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The new plastic Space Marine Dreadnought kit hits the shelves this month. Here's a look at the armored behemoth in all its glory.

DREADNOUGHT

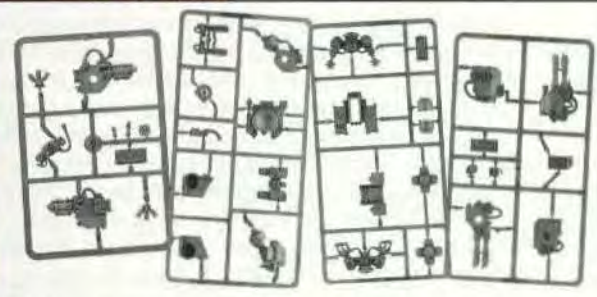
A LOOK AT THE NEW PLASTIC DREADNOUGHT KIT



Two Black Templars Dreadnoughts thunder over a ridge into the Ork lines.



Ultramarines Dreadnought Ferox smashes its way into an enemy fortress, allowing its brother Space Marines to pour through the breach.



Above: The component frames from the plastic Dreadnought kit.

Next month, we take a look at the various modeling options available with the new plastic Dreadnought kit. Jes Goodwin takes us through the creation process, and we examine the various roles the Dreadnought can fulfill on the field of battle.



Index Astartes



A series focusing on the Imperium's finest warriors, the Space Marines of the Adeptus Astartes

WARRIORS
OF OLD
Space Marine
Dreadnoughts

by Graham McNeill, Pete Haines &
Andy Chambers

Spearheading the assaults of the Space Marines, Dreadnoughts are feared by all foes of the Imperium. On the battlefield they are death incarnate, with powerful weapons blasting their foes and lethal close combat weaponry crackling with deadly energies. There are few opponents in the galaxy who can stand against such armored savagery.

Standing three times the height of a man, Space Marine Dreadnoughts are amongst the oldest war machines fighting on the battlefields of the 41st Millennium. Some Dreadnoughts are even said to date back tens of thousands of years to the Great Crusade, when the Emperor himself walked amongst his people. The art of their construction has long since been lost, the arcane knowledge required passing into ritualized mythology, and each Chapter's Dreadnoughts are treasured relics. They are a living embodiment of the Machine God, representing the ultimate fusion of the biological and the mechanical, as each one contains a living, sentient being. The pilots encased in the shell of a Dreadnought often have memories stretching back many thousands of years, and these ancient warriors are a tangible link to their Chapter's past and heritage.

Centuries of War

The biological component of a Dreadnought is no ordinary man; it is one of the Old Ones, a mighty Space Marine hero who has suffered grievous wounds in battle and is deemed worthy to be placed within the armored sarcophagus of a Dreadnought. The interment of the Old One's shattered remains is a ritual of great significance, involving his fellow battle brothers, the Chapter's Techmarines and its Apothecaries. It is considered a great honor for a Space Marine to be placed within a Dreadnought, and these ancient warriors are much respected by their fellow battle brothers. The Old One is suspended in amniotic fluids and surgically implanted within the armored sarcophagus where mechanical senses allow him to perceive the world around him. In this way he can continue fighting for the Emperor for many centuries to come, never leaving his metal body until its destruction.

In battle, Dreadnoughts are a terrifying foe to face, advancing with thunderous strides as incoming fire spatters from their thick adamantium armor. Electro-motivated fiber-bundle muscles power their heavy limbs, allowing them to fire devastating weapons on the move and to fight with all the skill and ferocity they possessed as a Space Marine. As well as fearsome warriors, the accumulated wisdom of their centuries of battle is a valuable resource, and their vast experience means that they have fought in almost every form of engagement imaginable. Almost nothing can defeat a Space Marine Dreadnought in an assault, and its close combat weapons can tear apart even the most heavily armored vehicles. Dreadnoughts are exceptionally difficult to slay in battle and, in most cases, only the complete destruction of the sarcophagus will kill the pilot. Destroyed Dreadnoughts are only ever abandoned in the direst of circumstances, and Space Marines will fight with righteous fury to retrieve a fallen Dreadnought so that they can lay its occupant to rest in the Chapter's sepulchers. The recovered shell will then be lovingly restored to full operation to await its next occupant.

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The Old Ones

When not in action, Dreadnoughts slumber within sealed stasis vaults in the depths of their Chapter's fortress monastery to extend their lives. The resting place of a Chapter's Dreadnoughts is a holy shrine, and the Techmarines tend to their ancient charges with great care, fastidiously applying the sacred oils and unguents while chanting the Litanies of Preservation. To honor these courageous warriors, the Techmarines allow them to sleep, and only awake the Dreadnoughts in times of great need. When called to fight, the Dreadnoughts are removed from their vaults and the Rune of Awakening is struck upon their hide.

As the Dreadnought continues to fight through the centuries, the Old One's grip on the material world inevitably begins to slip and he spends more and more time dormant, his mind becoming ever more distant. One of the oldest recorded Dreadnoughts is Bjorn the Fell-Handed of the Space Wolves. Bjorn was a young warrior in the days of the Primarchs and was said to have fought alongside the Primarch Leman Russ himself. Since his interment in the armored shell of a Dreadnought, he has fought in some of the most famous battles of the Imperium's blood-soaked history and even led his Chapter in defense of their home on Fenris.

The Art of Death

Dreadnoughts are called upon when the fighting is sure to be close and bloody. They are best employed in situations where there is plenty of cover for them to take advantage of, so that enemy weapons cannot draw a line of sight to them. They excel at fighting in built-up areas, underground tunnels and boarding actions where they can quickly close with the enemy and bring their devastating assault weapons to bear. The weapon points on a Dreadnought allow it to be armed with a variety of armament configurations depending on the tactical situation, and these weapons are broadly similar to those carried by Space Marine Terminators. Dreadnoughts were once used as test beds for new weapon patterns intended for suits of Terminator armor, in particular, early models of plasma cannons. However, Dreadnought weapons benefit from increased stability, better targeting systems and a greater ammunition capacity than those carried by Terminators. The sheer size of a Dreadnought also allows it to fit liquid nitrogen cooling systems for its rapid firing weapons, resulting in less overheating and fewer jams.

As well as powerful heavy weapons, Dreadnoughts can also be fitted with lethal close combat weapons that incorporate magna-coil servos to increase the strength of the arms. These allow them to grip and rotate, tearing gaping holes in even the strongest materials, or punch through the thickest armor. The Furioso Dreadnought of the Blood Angels is a prime example of this, its strength easily capable of rending even a Land Raider to pieces.

Death Unleashed

Throughout history Dreadnoughts have been involved in the bloodiest battles inscribed in the annals of the Imperium. Their acts of heroism are the stuff of legend across all the realms of man and few sights are more inspiring, or more terrifying, than to see one of these great mechanical juggernauts rampaging across the battlefield. Many Dreadnoughts become famous in their own right with tales



being told of their courage and sacrifice in the name of the Emperor all across the Imperium.

Three such mighty warriors are Brother Damos of the Angels Porphyri, Brother Severus of the Ultramarines and the legendary Bjorn the Fell-Handed of the Space Wolves. The smallest chapter of their history would fill a manuscript many pages long, their service to the Emperor stretching back over many thousands of years. Indeed, in the case of Bjorn, it goes all the way back to the times of the Primarchs. Detailed here are three of their most famous actions in the defense of the Imperium.

Ghattana Bay: The Battle for Gate IX

During the Third War for Armageddon, the largest recorded Dreadnought versus Dreadnought confrontation occurred during the attack on the Ghattana Bay Water Processing Plant. Water would be a key resource on Armageddon when the Fire Season arrived and Ghattana Bay was the source of every drop reaching Armageddon Prime.

The Ork attack on the plant had stalled badly. Options were now running out for the Ork Warlord Judrog Irontoof and he committed every Dreadnought and Killer Kan in his force to a single attack. Aiming for a point in the Space Marine line weakened by an earlier Kommando attack, over a hundred Ork machines stomped forward in a densely packed phalanx.

The defenders were battered by the Ork weaponry, their positions swept by the sheer weight of fire. Land Speeder squadrons were blasted from the skies by massed big shootas while bunker after bunker was silenced by salvos of Ork rokkit. Judrog's charge breached the defenses and burst onto one of the plant's access roads, leading between towering purification tanks. The Ork machines rumbled on, their power claws ripping each successive gate apart as they pressed deeper into the plant. As they approached Gate 9, however, they were surprised to see the barrier rise to reveal a line of eight Space Marine Dreadnoughts drawn up across the roadway. At their front was Brother Damos of the Angels Porphyri. Critically wounded during the Scouring of Hume and entombed for the last three thousand years, he had faced a hundred such situations before and prevailed. The Dreadnoughts standing with Damos were armed for long-range combat with a mixture of lascannons, autocannons and missile launchers. Their first salvo was devastating, the front line of Ork Dreadnoughts melted under



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their barrage but were battered aside as the rest clanked forward. The Space Marine Dreadnoughts had better weapons, and each step the Orks made towards the Space Marines cost them dearly, but eventually they were in range and could reply. The Ork Dreadnoughts could not match the accuracy of the eight Space Marine Dreadnoughts facing them, though. Each was a veteran of centuries of war, each a paragon of their Chapter's qualities, each a hero whether clad in flesh or metal.

An advance of four hundred meters had cost the Orks seventeen Dreadnoughts. They still came on, though, and howled in fury when they saw the Space Marine Dreadnoughts step back to allow a heavy security gate to be lowered blocking the road. Speeding up, they hurled themselves against it, rending the thick steel with their hydraulically powered claws, determined not to let their quarry escape.

Flight was not the plan, however. On the other side of the ruptured gate, the Space Marine Dreadnoughts were ready. There were another nine Dreadnoughts led by Brother Weylands of the Omega Marines, all armed with power claws and a mixture of shorter ranged assault cannons, multi-meltas and heavy bolters. Behind them stood Brother Damos' Dreadnoughts on a rampart of earth and sundered concrete so they could see over the front line. Both ranks opened fire together and for seven long minutes they stood thirty meters from the Orks, firing non-stop into the tightly packed mass of machines. Then the front rank ceased fire, its weaponry white hot, and thundered into close combat. The Orks were tightly packed in the roadway, the sustained fire had given them no chance to press forward and the Killers Kans at the back blocked their retreat. The Ork force was irretrievably entangled, some machines lifted off the ground by the press, unable to move, the front five ranks a smoking ruin. The Space Marine Dreadnoughts cut into them, Brother Weylands leading the way, climbing up over the destroyed Dreadnoughts until he was striding over the packed hulls of still operable machines, alternatively crushing them with stamps and punches. Where a power weapon reared up at him a swift multi-melta shot silenced it.

It had been a bold attack by Judrog's Dreadnoughts but, unsupported and caught at a complete disadvantage, they were helpless. It is testament to their ferocity and fighting spirit that not one Ork machine fled.

The final reserve destroyed, Judrog had no choice but to withdraw. Rearmed Thunderhawks were beginning their attack runs and ammunition was becoming scarce. The defeat would cost Judrog dearly but there was no celebration in the Marine lines. Of the seventeen ancient Dreadnoughts committed to battle, seven had been utterly destroyed with the loss of over 9,000 years of battle experience and loyal service. The Battle at Gate IX remains their testament.

Bjorn the Fell-Handed: The First Battle of The Fang

Some of the most ancient Dreadnoughts in the Imperium are those of the Space Wolves Chapter. These venerable warriors have fought the enemies of the Emperor for many centuries or, in some cases, even millennia. Perhaps the most renowned of these is Bjorn the Fell-Handed, a warrior so incredibly ancient that he walked beneath the same skies

BROTHER DAMOS OF THE ANGELS PORPHYR

Brother Damos commanded the 9th Company of the Angels Porphy, a stalwart veteran of three millennia of battle. His Devastator squads were the very model of efficient fire support and wherever his men fought, the armored might of the enemy would be wary. It was during the Scouring of Hume as he led his men in the defense of Hill 236 that a surprise attack on the Space Marines' position by rebel Marauder bombers caught him in the open as he moved between his linked bunkers. By all rights the bombardment should have killed Damos, but when the attack was over, his brother Space Marines found that the bloody shreds of his body still drew breath. He demanded the chance to fight on, and thus his remains were placed in stasis and transported back to the Chapter's fortress monastery where he was implanted within the armored sarcophagus of a Dreadnought. For three thousand years he has remained entombed within his armored body and, as he did in life, Damos provides a solid anchor of fire support for his brothers, guiding the deployment and firing of the Chapter's Devastators.

as the Primarch Leman Russ himself. He was the first Great Wolf of the Chapter following the disappearance of Russ and led the first Great Hunt to find him.

Bjorn's time as Great Wolf was to be short-lived, however. The Saga of the Fell-Handed tells of his mortal wounding in battle as he led the Space Wolves in the rescue of their kin from the Dreadsun Fortress. His attack was successful, but left Bjorn crippled and on the brink of death. Not even the formidable skills of the Wolf Priests could save him and Bjorn's last whispered words as a creature of flesh and blood were that he be placed within the armored sarcophagus of a Dreadnought. And for the next five hundred years, Bjorn continued to fight for his beloved Chapter, tearing apart the enemies of the Emperor with the lightning claw that had been his favored weapon while he still walked as a man. On Algol Nine he destroyed the daemon Thran'saba and in Quaran's deserts he slew the Ork Warlord Makrime. The rogue psyker Vornalan died by Bjorn's hand and, thus, the bloody rebellion on Thranx was averted.

But even flesh and steel cannot live forever. The long years of war began to take their toll and Bjorn took to spending longer periods in dormant slumber in the vaulted stasis chambers below the Halls of the Great Wolf. In honor of such a loyal and courageous warrior, the Chapter's Iron Priests allow him his rest and lovingly maintain his adamantium shell. Once every thousand years, Bjorn awakes and speaks to the Rune Priests, regaling them with sagas long forgotten, testing them on their knowledge of the ancient legends to ensure that the ways of Russ are still being followed. Only in times of dire need would the Iron Priests even consider waking Bjorn, one such occasion being the First Battle of the Fang.

The circumstances leading to the First Battle of the Fang and Bjorn's part therein form a cautionary tale that warns of the danger of trusting visions granted by Chaos. Magnus the Red, cyclopean Primarch of the Thousand Sons, had carried a burning hatred of the sons of Russ ever since they

MORIAR THE CHOSEN



On the corpse-strewn fields of Glamorga, Captain Moriar of the Blood Angels fell in battle, grievously wounded unto death and beyond even the lore of the Chapter's Sanguinary Priests. At a loss to save his mortal remains, his flesh was interred within the armored shell of the Dreadnought constructed by the master artificer, Brother Morleo. Moriar is not the first to inhabit this magnificent machine and will no doubt not be the last. Upon regaining his senses, it became clear that Moriar's battle fury had not abated and his psyche was wracked with visions of Sanguinius. The

Black Rage consumed him, but Moriar survived its ravages and continues to fight alongside his battle brothers in the forefront of every assault. It is rumored that the Red Thirst has claimed Moriar and that the Chapter's armorers have modified his Dreadnought in order that he may drink deeply of this vital fluid of life.

destroyed his home world of Prospero in the dark days of the Great Betrayal. Magnus' followers attacked worlds near Fenris, slaughtering whole populations and laying waste to entire planets in a campaign of terror lasting many years. The Great Wolf Harek Ironhelm sought in vain to engage Magnus in battle, but was chasing shadows as his enemy eluded him at every turn. As more worlds were ravaged, Harek's desire to slay Magnus grew to become an obsession and his quest took him deep into the Eye of Terror, eventually leading him to the world of Gangava. Here he believed that he had found the Thousand Son's secret base and fell upon the world with fire and steel. But Harek had been deceived – the forces present upon Gangava were merely an elaborate ruse executed by Magnus, and as he led the bulk of his Chapter's strength against the allied Chaos forces on Gangava, the Thousand Sons themselves appeared in orbit around Fenris and launched an all-out assault on the home of the Space Wolves, the Fang.

The Fang's defenses consisted of a skeleton force of Space Wolves and thralls and its fall seemed assured. Only the most courageous leader could have had any hope of saving the Fang, and thus it was decreed that Bjorn the Fell-Handed would be woken from his millennial slumbers to lead the defenders in this most desperate hour.

Bjorn took charge of the Space Wolves, one of the few rare instances where a Dreadnought has commanded a Space Marine force. Bjorn's courage and wisdom in battle were an example to all, and for forty days and forty nights Magnus' warriors could not breach the Fang's defenses. Bjorn had fought on Prospero many centuries ago as a Blood Claw and had lost none of the savagery that these hot-blooded young warriors are famed for. He was ceaseless in his determination to withstand the enemy at the gates, and his defense of the Fang is regarded as a masterpiece in the art of leadership and military organization. He planned daring

sallies into the ranks of the Thousand Sons, and in the midnight dark of the tunnels beneath the Fang he led desperate defenses, rallying Space Marines and thralls time and time again as they were forced further and further within their home. Collapsing tunnels as they went, the defenders killed hundreds of enemy warriors, leading them into Bjorn's carefully prepared fire traps and giant cave-ins.

Eventually a pack of Wolf Scouts, led by Haakon Blackwing, were able to breach the ring which Magnus had thrown around Fenris and carried word of the battle to the Great Wolf. Harek's anger and shame were terrible to behold and he immediately returned to Fenris with the full might of the Chapter. Howling Space Wolves descended from orbit and fell upon the Thousand Sons, driving them completely from the Fang. On its lower slopes, Harek and Magnus finally met in single combat, but Magnus was one of the Primarchs, now elevated to a Daemon Prince by the Powers of Chaos, and was more than a match for Harek. The Great Wolf fell, but with his last breath of life was able to grievously wound Magnus before the Thousand Sons fled from Fenris. It is said that it was Bjorn himself who carried Harek to his final resting place on the Fang's upper slopes. With his work complete, Bjorn then returned to the Hall of the Great Wolf to slumber until the day his Chapter should need him once more.

Ironclaw & Brother Severus of Tarentus: The Battle of Macragge

Brother Severus arrived on Macragge as one of sixteen aspirants who had triumphed in competitive games between Quintarn, Tarentus and Masali. These games are held between the triple worlds each seven years to determine which youths should have the honor of attempting to join the Ultramarines Chapter on Macragge. The games which Severus participated in were noted as particularly spirited and hard-fought on this occasion, with over a third of the participants killed or seriously injured.

The young Severus was accepted by the Ultramarines and successfully completed his training in 356.M41. According to records, Brother Severus's early career in the Scout Company was unremarkable, but once he came to full status as a Brother Marine he was frequently commended for his wisdom and far-sightedness. He received his Marksman Honor while a member of the 6th Company in 358.M41 in combat against Eldar pirates, and an Imperial Laurel in the following year after being wounded in the cleansing of Copul IV. In 362.M41 Brother Severus was promoted to Sergeant in the 3rd Company, commanding a squad through the Siege of Belios and the first Balur Crusade.

When Sergeant Severus and his squad broke through a dangerous Ork encirclement on Balur he was inducted into the prestigious 1st Company, receiving his Terminator honors in 367.M41. The promising career of Brother Sergeant Severus was cut tragically short in 371.M41 when he was critically injured during the Battle of Corinth. Ultramarine Apothecaries used his mortal remains to replace those of Brother Commodius in the Dreadnought Ironclaw which was also damaged on Corinth. Severus adapted well to the transition into the amniotic tomb of a Dreadnought body, retaining all of his former wisdom and battlecraft.

Severus' list of battle honors over the succeeding three centuries grew too long to be listed, culminating in his

the eventual return to Corinth on 698.M41 during the seven year Corinthian Crusade. In 745.M41 Brother Severus participated in the Joran retaliation against the alien Tau Empire, but the expedition proved ill-starred and the 3rd Company's Captain, Ardias, was killed shortly before the whole force was withdrawn. Urgent new orders sent the company back to Macragge to defend it from the advance of Hive Fleet Behemoth.

Of the great battle in space over the beleaguered world little can be said here, but the masterful defense by Marneus Calgar, Lord of the Ultramarines, can be read of in other places. In the aftermath it fell to the 3rd Company, under the newly elected Captain Fabian, to recapture the northern polar defense fortress on Macragge itself. Tyranid swarms had penetrated the orbital defenses and overrun the sprawling complex of laser silos and bastions. The first landings by the company barely held their ground against the swarms of creatures which emerged from the shattered bunkers and tunnels to oppose them, only being driven back by the combined fire of Devastator squads and Thunderhawk gunships. Captain Fabian summoned three Dreadnoughts; Severus's Ironclaw, Maximus's Victory and Dicoletian's Agrippa to assist his troops in clearing the forbidding underground tunnels.

The twisting, intersecting passages were already subtly altered by the aliens' presence, dripping mucus and resounding with horrifying shrieks and screams. The dead lay everywhere, contorted and mangled by the violence of their passing. More than once, Tyranids hid among the dead before ripping into the advancing Ultramarines from ambush. Casualties mounted and the Space Marines were forced to use flamers to burn their way forward. The Dreadnoughts were moved ever closer to the front of the advance as squads peeled off to guard intersections. Agrippa was leading when a flank attack broke across the company like a wave of razor-fanged destruction. In seconds, two squads were overrun and hacked down by a dozen Tyranids. Agrippa's assault cannon painted the walls with Tyranid ichor as they rushed forward, and Maximus was reduced to trampling them underfoot when his power fist was torn away. But the veteran Dreadnought still held the perimeter against the bio-engineered monstrosities until Severus arrived to crush the survivors.

With his searchlight piercing the darkness, Severus now led the advance of the 3rd Company into Silo 8, the cavernous housing of a giant, ship-killing laser battery. As the last squads cleared the entrance, a nightmarish horde of Tyranid creatures spilled out of the shadows on all sides. A hail of living projectiles cut through the Space Marine lines, corroding through armor and flesh wherever they struck. Like killing beasts tore into the Ultramarine lines with horrifying ferocity, their scythe-like talons clashing against chainswords and armor as bolters chattered frenziedly. Once again it was Severus that held the line, throwing the creatures back with his steel-strength and crushing power fist. The surviving Ultramarines rallied around the giant fighting machine as it blasted through the aliens' ranks, and the next wave of monstrosities swept down upon them.

A fearsome Hive Tyrant, as massive as a Dreadnought itself, thundered into the Ultramarines with a shriek of fury. Three Brother Marines fell to a single sweep of its claws before Severus charged into the beast. A terrible struggle ensued as the blessed servos and ancient fiber-bundles of Ironclaw were pitted against the preternatural strength of the alien monster's steely sinews. The Tyrant sent Severus reeling with one mighty blow of its claw, but the old Dreadnought recovered and sparks flew as its fist crashed into the creature's carapace. Foul ichor sprayed from the gouting wounds, temporarily blinding Severus' sensors. The beast caught the Dreadnought a terrible blow, tearing through its leg to leave it sprawling helplessly. At that moment Captain Fabian leapt into the fray, knocking aside the creature's claw and evading its scything return swing before blasting it in the head with his plasma pistol until it reared and screamed a final howl of death agony.

With the loss of the Tyrant and the guidance of the hive mind, the Tyranids fell into confusion. The Ultramarine bolter fire cut down the survivors mercilessly as they turned to flee. The 3rd Company was saved and went on to cleanse the polar fortress in its entirety. After the battle, Ironclaw was restored and Severus continues to serve with the 3rd Company to this day. Among the long list of honorifics he has accumulated, the Battle of Macragge remains the proudest, including as it does a share in the first ever accredited kill of a Tyranid Hive Tyrant in close combat.



Index Astartes

First Founding

An in-depth look at the
First Founding Legions of
the Adeptus Astartes.

**BITTER AND
TWISTED**

The Iron Warriors
Space Marine Legion

by Pete Raines

The Iron Warriors were the battering ram of the Great Crusade, hurled at every unbreakable wall or inaccessible citadel that stood between the Emperor and the establishment of the Imperium of Man. The blood and sweat shed during those distant times was wasted when the Iron Warriors turned on their brother Space Marines on Istvaan V and ensured that their once-proud name would be forever synonymous with treachery and heresy.

Origins

The Iron Warriors are a Legion of the First Founding, formed when the Imperium was young and the Emperor walked amongst his people. As with the other Legions, they were created after the Primarchs had disappeared. Although the Iron Warriors did not know their Primarch, during those early years they did inherit common characteristics, notably an affinity for technology and a coldly efficient logic, both of which served them well when calculation was needed, but left them lacking in faith. Tragically for the Iron Warriors, they were ultimately to be confronted by a threat against which the only possible defense was unshakable faith.

On Olympia the Emperor found the Primarch from whom the Iron Warriors had been fashioned – Perturabo. Dark and melancholy, with a mind like a razor, he was warlord to the Tyrant of Lochos and, like his Legion, was a master of siege craft. By a curious twist of fate, Perturabo had been put in the one place where there was nothing for him to learn but the extent of his own superiority.

Olympia was, in those days ten thousand years gone, a rugged and mountainous world, its population concentrated within a multitude of city states. The ready availability of quarried stone and the terrain made the control of strategic passes and high ground the key to military security.

The young Perturabo was discovered climbing the sheer cliffs below the city state of Lochos. Aware that this was no ordinary child, the city guard brought him before the Tyrant of Lochos, Dammekos. Intrigued by the strange, dark child, Dammekos took him into his household as if he were his own family. Perturabo never trusted the Olympians and, although Dammekos took time and trouble to win the trust and affection of the boy, Perturabo did not respond with any warmth. Many saw him as a cold youth but, when one considers that he had been cast alone into a strange world with no clue as to his own origins or the reason for his unusual abilities, this was perhaps harsh.

When the Great Crusade reached Olympia, Perturabo pledged his loyalty to the Emperor and, as was his custom with his Primarchs, the Emperor granted Perturabo command of a Space Marine Legion and suzerainty of the planet as the Legion's home world. The deposed Tyrant of Lochos spent the last few years of his life trying to marshal support to reclaim Olympia. He failed, but created an undercurrent of unrest that was to be harnessed many years later.

There was little time to delay. With the Great Crusade in full swing, Perturabo recruited new Iron Warriors from amongst the Olympians and conducted a lightning campaign against the nearby world of Justice Rock and the heretical Black Judges. The new recruits served well and their triumphant return was celebrated in the Palimodes Fresco, now known only through fragmented holo-recordings.

The Iron Warriors led by Perturabo were devastating siege troops. Expert engineers with cross-training from the Priesthood of Mars, they quickly built on their already impressive reputation. Whilst the Iron Warriors were determined to serve Mankind and their Emperor, their specialization was an unfortunate one. The nature of siege warfare is long periods of dull, back-breaking labor broken by the most brutal, merciless combat imaginable. Men, even Space Marines, cannot withstand hell indefinitely, and combat fatigue began to brutalize the Iron Warriors. The custom existed that once the siege lines were complete the besieged must either surrender or expect no quarter. With each campaign the Iron Warriors came to prefer the latter. Battle was, to these Space Marines, a release from the tedium of life in the siege trenches.

As the Crusade moved forward, many Iron Warrior citadels were established on liberated worlds guaranteeing a safe line of communications. There is a grim irony that the first and last military use of these citadels was to resupply Horus' forces on their traitorous march on Terra. Tiny numbers of Iron Warriors garrisoned the new fortifications. Where the likes of Russ, Vulkan and Magnus refused to split their forces, Perturabo obeyed his orders with increasing bitterness. The Iron Warriors were turning into a garrison Legion with tiny deployments all over the Imperium. For example, the infamous Iron Keep on Delgas II was garrisoned by one squad of ten Iron Warriors despite the world having a disgruntled population of almost 130 million. Resentment began to build up throughout the Legion and particularly with Perturabo himself.

Inquisition Access Level: 11 ninety eight

Iron Warriors, Progenitor Legion M.31



Pre-Heresy Codex color scheme of silver power armor.



Corrupted Iron Warriors color scheme.



Shoulder plate. Corrupted Iron Warriors Legion icon.



Corrupted Iron Warriors Legion symbol.



Pre-Heresy boltier meltagun combi-weapon.

Corrupted Iron Warriors Terminator.



Corrupted lascannon-heavy weapon.

Chainfist close combat weapon.



Bionic leg replacement.



Pattern 'Unknowns' Servo-arm.

Thought for the day: You carry the Emperor's will at your torch, with it destroy the shadows.

Index Astartes First Founding: The Iron Warriors

The passage of years and the carnage of the Heresy have long destroyed any possibility of proving why the Iron Warriors were treated with such casual disdain. Having finally found the truth of his existence, Perturabo was initially fanatically devoted to the Emperor and was ready to embrace missions that the other Primarchs avoided. The Iron Warriors' indisputable success then led to them being 'typecast' to the extent that they became an automatic choice for a siege or garrison mission. But all troops need time for rest and reorganization if they are to be at their best. Clearly some authority chose to keep the Iron Warriors in action despite the harm it was doing. The Emperor may have been deliberately testing Perturabo's faith but, given that Horus, as Warmaster, had control over the precise conduct of many campaigns, it is more likely that he was responsible. When the Heresy began, it was clear that Horus had already established 'understandings' with other Legions. In hindsight, it is perfectly conceivable that Horus was working to demoralize and derange the Iron Warriors to make them more malleable.

It is widely claimed that Perturabo was envious of Rogal Dorn. Given Dorn's well-attested vanity, one can imagine how frequent reference to the perfection of the defenses of the Emperor's palace on Terra might have antagonized his

brother Primarch. Dorn had this effect on a great many people but Perturabo brooded on it and let each boast become a open wound that a cunning manipulator could pull and prod to elicit a response.

It is undoubtedly true that the other Primarchs kept Perturabo at a distance. This may be attributable to his technical genius that was far in advance of any of the others. Perturabo could match wits with Adeptus Mechanicus Magi on anything from warp drives to macro cannons. This was reflected in the way his deeds are recorded in the legends passed down from those times. In one famous story describing the occasion when Leman Russ and Jaghatai Khan routed the Orks of Overdog Mashogg, Perturabo features only as the 'comrade' who calculated the optimum way to bypass Mashogg's low orbit defenses.

The Heresy

In the midst of the cleansing of the Hrud Warrens on Gugann matters were brought to a head. It was Horus who broke the news to Perturabo that Olympia was in rebellion. Dammekos had died, and the population, incited by demagogues, had taken up arms. Perturabo was, by this time, tired of repeatedly having to prove his worth and now, after all his battles, the thought of being the only Legion unable to hold its own home world appalled him. Horus made the most of the opportunity.

Before his departure, Horus presented Perturabo with the hammer *Forgebreaker*. It is possible that the weapon acted as a conduit through which the forces of Chaos could manipulate the Iron Warrior Primarch. Alternatively, a mark of respect from such a leader as Horus could have signaled the sealing of a pact between the two.



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Perturabo and the Iron Warriors suppressed the rebellion on the streets of one city state after another. No one was spared. It was the principle of surrender or no quarter, and the Iron Warriors had grown accustomed to granting no quarter. Perturabo watched on as unmoved and cold as the fortifications in which he taken such pride were overcome. By the time the massacre was over, Olympia had been culled into slavery with almost 5 million civilians dead.

As the pyres burned through the long Olympian night, the Iron Warriors slowly realized the extent of what they had done. One moment they were humanity's heroes assaulting the Hrud and the next they were committing genocide. Perturabo was like a man emerging from a drunken stupor who finds blood on his hands, only dimly aware of how it got there, but is aware of an oppressive feeling of shame nonetheless. He knew that the Emperor could never forgive him his crime.

It was in this doomed mood that the Iron Warriors received news and orders. The news would have been shattering under normal circumstances, but when heard in ruins that were thick with the stench of the dead, it was apocalyptic. Russ' Space Wolves had attacked Magnus' Thousand Sons on Prospero. Horus had turned renegade along with his own Sons of Horus. Angron's World Eaters and Mortarion's Death Guard were also with him. Fulgrim and the Emperors Children had tried to reason with Horus, but had been seduced into joining him instead. Now the universe exceeded the Iron Warriors in madness. Confused bewilderment gave way to the realization that, with the entire Imperium in flames, their excesses were irrelevant.

According to the accompanying orders they had received, the Iron Warriors were to join six other Legions to face Horus on Istvaan V.

The events on Istvaan V are part of the Heresy legend. The Iron Warriors joined with the Night Lords, Word Bearers and Alpha Legion to destroy the three Legions in the task force who remained loyal.

After Istvaan, the Iron Warriors were let loose. Finally freed from doomed missions, they were possessed with a terrible energy. On a dozen worlds, an Iron Warrior Warsmith replaced the true governor and tithes were paid under the shadow of fortified battlements.

A strong contingent of the Legion accompanied Perturabo to Terra where he supervised the siege of the Emperor's Palace. Here his skills were invaluable and the Iron Warriors found a sublime pleasure in tearing the edifices of the Imperium down. The end was near for the defenders when the Emperor confronted Horus on his battle barge and defeated him. Like many of Horus' followers, the Iron Warriors fled to the Eye of Terror, securing a new home world where they could brood on the turn of events and plot vengeance.

The rest of the Iron Warriors defended their small empire based on Olympia, but there was no refuge from the retribution of the loyalist Legions. The Imperial Fists supported the Ultramarines in a decade-long campaign to liberate the subjugated worlds. They discovered the Iron Warriors to be like a barbed hook that, once embedded into a victim, could only be removed with great risk of injuring the patient further. The Olympia garrison held out for two years, eventually triggering their missile stockpiles when defeat

was unavoidable. They left a blasted wasteland that, like the other Traitor Legion home worlds, was declared Perdita.

Home World

Like the other Traitor Legions, the Iron Warriors have seized a planet within the Eye of Terror and made it their new home world.

Knowledge of the worlds within the Eye of Terror is scant at best, and the realm of Chaos rarely stays the same for long. Medrengard is frequently depicted as a world turned into a vast fortress, all trace of its original form lost under mountains of impossibly high towers, its core penetrated by plunging dungeons. Whilst this is feasible within the Eye of Terror where the laws of physics do not apply, it is inconsistent with Iron Warrior fortifications in real space which are far more advanced in design and construction. Many depictions of worlds within the Eye of Terror have been derived from nightmarish visions rather than actual observation, and this may be so with Medrengard.

Inquisitor Maul performed an extended reconnaissance of the Eye of Terror in M.38. Although he was not cogent upon his return, his ship's interior bulkheads were covered by script in the Inquisitor's own blood describing what he had seen. Medrengard was described as a bleak prison world where slaves toiled and died while great Chaos warships were tethered to its tallest towers wherein resided the Warriors themselves.

Combat Doctrine

The Iron Warriors follow a simple method. They commence battle with a sustained bombardment utilizing every gun at their disposal. The basis of this is a complex fire plan in which every weapon is directed with utmost care at the optimum target for maximum effect. Where possible, the Iron Warriors will coordinate with Traitor Titan Legions to add to their own considerable firepower. The bombardment can last for weeks as the Iron Warriors rarely seem to be short of ammunition. They handle their weaponry well, with formations moving forward to fire and then redeploying before any reprisal. Often their entire force will move laterally to bring their fire against enemy weak points, with the result that counter-attacks flounder helplessly in the teeth of the Iron Warriors' weapons.

Where possible, field fortifications will be used to reinforce the line. Iron Warrior doctrine includes extensive use of fortifications to tie opponents down with the absolute minimum number of troops. This in turn keeps the bulk of the Iron Warriors troops fresh and available for assaults.

When a breach has been forced in the enemy defenses it will initially be probed by veterans and infiltrated, then the gap will be pried open with firepower until a storming force can be unleashed.

These storming forces are based around fast moving heavy armor which can move instantly from relentless barrage to lightning-fast advance. Breaches are then widened until the defenses are shattered. For the key moments in battle when a position absolutely must be taken, the Iron Warriors adopt an ice-cold ferocity that is comparable to the Blood Angels or World Eaters, but *only* when the moment is right and *never* for longer than necessary.

THE IRON CAGE

The one real triumph in the period following the Heresy was the reason for Perturabo's ascension to the rank of Daemon Prince. The Iron Warriors had been close to breaching the defenses of the Imperial Palace but had been thwarted by Horus' death. Afterwards, their empire was dismantled by the Imperial Fists by virtue of overwhelming superiority of numbers. On Sebastus IV, therefore, Perturabo set a trap for their Primarch by building the self-styled 'Eternal Fortress'. Upon hearing of the fortress, Rogal Dorn publicly declared that the Imperial Fists would dig Perturabo out of his hole and bring him back to Terra in an Iron Cage. Roboute Guilliman pleaded with Dorn to let him help, but, just as Perturabo planned, Dorn was arrogant enough to undertake the mission alone.

Rogal Dorn expected honorable battle, but that was not Perturabo's agenda at all. The Eternal Fortress was a sophisticated trap. At its center was a keep sitting in the middle of twenty square miles of bunkers, towers, minefields, trenches, razorwire, tank traps and redoubts. Radiating out from the keep in the shape of an eight-pointed star were underground tunnels that connected the surface fortifications. All the entrances to the underground network were concealed and the keep itself was a decoy of no real value. Most fortifications are limited by the need to protect something. The Eternal Fortress was twenty square miles of killing ground.

Perturabo and the Iron Warriors waited below the surface for the first shots of the Imperial Fists' orbital barrage. As soon as it commenced they replied with a number of remote weapon silos located well away from the Fortress. The Imperial Fists countered precipitately with Thunderhawk-borne troops attacking the silos and a full combat drop of the rest of the Legion. As soon as the attacks on the silos were under way, the missile stockpiles were detonated. Thousands of tons of debris was hurled into Sebastus' atmosphere making communication between ground troops and fleet virtually impossible.

The detonation was the signal for the Iron Warriors fleet to attack. The Traitor fleet was no stronger than that of the Imperial Fists, but the loyalist Thunderhawks were on the planet's surface. Also, the Chaos ships had many Iron Warriors amongst their complements eager to man the assault boats. The Imperial Fists' fleet tried to hold but was forced inexorably out of position. After a few hours the only targets being engaged on the planet were coordinates pre-planned by Perturabo.

Under fire from space, the Imperial Fists proceeded with their assault in parade ground formation on a four-company front. Perturabo watched them from an observation tower and carefully began to destroy them. First, the minefields did their work, then,

when the Imperial Fists reached the first expanse of fortifications, the Iron Warriors manned their trenches and opened fire. While the trenches held the loyalists' attention, squads of Iron Warriors with Krak grenades and melta bombs emerged from hidden bunkers and attacked the tanks halted by the fortifications. The Imperial Fists turned back to fend off this threat and for a time were pinned down amidst the tank traps. Once more they rallied and swept forward to overrun the Iron Warrior trenches only to find them empty. So it continued - Perturabo dissected the Imperial Fists tank by tank, squad by squad. Rogal Dorn remained convinced that victory was in sight and pushed his men on. Perturabo pulled back some of his defenders and called upon others to hold - a stratagem that fractured the Imperial Fists, first into companies then into squads. By day six of the battle, each Marine fought virtually alone, and Dorn's troops were reduced to burrowing into the mud and piling up the dead bodies of their brethren for cover. Still Perturabo remained patient, he allowed Dorn to rampage around the trenches calling his name and demanding personal combat, content that the sight of their Primarch's impotence would demoralize the Imperial Fists.

The siege of the Eternal Fortress was to last for three more weeks. The Imperial Fists had burrowed into the killing zone and were unable to escape. Although his captains called for a breakout, Rogal Dorn would not give the order. He refused to believe the evidence of his eyes and continued to call for one last charge or for Perturabo to face him. Unable to abandon their Primarch, the Imperial Fists prepared to die with him.

If Perturabo had a failing it was that he had grown to enjoy tormenting his enemies too much. He could have finished off the Imperial Fists at any time but chose not to. Fortunately for Rogal Dorn, Roboute Guilliman put the Imperium before pride and had brought the Ultramarines to the rescue. The powerful Ultramarine fleet forced the Iron Warriors back while their Thunderhawks plunged through the dust clouds to evacuate the Imperial Fists. Perturabo had no desire to fight two Chapters and concentrated on preventing the Imperial Fists evacuating their dead and wounded.

Rogal Dorn was a broken man. It was nineteen years before he and the Imperial Fists could once again go to war. They left over 400 Marines at the Eternal Fortress and every refugee carried horrific wounds.

The gene-seed captured was sacrificed to the Dark Gods in return for Perturabo's elevation to Daemon Prince. One insult had been avenged, and since then the Iron Warriors have lived only to settle accounts with the corpse on the Golden Throne.

Once they have an opponent at their mercy, the Iron Warriors are content to surround them and destroy them at their leisure, always preferring to let shell and laser beam do their work for them.

The Iron Warriors are expert sappers, engineers and miners and have acquired a formidable siege train of specialist equipment over the centuries. This includes Termite tunnelers, a Leviathan transport, Dreadclaw assault boats adapted for planetary landings and a large assortment of

Imperial-built artillery. These are used very sparingly and are maintained and guarded by the 1st Company. Additionally, they have a number of Corvus assault pods which allow them to make use of any supporting Titans as siege towers. The Iron Warriors are so frequently supported by Titans that some Imperial experts have asserted that they are part of the same formation. This is not widely accepted, but the theory is a reflection of the Legion's predilection for heavy barrages.

Organization

The Iron Warriors are organized as a number of Grand Companies each commanded by a Warsmith. Originally, each Grand Company would have had a similar organization totaling approximately a thousand Space Marines, but now they vary in size enormously. The Warsmiths themselves are all extremely gifted in combat engineering, many maintaining a large contingent of slave-mechanicians to perform the more menial work.

It is uncertain how many Grand Companies there are at any given time. At the time of the Heresy, the Legion had at least twelve Companies, although with the widespread deployment of many small detachments of the Legion at the time it is impossible to be sure.

Like many of the Traitor Legions, their current organization is completely non-standard. A Grand Company will often be divided into component detachments led by lesser champions. A tendency towards operating in multiples of three has been noted, although this is far from being verified. Suitable recruits are taken (willingly and unwillingly) to Medregard where they are selected periodically by Warsmiths for their Grand Company and subjected to ordeals until they prove themselves worthy.

The first Obliterators witnessed amongst Chaos forces were amongst the Iron Warriors and, on very rare occasions, Iron Warriors have manifested the ability to 'morph' weapons, although with nothing like the versatility of the Obliterators.

Beliefs

The Iron Warriors believe that the Emperor used them to fight the bloodiest battles of his Crusade and then let the other, more favored Primarchs take all the glory. They also believe that Rogal Dorn turned Olympia against them so that they would be disgraced and discarded after they had served their purpose. They will have vengeance on both.

They see themselves as titans of old who are loose in the universe, doing whatever they like, knowing that no natural or man-made law can stop them. They honor the Chaos gods as a pantheon but are not truly devout themselves. Their greatest loyalty is to Perturabo, who they believe saved them from being sacrificed by the false emperor.

Gene-seed

The Iron Warriors are a first founding Legion and bear the gene-seed of Perturabo. Since turning to Chaos they are subject to varying degrees of mutation and have been known to replace mutated limbs with cybernetic ones.

They have a marked tendency toward suspicion and paranoia but are also extremely intelligent with naturally well-developed problem solving abilities.

Battle-cry

Monotone chant of "Iron Within, Iron Without".



USING AN IRON WARRIORS ARMY IN WARHAMMER 40,000

Iron Warriors use the following units from Codex Chaos Space Marines.

HQ (see special rules below)	Warsmith or Daemon Prince, Sorcerer.
ELITES	Chaos Obliterators, Chaos Terminators (no Cult Terminators), 0-1 Khorne Berzerkers, Chaos Space Marine Veterans.
TROOPS	Chaos Space Marine Veterans, Chaos Space Marines.
FAST ATTACK	Chaos Space Marine Bikers, 0-1 Chaos Raptors.
HEAVY SUPPORT	Chaos Havocs, Chaos Dreadnoughts, Chaos Predators, Chaos Land Raiders, 0-1 Corrupted Vehicle (see below).

The following rules and Codex changes apply when using an Iron Warriors Chaos army. Note that the entire Chaos army must be Iron Warriors, not just one or two squads.

FORCE ORGANIZATION

Whichever Force Organization chart is being used, the Iron Warriors may drop two choices from the Fast Attack section and replace them with a single extra Heavy Support choice. They may not reduce the number of Fast Attack choices below one. On Standard Missions, therefore, the Iron Warriors could limit themselves to one Fast Attack choice which will in turn provide them with one extra Heavy Support choice.

NEW WARGEAR

Servo Arm: Some Iron Warriors are equipped with a powerful servo-arm which can be used to carry out battlefield repairs. The servo-arm counts as a power fist in close combat, always attacking once and hitting on a 4+. It may be used at the start of any Iron Warriors turn to repair an immobilized vehicle that is in base contact with the Space Marine on a D6 roll of 6. **30 points**

Bionics: Bionics allow a Space Marine who has suffered a crippling injury or debilitating mutation to return to action. There is a chance that an attack or shot will hit a bionic part – when the model loses its last wound, put it on its side. At the start of the next turn, a roll of 6 on a D6 will allow the model to continue fighting on with one wound. **5 points for Iron Warriors**

SPECIAL RULES

- A Warsmith replaces the Chaos Lord entry. They are identical, apart from the name change.
- With the exception of Berzerker Aspiring Champions, no member of an Iron Warriors army can bear a Mark other than that of Chaos Undivided. Berzerker Aspiring Champions may bear the Mark of Khorne and use Khorne gifts.
- The only Chaos vehicle gifts permitted to an Iron Warriors army are Daemoniac Possession and Destroyer, although Destroyer may only be fitted to a Rhino transporting a Berzerker squad.

Heavy Support

0-1 Corrupted Vehicle

This can be either a Vindicator (see Codex Space Marines) or a Basilisk (see Codex Imperial Guard). The Iron Warriors prize these weapons highly and repair wrecks for their own use.

A crew of thralls and servitors operates the Basilisk, so its BS with its hull heavy bolter remains at 3, and it is still open topped. All the weapon options in the list entry can be used although no Imperial Guard vehicle upgrades can be used. The Basilisk cannot be daemonically possessed, as it is open topped and possession requires a sealed hull.

SIEGE MASTERS

The Iron Warriors have formidable siege skills and as such count as Siege Masters. This has several effects on the scenario special rules as detailed below.

Fortifications: Siege Masters receive +1 armor penetration against bunkers, and their own bunkers have Armor Value 14.

Hidden Set-Up: When moving over a minefield, Siege Masters only trigger a mine on a 6+.

Obstacles: A Siege Master tank trap has an Armor Value of 12.

Preliminary Bombardment: When resolving preliminary bombardment, Siege Masters are better able to direct their supporting fire. They receive one extra roll for every 500 points being used. This can result in a single unit being hit several times. The Siege Master cannot choose to roll extra dice against a unit that has already been attacked; all the dice attacking a particular unit must be rolled together.

Stubborn Defense: When occupying fortifications in missions where they are the defenders, Siege Masters are treated as being *stubborn*. They will automatically pass any Morale checks, even in situations where normally they would automatically fail. They may never use the Voluntary Fall Back optional rule but test for pinning as normal. Outside fortifications and in fortifications built by the enemy (i.e., when attacking) they get no benefit.



How could such a nice guy be so warped by Chaos? We have been fortunate enough to have Mike Butcher grace these pages with his incredible

looking Nurgle armies in the past (WD issues #236 and #247). Now, appearing for the first time, Mike's Chaos Space Marine Iron Warriors.

**WARHAMMER
40,000**

RETURN OF THE BUTCHER

OR, THE IRON WARRIORS CHAOS SPACE MARINES



The mighty Champion Ferrous leads the way for the Chaos Space Marine Terminators fondly known as the Siege Breakers.



The dreadful Dreadnought Marcellus.

Mike Butcher has won the *Best Army* for the 1999 **Chicago Grand Tournament** and *Best Overall Champion* for the 2000 **Chicago Grand Tournament**. We were lucky enough to discuss with him some simple tips on painting an army.

1) Keep it simple! - An intricate, detailed paint scheme gets lost in the mix of troops or vehicles. What looks great on one model can feel like painting the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel when you are painting the 30th figure the same way.

2) Be consistent! - Try to paint all your army to the same standard (although your characters still deserve a special touch) and use the same colors. I write down what colors, washes, inks, etc., that I use when painting a unit, so I can repeat it. If there is a special color that you use, why not go ahead and mix up a batch in an old paint pot so it will be the same whenever you use it. I wanted to have my Iron Warriors to have a rusted look, so I mixed a jar of 50/50 Armor Wash and Chestnut Wash

to use on inking all the metal bits and armor.

3) Tie it together! - Use unit markings, banners, army badges, graffiti, etc., to bring the army together and make them look like they are all part of the same force. Conversions are a great opportunity to make your army stand out and also unite the squads in appearance.

4) Bases, bases, bases! - Use the same technique to do the bases on all your models. I look at bases as an opportunity to really make your army stand out. I like to put bits of fallen foes, vehicle parts, etc., on my bases. Your larger models, such as Dreadnoughts, Daemons, and Warbosses, present a chance to really make a statement.

In order to tie the Iron Warriors together you can see the use of the yellow and black hazard striping somewhere on every model. In addition, all of the bases are done using battlefield debris and painted in a blackened, scorched color scheme.

Don't be afraid to experiment and let those creative juices flow!



Squad Sapper armed with bolt pistols, close combat weapons, and a melta gun.



Squad Rampart led by Champion Crustus armed with a lightning claw and combi-bolter.



Squad Ballista led by Champion Oxidus armed with a bolt pistol and a power weapon.



Left: Chaos Predator with twin lascannon, auxiliary combi-bolter, dozer blade and extra armor.

Right: The maniacal Obliterators. 'Nuff said.



The Chaos Space Marine troops were based on the Khorne Berzerkers Boxed Set with a few loyalist marine parts thrown in. A call to Mail Order provided the Iron Warriors shoulder pads, the Chaos Spiky Bits sprue, older Ork Bolters and Bolt Pistols, the heads from the Chaos Bike Squad sprue, the Warhammer Chaos Warriors Regiment Boxed Set, some Zombie Regiment sprues, parts from the Gubbins bag, and the Gorkamorka wrecking ball.

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Arcane Lore is a series of ruminations and cogitations by the Warhammer Games Development team on different aspects of the Warhammer game. This month Alessio Cavatore talks about developing the new Vampire Counts Armies book.

ARCANE LORE

The new Vampire Counts armies book



Alessio Cavatore has been a Games Developer since he was offered a job whilst working as a translator for Games Workshop Italia. His

traditional Italian skills of 'thorough' gaming allow him to spot catches and loopholes in the rules like a hawk. He is also studying in his spare time to be a mad doctor.

You can read an interview with Alessio later in this issue.

I encountered during the design of this unique army.

HERE WE GO AGAIN

The idea of remaking the Vampire Counts as one of the first four army lists for the new edition of Warhammer was essentially dictated by the range of models available. The Vampire Counts were the last army list of the past edition, and were released less than two years ago. The models sculpted for them are still new and excellent, so it seemed to be a good move to publish a new edition of rules for them soon after the release of Warhammer. The only part of the range which we felt we had not developed to its full potential were the Vampires themselves.

So the miniatures designers were set to work, and the new Vampires were created. The models are absolutely gorgeous, and the Heavy Metal team turned them into veritable masterpieces. (Have a look at the photos throughout the magazine if you don't believe me!).

BIRTH OF A NEW VAMPIRE LINE

In the initial brief I received, the book was to contain the same four Bloodlines it had had in the previous version. I thought that it was a pity not to do anything new background-wise. The ancient texts speak of seven Vampire Masters escaping from the ruins of ancient Lahmia. That detail gave me the freedom I needed to expand the rich background of the Vampires and I proposed the creation of a new Bloodline. To back up the proposal I had to come up with a series of different concepts (sketches of new ideas, not fully developed yet) to be examined and approved. With the invaluable help of Tuomas and Gav, who helped me keep the focus on sensible ideas (No Hong Kong hopping Vampires!, no invisible models!, etc.), I ended up with eight concepts for the new Bloodline. Put yourself in our shoes and try to decide which one of the concepts would be created as a fully-fledged Vampire bloodline. Here they are:

Designing the Vampire Counts Armies book has been difficult. Compared with my previous task, writing the Empire Armies book, the Vampire Counts army list really has been a challenging project. In this article I'll try to share with you the many interesting points and problems



The massed ranks of the dead rise once more to defend their tombs against the troops of the Empire.

E

• The dandy, city-dwelling Vampire who hunts in high society (*Tom Cruise or Antonio Banderas in Interview with the Vampire*).

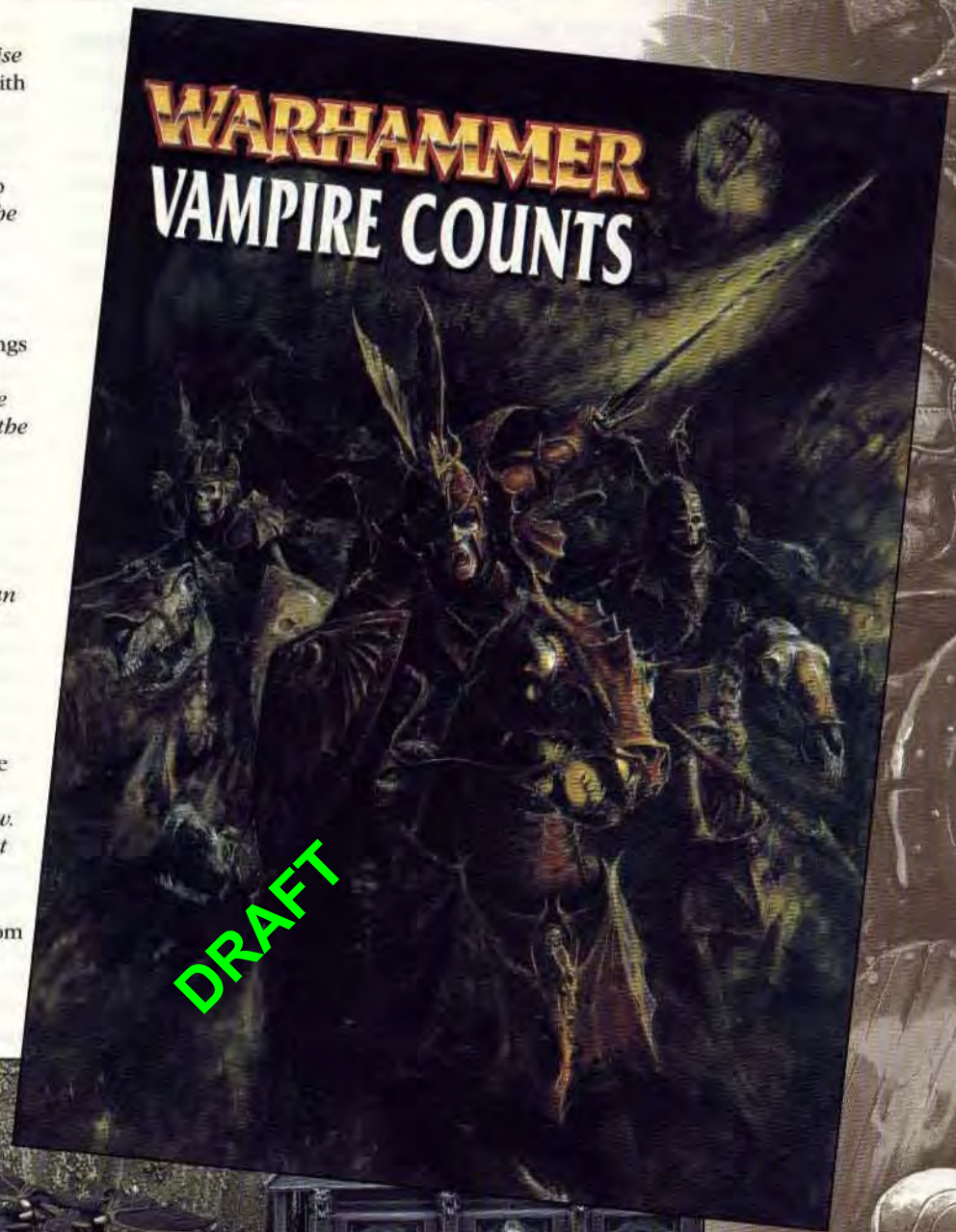
• A tribal bloodline from the Southlands, mostly based on voodoo magic and folklore (*have you seen the Candyman series? Watch out for mirrors!*).

• A manipulative, gluttonous and overweight monster and his underlings (*a vampiric Jabba the Hut, Baron Vladimir Harkonnen from Dune, the gross demon in Buffy, the keeper of the Vampires' library in Blade or Fat Bloke and his WD team!*).

• The leader of a thuggish, death-worshipping cult from the steaming jungles of the East (*who can forget the heart-ripping bad guy in Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom?*).

• The fallen angel, a modern vegetarian Vampire with a conscience (*Brad Pitt in Interview with the Vampire or Brandon Lee in The Crow. OK, I know he wasn't a Vampire, but he certainly was an Undead hero*).

• A mysterious oriental bloodline from Cathay (*Emperor Ming the Merciless meets Fu Man Chu. Have you seen Big Trouble in Little China?*).



DRAFT



• The Ghoul King who reigns over his court of foul things and hides in dark crypts, shunned by the living and by the other Vampires, devoured by an eternal all-encompassing hatred (*a very Lovecraftian character, I imagined it as an oversized Gollum from Lord of the Rings or, if you have watched Francis Ford Coppola's masterpiece, it's Dracula in his bat-monster shape, just before he turns into a rat swarm*).

• The last one I won't reveal here, because it did not go into the book, but we will use it in the future as a new Bloodline. Curious? Watch this space...

So, which one would you have chosen? Well, after much indecision, the Ghoul King eventually triumphed and I developed the Strigoi Vampire (Strigoi is a deformed version of the Romanian word for 'Vampire'). More details on these accursed monsters and their creation are to be found in the following pages.

BLOODLINES AGAIN

Well, one thing I did not like about the old Bloodline system was that Vampires from different lines had the very same stat-line and options. The only difference amongst them was the access to different powers, but if the player decided not to buy any and spent his points elsewhere, a Blood Dragon was exactly the same as a Carstein or, even worse, a Necrarch Vampire. I decided then that Vampires of each Bloodline should start with unique powers and weaknesses that distinguished them from the others. For example, all Necrarch now have

lower WS than other Vampires, to represent that they are more like wizards than warriors. On the other hand, their necromantic powers are the strongest (they get a +1 to the total they roll when casting spells!). Blood Dragons, on the contrary, are the best fighters but the worst spell casters. Hopefully the weaknesses and advantages of each line should balance out, so that all Bloodlines remain an equally viable choice. Of course, I still left a list of additional powers for people to buy, so that even within the same Bloodline, Vampires can have different and characterful abilities. Finally, I've made the powers less unbalancing altogether by making the points spent on powers count towards a Vampire's maximum magic items allowance. This stops people massing a huge amount of Bloodline powers and magic items on the same model and forces players to actually make a choice between the two.

THE UNDEAD RULES

The first thing I wanted to do was to simplify the rules governing the Undead army. I wanted the rules for the Undead to apply equally all across the list, unless the unit was actually alive. So, the main point is, if you're Undead, all the rules for the Undead apply, otherwise you're alive and the rules for normal Warhammer troops apply.

As a consequence, Vampires, and even Necromancers, turned into true Undead! Harsh? Maybe, but it makes life much easier and makes sense from the point of view of the background. Certainly Necromancers begin their career as living wizards, but in a few

centuries they lose their humanity and begin their unavoidable transformation into Liches (undead wizards). Relatively young Necromancers would be more alive than old ones, but that would slowly change with the passing of time. As far as the rules are concerned, I judged that it was far cleaner to treat them all as Undead.

In the past, Tuomas and I couldn't radically change the way the Undead worked because the rules for Necromancy were not in the book but in the Warhammer Magic expansion. Necromancy and the Undead rules must go together for the army to work, so we were forced to be rather conservative. I didn't have such a problem now – the new edition of the game meant that I could start from scratch, the slate had been cleaned! After playing with the Ravening Hordes rules it was clear to me that it was rather boring having to play with such an extremely slow army. You had to spend the entire Magic phase in trying to give them a bit of a push. That did not leave much space for other spells that, in my opinion, are far more characterful for the Undead. In the tradition of films like *Jason and the Argonauts* and *Night of the Living Dead*, skeletons should spring like daisies from the ground, and if you shoot a Zombie full of holes it should rise to its feet to advance again and again. This is where I feel the real terror of fighting the living dead should reside.

Disassociating Undead movement from the Magic phase was my first task. I thought that the proximity of the General, the creature responsible for



A Vampire Count commands his Undead legions to attack.

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the raising of the army in the first place, was enough to provide the Undead with the energy and coordination necessary to march. Thus originated the simple rule that Undead cannot march unless they are characters (more energetic creatures) or within 12" of the General. Simple and in line with the normal rules for the General's Leadership, that Undead have no use for, anyway. On the same track was the decision on the effects of the Battle Standard. Something that allows you to re-roll Break tests is not very useful with an army that does not take any! I then thought that it would be nice to have something to help the Undead in their unique way when taking Break tests. Solution: the presence of the Battle Standard within 12" allows the Undead to suffer one less wound than they should when defeated in combat.

Finally, in the previous edition of Warhammer, the death of the General meant a Panic test for the entire army in living armies, and almost complete destruction in an Undead army. In the new edition we removed the Panic test from the main rules because we felt that a single model shouldn't be that important. I wanted to follow that policy and changed the rules for the death of the General in the Undead army. Now, if your General is killed (and that's easier with the new Vampires, whose stat-line is not that of a Dragon anymore) you can still continue to play the game. At the end of the phase when he is killed, and at the beginning of every subsequent Undead turn, you must take a Leadership test for every unit on the table. Units that fail the test suffer a number of wounds equal to the number they failed the test by. Characters can pass their Leadership to units they're with, as normal. This causes your army to slowly crumble to dust as the spells binding it together unravel, but at least you can continue to play and, with some luck, you can still win, especially if the General dies in the last few turns of the game. Another nice effect of this rule is to make the Leadership score of Undead troops a meaningful number. It is now a measure of how self-aware they are, of how long they can exist on their own (for example a powerful Wight has Leadership 8, but a flimsy, unstable Zombie only has Leadership 2).

Shocked? Well, the only thing I ask of you is to try these rules on the battlefield before judging them.

NECROMANTIC MAGIC

The next thing I worked on is Undead magic. In the past it had dozens of special rules, making it completely different from any other magic. The ability to choose spells and to cast them more than once per Magic phase were clearly intended to be used with *Vanbel's Danse Macabre* and the 'Raise the Dead' kind of spells. Unfortunately, people immediately concentrated on the powerful necromantic attack spells and created battle-winning and deadly combinations. Not any more. No special rules apply to Necromancers and Vampires, and Necromancy is a list of six spells, exactly like the ones in the Warhammer rulebook. Like the ones in the rulebook, you can always choose to swap one of your spells for the first spell of the list, which happens to be the *Invocation of Nebek* (the one that raises new Skeletons/Zombies). The only thing that is slightly different is the way that this spell works: when you cast it, you can choose one of three casting values, and the spell will be proportionally more powerful if a higher casting value is chosen. Interestingly, you can also use this spell to heal Undead with multiple wounds (such as your General).

The rest of the list is a mix of attack spells and ~~to~~ enhancing spells, such as the old *Vanbel's Danse Macabre* which I have now split into two separate spells.

THE UNITS

Let's now have a look at each troop type in the army and see what's changed and why.

Vampires. Vampires' Strength and Toughness have been cut considerably from the last edition, but so have everybody else's, and that means that Vampires are still scary killing machines.

Necromancers. They have the same stat-line as human Wizards and are very close to them in all respects, except for being Undead, of course.

Wraiths. They're back and haven't changed much from their previous incarnation.

Wights. Far harder than before, the Wight Blades of Wight Lords, Grave Guard and Black Knights have lost the ability to cause D3 wounds but now have the Killing Blow ability. All in all, a good trade. On top of that, their stats have gone up a bit, since I wanted the





A band of intrepid Dwarfs marches to scour their ancestral tombs of the plague of the Undead.

army to have at least one unit which could stand its ground if fighting without characters.

Skeletons. The same old reliable Core troops.

Zombies. I removed the Horde rule, because they often had to lap round more than one enemy unit in complex multiple combats. This forced people to have long discussions about how exactly to do that, and I thought the rule wasn't worth all that stress. Since I wanted them to be cheap and different from Skeletons without armor, I gave them the Braindead rule (always strike last) that justifies their low points value.

Ghouls. Probably the unit that has changed the most. They used to be another block of unbreakable troops, making them a bit too similar to Skellies and Zombies for my taste. I thought that, being a pack of feral scavengers, they would behave more like... skirmishers! Yes, they had to be skirmishers. That represents better my idea of what a group of Ghouls would do on a battlefield: scuttling along the flanks of the army in the cover offered by woods and other difficult terrain, jumping on small units of weak troops and running from blocks of ranked enemies. I gave them the Poisoned Attacks rule (a classic from role-playing games) which makes them nastier in close combat.

Dire Wolves. Slightly less powerful than before, they remain a nasty pack with an 18" charge. The Fast Cavalry rule represents their maneuverability

and their lack of weight in a fight (I don't see them fighting in ranks any more than I see Ghouls adopting this formation).

Bat Swarms. Their Strength has gone down, but they now cause *fear*. I thought that the entire Undead army should cause *fear*, to represent the fact that the enemies would be scared to be facing the living dead. Bats and Ghouls are if not technically Undead, would be part of the sinister atmosphere of the army of darkness. In the midst of all that creepy stuff, I'm sure enemies wouldn't be making technical distinctions ("Look Hans, those Ghouls are less scary than those Zombies next to them...") and would be just plain terrified! Also, thanks to the new rules for flying units, the Bat Swarms are now skirmishers, which makes them more maneuverable (as they should be) and provides them with a useful -1 to be hit by missile fire and a very good 360° arc of sight.

Spirit Host. The most notable thing about them is that their Movement has increased to six, making them more useful than before.

Fell Bats. They, too, benefit from the new rules for flying units, which compensates for the loss of the Flying High rule (a rule that makes all flyers far more predictable).

Banshees. The Outnumbering rule has made them more frail, but I also made them more maneuverable by giving them the same movement rules as independent characters.

The Black Coach. I simplified the rules for the Invocation of Death and gave the Coach a unified stat-line profile, following the new chariot rules. Overall, it's less powerful than before (especially against Strength 7+ hits!), but the Coach is still a scary harbinger of doom.

THE MAIN PROBLEM

Without a doubt, the main challenge was trying to assign the correct price to the 'Undead' special rule all across the army. Let's start with an example. Without special rules a Skeleton would be far worse than any Goblin and, consequently, should be cheaper. We're talking about a cost of one or two points! But then the Undead rule kicks in and suddenly the value of the Skeleton rockets up. Being Undead on the positive side means causing *fear* and being Unbreakable, two major advantages. The drawbacks are: no marching (if away from the General), no charge reactions, extra casualties when defeated in close combat and a chance of vanishing if the General is killed. Now, the first issue is to understand if the bonuses are more important than the penalties, or vice versa. In other words: is it good to be dead?

We agreed that, overall, it was a bonus and consequently it should be paid for. As normal with special rules, I charged the same value to all the infantry and a proportionally higher amount of points to cavalry, large things and characters. Unfortunately, playtesting seemed to indicate that the main penalty of being

Undead, the extra wounds in close combat, was far worse for expensive Wights and characters than for cheap Zombies and Skeletons. That is quite clear to all Undead players. If you lose a fight and you have to remove three extra Zombies, you do it without a thought (you can always try and raise them back later anyway...). Your reaction is very different when you lose three fully equipped mounted Wights!

The Undead rule, therefore, is proportionally less of a bonus the more powerful the Undead model is, and therefore expensive, because the main penalty (extra wounds in close combat) is more and more crippling. Also, the cheaper the model, the larger the unit you can build, so you're more likely to outnumber the enemy and, as a consequence, the usefulness of your *fear* is increased... a real conundrum. Zombies and Skeletons in large numbers always seemed a safer and better choice for Undead than expensive elite units.

Eventually, I approached the problem by artificially increasing the points value of Skellies and Zombies, while at the same time I reduced the price of Wights a bit, and the price of the most expensive Undead units and characters. The list ended up with slightly underpriced Elites and overpriced Undead Core units (that is if you look at the models on their own). I'm confident, though, that the final points value better reflects their real worth on the battlefield (fingers crossed!).

SPECIAL CHARACTERS

This version of the book sees the return of the one (in)famous Vampire who has often been the choice of the connoisseur, mixing the fighting prowess of a von Carstein with the magic powers of a Master Necromancer. You've guessed his name? Yes, Manfred von Carstein is back with a vengeance (mainly because we really liked the model)!

The second special character is a completely new face. I was told to write up the text for this new model of a Necrarch on a Zombie Dragon and I really went over the top, making a character who is worth slightly over 1,000 points and takes all your character choices in a 2,000 points army! He definitely wins the title of 'Mr. All Your Eggs in One Basket'. Another interesting point is that the background information on this

powerful Vampire Lord has been written by our new Warhammer writer, Space McQuirk (yes, that's his real name, or so he says...).

ALTERNATIVE ARMIES

Finally, the appendix at the back of the book includes the army lists for the various Vampire families. An Empire-Undead army for the von Carsteins, a knightly Blood Dragon host, a literally Ghoulish Strigoi horde, and so on... It would have been fun to actually work them into the main list, but that would have meant having to playtest five different armies, and there was absolutely no time for that. It was extremely fun to design these alternative armies, and I hope it will be at least as much fun for you to read them and give them a go, if you feel crazy enough.

ON THE SHOULDERS OF GIANTS...

To conclude this long rant, I'd like to thank all the people whose work and enthusiasm, past or present, have contributed to the way I perceive an Undead army.

First of all, Tuomas Piipen, from whom I learned so much during the making of the first Vampire Counts book (and whose text I pinched shamelessly for this edition). Jervis Johnson and Bill King for writing the first Undead book, a precious source of material. Cristiano Delle Case for teaching me to fear the living dead on the fields of battle, and all the people in the Studio and in GW Italy, as well as all the members of the Geeks mailing list for their invaluable playtesters' feedback.

Thanks a lot.

That's all, folks, and remember, before you start a battle with your Undead army always stare at your opponent and, with your most creepy voice, recite these words:

"As you are, we once were. As we are, you will be."

It really works wonders on your opponent's nerves...

Alonso Caratoa



Warhammer Chronicles is devoted to the Warhammer game, featuring new rules, scenarios and other rules related topics. If you have any submissions of your own for Warhammer Chronicles please send them to the address below. Those missives deemed entertaining and profound enough to delight the masses (as judged by our diligent team of highly-trained Gobbos) will appear in a forthcoming issue of this publication.

If you have a good article for Warhammer Chronicles then write to:

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Warhammer Chronicles

Scrivened and presented by Gav Thorpe

Welcome, my Elucidated and Favored Brotherhood and Sisterhood, to the pages of the Warhammer Chronicles. This month, Rules-Scribe Thornton and I have delved into the humid jungle to lay before you the ancient mysteries of the Lizardmen, strange bipedal denizens of the exotic continent of Lustria. Detailed within is an account of their military capacity and their musterings in time of war, in addition to a brief overview of their peculiar race.

Enjoy, if you will, our exhaustive research into the anthropology of this most ancient race.

Lords of Creation

By Jake Thornton and
Gav Thorpe

It's been a while since we said much about the Lizardmen in these pages, but they've been lurking there all the while. Secure in the verdant jungles of Lustria and the Southlands, the ancient Slann have been biding their time, studying the stars for signs of the Old Ones' plan. Now their time has come again.

This list is *not* the final one that will be in the army book, but it's a lot closer than the Ravening Hordes list. At least, we think it is. What with the Vampire Counts, the High Elves and their Dark cousins we've not been able to test this army as much as we'd like. And that's where you can help. If you have a Lizardmen army and want to give this list a try, then please let us know how it goes. I'm afraid that we won't be able to answer all your letters, but we will read them and add your comments to the melting pot for when we get back to the Lizardmen and write up the final version for the book.

A quick note on Cold Ones: the ones you see here are as they'll be in the

Dark Elf book. The more we played with Cold Ones as you see in Ravening Hordes, the more we thought they were simply too good. This slight reduction in their profile leaves them still one of the most fearsome cavalry units in the Warhammer world, but not quite so unbalanced. And while I'm about it, there's also the question of the famous mixed units of Skinks and Kroxigor. These were not only better at fighting than the Saurus Warriors (which was odd), but also caused problems with the rules. After several days trying to come up with a way of making them work, Rick Priestley had a great idea which we've used here. Rather than having one unit with two different types of model in, you have two units that fight together in a special way. All in all both a lot easier in rules terms and more fitting in background terms.

Finally, as this list is for those of you that already have a Lizardmen army (and therefore the old army book), I've concentrated here on the rules and army list rather than on background information. Of course, we'll do loads of cool new background info when the new book comes out, but the general sweep of the history and culture remains the same. Only the names have been changed to protect the innocent...

WHAT'S UP?

With fifteen armies to go through, it's going to take a while before all the army books are out for the new Warhammer. Of course, you have the Ravening Hordes army lists to use in the meantime – that's what they're there for. Everyone would like to have the full army book for their army right now, but unfortunately that just isn't feasible, so to keep everyone happy we're going to do a 'work in progress' version of some of the lists that are further off in the distance. The first of these is the Lizardmen list you see here.

With a flourish the standard bearer plunged the banner pole into the hot sand, the golden threads of the flag glinting in the morning light. Beside it El Cadavo stood proudly with one foot on the pay chest, wishing that one of those fancy court painters was there to capture his moment of glory. New lands! Riches aplenty! All would be his. There just remained the small formality of quelling the natives.

He eyed the treeline at the edge of the beach. Nothing there, even the birds in the palms had stopped their shrieking to admire his army as it came ashore. And a splendid sight it was too. El Cadavo's heart swelled with pride.

"Alright men" he called, a smile splitting his gaunt features, "let's get these boats unloaded and the tents set up."

An hour hadn't passed when one of the sentries came running into the growing camp. "Sir, sir! Lizardmen, dozens of 'em!" El Cadavo emerged from his tent and blinked in the noonday sunshine. "Time to amaze the natives," he said. "Enrico, bring that chest." With that he strode off to meet his guests.

The Lizardmen deputation was a dramatic sight. In the centre was their leader, a vast bloated toad of a creature on a palanquin, surrounded by bone-crested warriors and borne up by more of their breed. Around them swarmed dozens of smaller creatures, all the same blue-green hue as their larger brothers. Several Lizardmen carried brilliantly colored feather banners and crests, and the whole group was laden with golden jewelry. They were a feast for the eyes.

As El Cadavo stared at this spectacle, one of the smaller creatures stepped forwards and in heavily accented Tilean said "Greetings most glorious master-of-warriors, most noble of travellers on the World Pond. My lord Xtinki bids me welcome you to the hospitality of our sun-kissed shores. Did you have a nice trip?"

"Greetings to your noble lord" replied El Cadavo, bowing to the toad-thing. "I have come from across these wide waters to bestow wondrous gifts upon you." With that he took the chest from Enrico and carefully placed it in front of the palanquin. "Such valuables are plentiful where we come from," boasted the grizzled general, winking to Enrico and opening the chest. Inside were all manner and color of cheap glass beads.

"Behold" cried El Cadavo, "Riches to decorate your... er... majestic brow." He began to hand the baubles to the nearest Skinks who looked decidedly unimpressed, but handed them round nonetheless. "And these looking glasses" said Cadavo, waving a piece of broken mirror to catch the light. "Their like has never been seen on these shores. All I ask in return is that we be allowed to march inland unmolested and perhaps collect a few mementos to remind us of our visit."

The Skink interpreter spoke again. "My lord Xtinki instructs me to thank you for your most generous gifts, but is afraid that he cannot possibly accept offerings of such... quality." As if on cue, the Lizardmen dropped all the trinkets into the sand and turned to stare at El Cadavo.

"Why, you ungrateful wretches" cried El Cadavo. "Enrico, bring up the cannon. That'll impress them." Then, turning back to lord Xtinki, he said "I'm sorry you dislike my gifts. Perhaps this will be more persuasive." He turned and nodded to Enrico who had readied the cannon. There was a deafening roar.

"There" said El Cadavo, turning back to the Lizardmen with a wolfish grin. "That is the power we bring with us. Why don't you take your ~~own~~ spears and feather skirts and run along now. I promise you shan't be hurt if you stay out of our way." Lord Xtinki blinked slowly, obviously unimpressed.

Stepping forward, the Skink interpreter pointed to the sky saying "You have

insulted our gods. To show his displeasure Lord Sotek will swallow the sun. All will be in darkness and the world will fall into perpetual night."

As one the Tileans burst out laughing, clutching their sides and roaring until tears poured down their cheeks. Eventually El Cadavo managed to pull himself together long enough to blurt out "Alright lads, enough of these primitive savages..." But before he could finish the command a cry went up from his men. "Look! The sun!" Everyone turned to follow the pointing finger. As they watched, a black stain began to cover the sun. "Sotek, Sotek" chanted the Lizardmen.

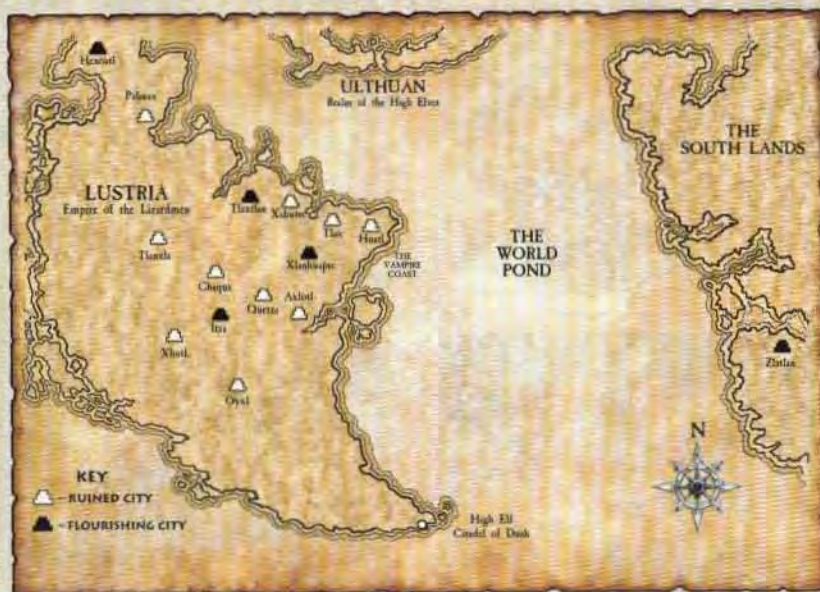
"Aaaaaaagh!" cried the Tileans. "Save us!", "Help!", "Disaster!", "The end of the world has come!"

Panic spread through the Tileans as the air grew chill and the darkness became complete. El Cadavo stood frozen among his panic-stricken men who dashed about tearing their hair, screaming for forgiveness or offering up prayers.

"Ye gods! What have we done?" muttered El Cadavo under his breath. Then louder, "Back to the boats!" There was a stampede.

As the Tileans frantically rowed away the sun began to show its face once more, but they weren't about to stop. "Row, damn you! Row!" cried the captain, and they rowed even harder.

On the shore the Skinks watched the eclipse complete its divine cycle, grinning as only Lizards can.



To The Land of The Dead

Each temple-city of the Lizardmen is like a separate independent country, ruled by a Mage-Priest and defended by its own army of warriors. The armies of the Lizardmen are very exotic and colorful. The cohorts of Skinks and Saurus warriors line up in their serried ranks, each with a standard depicting one of their ancient jungle gods and led by officers bedecked in feathered headdresses. Regiments are distinguished by the vivid colors and markings of the warriors' scaly skin and everywhere is the glint of gleaming gold and bronze weapons and armor. Towering above these hordes are the swaying howdahs on the backs of the awesome Stegadons and the ferocious Kroxigors. Commanding the army is the Slann Mage-Priest, borne aloft on his golden palanquin.

Spawnings

Slann, Saurus Warriors, Skinks and Kroxigors are spawned in ponds and swamps, whereas the various reptilian beasts which serve them, such as the Stegadons and Terradons, are hatched from eggs.



Every Lizardmen city has its sacred ponds and expanses of marsh where the spawnings occur. Skinks and Kroxigors tend to spawn in ponds and swamps open to the sky, whereas Saurus are usually spawned in dank subterranean caverns. Pyramid temples are frequently built over the top of the entrances to such caverns and outlying swamps are sometimes made into rectangular sacred ponds. Some days after the spawn has been laid, it hatches into tadpoles which grow larger and more powerful by the day, feeding on the enormous number of tropical insects that hover above the waters. When the Lizardmen are fully developed, they emerge onto dry land in enormous numbers.

The interval between spawnings can be very long, and usually a spawning will

not recur in the same pond within the lifetime of the last generation to be spawned there. Thus, each city is surrounded with ponds which spawn at different times, so that a particular pond will be given a name such as 'Sacred Pond of the First Generation' referring to the first spawning of a new cycle of spawnings. Since generations emerge from different ponds at different intervals of time, there are always several age-groups of Lizardmen living in the population of a city at any time. The Mage-Priests keep detailed records of the spawnings but can still be taken by surprise by sudden spawnings occurring in ruined cities where the records have been lost in antiquity!



Clockwise from bottom left: three Saurus warriors demonstrating various color schemes, a brightly-patterned Skink Standard Bearer, a mighty Kroxigor and the fearsome Stegadon with its howdah full of Skink riders.



Slann Magic: the Wisdom of the Old Ones

The ancient Slann are the most potent wizards in the Warhammer world, able to move entire planets if they put their minds to it. Fortunately for their foes, their minds are usually occupied on more important matters than merely fighting the lesser races.

When Slann Mage-Priests come to select their spells before a battle, they are allowed more freedom than normal. They may use any lore from the Warhammer rulebook. What's more, a single Slann can choose from more than one lore instead of being limited to just one. Truly they are masters of magic!

How do you do this? Pick a list, roll a dice to see what you get, choose the default instead, if you like, and then choose another list or the same one again. You cannot have the same spell from the same list more than once per Wizard as normal, so re-roll duplicate results. However, you could have the same effect from two different spells, eg. *Fire Ball* and *Dark Hand of Death*.

In addition, Slann are so powerful that they add +1 to their attempts to both cast and dispel.

SKINK MAGIC

The Skink Shamans are far less potent wizards than their Slann masters and rarely achieve more than a rudimentary understanding of magic. Their training focuses on astronomy and astrology, observing the movements of the heavenly bodies and divining the plan of the Old Ones from them. Appropriately, Skink Shamans use the Lore of Heavens for their spellcasting.

MAGIC ITEMS

You may choose magic items for your characters and units from the following

list and/or the common magic items on page 154 of the Warhammer rulebook.

Piranha Blade (magic weapon):
+2 Attacks. 50 pts

Dagger of Sotek (magic weapon):
Skinks only. +1 Strength. In addition, when fighting Skaven each wound inflicted by the dagger counts as 2 towards combat resolution instead of the normal 1. 50 pts

Sword of the Hornet (magic weapon):
Always strike first. 25 pts

Bitametl (magic armor):
Counts as wearing armor (5+ armor save, combines as normal with other armor saves).
Re-roll failed armor saves. 35 pts

Stegadon Helm (magic armor):
May be worn in addition to other armor (5+ armor save, combines as normal with other armor saves). 15 pts

Glyph Necklace (talisman):
5+ Ward save. 30 pts

Amulet of Itzl (talisman):
2+ Ward save against the first wound suffered. One use only. 40 pts

Amulet of Xapati (talisman):
Gives its wearer Magic Resistance (2). 40 pts

Cloak of Feathers (enchant item):
Skink on foot only. Movement can fly. 40 pts

Bane Head (enchanted item):
Nominate an enemy character at the start of the battle. All unsaved wounds caused by the bearer on the nominated target are doubled. 20 pts

Plaque of Dominion (arcane item):
Adds 1 extra dice to the Lizardmen army's pool of Power and Dispel dice in each player's turn. 50 pts

Totem of Prophecy (magic banner):
The unit causes *fear*. 75 pts

Sun Standard of Chotec (magic banner):
Missiles fired at the unit carrying the banner are at -1 to hit. 40 pts

Totem of the Crested Ones (magic banner):
The unit gets a 5+ Ward save against normal and magical missiles with a Strength of 5 or more. 30 pts

Jaguar Standard (magic banner):
The unit pursues an extra D6". 20 pts

MARKS OF THE GODS

The many gods of the Lizardmen are sometimes moved to mark out one of their followers for greatness. These marks are carefully examined and compiled by the Skink scribes so that they may pick out the chosen ones from each spawning and assign them to duties that befit their status.

Skink and Saurus characters may choose marks from the following list instead of/as well as taking magic items. The cost of the marks is taken from the points allowed to each character to spend on magic items. Each character may only have a given mark once, though he may have several different marks. More than one character in an army may have the same mark of the gods.

You should paint these markings on your models. Note that the gods are not always predictable in these markings, so whilst one of Tepoc's chosen may have a purple crest, another may be completely purple or have purple spots or stripes. Particularly fortunate characters may have more than one mark and so are a combination of these colors.



A unit of Saurus Warriors in all its colorful glory.

Mark of the Old Ones (albino):
+1 Wound. 50 pts

Mark of Tlaxcotl (yellow):
+1 Leadership. 50 pts

Mark of Chotec (vermillion):
+1 Attack. 25 pts

Mark of Sotek (blood red):
Frenzy. 25 pts

Mark of Itzl (great crest):
+1 Strength. 20 pts

Mark of Tepoc (purple):
Skink Shaman only. Knows 1 more spell than normal for his level. 15 pts

Mark of Huanchi (black):
+1 Movement. 15 pts

Mark of Tzunki (mottled):
+2 Initiative. 5 pts

Lizardmen Special Rules

The following special rules apply to the Lizardmen army.

- **Cold Blooded.** Lizardmen units roll all Psychology and Break tests on 3D6 and discard the highest dice score.
- **Aquatic.** Skinks and Kroxigor can move over marsh, rivers, streams, lakes or other water-features without penalty and will benefit from soft cover if in such terrain.
- **Scaly Skin.** Many Lizardmen have an armor save from their scaly skin. This may be combined with armor and shields as normal. Saurus and Salamanders have a 6+ armor save; Kroxigors have a 5+ armor save and Stegadons have a 4+ armor save.
- **Blowpipe.** These have a range of 12" and 2 x Multiple Shots. They suffer penalties for long range, moving and shooting, etc., as normal.
- **Poisoned attacks.** All attacks from Skink arrows, javelins or blowpipe darts count as poisoned attacks. Note that this only applies to shooting attacks, not those in close combat.
- **Mixed size units.** This is not a new rule, but a reminder of the ones on pages 59 & 98 of the main rulebook. When shooting at units containing a mixture of different sized models (such as Salamanders or units containing Slann) you may choose to target either one troop type or the other. So you could, for example, choose to fire on the Salamander rather than the Skinks around it. In this case the -1 to hit for being a skirmish unit would still apply.

SLANN

Slann are the leaders of the Lizardmen, directing their efforts towards a completion of the Old Ones' plans. A Lizardmen army will often be the personal retinue of a particular Slann Mage-Priest or Lord.

Large target.

Palanquin: Treat the Slann and his bearers as a single model with a single profile, rather like a chariot. Use a base size of 75mm wide and 50mm deep.

If the Slann has joined a unit of troops, the unit counts rank bonuses as if the space taken by the palanquin were taken by normal troops.

Note: Poisoned Attacks wound their targets automatically when they score a 6 on their to hit roll (as described on page 114 of the rulebook). But what happens if you need a 7 or more to hit in the first place?

In these cases the poison has no effect, and so such hits cannot wound automatically.

The Slann has a Unit Strength of 8.

Contemplation: Slann are concerned with the plan of the Old Ones and the workings of magic rather than fighting the lesser races. Consequently Slann will not use magical armor or weapons.

Shield of the Old Ones: Slann are protected by potent magical defenses which give them a 2+ Ward save. However, models in base contact with the Slann are slightly inside the mystical shield and the save against their attacks is reduced to a 4+ Ward save.

SAURUS WARRIORS

Saurus Warriors were bred specially to fight for the Old Ones many millennia ago, and they still form the backbone of Lizardmen armies today.

Cold Blooded, Scaly Skin (6+).

TEMPLE GUARD

Each Slann has a personal retinue of Saurus Warriors whose duty it is to protect him whilst he lies in contemplation of the Old Ones' sacred plans.

Cold Blooded, Scaly Skin (6+).

Sacred duty: If the Temple Guard unit is joined by a Slann, then it is suffused with his power and becomes *stubborn*.

SKINK WARRIORS

Skinks are nimble and intelligent, leaving the main job of fighting to the sturdier Saurus Warriors. Instead, the Skinks form clouds of skirmishers, nimbly dodging the enemy units and skirting round their flanks where they can pepper them with poisoned javelins and arrows.

Cold Blooded, Aquatic, Skirmish.

Scouts: This works exactly as explained on page 112 of the rulebook with the following additions. Scouting Skinks count as out of sight if they are deployed within a water feature, and more than 2" from its edge. They must still deploy 10" or more from enemy troops as normal.

Skink characters may be held back from normal deployment and be placed as Scouts after the rest of the army has deployed.

CHAMELEON SKINKS

These rare and secretive Skinks are masters of stealth and camouflage. They can stand motionless for hours, evading all but the most thorough of searches, biding their time until they are ready to unleash a hail of venom-coated darts to slaughter their enemies.

Cold Blooded, Aquatic, Skirmish.

Chameleon: With skin that shifts colors

to match their surroundings, the Chameleon Skinks are very hard to spot. This means that the enemy suffers an additional -1 to hit when shooting at them.

In addition, they are able to sneak up extremely close to the enemy. Chameleon Skinks are deployed at the same time as Scouts, and can be placed in one of two ways. Either place them exactly like Scouts, but with no minimum distance between them and the enemy, or place them in sight of the enemy (even in the open), but more than 12" away from them.

COLD ONES

Although they are difficult to train, Cold Ones are the perfect mount for Saurus Warriors. Both rider and mount are deadly killing machines and the combination is devastating.

Cold Blooded, Scaly Skin (6+), Cause Fear, Stupidity.

Thick-skinned: A warrior mounted on a Cold One adds +2 to his armor save instead of the normal +1 for being mounted.

KROXIGORS

These fearsome creatures are far bigger and stronger than the other Lizardmen, towering above the tiny Skinks and even the burly Saurus. Normally, their huge strength is used to carry the giant stones which make up the pyramid temples of the Slann, but in battle they are equally happy to carry huge bronze axes.

Cold Blooded, Scaly Skin (5+), Cause Fear, Aquatic.

Skirmish Screen: Skinks and Kroxigors often fight in closely linked formations, the smaller Skinks scouting out the enemy for the Kroxigors to charge. When the Skinks find the enemy, they whisper back to the Kroxigors who then charge through the screen of Skink skirmishers.

Both Skinks and Kroxigors are separate units and follow all the normal rules. In addition, Kroxigors may see and charge through Skink units (including Chameleon Skinks). Unfortunately, though the Skinks know the Kroxigors will charge, sometimes they don't get out of the way in time and are killed in the stampede. Roll a D6 per Kroxigor in the unit charging through the Skinks. For each roll of a 1 a Skink is crushed underfoot by the lumbering Kroxigors.

SALAMANDERS

Despite the many dangers of goading these fractious creatures, such is the skill of the brave Skinks that herd Salamanders to battle that they are only seldom eaten by them.

Cold Blooded, Skirmish, Scaly Skin (6+).

Salamanders spit venom up to 24" range using their BS to hit as normal and with the normal penalties for long range, moving, etc. Units that are struck suffer 1D6 Strength 4 hits with no armor save possible. Salamanders may not stand and shoot.

If all the Skinks are killed, the Salamander is treated like a ridden monster that has lost its rider. However, when it comes to rolling its Leadership test, assume it fails and just roll on the Monster Reaction chart (page 105) to see what it does.

TERRADONS

These ancient reptiles are trapped and trained by the Skinks who ride them. Soaring above the jungle canopy, the Skink messengers and scouts can move from city to city with ease.

Cold Blooded, Flying Unit.

Mounted: Skinks riding Terradons get a 6+ armor save. One Skink per Terradon may shoot his short bow each turn.

STEGADONS

Stegadons are huge and terrifying monsters from the depths of the jungle. In battle they are used as living battering rams to smash holes in the foe's line.

Treat Stegadons as ridden monsters with more than one rider. If the Stegadon is killed then the Skinks form a small unit of skirmishers. If all the Skinks are killed, the Stegadon is treated like any other ridden monster. For Victory points purposes only the Stegadon itself counts. Slain Skinks are ignored.

Cold Blooded, Scaly Skin (4+ for Stegadon), **Poisoned Attacks** (from Skinks' javelins), **Causes Terror**, **Large Target**.

Howdah: The combined effect of the armored howdah, shields and giant bony crest on the Stegadon is to give the Skinks (or character) riding it a 2+ armor save. This armor save cannot be improved, though a character could also have a Ward save from a magic item.

Mixed weapons: The Skinks carry a variety of weapons in the howdah. For

the purposes of the game count these as hand weapons, javelins and shields.

Impact hits: The Stegadon causes D6 impact hits when it charges, like a chariot.

Giant bow: Treat this as a bolt thrower with Strength 5 that can move and fire. Check the line of sight for the giant bow from its position on top of the howdah.

JUNGLE SWARMS

Lizardmen armies often march to battle amidst swarms of deadly serpents, poisonous toads and other reptiles. Many thousands of these creatures infest the Skaven tunnels beneath Lustria, protecting the Lizardmen nations from attack by the rat-men. Sotek himself is said to direct these creatures to aid the Lizardmen in ensuring that the plans of the Old Ones continue to be carried out.

For gaming purposes you can use any mixture of snakes and reptiles on a 40mm base. The exact number and type of models isn't important, but it should look like a swarm.



Skinks and Terradons pour from the undergrowth to attack an Empire raiding party

Unbreakable, Poisoned Attacks.

See p238-9 of the Warhammer rulebook with the following additions and amendments when choosing your army.

CHOOSING CHARACTERS

Characters are divided into two broad categories: Lords (the most powerful characters) and Heroes (the rest). The maximum number of characters an army can include is shown on the chart below.

Army Value	Maximum Characters	Maximum Lords
< 2,000	3	0
2,000-2,999	4	up to 1
3,000-3,999	6	up to 2
+1,000	+2 max	1 max

IMPORTANT: The number of characters is the total number of characters allowed in the army including Lords. For example: a 2,500 point Lizardmen army may have up to 4 characters in total, of which 1 may be a Lord (ie, 1 Lord + 3 Heroes).

An army does not have to include the maximum number of characters allowed, and can always include fewer than indicated down to a minimum of one (the General). Similarly, an army does not have to include Lords, it can include all of its characters as Heroes if you prefer.

CHOOSING TROOPS

Troops are divided into Core, Special and Rare units. The number of units of each type that are available to you depends upon the points value of your army. This is indicated on the chart below.

Army Value	Core	Special	Rare
< 2,000	2+	0-3	0-1
2,000-2,999	3+	0-4	0-2
3,000-3,999	4+	0-5	0-3
+1,000	+1	+1	+1

For example, if you are choosing a 2,000 point army you must take a minimum of 3 Core units and could choose to take up to 4 Special and/or up to 2 Rare.

In addition, if an individual entry has a number limiting it, eg 0-1, then you may only have that many in your army.

UNIT ENTRIES

Each unit is represented by an entry in the army list. The unit's name is given and any limitations that apply are explained.

Profiles. The characteristic profiles for the troops in each unit are given in the unit entry. Where several profiles are required, these are also given even if, as in many cases, they are optional.

Unit Sizes. Each entry specifies the minimum size for each unit. In some cases units also have a maximum size.

Equipment. Each entry lists the standard weapons and armor for that unit. The value of these items is included in the points cost.

Options. Additional or optional weapons and armor are listed here together with their extra cost.

Special Rules. Many troops have special rules which are described in this section.

LORDS

SLANN MAGE-PRIEST 405 points each

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Slann Mage-Priest	4	4	3	5	5	8	2	4	9

Equipment: Slann ride palanquins and are guarded by their bearers. Count the bearers' weapons as hand weapons. Their attacks are included in the profile of the Slann Mage-Priest himself.

Magic: A Slann Mage-Priest is a Level 4 Wizard.

Options:

- One Slann Mage-Priest may be upgraded to a Battle Standard Bearer for +25 points. A Battle Standard Bearer may carry any magic banner (no points limit) in addition to his other magic items. A Battle Standard Bearer may also be your army general.
- May choose magic items from the Common or Lizardmen magic item lists, with a maximum total value of 100 points in addition to any magical battle standard.

Special rules: *Palanquin, Large Target, Shield of the Old Ones, Contemplation.*

HEROES

SAURUS HERO 100 points per model

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Saurus Hero	4	5	0	5	5	2	3	4	8
Cold One	7	3	0	4	4	1	2	1	3

Equipment: Hand weapon.

Options:

- May choose either a great weapon (+4 pts), spear (+4 pts) or halberd (+4 pts).
- May wear light armor (+2 pts) and may also carry a shield (+2 pts).
- May ride a Cold One (+28 points).
- May choose marks of the gods and/or magic items from the Common or Lizardmen magic item lists, with a maximum total value of 50 points.

Special rules: *Cold Blooded, Scaly Skin (6+).* Cold Ones *Cause Fear*, are *Thick Skinned* and are subject to *Stupidity*.

Note: Saurus heroes are rare and powerful individuals and therefore each of them counts as 2 Hero choices instead of 1.

SKINK HERO 70 points per model

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Skink Hero	6	4	4	4	3	2	5	3	6

Equipment: Hand weapon.

Options:

- May choose either an additional hand weapon (+4 pts) or spear (+4 pts).
- May also choose either a short bow(+8 pts) or javelins (+8 pts).
- May wear light armor (+2 pts) and may also carry a shield (+2 pts).
- May ride a Stegadon chosen as normal from the Rare units section of the army list at the points cost shown there.
- May choose marks of the gods and/or magic items from the Common or Lizardmen magic item lists, with a maximum total value of 50 points.

Special rules: *Cold Blooded, Aquatic, Scout.* Skink arrows and javelins count as *Poisoned Attacks*.

SKINK SHAMAN 65 points per model

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Skink Shaman	6	2	3	3	2	2	4	1	5

Equipment: Hand weapon.

Magic: A Skink Shaman is a Level 1 Wizard.

Options:

- One Skink Shaman in the army may be upgraded to a Level 2 Wizard for +35 points.
- May ride a Stegadon chosen as normal from the Rare Units section of the army list at the points cost shown there.
- May choose marks of the gods and/or magic items from the Common or Lizardmen magic item lists, with a maximum total value of 50 points.

Special rules: *Cold Blooded, Aquatic, Scout.*

CORE UNITS

SAURUS WARRIORS 11 points per model

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Saurus	4	3	0	4	4	1	1	2	7
Champion	4	3	0	4	4	1	1	3	7

Unit Size: 10+

Equipment: Hand weapon and shield.

Options:

- Any unit may be equipped with spears (+2 points per model).
- Upgrade one Saurus Warrior into a Musician for +6 points.
- Upgrade one Saurus Warrior into a Standard Bearer for +8 points.
- Promote one Saurus Warrior to a Champion for +12 points.

Special rules: *Cold Blooded, Scaly Skin (6+).*

SKINK SKIRMISHERS 8 points per model

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Skink	6	2	3	3	2	1	4	1	5
Champion	6	2	4	3	2	1	4	1	5

Unit Size: 10-20

Equipment: Hand weapon and short bow.

Options:

- Skinks may exchange their short bows for javelins and shield (+2 pts).
- Promote one Skink to a Champion for +5 points.

Special rules: *Cold Blooded, Aquatic, Skirmish, Scouts.* Skink arrows and javelins count as *Poisoned Attacks*.

0-1 UNITS OF JUNGLE SWARMS 55 points per model

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Jungle Swarm	4	3	0	2	2	5	1	5	10

Unit Size: 1-6

Special rules: *Unbreakable, Poisoned Attacks.*



DRAFT

SPECIAL UNITS

0-1 TEMPLE GUARD 15 points per model

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Temple Guard	4	4	0	4	4	1	2	2	7
Champion	4	4	0	4	4	1	2	3	7

Unit Size: 10+

Equipment: Hand weapon, halberd and light armor.

Options:

- Upgrade one Temple Guard into a Musician for +7 points.
- Upgrade one Temple Guard into a Standard Bearer for +14 points.
- A Standard Bearer may carry a Magic Standard worth up to 50 points.
- Promote one Temple Guard to a Champion for +14 points.

Special rules: *Cold Blooded, Scaly Skin (6+), Sacred Duty.*

KROXIGORS 50 points per model

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Kroxigor	6	3	0	5	4	3	1	3	7
Champion	6	3	0	5	4	3	1	4	7

Unit Size: 3+

Equipment: Great weapon.

Options:

- Promote one Kroxigor to a Champion for +20 points.

Special rules: *Cold Blooded, Cause Fear, Aquatic, Scaly Skin (5+).*

SALAMANDERS* 70 points per unit

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Salamander	6	3	3	4	4	3	2	3	5
Skink	6	2	3	3	2	1	4	1	5

* You may take up to 2 Salamanders as a single Special choice.

Unit Size: 1 Salamander with 4 Skink Runners.

Equipment: Skink Runners have a hand weapon (goad or prodder).

Special rules: *Cold Blooded, Aquatic, Scaly Skin (6+ for Salamanders), Spit Venom.*

TERRADONS 26 points per model

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Terradon	2	2	3	3	3	2	4	3	5
Terradon & Champion	2	2	4	3	3	2	4	3	5

Unit Size: 3-10.

Equipment: Skink Riders have a hand weapon and short bow. Their attacks are included in the profile of the Terradon.

Options:

- Promote one Skink Rider to a Champion for +10 points.

Special rules: *Flying Unit, Cold Blooded, Mounted.* The Skinks' arrows count as *Poisoned Attacks*.



DRAFT

RARE UNITS

0-1 CHAMELEON SKINKS 15 points per model

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Chameleon	6	2	4	3	2	1	4	1	6
Champion	6	2	5	3	2	1	4	1	6

Unit Size: 5-10

Equipment: Hand weapon and blowpipe.

Options:

- Promote one Skink to a Champion for +6 points.

Special rules: *Cold Blooded*, *Aquatic*, *Skirmish*, *Chameleon*. Blowpipe darts count as *Poisoned Attacks*.

STEGADONS 265 points per model

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Skink	6	2	3	3	2	1	4	1	5
Stegadon	6	2	0	5	6	5	2	4	5

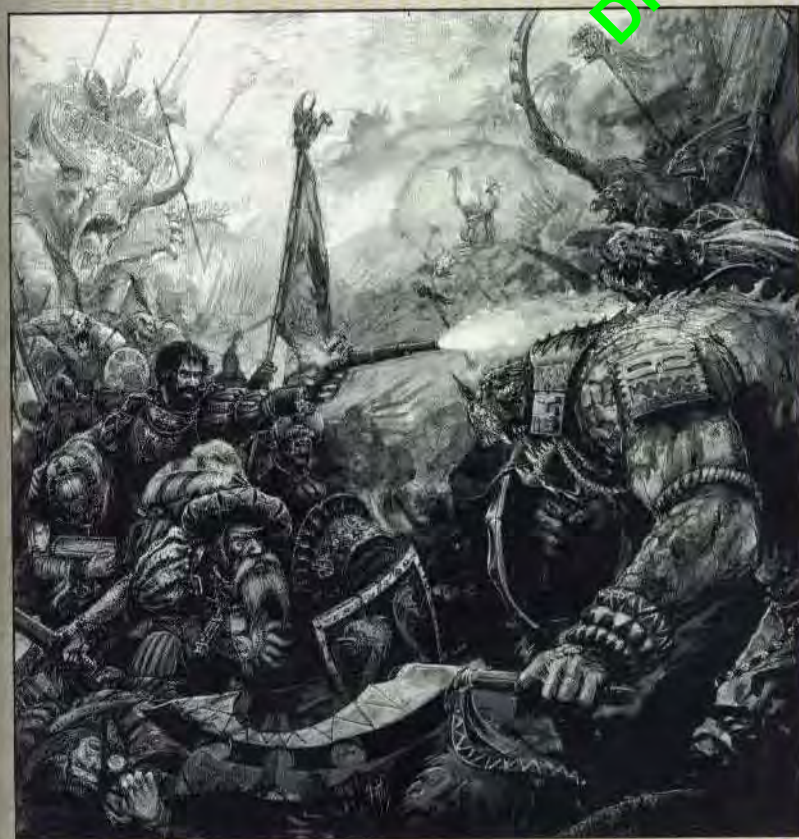
Unit Size: 1 Stegadon with either 6 Skink crew or 1 character chosen from the Heroes section of the list.

Equipment: Hand weapon, javelin and shield. If the Stegadon is not ridden by a character then it will have a giant bow (crewed by 2 of the 6 Skinks).

Special rules: *Cold Blooded*, *Houdab*. The Skinks' javelins count as *Poisoned Attacks*. Stegadons *Cause Terror*, have *Scaly Skin (4+)* and are *Large Targets*.

DOGS OF WAR (points variable)

See White Dwarf 250-1. Tichi Huichi's Raiders would be a particularly appropriate regiment for this army.



Well, that just about wraps it up for this edition of Warhammer Chronicles. Next month myself and Scrivener Thornton take a look at the eldritch wonders of interactive magic, and the peculiar advantages of 'wobbly' terrain...

Cbeerio until next time,

THE RED TERROR

by Phil Kelly

The slime-covered tunnel stretched into the distance, the halogen lamps of the Storm Troopers reflecting off the glistening walls. The thing had burrowed in a straight line through soil, bedrock, plastel and rockcrete alike in search of its prey, the various materials lay like strata along the ribbed walls of the tunnel. The acrid stench was unbearable, and the cramped conditions were taking a toll on the

Storm Trooper squad. They'd been in these dripping tunnels for six hours straight, and the acidic slime was eating away at the kevlar of their uniforms.

Sergeant Creagan had volunteered for the seek and destroy mission as soon as he had heard the news. Two of his men had been killed in the massacre at the mess hall, their ragged corpses slumped across the table, blood mingling with the slop they called food in Devlan. At first, his request had been denied, his emotional involvement deemed too great. Since then, the thing had killed another eighteen men. He was the only squad leader remaining with any kind of experience in this field. It needed to be stopped, and fast.

His plan was to follow the thing back to its lair after it had fed, killing it whilst it digested its latest meal. Earlier that night, Kilean had been devoured feet-first by the creature; and if they did not find it soon, it would resume hunting.

Creagan checked his flamer gauge; the earlier scare with the feasting Rippers had cost them valuable fuel. The temperature

readings inside his visor indicated that it was almost nightfall. They were running out of time.

The reading on the auspex was nearing their position at a worrying speed, there was no doubt that it had their scent. Creagan couldn't shake the feeling that he was no longer the hunter.

"Form up, this is it. We've found the creature. Hann, van Dohl, take point."

"Emperor's name, there it is! Twelve o'clock, coming fast!"

Barreling towards them along the tunnel was a nightmarish, writhing mass of claws and chitin, its carapace slick with blood and slime. The lead Storm Troopers released a belching cloud of superheated chemicals into the tunnel for long seconds, rewarded by a deafening screeching, the gout of flame billowing down the tunnel. When the backwash of heat became unbearable, Creagan gave the order to cease fire.

The tunnel was empty. The acrid stench was now even worse, the filters in their masks working overtime to keep the air breathable. The walls were black with thin strands of incinerated mucus. Creagan checked his auspex, but the only readings were those of his squad.

"Sarge? Where is it?" asked van Dohl. Creagan remained silent, it would not do to admit he didn't know. Long minutes passed before the squad started forward again, their shadows cast down the tunnels before them.

The burrow opened out into one of the mine's subterranean generator-chapels, crowded with thrumming engines and hissing pipes. The metal soles of their boots clanged on the heavy grille floor as the squad spread out.

Surveying his surroundings, Creagan realized too late that the auspex was chiming once more.

There were one too many readings in the centre of the display.

With a shriek of tearing metal, the thing burst from underneath the walkway, unfolding like some vile pupa as its fore-claws plunged deep into Hann's chest, gouging out great chunks of bloody flesh. It grabbed with snake-like speed at van Dohl, catching him in its massive calciferous talons, disappearing back into the hole before the others could get a clear shot. His screams were cut short by a bubbling cough.



"After it!" shouted Creagan, sprinting forward, his flamer spitting a lance of fire into the space below the walkway ahead of them. Something caught the light, and for a second he saw a wriggling morass of muscle and claw snaking below the metal grille. His squad were at his heels, running hard after the xenomorph.

A minute later, Creagan admitted to himself they had lost van Dohl. He also realized they had no idea where they were.

Turning a corner, he saw something that nearly incapacitated him with nausea. The creature was lying stretched out in a dark corner, its bony, drooling jaws distended impossibly wide, carapace plates rippling with peristaltic motion. Van Dohl's head, slick with slime, protruded obscenely from between its jaws, wide-open eyes staring straight at Creagan before he disappeared entirely into its gullet.

With a roar of anger, Creagan opened fire, his men doing the same, the flames silhouetting the creature, immolating everything within range. It writhed within the inferno for a second before disappearing from sight. The Storm Troopers advanced warily. A moment passed.

The thing reared up from behind a network of pipes, hurtling towards them, its maw open wide. It was in their midst before they could fire, a claw stabbing into Naverre's back, pinning him to the grille as its pincer-tail dug deep into Wendt's neck.

Darting forward, one of its secondary limbs whipped out, a claw slicing through the air towards Petrovic's head. He ducked, the talon clanging off his helmet, knocking him into the pipes. The creature wrenched its tail from Wendt's neck, wrapping it around Petrovic's legs and dragging him towards its jaws. But the Storm Trooper's carapace armor was wedged between the piping, resisting the pull. For an awful second, Petrovic hung off the floor, a scream rising in his throat. Then, in an explosion of blood, he came apart at the waist.

Creagan charged, chainsword buzzing, towards its slimy, segmented torso. The blow bit into a vast claw, the teeth screaming as they burnt into bone, and his arm was forced out wide, the chainsword twisting out of his grip. The thing reared, its maw gaping open. Creagan had no time to scream before it struck.

* * * * *

Creagan woke in agonizing pain, his vision seared red-black. His whole body was wracked in burning torture, trapped within the thing's digestive sac. His suit's life-support was working overtime, adrenaline thundering through his body. He was

dimly aware of movement, but his muscles were weak and numb, the soporific acids gnawing away slowly at exposed patches of flesh.

The exterior movement stopped, and the thing started to convulse. Strong bands of muscle were forcing him forward, into the light. The last thing Creagan saw was the remains of van Dohl slithering out next to him as the Red Terror regurgitated its latest meal into the acids of the digestion pool.

DRAFT

"Emperor knows what hellish apparition we came to know as the Red Terror. It first attacked the outer bastion and twenty four men died before we drove it away with flamers. We never even found the bodies of Lieutenant Borales and Captain Lowe, just a trail of acidic slime which led away from the command post and into the tunnels. It returned the following night and the slaughter began anew, but this time we were ready for it... Or so we thought."

Excerpted from *Twenty Days in Hell*, the retreat from Devlan Primus.



Whilst the terrifying abilities of the Vampire Bloodlines are legendary, few have ever learned from whence these dark creatures came.

Space McQuirk uncovers the origins of the Vampire.



Space McQuirk has contributed to Warhammer Armies Books including Orcs & Goblins, Dwarfs and Vampire Counts.

The tale of the dreaded Vampire begins many thousands of years before the reign of Karl Franz, millennia before the coming of Sigmar and the founding of the Empire. It begins in the realm of Nehekhar, now an arid desert, known as the Land of the Dead amongst men, Tar Uritharhain to the Elves and Grimaz-Ankor in the Khazalid of the Dwarfs.

Most mighty of the Nehekharan cities was Khemri, ruled over by the Priest King Nagash. Nagash rose to power after murdering his brother, and it was he who first created the lore of magic now known as necromancy. Nagash used his knowledge to raise up army of dead warriors and usurp the throne of Khemri. Yet Nagash had not achieved true immortality with his magic, for his body was still aged and withered.



BORN UNTO DAMNATION

The Origins of the Vampires – Part One

To channel the dark energies he needed, the renegade Priest King began the construction of a monolithic black pyramid that dwarfed even the mightiest existing tombs.

The other Priest Kings of Nehekhar feared Nagash, they grew suspicious of his longevity and knew that he was growing too powerful. Soon he would no doubt conquer them. Prince Lahmizzar of Lahmia gathered the other nobles together for a secret council, and they decided to unite their forces against Nagash.

Nagash hid inside his new monument and Prince Lahmizzar set guards outside the pyramid to wait for his inevitable surrender, but Nagash had other plans. The Black Pyramid had been constructed at the heart of the Necropolis of Khemri, and that night Nagash used his dark powers to summon a vast legion of skeletal warriors. Soldiers and kings who had been buried centuries before rose from their tombs and warred against their descendants. Nagash led them, striking fear into the brave Lahmians' hearts as he rode at the fore of his army in a chariot made of bone.

That night many brave warriors died in the surprise attack, but the people of Khemri were so horrified by the Undead horde that they united with the gathered kings and marched against Nagash. In the ensuing battle

Lahmizzar was killed by Nagash himself but his son fought a savage battle with the dark

Necromancer and avenged his death. As Nagash's body fell to the ground, the Undead horde collapsed.

The victorious warriors raided the pyramid seeking to destroy the dark works of Nagash. Neferata, Lahmizzar's daughter and now Queen of Lahmia, was at the head of this raid when she came across one of the Nine Books of Nagash containing all of the Priest King's necromantic lore, now infamous across the world.

The cursed tome called out to her, beckoning her to save it from the purging flames. She took the book with noble intent; thinking to use the knowledge it contained to fight the evil that Nagash had unleashed, but the book was saturated in dark energies. She soon became fascinated by the macabre experiments which Nagash had worked on his slaves and, before long, Neferata found herself copying some of his simpler theories. At first, it was innocent fascination, but over time she became obsessed by Nagash's quest for immortality.

Neferata was foolish in her pride and believed that she could succeed where Nagash had failed. She followed his macabre rituals and created an elixir, its liquid was as black as night and stank of grave dust. Uttering a prayer to her ancestors, she drank deep of it. For a moment nothing happened. Then she was gripped by a fearsome pain, her veins screaming with agony. The torture turned to ecstasy, her senses filled with vibrancy, her body quivering with unnatural energy. She felt her heart stop beating, though she continued to live and breathe.

Suddenly she felt her soul pulled to another world, the world of undeath. A whole new plane of existence opened and her mind raced as she marvelled at the beautiful images of the spirits of the dead. Her initial exhilaration was replaced by stark fear as Neferata realized that her weak and fragile soul attracted these spirits who surrounded her, seeking the warmth of the living.

They sought the essence of life that they once possessed and tore at her unprotected soul. Neferata tried to fend them off but was unprepared for

such an assault, and before long one spirit broke through her defenses. When the Queen awoke, she found herself in the chamber where she had collapsed but could feel the malicious spirit inside her. It was thirsty and sought the warm blood of the living to ease its pain.

For many years the young Queen managed to conceal her secret, limiting her nightly predations to slaves, servants and others who would not be missed. After a time, though, she could no longer contain her thirst, and it was then that she began to lure courtiers to her chambers, supping on their warm blood for relief from the torment of her possessed soul.

As the nobles of Lahmia grew older they began to question their queen's eternal youth. Neferata realized that alone she was vulnerable and so, one by one, gave her dark gift to the others by means of the elixir. Amongst those nobles were her brother Ushoran and her High Priest Wsoran. Together they ruled over the people, believing themselves to be gods. And gods they were to the populace of Lahmia, undying rulers ordained to reign for eternity. Slowly the old religion died away, to be replaced by the worship of the living ancestors, the Eternal Queen and her Deathless Court.

As time passed the vampiric aristocracy discovered more of their powers. The sun hurt them bitterly, but the dust of the deserts was theirs to command and could be summoned to shroud them during daylight hours. They had the strength of a dozen men and no disease, blade nor accident could harm them. Their bodies changed, growing fangs so that they might better feast on the lifeblood of their unwilling victims. Soon they found that the gift of eternity could be passed with their own blood – the creation of a lesser Vampire called the Blood Kiss.

Each Vampire in turn created more of their kind and the temple of Lahmia became refuge to a whole host of such creatures. They commanded that the people worship them and would feed off these unfortunate souls.

One dark night, as she hunted the streets, one of the King's former guards, who went by the name of Abhorash, discovered Neferata drinking from a victim. He fled in terror at the unrecognizable creature he found, body awash with blood, fangs and claws bared for the kill. The following evening she summoned him to her temple and bade him drink from a chalice which, unknown to him, was filled with her blood. He was

a loyal captain and drank without question, thus his fate was sealed.

Abhorash was horrified by Neferata's trickery but was helpless against the thirst that overcame him. For many days he tried to fight his desire for blood, but one dark night he could not help his craving and slaughtered many of his own people.

Realizing the futility of denying his fate, Abhorash had little option but to join Neferata in her terrible court. He was still loyal to his people and decreed a set of laws for the Vampires of Lahmia to follow. They would hide their presence and only feed off those worthy of death. Although Abhorash abided by his own code of honor, the other Vampires thought themselves above such laws and carried on as they had before. The people were too fearful to stand against them, and so they continued a reign of terror.

For many decades the Vampires ruled over the people of Lahmia in this manner, but rumor spread that Nagash had been seen walking the lands again. The other Priest Kings called a council to unite against the threat, but the nobility of Lahmia sought to welcome him back. They allied themselves to his cause and in doing so incurred the wrath of the other Priest Kings. King Alcadizaar united the Priest Kings and roused the downtrodden people of Lahmia against their rulers, bringing a great army to assault the Vampires' temple.

Abhorash led the defense of the temple, and none could stand against the unliving warrior. He had been Lahmia's greatest fighter in life, and in undeath he was nigh-unstoppable. The high steps to the temple poured with the blood of his foes, their bodies heaped at the bottom in a great mound of death. In his anger, Abhorash fed wildly, and his strength grew even more.

At Wsoran's word, the slain rose once more, Undead things bound to his will, and assailed their still-living friends and comrades. Many legends say that Nagash used his vast magical powers to aid the defense of his allies. Myths speak of a mighty storm that gathered above Abhorash, lightning crackling around the Vampire as he fought, striking down those who opposed him. Abhorash's blade felled a foe with every blow, and not the strongest armor nor the most skilled parry could defend against him. Khemrians brought forth machineries of war and, though battered by rocks, burned by alchemical fire and transfixed with bolts, he was impossible to destroy. The High Priests of Zandri invoked ancient magics to





curse the unliving warrior, and yet he fought on.

For a full week the Vampire general and his host of dead fought against the bronze-clad army of the Priest Kings, tenaciously defending the temple and launching devastating counter-attacks mounted on a nightmarish steed. But for all his ferocity and skill, and the death of thousands of his foes, Abhorash was unable to stop the Nehekharans storming the court of his Queen.

The temple of Lahmia was put to the torch and many Vampires died in the flames. Of those who managed to flee, most were hunted down and killed by the vengeful Nehekharans. Only the strongest and oldest Vampires escaped, amongst them Neferata, Abhorash, Ushoran and Wsoran.

Abhorash was grief-stricken and vowed vengeance upon all of humankind for what they had done. His once proud realm, which used to be scattered with oases and desert gardens, was now a torched, barren land. Nothing living stirred in Lahmia, though to this day the dead do not rest in their graves, such was the strength of the magic unleashed during the titanic battle.

The former commander of Lahmia's army went northwards with four companions, slaying all who crossed their path, and fed like wild animals, gorging themselves after years of denial and restraint. To this day, the Orc Shamans of the Badlands regale their Greenskin cousins with myths of the Throatrippers who slew five whole tribes. The Dwarfs greatly feared Abhorash, for often they would send supplies to an isolated stronghold or mine only to find that all the inhabitants had been butchered by the merciless killer.

The others fled to Nagash who was pleased with his new allies and bade each of them fight at the fore of his

Undead horde. The Great Necromancer had become mighty, indeed, and the Vampires of Lahmia were his most deadly warriors. They learned much of the Necromantic arts from their creator, and in turn became able to raise a host of the dead with their own magic.

Nagash had spent many decades gathering together an Undead horde the likes of which has never walked the earth since. With the Priest Kings ignorant to his presence he had raided the necropolises, and his army of darkness was set to march south. He had sworn vengeance on the Priest Kings and was set to exact a terrible toll.

An army of warriors and skeletal regiments descended upon Nehekhar, but the brave people of that desert land were not about to give up. They had been roused by the defeat of the Lahmian Vampire temple and were prepared to fight. Under the leadership of Alcadizaar they fought valiantly, and Nagash was forced to retreat. As Nagash fled back to the north the first seeds of discontent had been sown. Already the Vampires blamed each other for the defeat. Ushoran wanted to rise against Nagash and take control of what little remained of his army, Neferata saw wisdom in allying with Nagash and returning to found a new city of Lahmia. Wsoran argued against both these courses of action, and sought to go into hiding once more with their dark lord, in order that together they could take control of the world through magic.

Nagash ignored the petty rivalry amongst his most trusted servants, and spread a plague across the land. He raised those who died from the terrible disease to create another vast army, but on the eve of the great battle the Vampires' divisions turned to conflict. The six trueborn Vampires

who had survived the burning of their temple fought with one another. The fight was savage, no single Vampire able to better the next. For the whole night they battled but, as the sun rose, the Vampires fled from each other, hiding for fear that they should be destroyed by their enemies' minions as they slept. So it was that the Vampires were split apart. There is little doubt that together they could have conquered the world but, because of their arrogance and vanity, they were destined to become bitter enemies for the rest of eternity. Each now vies for power, creating their own army of Vampire thralls which became known as the bloodlines.

Neferata went northwards, and now the Eternal Queen and the Deathless Court hold counsel at the Silver Pinnacle. Here the Lahmian traditions are upheld to this day, an army of Undead warriors stands ready to guard against attack. Neferata's descendants can be found all across the Old World, as companions to dukes and barons, consorts and advisors to rich merchants and military leaders. Thus Neferata's web extends and grows, unfolding to some distant and mysterious plan that only she knows.

Elsewhere is told the tale of how Abhorash slew a great dragon in single combat and rid himself of the curse by drinking its blood. His greatest disciple, Walach Harkon, founded the Blood Dragons, who roam far and wide from their home in Blood Keep, honing their skills in battle so that one day they may emulate their master.

Next month: The history of the Strigoi and Necrarch bloodlines.




Codicium
Imperialis



DRAFT

Volume IX, part I of the Liber Victorum
—→ The Battle of Macragge ←—



Defenders of Ultramar

by Imperial scribe Graham McNeill

They shall be pure of heart and strong of body, untainted by doubt and unsullied by self aggrandizement. They will be bright stars in the firmament of battle, angels of death whose shining wings bring swift annihilation to the enemies of man. So it shall be for a thousand times a thousand years, unto the very end of eternity and the extinction of mortal flesh.

Roboute Guilliman

Prior to the Tyranid attack on Ultramar, the Adeptus Mechanicus filed this report on the home worlds of the Adeptus Astartes:

Recommendations on the model of Human Society, based upon cogent and pertinent observations of the stellar realm of Ultramar

Ref:704/89: In my time researching the varied and multitudinous home worlds & bases of the Adeptus Astartes, it has been a constant struggle to obtain the cooperation of the Chapter Masters. Information to date has been scant and based largely on hearsay from other units fighting alongside them. It was, therefore, with extreme surprise that I was extended every courtesy by Marneus Calgar, Master of the Ultramarines Chapter when I submitted my request for information regarding the realm of Ultramar.

Situated deep in the galactic south-east in the Ultima Segmentum, Ultramar is unique amongst all the Chapter headquarters of Space Marines, in that while most Chapters operate from asteroid bases, lonely fortress monasteries and isolated worlds, the Ultramarines control no fewer than eight nearby systems from their home world of Macragge. Each of these worlds has

Honored Lords, it is with the utmost vigor that I urge you to consider the contents of this document vital to the survival of our beloved Imperium. The words it contains impart information gleaned at terrible cost from the defeat of the Tyranid Hive Fleet Behemoth in the Ultima Segmentum. The stellar realm of Ultramar, controlled by the Ultramarines Chapter of Space Marines, bore the brunt of the Tyranid fleet, and it is, in no small measure, thanks to the dedication, bravery and sacrifice of the Ultramarines that so much was learned and the invasion halted. A leading authority on the Tyranid race, the learned Inquisitor Kryptman saw at first hand the full horror of these aliens and he realized that the threat posed by these monstrous extragalactic creatures cannot and must not be underestimated. The knowledge he and others gained in the fight against Hive Fleet Behemoth prompts me to compile the surviving records from those dark times as a warning against future lapses in vigilance.

As a prelude to this report I have attached the following extract from the Explorer files authored by Explorer Magos Dana Aquila.

Scrivener McNeill, 001M2

its own government, armed forces and individual cultures, but all are utterly loyal to the Ultramarines Chapter. Initially, I was highly suspicious of the manner in which the Chapter has extended its control over such an unusually high number of planets. Indeed, when I questioned the people of these worlds in regards to this, I was met with stony silences if not downright hostility. Such 'empire building' would be frowned upon under conventional Imperial doctrine, but my investigations have convinced me that no such desire exists within the Ultramarines.

The worlds surrounding Macragge are largely industrial in nature, though they are not polluted, poison choked wastelands such as Necromunda and Armageddon. I firmly believe that this is largely due to the organizational skills and far-sightedness of the Chapter's legendary Primarch Roboute Guilliman. Under his guidance these worlds were revolutionized into prosperous, productive planets where honest toil and virtue were rewarded and the populace flourished like never before. I found the inhabitants of these worlds to be industrious, disciplined and intensely loyal Imperial citizens.

Unlike other planets of the Imperium, these worlds are not required to pay Imperial tithes. When looking to their defense each world can rely on the protection of the Ultramarines, but, as would be expected, each one raises its own troops. These worlds are not required to levy troops for the Imperial Guard, but such is the prosperity and highly organized nature of the Ultramarines realm that it maintains hundreds of regiments which can fight, as and when required, throughout the galaxy. As well as their own defense, the worlds of Ultramar provide recruits for the Ultramarines, and it is a source of fierce pride when a particular family can point to an ancestor who became a Space Marine.

Some twelve millennia ago, in the glorious days of the Emperor's Great Crusade, the worlds surrounding



Master of the Ultramarines,
Marneus Calgar

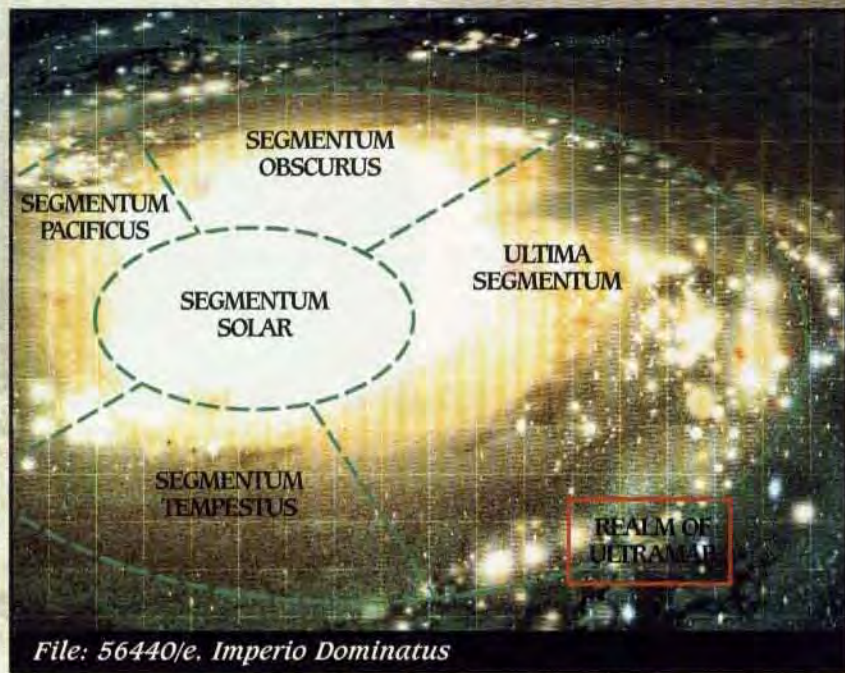
Macragge provided the Chapter with hundreds of new recruits, raw materials, supplies and all manner of support. Following the break up of the old Space Marine Legions into the Chapters we recognize today, this tradition has continued throughout the millennia. Close ties have been maintained between Macragge and its surrounding planets, and it is not surprising that many of these worlds share a commonality in language, culture, architecture and governmental styles.

It should not be thought that these worlds are identical. Each has its own particular character and distinctiveness which is dealt with in a later treatise. I shall confine myself to only the most general traits of each planet for now.

Macragge is a rocky world, protected by numerous orbital defenses and two vast polar defense grids. It is on this planet, in the harsh and unforgiving mountains, that the Ultramarines have their fortress, housing the shrine of the Primarch himself. Here the legendary Primarch's body is held within a stasis field and is a place of great pilgrimage for all loyal citizens of the Imperium. I, myself, had occasion to visit this shrine and can honestly say that I was deeply moved by the experience. Truly was the Primarch a giant amongst men.

Talassar is a turbulent planet of tempests and violent seas, with but a single continent named Glaudor that saw the defeat of the base Orks in battle following the Great Betrayal. In contrast, the three worlds of Quintarn, Tarentus and Masali orbit a common center of gravity and outside the huge, enclosed agri-cities are desolate and arid. Wind traps collect water for these domed cities that protect verdant greenery and hundreds of square miles of agricultural land. Calth's populace live below the planet's surface, far from the deadly rays of its blue sun. Vast subterranean caverns, so fresh and spacious as to make a man forget that he is underground, honeycomb the planet's crust and though the planet, like all others in Ultramar, is self-sufficient, a great deal of food is shipped in from nearby Iax. The planet's shipyards are justly famous and construct a sizeable proportion of the ships in the Ultramarines fleet as well as those used by other arms of the Imperium.

Both Iax and Espandor are sparsely populated worlds towards the edge of Ultramar. Iax is a model of how an agri-world should be managed and is one of the most productive worlds in the



Northern Polar Defense Fortress

Fortress of Hera and Shrine of the Primarch

MACRAGGE

- UL01.01
- Orb. Dist. 2.01AU
- 1.48G/Temp 23°C
- Adeptus Astartes Home World
- Tithe Grade: Adeptus Non
- Aestimare: D0
- Population: 400,000,000

File: 56440/g. Macragge, Ultramarines home world.

Imperium. Other Imperial commanders should take note! Espandor is primarily composed of forests and is rumored to have been settled when traders were blown off course by a warp storm during the Age of Strife.

The crowning glory of Ultramar is without doubt, Prandium. Its climate is temperate, and the natural beauty of its geography marks it as one of the most exquisite planets I have ever had the good fortune to visit. My duties permitting, I shall certainly return to the realm of the Ultramarines again.

Scribe's Note: Prandium was destroyed in the First Tyrannic War, stripped bare by Hive Fleet Behemoth.

Initial investigations into the emerging threat were undertaken by Inquisitor Kryptman.

Personal Log: Inquisitor Kryptman

The first recorded contact with these aliens was at the Tyran Explorer Base, in the farthest reaches of the south-eastern arm of the galaxy. It is from this world that they finally acquired a name – Tyranids. Reports of devastated worlds and planets laid waste were logged and filed by the Explorer Base for many years until I began to see an underlying pattern emerging. I took ship to the Tyran outpost to further investigate these disturbing reports. During the journey I received a garbled report from Tyran, forwarded by Astropaths on Earth. A terrible vision of the sky turned black by monstrous swarms of hellish creatures. It was a dire warning of things to come.

When my vessel arrived in the Tyran system, the navigational auguries could not at first divine the location of the Imperial outpost. Where I had expected to find a world covered by oceans, I instead found an airless dead rock, stripped bare of all life. A weak transponder signal was the only sign that this world had once been Tyran. I led an exploration team to the surface and discovered no survivors, no bodies and no trace of the planet's attackers. Determined to uncover the truth of what had occurred on Tyran, I refused to give up and at last discovered a data codex, buried in a deep bore shaft some 3,000 meters below the planet's surface.

The things I saw on that codex chilled my blood like never before, and my admiration for Magos Varnak, Tyran's commander, grew as I learned how he and his men had fought to the last against this terrifying foe before sealing the codex away so that others might learn from their deaths. Armed with this information I left dead Tyran and set out to warn the Imperium of this deadly new



File: 56442/s: Tyranid Devourer bio-weapon

enemy only to find that the psychic wake caused by this alien fleet had disrupted the warp to such a degree that communication was impossible. I immediately set course for the Thandros telepathica booster. By the time I arrived at Thandros, the Tyranids had already attacked, and once more, there were no survivors. I made one discovery of note aboard the telepathica matrix. In the crew quarters I chanced upon a translucent, filmy material, like shed skin, and a colorless ooze dripping from a bulkhead. Samples of these were taken, and although it was clear they were of alien origin, nothing more could be discerned without proper laboratoria facilities. The adepts of the Machine God aboard my ship were able to salvage the telepathica matrix (obviously the Tyranids had no use for such a device), and my astropath was finally able to pass word of the invaders and my discoveries to the Imperium. In return I received orders to travel to Macragge, planet of the Ultramarines in the realm of Ultramar.

Events had been set in motion even before my ship had arrived, and a dozen vessels already hung in orbit around Macragge. Mile long Space Marine battle barges dwarfed strike cruisers arriving from the furthest reaches of Ultramar and every day more ships arrived from the warp. The static orbital defenses were also impressive, ringing Macragge with a cordon of fire that, against a conventional opponent, would prove impossible to breach. It remained to be seen how they would fare against the Tyranids. To further augment the system defenses, a battlefleet from the Segmentum Tempestus sector base at Bakka was dispatched. I prayed that it would arrive in time.

On Macragge I met with Marneus Calgar, Chapter Master of the Ultramarines, and even after I had appraised him of the horrors approaching his realm, he was unperturbed. He merely stated that the

men of Ultramar would serve the Emperor until their last breath had been crushed from their bodies. I must confess that I found Calgar to be a man of great courage and could hope for no one better to lead the defense of Macragge.

Further information had come to light with a survivor's eyewitness account of a Tyranid attack on the stellar liner *Galactis Luxor* and the discovery of a complete Tyranid organism aboard the derelict freighter *Hammer of Foes*. Adeptus Mechanicus Genetors at the Inquisition fortress of Talasa Prime had deduced that, while the creature was definitely of Tyranid origin, it was not of the same force that had attacked Tyran. The implications of this were truly terrifying. It was now clear to us that there were in fact two Tyranid fleets, one leapfrogging the other in their consumption of worlds.

A month later, with no sign yet of the Segmentum Tempestus battlefleet, the Tyranids attacked Macragge.

At the forefront of the initial space battles, the captain of the Vae Victus witnessed much that will be of interest to starship captains who may soon have to face these aliens.

Vox-Log Record of Captain Lazlo Tiberius, Ultramarines Strike Cruiser Vae Victus, 745.M41

<<295/18:45> Emperor's mercy, what are these things? We are but ants attacking a Gox against them! Every attack we make is swept aside. Gigantic craft, like disgusting sea dwelling monsters with curled shells and questing tentacles are surrounded by tiny, darting... shapeless things that I cannot find the words to describe. Each volley of torpedoes we fire is intercepted by swarms of these

creatures, and our weapon decks are befouled by them. >

<<296/5:30> Whole squadrons of fighters and bombers are destroyed in a heartbeat, and while our lasers burn gaping tears in the chitinous hides of these beasts we cannot bring enough fire to bear on any one bio-ship to count. I saw the *Imperator Rex* pass too close to one of the hulking craft, becoming ensnared by some loathsome organ that dragged the ship into the embrace of thousands of tearing claws and scything blades that broke the mighty vessel in two. For every one of the smaller craft we destroy, a hundred times that number are vomited from the belly of the larger bio-ships. We must retreat back to Macragge, we cannot fight in this manner and survive. To die this way is no service to the Emperor, and we may yet find a way to fight this foe more effectively another day.>

<<298/05:23> We are now committed on a perilous course of action. With no sign of the Tempestus battlefleet, Lord Calgar has ordered the fleet to disengage and move outsystem in a bid to draw the aliens onto the orbital and polar defenses of Macragge. With the Tyranid fleet spread out around the planet he believes we may yet be able to cause enough damage to stop the aliens. May the Emperor prove him right, for we are lost if he is not.>

<<298/06:23> The hive fleet scatters before us! As though guided by the Emperor's own hand our divine weaponry cuts a swathe through the alien vessels. Spread out, they are much more vulnerable to our righteous fire and our manifest supremacy is now becoming clear.>

<<300/11:59> We have to give our fighters more time! Concentrate all firepower on the main hive ship! It is almost ready to go! See how it spills its lifeblood into space. Kill it, kill it now! Reload, damn you! Full spread of torpedoes. Fire! Fire! Fire!>

<<300/14:59> There! You see it perish? Our fighters deliver the killing blow, and it dies. Such is the fate of all invaders! Wait... the other ships, they drift now as though they cannot function without the guidance of the larger ships. We must strike while we have the advantage. Launch all remaining fighters and bombers, prepare to attack! We shall reap a bloody harvest this day!>

<<300/17:11> Hundreds of the Tyranid ships are dying. Without the main hive ship to direct their attacks,

they fight in an uncoordinated manner and are easy meat for my gunners. Many of the hive ships have pulled back behind a screen of the smaller ships and are disgorging what appears to be a hail of spore-like organisms above the polar regions of the planet. What exactly they are, our divination auguries cannot tell, but I fear they must be some new and terrible weapon. My prayers are with the defenders on the planet's surface.>

<<301/16:11> The Tyranids are withdrawing! Their battered ships fall back before us. The order has come to give pursuit and eradicate them. Though we are outnumbered, we shall prevail and destroy the Tyranids. Through the flames of perdition and for the Emperor we shall follow the aliens to the edge of the galaxy if need be! The victory shall be ours.>

This fragment of a soldier's personal journal was discovered on his dismembered body within the southern polar defense fortress.

Journal of Captain Rano Sebastien, Ultramarine Defense Auxilia

Day 26: I was looking along the barrel of my lasgun, trying to keep my breathing even. I knew I mustn't show any fear in front of the men. I couldn't see anything yet, but that didn't make me feel any better. Worse, in fact, I knew

the aliens were out there; we'd all watched as millions of spores dropped from space and turned day into night. The sky had burned with defense laser fire, but the massive guns couldn't hope to down all of them.

The sun was low and you had to squint against the glare of sunlight on snow to make sure you didn't go snow-blind. I checked left and right along our position. Thousands of fellow Defense Auxilia troops manned the firing steps of the trenches, our strength bolstered by the presence of veteran Space Marines from the Ultramarines 1st Company. I felt immensely proud to be fighting alongside them. Surely whatever was coming could not stand before such legendary warriors. How little I knew.

The ground shook as the Titans of the Legio Praetor shifted position, bracing their legs into a firing stance. The enormous machines must have seen something I couldn't. The air around them shimmered as their void shields powered up and their huge weapons, locked in place. I peered out onto the ice plains again and in the distance saw the Tyranid swarm for the first time. On the horizon I saw a shifting, blurred motion, a swarm of creatures too numerous to count speeding across the ice fields towards us. A low, buzzing, skittering noise came from the approaching horde, insistent and grating on the nerves. I grabbed a pair of magnoculars from Trooper Park and trained them on the horizon, zooming in on the mass of creatures.



The heroic defense of the Caltrophos encampment.



Ordnance barrages proved to be extremely effective at disrupting the Tyranid swarms.

I'm not ashamed to say that my knees sagged and my heart skipped a beat as I saw the horrors that scuttled, leapt and thundered their way towards us. Beasts that defied any classification of form swarmed forwards, stretching as far as the eye could see in all directions. Shadowy forms, lost in a haze of ice crystals, came after the smaller creatures, massively built with scything legs and jaws as big as dropships. A suffocating fear rose in me, paralyzing my limbs and turning my blood to ice. It seemed to me that there was no way we could fight these creatures. Nobody could stand against these numbers, I had to get away...

Then from amongst the lines of Defense Auxillia, a Space Marine Chaplain, as if sensing the beginnings of panic amongst us, began to sing the Battle Hymn of the Imperium in a loud, clear voice. Amplifiers in his suit of powered armor carried his voice across the trenches. Along the line, Space Marines and Defense Auxillia troopers began to join in and, like water poured on a fire, the mounting panic was quelled. A resolute determination filled me and I could feel it spread to all the men of Macragge who stood shoulder to shoulder in the trenches.

A deafening salvo of shells and rockets shrieked overhead and impacted square in the center of the alien horde, throwing up great chunks of ice and broken alien bodies. The whole swarm was momentarily obscured as every Titan and artillery piece fired and engulfed the aliens in fire and smoke. A huge cheer went up from our line, but died just as quickly as the aliens came on undaunted and apparently undiminished.

Heavy weapon fire tore huge holes in

the alien charge as the range closed still further and I shouldered my rifle, watching the range counter on my rifle's scope unwind impossibly quickly. The numbers flashed green and I pulled the trigger, a powerful blast of laser energy burning a hole in one of the smaller aliens. Their speed was unbelievable and I only managed to fire about three shots before they smashed into our line.

Then they were amongst the trenches. Sickle armed beasts with sinewy arms, slicing and eviscerating. Six limbed creatures with flashing sword-like claws and whips that coruscated with a crackling purple energy. Shark-faced living battering rams with giant razor claws and screaming roars. Blood splashed bright on the snow, armor cut through like paper and men running insane with fear. The sky darkened with drooling creatures borne aloft on leathery wings, vomiting corrosive gobs of acidic fire.

I fought with my bayonet, hacking and killing. I ducked as a snarling creature came at me, slashing with razor sharp claws like scythes. I desperately parried and stumbled backwards, falling to the trench floor. The beast hissed, ready to pounce and disembowel me. Powerful muscles uncoiled as it launched itself at me. I screamed, thinking that this was my time to die when a swipe from a Space Marine's power sword chopped the creature in two. Its severed thorax slammed into my chest and still its fanged maw sought to bite me. I pushed the bloody mess away, repulsed beyond words. The Ultramarines Space Marine who had saved me dragged me to my feet, thrust me back towards the firing step and moved on, firing his bolter at the aliens.

I was terrified, but damn it, I'm a soldier of the Emperor and began firing into the swarm once more. Soon, I established a rhythm, firing until the rifle's energy pack was dry, slamming a fresh clip in and repeating the process. Wave after wave of the aliens broke themselves against our defenses and how long we fought for, I honestly couldn't say. My vision blurred with fatigue and snow-blindness, but it didn't matter, there were too many to miss. I fired mechanically, any sense of my surroundings dulled by sheer terror.

Suddenly it was over. Hissing defiance, the aliens pulled back out of our weapons' range, leaving huge mounds of corpses piled high against the defense line. A cheer went up from the Auxillia troops, a cheer that came not from a sense of victory, but the simple elation of survival. A wailing siren from the base loudspeakers sounded the fall back signal, and I cast my gaze around the trenches. I fell to my knees retching, overcome by the sheer scale of the slaughter. Thousands were dead, ripped to shreds and huge gaps had been torn in our line. If the aliens attacked this position again, there would be no way of holding it. I gathered up my remaining energy packs and joined the surviving defense troopers and Space Marines streaming back to the secondary line of bunkers and trenches. As I ran, I vowed that I would make these abominations pay a fearsome toll in blood for every yard they dared to advance.

The Tyranids use bio-constructs of comparable size to the God-Machines employed by our own holy Titan Legions. This extract demonstrates the lethality of these abominations in graphic detail.

**Neuro-path engrams of
Princeps Sidarius Calvin,
Legio Praetor Warlord Titan
Semper Sanctus. Northern
Polar Defense Grid.
745.M41**

03:34 hours: Channel 564/lv13.
Moderati! I read a jam on the carapace rocket launchers! Fix it immediately! Salvo on grid reference 236 alpha, 303 omega. Maximum burst. All other weapons cycle auto loaders and continue to fire on sectors Tertion and Primus. Watch for overheating! *Deus lux!* Look at the size of that thing! It's

bigger than an Emperor Titan! By the Emperor's holy rule, we cannot suffer such a thing to live. Moderati Araya, concentrate your mega-cannon fire on that beast to our forward quarter!

03:58 hours: Channel 564/lvl3. Damn it, I said to watch for overheats Moderati Decius! Assign yourself one hour in the shriving chamber upon this battle's conclusion. Princeps Calvin to Engineer Calder give me striding speed, we take the fight to the alien scum! I see fluid leaking from its hide. Ready chain fist generators! And someone clear the smaller creatures from the legs of my titan! They slow us down...

04:01 hours: Channel 564/lvl3. Death to all enemies of the Emperor! Free up those turbo lasers Moderati Decius, burn through the tentacles! Get that chain fist free! Stepping back. No! We cannot move! Engineer Calder what the hell are you doing down there? Give me power to the legs! What do you mean, we have power? Then why are we not moving? Emperor! The joints are clogged with the corpses of the smaller beasts... Emperor save us!

04:24 hours: Channel 525/lvl6. Left arm gone. Moderati Araya dead and Moderati Decius mortally wounded. The beast is upon us and I commend my soul

and those of my crew to our beloved Emperor! The beast has destroyed us! Like swarms of ants they climb the body of the God Machine and tear me down. I see them now at the armored glass of my control centre, clawing their way in. They will tear me apart. They will not take the Semper Sanctus from me I swear! Activation of reactor overload. Princeps Sidarius Calvin. Authorization code [classified]. May the Emperor and the Machine God forgive me for what I do now. Finis Rerum!

Scribe's Note: The Semper Sanctus was destroyed in a self-initiated reactor overload that destroyed the Titan and the Tyranid construct now classified as a Hierophant bio-Titan.

Compiled from the surviving powered armor suit logs, the following text tells of the destruction of the Ultramarines 1st Company.

The Lament of the First

"And thus were the battle brothers of 1st Company tasked with the final defense against the Tyranids of Hive Fleet Behemoth. The ferocity of the Tyranids was unmatched save by the determination of the Company to defeat

them. Even those brothers honored with Tactical Dreadnought armor could not stand against the foe in close combat. Only the righteous fire from storm bolters and heavy flamers kept the foe at bay. Multi-limbed creatures with claws and swords of chitin moved like quicksilver, and their blades ripped open armor and bodies with equal ease.

At the southern polar defense fortress, the vital Eagle Bastion had fallen to the Tyranids, and the honor of retaking it was accepted by the surviving detachments of the 1st Company based in this region. The Eagle Bastion provided a solid base to anchor the defenses of the fortress, and without it there would be almost no chance of continued resistance above ground. Situated on a rocky bluff overlooking the entrance to the underground silos, the bastion had been considered impregnable, but a Tyranid organism was able to infiltrate through the oxy-recyc ducts and slaughtered the valiant defenders of Planetary Defense Auxillia tasked with its defense. The vile creature was eventually destroyed, but not before an uncannily well-coordinated attack carried the walls of the bastion and saw every one of the defenders killed.

Brother Captain Dardinus led his brothers in prayer in the hours before dawn and began the assault on the Eagle Bastion at first light. Unbeknownst to Captain Dardinus, the deviant aliens had laid a trap for him and, as the men of 1st Company stormed the bastion, they found themselves surrounded, every avenue of escape blocked by terrifying creatures bigger than a Dreadnought. Though they knew they were doomed, not a man amongst them was cowed, and each vowed to sell his life as dearly as possible. Fighting back to back, the men of 1st Company battled for six hours until at last only Captain Dardinus remained. A beast from the darkest of nightmares faced the brave captain. Fully six meters tall, with four arms and a giant maw filled with serrated fangs, the Hive Tyrant seemed to regard Dardinus with interest as though deciding upon his worth as a foe. Suddenly, the creature's scything talons lashed out and there was a burst of electrical discharge as the captain's power sword parried the blow. The alien screeched and hissed, circling Captain Dardinus more warily now. The beast's claws again struck at the brave captain, but he ducked, rolling beneath its attack and slashed his sword across the Tyrant's flank. Acidic purple ichor sprayed from the wound and the vile creature shrieked in pain. Captain Dardinus scrambled to his feet and



Last recorded image from Brother Captain Dardinius' power armor log.



Penitorem vid-log: Last stand of Captain Adrasta, 1st Company detachment.

parried another strike of the Tyrant's claws. He bled from a score of cuts but fought with the strength of the Primarch. The Tyrant attacked again, and its barbed tail whipped forwards, punching through the captain's breastplate. As Dardinus reeled, the creature's chest spasmed and fleshy lengths of tough muscle fiber fired out to ensnare the captain. Serrated hooks tore into Dardinus' armor and dragged him into the Tyrant's embrace. The beast's talons plunged deep into the captain's body and tore through his flesh, ripping him in two at the midriff. Thus, it was that the Eagle Bastion was lost.

At the top of the world, in the northern polar region, the 1st Company detachments were under the command of Brother Captain Adrasta. Despite the bravest resistance, the men of the company were forced underground. Unstoppable waves of the aliens poured over the defense silo, overrunning the surface outposts and bunkers, and all subsequent contact with the men of the 1st Company was lost. By this time, the Tyranids were forced to pay a heavy price for every foot they advanced. Running battles were fought amongst the gigantic coolant stores and capacitors of the defense laser batteries. The darkness was lit by the flash of lasers, bolters and the white heat of flamers. Screams, weapons fire and alien howls were the only sounds and many heroes were made in these dark and desperate times. Ultimately, there could be only one outcome to the battle and as the surviving members of 1st Company were pushed back into the

Penitorem, every man knew that this was the moment of his death. Chanting the Catechism of the Warrior, the Space Marines fought like heroes of legend and sold their lives dearly. When the brethren of 3rd Company retook the defense silo, they discovered a mound of Tyranids, six deep, surrounding the Terminators who died to a man in the subterranean darkness of their home world. The men of 1st Company had broken the Tyranid attack, but at the cost of their own lives.

As the last warrior of 1st Company fell, it is said that the flame that burns in the Chapel of Heroes in the Fortress of Hera guttered and died. And for a hundred nights, it could not be relit, a day of darkness and lament for each warrior of 1st Company".

While battle raged on Macragge, the war in space was still being fought. Marneus Calgar commanded the Ultramarines fleet and filed this report following the Battle of Circe.

Post Action Report: 5U/ST/Bakka/745.m41

My order to pursue the retreating Tyranid force was not given lightly. Though the fleet under my command was vastly outnumbered, I knew that were I to permit the alien menace to escape, we would only have to face it again. The fleet harried the Tyranids to the edge of Ultramar, giving them no succor or respite from our weapons. With no sign yet of the Segmentum Tempestus battlefleet, I knew that constant pressure was the only way we could prevent the Tyranids from regrouping and destroying us.

As we reached the outermost planet of Ultramar, my Astropaths warned me of a great turbulence in the warp. It was approaching at speed, but whether it was the Tempestus battlefleet or the second Tyranid fleet, they could not say. I swear the next few minutes that passed were the longest in my life. Then a storm of torpedoes and a veritable fusillade of laser fire heralded the arrival of the Tempestus battlefleet. Nearly two hundred vessels, led by the Emperor class battleship, the *Dominus Astra*, emerged from the warp, the anvil to the Ultramar fleet's hammer. Caught between the two fleets, the fate of the Tyranids was sealed, but the alien neither knows or understands the concept of defeat and continued to fight on. In the first moments of battle the *Pax Imperator* and *Clavis Regni* were

overwhelmed by swarms of monstrous creatures that completely obscured the massive Imperial cruisers with their numbers.

Our experiences in fighting the Tyranids had taught us that the aliens needed the largest hive ships to function effectively, and I ordered all ships to concentrate their firepower on a tentacled leviathan that lurked in the center of the swarm. Our ships punched a hole in the Tyranid centre, scattering them in all directions. Screens of smaller ships blocked the way, and though our losses were grievous, our vessels were finally able to fight their way through to the hive ships and strike at the vile craft with every weapon that could be brought to bear. Caught in the crossfire of two fleets the Tyranids were finally overcome, and after a brutal hour of constant bombardment, the remains of the hive fleet was destroyed and the battle won.

In triumphal procession, the two fleets began the journey back in-system. As we passed the gas giant Circe, the fabric of space was torn aside as the second Tyranid fleet emerged from the warp behind us. Realizing that the Tempestus battlefleet could not outrun the Tyranids, Lord Admiral Rath decided to make his stand within the upper atmosphere of Circe. With the fate of the defenders on Macragge uppermost in my mind, I ordered the Ultramar fleet not to engage and to return to Macragge. The Tempestus fleet would stand or fall regardless of whether my few cruisers remained.

The previous Tyranid fleet had been weakened and trapped. This one was fresh and undamaged, and as the Tempestus fleet turned at bay, the destruction wrought by the Tyranids was fearful. The Imperial craft could not breach the solid wall of creatures that protected the hive ships, the great bell tolled along the length of the *Dominus Astra*, and it seemed as though all was lost as the hive fleet closed for the kill. The enormous firepower of the Emperor class warship punched great holes in the Tyranid fleet, but for every hit that was scored, another Imperial vessel was overwhelmed and destroyed by the hive ship's protectors and, watching on the hologlobe, I believed that our desperate gamble had failed.

The Tempestus fleet simply could not bring sufficient weight of fire to destroy enough of the hive ships to disrupt the Tyranids. Suddenly the *Dominus Astra's* engines flared as it powered deep into the heart of the Tyranids and a fleet-wide communique sounded within the Sacristy of every Imperial vessel:

"Attention all vessels, this is Lord Admiral Rath. It is clear to me that we cannot win this fight by utilizing conventional methods of warfare. I order you all to disengage and withdraw. The *Dominus Astra* shall be the fiery sword of retribution that ends this war. I repeat, disengage and pull away. The Emperor's blessing be upon you always!"

Realizing the Admiral's plan, the remaining captains pulled their vessels away from the battle. The *Dominus Astra* collided with the largest of the Tyranid craft and as the hive ship's tentacles ensnared the vessel, the Admiral triggered his ship's warp engines. Space was torn asunder as an uncontrolled warp vortex erupted and engulfed the hive fleet in its destructive embrace.

The Tyranids were sucked into oblivion by the vortex, and when the coruscating warp field died down, not a single hive ship remained. The *Dominus Astra* was gone, also. The great Bell of Souls on Terra shall chime a thousand times in recognition of the Admiral's sacrifice and his name shall be entered in the Chapel of Heroes as a Defender of Ultramar.

The Battle of Circe had been won, but it had claimed nearly the entire Tempestus battlefleet. A small force of cruisers remained to destroy any surviving bio-ships, while the rest of the fleet limped back to Macragge. Contact had been lost with the defenders in the northern polar regions, and thus, I ordered the 3rd and 7th Companies ahead to bolster the beleaguered defenders. Only time would

tell whether or not they would arrive soon enough.

With the return of the Ultramarines, the remaining Tyranids were soon eradicated. Inquisitor Kryptman returned with them to begin the task of cataloging the various Tyranid organisms.

Personal Log: Inquisitor Kryptman

Upon arrival on Macragge following the defeat of the hive fleet in space, my first impression was of a hitherto unseen scale of slaughter. So numerous were the Tyranid corpses that a man could walk from one end of the ice fields to the other without once setting foot on the planet's surface. By the time I arrived from Talasa Prime, Ordo Xenos battlefield cleansing units had the situation under control and were following my strict quarantine and species classification protocols. The defenses of the polar regions were heavily damaged and bore all the hallmarks of a truly titanic struggle. Gazing upon the disgusting countenance of these aliens for the first time, I realized that not only must we resist them when they invade our space, we must seek them out and destroy them, also.

Venturing within the hallways beneath the polar fortresses, I was repulsed to find the internal architecture altered in ways too numerous to count. Obscenely organic constructions filled the corridors, and despite their destruction, it was impossible not to feel that some presence of the aliens remained. Everywhere I looked, there were

signs of fighting. Not an inch of ground had been yielded without fierce resistance. Fire-blackened walls and the stench of cooked flesh permeated every surface, and I doubt I shall ever truly be rid of that foul odor.

I began cataloging the many and varied Tyranid creatures in an attempt to gain some kind of understanding into this abominable new race of aliens. The Techno Magi of Mars arrived with commendable speed and began the long task of collecting specimens from amongst the dead creatures. It will take many years of careful study before the true nature of the Tyranids becomes clear, but several things are immediately apparent.

First, the presence of Genestealers in the alien horde seems to point to them being creatures of Tyranid origin. Early genetic scans appear to indicate this, but it will require a more detailed investigation to verify it. These creatures have long been thought of as indigenous to the moons of Yngarl, and how they came to be there when they are possibly of Tyranid origin remains a mystery. In light of this new information, I recommend a xenocidal campaign against this species be mounted immediately by the Adeptus Astartes and that all Inquisitors increase their vigilance in regards to Genestealer infestations.

Secondly, having seen the destruction wrought by the Tyranids against the realm of Ultramar, I cannot stress enough the danger posed by these creatures. They are the ultimate race of predators, consuming with no thought for anything except the absorption of the next race. Knowing what I know now, I cannot help but feel that this may not even have been a true invasion. As incredible as it seems, this may have been a learning experience for the Tyranids. I have perused several post-action reports all claiming that the Tyranids would rapidly adapt to whatever the defenders could throw at them. If this is the case and the assault on Ultramar was but a probing thrust, then we must maintain a constant vigil on the galactic rim and strengthen our military presence tenfold if we are to resist a more determined Tyranid invasion.

Thus, I submit my report and again urge you to act with all possible haste in this matter. I believe that should we underestimate this foe it will be the beginning of the end for humanity. The Tyranids cannot be bargained with, reasoned with or forced to surrender. They absolutely will not stop, and the only way we can defeat them is to be ready, to use the time the Ultramarines have bought with their lives to better prepare ourselves for the next Tyranid invasion. It may not be soon, but it will come. And we must be ready for it.



Recovered Xenos specimen, classified 'Hormagaunt'.



A man may die yet still endure if his work enters the greater work, for time is carried upon a current of forgotten deeds, and events of great moment are but the culmination of a single carefully placed thought. As all men must thank progenitors obscured by the past, so we must endure the present so that those who follow may continue the endeavour.

Carlo Mozeto



DRAFT



TERRIFYING TERRAIN

Rotten Scenery ideas for your VAMPIRE COUNTS Army

The dead are rising from their graves and hungering after the flesh of the living. Casting off the shackles of death, these corpses answer the silent call of their lords, the VAMPIRE COUNTS! With all the excitement of the re-released Vampire Counts hovering over us all like a black cloud of bloodthirsty bats, we have decided to showcase an ample sampling of charnel scenery from five US Games Workshop Staff Members. Maybe all of these morbid scenery pieces will get your creative blood...um, juices...flowing!

Rob Hawkins

The Mausoleum

Robert Hawkins is a devoted disciple to the powers of Undeath! Not only does he feverishly collect a Vampire Counts army but he also builds some amazingly decrepit scenery during the hours before the sun rises. What is more horrifying than a charnel house, whose contents never rest too soundly and when called by some dark master, rush to do his bidding? Rob used a combination of Games Workshop plastic bits and a building produced by a company called Mouse Models, the makers of an entire range of plastic cemetery gravestones and tombs for railroad enthusiasts which are

perfect for use in your games of Warhammer! To personalize this model, Rob applied the skull icon from the skeleton shield sprue to the sides of his building,

as well as bits from the Chaos

spiky bits sprue and, of course, a horde of skeletal minions to make this piece of scenery an object of terror.



Forge World makes an entire range of resin cast scenery pieces that are perfect for basing a scenery project around!



Rise From Your Grave!

Rob's Cemetery Gate is a massive piece of scenery! By using all sorts of bits, ranging from old metal tombstones, that are still available through our Mail Order service, to plastic zombies and skeletons, Chaos spiky bits sprues, more Mouse Models and even some **Forge World** resin walls which make up the actual focus of the piece. You can almost see the dark winds of necromantic magic rolling through his graveyard.

Rob used a piece of hardboard to serve as a stable base for his creation and worked up from there. He glued the gravestones to the base, cutting a few at angles to achieve the look of an abandoned and decrepit chunk of land. The walls were simply bought at a Games Workshop retail store and spruced up with various bits. With the finishing touch of the old Epic model, Mortarion, this graveyard is suitably creepy!

Placement of the dead returning to life is simple: chop off the bits that would be disappearing beneath the soil and glue the model to the base in a manner that stresses the fact that they're trying to pull themselves free and once again join the land of the living. A little bit of sand, glued over the base and the tops of rotting heads alike, add to this morbid scene!

Rob works at the Games Workshop Hobby Center in Cherry Hill, NJ. If you're in the area, stop in and say hi. He's always willing to share his modeling secrets!





Ty Finocchiaro

Column of Doom

Ty Finocchiaro has mastered the art of making quick, great looking, scenery. Don't believe us? Check out the Games Workshop website: www.games-workshop.com and take a look at his current project on how to defend against a Tyranid assault! When not toiling on our site, Ty digs into all kinds of modeling adventures. We cornered Ty and asked him to construct something that any Vampire Count general could build.

The basic shape was based on a cardboard toilet paper roll, which was later covered in a layer of sand to give it an interesting texture when painted. The bottom of the pillar was a precut circle of wood bought at A C Moore and has a piece of plasticard wrapped around it and superglued in place. The top of the tube was sealed off with a circle of plasticard and two more pieces of card were wrapped around it to match the bottom.

The group of skeletal bodies were literally piled on top, glued together in a twisted mass of bone. The chain was a simple conversion made from the Zombie regiment plastics. Take two of the chained bells from the sprue, cut the bells off and glue the remaining lengths of chain together. Simple! Ty glued an *extremely* damaged corpse (also from the Zombie regiment boxed set) to the chain... the message is clear: don't mess with the Vampire Counts!



Chad Mierzwa

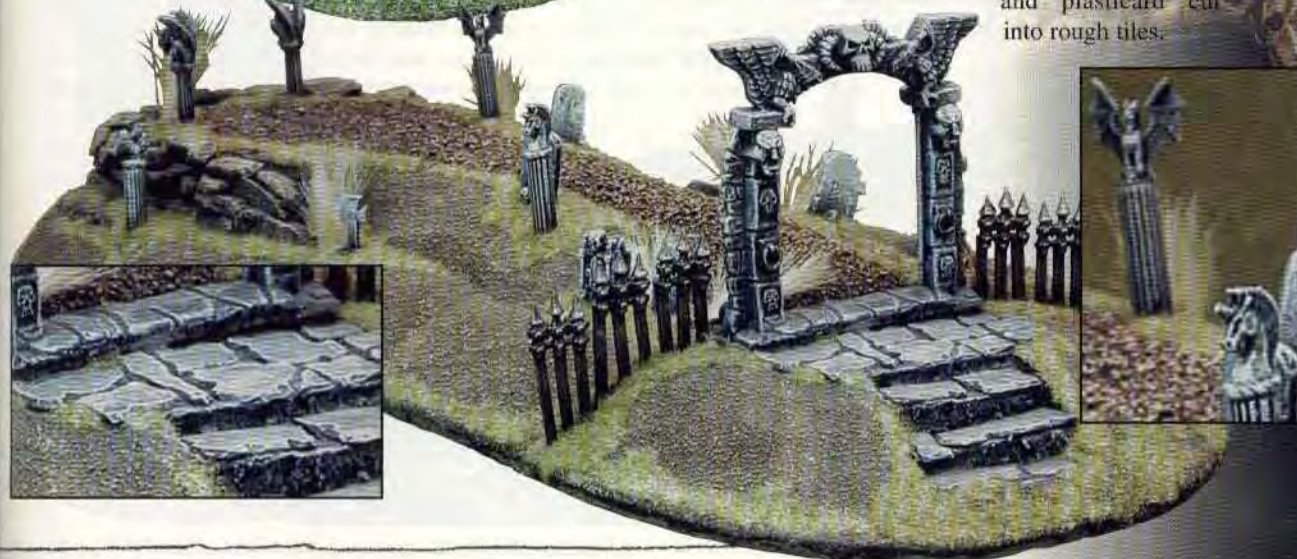
The Monument

Chad has always been fascinated with the undead. In fact, his reclusive nature points to the fact that he may really be a necromancer... or worse, one of the living dead! On a recent trip to London he had a chance to visit Highgate Cemetery. He knew he had to capture the ancient site in his scenery, so he started on this piece (left) immediately! The headstones are from our Arcane Architecture line as well as from the plastic zombie and skeleton sprues. The barren tree is from model railroad scenery and the actual monument is another resin model from **Forge World** topped by a statue converted from wraith! Hmm... it looks like Death has an eagle-eyed view of the cemetery.



Boneyard!

In this graveyard (seen below), Chad finished off the small headstones (made with wooden dowel rods) with the helmet ornamentation of the plastic Bretonnian Knights. The gate and walkway were created from bits from the Warhammer Quest game and plasticard cut into rough tiles.



Gothic Ruins

Ed Phillips, our very own Mail Order Supervisor, is always thinking of new ways to convert models or build scenery to add to his massive Vampire Counts army. He believes (and rightly so) that the main strength of the undead is their ability to cause fear and dread, sending their enemies packing! Spooky scenery can have the same unnerving effect. He also says that exciting games of Warhammer always benefit from the presence of striking scenery. (Smart man, this Ed!) "You only have to look as far as the local video store to find dozens of scary movies to give you inspiration for Vampire Counts scenery pieces."

To make some really quick scenery, Ed has used the Warhammer 40,000 gothic ruins with a twist. By using a really dark color scheme and adding sand for moss and static grass vines (made from floral wire), he made these plastic buildings particularly evil looking!



Unhallowed Hills

A quick trip to the hardware store gave Ed the necessary components to make his hills! 1" insulation foam and a Wonder cutter will let you rough out a hill with almost no effort at all. Ed dotted his hill with a few gravestones and even dug out a rectangle to serve as a freshly robbed grave. He used a modeling knife to carve out the steps as well.

Ed used store bought trees (bare of foliage, of course) to add another level of creepiness to his

piece. The large tree (above left) was just one way to make your own homemade variant. Ed took a wire frame and began to wrap cords of modeling putty over the armature.

When you're all done putting your hill together paint it with black acrylic house paint. Once its dry, paint the sides Bestial Brown and then give it a light drybrush in downward strokes with Bubonic Brown. Then paint the top of the hill Goblin Green and cover it in PVA glue and flock.



Zombie Swamp

There's something horrifying about a corpse siting up in a pool of stagnant water and then lurching toward you. Ed decided that he needed to explore this facet of undead existence, so he made this zombie swamp out of a circular piece of 1/8" hardboard, sand, flock and a copious amount of Gloss Varnish Citadel paint! First, Ed built a rocky outline using gravel and PVA glue. He also glued sand to the base at the same time, to make a suitable surface to pick up paint when he drybrushed the swamp. The land was painted in the same colors as the sides of the hill and the water was done in Regal Blue with swirls of Scorpion Green. This will give you a suitably disgusting tone to your body of

water. Ed added swamp grass which he purchased at a hobby shop and then flocked the base. After that, Ed finished it off by pouring a pot of Gloss Varnish paint over the surface of the water and waited for it to dry!

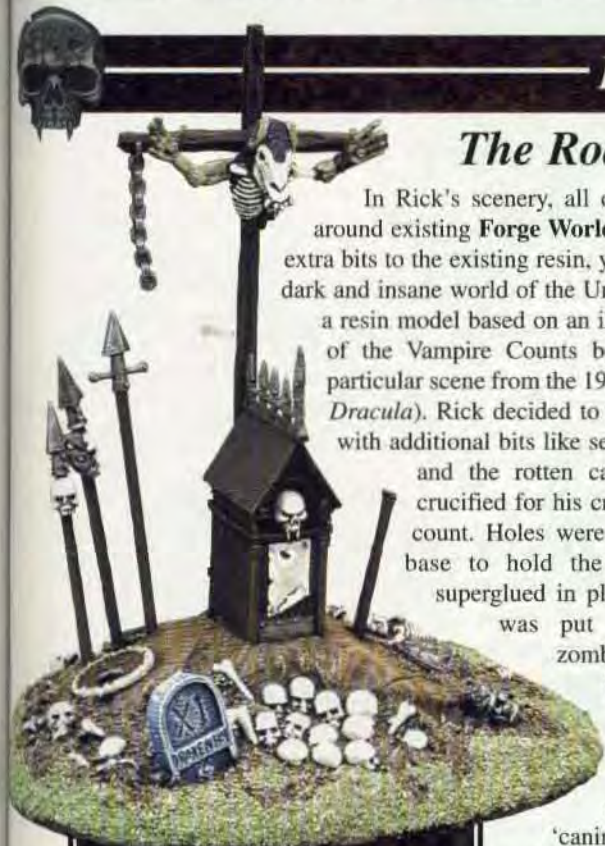


The Roadside Shrine

In Rick's scenery, all of the pieces have been based around existing **Forge World** models. By just adding a few extra bits to the existing resin, you can alter it to fit in with the dark and insane world of the Undead. The roadside shrine was a resin model based on an illustration from the last edition of the Vampire Counts book (which also resembles a particular scene from the 1992 film, *Bram Stoker's Dracula*). Rick decided to finish the resin kit off with additional bits like severed heads on spears and the rotten carcass of a wolfman, crucified for his crimes against the local count. Holes were drilled into the resin base to hold the spears which were superglued in place. The rotting body was put together from two zombie arms and the torso in the noose, which had its head neatly removed and replaced with a horse skull. Additional



The wolfman's hair was made from modeling putty and also served to fill in the gap between the skull and neck. The nails were made from thinly cut old skeleton spears.



Beware... this be the lands of the Dead!

'canines' and ears were cut from a plastic wolf head and glued on to make it more wolf-like!

Calling Forth the Dead!

This scenery conversion was very simple. Using resin wall corners (\$9.00 at a Games Workshop Hobby Center) you can add onto the basic shape. First, Rick took a plastic gravestone and glued it down to the base. Putty was then mounded up around the tombstone and in front of the stone, as well, so that when you press the zombie torso into the greenstuff it looks like he's straining to pull himself free. Take a sharp pencil or pin and press into the putty to give it a sandy texture when it's drybrushed or, better yet, glue some sand and small stones to the putty. After it's dry you can paint it up. Add a few more plastic skulls or bones to the base and you'll have one scary piece of scenery!



Shackled Beast

The more twisted lords of the undead, like the insane Necrarchs, like to flaunt their power over the living dead. Who knows why this zombie has been chained to this wall, but the minds of the Vampire Counts have become warped by all their years of undeath. Rest assured that they're not telling! This is a simple conversion using both zombie and skeleton plastics, with a length of chain made in the same manner as Ty's piece.

We hope that all of these pieces of scenery have inspired those of you who have fallen in line with the forces of undeath. So all you need to do now is get down to the dirty business of creating your own spooky scenery!



Necrotic Conversions

There is never a shortage of conversion ideas available for those Warhammer players who choose to align themselves with the dark creatures that stalk the night and hunger after the flesh and blood of the living. Three mad modelers have sought to share their work with fellow undead generals, in hopes that one day the Old World will belong to the living dead!

Rob Hawkins's Legion of the Infernal Skull

Rob Hawkins' Vampire Counts army is filled to the brim with amazing conversions! We lured him down to the Studio with promises of fresh blood, and he brought his loyal servants in tow for us to peruse and photograph.

Dimitri Von Koss is one of Rob's many vampiric conversions. When Rob begins working on a modeling project, no shiny metal bit or plastic piece is safe from his grasp! To make this dynamic miniature, Rob used the legs, shield and banner pole from Krell, the torso of the Red Duke and Von Carstein's sword. The crown was taken from the head of a mounted wight. This was cut along the crown to separate it from the wight's cranium and glued onto the flattened head of the vampire. The sweeping pose of this model only serves to accentuate this powerful character!

Dimitri Von Koss - Vampire Count

Marduk is the cousin of Dimitri. It was Dimitri who infected Marduk with the family curse. Marduk went mad when he was transformed, earning his title "The Wolf" for his ferocity and unpredictably on the battlefield. As time went by, Marduk became a liability. Seth, Dimitri's brother and superior, sent him to Mordheim, but Marduk thrived in the hellish city and returned, even more powerful than before!

The Wolf was created with the Red Duke's body, a plastic Chaos shield and an axe topped with a spike were taken from the Chaos spiky bits sprue. The nightmare is made up of a skeletal steed, an Empire barded horse, jeweler's chain, plastic skulls, the Red Duke's horse's head and a bit of modeling putty to fill in the gaps. The tombstones were cut from left over plastic sprues!

Marduk the Wolf - Vampire Thrall

Rob decided that the Zombie boxed regiment wasn't good enough to field without tinkering with them first! Whenever a Vampire Count wins a battle with a hated foe, you can be sure that he won't waste any time bolstering his tanks with some new troops.

These zombies were made with plastic bits from both the zombie box and the Empire regiment boxed set. Try making a regiment of zombies using the new dwarf plastics and mix them into your existing unit!

Neiman Kimmel once controlled his own army but had most of his power stripped away in a fateful battle with a Slaan Lord. He now serves the Von Kosses, biding his time until he can wrest power from the vampires and lead the Legion of the Infernal Skull as his own.

Kimmel is a simple conversion. Rob used the body of the Necromunda Arch Redeptor for the basis of his model. The staff was made from a plastic skeleton spear with modeling putty added to the skull at the tip of the spear to create a torch.

Neiman Kimmel - Necromancer

Lord Orin Koth was turned into a wight during Walach's reign at Blood Keep. He now leads the Hellfire Knights (Wight cavalry) in the service of the Von Kosses.

For Koth's upper body Rob used Krell's torso and the axe from a wight tomb guardian. For the lance Rob decided to make use of a Blood Dragon Lord's weapon, and the arm that's holding it belongs to a plastic Chaos Warrior. To finish off Koth's body, Rob used the legs of an Empire knight.

The rock Koth's steed stands on is a piece of quartz and the base is littered by all sorts of plastic skeleton bits and tombstones.

Make sure you keep an eye out for an article detailing how Rob makes all of his great banners, coming next issue of White Dwarf!

Orin Koth - Army Standard Bearer



All models shown at approximately 90% actual size



For a more dynamic pose, Rob added wyvern wings from our Warmaster range to these monstrous Fell Bats. First, Rob glued his bat to a 40mm base with a length of wire. The dragon wings were then glued to the back of the creature, and any gaps were filled in with Green Stuff. Using a sharp tool he then textured the putty to blend in with the rest of the model. Next, Rob based the model with sand and plastic tombstones which he purchased from Mouse Models, a company that exclusively makes cemetery models. Lastly, Rob finished off his winged terror with a good layer of paint.

Nightmarish Constructs

Chad Mierzwa Explains His Golems



At first, Chad was thinking of using his Scarecrows in place of skeletons, but for the time and effort spent on these conversions he decided to create a smaller unit and use them as Mercenary Ogres. The idea for the Scarecrows came from numerous sources, including video games and Tim Burton movies. Chad says, "The great thing about Scarecrows is that you can create them using just about

anything! I chose pieces from the empire artillery sprue, zombie sprues, etc." Chad tried to make them as gruesome as he could and yet still retain a little bit of charm.

Chad's standard bearer is probably one of the most bizarre things we've seen in quite a while! Does this automaton go searching for heads to fill its bucket? Only Chad would know and he's not telling.



Chad makes use of everything... he even used the left over plastic sprue frames. The legs of two of his creations are actually cut and shaved to resemble roughly hewn timber. It just goes to show

that you should never ever throw out any of your left over bits

For the sickle-armed Scarecrow Chad used a toothbrush dipped in blood red paint to create the splatter effect on the white bib and jaws. This close combat monster has shredded his latest foe and is looking for more victims to slice and dice.

Painting these monsters is simple, as well. Since they're mostly wooden, a few quick layers of paint applied with a quick drybrushing should do the trick. Attention to the bases also adds to the strange and bizarre nature of his models. Just the simple addition of the cow skull (on the barrel-headed beast) pointing in the same direction as the creature's movement really animates the entire piece. Chad never ceases to amaze. We're bound to see more from his demented imagination.



When Good Knights Go Bad

A Corrupted Empire Knight by Rick Smith

What larger blasphemy could there be than a righteous Knight of the Empire who has fallen in battle only to be summoned back to the world of the living by the practice of some unholy necromantic ritual? Imagine the disgust and horror this foul creature would cause among those that put their faith in the might of Sigmar. Think about the poor Warrior Priest who has to face this abomination in combat. Then imagine an entire regiment of these mounted Wights, running down anyone in their path!

This conversion was extremely easy to put together! All you need to do is a simple head swap and you're ready to start painting. The skull was removed from a bare-headed wraith, and the rest of the miniature is simply the leader from the plastic Empire Knights regiment boxed set. With a suitably morbid color scheme, this conversion could easily fit into your Vampire Counts Army!



All models shown at approximately 90% actual size



Andy Chambers, the Warhammer 40,000 Overfiend, has been overseeing the hallowed pages of Chapter Approved since time immemorial (or at least WD 227).

CHAPTER APPROVED

BY ANDY CHAMBERS

Greetings, citizens of the Emperor, and welcome to His most hallowed Chapter Approved column. For this month's missive I have taken the opportunity to cease studies of foul and malignant aliens in order to revisit some of the great heroes of the Ultramarines Space Marine Chapter. The Ultramarines are without doubt one of the most widely known and respected Space Marine Chapters of the 41st Millennium. Ultramar, a substantial realm on the eastern fringes, has already been subjected to attacks from the Tyranid Hivefleets Kraken and Behemoth, but remains a staunch bulwark of Imperial authority in an otherwise chaotic and rapidly disintegrating corner of the galaxy. To accompany the details of these heroes of the Imperium, Scrivener Haines has compiled an exhaustive report on Tyranid Seeding Swarms, the vanguard of the Great Devourer.

ULTRAMARINES SPECIAL CHARACTERS

ANCIENT HELVETICUS, BEARER OF THE BATTLE STANDARD OF MACRAGGE



ANCIENT HELVETICUS										
	Points	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Helveticus	190	5	5	4	4	2	5	4	9	3+

A Ultramarines army of 1,500 points or greater may include Ancient Helveticus (it is assumed that the army represents only a part of the entire Chapter in combat). If you decide to include him, then he counts as one of the HQ choices for the army but the army must still be led by a Hero, Chaplain or Librarian. Ancient Helveticus must be used exactly as described below and may not be given additional equipment from the Space Marine Armory. Helveticus can be used regardless of whether the players have agreed on the use of special characters (don't worry, the rules are balanced!).

Note: Although this character entry portrays Ancient Helveticus, it can be used without modification to represent any of the Ancients who carried the Banner of Macragge over the long history of the Ultramarines.

Wargear: Banner of Macragge, Terminator honors (bonus included above), bolt pistol, frag grenades, krak grenades, power fist.

SPECIAL RULES

Banner of Macragge: The Banner of Macragge is the Ultramarines' Chapter banner and, as such, has the combined effect of both the Sacred Standard and Holy Relic wargear items (see Codex Space Marines for details). In addition, Ancient Helveticus and any Ultramarines squad he joins becomes *fearless* and automatically passes any Morale check or Pinning tests that he/they have to take. Even effects which normally force a fall back move to take place with no Morale check taken are ignored by the banner bearer and the unit he accompanies. Finally, the presence of the Banner of Macragge is an unwelcome sight to their enemies – it tells them that they are facing the entire might of the Chapter. This is represented by all enemy units within 12" of the banner bearer suffering -1 to their Leadership values for any Morale checks they are forced to make. If Ancient Helveticus is killed, these benefits no longer apply to whoever picks up the banner (see below). Also, these benefits do not apply if Ancient Helveticus is inside a vehicle, bunker or off-table in reserve.

Banner of Macragge summary:

- 1) Counts as a Sacred Standard (6" range, +1 combat resolution) and a Holy Relic (2D6" range, +1 Attack once per battle).
- 2) Helveticus and unit joined become *fearless*.
- 3) -1 to enemy Morale checks within 12".

Foresworn: Only the most devout and dedicated of the Ultramarines are even considered for the position of Ancient. Those that are chosen have the weight of ten thousand years of sacred tradition to fulfill, never to dishonor the banner, never to take a step back, and certainly never, ever to lose it in battle. The fierce dedication of the Ancients mean that they will overcome even death wounds to fight on to protect the banner. To represent this, Ancient Helveticus' armor save counts as being invulnerable, so he may ignore any wound he suffers on a D6 roll of 3 or more, even ones which allow no armor saving throw.

Protect the flag! If Ancient Helveticus is killed, leave the model in place to show where the banner has fallen. Regardless of the mission being played, the Ultramarines player now also has to fulfill the victory conditions for a 'Rescue' standard mission (see page 143 of the Warhammer 40,000 rulebook), treating the sadly departed Helveticus miniature as the objective. If the Ultramarines player is not in possession of the banner at the end of the battle, he loses regardless of any other victory conditions. If he has the banner then he only wins if he has fulfilled the victory conditions of the original mission, as well (hey, you're the one who chose to bring the thing in the first place), but he can be secure in the knowledge that he hasn't stained the honor of the Chapter by losing the banner.

Independent Character: Ancient Helveticus is an independent character and follows all the special rules as detailed in the Warhammer 40,000 rulebook.

The vault reached up beyond sight in the gloom. Slanting shafts of light alive with dancing dust-motes lent it a spectral grandeur which outshone even the darkly clustered pillars and adorned stonework. In the shadows lay mounds of ancient armor, torn banners, corroded weapons and shattered machines which gave it the air of some forgotten battlefield. Chaplain Cassius knew better, as did the youthful Sergeant Tortalus who dogged his heavily armored boot prints as they wound their way to the centre of the vault. This detritus of war was a collection of the most valued trophies from uncounted campaigns across the galaxy in the service of the Emperor. They had been laid here in honor of one of the Chapter's most sacred relics. It stood proudly at the center of the vault, bathed in a pool of light. A tall banner, intricate beyond measure with victory scrolls and honorifics, the Ultramarines insignia formed of glittering gold on a field of purest, deepest blue. It hung from an adamantium shaft which was scored and pitted in many places, as though it had been burned by acids.

Cassius turned and fixed the sergeant with a baleful stare. His tough, leathery skin twisted into a network of scars beneath the half-mask of bionics which replaced his right eye and upper jaw as he spoke.

"See here boy, the Banner of Macragge. Touched by the Emperor's own hand when he presented it to our Primarch Roboute Guilliman at the beginning of the Great Crusade. A magical thing is it not? We Ultramarines have preserved it for ten millennia through fire and war and decimation, each generation passing it on to the next as a burning torch of our love for the immortal Emperor who made us. It has languished in dull stasis chambers and flown beneath the suns of

a thousand alien worlds. It has flown here on Macragge itself, whenever the whole Chapter is gathered together and it has been carried forth whenever our brethren have fought as one against the direst of foes.

It is said to be made of a stuff known only to the ancients; light as silk but strong as steel, flame cannot burn it and where it is rent asunder it re-spins itself as perfect as the day it was first made. It is marked with the names of all seventy seven Chapter masters; beginning with Guilliman and ending with young Calgar, it carries an honorific for each Victorix Maxima of the Chapter which has been declared at the Imperial palace on sacred Terra. I myself have had the honor of being present at nine of those victories, at once great and terrible times which I shall carry with me to the end of my days. I was there when we raised it over the ruins of Corinth, I was there when we carried it aboard our ships at the Battle of Macragge."

Tortalus stiffened slightly at the name. No Ultramarine would not have done so. The Battle of Macragge was both the Chapter's greatest victory and its most terrible loss. The Ultramarines' home world had been saved and the Tyranids defeated but at such a cost that it had taken over two centuries for the Chapter to fully recover. Cassius let that sink in for a moment before continuing.

"After Macragge, young Calgar declared that the Banner would not be carried forth again until we had rebuilt our strength, until we were a whole Chapter again. It has taken us two centuries to bring the 1st Company back to full strength after its sacrifice at Macragge. Only now does our Chapter Master believe that we are fit to carry the Banner of Macragge to war once more."

The old Chaplain turned, went down

upon one armored knee and intoned a brief prayer before reverently touching the pitted banner shaft.

"You know what it is to carry this banner in war. You become the vessel of all of us, the symbol of our unity and strength. You know the vows and oaths, the words of what it is to be the Ancient, the bearer of the battle standard of the Ultramarines. But do you know the reality of it? See here."

Cassius drew out the shaft of the banner from the hole it rested in and showed it to the young Space Marine.

"You see these bright gouges, that is where Ancient Galatan had his arm shorn off by an Ork Warlord as he fought through the breach at Corinth. He picked up the banner with his other hand and went onward, taking three more mighty wounds to the fore. He did not, would not die until the battle was won and never took a backward step.

These burns are from Macragge, when young Calgar's barge was boarded by Tyranids and Ancient Helveticus led the counter-assault. He was poisoned and burned unto death, but still his grip was so tight that he did not let the banner fall, even in death he did not dishonor his Chapter. Do you understand?"

Sergeant Tortalus' eyes were bright with reverence. He nodded once, curtly as if afraid to express himself further. But Cassius had four centuries of experience of reading the hearts of his Brother-Marines, he knew that this Ancient would die defending the banner if necessary, as the others had. He held forward the shaft.

"Bear it with pride Ancient Tortalus, you will take your oaths and carry it before the Chapter at sunset, as they load the ships for war."

WHAT'S CHAPTER APPROVED ALL ABOUT?

Each month, Chapter Approved takes a look at the Warhammer 40,000 game and its rules, introducing new scenarios, weapons, rules and army list entries of all types, frequently stolen from Codexes in progress here at the Studio. It also acts as a forum for dedicated players of Warhammer

40,000 who have produced inspired, well thought out and just plain brilliant additions to the game. If you've got something good for Chapter Approved then write to me at the address given here.

Note: Please don't include rules queries etc. with your letters, as the volume of mail means that in most cases I won't be able to send individual replies.

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ULTRAMARINES CHAPLAIN CASSIUS

Chaplain Cassius is amongst the oldest members of the Ultramarines Chapter, discounting those who fight on with the blessings of internment within Dreadnought armor. Although close on four centuries old, his eye remains sharp and his aim steady, and his sturdy presence within the Ultramarines battle lines fills the hearts of his younger brethren with pride. Cassius can recall tales of the first Tyrannic war when he fought alongside Marneus Calgar, always "young Calgar" to Cassius, to purge Ultramar of the horrific denizens of Hivefleet Behemoth. His impassioned words have carried the Ultramarines forward into battle on a thousand worlds, firing them with his own deeply-held passion and belief.

CHAPLAIN CASSIUS

	Points	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Cassius	142	5	5	4	4	2	5	4	9	3+

An Ultramarines army of any size may include Chaplain Cassius. If you decide to include him, then he counts as one of the HQ choices for the army and may act as the army's commander, if desired. Cassius must be used exactly as described below, and may not be given additional equipment from the Space Marine Army. Cassius can be used regardless of whether the players have agreed on the use of special characters (don't worry, the rules are balanced!).

Wargear: Bolt pistol, frag grenades, crozius arcanum (counts as power weapon), rosarius (4+ invulnerable saving throw), Terminator honors (bonus attack included above), bionics.

SPECIAL RULES

Tyrannid Hunter: Cassius is one of the few surviving veterans of the first Tyrannic war. He has fought in many battles against the Tyranids and understands them all too well. His hard won experience has led the Ultramarines to victory against these aliens, overcoming both their heinous weaponry and inhuman constitution. Cassius and any Ultramarines squad led by him may re-roll its dice to wound against Tyranids for any shots taken using rapid fire and/or pistol weapons. If the second roll still fails to wound, the dice may not be re-rolled again.

Great Knowledge: Any Ultramarines unit within 6" of Cassius may re-roll its Morale checks, accepting the second result as final. Note that this ability can be used even if a Morale check is passed on the first roll, so you can use it to try to make sure that the Ultramarines fall back in disadvantageous or outright dangerous situations (Cassius counsels with both strength and wisdom).

Independent Character: Unless accompanied by a bodyguard, Cassius is an independent character and follows all the special rules as detailed in the Warhammer 40,000 rulebook.

Bodyguard: Cassius may be accompanied by a bodyguard as detailed for a Chaplain in the Codex Space Marines army list.



Chaplain Cassius leads a squad of Ultramarines as Hormagaunts bound through the forest toward them.



Captain Invictus and a few loyal Terminators hold back the alien hordes.

CAPTAIN INVICTUS OF THE ULTRAMARINES FIRST COMPANY

CAPTAIN INVICTUS

	Points	WS	BS	S	T	W	A	Ld	Sv
Invictus	142	5	5	4	4	2	5	4	10 2+

An Ultramarines army which contains ten or more Veterans or Terminators (including his bodyguard) may include Captain Invictus. If you decide to include him, then he counts as one of the HQ choices for the army. Captain Invictus must be used exactly as described below and may not be given additional equipment from the Space Marine Army. Invictus can be used regardless of whether the players have agreed on the use of special characters (don't worry, the rules are balanced!).

Wargear: Terminator armor (save shown above, also gives 5+ invulnerable save), teleport homer, Terminator honors (bonus included above), plasma blaster, power fist.

SPECIAL RULES

Plasma blaster: The plasma blaster was a specially built combi-weapon crafted by the famed Artificer Putus in the 38th Millennium. It incorporated two plasma guns on a weapon mount suitable for replacing the storm bolter on a suit of Terminator armor. The plasma blaster counts as a linked plasma gun which is always stationary. This means it may always rapid fire as if stationary, even if Invictus moves, and re-rolls his To Hit dice, minimizing chances of an overheat.

Weapon	Rng	Str	Ap	Notes
Plasma blaster	24"	7	2	Linked weapon, rapid fire, gets hot! always counts as stationary

Independent Character: Unless accompanied by a bodyguard, Invictus is an independent character and follows all the special rules as detailed in the Warhammer 40,000 rulebook.

Bodyguard: As captain of the 1st Company, Invictus is able to equip his personal troops to the highest standard. As such he may either choose to be accompanied by a Command squad which must be upgraded to wearing Terminator armor (+25 pts per model) or accompany a unit of Terminators or Veterans instead. If a unit of Terminators or Veterans is chosen, each model in the unit may be given up to 50pts of additional equipment from the Space Marines Army. In either case, Invictus ceases to be an independent character, as he leads the unit instead.

Designer's note - this opens up a lot of unique options for equipping squads, particularly veterans. However many of the more... esoteric combinations may well require some heavy miniature conversion work to achieve, you have been warned!

Captain Invictus was the head of the Ultramarines 1st Company when it was destroyed defending the polar fortresses in the Battle of Macragge during the first Tyrannic War. Invictus had honed the Company carefully after the losses of the Corinthian Crusade, gradually expanding it with stolid veterans drawn from the rest of the Chapter in accordance with the edicts of the sacred Codex Astartes. As such, it suffered none of the failings of many reformed Companies: squad cooperation was flawless and fire discipline superb. Invictus was fanatically committed to ensuring that his battle brothers deserved the respect they gained from the rest of the Chapter and drove them with relentless energy. Invictus also acted as Regent of Ultramar and oversaw much of the rulership of Macragge itself when the Master of the Ultramarines was busy with other duties.

As such, it was he who requested that the 1st Company be assigned to protecting the two polar fortresses, the vital lynchpins in Macragge's orbital defense network. He judged, rightly as it transpired, that the Tyranids would attempt to make landings at these places to neutralize the defenses, opening the door for untold numbers of the creatures to swarm down and infest the planet. The presence of the elite veterans of the 1st Company ensured that the Tyranids suffered unsustainable casualties overrunning the fortresses, delaying the inevitable for long enough that Calgar and the rest of the Chapter could forge a victory in space. Captain Invictus' body was discovered among those of the last stand of the 1st Company in Silo 8 of the northern fortress. It is said that the bodies of their enemies stretched six deep for twenty yards all about them, and every pace from the silo to the entrance four levels above.

TYRANID SEEDING SWARMS



Big Pete Haines has been putting a lot of thought into the variant army lists for Codex Tyranids recently. Coincidentally, he has been

behaving rather strangely and was last sighted clutching his head and howling "They're coming!" over and over in a despairing voice.

The Tyranid hive fleets have now been assailing the Imperium for 250 years. In this time, whole Chapters of the Adeptus Astartes have been lost in the maelstrom of battle along with countless millions of Guardsmen. But now deeper knowledge of the Tyranid way of war is being gathered, every fragment paid for with human flesh and blood.

One realization has been that the swarms that descend from the hive fleets in the early stages of an attack are often significantly different from those that follow. The list in Codex Tyranids is designed to represent a typical swarm. This article, however, features a variant Tyranid list that deals with the first wave – the seeding swarms – the harbingers of doom to countless worlds and their cultures. Note that you will still need Codex Tyranids to use the seeding swarm.

Mycetic spores are more than just the Tyranid versions of drop pods, they are a vital part of their ecology. The Tyranids are a space-dwelling race but their prey is terrestrial. Mycetic spores are one of a number of different spore types used to seed target planets. Some types affect the weather, others the flora and fauna, and some even introduce new species. Militarily, without mycetic spores the hive fleet's ships and their Norn Queens would have to risk planetary defenses and waste valuable energy to feed. With mycetic spores the hive fleet can gather around the prey planet and bombard it with seeding swarms, only descending themselves when all resistance is crushed and all the juicy bio-matter is ripe for consumption. The release of seeding spores is analogous to a person pouring, sniffing and sampling a fine table wine before

drinking it. The main course may be yet to come, but the meal has started.

Mycetic spores are not as sophisticated as drop pods, but the sheer numbers of spores dropped ensure that some will get through the planetary defenses. As with any contested landing, the first few minutes are critical. If the seeding swarms can establish safe landing sites, then Tyranid reinforcements can be directed to those locations and, in short order, massive concentrations of Tyranids can be built up ready for the hive mind's signal to attack. If, however, the seeding swarms can be defeated, then there is nowhere safe for successive Tyranid swarms to land, and planetary defenses will continue to claim a high toll. With no chance to build up, the Tyranids that have landed can be counter-attacked and driven from the planet altogether.

No two hive fleets are exactly alike, and no two swarms from the same hive fleet need be exactly the same. Subject to this, seeding swarms have some similarities because of the job they do. If you think of a swarm as a

single large predator then, if it is a complex swarm relying on several genera operating almost symbiotically, it can be hamstrung by planetary defenses upsetting its balance. Even against a planet with minimal planetary defenses, heavy losses can be incurred, so the creatures in the first swarms down have to be robustly simple in their approach.

If robustly simple sounds right up your street, read on, because the seeding swarm is a different type of Tyranid army. It relies on the most numerous creatures in the swarm – those that occupy the Troop slots on the Force Organization chart. Heavy losses during planetfall are cancelled out by launching successive waves, with each subsequent brood having the same role as its predecessor. If one is destroyed, the next will replace it. Other broods manifest a chemical imbalance that ensures that they are unusually hyperactive. They are faster, stronger and even more ferocious than their kindred, but the rate at which they expend their energy causes them to burn out within minutes of their landing. These ploys are represented in game



terms by some changes to the way the mission to be played is selected, variations in army composition and, most importantly, two special rules which characterize seeding swarms.

SEEDING SWARMS – CHOOSING A SCENARIO

The seeding swarm has a Strategy rating of 4. This means that when determining the scenario category the Tyranid seeding swarm player will roll four dice and select the highest rather than simply rolling a single dice. If the seeding swarm player gets to choose the scenario then the Tyranids will automatically be the attackers and the scenario category will be *Battle*. Page 129 of the Warhammer 40,000 rulebook explains the rules for choosing a scenario and mission more fully.

All three Battle scenarios use the Deep Strike special rule. This is detailed on page 132 of the Warhammer 40,000 rulebook. All models in Tyranid seeding swarms **MUST** arrive on the table by this method with two exceptions: broods with the Infiltrate ability may deploy conventionally in accordance with the mission rules. Lictors may use *Secret Deployment* as described in Codex Tyranids.

Mariner Weiss heard the screams above the roar of the storm and the crash of the waves around the ship. He checked the emergency transmitter for the fifth time and found it was still inoperative, before drawing a laspistol and opening the communications cabin door. Five meters away from him along the hallway a growling Hormagaunt sat on the chest of an armsman, gnawing at his throat. To Weiss it looked like the worse parts of a wood scorpion and a redback-hunting lizard, only ten times bigger.

With a hiss it turned and leapt. Weiss slammed the door but to his dismay the creature had got its claws between the door and the frame. Weiss jabbed his laspistol into the gap and fired frantically until the snarling stopped, he then carefully opened the door and fired two more shots into the twitching monstrosity. Stepping gingerly past it he made his way carefully to the main deck to report to the captain.

Across the night sky the engorged clouds dispensed an endless torrent of viscous green globules which pulsated as they fell.

The Faithful Traveller was 400 clicks out from Mhakkian and still some 700 clicks from its destination port, Kirishi, in the middle of the roughest, coldest ocean on the planet. The spores had been dropping for the three days during which the Faithful Traveller had been at sea. They had listened to the broadcasts, but it had never occurred to them that they could be in danger this far off the coast.

Even here, though, the crew was falling to the Tyranids. Unknown viral conditions, fevers brought on by the oppressive, unseasonable temperatures and finally the horror of facing the Hormagaunts released when a spore hit the ship. After the one he had killed there were still nine unaccounted for lurking in the depths of the super-freighter. Other things were in the ocean, too – the engineers reported scratching noises against the hull. Even the water was changing, a sickly purple crust spread for miles across the ocean like a mauve plague. Weiss saw Captain Balfour and doubled towards him trying to stay icy calm, but he couldn't shake the thought that this wasn't their planet anymore.



The Tyranid broods swarm from all directions, pouring from mycetic spores into the Space Wolves' firebase.

For other scenario categories, if there is a Deep Strike option in the scenario, then it may only be used by Tyranids such as Gargoyles, that can Deep Strike as part of their normal profile. Other broods are set up as specified for the mission. These missions can be considered to represent the seeding swarm being attacked when it is already on the ground.

SEEDING SWARMS – COMPOSITION

Seeding swarms use the following units from Codex Tyranids:

HQ

0-1 Hive Tyrant, Tyrant Guard may accompany the Hive Tyrant but cannot be an HQ choice themselves.

HQ OR ELITES

Tyranid Warriors.

ELITES

Tyranid Warriors, Lictors (no more than one Lictor per brood).

TROOPS

Hormagaunts, Termagants, Genestealers.

FAST ATTACK

Gargoyles, 0-1 Raveners.

HEAVY SUPPORT

0-1 Zoanthropes (no more than one Zoanthrope per brood), 0-2 Carnifex.

The only Tyranid models excluded from a seeding swarm are Biovores and Ripper Swarms. Biovores are not included as the hive fleet will already have saturated the target planet with a spore mine preparatory bombardment if the mission calls for it. Ripper Swarms will come later when organized resistance is crushed and the business of consuming the planet's bio-matter is begun.

If you use a personalized Hive Fleet, you may still use it as a seeding swarm. If you have a new genus of Hive Tyrant or Carnifex, then you may use 0-1 Hive Tyrant and 0-2 Carnifexes as shown on the Seeding Swarm Composition chart. Ripper Swarms never feature in seeding swarm forces so cannot be used. New genera of Tyranid Warrior or Gaunt can be used freely in whatever category of the force organization chart Codex Tyranids specifies (see Hive Fleet List Force Organization on pg38).

The twin suns were blotted out by Tyranid spores. Thousands of deafening, wet detonations sounded as the pulsating spores slammed into the ground and split apart like overripe fruit. Sergeant Reilly rolled onto his front and wiped mud and sticky ichor from his eyes. He watched in disgust as the spore that had landed in the midst of his squad oozed a glistening amniotic fluid from the myriad cracks in its outer shell. Reilly knew the drill. He'd destroyed spores like this before. He unsnapped a Krak grenade from his combat webbing and pushed himself to his feet as the spore began to ripple with inner life. This was when the creatures were vulnerable, before they had a chance to break free of their protective cocoons.

The rest of the squad began picking themselves up as Reilly shouted,

"Fire in the hole!" His arm drew back to plunge the grenade home when a three fingered claw ripped through the spore's outer membrane and punched through the sergeant's chest, bursting from his back in a shower of blood and bone. A blur of motion, almost too quick to follow and the creature was free. Its talons and claws tore through the squad as its mutated adrenal sacs pumped horrifying vigor through its alien metabolism. Within seconds the infantrymen were dead, shredded strips of bloody flesh, no longer recognizable as human. The genestealer did not pause to savor its handiwork, the chemicals thundering through its body drove it onwards in a frenzy of slaughter.

Soon it would be dead, but until then it would exist only to kill. The perfect predator.

FEROCITY

Some broods may be mutated to maintain terminally-high adrenaline levels. This state is induced quite deliberately by the hive mind to turn a brood into even more vicious killers than normal.

Any normal Troops choice can be selected to be **Ferocious**. To do this they replace a Fast Attack choice on the Force Organization chart. The Troops choice is now a Fast Attack choice, leaving the vacated Troops choice free and reducing the number of Fast Attack choices remaining by one. A unit may not be both *Ferocious* and *Without Number* (see later).

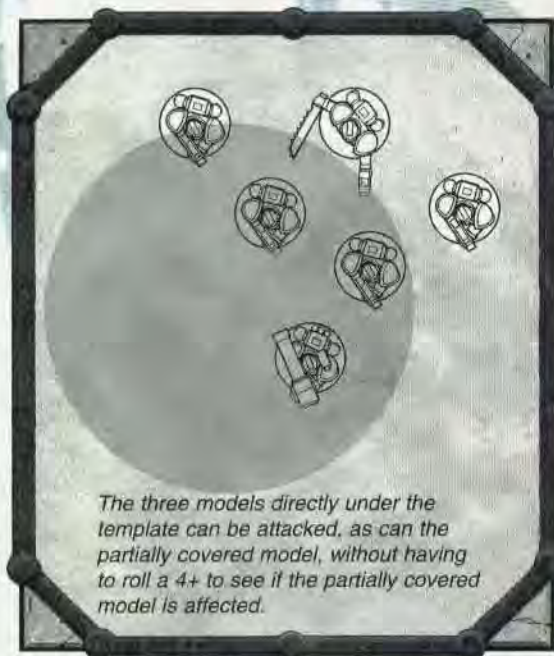
The effect of *Ferocity* is boosted Strength and speed (+1 Strength, +1 Initiative). *Ferocious* troops move in a blur, their bodies wracked with uncontrollable shaking and their eyes lit by berserk rage.

Ferocious troops must assault if there are any targets in range and must perform a sweeping advance instead of consolidating whenever the option exists.

When a brood is subject to *Ferocity* the normal proviso that Deep Striking troops are destroyed if they land within 1" of an enemy model does not apply. When deploying a *Ferocious* unit using the

Deep Strike rules, any enemy models that are also under (or partially under) the large template may be attacked in close combat. This is done in the Assault phase and is conducted normally with the Tyranids counting as charging. Such is the *Ferocious* troops' state of agitation that they burst from the spore almost as soon as it lands and leap on the nearest enemies without hesitation.

This is shown in the diagram below. The large circle shows the Ordnance template used to deploy the Deep Striking Tyranids.



The three models directly under the template can be attacked, as can the partially covered model, without having to roll a 4+ to see if the partially covered model is affected.



A ferocious brood of Genestealers instantly pours from the shattered remains of a mycetic spore.

Tyranids cannot live long in such an agitated state, and *Ferocious* broods suffer appalling attrition due to biological system failure. At the end of each Assault phase of the Tyranid player's turn, whether the unit has been in close combat or not, resolve a Strength 2 hit on each boosted brood member, with no Armor save. These tests do not begin until the brood is actually on the table.

Whilst the negative effects of augmented *Ferocity* is potentially crippling, these broods are able to swiftly overwhelm key positions while other Tyranids are still emerging from their mycetic spores, their sacrifice opening up the defenses for those that follow. If the Tyranids are not arriving by mycetic spore then they deploy normally, but otherwise follow the *Ferocity* rules.

WITHOUT NUMBER

Any normal Troops choice can be selected to be *Without Number*. To do this they replace a Heavy Support choice on the Force Organization chart. The Troops choice is now a Heavy Support, leaving the vacated Troops slot free and reducing the number of Heavy Support choices remaining by one. A unit may not be both *Ferocious* and *Without Number*.

Without Number has the effect of making the brood the first of a series of waves, each consisting of an identical brood. *Without Number* broods are always subject to the Sustained Attack special rule (see page 137 of the rules). When the brood is destroyed or if it is falling back and the Tyranid player chooses to remove it, then an identical brood re-enters play during the next Tyranid turn, arriving by

mycetic spore. The replacement brood can therefore Deep Strike even if this is not allowed in the scenario being played. If the scenario allows Sustained Attack anyway, then *Without Number* broods re-enter play using the Deep Strike rules rather than coming on the table edge.

If one of the incarnations of the *Without Number* brood is lost while performing a Deep Strike then its replacement arrives in the following turn.

TACTICS

A seeding swarm arrives from reserve in a piecemeal fashion, so early on in the game you will have to play according to what arrives. Taking a Lictor and some Genestealers to deploy conventionally can be quite effective, as it gives the enemy something to focus on and ensures that at least part of your force is immediately available.

Because you will be landing amongst the enemy, firepower is not as important as normal, a seeding swarm

The first Chimera skidded to a stop. Clay's squad dismounted while the rest of the Company roared on. Sergeant Clay formed them up facing the power station administration building in a loose skirmish order and began to advance. Mycetic spores had penetrated the planetary defenses and landed in and around the hydro-electric facility. The upper floor of the administration building had a gaping hole in it; the squad's job was to check it out. They had barely gotten within 500 paces when a horde of fanged and clawed Hormagaunts leapt from the building's upper windows and bounded at them. The Guardsmen obeyed their training and Sergeant Clay's terse orders – firing short controlled bursts from their lasguns as the Hormagaunts closed. They were too many and too fast to be stopped by lasguns alone, though, and the Chimera added its heavy weapons to the salvo, ripping a hole in the brood just as the squad's heavy bolter coughed into

life. The surviving Hormagaunts still came on and were tensing for a final leap when they were enveloped in roaring gout of fire from the squad's flamer. A last Hormagaunt, its hide blackened, made it through the fire and leapt forward landing before a Guardsman, plunging both of its sword-like talons through his torso with a triumphant hiss. Before it could move, Sergeant Clay's chainsword swept across its chest knocking it on its back while he calmly put four bolt pistol rounds through its head.

"There you go lads, not so tough eh?" beamed the Sergeant but there was no answer from his squad. Following their gaze he saw another brood as large as the last dropping from the building while yet another seemed to be massing within. Even Nathaniel Clay, twelve years a veteran, hesitated briefly before his stoic sense of duty reasserted itself. "We may need to put some overtime in today, men," he said, with a feral grin. "Fire!"



A terrifying Tyranid seeding swarm pours in from all sides as the mycetic spores rain down upon the Ultramarines' battle line.

can get away with being armed solely with tooth and claw, but it will need some monstrous creatures or loads of rending claws to deal with enemy tanks.

The hive mind's Leadership is essential to sustain the swarm through the heavy losses it will doubtlessly take. Don't skimp on Synapse creatures, because the consequence of running out is a lot of Morale checks against very low Leadership. Early in the game you may only have a single Synapse brood or creature on at any moment in time. If so, concentrate on keeping them out of the line of fire but within Synapse range of the lesser creatures.

Broods taken as Heavy Support with the *Without Number* rule are very useful and can be hurled into combat secure in the knowledge that they will be back. Large Hormagaunt broods are ideal choices in this regard. Their combat abilities are formidable, being more than a match for Imperial Guard and Eldar Guardians. With an advantage in numbers they can even threaten Space Marines – remember

Space Marines have got to fail their armor saving throws some time!

Ferocious broods are marked for death the moment they are selected, so it does not pay to invest too many points in them. They are great for tying up dangerous enemy units who are in the strongest defensive positions. If they arrive later, then they become really useful reinforcements as their spores drop right into ongoing combats or onto enemy fire bases. Small broods of Genestealers can be particularly useful in this role, as in their boosted state they are able to lay waste to pretty much anything they can jump on before they die out themselves.

So how do we balance it all up? The best way of showing the true potential of the seeding swarm menace is via an army list. I designed the following list to be representative of a seeding swarm, and a swift glance should show how scary this variant of the Tyranids can be. I have used the standard Tyranid list with no biomorphed genera although there is no reason not to use your own hive fleet. The seeding

swarm is, in fact, absolutely ideal for a hive fleet that specializes in hordes of the smaller critters.

I have selected one HQ – a very tough Hive Tyrant whose presence should cause a lot of worry. As he is quite likely to appear in the middle of the enemy forces, the Psychic Scream should be effective. When playing against Andy Chamber's swarm recently I was impressed by the way Warp Field protected his Tyrant from my missile launchers, so I have casually stolen the idea. There are times when a venom cannon, for all its three shots at Strength 8, just isn't the tool for the job, so I have selected Warp Blast to frighten Space Marines and punish anyone grouping together too tightly.

I really like the new Tyranid Warriors, so I have included three broods as Elite choices. I have found the safest place for a Tyranid Warrior is often in *mélée* rather than being a target, so I have equipped them all with rending claws to ensure that they can hurt well-armored enemies. Venom cannons are



the only Tyranid guns with decent range, so I included one in each brood. Devourers are great close-up, and I reasoned that there would be times emerging from a mycetic spore when a hail of death might be useful.

Due to the seeding swarm rules, I knew that I would be using lots of troops and decided to stick to Genestealers and Hormagaunts. The plan is to land in numbers and get into m el e very quickly. Three Hormagaunt broods make up my Troops selections and I included a mutant Hive Node in each of them. The vagaries of Reserves and Deep Strike being what they are, it is quite possible that these broods will have to operate away from the hive mind for some time, so having a Leadership value of 10 will help prevent them from adopting instinctive behavior when I least want it.

Two Hormagaunt broods were selected as Heavy Support to benefit from the *Without Number* rule. These will ensure that the swarm will keep coming and that even on the last move of the game there may be more

Tyranids arriving. The other Heavy Support pick HAD to be a Carnifex, as these rampaging monstrosities have the capacity to rip, rend and tear their way through virtually anything. Even the normally invulnerable Land Raider is just so much food packaging to the Carnifex, so it is certain to draw masses of fire.

For Fast Attack choices I took a standard Gargoyle brood, primarily so that I had a few more things to shoot with on landing, and also because with their bio-plasma the Gargoyles can be surprisingly dangerous. For the other two choices I took Genestealer broods with the *Ferocious* rule. There will inevitably be games where the decision point is whether one or two firebases can be held. The Genestealers will be hurled at the firebases. I don't expect them to live, but I do expect them to get their claws bloody very quickly. Ideally, the damage done by these broods will be sufficient to give the hordes of Hormagaunts and Tyranid Warriors the chance to get the job done.

As is often true with armies lacking firepower, by giving your opponent lots of difficult target choices you maximize the chance of them getting it wrong at the key time. In this army the Tyrant, Tyranid Warriors and Carnifex are what will really work on an opponent. Everything else is really a decoy but a potentially deadly decoy if not treated with the proper respect.

I make no claims that the seeding swarm is invincible, indeed, I can tell you for certain that it isn't. What I do claim is that it's the type of army that will have your opponent watching the game from behind the sofa and developing a tendency to look up a lot, just in case. All in all, seeding swarms have terrifying potential, but throwing your broods at a planet is a gamble that could cost you. The resultant battle is likely to be intense and brutal.

What more could you want? Have fun.

Pete

HIVE FLEET CANTHARIDAE: SEEDING SWARM

HQ

Hive Tyrant with scything talons & venom cannon; Warp Blast, Warp Field & Psychic Scream. **158 pts**

ELITE

3 Tyranid Warriors

Two with devourer & rending claws, one with venom cannon & rending claws. **120 pts**

3 Tyranid Warriors

Two with scything talons and rending claws, one with venom cannon & rending claws. **111 pts**

3 Tyranid Warriors

Two with scything talons and rending claws, one with venom cannon & rending claws. **111 pts**

TROOPS

9 Hormagaunts

with Hive Node mutant **100 pts**

9 Hormagaunts

with Hive Node mutant **100 pts**

9 Hormagaunts

with Hive Node mutant **100 pts**

FAST ATTACK

6 Genestealers

Ferocity **96 pts**

6 Genestealers

Ferocity **96 pts**

9 Gargoyles

90 pts

HEAVY SUPPORT

16 Hormagaunts

with Hive Node mutant
Without Number **170 pts**

10 Hormagaunts

with Hive Node mutant
Without Number **110 pts**

Carnifex

with venom cannon and scything talons **133pts**

TOTAL 1,495 pts

TACTICA shines the spotlight on one particular army every month, with a veteran player taking you through some tactics and strategies for their favorite force. This month, Matthew Sprange looks at the advantages and disadvantages of fielding a Dark Angels Ravenwing force.



As well as being a regular player of the much underrated Sisters of Battle, Matthew Sprange also fights with the difficult to use Dark Angels Ravenwing.

The 2nd Company of the Dark Angels, known throughout the galaxy as the Ravenwing, are noted for their experience in reconnaissance and fast strike missions. Their skillful use of Bikes and Land Speeders enables them to engage armies many times their size and emerge victorious.

Within Warhammer 40,000, the Ravenwing represent a truly unique force. They are not simply another Space Marines army but instead have a completely different mode of warfare, forcing players who use them to adjust their normal tactics appropriately. Whilst they are usually regarded as a niche army, the Ravenwing does have a lot to offer to the discriminating gamer.

TACTICA

DARK ANGELS RAVENWING

ADVICE FOR USING THE DARK ANGELS ELITE SECOND COMPANY

1. They are fast. Ravenwing units have the ability to keep an enemy totally off balance, feinting attacks, then striking in weak positions. They are also superb at taking objectives, absolutely necessary in Take & Hold and Cleanse missions.
2. They are tough. Every biker has a Toughness of 5, enabling them to withstand a great deal of punishment. Even elite units such as Eldar Howling Banshees, the bane of many Space Marine armies, need a 6 to wound them in combat. Also, every unit receives a 6+ jink save and this must not be underestimated. It has won me more games than I care to remember!
3. You need very, very few models in a Ravenwing army, allowing players to assemble a force in an incredibly short space of time. A standard 1,500 points army is likely to have less than twenty models – you could paint the entire force inside one weekend!
4. They are an elite force from the greatest Space Marine Chapter in the Imperium. What more needs to be said?

FIELDING THE RAVENWING

When putting together a Ravenwing army, you need to keep several things in mind. Your force will be very small and, whilst you may be able to paint it quickly, your opponent can destroy it even faster on the open battlefield. It is imperative that you maximize on the destructive capabilities of your units in order to ensure that when you strike, your opponent will feel it.

The Master of the Ravenwing is a compulsory purchase but, in a normal 1,500 points game, steer away from giving him a Command squad. You will find that he is far more flexible if he can join and leave squadrons at will throughout the battle, rather than being tied down to just one. You are also required to take two Bike squadrons, and these will end up forming the core units of your force, so do not skimp on the upgrades. Make sure that you have the maximum five bikers in each squadron, with an attached Attack Bike if you have the points to spare. A Veteran Sergeant in each will allow you to field power weapons and fists, essential tools as the bikes will spend much of their time assaulting the enemy. Furthermore, the chance to take two special weapons in a single squadron greatly increases their firepower. I tend to choose a mixture of flamers and meltaguns, as you will rarely have the opportunity to use the rapid firing plasma gun to full effect. As an aside, it is usually worth having a Chaplain or Librarian leading one of these squadrons, as their lethal close combat prowess will be enough to crush entire enemy squads and could well swing a vital combat in your favor.

The periphery of your army will be comprised of Attack Bikes and Land Speeders, but these must still be considered essential units. The Land Speeders are the fastest units you have at your command, whilst the Attack Bikes grant a much needed anti-tank capability. Their Toughness



A Ravenwing bike squad 'jinks' its way through a storm of heavy fire.



A Ravenwing squadron skims across the canopy of a jungle planet.

and armor can also be used to stall lethal close combat squads for many turns, allowing the rest of your army to deal with weaker enemies.

ON THE BATTLEFIELD

It may be presumed that the Ravenwing will excel at some missions at the expense of others. However, you really do have the tools to tackle every mission in the rulebook with a degree of success, though you must accept that command of the Ravenwing is not for the faint-hearted. Your enemy will always outgun and outnumber you. It can be very daunting to set up twenty-odd models on the table when the other player has well over a hundred!

It has to be said that the Ravenwing is not for the novice player. However, once they understand the key strengths and weaknesses of this force, any player with a good grasp of the rules may find the Ravenwing to be an extremely capable army.

The first mistake many players make is to assume that, as a fast attack force, the Ravenwing operates best as a stand-off type of army, using speed and concentrated firepower to achieve mission goals. This is not strictly true, and players using these tactics will find themselves outgunned and running for cover every time. It is necessary for you to get your Bike Squadrons into assault as quickly as possible. After all, if they are in close

combat, they cannot be shot at! Use terrain to cover your advance and do not be afraid to dash through a thick wood or overgrown ruin if it gets you into contact with the enemy a turn sooner. I have yet to lose a biker from failing a Difficult Terrain test (I am going to regret saying that!). Aim to get a shot off from the squadron's special weapons before the assault is launched, destroying that all-important tank with the meltaguns or annihilating a counter-attacking squad with the flammers. Once in the thick of things, your Veteran Sergeants will make short work of their opponents, whilst the high Toughness of the bikers will allow them to survive the inevitable return attacks. Once the enemy breaks, the bikes' movement will enable the squadron to run down most units.

The Land Speeders should be kept further back and used to attack enemy flanks and grab objectives. In this way, the Land Speeders will ultimately win more games for you than any other unit. But to do this, they must stay alive, as obvious as it sounds. It should go without saying that a Land Speeder must always move over 6" every turn so will only take glancing hits, even if it carries two weapons. They will lose firepower, but will certainly last a lot longer. On top of that aid to survivability, you also have the famed 6+ 'jink' save.

Now, when reading Codex Dark



1. Bikes and Attack Bikes use cover to avoid enemy fire as they close in on an enemy army for an assault.

2. Speeders stay behind cover around the flanks, ready to pick off enemy units.

Angels, many players dismiss this ability as almost useless. However, you really do have to field an entire Ravenwing force to fully appreciate it. You see, when your opponent fires a missile launcher or similar weapon at your Land Speeder, he will automatically assume that it is going to be destroyed or at least be unable to fire next turn and will start hunting for another target. When you make that 6+ 'jink', it will cause a degree of consternation, as he will now have to find another weapon to fire at it. When you start making consecutive 'jinks', he may well start tearing his hair out. As the Land Speeders are usually so important to achieving mission objectives, this little ability is a potential game winner.

I must make another note about Land Speeders at this point. Players generally detest using their heavy weapons against them, as they know full well that multiple bolters, shuriken catapults and the like, tend to be far more effective at bringing them down, and it leaves the big guns to fire at more important targets – such as your Attack Bike squadron which is sneaking behind a hill, trying to get a good shot at an armored vehicle. The Land Speeder's own guns outrange these weapons, especially when the enemy starts moving about in reaction to your fast moving forces, so there is no reason to get within their range. At all. Make him concentrate his heavy weaponry on your Land Speeders, rather than your bikes, as they can

certainly take it. Remember that a heavy bolter is just as good at supporting your advancing bikers at a range of 36" as it is at 12".

In the early stages of battle, you must try to get your bikes into close combat, whilst your Land Speeders stay in the rear and on the flanks, preferably hidden by or the bulk of the enemy army by large pieces of terrain. Try to destroy key units with a combination of shooting and assault,

targeting the greatest threats to your army – tooled-up close combat characters, heavy tanks and large numbers of basic troops which can overwhelm your units by sheer numbers.

A MOST ELITE FORCE

Admittedly, a Ravenwing army is not for everyone and they do not forgive any mistakes you may make in play. If you like your units charging into the teeth of enemy fire, explosions blasting all around them, then the Ravenwing is not for you. If you like the sort of army that can gouge out huge holes in the enemy's line in the first turn, then the Ravenwing is not for you.

However, if you are looking for a new force that you can take the time to get to grips with and actually makes you think whilst you are playing, then the Ravenwing may well be suitable. You may have to persevere, but remember that no matter how many troops, guns or tanks the enemy has, the Ravenwing does have the capability to overcome them and win.

There is one last thing to consider. Any player who can take a Ravenwing force to a tournament and do well – say, come within the top 10% – is, without a doubt, an extremely good Warhammer 40,000 player. The challenge is there, if you are up to it!

EXAMPLE OF A 1,500 POINTS RAVENWING FORCE

HQ	
Master of the Ravenwing	255
Interrogator Chaplain with bike, artificer armor, bolt pistol, Blades of Reason, melta bombs.	156
TROOPS	
4 Ravenwing Bikers with twin-linked bolters, bolt pistols, 1 flamer and 1 meltagun.	258
1 Veteran Sergeant with power weapon who is <i>stubborn</i> .	
4 Ravenwing Bikers with twin-linked bolters, bolt pistols and 2 meltaguns.	285
1 Veteran Sergeant with power fist who is <i>stubborn</i> .	
FAST ATTACK	
Ravenwing Land Speeder with heavy bolter.	60
3 Ravenwing Land Speeders with heavy bolters & assault cannons.	255
HEAVY SUPPORT	
3 Ravenwing Attack Bikes with twin-linked bolters and multi-meltas.	225
TOTAL COST:	1,494 points

SPOTLIGHT ON ALESSIO CAVATORE

Break out the garlic! This whole issue carries the unsavory reek of putrefaction and, with our crucifixes held high, we now meet the man behind those fanged denizens of the night. Say hello to the Games Developer responsible for the new Vampire Counts armies book, Alessio Cavatore.

Come on then, Alessio, introduce yourself!

Well, I was born in Turin, Italy. I have always had a strong love for model soldiers. As I grew up, I was fascinated with gaming books of all kinds, and before long I began writing my own scenarios for them. I guess the games developer was lurking inside me even then!



WD250
(November 2000)
Dogs of War

Can you remember your first exposure to Warhammer?

When I was old enough, I joined my local roleplaying games club. It was at this club that I saw a game of Warhammer being played for the first time.

Around this time, a bad accident of my own doing (the gory details have been left out to protect the innocent) left me with a badly broken leg and I found myself stuck in hospital. A friend of mine gave me a copy of Warhammer while I was there, and from that point on I was hooked.

So, how did you proceed from playing games to writing them?

I didn't really have a writing background as such before joining Games Workshop. My first love was playing the game itself. I used to field a Skaven army, although generally I prefer playing the good guys. After many years of playing, I decided to enter the Italian Grand Tournament. To my surprise I won and, in doing so, got to speak with the people who were at the time setting up Games Workshop Italia (which was based at head office). After a brief chat, they decided that my grasp of English was good enough for the job of translator, so I set off for Nottingham.

How did you find moving to a foreign country and straight into a new job?

It came as a big shock to my system. I had taken a big gamble in dropping out of my last year at university to pursue a career here at Games Workshop. I was working on translating the Warhammer fifth edition Magic supplement, and spotting some inconsistencies in the initial print run of the English version brought me into contact with the Games Developers. I found myself working with Tuomas Pirinen (author of Mordheim and the driving force behind the sixth edition of Warhammer) and Rick Priestley and forged a solid friendship with them. Then came the staff tournaments and I surprised everybody by winning in 1998 with a Bretonnian army. By the time the 1999 Staff Tournament was played, I was the firm favorite to win and did not disappoint. This, in combination with an opportune discussion with Rick and

Tuomas, led me down the hallowed path to Games Development.

The first original written piece you produced was fiction (the 'field surgeon' story for the Dogs of War Armies book, back in 1998). Is writing fiction something you want to move into?

I don't see myself as much a writer as I do a games developer, although I do enjoy writing stories very much. For me, writing is the ability to make people dream. To be able to give people dreams is a dream in itself. One of the biggest problems I came across as a writer was building up the confidence to write in English. It is a definite psychological barrier, but the more I wrote, the greater my confidence grew. I don't get enough time to write as much as I would like as I am busy finishing my degree (in biology).

You used to have a reputation as a bit of a 'power player'. Do you feel that this is undeserved?

I will freely admit that my style of play is that of a power player, or 'rules lawyer' as they are often known. Being so competitive has, however, given me a distinct advantage in my job. By pushing the rules to their furthest definitions you can see how easy they are to bend and, in doing so, you can try to combat that abuse. I think my tenacity to stick by the strict letter of the rules combined with an attention to detail honed from my time spent as a translator allows me to pen rules that make sense without the need for lengthy discussion.

The whole process of games development is very rewarding, it makes me feel great to create these games as they are better than any computer game. In a computer game you play against a machine, whereas with Warhammer you meet real people who have real lives.

Tell us about your first big projects for Warhammer. The Dogs of War army list, for instance.

I was given the Dogs of War project for a variety of reasons. Firstly, many of the units are from Tilea. They're part of the family (Tilea in the Old World corresponds to Italy in the real world!). Secondly, having recently completed the Empire Armies book, writing the updated Dogs of War was an obvious choice. They are mostly human mercenaries and

share many of the same traits as the men of the Empire, they are all humans, after all. One of the biggest problems I faced with the Dogs of War is that there are too many obscure units, each with its own special rules. This posed a problem in that each unit has the potential to fundamentally mess around with the original Warhammer rules and create horrible complications.



When writing an Armies book, it must be difficult not to keep making armies tougher and tougher.

It is a strange dilemma that a games developer must face. It is all too human to try and make the current army you are working on the toughest yet. After all, it is your creation and you want it to be the best. At the same time you know that this is wrong. We would risk having a terrible escalation of power with each book released if we couldn't keep this way of thinking in check. What you need to achieve is a 50/50 balance, although it is a difficult process to master.

Where do your influences come from?

A wide variety of sources. Naturally, J.R.R. Tolkien (author of fantasy novels *The Hobbit* and *Lord of the Rings*) inspires us all in Games Design, but a combination of films, comics and books all keep me imagining. I'll watch a film or read a book and want to better it.

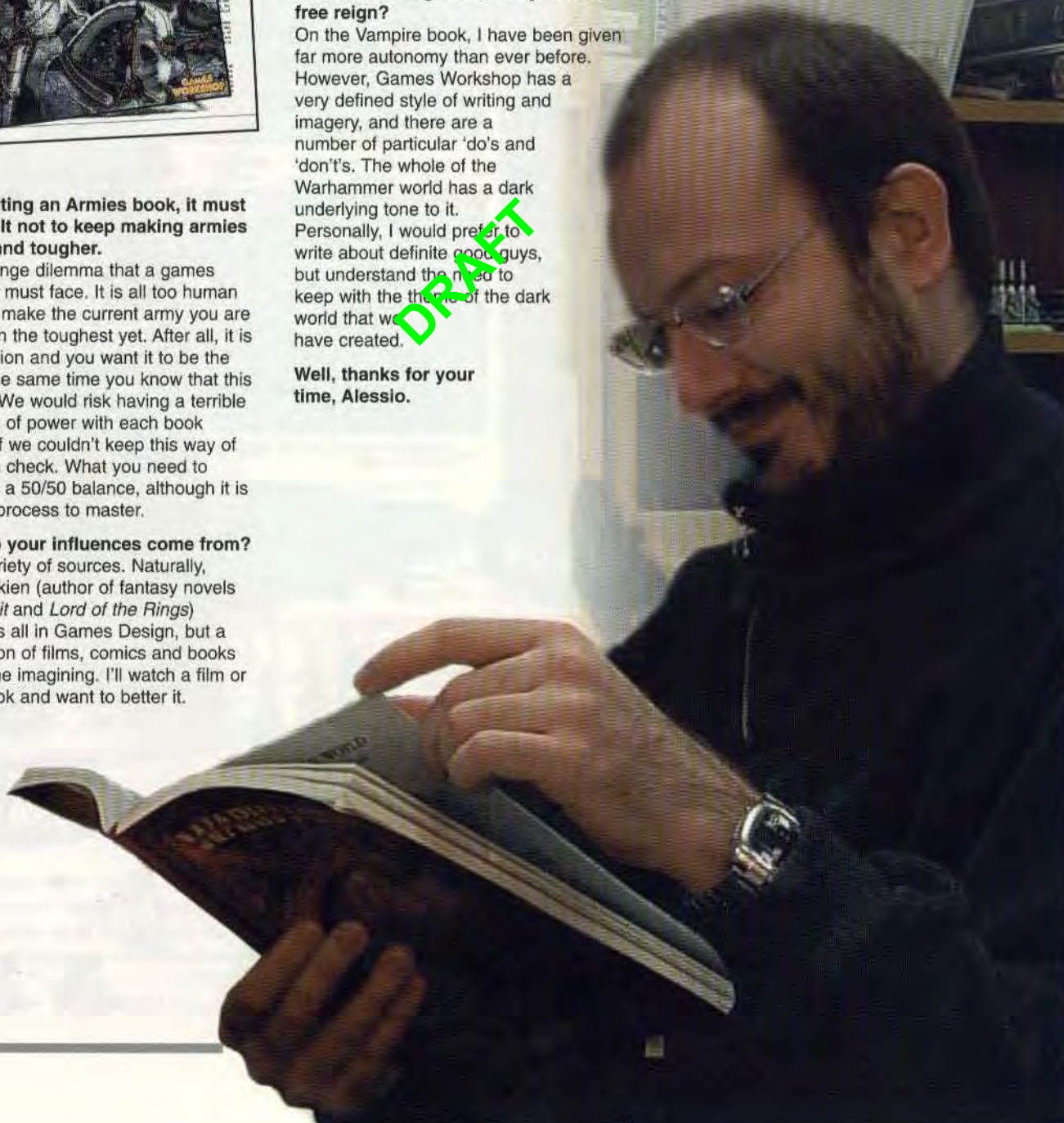
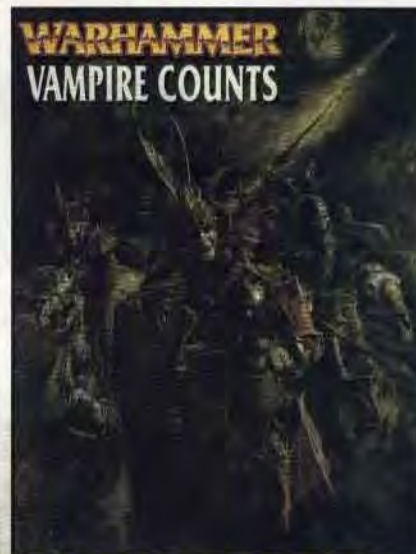
Ok, let's talk about Vampire Counts. For over 200 years, the vampire has been an integral part of our popular culture. Are you a big fan of the vampire in literature?

I am not a massive follower of vampire mythos, but I would class myself as a fan, nonetheless. I saw *Bram Stoker's Dracula* (by Francis Ford Coppola) and was inspired to read the book. The book is fantastic and has all the elements of every vampire that has ever been created in film.

You contributed to the first Vampire Counts book, but this time you were the main writer. The Vampire Counts are still quite new as a Warhammer race in their own right (previously being part of the generic Undead Armies book). When working on the rules and background, did you have free reign?

On the Vampire book, I have been given far more autonomy than ever before. However, Games Workshop has a very defined style of writing and imagery, and there are a number of particular 'do's and 'don't's. The whole of the Warhammer world has a dark underlying tone to it. Personally, I would prefer to write about definite good guys, but understand the need to keep with the theme of the dark world that we have created.

Well, thanks for your time, Alessio.



GW Mailbox



or... "Ask Dirty Steve!"

Have a question about when new armies are coming out? Need some advice about painting or modeling? This is the place for your inquiries and opinions! Write or email us at the addresses below!

Dear White Dwarf,

I've been collecting Warhammer 40K for about 4 years. I have recently changed and tried Warhammer. I wanted to collect Dark Elves, but I don't know much about the rules. The Warhammer rulesbook has most of the stats for them and I heard that there is a little booklet that also has some of the rules, but I don't know what any of the characters look like. I read about some of the characters like the Assassins and Corsairs, and they sound pretty good, but what do they look like? What I would like to know is when is the army book coming out for the Dark Elves? There are books for the Empire and Orcs, but why isn't there one for the Dark Elves?

Sincerely,
Kevin Hargrud

As it turns out, Kevin, the Dark Elves are about to hit the Warhammer scene really big with a large part of the army's new miniature line being sculpted by Chris Fitzpatrick. Look for the army book and a BOATLOAD of new miniatures to be released right around this year's Games Day! Trust me...everything you ever wanted to know about the sinister inhabitants of Naggaroth will be in your local retailer faster than a frenzied Witch Elf!

Dear White Dwarf,

Me and my friends love Warhammer 40,000 (Space Marines in particular) and we have arguments about which is the best and strongest Space Marine chapter of all. I, myself, play the honorable Black Templars, extremely dedicated warriors to the last, some of my friends play the untrustworthy Blood Angels, some the mysterious Dark Angels, others the ferocious

Space Wolves. We came up with this idea: What if, in a future White Dwarf you had a Battle of the Chapters to find out which is the strongest, a tournament, a battle to the death, and so on. I have been playing for almost two years now, and I hope you can decide for us which chapter is the best of the Emperor's finest warriors.

Andrew N. Solic
Pittsburgh, PA

In truth, Andrew, there is no one chapter of Space Marines that is the toughest or the best. Each one has its own advantages and disadvantages in order to balance them out with other armies in the 40K universe. That, coupled with the randomness of a die roll (like the random and chaotic nature of war) makes it hard for games to be won just by playing a particular army. As I've heard often on the field of battle, "The dice giveth and the dice taketh away."

Dear White Dwarf,

I am a devoted Dark Angels player and a White Dwarf subscriber. I've played for almost four years now, and I've even started my own Codex: Obsidian Angels. It's working pretty well. Anyway, I was wondering... Space Wolves have hatred towards Dark Angels, right? You hit on a 3+, etc. But why shouldn't the Dark Angels have some kind of hatred towards Chaos? I mean, after all, there are the Fallen Angels, and we want revenge! I think it would be sweet if you would let Chaos and Dark Angels have a feud. There are rules about Cypher and the Fallen Angels, but that really doesn't display their hatred towards Chaos. I think Chaos players would agree that it would be fair to have some kind of special rule (especially if they get to hit on a 3+ in close combat!) besides the

rules for the Fallen. Nobody plays special characters much, anyway. Thanks for your time. And I was wondering, when do you think the 6th edition Bretonnian army book will hit the shelves?

Thanks,
Brock Clayton

As I am still a novice farseer, my foresight only has limited power. But, as far as I can tell, I don't see the Bretonnian book coming out before the fall of this year.

Hatred rules for Chaos...that's a pretty cool idea! As always, house rules are COMPLETELY encouraged within gaming groups. Try and set up some bonuses and restrictions with your opponents, and have a go at trying them out in a few games!



Please send all rules questions to our knowledgeable Roolzboyz at:
roolzboyz@games-workshop.com

Want to send a letter to the Mailbox? Write us at: Games Workshop, Attn: White Dwarf Staff, 6721 Baymeadow Drive, Glen Burnie, MD 21060. Or, send us some email at WhiteD@games-workshop.com, but remember to give us permission to print your emails. We can't use them if you forget!

THE QUICK AND THE DEAD

A Warhammer Battle Report by Phil Kelly and Alessio Cavatore.

Unless you have been hiding behind the sofa, you will know that this month sees the release of the new Vampire Counts, and what better way to celebrate this than a blood-soaked battle report showing off this fearsome army.

The trickiest decision to be made for this battle report was which of the Vampire Counts bloodlines to use. Although many suggested giving the new Strigoi a chance to get their claws dirty, we eventually decided on the Blood Dragons, the quintessential Vampire warriors. The decision was a little biased; it was intriguing to see just how potent the new Vampire Counts army was when the onus is on rock hard troops and

not necromantic magic. The lucky player who led the Blood Dragons on the battlefield was to be Alessio Cavatore, the author of that dread tome, the Vampire Counts Armies book.

To oppose the infernal knights were the Skaven, using the Ravening Hordes army list. Taking the ratmen to the fore was Phil Kelly, White Dwarf's resident Skaven player. The Skaven, renowned for their sneaky tricks and total lack of honor, contrasted nicely with the martial discipline of the Blood Dragons.

The scenario was to be a Meeting Engagement, which is basically very similar to Pitched Battle, but with an interesting twist. Before the battle

begins, each player needs to number his units in a marching order, and must deploy the units in exactly this sequence, the first unit placed in the centre and the rest working out from this point. This provides an interesting mission where the battle can potentially be won or lost before the game even begins.

Given Alessio's tactical wizardry and Phil's predilection for fighting dirty, only one thing was sure: things were going to get very, very messy...

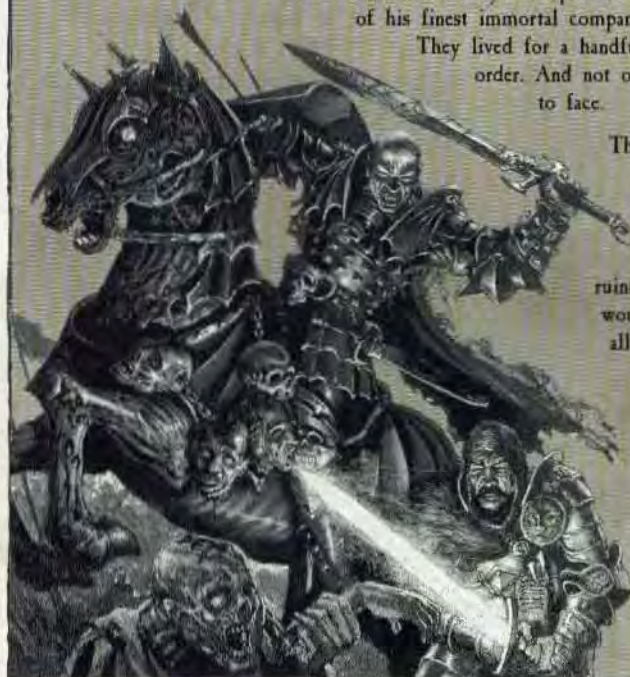
(Note: The Vampire Counts army was still being developed at the time this battle was played and therefore some details and points values may not entirely correlate with those in the Vampire Counts Armies book.)

This is demeaning, thought Count Gregor von Dechiel, as his army of the dead crossed Geiden Ford. We march to war once again, but not to plunge a bloody spear into the soft belly of the Empire, not to behead a proud Elven prince and parade it before his troops, not to drown a Dwarf clan in their own blood. We march to rid this land of an infestation.

Von Dechiel had fought the ratmen before. They had a nasty habit of bubbling up from underneath the ruins of Geidenheim when they had spawned enough to pose a threat. Every decade or so he had to take a party of his finest immortal companions onto the battlefield and beat the Skaven back into their burrows. They lived for a handful of years, a mere blink of an eye for the eternal warriors of his order. And not one of the vile runts had the mettle or the courage to fight him face to face.

The winding column of his Undead minions stretched behind von Dechiel as he led the way through fields of blighted corn, over black-running rivers and between gnarled, ancient forests. He had sent his most recently reborn thrall to Geidenheim three nights before with the parchment issuing his edict: clear out of the ruined town or die to the last rat on the field of battle. As usual, they would ignore it. They had little in the way of memory and nothing at all in the way of respect.

"Still, it will keep the blade of Vanghai wet, and make for good practice in martial discipline," mused von Dechiel as his Nightmare cantered forward, its step echoed perfectly by the mounted Black Knights around him. He was no fool, and he knew full well that among all the races in the Old World the Skaven were the most likely to resort to underhand tactics and deadly traps. There was more martial honor in his little finger than in an entire burrow of ratmen. But Geidenheim was where he was given the kiss of undeath, and his open grave remained there still. This night, the vermin would have to be culled.



EVEN THE DEAD CAN BURN



Phil Kelly

Phil: The Undead: unbreakable hordes of magically raised corpses, most of whom could not fight their way out of a wet paper bag, but some of whom could take on a Dragon and

walk away with a nice new suit of scale mail. No matter how hard you hit them, they never run away.

The Skaven: potentially extremely powerful, with a good selection of excellent specialized troops. In units, they have a very high effective Leadership, but give them a good hard slap and off they go. Famous for hiding in holes when the going gets tough.

Which is kind of what I felt like doing when I swapped army lists with Alessio. The infamous Blood Dragons. Three of the blighters, and oh, I see they've brought their mates.

In all the armies I've faced since the new Warhammer came out, the Undead are the only ones who have massacred me. I knew what I had done wrong, and it was simple enough: never, ever go toe to toe with troops far harder than your own.

So my strategy, basically, was to ensure that we fought on my terms. The Blood Dragons are infamously bad at magic, so I decided to outclass them in that field at least. Warlocks to the fore! Besides, a Skaven Warlord would end up as so much bad kebab meat in a challenge against a Vampire Count. A Grey Seer with the *Flaming Sword of Ruin* (Lore of Fire, giving a Grey Seer 3 Attacks, hitting on 2+, with a Strength of 7) seemed like a much better bet. Backed up by a Warlock Engineer with a couple of scrolls, I could be confident of having the monopoly on magic.

Secondly, if I was to engage the Vampire Count and his mounted Wights, I was going to do it in as underhanded a way as possible. Hit a unit of cavalry in the flank and you only have to worry about fighting two or three non-character models (God bless cavalry bases). All you need is a nice big unit to be the decoys; when they're charged, you flee with that unit, the enemy fails their charge, you rally the fleeing unit next turn as they pass your General, and hit the offending unit in the flank. Oldest sneaky move in the book. Chances of me successfully pulling it on Alessio Cavatore: nil.

Still, I had plenty of other tricks in the bag. Globadiers, for instance. Against a unit of heavily armed, high toughness elite troops in tight formation, like Grave Guard, they can really earn their points. Back them up with a Warpfire Thrower and your units could well be charging low grade charcoal rather than armored Wights.

I took the Rat Swarms because they are Unbreakable, an excellent trait against really expensive units. Whilst the ancient and powerful Lords of the Night are playing at being sewerjacks, you can concentrate on hitting the rest of the army where it hurts. The unbreakable Doomwheel can tie up big units indefinitely, electrocuting them with impunity. It's best deployed on the flank, so it doesn't zap your own units.

I didn't have much in the way of Jezzails, so that freed up a special choice for my personal favorites: the Rat Ogres. Pump them full of Skavenbrew and off they go! If you're lucky, these monstrous hybrids will then suffer from *batred*, making them nigh-unstoppable due to their high Attacks and Strength. A nice big unit of Stormvermin is also worthwhile; their halberds take them up to Strength 5, worrying even for barded cavalry and heavily armored infantry.

The Gutter Runners were to infiltrate the other flank, ideal for restricting the Undead's shiny new march moves, and buying me a bit more time. Finally, the ubiquitous Skavenslaves; totally invaluable cannon fodder, completely disposable, underrated and cheap as dirt.

Well, I had plenty of tools for the job. All that remained was to see if I could use them.

SKAVEN DEPLOYMENT

I figured that I had a couple of aces up my sleeve as far as the marching order was concerned. Small units like the Globadiers and especially the Warpfire Thrower are invaluable, as they both count as units and are extremely maneuverable. You can place these troops down first without committing anything at all in the way of manpower, making your opponent respond and hopefully forcing his hand. I chose the Clanrats as the central anchor, a nice big unit for my General to lead, bumping his Leadership right up to 10 whilst remaining within 12" of practically the entire army (always good practice). My Slaves guarded the left flank against the Black Coach; I was confident that so long as they stayed within 12" of the Grey Seer they could hold off the Black Coach indefinitely. The Stormvermin and the Rat Ogres were placed so that the Rat Ogres could hinge round and flank anything that hit the center of my lines. The Rat Swarms were out front; they were to stop the cavalry in their tracks, if possible.

The Doomwheel went far out right, so that it could hug the impassable terrain and ultimately hit the Undead battle lines in the flank. Alessio deployed in a fairly textbook fashion, keeping his hardest units close together to prevent a dislocated battle line.

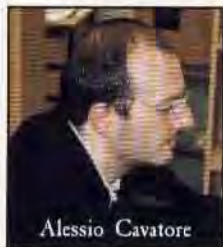
All in all, I was pretty happy with the way deployment had worked out.

Here goes nothing...

Before deploying, Alessio and Phil both wrote down their order of march. Units were deployed in the order shown below.



IN THE NAME OF ABHORASH! CHARGE!



Alessio Cavatore

Alessio: I haven't even finished the army list yet, and I already have to play a battle report. Weird. Well, that's the way things go around here,

because we work so many months ahead of the release dates. So don't worry if you see a few differences here and there between my list and the final one that will be published in the book. Hopefully it will only be a few minor details.

Right, let's think about the list. I'll be playing a Blood Dragon army and, therefore, I'll start with a solid unit of fully equipped Black Knights. As for characters, a Count toolled up to fight and his Thrall Battle Standard Bearer (carrying a War Banner) will lead the cavalry. I normally choose a Wraith at this point, but I just love the Blood Dragon on foot wielding the sword and dagger combination, so he will be my next Thrall. He'll lead one of the infantry units. And to finish, I'll take the mandatory Necromancer, because the Blood Dragons are not great with magic, and I need some defense (ie, Dispel Scrolls) in case Phil takes a Grey Seer as his General. As for my Core Units, I'll have a solid block of armored Skellies. They are a bit pricey, but they have a nice 4+ armor save in close combat due to their hand weapons and shields, and I'll try to raise some more of them during the game. I feel that fewer, better equipped Skeletons fit better with the Blood Dragon theme, and for the same reason I'll be fielding no Zombies. A

pack of fast Dire Wolves is a must to try to outflank the Skaven, and a band of Ghouls will be useful to tackle small annoying Skaven units such as Warfire Throwers, Globadiers and even Gutter Runners.

To match the Black Knights I'll also deploy a unit of Grave Guard equipped with the dread *Banner of the Barrows*, allowing Wights to hit on a 3+ in close combat. That's a unit that can probably hold its own in a fight even without characters leading it.

I then decided to buy a Black Coach, since Skaven cannot easily have Strength 7 hits that would destroy it in one blow. Furthermore, a *terror* causing unit will probably be useful, and the extra punch of the Coach will do nicely if I manage to coordinate it with my cavalry. Since my army is mostly comprised of two big blocks of rather expensive infantry, I'm growing increasingly worried about Warfire Throwers. A small unit of Fell Bats should help fight that menace.

The battle plan is simple, I trust my cavalry to smash through anything, and I'll therefore try and aim it at the enemy's most expensive unit. The two blocks of infantry should follow the cavalry to engage the Skaven line in the front while my Count turns around behind their lines after having broken through. It's vital for your cavalry to have this kind of infantry support, otherwise the enemy will have time to turn and charge your cavalry whilst it's turning around after the breakthrough! With a bit of luck, my Dire Wolves or my Black Coach (or both!) will make it to the Skaven flank, and that should spell doom for the ratmen. Of course, I know that Phil is a very clever player, and I'm

sure that my carefully thought out plan will soon be reduced to a mess where we are both trying to survive and snatch defeat out of the jaws of victory... or is it the other way around?

UNDEAD DEPLOYMENT

We started with selecting our spells and my Vampire Count got *Gaze of Nagash* and *Invocation of Nebek*. My Necromancer rolled *Curse of Years* and *Vanbel's Danse Macabre*, but I decided to give up the *Curse* (quite difficult to cast for a second level Wizard) in favor of one more *Invocation of Nebek*, my favorite Necromantic spell due to its versatility and variable casting cost.

Then, we moved on to deployment. My first mistake here was thinking that a Meeting Engagement would be easy. It's not. It requires careful planning, and you really have to think ahead when you write your order of march.

Underestimating this point, as I did, leads to a mess in your deployment. As a result, the initial position of my units was not exactly perfect. If I deployed my General with the Black Knights as planned, my Dire Wolves would have been out of his 12" radius and, therefore, unable to march. Since I really wanted the Wolves to outflank the Skaven, taking advantage of the entirely open left flank, I had to deploy my General with the Skeletons. If I had been facing an army with a lot of shooting, I wouldn't be able to do that, because my Count on his steed would have been a perfect target for missile fire in the middle of a unit of infantry.

At the end of the deployment I was relatively happy with the situation on the flanks. Nothing was set to stop my Dire Wolves, unless the Doomwheel decided to turn and kill them (but that would have taken an Unbreakable unit out of the center, still an advantage for me). On my right flank I was confident that the Black Coach supported by the Ghouls could take care of the Slaves and Gutter Runners. My Fell Bats were also in a good position to take care of the Globadiers and the Warfire Thrower. I was definitely less confident about the center, where Phil had too many worrying units. Two Unbreakable units (the Doomwheel and Rat Swarms), a big pack of frenzied Rat Ogres and two large units of Skaven were seriously outnumbering my two units of infantry and one cavalry.

I thought that it was vital to get to the Skaven flanks quickly, before they could overwhelm my center. Winning the roll to choose who got the first turn was a good start, and I decided to seize the initiative and go first.



The Vampire Counts battle line.

SOULGNAWER'S VERMINHORDE

CHARACTERS

LORD: Skaven Grey Seer Soulnawer (230) with hand weapon, Warpscroll (50) and a Warpstone Amulet (30). **310 pts**

HERO: Chieftain Fingul (50) heavy armor (4), great weapon (4) and Skavenbrew (50). **108 pts**

HERO: Chieftain Einhorne (50) heavy armor (4), Battle Standard (25) (War Banner (25)). **104 pts**

HERO: Warlock Engineer Tanq (60) with an extra level (35), hand weapon and two *Dispel Magic Scrolls* (25 each). **145 pts**

CORE

24 Clanrats (120) with light armor, shields (24), hand weapons, Champion (10), Standard Bearer (10) and Musician (10). **174 pts**

24 Stormvermin (168) with heavy armor, halberds (48), Champion (10) and Musician (10). **236 pts**

20 Slaves (60) with hand weapons and Standard Bearer (10). **70 pts**

3 Rat swarms (150) **150 pts**

SPECIAL

5 Rat Ogres (200) and 4 Beastmasters armed with hand weapons (40). **240 pts**

Warpfire Team with heavy armor, hand weapons and one Warpfire Thrower. **70 pts**

4 Poison Wind Globadiers (100) with light armor, hand weapons and poison wind globes. **100 pts**

7 Gutter Runners (98) with 2 hand weapons (14). **112 pts**

RARE

Doomwheel (180) with scythes and an Engineer armed with hand weapon and pistol. **180 pts**

TOTAL **1,999 pts**



THE WARHOST OF VON DECHIEL

CHARACTERS

LORD: Blood Dragon Vampire Count Gregor von Dechiel (205), extra level (35), full plate armor, shield (3), barded Nightmare (18), *Sword of Striking* (30), *Ring of the Night* (30) and *Red Fury* Bloodline power (25). **346 pts**

HERO: Blood Dragon Vampire Thrall Illych von Tchaikov (75) with heavy armor (4), two hand weapons (4) *Blademaster* (25) and *Red Fury* (25) Bloodline powers. **133 pts**

HERO: Blood Dragon Vampire Thrall Piotr Vozht (75) with heavy armor (4), barded Nightmare (12) and a Battle Standard (25) (*War Banner* (25)). **141 pts**

HERO: Necromancer Vacharos (65) with extra level (35), hand weapon and 2 *Dispel Magic Scrolls* (25 each). **150 pts**

CORE

9 Ghouls (72). **72 pts**

6 Dire Wolves (60) with Doom Wolf (10). **70 pts**

24 Skeletons (192) with light armor (24), hand weapons, Champion (10), Standard Bearer (10) and Musician (5). **241 pts**

SPECIAL

21 Grave Guard (252) with heavy armor, shield (21), hand weapons, Crypt Keeper (12), Standard Bearer (12), Musician (6) and the *Banner of the Barrows* (45). **348 pts**

8 Black Knights (184) with heavy armor, shield, hand weapons, lance, barded Nightmare (16), Hell Knight (16) and Musician (8). **224 pts**

3 Fell Bats (60). **60 pts**

RARE

Black Coach (215) drawn by two Nightmares and crewed by a Wraith armed with a great weapon. **215 pts**

TOTAL

2,000 pts



VAMPIRE COUNTS TURN 1

Alessio: The Dire Wolves started their flanking move on the left, and the Black Coach, Ghouls and Bats advanced at full throttle in the graveyard on the right. They really looked cool among the tombstones!

In the center my Black Knights moved forward to meet with the General, who left the Skeletons and joined them. The two units of infantry positioned themselves on the flanks of my cavalry. I was not advancing fast, in order to give some time to my outflanking forces. In the Magic phase I got only five dice instead of six, because Blood Dragon Counts generate one less Power dice than other bloodlines. Phil's Fourth and Second Level Wizards granted him the same number of dice as I had! I first attempted to cast *Invocation of Nebek* with one dice on the easiest level to create a new unit of Zombies within 18".

This tactic is a bit of a gamble, I know, with only a fifty-fifty chance of actually raising the new unit even if the spell is successful. The idea was to force Phil into a difficult choice with his Dispel dice. I failed to cast the Necromancer's one, and Phil dispelled the Count's *Invocation*. The Count then cast *Gaze of Nagash* on the Rats. To my surprise Phil gambled on a Dispel roll, failing it, and seven of the fifteen wounds of the Rats were gone! I was really pleased by this. Unbreakable Rat Swarms really are a pain, and they were now reduced to a number that my cavalry unit could hope to kill in one go, allowing me a chance for a precious overrun move.

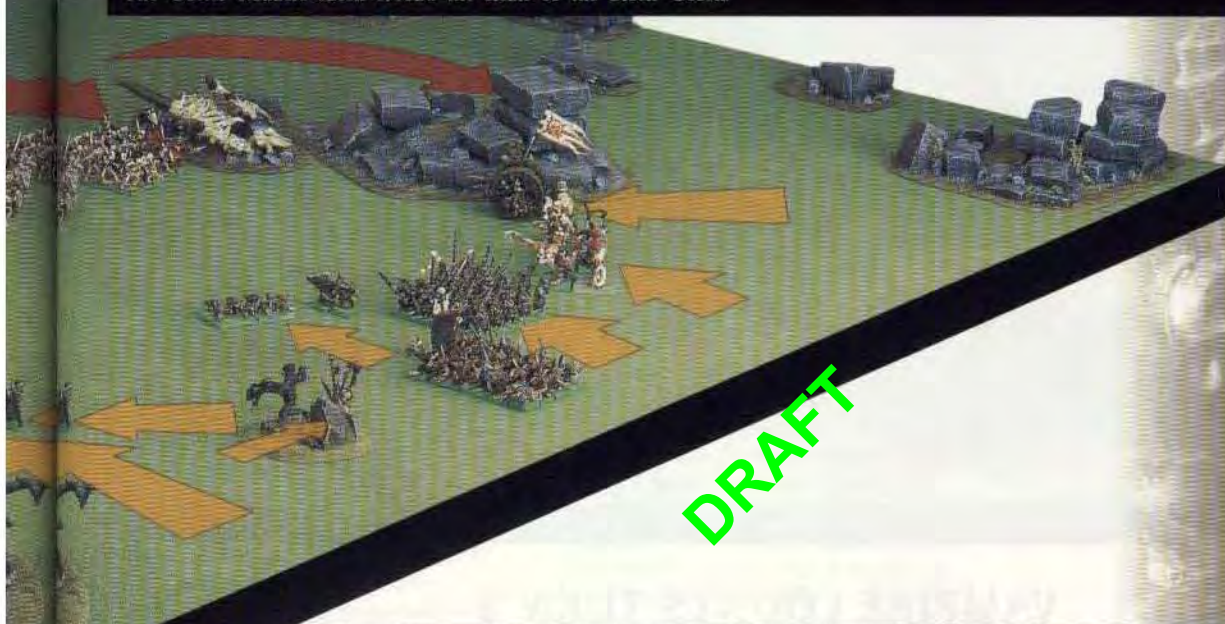
I was still smiling when Phil started to move, and only then did I realize a big mistake in my movement. In my eagerness to chase the Warfire Thrower with the Fell Bats, I had moved them in front of the Black Coach, so that now I didn't have a line of sight from the Coach to the Slaves. What a stupid thing to do! Now the Slaves would be able to march towards the Coach and maybe charge it in their second turn! Doh!



The Grave Guard and Black Knights maneuver into position.



The Gutter Runners sneak around the flank of the Black Coach.



SKAVEN TURN 1

Phil: Well, I'm still not used to Undead moving that fast! I fondly remember the days when redeploying like that would be practically impossible for dead guys.

My Movement phase was a little simpler, as I intended to hang back and let them come to me. The Skavenslaves and the Gutter Runners were the only troops to move forward to any real degree, plugging the gap on the left flank so that the Black Coach could not circumvent them and get into the thick of my battle line. The Warlock Engineer left the Slaves when he realized what the Grey Seer had planned for them! The Globadiers stuck close behind them to prevent an aerial charge from the Fell Bats. The Rat Swarms pivoted into the center of the line, the Warpfire Thrower sticking close

behind them. The rest of the units edged forward into position; with no fast moving troops, it was inevitable that I would have to receive the charge of the Black Knights somewhere along the battle line and I was determined to exploit it when it happened.

My Magic phase began much like Alessio's, with a small decoy spell. I intended to see if I could use up some of Alessio's Dispel dice, and so cast *Steed of Shadows* on the Warpfire thrower. Sure enough, he decided that he could not afford such a dangerous toy whipping around behind his lines, and dispelled it. The Grey Seer's *Fireball*, aimed at the Fell Bats (very valuable to Alessio), was also an attempt to draw out the Dispel dice before I sent serious fiery death soaring into his ranks. It was

successfully cast, and managed to cause an unexpected four wounds, killing two! My initial grin dripped off my face when I saw that this 'success' had left the Black Coach with line of sight to my Slaves. Some decoy; that was not my intention at all.

Still, I was left with four dice and Alessio had none, so I sent a *Conflagration of Doom* toward his nice big unit of Skeletons. Sure enough, out came the Dispel scroll. One down, I thought...

The Shooting phase saw the Doomwheel earth a lightning bolt on itself, causing the machine to lose a wound, and irritatingly it also fried a nearby Beastmaster! The Warpfire Thrower had a bit more luck, but, although it inflicted two wounds on the Black Knights, their armor protected them from harm.



The Dire Wolves dart around the Skaven flank, unseen by the Skaven.

VAMPIRE COUNTS TURN 2

Alessio: Strangely enough, it was a great relief to lose my two Fell Bats to the Grey Seer's *Fireball*. My Coach now had a line of sight to the Slaves!

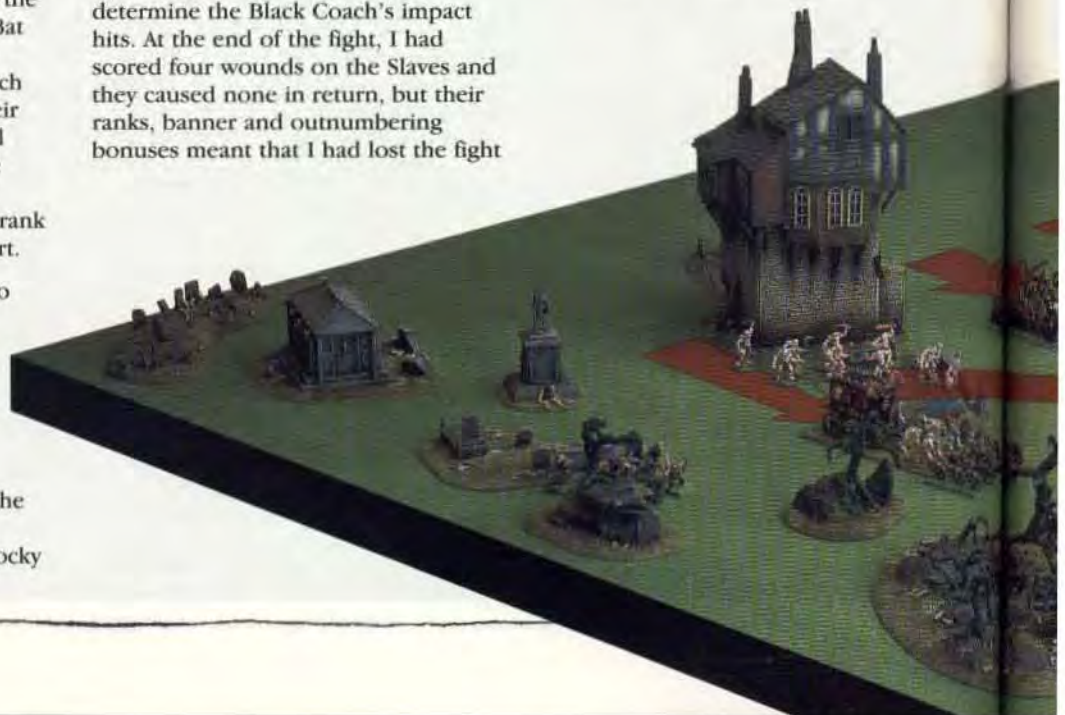
Without hesitation I charged it into the puny Skaven, while my remaining Bat charged the Warfire Thrower. The Skaven war machine fled out of reach of my Bat and the Slaves passed their Terror test. How dare they! Well, I'll just have to slaughter them in close combat, I thought as the terrifying Undead carriage crashed into their rank with the Ghouls close by for support.

My cavalry inched its way forward to give time for the two infantry units to get into a better position, slightly ahead of the Black Knights, tempting the Skaven to try an uncoordinated charge.

The Wolves, now slowed down by the absence of the General within 12", continued to go around the large rocky hill on my left.

I repeated the same sequence as in the previous Magic phase, but Phil managed to stop me every time. The Close Combat phase started with an appalling roll of a 1 on the dice to determine the Black Coach's impact hits. At the end of the fight, I had scored four wounds on the Slaves and they caused none in return, but their ranks, banner and outnumbering bonuses meant that I had lost the fight

by one! The Coach lost one of its four wounds and I started to have a bad feeling about the fight. Luckily, my Ghouls were not far off.



SKAVEN TURN 2

Phil: The game was beginning to become more interesting, and the next few moves would be crucial. The Gutter Runners, intending to charge the nearby Ghouls and remove them from the equation, failed their Fear test and spent the turn quaking in their boots instead.

The Warfire Thrower rallied, unsurprising as it was only within a couple of inches of the irate Grey Seer. The Globadiers, however, failed their Terror test for being near the Black Coach on a disastrous roll of 11, fleeing toward the table edge. No problem, I thought, they'll no doubt rally next turn, and they're not much use just now, anyway.

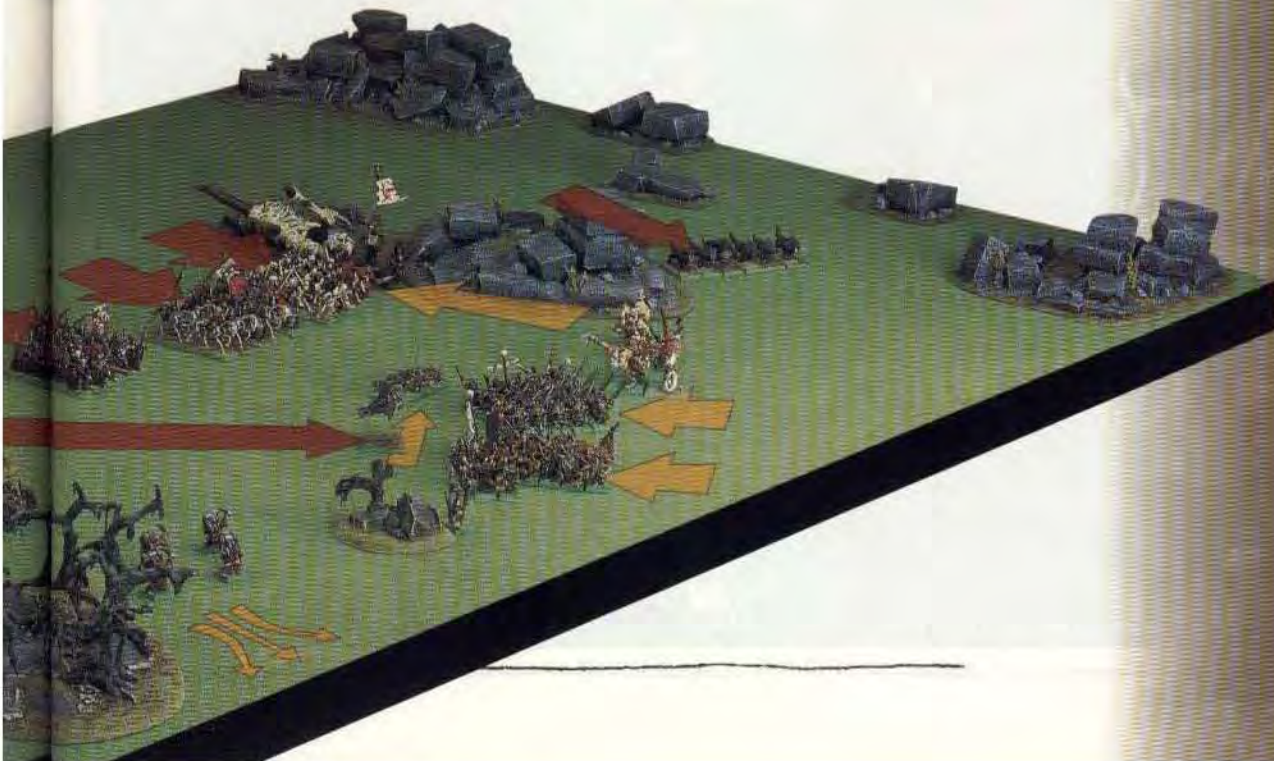
The Rat Swarms again moved into position, ending in front of the big unit of Stormvermin. I was carefully aligning my troops so that if the Black Knights charged the Rat Swarm, they would get a bunch of Rat Ogres in the side for their trouble; and if they charged the Rat Ogres, it would be the Stormvermin that hit them in the flank.

The Clanrats wheeled to face the lone Fell Bat, while the Chieftain with the Rat Ogres ran over to interpose himself in between the rallied Warfire Thrower and the Fell Bat. The Doomwheel managed to sneak itself alongside the flank of the Skeleton unit, ready to trundle into the bony formation in the next turn.



The Black Coach thunders into the Skavenslave regiment.

The Magic phase began in much the same way, Alessio dispelling my *Steed of Shadows* on the Warfire Thrower. The second *Fireball*, seeking to obliterate the last Fell Bat, was also dispelled, leaving me lots of lovely dice for a second *Conflagration of Doom*. If that drew out another Dispel scroll, it would be time for my Warpscroll to rip its way through the Skeleton unit. Sadly, the *Conflagration* miscast, and the Magic phase ended.



VAMPIRE COUNTS TURN 3

Alessio: My Ghouls charged the Slaves in a desperate attempt to save the Black Coach from the accursed rat-things that were destroying it!

My Black Knights were now too close to the Rat Swarm and charged in. To cover their left flank, my last Bat sacrificed itself by flying in front of the Rat Ogres. I angled the frontage of my model so that the Rat Ogres would have to align themselves by facing the hill on the right and, since they had to overrun because of their *frenzy*, I was hoping that they would run up to and into the sheer cliff (very difficult terrain!). If it worked, that would have taken a big threat off my left. It was a worthy sacrifice! This was a clear example of how *frenzy* can be a double-edged weapon. The extra attack and the immunity to Psychology make it powerful, but the fact that *frenzied* troops have to charge and overrun also makes it easy for the opponent to lure part of your force away with some expendable troops. The Grave Guard advanced to protect the Knights' right, and the Skeletons placed themselves between the Doomwheel and the cavalry, while the Wolves finally made it around the hill.

In the Magic phase I twice tried to raise a new unit of Zombies to help the Coach and my second attempt (a mighty 16 with three dice!) was successful. A new unit of eight Zombies appeared from the woods on the Slaves' flank. I was suddenly more hopeful about the situation on the left flank.

My hopes faded again when the charging Ghouls only managed to kill a single Slave and suffered a casualty in return (Curses! What are these Slaves made of?). The fight was a draw, and Phil regretted the decision of not buying a Musician for his unit. My Black Knights, with a Vampire Count, a Vampire Thrall and a Hell Knight in the first rank,

unsurprisingly wiped out the remaining Rat Swarm. They decided not to overrun though, because if they had done that and charged into the Stormvermin, they would have also offered their flank to the Rat Ogres. I'm sure that, given the chance, the Rat Ogres would have preferred to slam into my General's unit rather than having to waste their strength on the waiting Fell Bat.



The Fell Bat lands in the midst of the Skaven as part of some despicable plan.



The Stormvermin charge into the Black Knights.

SKAVEN TURN 3

Phil:
Alessio had charged my Rat Swarms and, according to my plan, the Stormvermin were there to back them up, and the Rat Ogres were in a position to flank them. My plan had come to fruition. Apart from one perfectly placed spanner in the works; Alessio's irritating Fell Bat. And so my Rat Ogres spent their considerable strength ripping an overgrown flying mouse into pieces rather than supporting my poor old Stormvermin.

As the Chieftain with Skavenbrew had to charge the Black Knights, due to being *frenzied* (I was getting a bit tired of that...) I felt I ought to support him, so in went the Stormvermin. I stuck the Doomwheel into the flank of the Skeleton unit too, as it would also tie up this unit and stop it smashing into one of mine.

Again, I failed the Globadiers' test on Leadership 10 and off they ran, taking a neat 100 points off the field without causing a single casualty. However,

the Gutter Runners had finally mustered the courage to charge into combat with the Black Coach, which was a blessing.

My Magic phase began with a failed *Creeping Death* at the Grave Guard and a dispelled *Fireball*, and ended catastrophically with my Grey Seer miscasting a *Wall of Fire*, sending the Grey Seer smashing into the Clanrat behind him with unholy force. He would only regain his spellcasting abilities on the roll of a 6 in my subsequent Magic phases. Oh joy, I thought.

My spirits were raised slightly when the Warfire Thrower torched six of the Grave Guard, and the Doomwheel shattered two more of the Skeletons with electric force. Its impact hits accounted for four more and, because it was Unbreakable, it stayed firmly embedded in the unit's side.

The combat in the center of the battlefield was a mess. No matter what I threw at the Black Knights, it bounced off their armor save. The Blood Dragon Count, bound by honor to challenge, was faced by the unfortunate Stormvermin Champion, who was duly reduced to ribbons by

the Vampire and his Sword of Power (5 Attacks, hitting on 2s and wounding on 2s? Oh, come on!). The Thrall by his side killed a further two, and the rest of the Black Knights impaled another. Nonetheless, my elite ratboys held their ground.

As for the Black Coach fight, the Slaves would most likely have scared off those Ghouls if I had only invested in a Musician. Always pay the points for a Musician. Sorry, I don't think I stressed that enough: ALWAYS BUY A MUSICIAN! Just do it! Every time I think I can get away with it and save some points (10 points to upgrade a Slave, which would normally buy you another 3 Slaves) I get into a combat that comes down to the wire and regret it. At the end of the day you'll hate yourself if your elite unit runs away from a man with a pair of bongos or a knackered trumpet.

This turn the Slaves held their own again, mainly due to the timely intervention of the Gutter Runners, and finally put paid to the Ghouls. But it had not been a good turn, not at all.



With an amazing burst of speed, the Stormvermin outrun the Black Knights.



VAMPIRE COUNTS TURN 4

Alessio: The bad miscast by the Grey Seer was good news and compensated for the Gutter Runners passing their Terror test, which I was really hoping they would fail. I charged my newly raised Zombies into the Slaves' flank, and they managed to pass both their Fear tests (they managed to pass the one for the Ghouls as well!) and their Panic test for being charged in the flank. These stubborn Slaves just refused to give ground! I wondered what kind of horrible death the Grey Seer had promised them in case they fled.

Both the Grave Guard and the Dire Wolves attempted to charge the Clanrats with the enemy General, but were miles out of range (I didn't have anything to lose in declaring the charge, because I couldn't march, anyway). The Thrall in the Skeleton

unit could have moved in the ranks to fight the Doomwheel, but decided to stay where he was, ready to receive the Rat Ogres' charge (a very wrong decision in hindsight).

The Ghouls failed to rally and kept running like the cowards they are. The Magic phase was ineffective, as both my attempts to boost the numbers of the units of Zombies and Skeletons were dispelled by the traumatized Grey Seer. The Close Combat phase looked better as the Count chopped the frenzied Chieftain to tiny bits in a challenge (four wounds!). The Stormvermin managed to drag down only one Black Knight before being cut down in return, and they lost the fight. Now outnumbered by *fear*-causing enemies, they had to flee, and my Black Knights pursued them but could not match the Stormvermin's amazing

speed (they rolled a 12; Skaven are certainly good at fleeing!), ending up 2" behind them. Well, at least we captured the rats' Army Banner.

The charge of the braindead Zombies proved not terribly effective as the Slaves managed to kill one of them before they could attack and kill two of the Skaven. The Black Coach managed to score not a single wound, and the fight ended once more in a draw. Alas! I was destined not to conquer these unbelievable Slaves!

The fight between the Doomwheel and the Skellies carried on with both sides doing nothing and then refusing to break. The Rat Ogres in front of my unit looked ominously huge and ferocious...

SKAVEN TURN 4

Phil: With the greatest of glee I charged the Rat Ogres into the Skeleton unit, I knew what these beasts were capable of, and I was confident that even the Blood Dragon Vampire Thrall, five Attacks or no, would not blunt their frenzied assault. The rest of the Movement phase was basically my Warlock Engineer meandering out of charge range and my Warfire Thrower getting into position.

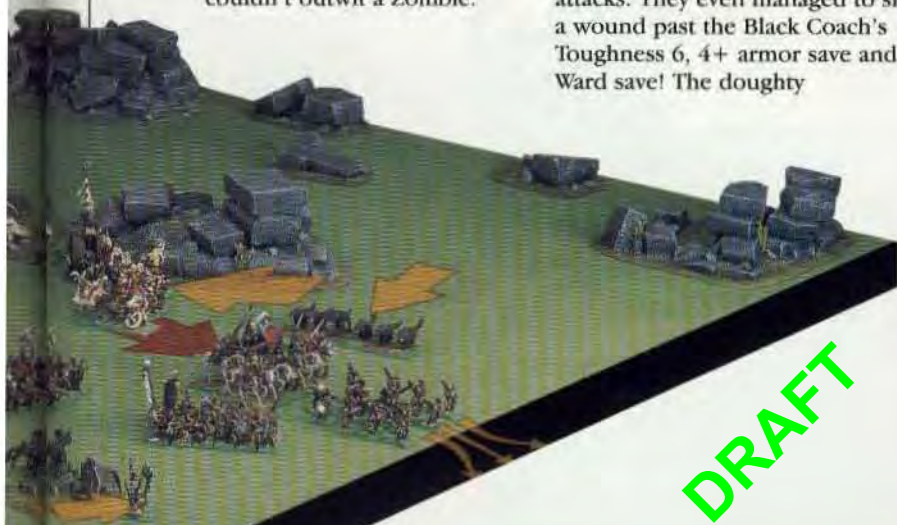
The Magic phase was paltry, indeed, as my Grey Seer was still trying to recover; for the time being he couldn't outwit a Zombie.

The Warlock, now spoilt for dice, irresistibly cast *Creeping Death* on Alessio's Grave Guard, but then caused no wounds. Typical! The Warfire Thrower overshot, killing only one of the Grave Guard, and the Doomwheel failed to fry any Skeletons on the right flank (Skryre war machines either work magnificently or not at all. Sometimes they explode).

The Close Combat phase was far more eventful with the Gutter Runners hitting with 13 of their 14 attacks. They even managed to sneak a wound past the Black Coach's Toughness 6, 4+ armor save and 5+ Ward save! The doughty

Slaves, holding the flank up permanently it would seem, killed another Zombie and, despite the Wraith reaping Slaves like corn with his scythe, the Skaven won the combat by two. Yet more Zombies collapsed back into the earth.

The sinking feeling that had begun to set in evaporated when my Rat Ogres thundered into the Skeletons. Two of the beasts set about the Blood Dragon Thrall, causing four wounds and killing him before he could fight back! The rest of the Rat Ogres munched three Skeletons, and the Engineer and his Rats even managed to kill one. Alessio lost the combat, and four more Skeletons crumbled as their necromantic magic faded. Although I was in deep trouble in the center of my battle line, the two battles on the flanks were looking pretty good.



The Rat Ogres annihilate the Skeletons in an orgy of destruction.

The Beastmasters had little need to crack their whips. Their hulking charges were bounding forward at such speed that the handlers were hard-pressed to keep up. Slickrit had just witnessed one of the Rat Ogres lash out as a giant bat crossed in front of them, tearing it out of the sky and throwing it to the floor. Slickrit had wisely stepped back as the heaving, barking monsters had pounced on the broken thing, burying it in a mass of blood-flecked muscle.

Ahead of them, he could see a large unit of dead warriors marching toward them in perfect step, led by a grim figure in red armor. He knew full well what that was, and his hair stood up as it met his gaze. Suddenly, the Doomwheel crashed into the side of the unit, bone splintering as lightning crackled across their shields. Slickrit saw one of the Rat Ogres look up from its meager feast at the noise. The Beastmaster gingerly poked it in the appropriate direction with his pointed stick. It turned to look at him, and growled. Behind his back, he crossed his fingers.

One by one, the entire pack sprang forward, plowing into the precise ranks of Undead warriors. Two of them attacked the armored Vampire, catching him in their massive claws, the Skeletons around him denying the recourse of evasion. With a bestial roar, the monsters ripped the unfortunate warrior apart, blood raining onto the dry bone beneath him.

Beside them, two more of the monsters stamped through the forest of brittle limbs, ignoring the Skeletons' slashing swords, smashing the Undead warriors apart in a shower of splintering bone.

Slickrit thanked the Horned One. He was exactly where he felt safest. Behind them.

VAMPIRE COUNTS TURN 5

Alessio: The Wolves abandoned the Skeletons to their bitter destiny and charged the Stormvermin's exposed flank, while the Count separated from the Black Knights and charged the elite Skaven in the front. The cavalry reformed on the spot facing the Clanrats' flank, while the Grave Guard charged them in the front. Things were looking bad for the Grey Seer!

To my surprise, the Ghouls rallied, regrouping in the shadow of the manse.

In the Magic phase I tried to charge the cavalry into the Clanrats' flank with *Danse Macabre*, but Phil dispelled it. I then failed to cast *Invocation of Nebek* on the Zombies.

The Grave Guard managed to kill a single Clanrat and had one of their number slain by the humble Skaven warriors, losing the fight to the ratmen ranks and numbers. Next turn, the Skaven wouldn't be that lucky, because the Stormvermin were cut to bits by the Vampire Count, fleeing towards the Clanrats. They were run down by the slaving Dire Wolves and the enraged Blood Dragon, who both then impacted into the flank of the Skaven General's unit. It seemed like I was trashing the Skaven center!

On the sides, the situation was somewhat different: the Skeletons got wiped out by the rampaging Rat Ogres and Doomwheel, and the Black Coach and Zombies managed to lose by 3 against the Gutter Runners and the invincible Slaves! My left flank was falling to pieces!



The Stormvermin are run down by the Dire Wolves, signalling the collapse of the Skaven center.

Through the mists of his confusion, Soulgnawer watched as the Vampire Count smashed into the flank of the Clanrats. The Grey Seer knew that somehow things had gone drastically wrong. He could remember the overload of power exploding out of his mind, flinging him back onto the unit with such force that he was still covered in the bloody rags that was once the Clanrat behind him. But his mind was swimming with pain, and he could not concentrate.

A pack of black wolves with rotting fur and milk-white eyes were ravaging his warriors to the right, and in front his Clanrats were desperately defending him against a host of armored Undead. The air was thick with the musk of fear, and he could feel the resolve of the unit wavering. A thin trickle of bloody drool hung from

the Seer's lips as he watched, hypnotized by the efficiency with which the Blood Dragon Vampire cut through his Clanrats. Something was wrong, but he couldn't remember what. Something about that smell of fear...

Suddenly, the Grey Seer's ancestral instincts kicked in with a jolt of adrenaline, and his mind screamed for him to get out. They were all going to die! The fog in his mind cleared, showing a path to salvation...

Soulgnawer turned to the warlock engineer, skulking over by the gnarled tree to the left, and shouted at the top of his lungs. "TANQ! EXIT NOW! QUICK-QUICK!"

Almost immediately he saw his shadow billow and stretch into a massive, nightmarish stallion, taking form below him and raising him into the air. The

Vampire was cutting its way through the ranks with inhuman speed, its blade hissing as it slashed a bloody trail towards him. He could hear its dusty challenge, words it had spoken time and time again issuing from parched lips. Evil red eyes bored deep into his soul.

Suddenly the spell was complete and, with a blood-curdling screech, the shadow stallion bolted into the air, carrying the Grey Seer at unbelievable speed across the battlefield. The spell-beast merged into the shadow of the Rat Ogres, disappearing as quickly as it had appeared, and he landed nimbly behind the hulking beasts. Turning, he saw his Clanrats break, the Vampire Count running them down with his wolves. Soulgnawer leered, and spat blood onto the blighted ground. Oh well, never mind...

SKAVEN TURN 5

Phil: Oh dear, oh dear. My Clanrat unit was utterly doomed. With the Grave Guard in the front and the Vampire Count and his slaving Wolves in the flank, they were more dead than the corpses assaulting them. And in their midst, around 300 points of catatonic Grey Seer, waiting to be run down and stomped into the ground. Sighing, I made what moves I could, crunching the Rat Ogres and the Doomwheel through the impromptu graveyard of the Skeletons' remains to face the Vampire and his boys after they had put paid to my poor old Grey Seer. The Warfire Thrower moved forward to give those Ghouls a basting; hopefully they would be off before too long, as they were taking up a valuable corner of the battlefield and could still make their presence felt.

Both Gav Thorpe (in his capacity as referee) and I were looking solemnly

at the situation in the center of the battlefield when simultaneously a pair of proverbial lightbulbs appeared above our heads. If I was lucky, I could get out of this one in a typically Skaven fashion...

My Magic phase rolled round and first off the mark was *Steed of Shadows* on the Grey Seer, and to my immense relief, Alessio failed to dispel it. With a cry of "See ya suckers!" the Grey Seer magically flew across the battlefield, landing just behind a nice big pack of Rat Ogres, safe as houses. I couldn't believe my luck; I must say I have never thought of using *Steed of Shadows* like that before!

The Warlock Engineer cast *Creeping Death* on the Ghouls, killing one, as I had Power dice to burn and everything else was in combat. They held fast. Despairingly, I used my Warpscroll on the scavengers – a

waste of points, but I didn't fancy my chances of using it constructively at this point, anyway. Sure enough, I killed another, but on a double 1 the Ghouls held fast. The Warfire Thrower sent a torrent of liquid flame, killing another, but yet again they rolled snake eyes for their Leadership test: these Ghouls were hungry and, whatever I threw at them, they were going nowhere.

Predictably, the Clanrats were butchered by the Vampire Count, although the ratboys managed to save a lot of what was dished out to them (the extra save you get from a hand weapon and shield is a real bargain). Sure enough, the Clanrats ran, and were cut down by the Wolves and the Vampire Count, who pursued them off the table.

DRAFT



The Black Coach finally meets its end at the hands of the Skavenslaves and Gutter Runners.

VAMPIRE COUNTS TURN 6

Alessio: AAAARRRRRGGGGHHHH!!!!

The coward had fled! He abandoned his men and fled away to hide behind the big Rat Ogres. He spoiled my victory plan, taking all the Victory points he represented beyond my reach. Blood red hatred filled my eyes! After swallowing my impotent frustration I had to admit that such a sneaky act was extremely in character with the Skaven and, at the end, I even saw the funny side of it. The Ghouls made a last (very desperate) attempt to charge the Gutter Runners fighting the beleaguered Black Coach, but were far out of reach. It was too late for the Coach!

My units of Wights were now facing an empty table edge and had nothing to charge, so I turned my Black Knights to face both the Doomwheel and the Rat Ogres, making sure that the unavoidable final charge would have to hit them in the front. At this point I had to decide whether I wanted to risk my General against the might of Clan Moulder and Clan Skyre by joining the

Black Knights once more. I decided to gamble and hope that my Vampire Count was enough to break the Rat Ogres and win me some points. Once again *frenzy* was a dubious advantage, because it meant that I knew that Phil had no choice but to throw his Rat Ogres at my waiting Vampires and Knights in the last turn of the game... a risky business, indeed. Would it also give them the impact they needed to defeat my armored cavalry? We would soon find out.

In my last Magic phase I first tried to fry the Doomwheel with *Gaze of Nagash*, but failed to cast and then tried to charge my Black Knights into the Rat Ogres with *Vanbel's Danse Macabre*, but Phil dispelled it.

The short Close Combat phase saw the demise of my Black Coach at the hands of the Gutter Runners and, of course, of the two Slaves left, still proudly carrying their tattered banner! I could hardly believe what these scum had achieved!

To add insult to injury, the Ghouls running to the rescue of the Coach panicked because of its destruction and fled, with no chance for me to rally them! No comment!

Now all that was left was to brace for impact and wait for the final charge that would probably decide the outcome of the game...



SKAVEN TURN 6

Phil: Wahey! The Slaves finally killed the Black Coach, forcing the Ghouls to run on the last turn! Excellent news! That was such a bonus. I knew that they would hold it up, but I had no idea that they would eventually take it down. It just goes to show how no matter how hard the assaulting force is, how many special rules it has, or whether it has a grinning *terror*-causing meat grinder sitting atop it, you can always rely on the combination of Standard, rank bonus and outnumbering. But, in reality, I was very lucky, as Alessio could have smashed my center to pieces had the infernal thing gotten through.

Of course, he had anyway! Well, it was *frenzied* charge time again with the Rat Ogres, and I thought it only decent to support them with the Doomwheel for the impact hits. The Gutter Runners sneaked forwards slightly, claiming a table quarter, and the Warfire Thrower maneuvered round to take a parting shot at the Grave Guard.

The Magic phase was uneventful; my Grey Seer still couldn't get it together, and my Warlock Engineer's *Creeping Death* was dispelled.

The Warfire Thrower, utterly reliable all through the game, spewed a stream of vicious flame into the ranks of the Grave Guard, killing four and reducing them below half strength.

The battle hung in the balance.

The all important combat had arrived: my

frenzied Rat Ogres and the damaged Doomwheel against the Vampire Count, the Thrall with the Battle Standard and the Black Knights. The Doomwheel's four impact hits smashed one Knight apart, but the majority of the damage clanged off their unholy armor. The Engineer atop the Doomwheel and his swarming charges were unable to make their presence felt. Although the Rat Ogres caused a mighty five wounds, the Black Knight's revoltingly reliable saving throw saved all but one from a gory death. In return, the Vampire Count slashed his way through the Rat Ogres until he was awash with gore, causing five wounds by himself! The Thrall added another wound to the tally, but the rest of the Undead forces could not take the last wound from the Doomwheel. Combat resolution proved that the Vampire had truly earned his title, the Rat Ogres ran, tails between their legs, and all that remained was to count the cost...

DRAFT

Risquil saw his chance and went for it. His Gutter Runner brethren were clambering all over the infernal coach, stabbing and tearing, trying to find a weak point whilst the horrifying coachman slaughtered the Slaves one by one. But they could not damage it. Aside from the fact that it was virtually invulnerable, its necromantic protection was sapping their energy, making them weak. How in the Horned One's name did you kill a coach?

But it had become clear to him. Sprinting around the back, he saw a coffin inside, ornate and foreboding. Inside was what gave it the power, he thought, inside was the treasure that must be seized. He darted into the coach, through lush velvet drapes that smelled of antiquity and rot. Emblazoned upon the casket was the image of a red dragon, twisting upon itself, a crown set above its horned head. Risquil overcame his fear and lifted the lid, it opened with surprising ease. Something hideous grabbed him by the throat.

In a blur, the Gutter Runner was pulled inside, and the lid slammed shut as the coach began to collapse.

In the climactic finale, the Rat Ogres charge the Black Knights.

RIDE THEM DOWN!



Alessio Cavatore

Phew! That was close. If the final charge of the Rat Ogres had been more successful and they did not break, we would have probably ended up with a draw.

My General proved to be a veritable killing machine, but that's appropriate for a Blood Dragon Count. Of all Vampires, only the Strigoi can match the Knights of Blood in close combat.

I was astonished by how easy it was for the Rat Ogres to rip my Thrall apart and then proceed to wipe out my Skeletons, but then my Count exacted a bitter revenge on those monsters and finally broke their fighting frenzy.

My Black Knights were splendid and, led by the powerful Count and his personal Battle Standard, carved a red path through the Skaven army and certainly won the game for me. The Grave Guard took a few full hits from the Warfire Thrower and still made it to the end of the game: a remarkable feat in itself. The Dire Wolves and Fell Bats performed well, but the Ghouls and the Black Coach really disappointed me, not being able to take care of a unit of Skavenslaves!

To their credit I have to say that Phil's Slaves were the toughest Skaven I've ever seen, fighting on against *fear*- and *terror*-causing enemies until there were only two of them left. How very un-Skavenish of them!

My offensive Magic phase was a bit weak (I got only two spells through in all the game!), but that's normal with Blood Dragons. There is a price to pay for being a WS 9 armored Wizard! Thanks to Phil's bad luck with his miscasts though, I managed to defend myself quite well from the Skaven magic (except for that damned *Steed of Shadows* on the Grey Seer!).

Overall, the battle was great fun. It was quite a competitive game, with both me and Phil playing hard to win (the sort of games I really like), but we managed to keep it very friendly and we both really enjoyed it. Combined with the splendid models and scenery we were playing with, it really was Warhammer at its best, and I hope you enjoyed reading about our battle at least as much as we did playing it.

E EK!



Phil Kelly

Okay, so the bulk of my Skaven ran away. Hands up who's surprised!

Seriously, though, I failed to punish Alessio for his few mistakes. A lot of the things that went my way were due to luck. But the major thorn in my side was not the indomitable Blood Dragons, not the cowardly Globadiers running off on Turn 2, and not the horrible outnumbered-by-a-fear-causing-enemy rule. It was the magic.

What a damp squib. One lousy *Fireball* and my Grey Seer's brain dribbles out of his ears. A bit of a waste of points. It just goes to show how thoroughly miscasts can ruin your game if you rely on magic, and I hate to say it, but I was doing just that. A well placed *Wall of Fire* can completely stymie your opponents advance, the *Conflagration of Doom* can chew through whole units, the *Flaming Sword* can cut down the hardest character. But it was not to be; my magic was extremely sketchy throughout. Although, admittedly, the well-timed use of *Steed of Shadows* to haul my Grey Seer's furry butt out of the fire was a highlight and definitively Skavenesque.

It was worth it just for the look on Alessio's face...

I think that I played better towards the end of the game, as at one point it looked like I was in for a real drubbing, but I managed to pull things back and nearly walked away with a draw. If my expensive Rat Ogre unit hadn't charged on the last turn as a consequence of them being *frenzied* from the *Skavenbrew*, I might have gotten away with it. *Frenzy* can be a real pain in the tail sometimes; for all its benefits, a canny player will use it to draw your unit out into an awkward position and then smack into them so hard that their frenzied grins are wiped off their faces (or get them pursuing a cheap unit into the middle of a marsh, over a cliff, or into the midst of several hundred angry troops).

For me, one of the most outstanding aspects of the day was the left flank; it seemed to be a Battle Report in its own right, centering around the Skavenslaves and the Black Coach. The tide of that mini-battle swung back and forth continuously, and ultimately my Slaves were my 'unit of the match' due to their incredible tenacity. I love these scabrous little runts, they never fail to bug your opponent, and when they are near

your General they can tie up pretty much anything. Oh yeah, and they eventually killed off that nasty old Black Coach, a major bonus.

Also on the plus side, it made me grin to see the Rat Ogres munch that Blood Dragon Thrall like so much dog meat; if the Vampire had been given time to retaliate, it would have been quite another story. It's a real shame I didn't get the hyperactive monsters into the Black Knights' flank in conjunction with the Stormvermin on Turn 3, instead of having to charge the awkwardly placed Fell Bat (nice move Alessio...). That was my best chance by far, as the Doomwheel would have tied up the Skeletons on the right flank for at least a turn, and that lone Bat could well have been the fulcrum that tipped the game. As a result, my carefully prepared flanking maneuvers came to nothing, and I ended up doing exactly what I didn't want to do; taking on the Vampire Counts face to face. And they aren't pretty.

VICTORY POINTS

SKAVEN	1,035
VAMPIRE COUNTS	1,462
DIFFERENCE OF 427:	MINOR VICTORY