

SKAVENBLIGHT

gazette



ISSUE 13

SKAVENBLIGHT Issue 13 gazette

Skavenblight Gazette

Lead Editors

Skaven Lord Vinshqueek, Clanlord Trask

Editor

Skwervo

Proofer

Demagorgon

Writers

Clanlord Trask, Craig Lee, Joe Flesch, Seer Squeek, Skaven Lord Vinshqueek, Skwervo, William King.

Artwork and miniatures

Craig Lee, Joe Flesch, Neil.

Cover

Craig Lee

Production

Clanlord Trask

All material appearing in Skavenblight Gazette is copyright of its author or creator. Reproduction in whole or part is not permitted without permission.

Opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of Skavenblight Gazette, The UnderEmpire, Supporters or the staff. Information is published in good faith and we do not accept any responsibility for damage that may arise from any possible inaccuracies. All rights reserved, none of the contents may be used in any other media without prior consent of its creator.

Warhammer, and associated intellectual property, is copyright of Games Workshop. A full list of Games Workshop trademarks can be found at www.games-workshop.com/Legal/legal.html

All complainers will be fed to the Mutant Rat Ogre.

www.skavenblightgazette.com

Contents

Ask Seer Squeek Seer Squeek	pg 3
Interview: William King	pg 4
Show Your Inner Skaven	pg 7
The True History of the Skaven Skwervo & Clanlord Trask	pg 8
Children of the Horned Rat Feature Gallery	pg 10
Future Issues	pg 13
Know Your Enemy	pg 14
Craig Lee Contributor of Note	pg 17
Screaming Bell into Plague Claw Catapult Joe Flesch	pg 22

Can you believe it? Thirteen issues.

Lets just take a moment to reflect on this, shall we?

This all started back in 2006, when Sebrent on The Under Empire Forum floated the idea of a Skaven webzine. The response was positive, and he recruited Skaven Lord Vinshqueek and myself to act as his lackeys and servants.

Months were spent putting the team together, deciding on a visual style, recruiting writers and illustrators and generally trying to build the basis for the webzine to work from.

Then, at the start of January 2007, issue 1 was released, and it was a huge success.

A second issue was put together, and then a third. Everyone involved began to find their feet. Regular articles, like Ask Seer Squeek, were introduced.

Quickly Skavenblight Gazette established itself as one of the most creative and professional Warhammer webzines available.

This dedication to quality helped to draw in a number of big name interviews, like Alessio Cavatore and C.L. Werner, as well as features, such as the new Bloodbowl game in development. C.L. Werner even contributed a special piece on Grey Seer Thanquol for issue 9.

Along the way Skavenblight Gazette has had its ups and downs. Its late issues, mistakes, and the loss of its founding member (who unlike the other editors, apparently had a life). But it continues to go from strength to strength.

Voices from the dark

Personally, I can't pick a favourite article. All have been a joy to edit and lay out. Each person who has contributed brings so much enthusiasm and love for the Skaven, as well as Skavenblight Gazette, with them. This is what makes each issue so good. Peoples passion for the Children of the Horned Rat.

As always, we are looking to the future. To what we can do in coming issues, and what will best serve those who inhabit the Under Empire.

We can't do this alone. As always, we need your contributions. Articles, photos, artwork, or even ideas. Even the smallest contribution makes each issue better than the last.

And as always, lets spread the disease.

Clanlord Trask

Lead Editor, Skavenblight Gazette

Skavenblight Gazette's very own Agony Uncle answering your questions.

Dear Seer Squeek,

I have a question. I started out breeding Giant Rats for my wonderful Clans Brood, but they multiply more like Giant Rabbits. So much so that I now have over 60! I wonder, could these actually be put to use in a giant formation against my enemy or should we just use them as food for our Ogres?

jpg1982

Dear Chef's Special,

Despite the apparent insatiable need for Rat Ogres to gorge upon any form of (raw) meat put in front of them, whether it is alive or dead, I advise to try to keep them at least a little bit hungry. After all, there is nothing more devastating for a Packmaster than to guide the lumbering brutes into battle and see them back down at the last moment, as they're suddenly not that hungry any more.

Another option would then be to cook them for your fellow kin. With an ever-increasing population, food is always scarce and a business in fresh meat is a venture that sounds like it could generate thousands upon thousand of warpstone tokens. Head in that direction and you can simply hire clans to fight your battles for you.

Should your interest only be to do battle, you could field them in broader ranks with an increased number of Packmaster. The Wave of Rats you then create could be the perfect example of quantity over quality when it comes to attacks. (An example would be a seven wide, three deep unit of giant rats with over five to seven packmasters, which generates over twenty-five attacks on the charge)

**Thinks back to his days as Chef Squeek Kitchen Hell,
Seer Squeek**

Dear Seer Squeek,

My lair is under attack by kittens. I am only able to train my clanrats during certain hours of the day when the beasts are sleeping. Any advice before my positions are overrun?

A Warlord in peril

Dear Out of Viable Tactics,

A rule of thumb when fighting an opponent far superior to your force is to make sure that a clan that is causing you too much trouble becomes a far more interesting target for your enemy. Now as you probably need suggestions instead of a lesson, you could consider the following options:

- Let the Eshin cadre of your clan spread rumours amongst the kittens of your opposing clan dealing in balls of wool.
- Fill the tanks of your Warfire Throwers with water, spraying the kittens with bursts of the liquid, next time they come around.
- Use laser-guided beams and let these runs in flickering motions towards the lair of your opposing clan.
- Hire dogs to let your clan become the more superior opponent for the kittens... though those mutts can be quite demanding when it comes to hiring them.

**Prefers not spending four to eight hours a day cleaning his fur,
Seer Squeek**

Dear Seer Squeek,

I have two interesting questions.

Question 1: Did I submit a question for this edition? I really forgot.

Question 2: How do you get inspiration for fluff? I honestly have problems making up stories lately.

Thanks, Random-Skaven XIII

Dear soon-to-be Pile of Charcoal,

A Grey Seer such as myself does not make up stories. I do not require inspiration for whatever this... 'fluff' is, that you refer to. I base my advice on decades upon decades of hard-earned experience, something which you will never have, as the Clan Eshin assassins on my payroll will soon have pinpointed your location.

As for the short-term memory loss you seem to be having, once I visit your den, I will make sure you won't have any problem with that either.

**Finishes matters with a single blast,
Seer Squeek**

INTERVIEW: William King



Our agents were dispatched into the very heart of the man-thing lands to recover an individual of great importance. Dragged into the secret lair of Skavenblight Gazette, hooded and bound, our Editor-Adepts have managed to extract the following information.

Read on for the induced testimony of one of the most well know Warhammer writers of all, William King.

SB: What attracted you to writing professionally?

I just always wanted to be a writer even from the earliest age. It was either that or be an astronaut and my fear of heights would probably have got in the way there. Let's face it, writing is an excellent way to make a living. You can get up when you want, travel where you like, work in your own hours, and get paid even when you are not working, if you can earn royalties. What is not to love? I am living the dream!

SB: How did you get your start with Games Workshop?

I had just published my first story in Interzone back in the late 80's. I noticed an announcement that David Pringle, then IZ's editor, had taken a job editing the fiction line for GW. I was an avid WFRP player back in the day, very familiar with the background and I wrote to him saying basically, I can do this, please give me a job. My first story was Geheimnisnacht. Later, I was down in Nottingham at a the convention launch of Zenith, an anthology I had a story in, and I saw Bryan Ansell in the Dealer's Room. I recognised him from his photograph in White Dwarf so I walked over and introduced myself. We got to talking and he offered me a job. That was my way in.

SB: You write for both Warhammer and Warhammer 40,000 settings. Is there a particular one you favour, and why?

My personal preference is for Warhammer, simply because, as a writer, my personal preference is for fantasy. I love the 40K setting and I enjoy working in it but fantasy has always been my first love and I really, really like the Warhammer take on it.

SB: It seems that the Warhammer world is quite fixed and static. Because the setting exists to support a business, the status quo must always exist at the end of any story. Is it difficult writing within the Warhammer setting?

I have done more damage to the Warhammer world and wrought more changes than the average thriller writer does to the real world in the course of a novel. The world has to be consistent for sure, and I can't just go around knocking off major characters but I can put them through changes, emotionally and intellectually and that is what most fiction is really about.

SB: You are mainly responsible for creating the Grey Seer Thanquol we know of today. He has become one of the most important Skaven characters ever. Where did the idea for this character come from, and did you think he would prove to be so popular?

I am sure he would be happy to hear you say that! It certainly fits his view of himself (Most important Skaven ever!) Thanquol, sad to say, is partially based on myself. In particular, he is me when I play war-games. When I win, it is because of my brilliance. When I lose it is because of bad luck or the incompetence of my minions. I am sure all gamers know someone at least a little like this, so he resonates. I also think he is funny and just a little bit sad as well, because his reach so exceeds his grasp. Thanquol is actually all the things he thinks he is: clever schemer, charismatic leader, great sorcerer. His problem is that he is not quite as clever, charismatic or great as he thinks he is and so he is always tripping himself up. Also, in Gotrek Gurnisson he has a foe who is all but invincible. Not that it stops Thanquol trying.

SB: Are we ever going to see you write for Grey Seer Thanquol again?

There are no plans but who knows?

SB: Thanquol isn't the only skaven you have written, however. What are your impressions on writing for skaven? Are they challenging to write authentically, or do you treat them comedically? How did you go about writing the skaven and their nefarious plans in books such as Skavenslayer?

I always loved the Skaven from the get-go. I loved the proto-steampunk, first world war technology. I loved the look. I loved the feel and imagery. It's hard now to remember just how original and influential Jes Goodwin's vision was but it was something really striking and new to me back in the day. I can remember sitting down with Andy Chambers when we were doing the first Skaven Army book and discussing what made them the way they were. Basically very short life spans combined with enormously high birth-rates gave their leaders a real contempt for the value of any Skaven life except their own. Growing up in

the enormously over-crowded warrens of Skavenblight created a fiercely competitive, Darwinistic society.

I try to write every character from inside their own head and I take them as seriously as they do themselves. The Skaven take themselves very seriously indeed and so do I when I am writing them. The comedy tends to come from the gap between their perception of themselves and the way they really are or in some cases how the world sees them.

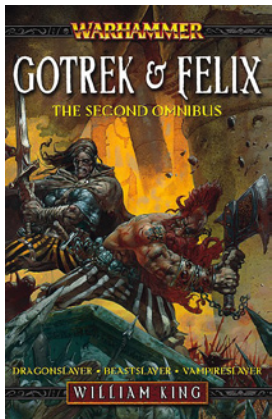
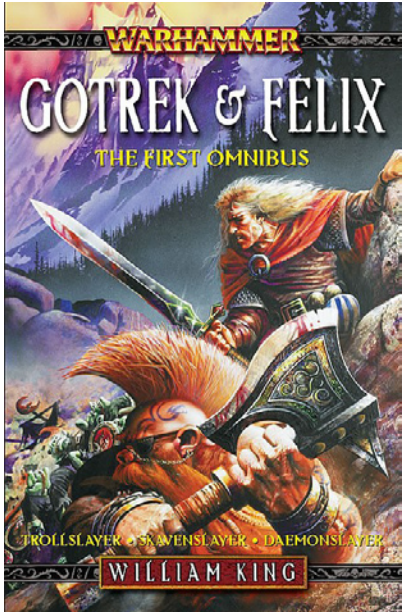
There was not a great deal of actual planning about the whole thing. Skavenslayer was me working my way through a bunch of the great clans and showing how they worked before Gotrek slaughtered them. After that, Thanquol just wrote himself into the ongoing plotline and would not let go. I wanted to keep writing him into the later books but the editors, quite sanely, made me take him out.

SB: You have been involved in writing for not only with Games Workshop and their properties, but may other companies and worlds over the years. What are your highlights in the wargaming and fantasy? Do you believe there have been key turning points?

Writing Warhammer fiction is the highlight of my involvement in the games industry. I really enjoyed working on Gotrek and Felix and writing Tyrion and Teclis has been really great and very different. I am really thrilled to have my Terrarch books out in ebook form and have them in the Kindle Epic Fantasy top 20 in the UK.

SB: Have you read the latest Skaven army book? What are your thoughts on the current Skaven, especially with the addition of much more outlandish and horrific monsters and machines.

For my sins, I have not actually read the latest army books. It's something I will have to do at some point.



SB: Did Ian Livingstone and Steve Jackson's dice based adventure series have an influence on your own work?

I played Warlock of Firetop Mountain when it first came out and I enjoyed the Fighting Fantasy background book that Marc Gascoigne wrote but I can't say there was any huge influence there.

SB: Is there anything you have had published that, in hindsight, you would have changed or omitted entirely?

Like every other writer who has ever lived I have made many mistakes but there's nothing that really galls me all that much. I've always tried to do the best job I could within the constraints of deadlines. I made the decision when I first came into the industry that I was not going to do anything that I would be ashamed to put my name on and I have tried my best to live up to that. Other people can judge whether I succeeded!

SB: There are some players who would like to see a version of the Skaven introduced into Warhammer 40,000. What are your thoughts on this? Would the Skaven fit into the 40k setting, or would it be a terrible corruption of an original idea?

I am not sure I want to step into this debate. For me, the skaven (for some reason the autocorrect on my computer just turned that into the shaven :)) are pretty firmly rooted in Fantasy. It is the lens through which I see them. I am sure a version of the rat-men could be created for 40K, but I am not sure whether they ever will be or not. For me, they seem to fit better into the fantasy world. One of the things that makes the skaven interesting and unique there is their anachronistic (for a fantasy world) technology.

This would not be all that unique in 40K. On the other hand, there is something quite appealing about the idea of seething legions of ratty mutants armed with shoddy bolters and self-exploding warpstone powered las-pistols. I can see them in ships a bit like those of the Reavers in Firefly as well.

William King has a new book, Blood Of Aenarion, which you can get at Black Library.

You can find out more about this release, as well as keep up to date with the rest of his works, on his website www.williamking.me



SHOW YOUR INNER SKAVEN

We are pleased to announce our winners, Warlord McQueek and Kimzi. They both win a set of Skaven dice. First place also gets a special A2 poster version of this issues fantastic cover illustration, while second place will be sent out a Clanrat box to add to their army. Winners be on the lookout, Adepts will be heading your way soon.

Congratulations everyone, you are all credits to the master race. Just watch your backs!

1ST



Warlord McQueek

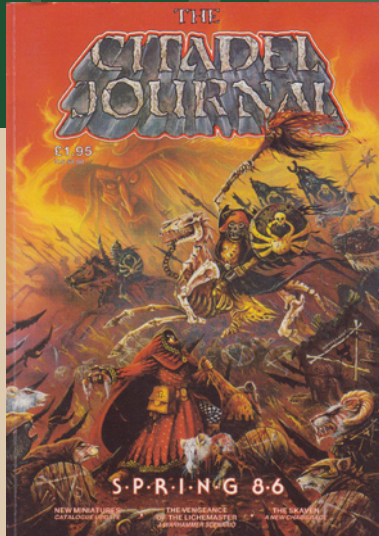
2ND



Kimzi

The True History of the Skaven

by Skwervo and Clanlord Trask



Citadel Journal, Spring 1986.

It is doubtless, especially if you are reading Skavenblight Gazette, that you know who the modern Skaven are. Unlike most of the other Warhammer armies available though, they are not a traditional fantasy archetype. Where did the idea for them first come from, and how has it developed over the years? How have the models changed to reflect this? This issue we take a close look at the real history of the Skaven.



The first edition of Warhammer Armies: Skaven.

Their birth into the hobbyist's world happened April 12, 1986, when Skaven were introduced into Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay (WFRP) in the spring 1986 issue of Citadel Journal. They were billed as "a new Chaos race," and given a feature length article, with a description of their different clans, a listing of their special weapons, complete Warhammer stats and special rules, and extensive rules on the use of their magic.

They were included as foes in the module *The Vengeance of the Lichemaster*, in which a group of monks at the monastery of La Maisontaal had stolen The Black Arc of the Covenant, described in the module as "[the Skaven's] most sacred and powerful magical artifact." The Arc lay within a casket that could only be opened by a warpstone key that Grey Seer Gnowdoo carried.

Skavenblight was first outlined in this issue, described as the home city of the ratmen. They were associated with warpstone, an unstable, mutagenic material created by Chaos-corrupted gates crafted by the Old Slann as "interspatial gateways" 7000 years earlier. The module also provided 27 paper cutouts of Skaven to use as markers. To complete the article there was information on The Horned Rat, The Thirteen Lords of Decay, The Grey Seers, the four major clans, and the weapons and mutations common to Skaven. All background content was attributed to Jes Goodwin.

The Skaven also appeared in the same issue in an episode of *The Quest of Kaleb Daark* comic, in which they attempted to use their 'warpflame' flamethrower to assassinate the character Arianka, but were defeated by a group of Chaos warriors. In this episode we see the Skaven use their distinctive speaking pattern, such as the phrase "Killkill".

Skaven models that were shown painted in this issue included: 'Skaven Flamethrower' and 'Skaven vs. Zombies' by David Andrews; 'Clan Pestilens Monk', 'Skaven Seer Slave', and 'Gnowdoo with Seerstone' by Charles Elliott; and 'Throt the Unclean and Skaven Battle Banner' by John Blanche. The new Skaven models photographed in a Citadel Miniatures feature following the module included: 'Throt the Unclean', 'Ashish the Black', 'Wyrde Banebreath', 'Gnowdoo', 'Spyne Blightmaster', 'Skewer', 'Skree the Slaver', 'Kruhl Backripper', 'Carver', 'Rott', 'Steelrat', 'Vermyn', 'Skurge Hooknet', 'Canker Darkspike', 'Glave', 'Skuttle', 'Goar Headwrecker', 'Flench Packlord', 'Nighrunner' and three models of a 'Flamethrower Crew': 'Scathe the Tainted', 'Flem' and 'Malis Manwrack'. All models were by Jes Goodwin.

In a mail order flyer released at the same time, Citadel offered a collection of 'Chaos Ratmen', which included 'Malis Manwrack', 'Nighrunner', 'Skuttle', 'Rott', 'Goar Headwrecker', 'Spyne Blightmaster', 'Kruhl Backripper', 'Skree the Slaver', 'Steel Rat' and 'Vermyn'.



The plastic Skaven in the Warhammer Fantasy Regiments box set.



The plastic Skaven in Advanced Heroquest.



Single pose plastic Clanrat.



Multiple pose plastic Clanrat.



Plastic Clanrat released 2009.

Soon after, in the May 1986 issue of White Dwarf, the 'Chaos Ratman' model 'Iron Wielder' featured in the 'Tabletop Heroes' section of White Dwarf issue 77. It was billed as one of the first ten miniatures in the range. It was designed by Jes Goodwin and was painted and photographed for the magazine's feature by Phil Lewis.

The Skaven resonated quite strongly with the player base and a Skaven team was added to Blood Bowl. Their rules, and cards representing the players, are released in Issue 86 of White Dwarf, in February 1987. They were a fast, fragile team that was prone to mutations. Also introduced was the veteran Skaven team, the Skavenblight Skramblers.

Around this time Games Workshop also release a boxed set of plastic miniatures, titled *Warhammer Fantasy Regiments*. There were six types of single pose bodies, with a selection of heads and weapons. Amongst them is the first plastic Skaven.

Thanks to their continued popularity the Skaven are part of the 1989 Games Workshop board game *Advanced Heroquest*. Along with models for the player characters and henchmen were 20 plastic Skaven. These models were single piece, unlike those in the *Warhammer Fantasy Regiments*, and had a distinctive hunched appearance.

Shortly after, in 1993, Skaven were included as a playable army in the *Warhammer Armies Fantasy Battle (3rd edition)*. Many staples of the Skaven army are introduced, such as 'Strength In Numbers'. A boxed set of 10 single pose plastic Skaven is made available, as are a number of new metal miniatures. With the Skaven firmly entrenched in the Warhammer lore, they continued to grow in popularity. They received a new *Warhammer Armies* supplement book in 2002, and again in 2009.

After *Advanced Heroquest* was official discontinued in 1994, *Warhammer Quest* is released in 1995. Another board based dungeon crawl, Skaven Clanrats feature as one of the monsters. The single pose plastic Clanrats are included in the box.

Soon Games Workshop decided to branch out from the single pose plastic models and release a series of multiple part plastic kits for every army. The Skaven Clanrats are one of the first releases. While an innovative concept, a number of issues plagued the models. Chief amongst the complaints was they looked too much like monkeys. On top of this, it was extremely hard to get the models to rank up properly. However, despite all the flaws, these multiple part kits contributed to a great many Skaven hordes growing quite quickly.

When the new skirmish game *Mordheim* was released by Games Workshop in 1999, one of the two warbands available in the box was Clan Eshin Skaven. This set of multiple part plastic miniatures would soon be reboxed as the Nightrunners set.

A new edition of *Warhammer Armies: Skaven* in 2009 heralded in another new set of plastic Clanrats. Along with these also came the first set of plastic Stormvermin, and a Screaming Bell/Plague Furnace kit. Over time plastic kits for the Hell Pit Abomination and Warplightning Cannon/Plagueclaw Catapult would be released.

Presently the 8th edition of the Warhammer started box, *Island of Blood*, contains both Skaven and High Elf forces. Along with variations of the current plastic Clanrats, there are also plastic versions of two Rat Ogres, a Packmaster, Warfire Thrower, Poison Wind Mortar, Warlock Engineer and Warlord.



Children of the Horned Rat

The Horned Rat has blessed the Warhammer world with millions of his children. They gnaw at the roots of civilisation, each a twisted knot of spite, self-interested and full of a need to bring about their fathers will.

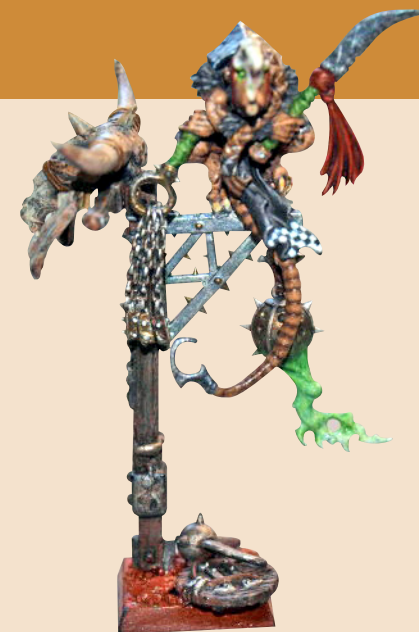
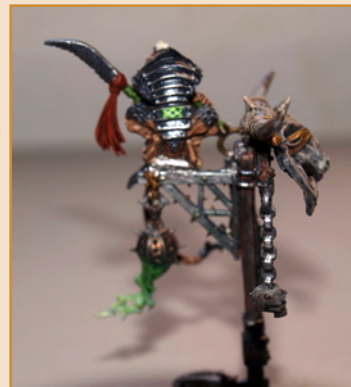
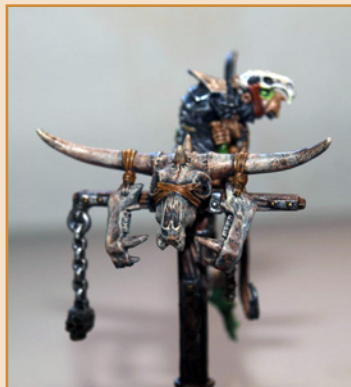
Here we present a collection of The Horned Ones creations, as well as the fruits of his childrens labours. Powerful individuals, raging monsters, the Skaven enlist all their talents to spread the word of their deity.

Next issue we will be looking at the diseased and fanatical members of the Pestilent Brotherhood, in our featured gallery Pestilent Blessing.

So send in your Plague Priests, Plague Furnaces, Plague Censer Bearers or anything else that spreads the diseased word of The Horned Rat. Include your name, the name of the unit, and a brief description on how it was made, to sbgfeatures@gmail.com.

Tretch Craventail

by Grey Seer Snachett



Warlock Engineer

by Joe



Brood Horror

by Dutchwarlord



Rat Ogre

by Joe



Children of the Horned Rat

Warlord on Bonebreaker

by Joe



Rat Ogre

by Matthijs Pals



Hell Pit Abomination

by Krom The Conquerer



SKAVENBLIGHT GAZETTE

FUTURE ISSUES



The following information gives you closing dates for each issues submission deadline, as well as the estimated release date of that issue.

As well as articles, we are always looking for illustrations and miniature photos to use in articles. Contact the editors for details on submitting artwork, or if you are interested in doing commissioned pieces for articles

Editor contact:
editor@skavenblightgazette.com

Issue 14

Submissions in by:
27 March 2012.

Release date:
13 April 2012.

This issues featured miniature gallery is 'Pestilent Blessing'. You can submit conversions or painted models from Clan Pestilens (Plague Monks, Censor Bearers, etc), unique units of your own creation, or Clan Pestilens-esque variations on existing troop types. Anything is welcome, as long as it is devoted to spreading the word of the Horned Rat.

Email sbgfeatures@gmail.com to submit.

Issue 15

Submissions in by:
17 July 2012.

Release date:
13 August 2012.

This issues featured miniature gallery is 'Strength In Numbers'. You can submit conversions or painted models from Warlord Clans (Clanrats, Warlords, Stormvermin, etc), unique units of your own creation, or variations on existing troop types. Lend your might to the armies of the Under-Empire.

Email sbgfeatures@gmail.com to submit.

Issue 16

Submissions in by:
5 November 2012.

Release date:
13 December 2012.

This issues featured miniature gallery is 'In The Flesh'. You can submit conversions or painted models from Clan Moulder (Packmasters, Hell Pit Abominations, etc), unique units of your own creation, or variations on existing troop types. It is time to show your greatest flesh moulding creations!

Email sbgfeatures@gmail.com to submit.



KNOW YOUR ENEMY

You know the great webzine that is Skavenblight Gazette, but what of those rats behind it? Who are they? What do they do? Can they be trusted?

We delve deep into the Skavenblight Gazette tunnels, penetrating the complexes very core and into the editors lairs. Who knows what we will find, but be aware. Danger lurks around every corner.



Skaven Lord Vinshqueek



Above: Skaven Lord Vinsqueek's next Epic Armageddon Eldar army (plus some extra stuff, in there, to keep him busy). Left: Where Vinshqueek works on both his hobby, and Skavenblight Gazette.



What do you do on Skavenblight Gazette?

Editor and promotions, making sure that the release of a new issue is known on as many communities and sites as possible.

How long have you been a fan of the Skaven?

Despite starting back in 1999 with Warhammer Fantasy and my Skaven army, a few schoolmates of mine introduced me to the game in the two (or so) years before that. Through all that time, the Skaven have always had something special for me.

What Warhammer themed games do you play, and what is in your collection?

For about two years now, I have solely been playing Blood Bowl. Although having quite an experienced (and much-used) Skaven

team, I am currently mostly found playing Goblins at tournaments, though have various teams that see action in the leagues I am playing in.

As for my collection, that one is rather vast. Aside from a horde of Skaven, I have a small force of Dwarfs (later converted to do service in the streets of Mordheim), as well as various warbands for Mordheim and the mad boardgame Gobbo's Banquet. Together with armies for various 40k systems and over twelve years of White Dwarf magazines and many, many army and rulebooks, the hobby area claims quite some space in my apartment.

Do you have any special equipment you use for Skavenblight Gazette?

No. Aside from my wit and a computer, there isn't much else I am using.

What do you do when you aren't scuttling through the tunnels of the Under Empire?

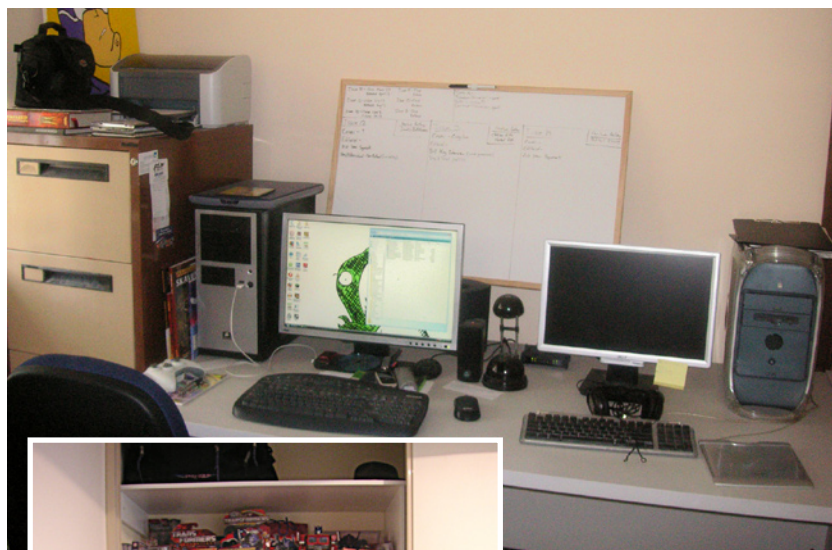
My nine to five job is in the waste-water department of the city I live in, designing (and maintaining) sewage systems for the areas that are subject to large-scale development or re-development. So, I guess that scuttling through tunnels happens on a daily base anyway.

Do you have any other hobbies or obsessions?

Quickly after moving into my apartment, an Xbox found its way towards me, letting me spent many hours haunting opponents through war-torn areas. Blowing off steam through first person shooters or off-road racing games is a much-enjoyed activity after work from time to time.



Clanlord Trask



Above: Where Clanlord Trask puts together Skavenblight Gazette. Left: The secret stash of Optimus Prime paraphernalia.

What do you do on Skavenblight Gazette?

Editor and layout, as well as organise illustrations and update the website.

How long have you been a fan of the Skaven?

Since I first started playing Warhammer, way back around 1994.

What Warhammer themed games do you play, and what is in your collection?

Warhammer Fantasy Battle, of course. I have a Skaven army, as well as a Bretonnian army. I also used to play quite a bit of Warhammer Quest, and own two copies of that.

Do you have any special equipment you use for Skavenblight Gazette?

On the editor side of things, not really, though I have a white board I use to catalogue the progress of future issues. The layout I do on an aging Macintosh G3 using InDesign 2. Yes, InDesign 2! Where as the website I update using a PC.

What do you do when you aren't scuttling through the tunnels of the Under Empire?

My main job is working for a media company developing print and online learning resources for teachers and students. I also run my own design business, producing corporate print and digital media for a small number of clients.

Not too long ago I also bought a house, so I spend a great deal of time (and money) trying to make sure it doesn't fall down around my ears!

Do you have any other hobbies or obsessions?

Absolutely. I am mad for Transformers, and have quite a large collection. The main focus is Optimus Prime, a character who has always fascinated and inspired me.

I'm also an obsessive video game player. This mainly centres around Xbox 360 titles at the moment, though I do branch out into PC and Playstation 2 and 3 as well.



Contributor of Note

Craig Lee

Over our last twelve issues, Craig has contributed more illustrations than anyone else. This issue we decide to go behind the canvas and talk to the man himself about Skaven, illustrating and this issues cover.



Son of Colin game promotional illustration.

Do you have any training in illustration, or is this just a hobby?

It started as a hobby. I was always the kid that would doodle in the margin of his book, or on the pictures in his bible (they were never exciting enough). I'd never really considered that all the artwork that inspired me is something that I could potentially be creating one day since it's all so much better than my stuff. It wasn't until I got talking with someone I played an MMO with maybe six years ago that I realised that with a bit of practice I could try to make a living from it. That person, by the way, is a Swedish fantasy artist named Linda Bergkvist. Her site has been down for some time, so just google some of her art to be absolutely amazed. Then I heard that I could study game art, so I went and studied that. It wasn't really great to teach me the digital illustration and concept art skills I wanted, but it was still entirely worthwhile and linked me up with some great people to support me.

What mediums do you work in (pencil, paints, electronic etc)?

The earliest illustrations I did for the SBG were pencil sketches thrown into Photoshop and painted over, first using a multiply layer and then just straight over the top with the lines as a guide. Anything from the last couple of years is entirely digital in Photoshop painted with a Wacom tablet.

What is your computer setup?

Current computer is only a couple of months old. Intel Core i5-2500K, 8gb of ram, GeForce GTX 570, 60gb SSD to boot from and run frequently used software from and a 2TB HDD for all my data and rarely used software.

Do you only do illustrations, or do you produce other kinds of works (like storyboards for example)?

My main love is for concept art. I love creating characters and environments that tell a story. I've only had the opportunity to produce a little concept art for games, and some for short films. I've also done storyboard work now and then although they are by and far the worst examples of my illustrative skills. It'd be nice to have a crack at only keyframing some shots for a film to give me the breathing space to work them up to something presentable.



Left: Concept illustration for 'Scrap'.
Right: The Walker.



What kind of a process do you go through to produce an illustration?

Depends what I'm trying to produce. For something like the cover of this issue I just looked at Leonardo DaVincis' The Last Supper and then went ahead and started painting in Photoshop. Start with big broad strokes of textured brushes over a coloured background and then keep refining until it begins to resemble what you want. The general rule of thumb is start big and general and then go over the picture with a finer and finer brush until you are satisfied or your time is up. Usually the latter.

What is your connection to the Warhammer universe, and to the Skaven in particular?

I collected Warhammer as a child and was always inspired by the badass artwork. As I got older I stopped collecting so much, and it's now been years since I bought anything. I still fight battles now and then when my friends that still play and collect ask me to. I field a terrible Warriors of Chaos army, they haven't won a battle in many years – I'm sure the 50 man strong Marauders unit has nothing to do with that. I have no real connection to Skaven. They were something I collected for a short while when I was younger but I was quickly pulled away to Chaos after that Chaos Knight boxed set came out, the last one to come with the sticker pendants for their lances. However my brother continued to collect and enthuse over Skaven.

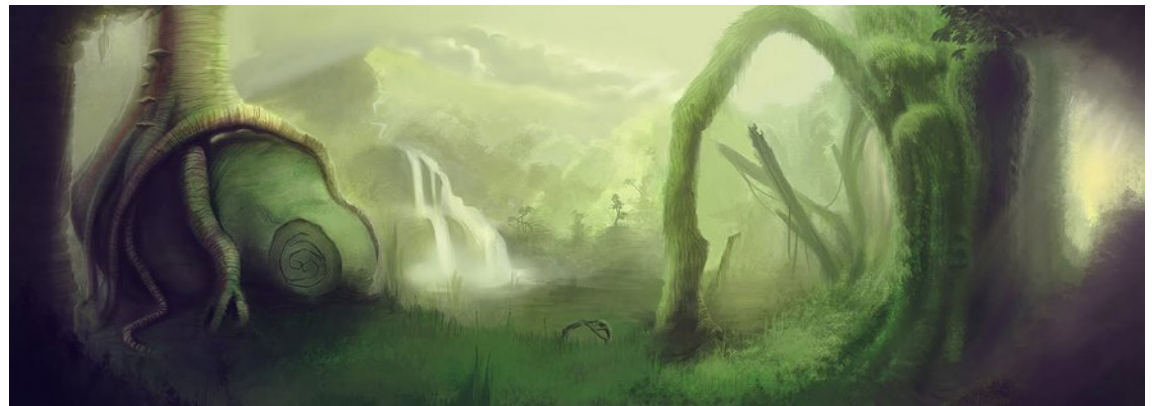
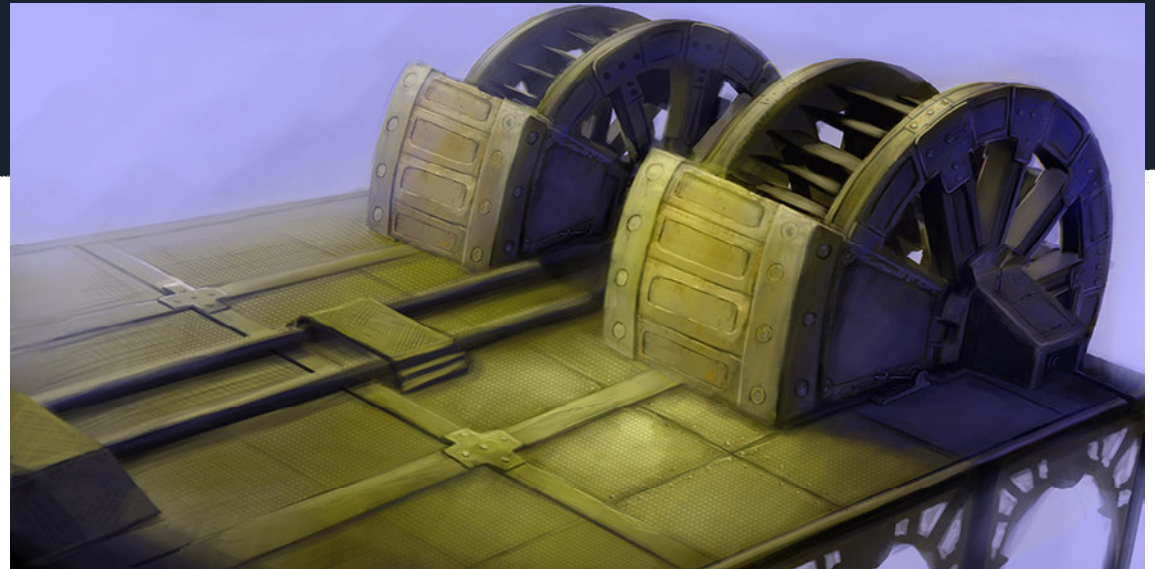
What about the Skaven do you find interesting to illustrate for?

They're dirty. Lots of chances for fun grimy details.



Cover for the novel United Fleet.





Left: Concept mood piece. Above right: Turbine concept art for 'S.Team Project'. Below right: Landscape.

Do you only work in the fantasy genre? What other genres or themes do you illustrate, and do you have a favourite?

I work in ALL GENRES as is required of me. There's really no favourite although I'll default to fantasy more often than not. I've been required to work on sci-fi at times, as well as some real world based stuff (for film usually).

From all the previous issues what has been your favourite piece?

I really liked the issue 12 cover, there's a great mood and texture work in there and that guy clearly knows how to draw horned skaven better than I do. Honourable mention to issue 6 cover too, a simple monochromatic piece with an excellent mood too.



Left: Character detail for 'Jeff'.

Tell us about the cover of this issue. What inspired it? What did you have to change to make it work with Skaven characters? What about this illustration are you most proud of, or find interesting?

As I mentioned before, it's based around The Last Supper. Turning Jesus into the Horned Rat was the biggest challenge, since the comparative size of the figures is just totally different. I felt like the composition worked well when I had a smaller, Jesus-sized haze as the placeholder for the Horned Rat but it didn't have the presence that the larger smoky version has. Apart from that eerily little had to be changed. Exact same amount of figures in pretty much the same poses. It was fun deciding which ones suited which clans best. The table is a little bare but I figure they probably wouldn't bring much to share around and I began to run short on time (the figures are way more important than some snacks).

Are you available for commission work?

Totally, and I love it (assuming it's not a really, really bizarre request) since it's always fun to play around with someone else's ideas.

If you want to take a look at more of Craig's work, or you feel like reading his thoughts on some of his pieces, you can find him at:

DeviantArt

<http://craig-lee.deviantart.com>

Blog

<http://brieflysalmon.blogspot.com>

THE CONSTRUCTION WORKSHOP

SCREAMING BELL INTO PLAGUE CLAW CATAPULT

by Joe Flesch

So when I volunteered to write an article for Skavenblight Gazette I wasn't sure what I'd do. Like any good rat though I schemed and plotted and finally it came to me like a vision from The Great Horned One. Given the many great new plastic kits that we have been graced with, and some of the older ones that we as players may have already had, I decided to re-purpose an older kit to bring it into the newer army. Thus is the birth of the Plagueclaw Catapult/Screaming Bell conversion.

Let's face it, the new Screaming Bell is almost completely different to the old metal versions. The same could be said of our Warplightning Cannon (which I've already got two of, by the way). However like all good packrats I ferreted the Plagueclaw Catapult parts of the new plastic Warplightning Cannon/Plagueclaw Catapult kit away for future use. And now they have a use! So without further ado, let's get on with the conversion!

Step 1: Gathering Parts



Obviously you need an old Screaming Bell. There are two different bell models, but I'm going to be using the version before the current one. This guide will be working from the view that the Screaming Bell model is already assembled (most likely because you were using it in the previous edition!). I've also gathered the Plagueclaw Catapult bits from the Warplightning Cannon/Plagueclaw Catapult sprues; the claw and ichor for it, the heads for the crew and the hands with the shovel full of glop.



Apart from these parts you will need some plasticard and a chariot base. I have used some 4.0mm round tube plasticard, though 3.5mm would also suffice. If you use the 4.0mm tubing there is a chance that you will have to drill the slots for them that exist in the metal kits a little larger. I have also used a 4.0mm H beam piece. The H beam looks similar to the large I-Beam girders you would see on a construction site.

Lastly for my model I have glued an old Night Goblin Fanatic ball and chain into the bell to use as a clapper.

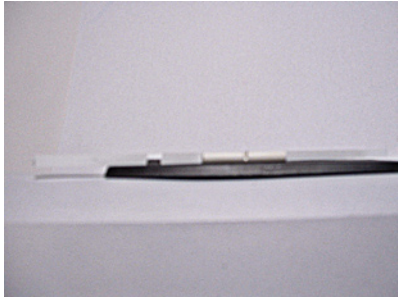
Step 2: Bell Preparation



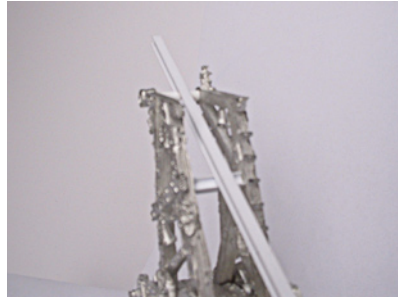
We will start by preparing the bell carriage. The Grey Seer and the platform that he stands are removed. Then cut a piece of the tubing to fit through the holes of the carriage where the bell used to attach. Remove the poles at the top of the bell itself (where it slots into the carriage) with clippers and drill a hole through the centre of the head. We will come back to what this is used for later.



Step 3: Catapult arm



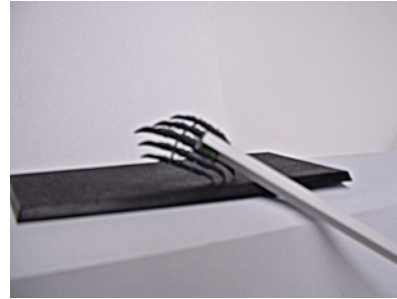
Next we move onto the catapults arm. A small piece of H beam is glued between the two back carriage supports, about halfway down. This will add another contact point for the arm. Another H beam piece is cut to roughly 5 1/2', and will act as the arm. Position it resting on both the plasticard beams attached earlier, positioning the arm roughly where you want it to sit. Mark where the arm touches the top plasticard tube, and cut away the bottom section of H beam so you have a tab-like section.



Cut a notch into the very centre of the tube attached at the top of the carriage, large enough for the tab in the arm to slot into. Be careful not to make the notch too deep, as you want to keep the plasticard rods structural strength. The arm will eventually be glued into the slot, and also glued where it contacts the other I-Beam support beam.

You will begin to see the main structure take shape, and start to get the feel of the look of the catapult.

Step 4: Weaponising



Now on to adding the important parts of the Plagueclaw Catapult, the parts that do the damage! Drill a hole in the end of the arm that will be pointing into the air when it is attached. Attach the Screaming Bell to the arm at this point. I have used jewellers wire to thread through the hole drilled through the arm and top of the bell. Using pliers, the wire is twisted into a rough circlet.



The claw that holds the sludge for the current Plagueclaw Catapult kit has a little hole on the bottom, where it attaches to its original arm. With a little trimming of that area it fits straight onto the I-Beam catapult arm. I have cleaned the area up where mine attaches using Greenstuff.

Step 5: Assembly



Now the arm and carriage are complete and ready for it to be all glued together. A wonder of Skaven engineering! You can glue the bell to its circle of wire or leave it loose. Glue the ichor into the claw of the arm and we're nearly done.

Step 6: Crew



To build the crew I used 3 models from the Clanrat box. I really liked the one with a hunched back, he looks all mutated, so I thought he'd make a great guy to be scooping the ichor. The other two were very simple head swaps. Luckily the new Clanrats are easy to do this with. Just clip the head off it at the collar.

One crewman was given the hooked spear. He looks like he might be the one ready to yank the chain to fire the catapult. For the next crewman, the shovel hard to attach. I had to carve the one hand that's part of his body off, and then find a weapon arm from the Clanrat sprue that I could chop the hand off of and fit it into the space. The last crewman was given a club. Then I just had to position the crew.



Step 6: Crew



There we have it. An old Screaming Bell model and some extra plastic Plagueclaw Catapult bits turned into a fearsome machine of war.



CONTRIBUTOR CREDITS

Artists

Craig Lee

craig_lee@internode.on.net
craig-lee.deviantart.com

- The Thirteenth Member (Cover)

Joe Flesch

-Conversion photos (pg 22-24)

Neil

neil_of_orange@ntlworld.com
mywargame.com

- Plastic Skaven generations (pg 9)

Writers

Clanlord Trask

underempire.net

Skaven Lord Vinshqueek

underempire.net

Skwervo

underempire.net

William King

williamking.me





The Skavenblight Gazette website!

Take advantage of working with the numberless masses of the UnderEmpire and get your message out there.

Banner promotions

Promote your business, event, club, or anything else you want with this high visibility banner spot. It's a first in first serve basis, so contact the Adrats at the Skavenblight Gazette now.

Allies

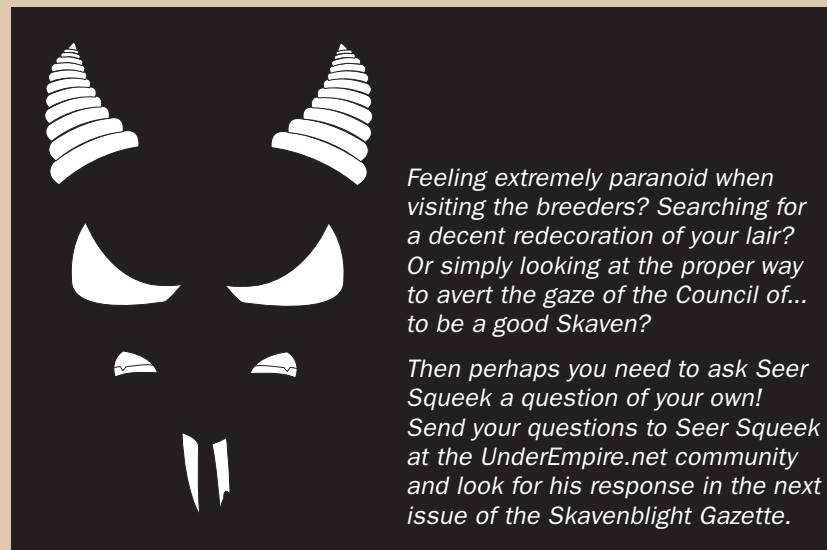
Are you a fan created, Warhammer based publication or production? Contact the Adrats and you could reap the rewards of working with the Master Race.

Lesser races, quiver in fear!

Promote your Warhammer webzine or community in the Skavenblight Gazette or on the website.

Email the Adrats at editor@skavenblightgazette.com and arrange your place in the greatest ezine about the master race.

www.skavenblightgazette.com
contribute or die, man-thing!



Feeling extremely paranoid when visiting the breeders? Searching for a decent redecoration of your lair? Or simply looking at the proper way to avert the gaze of the Council of... to be a good Skaven?

Then perhaps you need to ask Seer Squeek a question of your own! Send your questions to Seer Squeek at the UnderEmpire.net community and look for his response in the next issue of the Skavenblight Gazette.

WANTED

Skaven are needed to fulfil the role of Clanrat Warriors in an upcoming battle. The usual Clanrats are all busy off playing Skyrim, and cannot be reached.

Need own hand weapon and shield.

LOST

I have lost my dear Bonebreaker, Gutwrencher (also answers to Fluffy).

If found please return him to Warlord Din of Clan Mkret. If you survive there may be a reward of some kind.

POSITION VACANT

We are looking for a special type of Skaven to accompany us on an extremely important mission.

The applicant will be experienced in controlling dangerous experimental craft, have no aversion to heights or wide open spaces, and needs full use of at least two arms (their own) and tail.

All applications to Master Warlock Brink, Clan Skryre.

WANT LONGER LASTING HEX?

See the Order of Grey Seers today about hexes, spells and curses that will last the distance.

THE END IS NIGH!

Best stock up on cheese.



PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Be warned, there is a large man in red breaking into houses. Approach with caution. May have a sack.