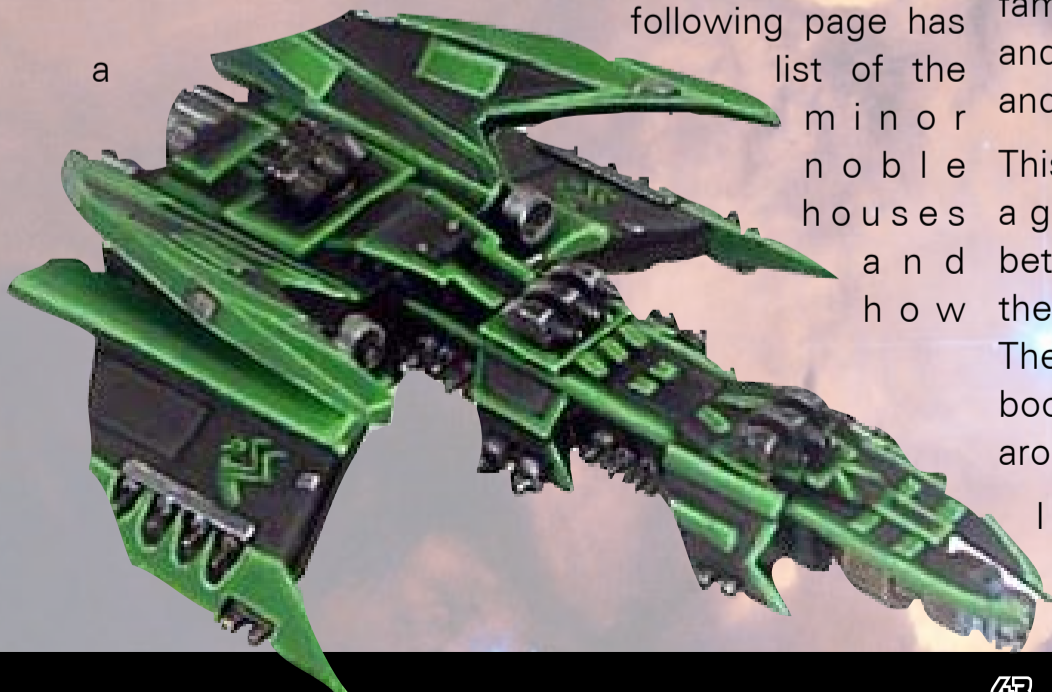
I like campaigns. It gives you opportunities to have even more fun at the club/garage or dining table. There is also some scope for tournament play with the scenarios, always a good thing.

Weird Situations

We now have a Weird Situation, several in fact. There's a page of Weird Situations, which may or may not crop up during the game and that aren't covered by the rules themselves, they have approached these using the long lost skill of common sense. The

following page has

a list of the minor noble houses and how



they are aligned, useful if you don't fancy creating a fleet of a major house.

Fleet Lists

Each page has a colour picture of each ship and its stats, all very Babylon five. I think there is nothing wrong with this as it worked for B5 so why would it not work here. This approach is useful in helping



to choose what fleet you like, if you're not using the race histories for inspiration.

Other Games Stuff

We're almost done. There are two pages of tips in creating debris for the game, how to create moons and asteroids, all very clear and nothing too difficult to achieve, so long as you have a few old CD's and the right rocks near to hand that is.

Now we're done

The last few pages are the product catalogue, colour pictures of the ships and how much they cost, in both pounds and dollars.

The rule book isn't too hard to follow, and after playing the old B5 game many of them seemed very familiar to me. I didn't come across any glaring typos and the language used throughout was easy to read and to understand.

This rule book is functional; it is a rule book for playing a game and needs to be treated as such. There are better looking and better manufactured books out there, but Mongoose have gone for the practical. These rules do exactly what they say on the tin, the book contains everything you need to play, and at around 22 pounds it is good value.

I love space combat, if I didn't have my sweaty paws on this review copy I would buy it



KHADOR IRON SMELTER

By Pat Ohta

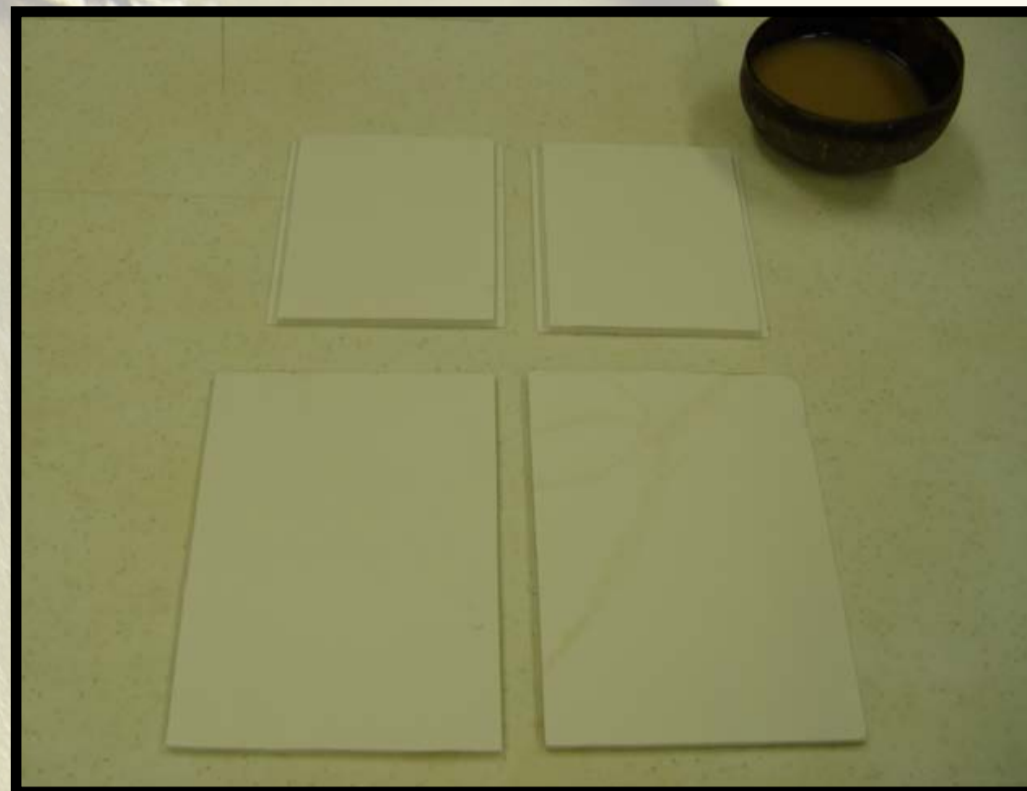


Every kingdom needs a smelter to make the metals necessary to prepare for battle. I decided to make a small one that fits in with the atmosphere of Warmachine.

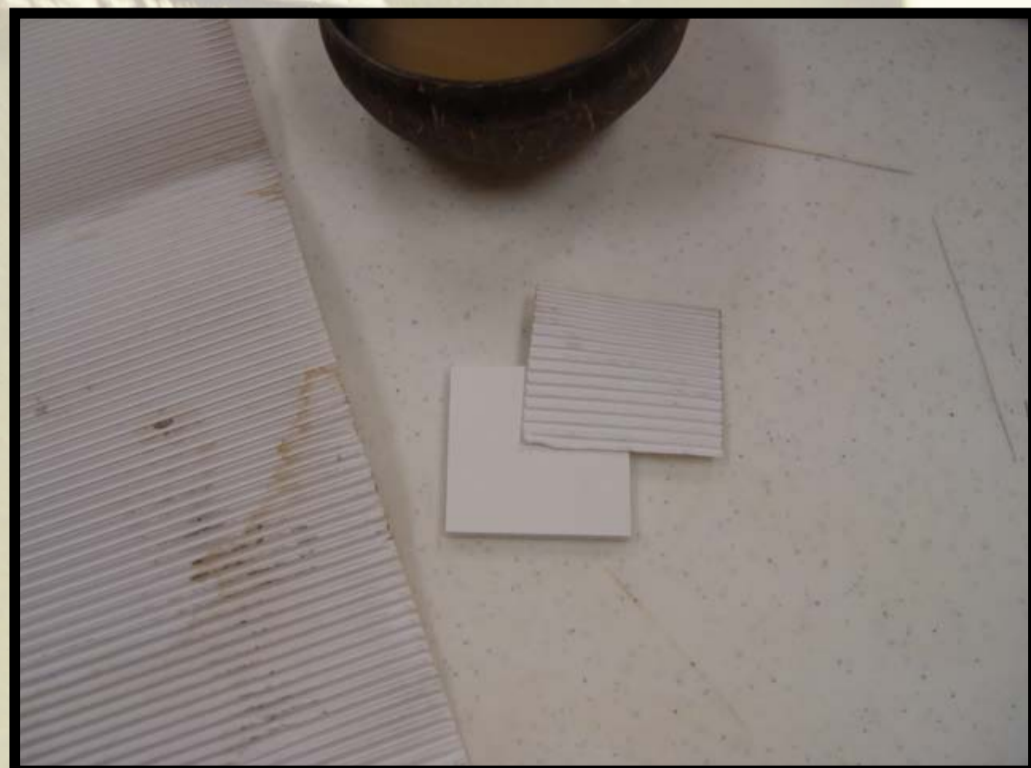
Materials Needed

- Foam board
- Ruler
- X-acto Knife
- Plastruct 1:12 Board and Batten
- Plastruct 1:48 Random Coursed Stone
- Styrene Strips
- Styrene Sheet
- Styrene Channels
- Rabbet Cutter
- Hot Glue
- PVC Pipe
- Pipe Cutter
- Crazy Glue
- Tenax-7R
- "Touch n Flow" applicator
- Card stock paper
- Leather Hole Punch
- Corrugated Card
- Dremel
- Pegasus Chemical Plant kit
- Tamiya Tank Bits
- Aquarium Filter Upright Cap
- Plastic Mesh
- Water Bottle Cap
- White Glue
- Woodland Scenics Snow Flock
- Privateer Press P3 paints

1. Cut two 5" x 7", and cut two 4.5" x 5" pieces of foam board. These will be the front, back and sides of the building.



2. Cut a door of any size in one of the 4.5" X 5" pieces. Use the door as a template and cut a slightly larger piece of corrugated card. Using hot glue, attach this for the corrugated rollup door.



- Use your rabbet cutter to slice both sides of the front and back walls. A rabbet is a groove cut into the edge of the board that allows you to make very nice 90 degree corners.

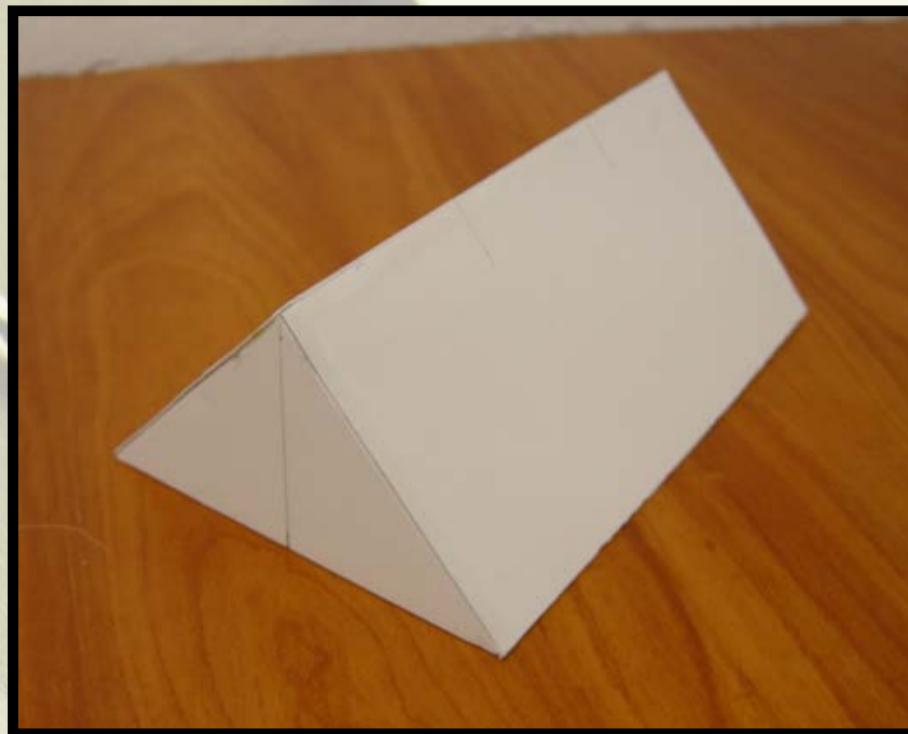


- If you do not have a rabbet cutter, simply measure the thickness of your foam board and apply that measurement to one of the sides that are going to be joined together. Take your X-acto knife and cut through the top layer of the foam board and remove it along with the foam, leaving the bottom layer of paper.

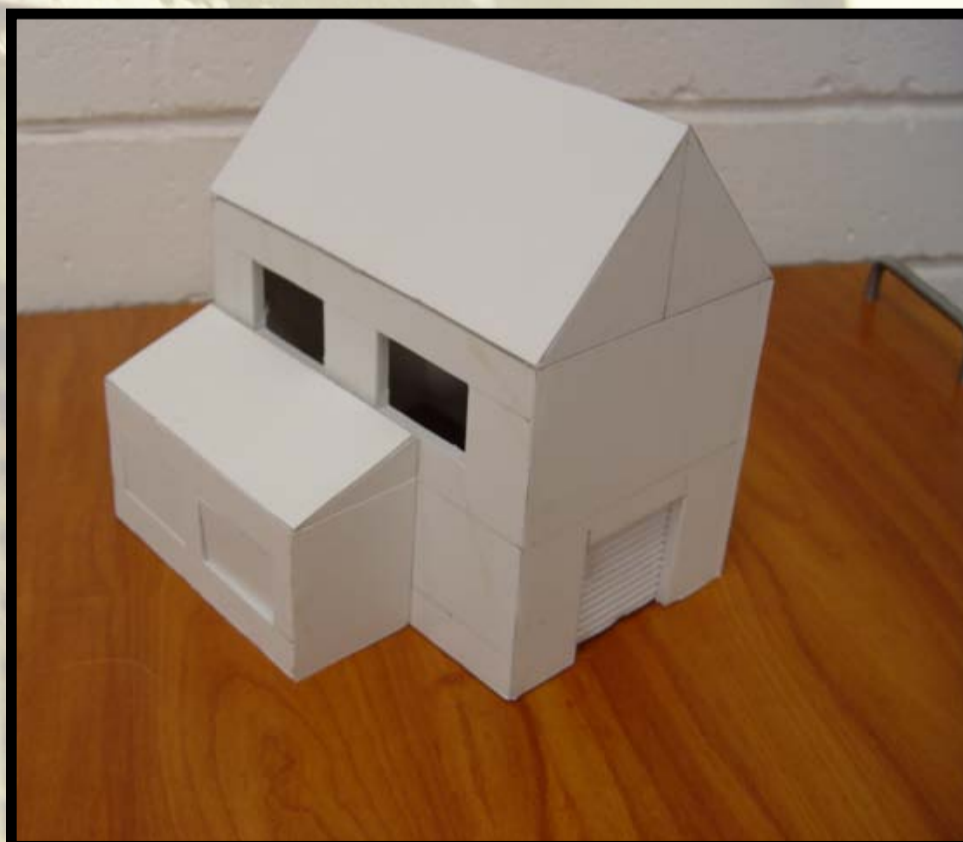


- Pick areas out where you would like to have windows. This place is going to be hot (it is a foundry after all) so I made my windows big. I made a template that measured 1" X 1 3/4". I placed this along the sides of the building and then cut out the windows. Save the cut outs.
- Apply hot glue to the rabbet cuts and join all of the walls together.
- To make the roof I cut out two 7" X 3 3/8" pieces of foam board. To make the front and back triangle pieces, I first cut out two 4.5" X 2.5" pieces. Find the center point along one

of the long edges and make a dot. Use your ruler and draw lines from the dot to the two opposing corners. At this point you should have a triangle. Cut out both triangles and glue all of the pieces together. (insert 4301)

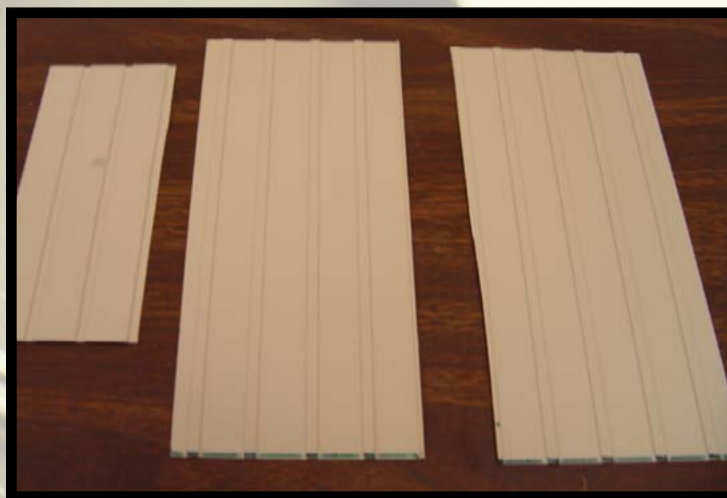


- Glue the roof to the main building.
- Next we will make a small store room to go alongside the main room. Cut two 2" X 2.5" pieces of foam board for the sides of the store room. Cut one 5" X 2.5" for the front.
- Using your window template, cut out more windows.
- Cut a rabbet into both sides of the front panel and glue the parts together.
- Make a roof for the store room.

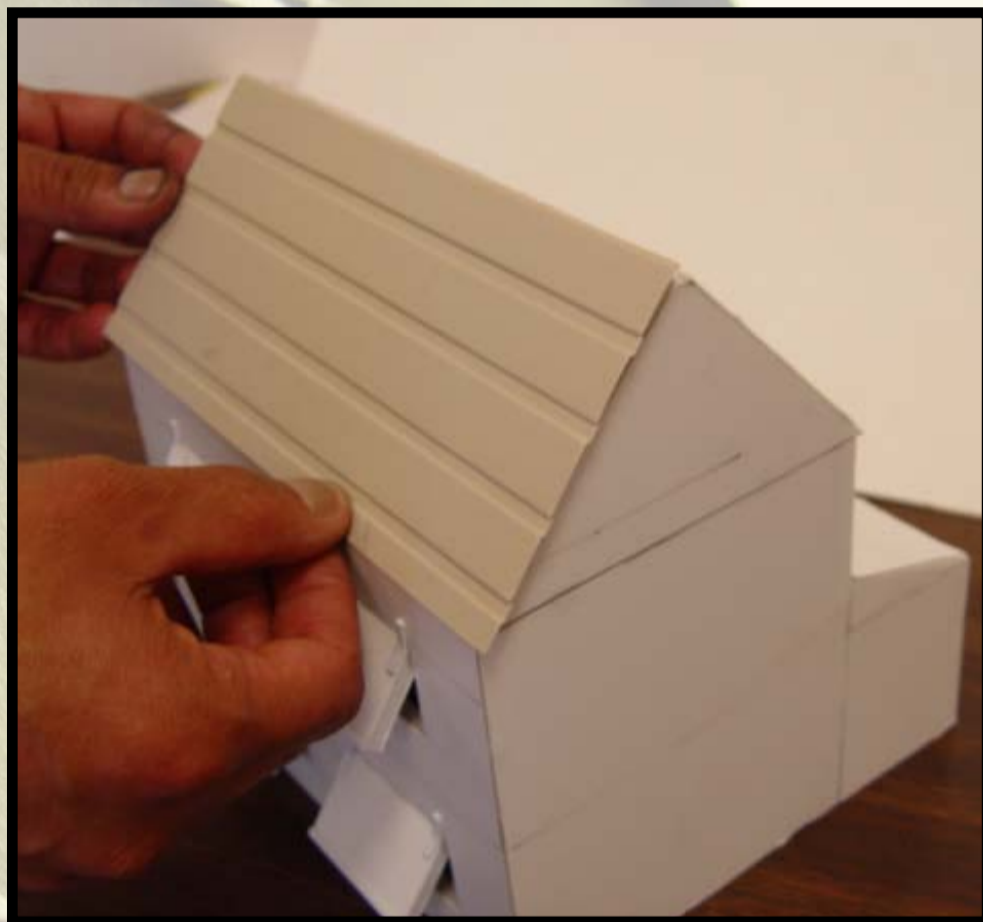


13. Cut out pieces of plastic mesh and glue them to the inside of the building covering the window holes.

16. Cut the Plastruct Board and Batten sheets and glue it to the roof. I made mine slightly larger so there would be a lip.

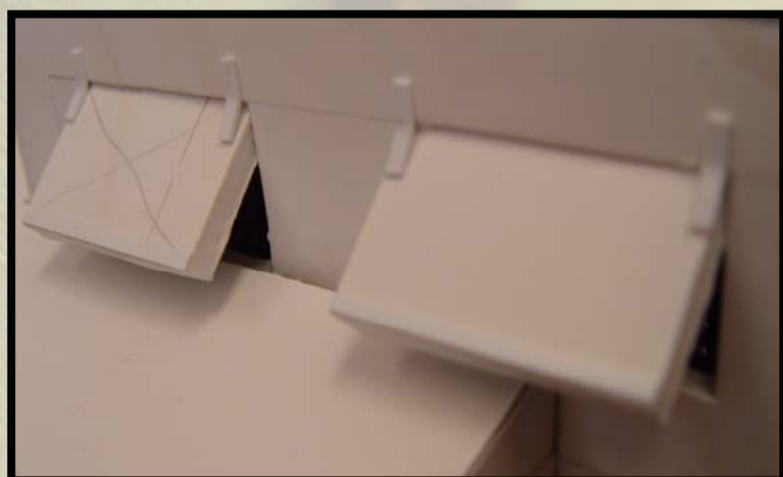


14. Take the cut out windows and glue them in at an angle. These will become our window shutters.

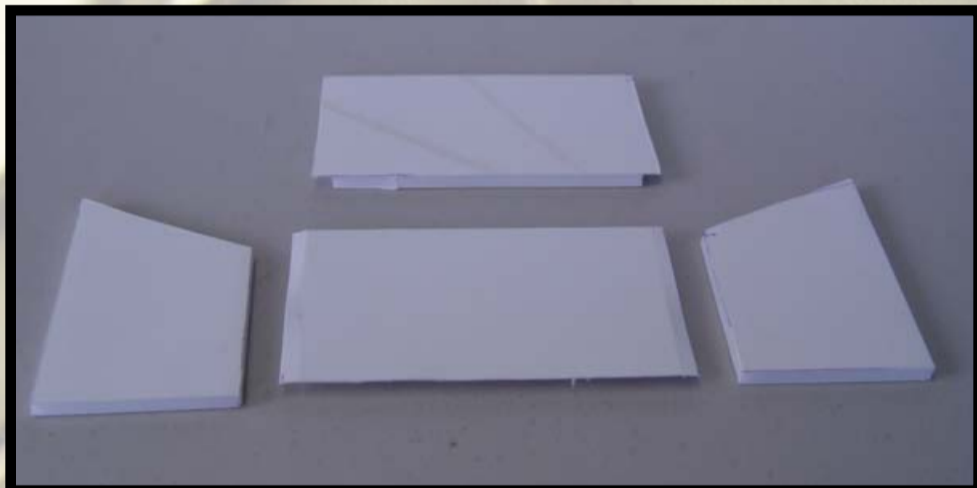


15. Cut strips of Evergreen .030 X .080 styrene strips and glue them to the bottom edge of each window shutter. To make the hinges, cut 1/2" strips of Evergreen .040 X .100. Bend these pieces in half and glue them to the tops of the shutters.

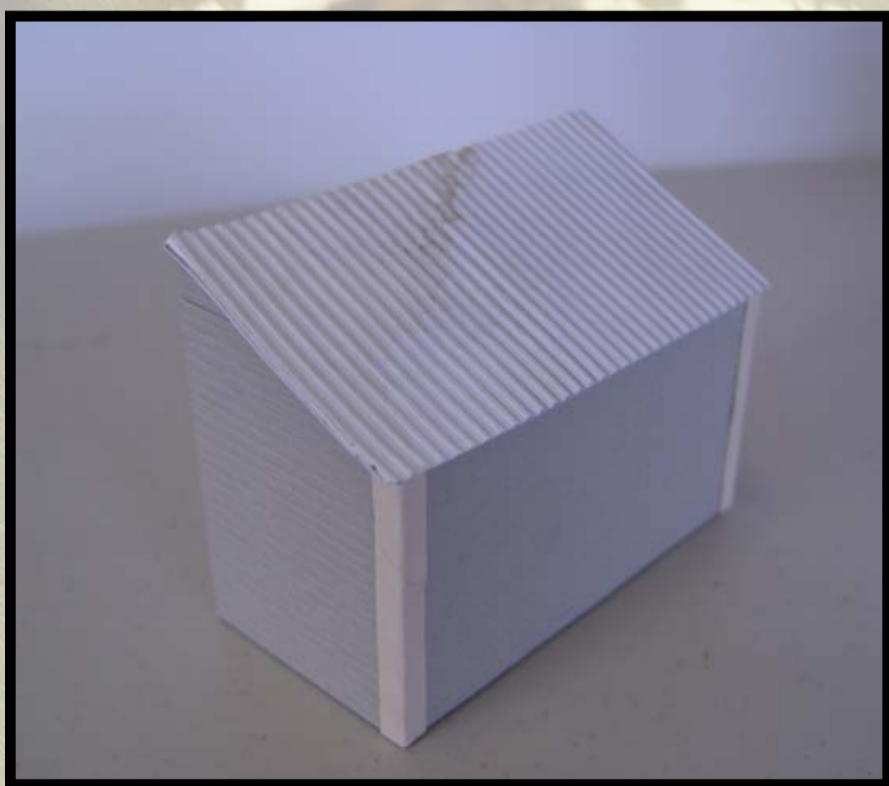
17. Cut strips of 1/2" card stock and fold them in half. Glue these to the top of the roof and to the edges of the building.



18. My initial plan was to stop here and add a smoke stack, but after looking over the building I decided to make a dedicated section for the furnace. So we are back to cutting more foam board. Cut two 4.5" X 2.5" pieces for the front and top sides. Next cut two pieces for the sides. These measurements will take into consideration the slope of the roof so we don't have to figure that out later. Make a trapezoidal piece with the following measurements- front 2.5", top 2.5", back 3.5" and the bottom 2.5". Rabbet cut the front and top pieces.

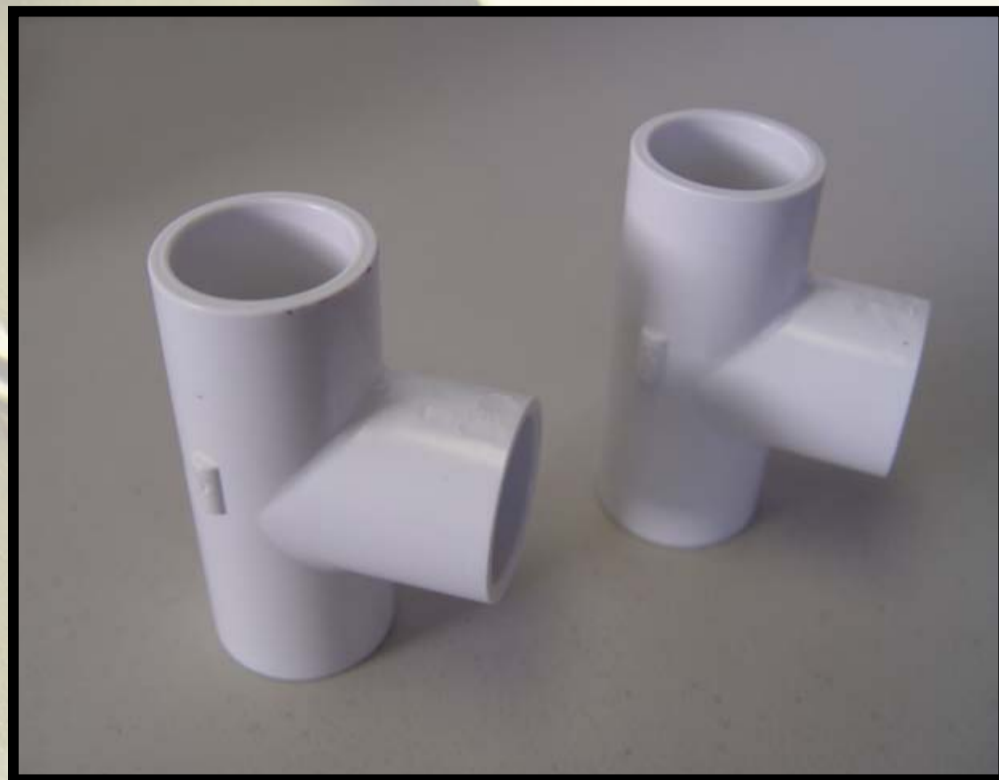


19. Now cut some corrugated card to fit the roof of this piece and cut out Plastruct Random Coursed Stone to fit the front and sides. Hot glue the card and plastic sheets to the piece. Then glue all the sides together. Also, glue strips of card to the edges of the walls like we did in step 17. When this is done glue them to the back of the building.

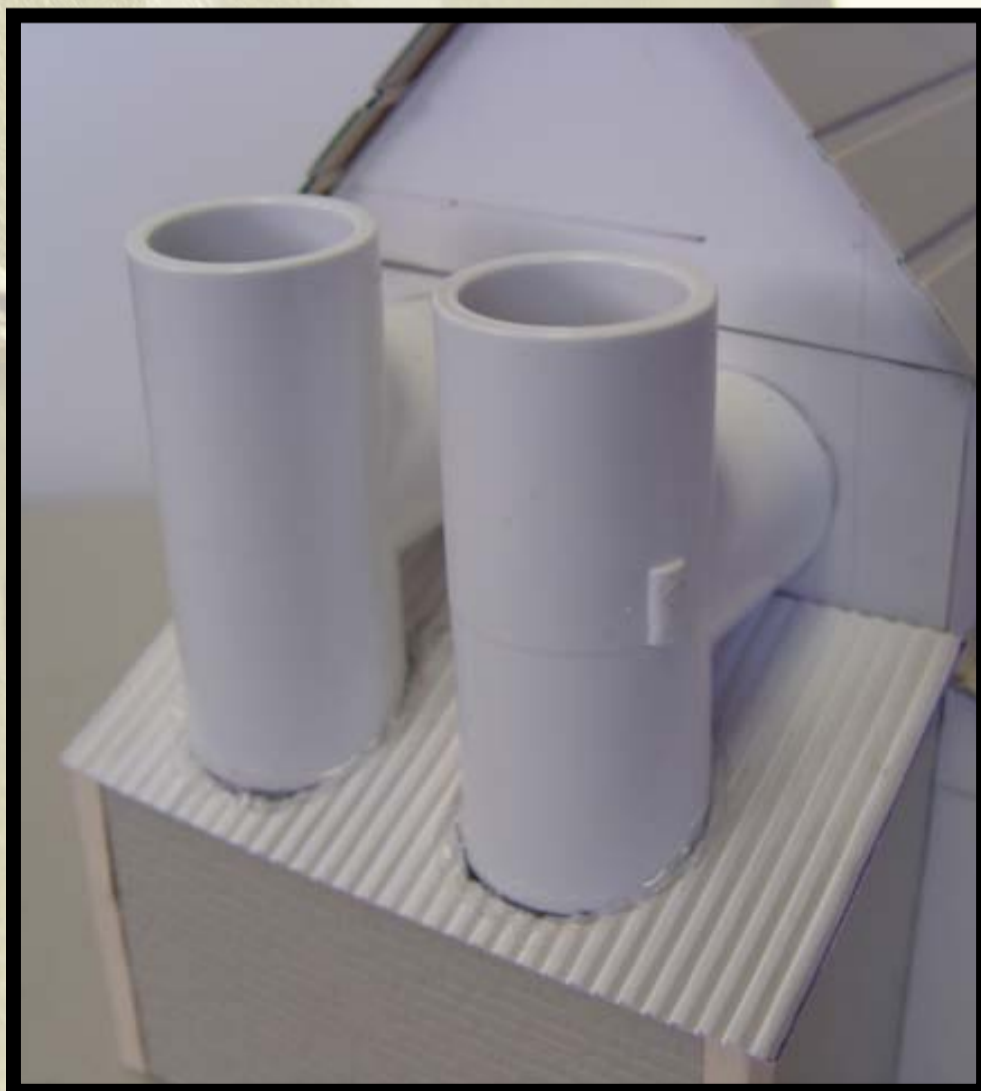


20. To construct the dual smoke stacks we will need two 3/4" PVC T-joints, and PVC piping to fit into it. Use a Dremel or any sanding or scraping

tool to remove any company names embossed on the pipe. These parts were made by the Khador empire not NEBCO like mine said.



21. These pieces will be glued to the back of the building and on top of the furnace shed. Place the T-joint on end, and trace a circle where the pipe meets the roof of the furnace. Cut out a hole with an X-acto and hot glue it in place. Also, glue the T-joint to the side of the building.



22. Next take your pipe cutter and cut a piece of PVC pipe 3 1/4" long. Attach this to the T joint with Crazy glue.

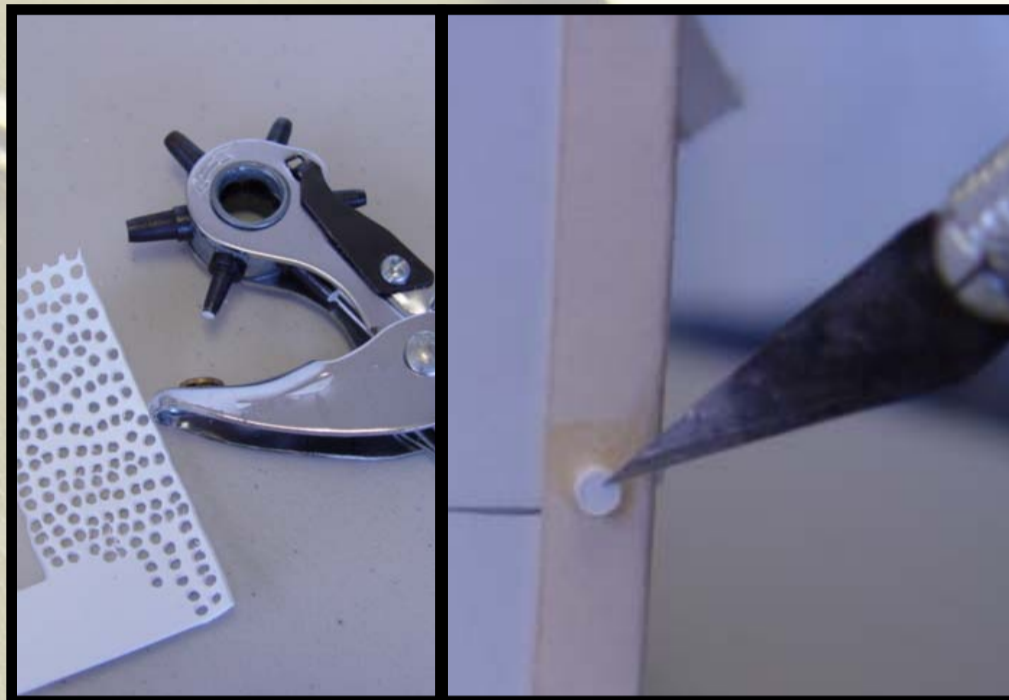


23. To finish the smoke stack, glue on the fish tank caps to the top of the pipes. These pieces are to cover the tubes used with under gravel filters.

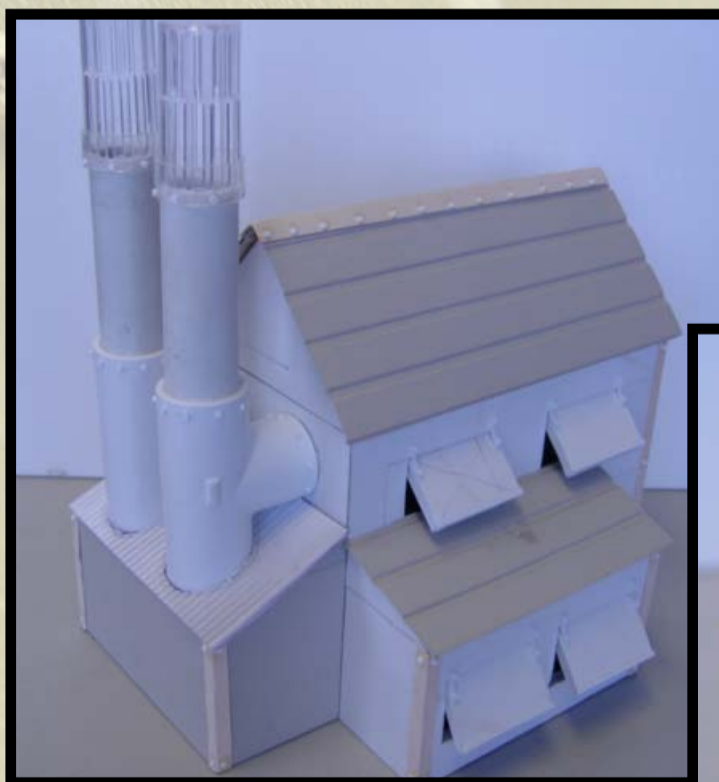


24. The basic structure is now complete and you can stop here if you wish. Otherwise we move onto what I call the super detail phase. This is where we add rivets and other details to make this building stand out.

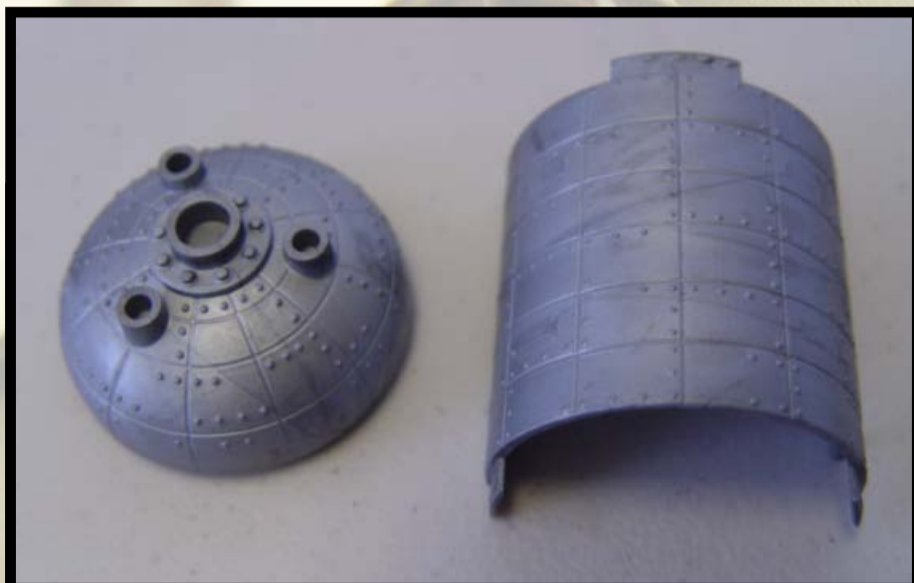
25. Take a scrap sheet of styrene and punch out rivets using a leather punch. I like to use the smallest setting for this. Glue the rivets to the card using Crazy glue. Evenly place drops of crazy glue where you want the rivets to be. Then gently stab a rivet with your X-acto and set it in the glue. Do a little at a time so the crazy glue doesn't harden.



26. Glue rivets to the hinges of each window. I like to use Tenax-7R for this, but Crazy glue also works. Tenax-7R is a special welding solvent for styrene. Fill your "Touch n Flow" applicator with Tenax-7R, hold the rivet in place with a X-acto, and touch the applicator tip to the seam where the rivet meets the hinge. Tenax-7R will fuse the seam through capillary action.



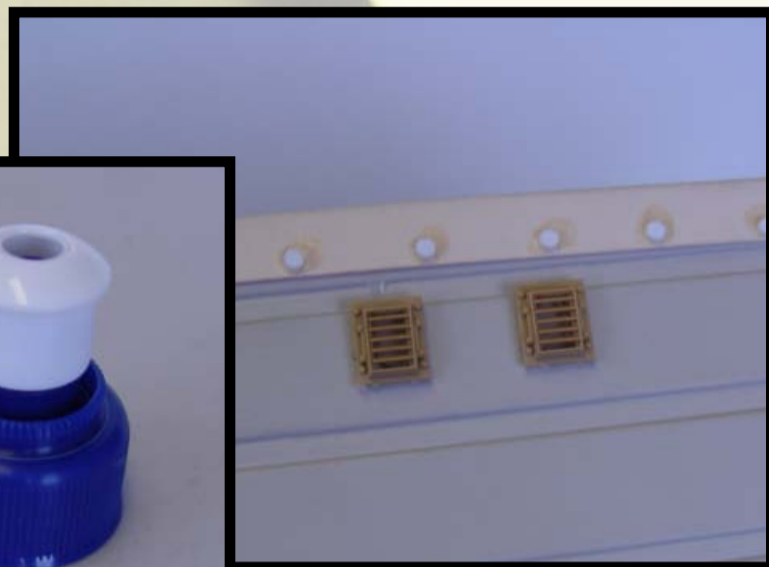
27. Cut out the boiler pieces from the Pegasus Chemical Plant. There should be three pieces (two sides and a cap). Saw the boiler cap in half and remove the tabs. Glue the half cap to one of the boiler sides. Now hot glue both of them to the furnace. Also, cut out the control box and glue it to the front of the building.



28. Take the styrene channels and glue it to the sides and front of the building. I like to use these to cover up any mistakes I made and to break up large areas of walls that need some kind of detail.



29. I like to buy Tamiya tank kits for the parts. Industrial Light and Magic used these same kits to build many of the original models seen in Star Wars. I found a couple of vents in one of the tank kits and glued them to the top of the main building. I also added a vent on the storage unit by cutting off the top of a water bottle, and gluing it to the roof.



30. The Khador Smelter is now complete and ready for paint.

31. I first used white glue and painted over any exposed edges of foam. After this dried, I spray painted the building with texturized black spray paint.

32. The entire piece was painted using P3 paints. The main building and storage room were painted using Battledress Green. I then highlighted them with Thrall Flesh, Jack Bone and Menoth White Highlight. The stone was

Painted with Bastion Grey, and highlighted with Jack Bone, Menoth White Base, Menoth White Highlight, and Morrow White Highlight. The dual smoke stacks were painted Iron Hull Grey, and highlighted with Bastion Grey and Morrow White Highlight. All metal areas were painted with Pig Iron, and washed with Brown Ink and Armor Wash. Rust was applied using Bloodstone and Khador Red Highlight.

33. I added additional weathering to the building using Thamar Black mixed with various P3 browns.

34. I like to add logos and numbers to industrial buildings. For this task I asked local artist Solomon Enos to draw up a original Khador logo I could add to my building. After he finished the freehand drawing, I cut it out and stenciled it to the front of the building.



35. The last thing to do is add snow. I like to use the Woodland Scenics Snow Flock mixed with a little water and white glue. Mix it to a semi dry consistency and apply it to the areas where snow would collect.



This piece was built with out a base so lights can be installed. If you have dry ice you can let it vent out of the smoke stacks too.

There you have it a Khador Smelter! Now that you know how to make one, get to work and keep your battlefield from being boring.







Infinity Miniatures New Releases

June New releases



Order Sergeants (Spitfire)

The Order Sergeants are the core of the PanOceania Military Orders, experienced soldiers that support the aggressive actions of the armoured knights. Thanks to their superior equipment and training, the Specialist Sergeants provide wider tactical flexibility to the Order's combat forces. The Multispectral Visor L2 allows them to locate hidden threats, and the Spitfire support weapon to eliminate them. Fight in the name of God and PanOceania with the Order Sergeants!



Djanbazans (Hackers)

The Djanbazans protect the Haqqislamite trade routes, finding hidden enemies wherever they might lurk. All of them have submitted to a special Supersoldier program and are able to recover from damage received, making it seem impossible to take them down. Now, all Haqqislamite can complete their Djanbazan Fireteams with this gorgeous female Hacker!



Reverend Custodians
 (Hacker, Combi Rifle + Marker). New Release!
 The Reverend Custodiers are undoubtedly some of the best Combat Hackers in the Human Sphere, able to reach any point in a zone of operations thanks to their Marker. These mysterious women are priestesses of the dataweb and goddesses of cyberwarfare - there is no technological device on the battlefield safe from them!

Skiávoros (Plasma Rifle).
 The Skiávoros are the bodies the EI uses to deploy onto the battlefield when directing its troops from the frontline. The Skiávoros is the cheapest option for a Combined Army player to deploy an embodiment of the EI and take advantage of its Strategos and Mnemonica Special Skills, ensuring advantages in deployment and avoiding a Loss of Lieutenant situation. Skiávoros means "Shadow devourer", but to your enemies it will mean "nightmare"!



Asuras (Spitfire)
 The mighty Asura is a powerful Heavy Infantry trooper with the body of a gorgeous biosynthetically enhanced woman. Her Multispectral Visor L3 is the state-of-the-art in detection devices, while the versatile Spitfire is a lethal and precise weapon at any distance. As beautiful as she is dangerous, the Asura is an adversary to die for!



FIRESTORM

ARMADA

SPACE COMBAT IN A WAR TORN UNIVERSE

Battle over Roland II

Written by Spencer D Taylor
Photographs by Kyle Ott

Every so often at the gaming store you want to have a slight change of pace, to do something different, to mix it up a little bit. So in the case myself and my good friend Marc; we decided to take a night off from our usual giant steam-powered robot death matches to do some grand old battle amongst the stars in Firestorm: Armada.

We decided that we would do a simple starter box game because that's all I had my disposal. We didn't use any fighters, none of the recently released Model Assigned Rules that Spartan Games gave us, and just kept everything as simple as possible. We were, however, using the optional deck of cards to add a little extra element to our game.

So on one side of the table sat Marc's Sorylians with their green and gold On the other side was positioned my Relthoza in their grey and blue. Between our fleets

sat a small asteroid field and the planet Roland II. The asteroids weren't moving objects and the planet



was considered to have little gravitational pull as to, again, keep things simple and moving along nice and quickly. Marc deployed in a fairly standard fashion with his frigates to either flank, his battleship dead center of his lines with the cruisers to one side. I set up a little differently with my frigates to the flanks, the cruisers in the center and my battleship coming up behind one of the frigate squadrons. My cruiser squadron and my battleship were starting the game with cloaking fields active to make Marc's first few rounds of shooting a bit more difficult for him.

On the first turn I play the card "Comms Intercept" which gives me a +3 to my initiative roll, with that and the +2 fleet tactics bonus the Relthoza have I was rolling 2d6 with a +5. Needless to say I won the initiative on the first turn, and took the opportunity to go first. With my first move I moved my squadron of cruisers up towards the asteroids and then turned towards the planet hoping to get a quick shot off at his battleship, but it was out of range of my ships and so was his cruiser squadron. Marc then moved his cruisers up straight ahead towards my ships and fired with their fore guns, but the cloaking



fields prevented him from damaging my ships. His torpedoes were fired, but unable to penetrate past the Relthoza point defense systems. We both moved



to bear on one of the Sorylian frigates while lining up my fore weapons to the frigate squadron near the planet. The broadsides fire and damage the frigate they were aiming for, and the torpedoes do their work by destroying the frigate they were brought against. We were both down a ship, and his battleship had no luck in doing anything as far as combat was concerned.

Turn one ends with me on top, but just barely. Thankfully for me I win the initiative yet again, and so I decide to go first. I decide to try and do some damage, and uncloak my cruisers for maximum firepower. They move forward, aim their broadsides against the Sorylian battleship and fire. They miss, by one. They've done no damage with all their dice,

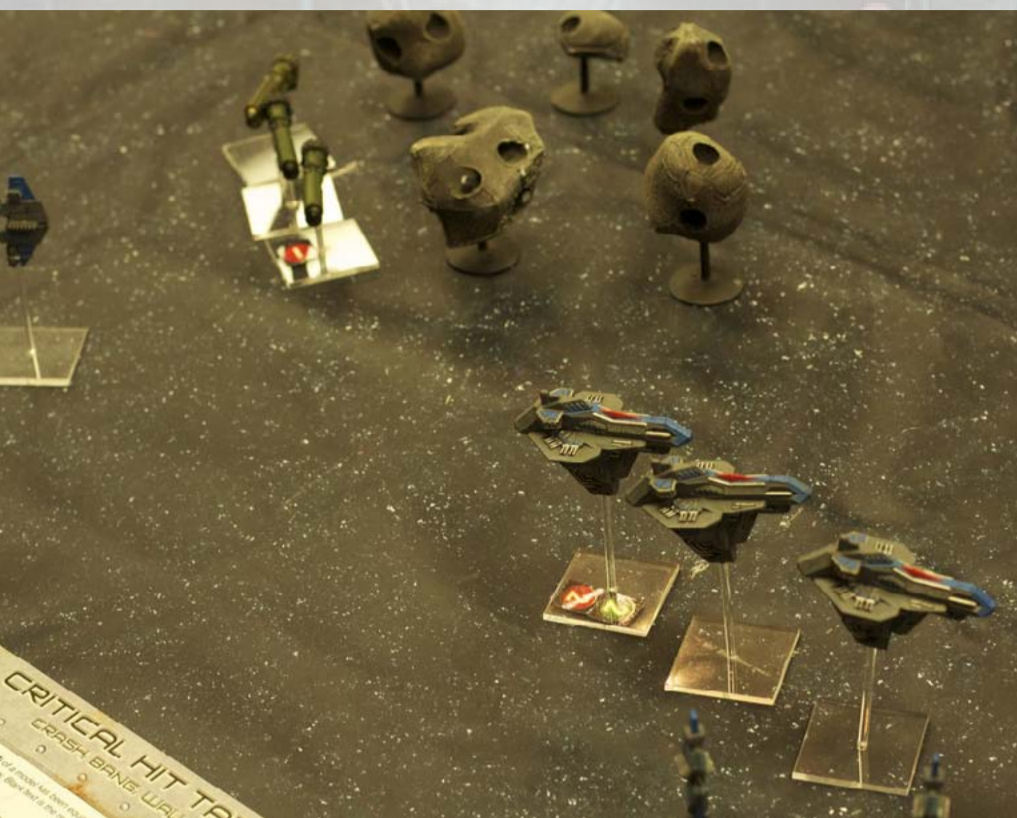
our frigate squadrons near the planet up towards the combat, but neither of them were successful in doing anything else. The frigates in front of my battleship had moved up towards the asteroids but couldn't get any shots off with their broadsides. This left them as open targets for the Sorylian frigates who, using their superior speed, began to swing around the asteroids and unleashed hell upon my ships; scoring a critical hit which destroyed one of my frigates. Marc had drawn first blood, and I was suddenly down a ship. With my last move of the turn I lurch forward my battleship, bringing its broadsides



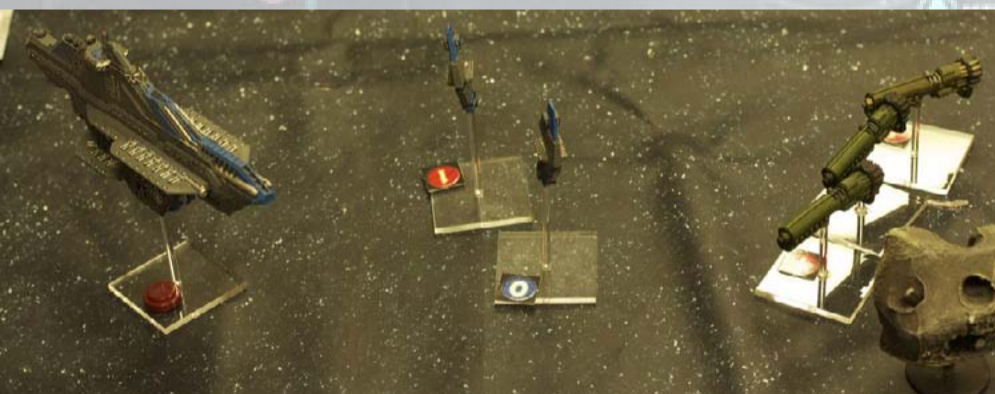
and now their only defense against primary weapons from the Sorylians is off. I gambled, and I lost. Marc's immediate reaction is to move his frigates nearby my battleship to optimal firing positions, and to let me know my choice was a mistake. His frigates fire their fore weapons at my rear-most cruiser and, much to my surprise, score a "hard pounding" critical which not only deals my ship two points of hull damage, but also deals two points of crew damage. Marc's frigates aren't done, though, and use their broadsides to fire at one of my nearby frigates; dealing a point of hull damage to it. Things aren't looking good for my Relthoza, but the fight must go



on. I move my frigates by my battleship to fire their broadsides at the Sorylian frigates, scoring a hit on the rear ship. My lead frigate then launches boarding



vessels in an attempt to take the lead Sorylian ship, but my assault ships are shot down before they ever reach their intended target. The other squadron of Sorylian frigates then moves forward and fire; they kill one nearby frigate of mine as well as downing the wounded one near my battleship. Just like that



I'm down another two ships. The frigate escort I had for my battleship consists of a single ship now, and things really aren't looking good. I move my healthier



frigate squadron up behind my cruisers as they begin to move to lend the battleship some assistance. In the process they open fire and deal a killing blow to one of the enemy frigates between the planet and asteroid field. Marc's frigates suddenly aren't looking much better than mine. He's got one squadron consisting of a single ship and his squadron of three ships has two that are damaged and an unscathed Relthoza battleship with them at optimal firing distance. Marc



decides to move his cruisers forward and lets loose with all guns. He destroys my last frigate guarding the battleship, then scores a double critical against one of my cruisers. The first critical sets it on fire, but the second one is the death blow as it deals those last two points of hull damage to bring it down. They then fire torpedoes at my already wounded cruiser, and it goes down as well. I'm suddenly down a lot of ships, and Marc has a victorious look in his eye. I won't go down without a fight, though, and so I move my battleship forward ever so slightly to bring his cruisers into range of my fore weapons. They fire



and score a “hard pounding” critical on one of his cruisers, dealing some much needed damage both to his seemingly unstoppable fleet and his pride. Of course my joy doesn't last long as my battleship manages to miss everything else it fires at. Finally Marc moves his battleship up towards the fray, and in an impressive bout of rolling scores a double critical on my last remaining cruiser to take it out. Turn two ends with me in a bad place, and Marc still smiling.

Marc attempts to play his own “Comms Intercept” card to try and win the initiative for turn three, but I play another card; which cancels it out. Much to Marc's dismay, and both our surprises, I win the



initiative roll once again and take the first turn again. I'm down to my battleship and two rather measly frigates. Marc's still got four frigates, all his cruisers and his battleship. This is turning out to be a very lopsided match, and so I decide to try and go out in a blaze of glory. I uncloak my battleship and move it up again, then I play the “Practiced Gunnery” card; which lets me hit on rolls of three or more instead of four

or more. Using my new gunnery skills my battleship opens fire by splitting it against the two wounded frigates nearby; killing them both in a flash. It then fires it's fore weapons at the wounded Sorylian cruiser, scoring another critical and destroying it. Torpedoes fire and damage another enemy cruiser. Marc retaliates by moving his cruisers up and firing at my battleship; their combined firepower scores an amazing 17 hits, just three hits shy of a double critical on my battleship! The critical hit causes decompression and just like that my battleship is flying with a bit of a limp. The Sorylian cruisers then damage the frigates nearby them and even manage to destroy one of them. I'm down to



two ships, both damaged, and Marc still has his other three squadrons to go. I'm doubting I'll make it past this turn, and he's already tasting sweet victory for his fleet. I move my last frigate towards my battleship, firing at the Sorylian cruisers along the way but doing no damage. Marc moves his lone frigate from behind his cruisers towards my last frigate, taking shots at both the frigate and my battleship. All this accomplishes nothing, however, as all his shots do no damage to either of my ships. He then attempts to board my frigate, but the Sorylians are fended off at a great cost to the Relthoza frigate; all it's marines are lost in the process. Marc's last big move of the turn is to move up his battleship and open fire on



mine, and it does so in spectacular fashion scoring a “hard pounding” on my battleship and reducing it to a lowly four hull points. He fires his torpedoes, but they do nothing in the end.

To my surprise, and to Marc's as well, I've managed to survive turn three at a pretty big cost. I've got a frigate with no marines left and a pretty badly damaged battleship with decompression going on. I go to play my “Systems Back Online” card to



nullify the decompression, but Marc quickly cancels that so I have to make the roll to see what happens. Thankfully for once the dice are on my side and the decompression is fixed with no further damage to the battleship.

As we head into turn four it's painfully obvious to everyone watching that without some sort of ungodly luck I'm not making it past this turn. We roll for initiative and, once again, I come out on top. I decide to go first and give it everything my two ships have got. I move what's left of my battleship up and bring my broadsides against the Sorylian battleship. My ship fires and scores enough hits to at least do some damage, but the Sorylian shields manage to negate them to the point where I miss by one. The battleship does, however, manage to destroy another Sorylian frigate, but it seems too little too late. The Sorylian fleet moves it's battleship up and fires at mine, scoring another mind blowing 18 hits! Marc has come within two and three hits of double criticals on the same ship. The critical that went through causes a raging fire[26] on my battleship, and with that brings it down to two hull points from it's original nine. Thankfully his torpedo fire misses yet again, but it seems a rather shallow victory. The Sorylians manage to capture my remaining frigate without a fight, and shortly thereafter the Sorylian cruisers make their way over and capture my dying battleship to officially end the game.

I ended the game with two ships left on the table (even though they both got captured), and Marc ended the game with only slightly better results as I managed to destroy six of his original ten craft. It

was a crazy game, but in the end I got outplayed and outgunned. Marc's ships were faster and his frigates



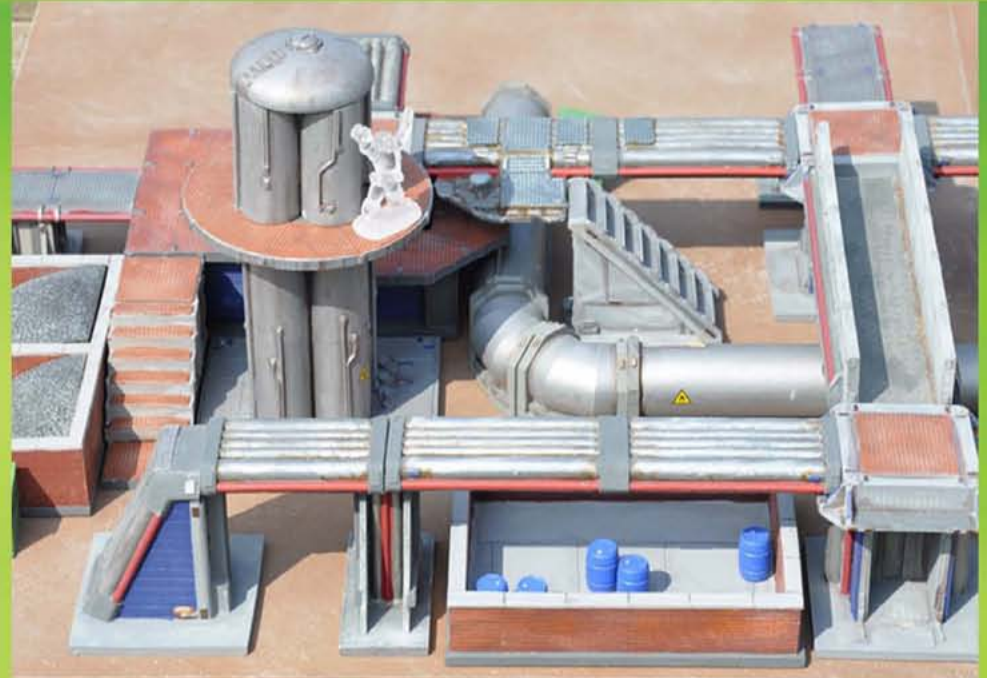
had a painfully obvious advantage over mine both in speed and firepower, but him coming so close to getting a double critical on my battleship twice really said something about how the game turned out. He was scoring critical hits left and right, while I was barely able to scrape by. I misused my frigates by trying to run them on the flanks, and that cost me. Their lack of fore weapons and no cloaking fields makes them practically worthless on the flanks, and I should have run them up the center of the table where they could use the asteroids to their advantage while having more targets to fire at. Another major tactical blunder on my part was uncloaking those cruisers when I did. I thought I could score some hits against his battleship, but in the end didn't. So many of those hits could have been nullified by my cloaking shields, and may have even given my cruisers more time to get into better firing positions to actually do some damage or, at the very least, draw Marc's attention to them rather than my battleship.

Regardless of the results we both had a blast playing, and it was nice to mix it up a little bit from our regular gaming experience with each other. Now all I need to do is buy some more ships, build up my fleet, and exact my revenge.

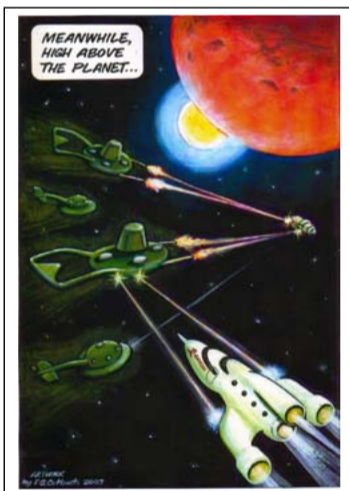


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SCARNADA

THE ADMIRALTY EDITION

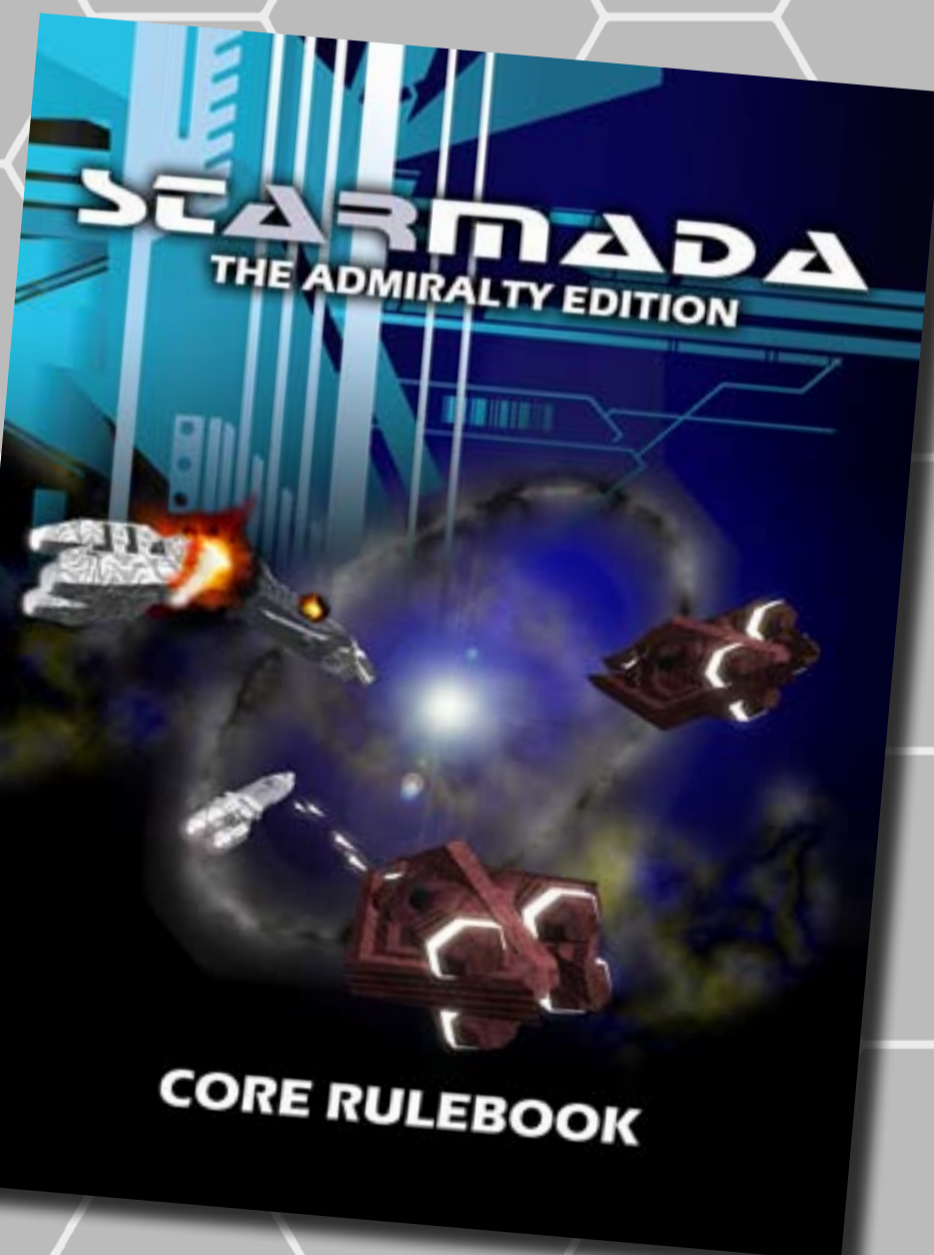
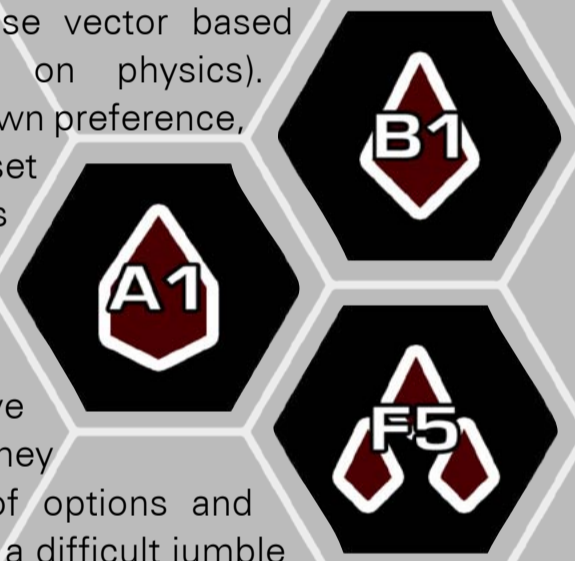
by "Ensen" Marijn Bierhof

Going beyond the stars

As a kid I loved to watch series like Star Trek, the old Battlestar Galactica and later Babylon 5. It was thrilling to see the fighters and cruisers flying through space, finding new planets, new civilisations...and blasting them to space dust! I think most miniature gamers still have that kid locked up in their heads and sometimes he needs to get out. Fortunately for the people around us, that's during the games we play. So when I place down those space ships on the table, it's time to let the kid out again and start blasting some aliens to smithereens.

Can't see the black hole for a singularity.

So, time to play a space combat game...but which one? There are many of them, each with its own rules and ideas. One of the important questions is how a game works with the 3D aspect and with movement. Most games use a 2D system (similar to naval combat), some use cinematic movement (the way ships move in movies like Star Wars) and some use vector based movement (based on physics). Everyone has their own preference, so choose a rules set which simulates movement the way you like it. One thing most space combat games have in common is that they usually have lots of options and quickly can become a difficult jumble of rules and special abilities. Not great for new players. The main trick is to get a good combination between simple rules and defining options by special rules. For me, this is where Starmada: the Admiralty Edition (SAE) from Majestic Twelve Games shines. I think it's one of the greatest rules sets to start with and also is one of the better rules sets for new players. In this review I'll explain why I think so.



Simple, but not simplistic

The main thing I like about SAE are the simple rules mechanics. It's also the game's tag line: simple, but not simplistic. The core rules are only 22 pages long. This explains everything from movement to combat and small fighters. In addition to the core rules, the system uses add-on special rules. So you can decide which special rules you want to use to personalize your ships and simulate your favourite movie. You can add as many as you want and each

extra special rule adds more rules to the game. This gives experienced players also the option to make the game very detailed with loads of options and special things going on. It's all up to you.

Next, although the game has its own theme, story and factions, the rules set themselves are open. You can design whatever ship and fleet you want and set them apart with the special rules. You want cloaked Klingon ships? It's possible. Do you want to play a Homeworld Hiigaran fleet? Add some rules for Ion cannons, multi-gun corvettes, heavy battery destroyers and voila! SAE has a design system to make your own ships, the way you want them to be (more on this later). Now an open design system isn't new to starship combat gaming. A lot of systems use it. I do see this as a positive thing as games like Battlefleet Gothic or Firestorm: Armada are closed systems without options to make a personalized fleet. And hey, who doesn't want to see a fleet of Federation ships lined up against Star Destroyers and Tie Fighters?

The core rules are in a soft cover format, black and white and 80 pages long. It looks okay, but it's a bit simple compared to the products we see released nowadays. The book has a lot of pictures, all obviously drawn on a computer. They look okay, but are similar to spaceship games from the nineties. So don't expect any fancy stuff in the book. It's all about the rules.

Admiral!

We have enemy ships in sector 47!

So how does the game actually work? Players decide on a scenario to play or pick a point value for a 'till the death' scenario. Each starship has a certain combat rating. The higher the rating, the better the ship. So for example, if you and your mate decide on a 1000 points game, you could pick five ships with a combat rating of 200. There is one important limit: the combat rating of a ship cannot exceed 50% of the size of the

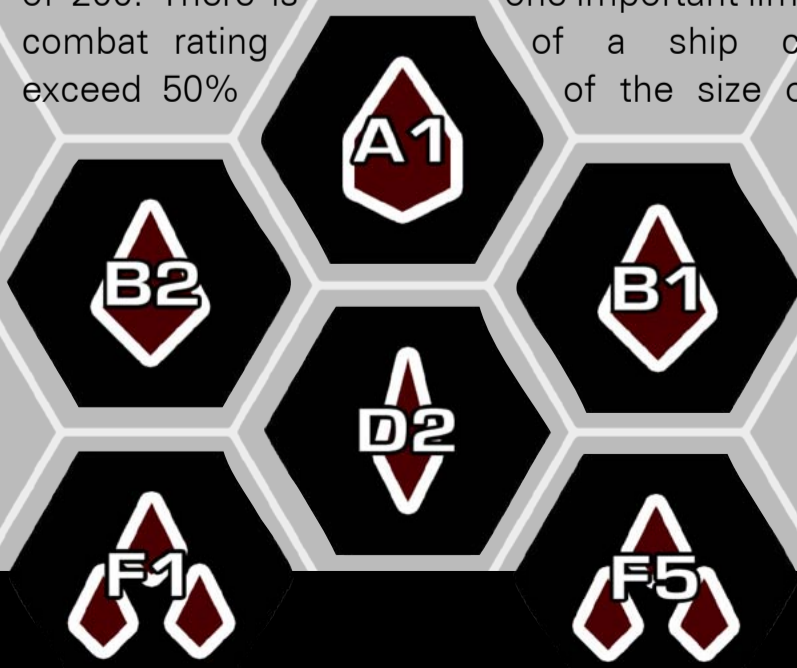
game. So the player could not field a ship which has a combat value of 501 – 1000 points. This makes sure one player does not field a Deathstar, which obliterates

all enemies. Each starship has its own data card. On you fill out all details and you can keep track of damage. It's a nice and simple way of keeping track of everything.

Once both players have picked their forces, it's time to deploy. The game itself uses a hex-based system and recommends using a hex-grid on the playing field. This does make movement and measuring a lot simpler, but not everybody likes the look of grids on their table. Of course you could decide to play on a field without grids and simply replace each grid by 2" range. A simple fix. Both players then alternately deploy their forces on the field, starting with the player with the most ships. Each player has a deployment zone of three hexes deep. Once all ships have been deployed, it's time to start the game.

To Boldly Go...

The game is divided into turns. The turns are divided into four phases: Orders, Movement, Combat, End. During the Orders phase, players write down the movement orders for all of their ships. This means that all movement is simultaneous and you don't exactly know what your opponent will do. Of course, movement is limited by several rules, so big lumbering ships won't be able to zip around like fireflies. This gives certain predictability on where ships will approximately go. All ships can move and turn. The amount of movement and turning is determined by a ship's "engine rating". The higher rating, the more manoeuvrable a ship is. For each turn you make and acceleration or deceleration you apply, you must compare the result. If the result is equal or less than the engine rating, then the ship can do the movement. For example: A ship has a speed of 5. The ship wants to fly two hexes forward,



turn one to port, move three hexes and then turn one to starboard and finally fly a last hex (noted as 2P3S1, read as 2"/Port/3"/Starboard/1"). This part of the rulebook is a bit tricky if you are new to the game. You may have to read the section a few times to get the way it works. Fortunately there are several examples to explain how it works. Once you know how your ship will move, note down the orders on the data card (i.e.. 2P3S1). All ships are then moved. This is always a great moment...the ships are moved and you can see if your plans and predictions work out. Like in most starship combat games, ships retain their speed, so you will have to keep an eye on a ship's speed. Zipping around the table may sound interesting, if you accidentally fly off, the ship counts as being destroyed.

After movement it's time to fire photon torpedos and blasters! Once again the player with most ships can start with combat. Ships have line of sight to all ships on the board. It's not a big advantage you can start firing as all the results take place in the End phase. A ship targets one or more ships it will fire at and with which weapons. Each weapon has its own firing arcs, so it's possible you won't be able to fire all weapons. Roll a number of dice equal to the weapon's rate of fire and compare the die result with the ship's accuracy number. For each successful die, roll a number of dice equal to the weapon's impact rating and compare the result with the target's shield rating.

For each die that equalled or exceeds the shield rating, roll a number of dice equal to the weapon's damage statistic. When rolling for damage, you roll dice to see what part of the ship is hit. You can hit its hull, engines, weapons or

shields. Each part has its own effects when damaged. Damaged shields will offer less protection, damaged weapons will fire less effectively and a damaged engine will lead to a slower ship. You can keep track of all effects on the data card.

To summarize: you see if the shots hit, if they penetrate the shields and finally how much damage they inflict. At first it seems like a lot of dice rolling, but you'll quickly get used to it.

"Galactica, Boomer. Hotdog's aboard"

A starship combat game would be incomplete without fighters. SAE also has rules for fighters. The core rules focus on fighters, but in the options you can find extra rules to make bombers or boarding ships. If you are using fighters in the game, you will have another

phase: the Fighters phase. This phase comes between Movement and Combat. In order to field fighters, a player must have a carrier starship with space for the fighters. Fighters come in flights. Each flight has 6 fighters, so the easiest way to show how many are left in a flight is to place a regular die next to a flight. Once all fighters in a flight are gone, remove the miniature from the playing area.

All fighters can move 10 hexes anyway they want to. Players alternately move and do combat with a flight of flyers. Fighters don't retain their speed. This simulates their flexibility when compared to the lumbering ships. So they could move 10 hexes forwards in one turn and 10 back in the next. Once a flight has moved, it can immediately attack. Roll a die for each surviving fighter in the flight. Fighters hit starships and other fighters on a roll of 5+ and will score one hit or destroy one fighter. This damage is immediate, so you can try to destroy or weaken a flight or a starship, before it had a chance to unleash its weapons. A starship shooting at a flight will make a regular attack, with an additional -1 modifier to the accuracy roll. Each hit destroys one fighter.

The rules on fighters are very simple, but work well. They are like swarms of insects zipping around space

and firing a lot. They will not do a lot of damage per flight, but if you manage to combine several flights together, you can have interesting results.

Math is radical!

As I mentioned before, SAE is an open system. You can design whatever ship you want to. In the 'starship construction' chapter you can find

how to do so. To me, this is the weakest part of the book as it's quite difficult to do yourself. During starship design you make all kinds of choices and all choices influence each other and the ship's final combat rating. That's not really special for a miniatures game, but you don't often see exponentiation when calculating all values. In SAE you will use exponentiation a lot, making the math very hard to do on paper and also hard to grasp. Of course there is an online shipbuilder where you enter all values and the program calculates everything. Personally, I prefer simpler calculations. That said, the program works fine and it's fairly easy to design ships.

And once you get down to designing, you will see the amount of options you have. It's a lot. 26 of the pages in the book are dedicated to all options. You can alter whatever you like, from movement to combat and fighters. You want photon torpedos? Check. You want a cloaking Klingon ship? Check. The sky is the limit.

"What are you doing?

You're not actually going into an asteroid field?"

On the one hand terrain often feels awkward in a game set in the void of space. On the other hand, some terrain breaks up the open space and adds more tactical options. In SAE there are several types of terrain which you can use, from black holes and planets to dust clouds and asteroids. Like the main rules, terrain is easy to use in your games. It's a short chapter of only three pages, so it's not hard to implement into your regular game.

Finally, there are rules on scenarios. The main rulebook has six scenarios to play. All of them use fixed combat ratings with clear objectives. Players who want to play bigger or smaller games can easily adjust the combat ratings involved to suit their liking.

Target Acquired?

So that's Starmada the Admiralty Edition in a nutshell. It's a simple game with great rules and loads of options. It's easy to get into because of the simple approach. On the other hand, it offers experienced players a lot of options they can use. \$16.95 for a rulebook is nice, it's makes it easy to try and get into.

Players who like SAE and want even more, Majestic Twelve Games sell lots of expansions. This includes books for their own designed factions and also several Star Trek fleets. Should you be interested, you can download a demo version of the rules from their website. It features all the basic rules, so you can try some games with the core rules.

<http://www.mj12games.com/starmada/>

LONDON

Tanelorn Wargames Club

Leytonstone & District Ex-Servicemen's Club,
Harvey Road, London, E11 3DB
Sunday 6pm-10pm
www.tanelornwgc.org
barryp@tanelornwgc.org

The Good the Bad and the Bromley

Unit 21, The Mall, Bromley, BR1 1TS
Tuesday 5pm-9pm
www.thegoodthebadthebromley.com
thegoodthebadthebromley@live.co.uk

The North London Imps

Gordon Hall, Huntley Drive, West Finchley,
London, N3 1NX
Monday 7.30pm-10.30pm
www.northlondonimps.com
dakommittee@northlondonimps.com

SOUTH EAST

Bedford Gladiators

North End Working Mens Club, Bedford, MK41
7TW
Monday 7.30pm-11pm
gladiators.wordpress.com
gladiator64uk@yahoo.co.uk

Gravesend Gamers Guild

The Three Daws Public House, 7 Town Pier,
Gravesend, Kent, DA11 0BJ.
Wednesday 6.30pm-9.30pm
www.gravesendgamersguild.co.uk
zenga@blueyonder.co.uk

Bognor Regis Gaming Asociation

Newtown Sports and Social Club, Bognor Regis,
PO21 5EU
Tuesday 6.30pm-11pm
www.bognorgaming.com
mrfrankhill@yahoo.com

Brighton Warlords

King and Queen Pub, 13-17 Marlborough Place,
Brighton, East Sussex, BN1 1UB
Monday 4pm-10.30pm
peter.cooke423@ntlworld.com

Chelmsford Bunker

Chelmsford Police Sports & Social Club, St.
Margaret's Road, Chelmsford, CM2 6DA.
Wednesday 6.30pm-10.30pm
www.bunkerassault.co.uk

enquiries@bunkerassault.co.uk

Gambit Games

St. Leonard's Church Hall, Glebe Villas, Hove
East Sussex BN3 5SN
www.gambitgames.co.uk
inferno150@sky.com

Newmarket Knights

Studlands Park Community Centre, Brickfields
Avenue, Newmarket CB8 7RX
Alternate Fridays 6.30pm-9.30pm
nktknights.tripod.com
nktknights@gmail.com

Outpost 47

The Seven Sisters Pub, Alfriston Road, Seaford,
East Sussex, BN25 3JF
Tuesday 7.30pm
outpost47.phpbb3now.com
mark@froglenut.co.uk

Phoenix Gaming Club

The Scout Centre, Skinners Hill, Wellingborough
Road, Rushden, NN10 9YE
Tuesday 7pm-11pm
phoenixgaming.wordpress.com
Darrell.lee1@hotmail.co.uk

Southend Toy Soldiers Club

Southend High School for Boys, Prittlewell
Chase, Southend-on-Sea, Essex, SS0 0RG
Thursday 6pm-9.30pm
clubenquiries@holttum.com

Walberton Wargamers

The Pavilion, The Street, Walberton, Arundel,
West Sussex BN18 0PQ
Friday 7.30pm-10.30pm
www.walbertonwargamers.org.uk
walbertonwargamers@yahoo.co.uk

Tunbridge Wells Wargames Society

Speldhurst Village Hall, Speldhurst, Tunbridge
Wells, Kent, TN3 0PR
www.twws.org.uk
secretary@twws.org.uk

SOUTH**Bracknell Forest Gamers**

St Pauls United reform Church, Bracknell, RG12 9LP

Monday 7pm-11pm

www.bfgclub.org.uk

chair@bfgclub.org.uk

The Oxford Gaming Club

Botley Baptist Church, Westminster Way, Botley, Oxford OX2 0LW

Monday 7.00pm-9.30pm

www.oxfordgamingclub.co.uk

royemunson@hotmail.com

Abingdon Wargames Club

Neave Room, Abingdon Conservative Club, OX14 5AG

Friday 6.30pm-10pm

www.abingdonwargames.org.uk

steve@evanssteve.wanadoo.co.uk

Armageddon Inc

Reggie Goves Centre, Pauls Row, High Wycombe, Bucks, HP11 2HQ

Monday 6.45pm-10pm

www.armageddon-inc.co.uk

james.adams@hotmail.co.uk

Sad Muppet Society, The

Glebe Hall, Church Square, Basingstoke, RG21 7QW

Tuesday 7pm-10pm

www.sadmuppets.org

DaveR@sadmuppets.org

Spiky Club

RPOSSC, 6 Richfield Avenue, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 8EQ

Thursday 7pm-11pm

www.spikyclub.com

spikydavid@gmail.com

Guildford Games Club

Park Barn Centre, Park Barn Dr, Guildford GU2 8EN

Monday 7.30pm-22.30pm

benjaminlee422@gmail.com

SOUTH WEST**Beast and Bionics**

Poldark Inn, Delabole Cornwall, PL33 9DQ

Thursday 6.30pm-10pm

s6.zetaboards.com/Beasts_and_Bionics

Hendybadger@aol.com

Calne Gaming Club

Church House, 30 Church Street, Calne SN11 0HU

Monthly - see website

www.calnegamingclub.com

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

celtofkernel@aol.com

Exeter Inquisition

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

Tuesday 6pm-10pm

exeter-inquisition.org

via website

Rygas Roughnecks

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

Wednesday 6pm-11pm

www.rygasroughnecks.com

Swindon and District Wargamers

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

Wednesday 7pm-11pm

www.sadwargamers.com

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

neilasharp@aol.com

MIDLANDS**1st Company Veterans**

Warhammer World, Nottingham, NG7 2WS

Thursday 6pm-10pm

www.1stcompanyveterans.net

matt_rs2003@hotmail.co.uk

Celler Dwellers

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

www.cellardwellers.info

aLYsaudoe1@hotmail.com

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

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

KIA Games Club

Kirkby-in-Ashfield Library, Ashfield Precinct,

Kirkby-in-Ashfield, Nottinghamshire, NG17 7BQ

Alternate Saturdays 10am-3pm

www.kiagamingclub.net

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

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

Tamworth Games Club

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

Wednesday 6pm-9pm

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

warlords_of_walsall@hotmail.com

Derby Wargames Society

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

Monday 7pm-11pm

derbywargamessociety.com

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

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

Via website

NORTH**Doncaster Wildcats**

The Leopard, 2 West St, Doncaster DN13AA

Monday 6pm-10.30pm

sixthkraven@hotmail.co.uk

East Cleveland Warsmiths

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

Sunday 6pm-9.30pm

james.borders@live.co.uk

Hulls Angels

Unit 2, Grimston Street, Hull, HU1 3HG

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

hulls-angels.co.uk

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

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

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

kevin.gibson4@ntlworld.com

Northumbrian Adventurers Guild

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

Sunday 12pm-7pm

www.anythingbutaone.com

contact@anythingbutaone.com

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
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www.gobstyks.co.uk
info@gobstyks.co.uk

Lost Boys Wargaming Club

Ainsdale Methodist Church, Ainsdale, Southport,
PR8 3NQ
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hez14badkarma@blueyonder.co.uk

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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.



THE LAST WORD

WITH
UNCLE BOMBER

Dice

Who wins games, is it the guy with the most disposable income, the guy who is best able to buy the latest greatest model, or is it the guy who can build a balanced force out of what he already has, and knows how to use them.

There is an argument for the Hollywood player, the player with the big budget production. Ladies and Gentlemen, I give you the latest, the greatest, the one, the only (Insert latest greatest model here). It can be difficult to face a new model for the first time; we are unfamiliar with its stats and abilities.

But, and I know you will all agree with me. There is nothing more satisfying than beating the Hollywood player; I have fond memories of facing a certain player who will remain nameless (Luke cough cough!) and his new Confrontation Red Oak Wolfen, everyone who faced him said they were broken, until my guys handed him his derriere, his glutinous maximus, his rear end, his.. Well you get the picture.

It's my opinion, feel free to disagree. But a balanced force will always have the edge over the latest greatest model. The balanced force is the Kryptonite if you will, of the Uber newest model or army.

Now the general with the balanced force doesn't have it all his own way, he has his own daemons to face. He has Old Father time's sidekick to worry about. He has to face Lady Luck, it doesn't matter what you do, how fantastic your deployment is. If you can't roll that D6 and get the number you want, when you need it, well what's the point. At some point your opposition will need to roll six sixes to kill your general, guess what they are going to roll.

Wargaming is a game of chance, or at least a game were, let's call it luck plays a roll, we can't plan for it, we certainly cannot see it coming. It's when we are at our most vulnerable when all our attention is focused on the game, we will need to roll a dice, and it will always be a pivotal point during the game. It will be now that Lady Luck will start sniping at us from the shadows, you need a four do you. Bang have a three instead. Can we protect our dice

from her, I don't know yet. But when I do, you will be next.

Which brings me to another thing, are there to many D6's in wargaming, whatever happened to D4, or a D20. How many of us are tired of the D6. I think it has ideas above its station; I once had a game when my opponent needed three hands to roll all his dice in attack, followed by lots to wound, followed by lots to roll for my save, and he only killed two models, I spent more time collecting dice afterwards than I did removing the figures from the table .

I see the hand of Old Father Time in this, he has found a way to interrupt our games, if we spend more time rolling dice then picking them all up again, we aren't actually playing are we.

What's wrong with the venerable D20, or the elusive D12? And don't forget the legendary D100. I know that if I was to empty my dice bag right now; the bottom of the bag is full of these rare dice, along with a few deviation dice and those tiny white D6 we all have.

For all you younger gamers out there, go and ask your parents if they can show you what a D100 looks like, or when your dads not looking poor out all his dice, and marvel at the craziness that is a D4, yes a pyramid shaped dice, if you don't believe me just go and check it out on the internet.

I think it would be a good idea to take a step back from the D6, imagine how nice it would be to not need a Sherpa to carry your dice bag, think of how many games you could squeeze into an evening if you didn't spend all your time rolling and rolling and rolling your D6, followed by ten minutes picking them all up again. And don't forget how much room you need to roll all these dice, you almost need another table just so you can roll them all.

As always you are free to disagree, as always you would 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

Uncle Bomber

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Your portal to Sci-Fi and Fantasy Gaming



Next Issue.....