

Privateer Press™



NO QUARTER

MAGAZINE

ISSUE N° 1
July 2005



BLOOD AND COIN!

Mercenary contracts for WARMACHINE

COURAGE

Haley. Deneghra. Mud. 'Nuff said.

APOTHEOSIS

First look at the new expansion

PISTOLS AT DAWN

Dueling in the Iron Kingdoms



ON THE COVER

SECOND WAVE

The worst of winter's fury has passed. One year after the invasion of Llael, the Motherland's greatest strategist, Kommandant Irusk, leads a fresh army bent on conquest in the name of the Empress and the restored Khardic Empire. War will consume the entirety of the Iron Kingdoms as this new chapter unfolds in the pages of the upcoming WARMACHINE: Apotheosis™.

BRIAN DESPAIN

Brian Despain is a world-renowned illustrator with work featured in such products as Magic: the Gathering™ and Dungeons & Dragons™. He has garnered awards in the Spectrum™ Fantasy Art Annual and Expose™ and recently has brought his talents to the Iron Kingdoms with a pair of epic paintings in WARMACHINE: Apotheosis as well as the upcoming cover of the Liber Mechanika™. He works as an artist for computer game developer Snow Blind Studios™. Brian also has an unnatural affinity for the number nine, a penchant for long stories with small payoffs (should you manage to catch him at a convention), and a love of all things retro and robotic. You can find more of his stunning work at his website: <http://imphead.com>.

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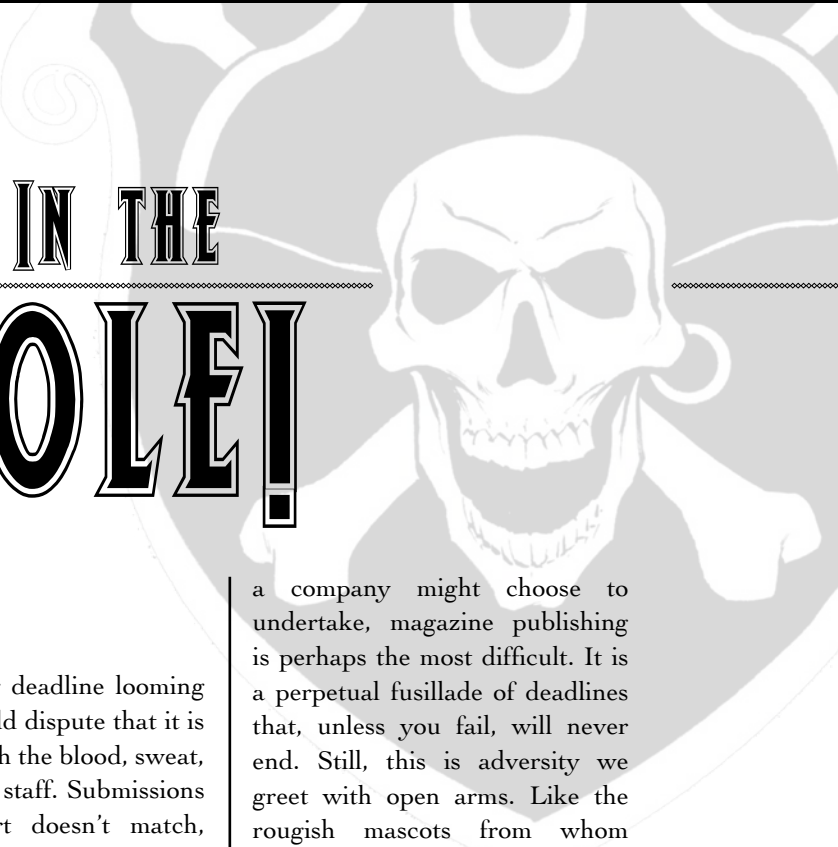


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No Quarter Magazine

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FIRE IN THE HOLE!



No Quarter — the term, indicative of a fight to the death, gathers its meaning from the reverse of “giving quarter,” an old custom by which officers, upon surrender, could save their lives by paying a ransom of “one quarter of their pay.”

I Googled™ that: www.goatlocker.org/resources/nav/trivia.htm

Other popular interpretations of the phrase include ‘no mercy’ and ‘take no prisoners.’ It is a battle cry shouted before a charge into melee to inspire comrades at your side to fight with ferocity and warn the enemy to save their breath. This will be a fight to the bloody end. We ask no quarter, and we shall give none in return.

How else are you going to launch a magazine?

In general publishing is a daily battle. Though it is a non-violent experience for the most part, few who have felt the chill shadow

of a publishing deadline looming over them would dispute that it is a road slick with the blood, sweat, and tears of its staff. Submissions arrive late, art doesn’t match, word counts are bloated and must be cut, computers crash, the phone rings in the middle of intense concentration as your race to compose an editorial — these are just a few of the myriad obstacles that mark the treacherous course between a publication’s concept and its delivery to a printer. Each barrier must be confronted as a mortal enemy and dealt with accordingly lest you lose ground and succumb to the fatigue of a battle ultimately to fall short of your prize...or rather, missing your deadline.

In the best of times, the game industry is a sea of dangerous waters difficult to navigate, impossible to predict, and merciless to those who misjudge its depths. Of the various products

a company might choose to undertake, magazine publishing is perhaps the most difficult. It is a perpetual fusillade of deadlines that, unless you fail, will never end. Still, this is adversity we greet with open arms. Like the rougish mascots from whom we take our name, the crew at Privateer believe the freedom to chart our own course is worth all the carnage left in our wake.

Let this be our red flag to anything that would get in our way. We relish the fight, we long for the challenge, we ask for no quarter, and no quarter will be given!

(Except to you...every two months for \$5.99 at all fine game and hobby stores.)

Creative Direction,
Matt Wilson



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ASHLYNN D'ELYSE, MERCENARY WARCASTER
PIP 41018 \$7.99 • SCULPTED BY BOBBY JACKSON



IN CELEBRATION OF NO QUARTER MAGAZINE'S INAUGURAL ISSUE, A SPECIAL VARIANT POSE OF VICTORIA HALEY WAS MADE AVAILABLE TO RETAILERS PLACING PRE-ORDERS WITH THEIR DISTRIBUTORS. ASK YOUR LOCAL RETAILER FOR DETAILS ABOUT THIS AMAZING MODEL!

CAPT. VICTORIA HALEY, CYGNAR WARCASTER (VARIANT POSE)
PIP 31036 \$7.99 • SCULPTED BY JERTZY MONTWILL



MULE, MERCENARY HEAVY WARJACK
PIP 41019 \$21.99 • SCULPTED BY JASON HENDRICKS

STEELHEAD HALBERDIERS, MERCENARY UNIT
PIP 41021 \$29.99 • SCULPTED BY CHRISTIAN DANCKWORTH





VANGUARD, MERCENARY LIGHT WARJACK
PIP 41020 \$15.99 • SCULPTED BY JOHN WINTER



OGRUN BOKUR, MERCENARY SOLO
PIP 41025 \$17.99 • SCULPTED BY PAUL MULLER



HAMMERFALL HIGHSHIELD GUN CORPS, MERCENARY UNIT
PIP 41023 \$29.99 • SCULPTED BY KEV WHITE

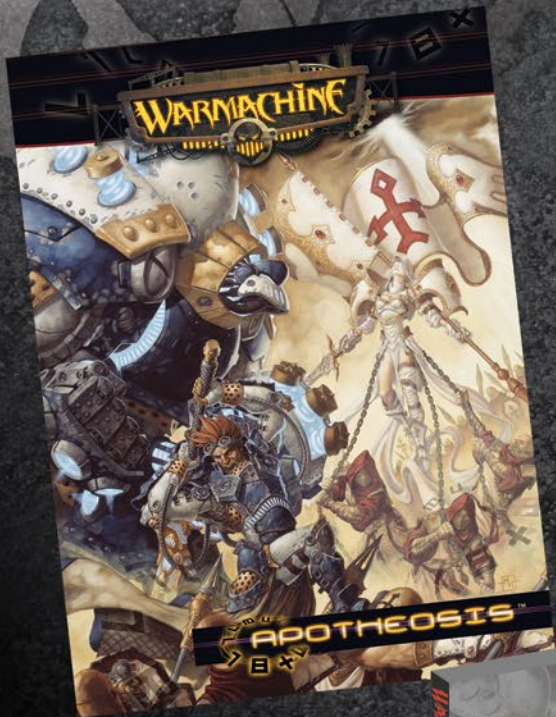
STEELHEAD HALBERDIERS BLISTER
PIP 41022 \$9.99 • SCULPTED BY CHRISTIAN DANCKWORTH



HAMMERFALL HIGHSHIELD GUN CORPS BLISTER
PIP 41024 \$9.99 • SCULPTED BY KEV WHITE



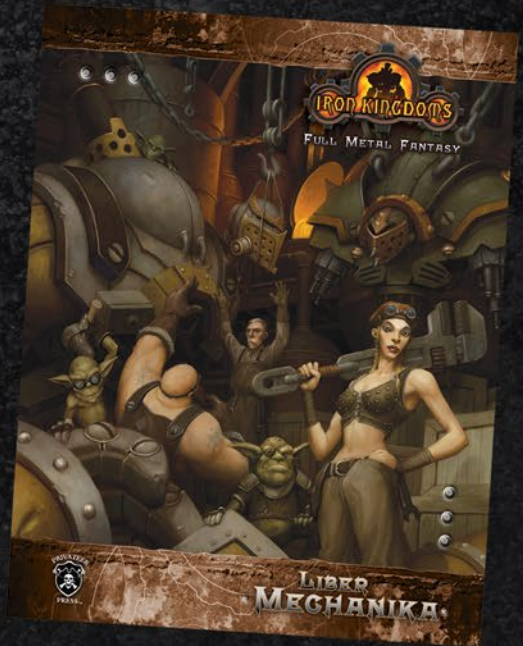
August Releases



WARMACHINE: APOTHEOSIS™
 EXPANSION FOR WARMACHINE
 PIP 1003 \$34.99

APOTHEOSIS LIMITED EDITION
 COLLECTOR'S HARDCOVER

PIP 1004 \$94.99



LIBER MECHANIKA™
 FOR IRON KINGDOMS RPG SETTING
 PIP 403 \$24.99



RELEASING IN JULY

WARMACHINE COLOR
 CARD FACTION DECKS

CYGNAR COLOR CARD DECK
 PIP 91004 \$12.99

PROTECTORATE COLOR CARD
 DECK
 PIP 91005 \$12.99

KHADOR COLOR CARD DECK
 PIP 91006 \$12.99

CRYX COLOR CARD DECK
 PIP 91007 \$12.99

CAPTAIN DARIUS,
CYGNAR
WARCASTER
PIP 31031
\$39.99
SCULPTED BY
KEV WHITE



KARCHEV THE TERRIBLE, KHADOR WARCASTER
PIP 33032 \$44.99 • SCULPTED BY MIKE McVEY



LICH LORD TERMINUS, CRYX WARCASTER
PIP 34034 \$44.99 • SCULPTED BY VICTOR MARTINS



HARBINGER OF MENOETH, PROTECTORATE WARCASTER
PIP 32031 \$34.99 • SCULPTED BY CHAZ ELLIOT

CREATING OUR

WARMACHINE™ APOTHEOSIS™

August of 2005 sees the release of one of the most ambitious tabletop wargaming products in the world. The next revolution in steam-powered combat for Privateer Press' unstoppable, award-winning miniatures game, WARMACHINE: Apotheosis provides the experience you've always wanted in a tabletop wargame.

The game you love just got an order of magnitude better. Already a fast, challenging game that favors the aggressor, Apotheosis takes WARMACHINE's go-for-the-throat philosophy and straps it to a laser-guided missile. Every model in this book contains as much ass-kicking Page 5 spirit as they do metal. You've never handled this kind of power before. Use caution; these miniatures can smell fear.

THE CONTENTS

Apotheosis gives you no less than four new warcasters for each faction, two brand new and two experienced versions of previous 'casters. With spells and abilities that challenge the stereotypes of their factions, these characters improve troops, overdrive warjacks, and can bring the pain personally. We'll profile the first four new warcasters here as a teaser.

not simply pummel your enemy. They drive into your opponent's army and turn his forces into clouds of rapidly expanding blood mist.

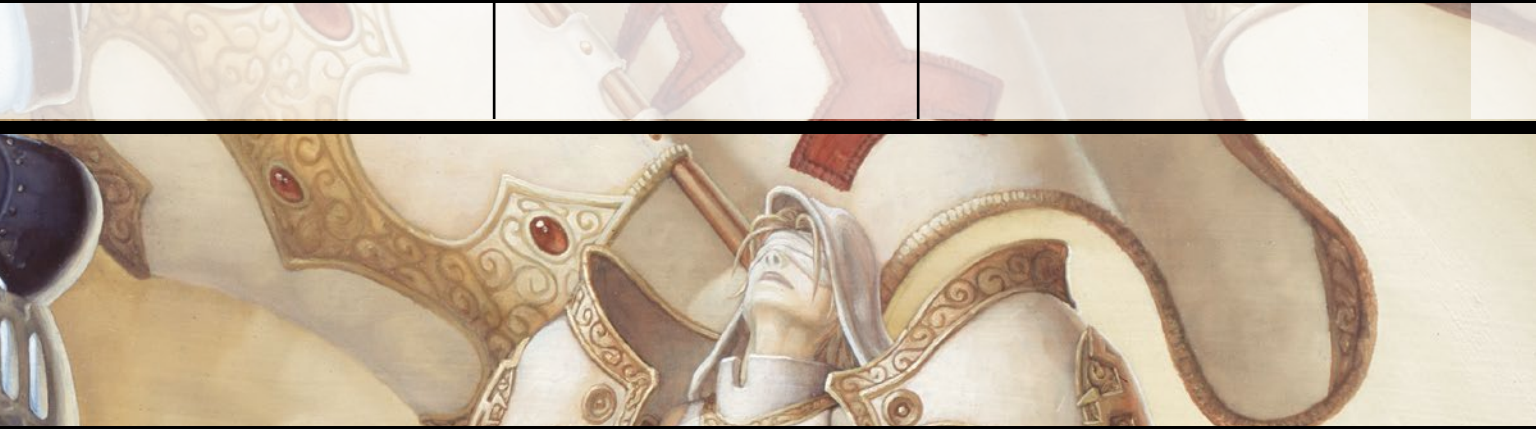
Of course, these 'jacks carry a high point cost and might mean you can't afford another unit, or two. This game is about hard choices. But when you see your Thunderhead starts blasting your opponent's army apart, you'll love every point spent.

The book itself defies this genre. We made Apotheosis one of the most beautiful publications ever seen in this industry; a lavishly illustrated, large format 144-page full-color work equal parts rulebook, art book, and story.

Every faction also gets one new, unique warjack, each a character in itself. So when you field the Deathjack you really have *the* one-of-a-kind, spell-casting, soul-eating, mechanical terror. Each of these massive engines of destruction represents the pinnacle of warjack design for their factions. They do

WHAT ELSE? A LOT ELSE.

Besides new warcasters and warjacks, we also added new power attacks, new rules on bonding your warjacks to your warcasters, and a unique, map-based campaign system, all designed to give you new and more rewarding ways to play.



It's important to mention what you won't find in this book. You won't find new rules replacing existing ones, or models that replace old ones, or any of the annoying things you might have feared from a 'rules expansion'. Apotheosis does not rewrite the game you love. It literally expands your options for play and drops you deeper into the Iron Kingdoms. Lastly, this book represents the pinnacle of warfare for the original four factions and introduces no new ones. For those anxious for new factions, keep your eyes open for clues to the next big thing.

THE BEGINNINGS

Much in Apotheosis existed long before even WARMACHINE: Prime saw print. Their part in the evolving story line, however, meant these new warjacks and characters had to wait for their time. Prime laid the foundations of the game, providing a firm understanding of the world, the rules, and the style of play. Escalation cranked up the power with new troops and warjacks, creating a more complex game. Finally, we can show you the ultimate WARMACHINE experience, what we've had in mind since day one. You expect, nay, demand, massive firepower and overwhelming brutality from this game. Apotheosis delivers.

AN ARTIST'S VISION

A strong artistic vision drives everything at Privateer and each

product must meet that vision's level of quality. As much as a good story, art gives life to the Iron Kingdoms and our books balance high quality art, new rules, and provocative storytelling. This makes all our books more than rules collections, but we wanted Apotheosis to raise the bar. Creative Director Matt Wilson explains, "With Apotheosis, we are pushing the creative envelope the likes of which has never been done. The artwork, the models, and the story are the focus of this product, and we have put more time and energy into these than anything we've ever made."

Artists Brian Snoddy, Chippy Dugan, Brian Despain, Sam Wood, and Matt Wilson contributed over ten thousand square inches, making Apotheosis the most art intensive project in Privateer's history. They took great care to evocatively place these characters within the context of the world and their factions. Apotheosis is a fantasy art lover's dream.

THE STORY

Story rules in WARMACHINE. Escalation introduced a world-changing story with the Kings, Nations, and Gods campaign. By the end Llael had fallen and the fates of a number of characters remained uncertain. Would Commander Stryker leave

command of his beloved Cygnar? Would Allister Caine turn traitor? Did Umbrey's Dark Prince die and bring about the dire prophesy of Khador's doom?

Apotheosis propels this story to a stunning climax. The dark, twisted plans of the Iron Lich converge in the Thornwood Forest where Asphyxious moves to make the ultimate power grab. Guided by her divine visions, the Harbinger of Menoth drives her armies north to stop him. The discovery of the ancient Orgoth Soul Cairn – center of Asphyxious' plans – draws the attention of powerful Cygnaran warcasters, who discover the Cairn holds secrets darker than anyone dreamed. The unexpected arrival of a Khadoran hero tips the scales of this four-way battle, and.... Well, we won't spoil it for you.

THE RULES

Apotheosis introduces four unique warjacks and sixteen new warcasters. We wanted to maintain each faction's original flavor while increasing their options and many of these characters defy their faction's stereotypes. Imagine melee focused Cygnar armies, or a Khador force built around speed. We haven't leveled the playing field; we've elevated everyone's vantage point.



EPIC CASTERS, ELITE CADRES, AND WARJACK BONDS

Not even the greatest heroes can endure war unchanged. Epic warcasters reflect the evolution of these characters through the story and the events each has endured. Each faction receives two new versions of old 'casters such as Cygnar's Commander Coleman Stryker.

Stryker changed dramatically by the end of *Kings, Nations and Gods* and his character in *Apotheosis* shows a man transformed into a living instrument of vengeance at any cost. Epic Stryker's abilities and spells change the way he plays by allowing him to risk everything to eradicate his enemies.

Epics have new strengths and weaknesses, different spell lists, different abilities, different weapons, and new feats to reflect their character arcs. Stryker's new spells revolve around aggressive combos, and his new feat *Rolling Thunder* creates a full frontal assault with his whole army. He blasts troops to dust. He supercharges his soldiers. He wrecks warjacks with his sword, yet even with all these new tricks, you'll still sometimes desperately wish you had *Invincibility* and *Earthquake*. We wanted warcasters that would play differently without overshadowing their predecessors. Playing with an epic is most rewarding to veteran players familiar with their original versions and ready to expand their horizons.

On top of the other changes, many of these characters share abilities available only to epics: warjack bonds and Elite Cadres. Some epic warcasters may begin battles with a powerful bond to a warjack. Others are commanders of men who



hand pick improved versions of particular troops.

Elite Cadres use standard models but gain higher stats and a special ability, representing veteran troops associated with the epic 'caster. For example, all Stormblades fielded with Epic Stryker gain +1 MAT, RAT, and CMD and may move their speed after normal deployment but before the first turn. The second issue of No Quarter Magazine includes modeling suggestions for converting troopers for Elite Cadres.

When a warcaster commands a warjack for some time, the machine may develop personality quirks related to its master. Such warjacks often gain a special ability reflecting the close connection between man and machine. Epic Stryker, for example, may bond a single warjack that can therefore receive an extra focus and make power attacks and charges for free. Different warjack bonds may also appear with any warcaster over the course of campaign or league play. Players can use the bonding rules as a reward during their campaigns, or may include them in normal games.

These special abilities make epic warcasters powerful and expensive, each more so than their former selves. To reflect this, one epic warcaster may only appear for every 750 points in the army. We have included a new battle format at this point level to allow epic vs. epic battles or a challenging epic vs. normal warcaster. At 1,000 pts you can field one epic caster and one normal 'caster, at 1,500 pts you could field two epics and one standard as your third.

Though the epics may sound unbeatable, we tested them thoroughly against in-print armies and the other casters from Apotheosis to make sure they were worth their points. You'll still want to field Stryker



for all the same reasons you do now, but sometimes you'll want to field his epic version for a different style of play.

NEW POWER ATTACKS

No moment in WAR-MACHINE quite matches slamming an enemy warjack off a cliff or head-butting one to the ground before you hammer fist it into oblivion. We love power attacks too, so we added more. Take the two-handed throw for example. Only available to 'jacks with two open fists, this attack allows you to pick a target and make a ranged attack roll to hit it with the model you're throwing.

CAMPAIGN

In addition to new characters, new warjacks, and new rules, we also managed to squeeze in a new campaign system. Escalation's Kings, Nations, and God's tells a story through a series of battles, encompassing quite a large area. This new system lets us focus in more detail on one region and lets us apply the same format to any location we like. We call it the "Theater of War" campaign system.

We wanted a system that allowed exciting, balanced campaign play that could last for weeks, not months. We created a map-based system wherein each Theater of War represents a location hotly contested by the four factions. The map in Apotheosis focuses on the Thornwood Forest region of northern Cygnar where the Iron Lich has hatched his plans and attracted the armies of every nation. Each faction has military goals in the region and can win by taking three difficult, unique objectives or by simply capturing territory and dominating the map.

This system allows detailed campaign play anywhere in the Iron Kingdoms, so you can expect to see many new campaign maps

in the future with some in the pages of No Quarter Magazine. Creative players may create their own Theaters of War and fight anywhere across western Immoren. Additionally, we crafted rules allowing campaigns to be played by two or three players to give you more flexibility to play out your campaigns.

CONCLUSION

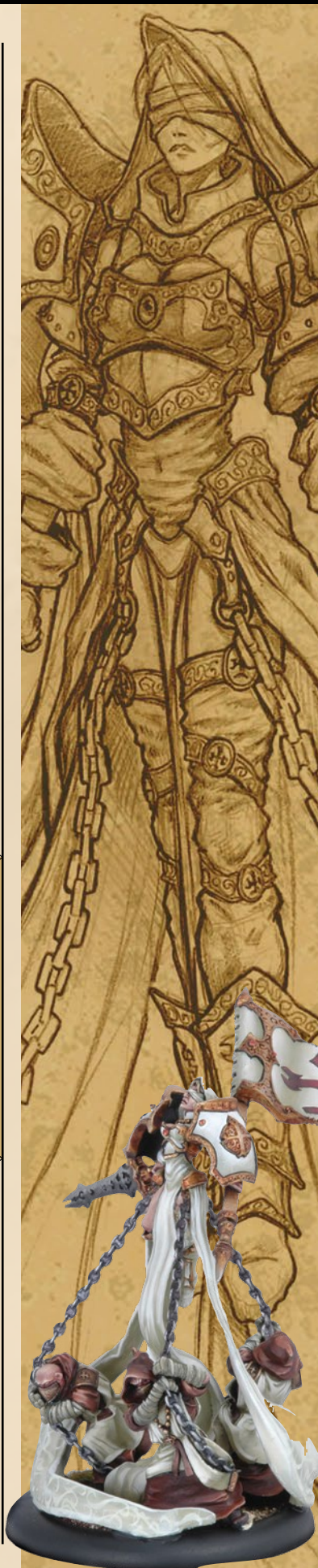
WARMACHINE does not end with Apotheosis. When you have your own copy, breathing that new book smell, take it all in slowly. We don't want your head to explode because there is more to come. For now, though, it's time to teach the old war dogs some new tricks, so button up and prepare for battle.

Apotheosis may feature only a few new models, but they will have an awesome effect on your games. With Prime, you had three possible combinations of warcasters for your faction at the 1000 point level. Now, by

You try living 24/7 in a soot-stained, blisteringly hot 10-ton iron coffin and see if you don't want to smash in a few skulls with your over-sized steel hands. Luckily Khador has plenty of enemies to draw Karchev's rage.

doubling your choice of casters, you'll have 25 combinations. With five times as many warcaster combinations, every game will bring new challenges and new tactics as your 'casters work together in unprecedented ways.

Apotheosis models do not guarantee victory. Sure your all-warjack Darius army may steamroll your opponent once, maybe twice, but these models take some skill to use so don't



get overconfident. An all-Prime army has trounced each and every one of these new models. Your opponent will adapt, learn your tricks, and exploit your weaknesses. That's what wargaming is all about, and that's what Apotheosis ultimately brings to you, the pinnacle of options in army building, modeling, and tactics for WARMACHINE.

KARCHEV THE TERRIBLE

Nearly 100 years ago, Karchev's body fell broken by Cygnaran defenders in the Thornwood War. To serve the Motherland and vent his rage, Karchev chose a life of hardship, chose a body of iron and steam over flesh and blood, and chose to become the man in the machine.

Once a Greylord and decorated warcaster, Karchev's rage sustained him after his nation's great defeat. Khador does not waste its meager gifts, and the Motherland's finest mechaniks labored to provide Karchev with a new body and a new life as a living warjack. The result is the shell of a warcaster living in a warjack with an uncanny empathy for controlling his hulking battlegroup.

WITH A BATTLEGROUP OF UNBRIDLED FURY

Karchev has a body of steel and a heart of fury. On the battlefield he drives forward to crush the enemies of his beloved Motherland and few can withstand the sheer brutality of his assault. With Karchev you may have the urge to field an all-warjack army. Feel free to indulge.

Practically a warjack himself, Karchev exerts a great deal of control over his battlegroup. His arcane connection awakens brutal instincts in his warjacks' cortexes, driving them to great accuracy in their



attacks. He can bring his battlegroup across the field with lightening speed and increase their protection simultaneously. All this makes an all-warjack Karchev force not just an instinct but a good idea. If you love to see a host of Bezerkers tearing apart hardened troops, or a pair of Kodiaks tag-teaming enemy 'jacks, then Karchev is your man in the machine.

THE HARBINGER OF MENOTH

The Harbinger is Menoth's vessel and the bearer of His words to the people of Caen. She calls the faithful to war, her floating form a beacon to all followers of the Lawgiver and the doom of heretics and unbelievers. A true prophet with the powers of a warcaster, the Harbinger leads the Protectorate's armies in a great crusade to reclaim western Immoren for the Creator of Man.

**After a few centuries
at this sort of thing,
you learn a thing or
two about people:
mostly that they make
better slaves
when dead.**

**Terminus
understands and
makes good use
of the living dead
surrounding him.**

Driven by visions of a rising evil in the Thornwood Forest, the Harbinger has amassed an army to destroy it. Even as Cygnaran guns pound the walls of Sul, she drives way north and westward to confront the Iron Lich in the darkness under the brooding trees. Composed of fanatical believers, her army fearlessly marches through





merciless terrain bearing their burdens as easily as a Monolith Bearer carries his. This wave of righteousness will break upon the Thornwood and scour out the evil within.

HER HOLY HOST

On the field the Harbinger of Menoth commands a holy host from all across the Protectorate utterly dedicated to her and her to them. As her soldiers suffer wounds the Harbinger martyrs herself, sacrificing a portion of her own life to spare theirs. She will not let one Menite soul go to Urcaen until the Lawgiver himself declares they are worthy to serve him there.

Few have the courage to confront this prophet of Menoth, as her very presence awes them into submission. Those who do stand only suffer the wrath of her followers. When the Harbinger commits herself to combat, Menoth Himself guides her sword arm. A battle rage fills her troops, and they strike like the desert wind to grind down all heretics. Nothing can withstand the will of Menoth embodied in His Harbinger.

LICH LORD TERMINUS

The Lich Lords of Cryx rank among the most powerful beings on Caen. Now let the nations of western Immoren quail, for one such creature has taken the field against them. Only the bravest may stand against such abomination and even then their courage avails them little. For who can withstand one of the greatest servants of Toruk the Dragonfather?

Terminus, one of the twelve Lich Lords, has not set foot on the mainland for centuries, content to lay his plans from his dark citadel in Cryx. All that changed when he received word of the events unfolding in the Thornwood. Now his iron feet poison the earth of the Iron Kingdoms seeking nothing but the final victory of his liege and god.



UNDER THE WINGS OF DEATH

The fearsome Lich Lord Terminus works best as a merciless spear driving through the heart of his enemy's army for the warcaster. He does not have the patience for the cat-and-mouse games of most Cryxian warcasters, nor does he need it, making him perhaps the most straightforward Cryxian 'caster in that regard. While potent, his arcane abilities don't tempt players as much as his unmerciful melee attacks, making it imperative to deliver the Lich Lord to his target swiftly.

Not unlike the Harbinger, the Lich Lord functions best surrounded by troops, in this case a host of undead horrors from the Nightmare Island. He carelessly uses thralls and revenants as a shield against enemy attacks, even tossing them into the air to intercept enemy fire. With a massive army the Lich Lord can drive deep into the enemy unscathed.

Unconcerned by enemy warmachines, he rips his huge sword through the toughest of Khadoran warjacks like the right talon of Toruk Himself. Anything left standing he tosses aside and douses with his corrosive breath that melts men to their boots. His unrelenting, brutal assaults consume the souls of the living after he liquefies their bowels with the sound of his dragon's call. Nothing short of the perfectly laid plan can stop this malignant horror, and perhaps not even then.

CAPTAIN E. DOMINIC DARIUS

A grease-stained force of nature, Captain Darius is a mechanik turned warcaster whose tactics click like clockwork. Combining the finest technology with effective magic, Darius and his battlegroup function like a single, well tuned machine. While Commander Adept Nemo has pioneered Cygnar's new storm-fueled technology, Darius' mind for gears and alloys lets him push even the oldest of technology to perform on par with Nemo's inventions.

Wearing enormous steam-powered armor of his own invention, Darius bears down on enemies with his quake hammer, a warjack-sized mechanik's wrench, and a shoulder-mounted steam cannon that devastates enemy troops. Enemy warjacks quickly come apart – their gears shattered, pins sheared, and mechanical guts spilling out – under a well placed blow from his hammer. Just as quickly Darius can repair the most ruined of Cygnar 'jacks with his arcane skills and trusty wrench.

Darius' Halfjacks operate as an extension of himself, mechanical assistants with the ability to repair friendly warjacks or utterly disable enemy machines. These half-sized mechanical wonders can patch warjacks in the middle of a battle or lock down enemy systems. Their utility does not stop there. Halfjacks may also bury themselves and prime to explode. They are somewhat delicate compared to standard warjacks, but Darius

Humpty Dumpty obviously didn't fall off a wall in Cygnar because Darius could not only have put him together, but he would have added a pair of chainguns and a reserve steam tank to his new iron-plated shell.

may simply construct replacements for Halfjacks he loses. With his Halfjacks close at hand, Darius never lacks help on the battlefield.

DELIVERING THE PAIN

Darius feels most at home when surrounded by Cygnaran heavy warjacks such as the classic Ironclad or Defender. His arcane abilities allow them to cross the field quickly to deliver their payload of pain. For those irritating times when a warjack is not quite in position, Darius may use his crane to reposition it. When a 'jack has lost a weapon system, the Halfjacks or a team of mechanics under Darius' direction can make repairs in record time. No matter how dire the situation or how deadly the enemy artillery, Darius' skill ensures his battlegroup survives much longer than warjacks rightly should.

If you are the kind of Cygnar player who loves the satisfying 'crunch' of a quake hammer or the sound of a Centurion's spear hammering through armor like tin foil, then Darius is your warcaster. When you absolutely, positively have to have it smashed to bits right now, call Darius.



APOTHEOSIS PLAYTEST FACTOIDS

Reams of paper recycled: 20 (10,000 sheets)

of playtesters: 61

of man-hours: 27,328

of Broken Feats: 23

ships commandeered: N/A

of Pizza's Consumed: 112 (1,344 Slices)

of Softdrinks Consumed: 336

(4,032 oz)

Production Babies: 0

Girl Friends Lost: 2

Marriages: 0

New Tattoos: 8

Body Piercings: 3



KARCHEV THE TERRIBLE

August sees the release of **WARMACHINE: Apotheosis** and with it the start of a range of miniatures far more ambitious and amazing than anything Privateer Press has produced before. We pushed every part of the process of creating these miniatures to the breaking point to achieve the best possible results. From the stunning concepts, through the hundreds of hours of painstaking sculpting by some of the best talents in the industry, down to our master mold makers finding new and better techniques and materials, everyone really pulled out all the stops. The miniatures in this line are truly spectacular, breathtaking centerpieces for any army you build around them.

This article takes a closer look at two of the first releases – the Harbinger of Menoth, and Karchev the Terrible. Both miniatures beautifully represent what you will find across the whole Apotheosis range – spectacular and dynamic pieces that really take your army to the next level. Of course producing miniatures with this degree of detail and movement does have another side to it – they do require a certain

MODELING e PAINTING

THE HARBINGER AND KARCHEV THE TERRIBLE

amount on time and skill to make them ready for painting and, once assembled, present quite a painting challenge to get the best from them. The results though, when your army stands victorious on the field of battle, make all the hard work well worth it.

The first thought you'll probably have when you open the boxes is, "Wow, there sure are a lot of pieces." Both of these models, and indeed most of the larger sets in the Apotheosis range, do have a quite high component count. We have a two-fold reason for this. Firstly, it's the only way to achieve the dynamic movement we wanted, and really do justice to the original concepts. Secondly, by splitting the miniature down into more small parts, we have far better control over the quality of the casting – larger components often pick up surface texture in the casting process. Of course, this means that you have a little bit of work ahead of you to assemble the model, but with some planning and the right tools, you can minimize the pain make sure that the finished model will be perfect.

Many people regard cleaning and assembly as a necessary evil, but I really think that's the wrong approach. No matter how good a painter you are, cleaning really is one of the most important stages of the painting process as the miniature will always let you down if you don't take the time at the beginning to clean the

By **Mike McVey**, Miniatures Director, Privateer Press

Miniatures painted by
Alison McVey

castings properly. Even those of you in the school of fast painting need this step, as you don't want to constantly repair a miniature because you didn't assemble it properly the first time round. Cleaning and assembly is just a part of this hobby – after all, these aren't snap together plastic toys!

I'm not going to go into great detail about assembly techniques here, as you can find that information in plenty of places. Both **WARMACHINE: Prime** and **Escalation** have useful tips, and www.brushthralls.com is a mine of great modeling knowledge on subjects like pinning and filling gaps as well as more advanced techniques. I am going to show you how to apply techniques to these specific miniatures by telling you the challenges you'll come up against and what you need to get past them. We'll start with some issues you need to consider with both the Harbinger and Karchev and then look at difficulties specific to each.

GENERAL PREPARATION WORK

First, get all the components out of the box and check them over, just to make sure that you have everything present and correct

and to give you an overview of the task ahead. Work out where everything goes and which parts connect together. Next, clean all of the pieces to get rid of mold lines and vent marks, easily achieved with a sharp, new blade on your craft knife and some fine needle files. I also like to have a couple of different grades of fine abrasive wet-and-dry paper for getting in to places the files won't reach. One part of this process that people often overlook, and perhaps the most important stage of all, is to thoroughly clean the areas to be glued together, and I mean REALLY thoroughly. Oxidation covers the surface of the castings and if you don't remove it you will never get a good join between the pieces. The flatter the join area, the stronger the bond between the pieces, which makes it really worth taking the time to get this just right so you won't reach for the super-glue every time you pull the miniature from its case.

Once cleaned, "dry fit" the pieces. This just means holding the pieces together to test the accuracy of the fit and adjust if necessary. We make every effort to ensure that the pieces fit together neatly and accurately when originally sculpted, but this almost always changes in the casting process as small amounts of shifting and warping of the molds takes place. We do our best to minimize this, but miniatures will always require a little work, especially those with large or especially complex parts. Filing a little metal away or using putty to fill a small gap easily fixes the problem. You shouldn't put glue anywhere near the castings until you are sure the pieces will fit together comfortably.

Next comes pinning and, while not absolutely vital, I really would recommend it for some parts of these models to ensure

they stand the test of time. We'll look at what parts to pin when we look at the specific miniatures. We'll also look at what parts to assemble right away and in what order, and what you will need to paint first and then assemble. You should always work out what needs pinned and drill all the holes before doing any gluing. If you glue some of the components together and then try and drill a hole, you will probably just break the pieces you have glued.

Once you have all of the assembly as complete as you want it at this stage you can go ahead and undercoat. We primed both the Harbinger and Karchev with black but this is really just a matter of personal preference; white would work just as well – it simply requires different painting techniques. One important thing to remember, you have to join metal to metal to get a good strong bond so clean the primer off the joins before you assemble the pieces you paint separately.

KARCHEV THE TERRIBLE

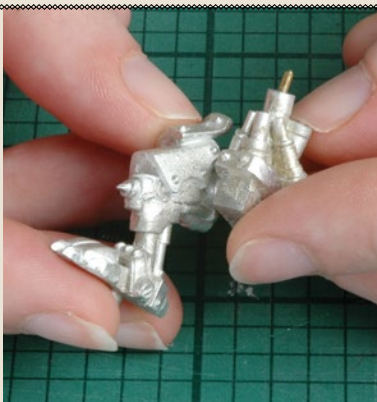
Although a warcaster, Karchev behaves more like a warjack in terms of assembly and painting – and a complex one at that! Because he's so large and dynamic, you are going to want to paint some of the parts separately before they are fully assembled. Keep this as four separate pieces: the complete body and legs assembly, each of the arms and the armored "skirt" that fits round the back (Tip: paint the body piece first and then attach the "skirt" and paint it on the model). If you paint parts separately, try to have something to hold them with to keep your mucky, paint-covered fingers off the model. For Karchev's arms, we added a good thick brass pin to the top of the join area and stuck them into old corks to give something to hold on to. You can also use an old pin-vice

or jewelry clamp here to give even more support.

To make life easier for yourself, you should assemble the pieces in a fairly specific order. Construct the legs first, as this will give you a good solid base to work on. The pins that join the legs to the waist area have little location lugs so you won't have to think about the position of the pieces. If you want to achieve a different pose, just file these lugs away and re-position as desired. If you really want a bombproof miniature it's a good idea to add strengthening pins to the legs. Glue one of the legs to the waist, let it dry thoroughly, and then attach the other. When that dries you can add the armor plate that hangs down between the legs – while not totally necessary at this stage it can get a little tricky once you have more of the model assembled. Next, glue the legs to the base. Because the complete miniature has a lot of weight forward, you will probably want to glue the legs toward the rear of the base. This also ensures the armored skirt will clear the back edge of the base.

THE HARBINGER OF MENOTH





The right leg is pinned to the waist piece.



The left leg is added; the location lugs should ensure the feet line up correctly to sit flat on the base.



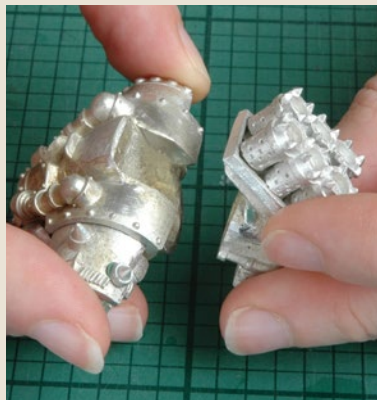
The legs are glued to the base. Holes have been drilled to accept the pins on the feet.

Now construct the upper body assembly. While quite a lot of pieces, this easily splits down into manageable chunks. The main body, Karchev himself and the two front armor plates, are one piece, the boiler and the two smokestack assemblies are another, and the shoulders and separate spikes another. Fully assemble each of these before you join them together. Then pin

the shoulders in place and attach the boiler assembly. It's pretty important to pin the shoulders as they are weight-bearing joints – the whole arm assemblies are reliant on these holding up to the strain. You might find that the shoulders need a small green-stuff fill where they meet the body – just roll out a thin sausage of putty, lay it along the gap and carefully smooth into place.



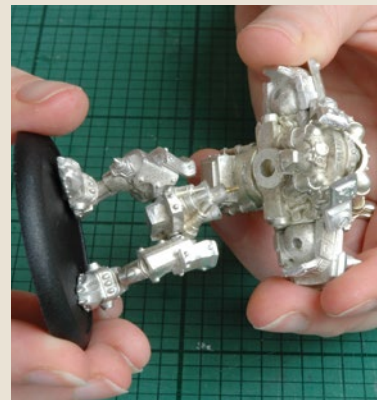
The shoulders are pinned to the body.



The complete boiler assembly is glued to the body.

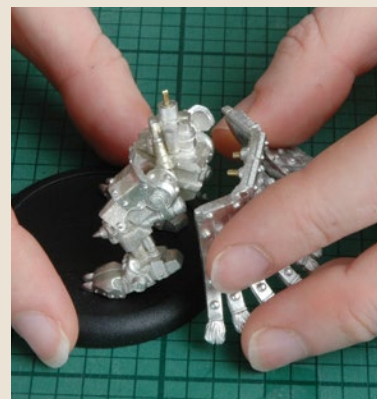
Once you have the entire body piece complete you can attach it to the legs. Even though these pieces have a good solid joint area with the peg and socket, adding a strengthening pin remains a good idea. With the arms in place you have an awful lot of weight resting on a small area. As I mentioned previously, make sure you line up and drill the holes before assembly starts, otherwise you will break some of the joints. You also have a certain amount

of possibility here. The body will swivel round, and the joints have enough play to get some forward and backwards movement. So if you don't add a pin you should pack some modeling putty around the joint to make sure the area remains stable.



The whole upper body is attached to the legs – it might be necessary to fill between the pieces.

The "skirt" assembly has four parts, three pieces of studded leather strips and the frame that holds them together. The frame has two studs where it meets the body, but I would still add strengthening pins to get a good strong joint. The skirt sticks out clear of the base when attached to Karchev, making it a little prone to breaking off. For the same reason, I would make sure you fill any gaps between the frame and the leather strips with green-stuff.



You should "dry-fit" the skirt assembly to the body, but don't glue it in place until the body is painted.

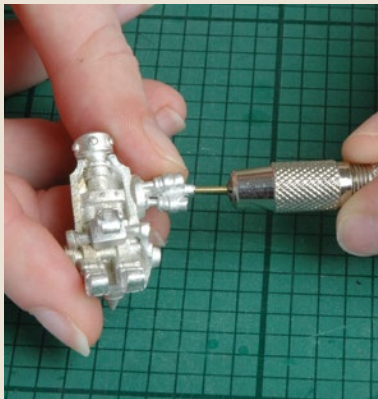
The arms don't need much assembly – just glue the top of

the axe to the right arm and the thumb to the left arm and you're good to go.

That finishes the assembly for this stage – the arms and body need to be glued together when painted, but before you do that, you should attach and paint the armored skirt assembly. Gluing the arms to the body will mean that you need to trim down the long pins on the arms so they fit into the holes you drilled in the body.



A long, thick brass rod was added to the arm to give something to hold while painting.



The arm was held in a pin vice while it was painted.

THE HARBINGER

Assembling the Harbinger presents a different set of challenges to Karchev. While putting Karchev together is all about making sure all the joins can bear the weight of the huge pieces, the Harbinger is a bit of a jigsaw puzzle and the challenge is getting all the pieces aligned to fit together properly. The piece count isn't particularly high for

such an impressive and complex piece – just 13 pieces all told – but the fun is getting all those pieces to fit together and work as a mini-vignette on a 50mm base! The real trick lies in positioning the Acolytes correctly on the base in relation to the Harbinger herself. Not only do they have to fit on the base between all the swirling pieces of cloth, but they also need to be in the correct positions so that the chains can attach. I'll make no bones about it – this is definitely a challenging piece to assemble, one of the trickiest you'll come across, but the amazing model you'll have when you finish is incredibly rewarding.

It's really a case of breaking the assembly down into manageable stages, and making sure you have done a good, thorough job of each before moving on to the next. As with Karchev, you don't want to put all the pieces together before painting. In fact, you should leave all the Acolytes and lengths of chain off until you have painted and varnished everything except the chains. So where to start?

As always, thoroughly clean all the components to get rid of mold lines and vent marks. Then you should dry fit the pieces, especially the joins between the lower and upper half of the body, and the banner and left arm. Only these two joins take significant weight (make worse by the fineness of the join area), so you should definitely add a strengthening pin. The most important pieces to dry fit – the Acolytes, the lower body of the Harbinger, and the base – must work together seamlessly or you'll have trouble later. Fortunately, I have already done some of the hard work for you. The diagram shown at the conclusion of this article is a 1:1 scale drawing of the base for the Harbinger, and I have marked on it exactly where you

Tools: What will I need?

You'll need a few things to put these miniatures together, but nothing that you can't find in a good hobbyist's tool box: pin vice, drill bits, appropriate size wire for strengthening pins, craft knife, needle files for cleaning the castings, green stuff (or comparable modeling putty) and a sculpting tool for filling gaps and attaching components, and superglue and accelerator. I really can't emphasize enough how much superglue accelerator just makes life so much easier. In fact if you don't have some in your toolbox already, put down this magazine and get some right away! I wouldn't want to attempt complex assembly like this without it.

should glue the lower body piece, and also where to drill the holes for the Acolytes. If you follow this pattern exactly (and attach the different Acolytes as shown in the photographs) everything should fit correctly.

Feel free to photocopy the diagram at the end of this article, cut it out, and use it as a template for the pieces.



Holes are drilled in the base to make sure the acolytes fit around the Harbinger, but they are not glued in position.

You don't need very big holes for the pegs on the Acolyte's, just 2-3mm across, and you shouldn't really need to pin the Harbinger to the base – this piece has a good flat base so it glues on securely.

Once you have all the pieces in the right position and made sure that they fit together well you can start to glue things together. First glue the lower half of the Harbinger to the base, and when this dries attach the upper body. Take extra care with this to make sure you get it lined up correctly, or the body will look off-center on the legs. Next, attach the side strips of cloth to the sides of the base and meet the main body right on the hips. You might need to bend the pieces a little to make them fit correctly. These fasten to the base best with a rolled out piece of modeling putty, ideally green-stuff, as it's good and sticky. Lay this on the under side of the fabric, where it meets the base, and push it into position. Then add a tiny spot of glue where the fabric meets the body. Once the glue dries you should trim off the excess green-stuff where it meets the base and run a tiny amount of glue into the joint to stop it moving

Applying glue. The best way to glue a miniature in a controlled way is to use the tip of a pin, rather than straight from the bottle. Apply a little glue to some waxed paper – this makes it stand up in a drop rather than flow out thinly. Then just dip the tip of a pin into the glue and apply this to the miniature. I have a flat-ended pin mounted in an old paintbrush handle that I made specifically for the purpose.

before the putty dries. Then fill any slight gaps between the fabric and the body with green-stuff. The combination of green-stuff and super glue works really well for securing delicate pieces like this, but you need to make sure that the green-stuff dries thoroughly before putting any strain on it.

The banner goes on next, perhaps the most delicate piece of all. Though it has two points of contact, I would still add a pin to where the two halves of the arm join. If you drill 2-3mm into each side of the join area, you will end up with a really strong bond, especially when coupled with the secondary joint where the banner pole meets the back of the hood.

The last thing for the main part of the Harbinger is to add the shoulder armor – these should just glue right on to the studs on the shoulders, but for extra support, add some green-stuff to the joint. Just roll up a tiny ball of green-stuff and pop it into the hole in the underside of the shoulder armor, then add a spot of glue to the stud on the body and press the two parts together.

Once you glue the Acolytes to bases for painting (just lightly tack them to any old base you have lying around) you have finished all the assembly you need to do before painting. We'll look at the final assembly after the painting description below.

GENERAL PAINTING NOTES

Alison McVey (PPS_Fluffy on the forums) painted both of the miniatures in the Privateer Press studio using a variety of painting methods. I'm not going to get bogged down with talking about specific techniques in this article, but just look at the way they were painted and the



The two halves of the Harbinger are glued together.



The fabric pieces are attached to the base with green stuff and superglue.



The tops of the fabric pieces are glued to the Harbinger and any small gaps filled.



The banner is pinned to the arm and glued in place.

colors used. Once again, more information on miniature painting techniques and explanations of the terms I use (such as Blending and Glazing) appear in many different places, including WARMACHINE: Prime and Escalation. Of course you don't have to use these techniques; you decide just how much time you put into the painting. Remember, though, that you may only have one of these miniatures in your army, which makes it really worth putting the time in to make them as spectacular as possible.

Alison used a few different brands of paints on both of these miniatures, but mainly Citadel™ and Wargames Foundry. You can use any brand you like, just substitute the colors for whatever is appropriate. Alison used Higgins™ artist inks, but again, any comparable brand is fine.

PAINTING KARCHEV

Okay – with the assembly finally done you can start slapping paint around, but where do you begin with such a huge piece? As I mentioned earlier, painting this miniature in four separate pieces – the body, two separate arms, and the armored skirt – definitely works best. The best way to handle the arms and body is to paint them at the same time – that will ensure that the colors match, which is particularly important for the red armor. Here's the breakdown of the way Karchev was painted.

- First, all the pieces got a primer coat of black spray paint; we have found that the best sort comes from car accessory shops, such as Schucks™. Always prime in well-ventilated areas and watch for overspray.
- All of the silver metallic areas received a Boltgun Metal base

coat and the areas that ended up gold metallic got at Brazen Brass base coat. The battle-damaged areas also ended up painted with Boltgun at this stage.

- A wash of blue and brown ink, with just a dab of Bestial Brown added, went over all of the metal areas. The brown paint helps the wash to adhere better to the surface and not just run off into the recesses.
- The armor got a coat of Blood Red with a spot of Scab Red added to deepen the color, but leaving the battle damage areas clear. You need several coats of red to get good, even coverage.



- Regal Blue and a spot of Scorched Brown were added to the red color to produce a deep tone and then blended into the shaded areas.
- Adding first Sunburst Yellow and then Skull White to Blood Red produced the different

highlights, which Alison carefully blended onto the miniature in progressively lighter tones.



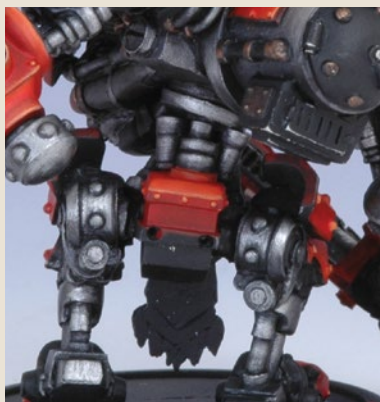
- When the highlights had dried, the red armor got several glazes to deepen and strengthen the color. The first glazes, a mix of red and yellow ink, went over all of the armor. She applied a deeper red color to the shaded areas and blended it in to give depth to the finish.



- The silver metallics got highlighted first with Boltgun Metal, then a mix of Boltgun and Chainmail, and finally just Chainmail. The gold highlights worked the same way, but with Brazen Brass, Shining Gold, and Chainmail.
- At this stage the arms were carefully glued in place and the unpainted skirt was added to the back.



The metal areas are base coated with Boltgun Metal and washed with a mix of blue and brown ink.



The highlights are built up with Boltgun Metal and Chainmail.



Subtle blending effects can be applied to metal in just the same way as any color.



- The leather strips on the skirt were painted with Scorched Brown and highlighted with Buff Leather.
- Alison highlighted the black areas on the figure with Canvas, Enchanted Blue and white.
- The gold areas got highlighted.



- The last stage of the main painting involved using black to tidy up the whole miniature – redefining deeply recessed areas and where different parts of the model meet.

- Once completely dry, the freehand painted designs, like the runes and rank symbol were added.

PAINTING THE HARBINGER

Painting this piece really amounts to painting four miniatures – the Harbinger herself and the three Acolytes. You can make this a little easier, and quicker, by painting all three Acolytes at the same time; they share the same color scheme and details, so it makes sense to work on them all at once. First, the Harbinger.

- The miniature received the same black undercoat as Karchev.
- First, a mix of flesh and Scorched Brown base coated the skin. Then came a wash using the same colors as the base coat, but with brown ink added.

- The highlights came in three stages, with the third stage including multiple highlights, each progressively lighter than the last; first a mix of flesh, Scorched Brown and Buff Leather, then just flesh, and finally flesh and white – adding more white at each stage to lighten the color.

- The fabric areas of the miniature received a base coat of Canvas, Enchanted Blue and Bleached Bone. You need only a tiny spot of blue to deepen the color.



- The highlights on the fabric came first by adding more Bleached Bone to the base color, then by using just Bleached Bone, then Bleached Bone and white, and finally just white. Blend these highlights to give a smooth flow and progression of colors.



- Shining Gold washed with brown ink based the gold areas of the armor and banner in order to achieve a really bright and clean finish.



- First Shining Gold and then Shining Gold and Chainmail highlighted all the gold.
- The red details received a base coat of Scab Red with a tint spot of dark green added to deepen the tone, then highlighted with Scab Red and red ink, and then with a little Bleached Bone added to the mix.



- The swirling patterns were painted on with white to lighten the shaded areas at the base of the fabric.

The Acolytes presented a slightly simpler proposition to paint. The main areas of the robes got an even coat of Scorched Brown highlighted with Buff Leather and then Bleached Bone. Tinting the robes with really thin glazes of yellow added some richness to the color. The rest of the clothing and the skin were painted in the same color as the Harbinger, but the highlights were not taken as light.

HARBINGER FINAL ASSEMBLY

Now, with all the parts painted (except the chains) and varnished, you can do the final assembly. This requires a little care and attention, as you don't want to start chipping off all that carefully applied paint. The Acolytes should go into position easily enough; put them in place one at a time and apply glue to the underside of the base where the pin comes through. Just apply a tiny spot and let it run into the join. This should hold it in place, but I like to add a tiny amount of green-stuff around the bottom of the pin where it come through under the base just make it super-secure. Do this to each of the Acolytes and let them dry thoroughly.

Last, glue the chains in place and paint them. While not too difficult, the small parts can make this fiddly. All the pieces of chain are the same length, so at least two of them will need to be trimmed down with either wire clippers or a sharp craft knife so they fit. Take care when doing this – just trim a little away at a time, as it's impossible to glue it back on if you remove too much. When you have a good fit, glue them in place by adding a little glue to the bottom end of the chain and placing it in the Acolyte's hands. When that dries, you can apply a tiny spot of glue to the top and

fasten it to the body. Use a pin to apply the glue. Do not, under any circumstances, apply glue directly from the bottle. You will end up flooding the miniature with super-glue! Trust me on this, after all your hard work that would be a bad thing.

Once dry, carefully paint the chains and that's it. You're done. Now to crush your enemies (and wow them with your modeling skills)!

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 FOR MODELS APPEARING IN
WARMACHINE: APOTHEOSIS



Use this as a template for drilling the holes for the Acolytes. The colored area indicates the spot the Harbinger should be glued. The arrow faces front.



MERCENARY

CONTRACTS



Rules Development: **Jason Soles, Rob Stoddard, and Matt Wilson**

Writers: **Rob Baxter and Jason Soles**

Boomhowler 'ad been grim since Magnus 'ad walked into the Iron Balls, and I'd the feelin somethin was a'brewin in his 'ead. "The Traitor" 'ad laid out two strong krielkin as if they were gobber kits and they 'ad 'ollered fer blood. But Boomhowler 'ad shut their cake pits up right fast. Can't kill a man yer chartered too, and they knew that full well. Not as if they could lay a finger on a vicious blighter like Magnus; he'd slash'em from gib to gullet faster than a dracodile's grin.

Our first order from the boss after the meetin' was to make to the Drunken Jenny, some hole in the ground in Five Fingers. Magnus 'ad need o' the Piper, and though he dinna' work for the Traitor, t'was our job to make sure he saw the upside of doin' so. T'were simpler than cutting throats — if the Piper would'nae sign the contract, we'd make bloody true that he never put lips nor fingers to his pipe again.

When we arrived at the Jenny, Boomhowler told us the score.

"He's in 'dere, but he's wid' friends. So we godda make 'dis quick and leave widd'im alive." Boomhowler 'ad a heartful of kenship for the Piper, and this made things plenty hard to reckon. The Ordic rimer could ply a somber tune on those pipes. Such

tones warm even the heartsblood of hard angry bastards like us, and Greygore respected the Piper's talent. Leaving with'im alive meant we couldn't bash the bloke too sore, but 'is mates were fair sport.

We stride into the stinkin', drunken, raucous mess of manfolk in the Jenny and mark the room quick. The Piper sits in the corner with some sellsword wench talkin' all a whisper. All ya can 'ear as we walk to them is the shuffle of drunks makin' for the doors. No one can smell trouble better than a Five Fingers rummy.

"Rupert," Boomhowler says.

"Aye, Greygore, I dinna ken yer get was about the streets of the Fingers."

"We've come ta contract ya," Boomhowler hands Magnus' charter to the Piper of Ord. We watch Carvolo peel open the scroll and ken the words. He takes his time.

"Ah, I see yer purpose now Greygore," he spits on the writ, and flings it to the floor. "Ay'd never take this job. Even if Ay could, Ay'm already signed tah another, and under the decree o' the words of writ, I am bound tah service for twelve months and a day, tah provide succor and aid tah the troops o' the Highborn Covenant and walk with them intah battle." He let the words hang in the air.

"Yeh may nay ken my fair companion, Ashlynn." Rupert nods to the woman sitting with him. "She can attest, Ay'm already otherwise employed."

Boomhowler reaches out and nabs the Tordoran by the scruff. Liftin' the broad shouldered piper to 'is feet. "Sorry Carvolo, but yer' comin' wid us."

The blond woman stands, and draws her blade t'ready. Faster than we can move the tip o' her sword rests on the bosses shoulder. "If you can take the sword from my hand, you can have the Piper's services."

The boss chuckles, a deadly rumble I've heard many a'time, and hauls out 'is pistol with 'is free hand.

There's a blur o' steel and Boomhowler's forearm hit's the ground like a slab of butcher's meat, pistol spillin' to his feet. His howl fills the empty tavern.

The swordswoman is standin' like a moorcat, blade a'ready, still restin' on the bosses shoulder like a silver tipped claw. "Is there anything else you want me to cut off?"

"Naw! n'more fights fer me t'day..." Boomhowler lets the Piper go and a'reaches down to pick up 'is arm. We leave in a hurry, and don't look back.

Looks like the boss is gonna have some explainin' to do.

Whether for a private war or to supplement the forces of a kingdom, mercenary contracts provide powerful and wealthy patrons with a means to quickly build an army. Though most patrons prefer to hire larger contingents, in a pinch smaller bands may be combined to form a force large enough for the task. Though a diverse lot, one can always rely on the mercenaries of the Iron Kingdoms to set aside their petty differences for the right price. After all, few loyalties are as solid as gold, and with enough coin one may buy an army; or at least rent one for a time.

Mercenary Contracts allow players to field armies made up entirely of mercenaries models. These contracts detail the background of the mercenaries' employers, the history of the contract, and guidelines for constructing an army. Some players may choose to represent a new Contract each time they play. Others might dedicate themselves to playing a particular Mercenary Contract, painting and modeling their forces to reflect the flavor or color scheme of a specific army.

**BUILDING A
MERCENARY ARMY**

A player begins by choosing a mercenary contract. Two Mercenary Contracts appear below, the *Highborn Covenant* and the *Four Star Syndicate*. The Highborn Covenant represents the interests of exiled Llaelese nobles, hiring mercenary forces to fight the Khadorans occupying their homeland. The Four Star Syndicate are a pirate army financed by mysterious backers. Additional Mercenary Contracts will come in the future, giving players even more contract options.

Each contract includes the rules required to build an army. Though each man has his price, not every mercenary is willing to serve any master. For example, a player building a Four Star Syndicate contract army may field any mercenary models that will work for Cryx or Khador, plus Rhupert Carvolo, Piper of Ord and Sam MacHorne & the Devil Dogs.

Mercenary warjacks may only be included in a battlegroup controlled by a mercenary warcaster or assigned to a mercenary with the jack marshal ability.

Some mercenary warjacks are further restricted to the battlegroups of particular warcasters, such as custom or Rhulic warjacks. Rhulic warjacks can only be fielded by a Rhulic warcaster. For example, the Renegade and Mangler are both custom warjacks and may only be included in a battlegroup controlled by Magnus the Traitor. In addition to the guidelines presented in a contract, mercenary armies follow all the normal army composition rules. Some contracts may also include special rules in the contract description.

**THE
HIGBORN
COVENANT**

Many of Llael's exiled nobility have turned to mercenaries to fight the Khadorans occupying their nation and the Highborn Covenant Mercenary Contract represents

the most coherent of these efforts. With considerable backing from émigré nobles and some merchant concerns, the Highborn Covenant has assembled a formidable army that may not care much about Llaelese land, but has a great interest in Llaelese coin.

Rumors hold that the free chapters of the Order of the Golden Crucible also sponsor the Highborn Covenant, but have kept their involvement secret to maintain the lives of any brethren held in service to the Khadoran crown.

While the Highborn Covenant has lofty and somewhat long term goals of liberating Llael from its Khadoran invaders, it also serves to help the exiled nobility maintain some legitimacy. Without the mercenary army, the exiles' claims on land, title, and station would be tenuous at best. The Highborn Covenant ensures they maintain some grip on authority in Llael, even if only through appearances.

The Highborn Covenant was drafted only days after news of the fall of Merywyn reached Corvis,



shortly after Cygnar pulled most of its forces out of Llael. By the end of Rowen 605 AR, the Highborn Covenant had begun actively seeking mercenary interests that had previously demonstrated hostility towards Khador.

Mercenary forces under the Highborn Covenant serve six to eight months, with extensions offered to individuals and mercenary companies that prove trustworthy and reliable. Due to conflicts of interest with kriels that have previously maintained mercenary operations against Rynnish interests in the past, the Covenant turns away any company with trollkin members even if they have fought for Llael or against Khador in the past.

THE FOUR STAR SYNDICATE

A shadowy organization notorious even amongst the pirates and cutthroats in the backstreets of Five Fingers, the

Four Star Syndicate (or simply the Syndicate) fills its own pockets through daring raids overland and at sea. As the Mercarian League has learned at great expense, no target seems to lie beyond the reach of this exceptionally well-funded confederacy of mercenaries, thieves, and desperate men. Backed by warjacks controlled by freelance warcasters, the Syndicate acts so brazenly that they have openly targeted rail yards, small fleets, and even Cygnaran military supply trains. Land based raids along the shores of the Dragon's Tongue have captured several shipments of armaments, explosives, and even warjacks that the Syndicate quietly sold on the black market for outrageous profits. However, for reason hitherto unknown, the Syndicate seldom operates within Ordric waters.

Few know anything of the Syndicate's inner workings. Only the organization's internal

documents, signed with simply four black stars in a diamond pattern, provide a clue to the identities of the hidden benefactors who fund the Syndicate. A favorite target of these operations, the Mercarian League has spent no small fortune to uncover the secrets of the organization but with disappointing results; Syndicate loyalties are bought with gold coin and bound with iron promises of retribution.

The success enjoyed by the Syndicate has drawn much attention to the organization. Profit is the purest motive a mercenary has, and those who know a way into the mercenary market in Five Fingers can easily find a way onto the writ of the Four Star Syndicate. Even those who might not regularly serve beside treacherous villains often find a way to compromise their values. The Syndicate pays well and in Five Fingers a full purse can even buy a clear conscience.

HIGHBORN COVENANT CONTRACT COMPOSITION

- An army constructed under the Highborn Covenant contract may include any mercenary models that will work for Cygnar.
- Due to a long-standing animosity between the Rynnish nobility and the trollkin, a Highborn Covenant contract army cannot include Greygore Boomhowler & Co.

CURRENT ROSTER

Players may include the following mercenary models in a Highborn Covenant contract. This roster will expand as we release more mercenary models.

- Gorten Grundback (Rhulic Warcaster)
- Grundback Gunner (Rhulic Light Warjack)
- Ghordson Driller (Rhulic Heavy Warjack)
- Ashlynn D'Elyse (Warcaster)
- Talon (Light Warjack)
- Vanguard (Light Warjack)
- Mule (Heavy Warjack)

- Nomad (Heavy Warjack)
- Captain Sam Mac Horne and the Devil Dogs (Character Unit)
- Hammerfall High Shield Gun Corps (Unit)
- Herne Stoneground & Arquebus Jonne (Character Unit)
- Steelhead Halberdiers (Unit)
- Eiryss, Mage Hunter of Ios (Character Solo)
- Gorman di Wulfe, Rogue Alchemist (Character Solo)
- Ogrun Bokur (Solo)
- Reinholdt, Gobber Speculator (Character Solo)
- Rupert Carvolo, Piper of Ord (Character Solo)

SAMPLE ARMY

The following 1000-point army uses the Highborn Covenant mercenary contract.

WARCASTER — ASHLYNN D'ELYSE	67
ASHLYNN'S BATTLEGROUP	
1 Mule Heavy Warjack	110
1 Vanguard Light Warjack.	76
1 Talon Light Warjack	61
WARCASTER — GORTEN GRUNDBACK	60
GORTEN'S BATTLEGROUP	
1 Ghordson Driller Heavy Warjack.	112
2 Grundback Gunner Light Warjacks	96 (48 each)
SUPPORT	
1 Steelhead Halberdiers Unit	85 (58 +27) with 3 additional troopers
1 Sam MacHorne & the Devil Dogs Unit. .	120 (76+44) with 4 additional troopers
1 Hammerfall High Shield Gun Corp Unit	85 (53+32) with 4 additional troopers
1 Eiryss, Mage Hunter of Ios.	29
1 Gorman di Wulfe, Rogue Alchemist	28
1 Rupert Carvolo, Piper of Ord.	22
Total.	999

**FOUR STAR SYNDICATE
CONTRACT COMPOSITION**

- An army constructed under the Four Star Syndicate contract may include any mercenary models that will work for Cryx or Khador.
- The Four Star Syndicate is based in the Ordic city of Five Fingers and may include the Ordic mercenaries, Sam MacHorne & the Devil Dogs, as well as Rupert Carvolo, Piper of Ord.

A Four Star Syndicate army may include all mercenary models previously released. Don't worry, we would not make your old forces obsolete on you.

CURRENT ROSTER

Players may include the following mercenary models in a Four Star Syndicate contract. This roster will expand as we release more mercenary models.

- Gorten Grundback (Rhulic Warcaster)
- Grundback Gunner (Rhulic Light Warjack)
- Ghordson Driller (Rhulic Heavy Warjack)
- Magnus the Traitor (Warcaster)
- Renegade (Light Custom Warjack)
- Talon (Light Warjack)
- Vanguard (Light Warjack)
- Mangler (Heavy Custom Warjack)
- Mule (Heavy Warjack)

- Nomad (Heavy Warjack)
- Captain Sam Mac Horne and the Devil Dogs (Character Unit)
- Greygore Boomhowler & Co. (Character Unit)
- Hammerfall High Shield Gun Corps (Unit)
- Herne Stoneground & Arquebus Jonne (Character Unit)
- Steelhead Halberdiers (Unit)
- Eiryss, Mage Hunter of Ios (Character Solo)
- Gorman di Wulfe, Rogue Alchemist (Character Solo)
- Ogrun Bokor (Solo)
- Reinholdt, Gobber Speculator (Character Solo)
- Rupert Carvolo, Piper of Ord (Character Solo)



BLOOD AND GOLD

*Developed by Matt Wilson, Rob Stoddard, and Jason Soles,
writing by Bryan Steele, art by Chippy*

For as long as history can recall, western Immoren has been a land rife with conflict and war, all the while great nations invest excess coin to direct such events. These are circumstances that can reshape even the most stubborn of nations. Some are forced to examine means of greater defense, while others approach such circumstance as opportunities, and have twisted such actions to meet their own will and profit. Whether the populace supports their lord's current pursuits or not, one thing all shall agree upon, where there is conflict and coin to be had, so too will you find mercenaries willing to fight.

This month we are proud to unveil an avalanche of new models and bring more mercenary options to WARMACHINE fans all around the world. Through these additions and the introduction of mercenary contracts, mercenary commanders and generals shall rouse their forces and prepare to stand toe-to-toe with the great nations of the Iron Kingdoms.

The very existence of mercenaries is an important institute upon the battlefields of Western Immoren and many have vast ties to the history and events that have shaped the Iron Kingdoms. Many have their own unique stories to tell, and now is the time for some to step to the forefront and their tale to be heard.

WARMACHINE players now have the ability to field an entire armies dedicated to the mercenary way. While not a faction of their own, mercenary commanders would need some essential pieces in order to make their newly introduced contracts viable, as well as fun and enjoyable, something that we constantly strive for with each and every Privateer Press product that we release.

The new mercenaries presented withing these pages augment everything that has come before and that which has yet to see the ravages of war.

This is far from the end; mercenaries shall endure and flourish as long as war engulfs the nations of the Iron Kingdoms. Keep a stern eye to the horizon, as many more mercenaries shall be departing the shadows to sell their swords and reveal their secrets to the highest bidders.

STEELHEAD HALBERDIERS

UNIT

"Numerous, effective, and tenacious; qualities I admire in my allies, not enemies. We must remember to hire them next time."

-Vladimir Tzepesci, Dark Prince of Umbrey

With chapter houses from Ternon Crag the Khardic Sea, the Steelhead Mercenary Company boasts a charter spanning western Immoren. Serious soldiers and dispationate killers distinguished by their prominent badges and distinct helmets, the Steelheads can find a use for anyone willing to train and work, no matter where they may hail from.


Formed nearly two centuries ago, the early Steelheads realized that training and professionalism lead to success and so created a very structured, detailed training and recruiting manual for all of their units. Skilled halberdiers emerge from Steelhead camps monthly, marching to battlefields in every corner of the Iron Kingdoms. Using simple halberds and well drilled fighting formations these common Steelhead units can bring down more sophisticated enemies in short order.

Using long practiced maneuvers and a series of verbal commands to coordinate their strikes, the halberdiers can lay low most targets as they approach. This doctrine of destroying an enemy's advance truly exemplifies their chapter's founding philosophy

of "ye never need defend against the offender ye have already killed." When larger opponents stand against them - like the warjacks that make up the backbone of most modern armies - the Steelheads bury their halberds into them like Ordric harpooners would a hullgrinder. Though brave, if timed poorly such tactics cost many halberdiers more than just their wage at close of day.

Often hired and deployed in large numbers, the Steelhead Halberdiers demonstrate just how many good men will put their lives on the line for enough money. The Steelheads do not care if that money comes as Cygnaran crowns, Khadoran talons, or Cryxian dragoncoin. They never ask why, only "how much."



SERGEANT						CMD 8
SPD	STR	MAT	RAT	DEF	ARM	
6	6	6	4	13	13	
HALBERDIER						CMD 6
SPD	STR	MAT	RAT	DEF	ARM	
6	6	5	4	13	13	
HALBERD						
 Special POW P+S Multi 5 11						
Leader and 5 Troops						58
Up to 4 Additional Troops						9 ea.
Field Allowance						3
Victory Points						2
Base Size: Small						

MERCENARY

The Steelhead Halberdiers will work for any faction.

SERGEANT

LEADER

UNIT

COMBINED MELEE ATTACK - Instead of making melee attacks separately, two or more Steelhead Halberdiers in melee range of the same target may combine their attacks. The Steelhead Halberdier with the highest MAT in the attacking group makes one melee attack roll for the group and gains +1 to the attack and damage rolls for each Steelhead Halberdier, including himself, participating in the attack.

FORFEND - A Steelhead Halberdier may make a melee attack against an enemy model that moves into and ends its movement within the Steelhead Halberdier's melee range. Resolve the attack immediately after movement ends. If a Steelhead Halberdier makes a Forfend attack, he may not make another until after his controller's next turn.

HALBERD

POWERFUL CHARGE - When making charge attacks, Steelhead Halberdiers gain +2 to their attack rolls.

REACH - 2" melee range.

SET DEFENSE - A Steelhead Halberdier gains +2 DEF against charge and slam attacks originating from his front arc.



ASHLYNN D'ELYSE

WARCASTER

"I've wept for my countrymen. Now let the Khadorans weep for theirs."

-Ashlynn d'Elyse

As the only daughter of master duelist Benoir d'Elyse - a former member of the Royal High Guard - Ashlynn grew up in training academies and target ranges. She fought and defeated some of the finest swordsmen in Llael by the age of fifteen. Her magical aptitude earned her a place at the Royal Arcane Academe, where she blossomed. She graduated head of her class and went to serve as one of her nation's few warcasters.

Never bound by what she considers the arbitrary concept of fair play, Ashlynn has made a fine art of fighting dirty. Despite the exhilaration of winning a straight fight she learned early on the consequences of losing and, whether with her saber or a stacked hand in Rynnish Spades, she always plays to win. She once leaned in and kissed her opponent full on the lips during a duel - surprising the old cheat long enough to press the barrel of her handcannon to his chest and end it. She specializes in finding or making a hole in her enemy's defense. Few can match her prowess, and she knows it.

Ashlynn hedges every bet on the battlefield, turning to her formidable arcane abilities when her skill with a blade falls short. Commanding the air around her she becomes a blur of motion. Like a dervish of steel Ashlynn unleashes torrential attacks, her saber riding on a cushion of wind. Tornadoes sweep aside her enemies at the flick of her wrist, or she crumples them under intense pressure with the clench of her fist. Whether by ending rude and profane suggestions on whispers of a breeze or feigning solitude when allies wait nearby for the push of her gales, she makes an enemy overextend an attack - which she then never fails to exploit.



Despite assignments to such tedious activities as bodyguard duty to the Council of Nobles, Ashlynn soon became one of the most renowned duelists in Llael. When Khador invaded, Ashlynn rushed to the front. Finally able to fully cut loose on the battlefield, she surprised even herself with her martial prowess, proving herself a true warcaster as no duel ever could. Her battlegroup easily cut through the enemy lines, bringing honor to herself, her family, and her nation, whether raiding supply lines or fighting pitched battles. She gloried in her skill until she heard of the fall of Merywyn, and of her father. His death killed her childish joy in the rush of battle, turning her cold and ever more ruthless. After her father's death she took a grim satisfaction in killing Khadorans, something that stayed with her long after she finished escorting nobles across Llael's occupied borders to sanctuary in Cygnar.

Though forced from her homeland, Ashlynn has not lost her fight. Since the occupation she has turned to freelancing to fund her ongoing operations against Khador. Though she has no love for the Protectorate and blames Cygnar's withdrawal for Llael's defeat, she gladly accepts their gold. The coin from these enterprises goes to rebellious groups in the homeland, and to support her own operations. Vengeful and independent enough to accomplish anything, she wages a guerilla war that costs Khador thousands in supplies and stolen funds. Though only biting at the Motherland for now, Ashlynn hopes not only to repel the invaders, but one day to drive her saber through the heart of the man who robbed her father of an honorable death with indiscriminate mortar fire - Kommandant Gurvaldt Irusk himself.

FEAT: ROULETTE

While in Ashlynn's control area this turn, friendly models roll two extra dice on all attack rolls. Two of the attack dice rolled, determined by Ashlynn's controller, are discarded. In addition, enemy models targeting a friendly model in Ashlynn's control area with an attack this round roll two additional dice. Two of the attack dice rolled, determined by Ashlynn's controller, are discarded.

MERCENARY

Ashlynn d'Elyse will not work for Cryx or Khador.

ASHLYNN

MERCENARY WARCASTER - Ashlynn counts toward the maximum number of warcasters allowed in an army. Only mercenaries may be included in a force if the only warcasters are mercenaries. Ashlynn can only give orders to mercenary units. Only mercenaries may use her CMD when making command checks.

POINT BLANK - Ashlynn may make a melee attack with her hand cannon targeting a model in melee range. Use Ashlynn's MAT when resolving this attack. If the attack succeeds, the target suffers a damage roll equal to the POW of the hand cannon. Ashlynn rolls an additional damage die for Weapon Master on this attack but does not roll an additional damage die on charge attacks. Ashlynn cannot spend focus points for additional hand cannon attacks and cannot perform free strikes with her hand cannon.

RIPOSTE - When Ashlynn is the target of an enemy melee attack that misses, she may immediately make a melee attack targeting the attacking model if it is within her melee range.

WEAPON MASTER - Ashlynn rolls an additional die on her melee damage rolls.

NEMESIS

LUNGE - Once per activation, Ashlynn may make a Nemesis attack with a 2" melee range.

PARRY - Ashlynn cannot be targeted by free strikes.

FOCUS	6	CMD	8		
SPD	STR	MAT	RAT	DEF	ARM
6	4	8	6	17	14
HAND CANNON					
	RNG	ROF	AOE	POW	
	12	1	-	12	
NEMESIS					
	Special	POW	P+S		
	Multi	5	9		
Damage					14
Point Cost					67
Field Allowance					C
Victory Points					5
Base Size: Small					

Spells

	Cost	RNG	AOE	POW	UP	OFF
Distraction	2	8	-	-		X
Target enemy warrior model/unit cannot make ranged attacks and suffers -2 MAT and DEF for one round.						
Feint	2	6	-	-	X	
Target friendly model may move up to 3" immediately after an enemy model ends its movement engaging the model. During this movement the model cannot be targeted by free strikes. The spell expires after the model moves.						
Flashing Blade	2	Caster	-	-		
Ashlynn may immediately make one melee attack with Nemesis against every model within melee range in her front arc. Completely resolve each attack individually and apply the targets' special rules immediately as each attack is resolved. Determine damage normally.						
Kiss of Death	3	10	-	13		X
When the damage roll fails to exceed its target's ARM, the target automatically suffers one damage point. When damaging a warjack, choose which column takes the damage. When damaging a warbeast, choose which branch takes the damage.						
Quicken	3	6	-	-	X	
Target friendly model /unit gains +2" movement and +2 DEF against ranged attacks.						
Twister	2	8	3	10		X
After dealing damage, the Twister AOE remains in play for one round as a cloud effect.						

MULE

HEAVY WARJACK

"Get me a dozen shoeing nails, a pair of rivets, and a quart of pitch tar. The Mule's down, and we'll prolly be needin' her t'orrow."

-Grover Hollenbach, Devil Dog company mechanic

Retired after the success of the Defender, mercenaries all over western Immoren have found the Mule at least as useful as its namesake. The Mule's simple design - based on the same chassis as the Nomad - and ease of repair make it very attractive to often-impooverished mercenaries as mundane steam workers can service it. Free of more complex mechanical weaponry, it runs well in most environments, and comes standard with towing points for gear and supplies. Its ability to readily fill multiple roles well earned it its name to begin with, and makes it a continuing favorite in the service of a mobile mercenary charter.

The Mule mounts two very simple, effective weapons, a heavy battle mace and a steam-powered cannon. Reinforced with an iron core, the mace sunders anything it can reach, though the Mule really shines in ranged combat. An oversized hydraulic piston that pushes primed cannon shot far into the air, the steam lobber works

best when the Mule digs in its heels and rips loose. Using a simple cut-off valve system between the legs and the lobber, steam is routed in huge amounts from one to the other. When it puts its entire yield to the lobber, the explosive payload can sail much farther into enemy formations - sending men and machines careening through the air from the impact.

Though it is a pack animal to some, no one argues with the Mule's effectiveness once they have been kicked by it.

SPD	STR	MAT	RAT	DEF	ARM
5	11	5	4	10	18

STEAM LOBBER



RNG ROF AOE POW

LEFT 8 1 4 15

BATTLE MACE



Special POW P+S

RIGHT - 5 16

DAMAGE GRID	1	2	3	4	5	6

SYSTEMS

Left Arm (L)						
Right Arm (R)		L			R	
Cortex (C)	L	L	M	C	R	R
Movement (M)		M	M	C	C	

Point Cost	110
Field Allowance	U
Victory Points	3

Base Size: Large

Height / Weight 12.1' / 9 tons

Armament Battle Mace (right arm), Steam Lobber (left arm)

Fuel Load/Burn Usage 120 Kgs / 5 hrs general, 1 hr combat

Initial Service Date 459 AR, decommissioned 582 AR

Cortex Manufacturer Fraternal Order of Wizardry

Orig. Chassis Design Engines East

STEAM LOBBER

ARCING FIRE - When attacking with the Steam Lobber, the Mule may ignore intervening models except those that would normally screen the target.

CRITICAL DEVASTATION - On a critical hit, rather than suffering a normal damage roll, each model in the AOE is thrown d6" in a direction determined by a deviation roll with the same effect as a throw attack. Do not make another deviation roll when determining a thrown model's point of impact. Determine the point of impact for all affected models before applying damage.

The model directly hit by the attack suffers a POW 15 damage roll. Other models hit by the attack suffer a POW 8 blast damage roll. Models hit by a thrown model suffer a collateral damage roll of 2d6 plus the POW of the damage roll suffered by the thrown model.

STEAM PRESSURE - The Mule may forfeit its movement to add 4" to the range of the Steam Lobber. The Mule also gains an aiming bonus for forfeiting its movement.



VANGUARD

LIGHT WARJACK

"I think of him as my four ton steel big brother, and he does well looking after this little sister."

-Ashlynn d'Elyse, on the Vanguard

Height /Weight	8'7" / 3.8 tons
Armament	Guisarme (right arm), Oversized Blastbuckler (left arm)
Fuel Load/Burn Usage	75 Kgs / 7 hrs general, 1.75 hr combat
Initial Service Date	566 AR
Cortex Manufacturer	Order of the Golden Crucible
Orig. Chassis Design	Crucible Arms

One of the few Llaelese warjack designs ever to grace the battlefield, the Vanguard demonstrates the genius of the Golden Crucible. Using the best materials, most skilled hands, and the finest workshops within Thunderhead Fortress, the Order produced perhaps the most sophisticated warjack of its kind, and possible the most effective light 'jack in western Immoren.

With so few warcasters, the Order produced only a small number of these marvels, which quickly became battle commendation - a walking, fighting badge of honor awarded to the cream of quite a small crop.

Nearly all of Llael's warcasters died or fell into Khadoran custody during the invasion. The surviving Vanguards slipped through the borders with refugees willing to sell them to the highest bidder to escape their war-torn homes. Now any mercenary with the coin can use these masterworks in the craft of war.

Vanguards more than earn their staggering cost. Designed as mechanical bodyguards, as well as offensive weapons, these lithe, four ton killers use a long-hafted guisarme and ingenious, large-caliber cannon built into their tower shield to slaughter anyone

approaching their warcaster. Able to keep up with the fleetest of warcasters and shield them from danger, the Vanguard is a highly prized attaché to any mercenary looking to live out a conflict.

Only a small number of Vanguards escaped the invasion unscathed, and those who did manage to get their hands on one spend small fortunes keeping them running. There are precious few mechaniks capable of major repairs outside of Llael, and those who can charge exorbitant fees to do so. Once a badge of honor for noble warriors, the Vanguard now shows the success of sell-swords, as only truly successful mercenaries can afford to have one.



SPD	STR	MAT	RAT	DEF	ARM
6	9	5	5	13	17
					19

SHIELD GUN				
	RNG	ROF	AOE	PoW
LEFT	8	1	—	12

TOWER SHIELD				
	Special	POW	P+S	
LEFT	—	0	9	

GUISARME				
	Special	POW	P+S	
RIGHT	Multi	4	13	

DAMAGE GRID	1	2	3	4	5	6
SYSTEMS						

Left Arm (L)						
Right Arm (R)		L				R
Cortex (C)	L	L	M	C	R	R
Movement (M)		M	M	C	C	

Point Cost	76
Field Allowance	U
Victory Points	2

Base Size: Medium

VANGUARD

ASSAULT - As part of a charge, after moving, the Vanguard may make a single ranged attack followed by a charge attack. The Vanguard is not considered to be in melee when making the Assault ranged attack.

GUISARME

REACH - 2" melee range.

SET DEFENSE - The Vanguard gains +2 DEF against charge and slam attacks originating from its front arc.

TOWER SHIELD

GUARD - A model screened by the Vanguard gains an additional +2 DEF. Attacks that ignore screening also ignore this bonus. This bonus is not cumulative with itself.

OGRUN BOKUR

SOLO

"They may be hard as warjacks, but what we save on coal we spend on mutton to keep 'em fed."

-Wagner Holt, Steelhead Halberdier Sergeant, Corvis Chapter

Young ogrun who have yet to forge a bond with a Korune often go to great lengths to impress one, spending months or years outside their homelands trying to make a name for themselves. Called bokur, the reckless youths attach themselves to important people across the continent in order to prove their worth by demonstrating their martial skill. Through a binding pledge of service to a client that is both oath and contract, they ward over another for reputation, profit, and adventure.

In a time-honored tradition of swearing their lives to another, bokur choose clients, no matter the region or employer, and protect them for as long as their oath, coin, or life lasts. From the black ogrun who look after necromancers in the Schardes

to the clannish ogrun of Rhul who tower above their dwarven allies, bokur stand against any that might bring harm to their clients.

Whether crushing enemies with their shield or cleaving them with an enormous ogrun pole arm, the bokur follows their clients into any situation. They glory in the thrill of battle, and few can survive their rapid, vicious blows or powerful charge. Even warjacks stutter and fall to their unyielding barrage.

With the chaos of recent times, many bokur have gone to collecting trophies or getting tattoos to track their successes in great detail. Some Korune will not care who they protected or how many they killed doing so. Only the bokur's journey that matters, and lately that seems inevitably entangled with the wars of men.

BOKUR		CMD 9	
SPD	STR	DEF	ARM
5	9	6	3
OGRUN POLE ARM		13 17	
Special		P+S	
Multi		6	15
SHIELD			
Special		POW	P+S
Critical		0	9
Damage		10	
Point Cost		39	
Field Allowance		2	
Victory Points		1	
Base Size: Medium			

SPECIAL RULES

MERCENARY

The Ogrun Bokur will not work for the Protectorate.

BOKUR

CLIENT - Before the start of the game, the Ogrun Bokur's controller may declare one warcaster, solo, or unit leader to be the Bokur's client. A Bokur cannot be the client of another Bokur. A Bokur cannot have the same client as another Bokur. While within 6" of his client, the Bokur never flees and rolls an additional die on all attack and damage rolls. If the Bokur's client has Advance Deployment, the Bokur gains Advance Deployment.

SLAM (★ATTACK) - The Bokur can perform slams.

OGRUN POLE ARM

FLYING STEEL - The Bokur may make d3 attacks with the Ogrun Pole Arm each activation.

POWERFUL CHARGE - When making a charge attack with the Ogrun Pole Arm, the Bokur gains +2 to his attack rolls.

REACH - 2" melee range.

SHIELD

CRITICAL SLAM - On a critical hit, instead of making a normal damage roll, the Bokur may slam the target model d6" directly away from him. The model suffers a damage roll equal to the Bokur's current STR plus the current POW of his shield. If the slammed model collides with another model, that model suffers a collateral damage roll equal to the Bokur's current STR.



HAMMERFALL HIGH SHIELD GUN CORPS

UNIT

"I never tire of watching their formations assemble, especially when those stout cousins line up on my side of the paymaster's ticket!"

-Gorten Grundback, Rhulic mercenary

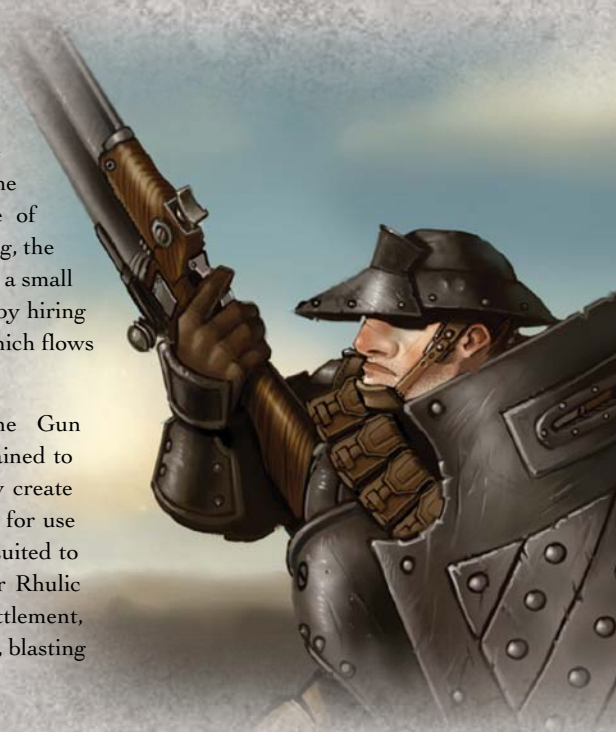
The Rhulic fortress of Hammerfall selects master gunners from among numerous rifledwarves to form the High Shield Gun Corps. Chosen and trained by officers managing the fortress, the Gun Corps exemplify the skill, discipline, and powerful resolve of their people. A large unit of long standing, the Corps' commanders have recently made a small fortune under the tax collectors' noses by hiring their units out for the Immorse coin which flows so freely in these times of war.

Well equipped and armored, the Gun Corps form a crack unit of riflemen trained to maneuver and fight in formation. They create a solid barrier of shields, first designed for use in close quarters with axes but ideally suited to hold up the heavy dual-barrels of their Rhulic war-rifles. Used like arrow slits in a battlement, the Gun Corps' shields bristle with rifles, blasting away at every targets in sight.

Although impressively equipped with Rhulic arms and armor, the Gun Corps' real strength lies their ability to act as a cohesive unit at their sergeant's firm orders. Years of training allow them to position so all Corps members can fire over or between their comrades, unleashing clouds of lead with all available barrels.

Trained as Jack Marshals to defend Hammerfall, the sergeants of the Gun Corp occasionally supplement the firepower with Rhulic warjacks. Though only available to the highest paying customers, the sight of a Ghordson Driller towering over a solid line of dwarven guns has changed the tide of more than one battle.

Until peace settles on western Immoren or the coffers of younger races run dry, the Hammerfall High Shield Gun Corps will continue to sweep the battlefields clean for the right price.



SERGEANT		CMD 9	
SPD	STR	DEF	ARM
4	6	6	5
GUNMEN		CMD 7	
SPD	STR	MAT	RAT
4	6	5	4
DEF	ARM		
11	15		
DOUBLE-BARRELED RIFLE			
	RNG	ROF	AOE
	10	1	-
AXE			
	Special	POW	P+S
	-	3	9
Leader and 5 Troops			53
Up to 4 Additional Troops			8 ea.
Field Allowance			2
Victory Points			2
Base Size: Small			

SPECIAL RULES

MERCENARY

The Hammerfall High Shield Gun Corp will not work for Cryx or the Protectorate

SERGEANT

JACK MARSHAL (1) - The Sergeant may start the game controlling one Rhulic Mercenary warjack. The Sergeant has a marshalling range equal to his CMD in inches. If a controlled warjack is within the Sergeant's marshalling range, it can run, charge, or boost an attack or damage roll once per activation. If the Sergeant is destroyed or removed from play, warjacks under his control do not become inert. The Sergeant may reactivate one friendly inert Rhulic Mercenary warjack per turn in the same manner as a warcaster. The reactivated warjack comes under his control unless he already controls another warjack.

Leader

SHIELD WALL (ORDER) - When this order is given, every High Shield in the unit who moves into tight formation gains +4 ARM.

This bonus does not apply to damage originating in the model's back arc. Models that do not end their movement in tight formation do not benefit from the Shield Wall. This bonus lasts for one round even if adjacent models are destroyed or removed from play.

UNIT

COVERED FUSILLADE - During any round in which the High Shields have received the Shield Wall order, all models in the unit benefiting from Shield Wall may make Covered Fusillade attacks. Make one ranged attack roll for each affected High Shield. If the attack roll succeeds, the target model suffers a POW 13 damage roll. If the unit makes Covered Fusillade attacks, models in the unit cannot make ranged attacks during their next activation.

RANKING FIRE - High Shields may ignore intervening models in their unit when drawing LOS.

STEADY SHOT - While benefiting from Shield Wall, a High Shield gains +1 to ranged attack rolls.



PISTOLS AT DAWN

DUELS IN THE IRON KINGDOMS

In the Iron Kingdoms, death comes easily and you survive only by your wits or a lightening-fast draw of your quad-iron. Duels epitomize this sharp truth of life, providing a structured, formal, occasionally even legal, way for someone to gun you down in the streets or practice his fencing technique in pursuit of his honor.

Typically a 'duel' is just a combat between two opponents, often with witnesses, resolved using normal combat rules. Two notable exceptions exist, when you find yourself using the formal Llaeese dueling codes or standing in a showdown with a gunslinger. The Llaeese dueling codes comprise a complex set of social customs regulating honorable combat amongst Rynnish nobility. Such combat carries with it a special social consequence for characters engaging in it. Showdowns, by contrast, stand open to anyone, and revolve around split-second reactions, the moments before you draw dripping by like hours, and often ending with the first shot. Llaeese duelists that favor firearms follow both the code and they engage in the lighting-draw style gunfights made famous by pistoleers.

Both types of dueling are uncommon, but often lethal, encounters for adventurers. Adventures rarely have the pedigree for a duel and more likely will simply meet the offended noble's guards or the local law enforcement. Very few people have the grit to meet a gunslinger in the streets alone, even PCs, knowing the consequences. When brave characters do enter a duel, special rules apply before and after combat, and with the exception of the first round of combat in a showdown, the fight itself is handled with normal combat rules.

Most peoples in the Iron Kingdoms practice some form of ritualized combat. Rhulfolk are well known for their duels, and ogrun participate in grapples to determine the stronger and more honorable opponent. Trollkin practice perhaps the most unique form of personal combat, fighting a battle of wills instead of brawn, which will appear in a later issue of *No Quarter Magazine*. Iosian and Nyss cultures once dueled with swords but have now outlawed such traditions as their populations decline. Only goblindkind have no form of ritualized combat. Gobbers are far too



practical to indulge in matters of personal honor, and bogrin settle things in subtler, less honorable ways.

THE LLAELESE CODE OF DUELING

Llael's Rynnish nobility values personal honor very highly and they perfected the art of dueling to control long-standing vendettas and feuds between families by settling personal arguments with finely crafted speech or the tip of a sword. Codified shortly after the signing of the Corvis treaties, the dueling codes have not changed significantly for hundreds of years. Llaeese PCs know of the Llaeese dueling codes and some of their nuances. Breaking the rules during a duel, even in ignorance, incurs the Cheating penalty (see sidebar). A duplicitous Rynnish noble might even use the PCs' ignorance to discredit them publicly. In essence, a duel is as much a maneuver in the circles of society as a display of one's martial prowess or demonstration of honor. Friendly GMs may have a local NPC describe the rules to PCs, but more devious ones should require a Gather Information roll.

TRADITION AND THE OCCUPATION:

Since the occupation, the ever-crafty nobles have found ways of employing traditions to better their current position with their Khadoran rulers. Carrying weapons and engaging in combat violates the law in Occupied Llael but the nobility have maintained their traditions, including dueling. As a result duels still occur between nobles and any, including adventurers, who get caught in their machinations. Only Khadorans are immune to challenges. In the words of Koldun Lord Volkh Lazar, posadnik of Leryn, "What matter if these so

called 'nobles' wish to kill one another for the merest slight? Let them bleed. Does it not profit the Motherland to be rid of these weaklings?"

THE LLAELESE RULES OF ENGAGEMENT:

Once insulted, the first step in a formal duel is to **demand for an apology**. If no apology is forthcoming, the character **makes a challenge** to his opponent. If he does not refuse or delay, the opponent **chooses weapons, time, and place**. Then the duelists and their seconds meet to settle the dispute using normal combat rules.

Duels of any sort are matters of honor and showing cowardice or outright cheating carries social consequences. See the dueling rules for when to apply these penalties.

DEMANDING AN APOLOGY:

According to the Llaeese rules, duels begin with an apology. Any cur deserves the chance to beg forgiveness. Most civilized people consider drawing blades or engaging in combat before an apology vulgar, and most civilized places consider it illegal. The offended party sets the terms of the apology, from simply a verbal admission of fault, to a sum of money or goods, or some form of behavior (not to court the baron's daughter, or to leave town by sunset, for example). However a sharp-tongued Rynn itching for a fight might set terms so impossible as to make a duel inevitable.

An adventurer or noble may make an apology, and avoid combat, by meeting the

terms set by the offended. For a purely verbal apology, a GM can require a Diplomacy check (DC 10+level+chr bonus of the offended) to determine if the character has made a properly phrased apology. Instead of diplomacy, a quick-witted or imposing character can make a standard intimidation check to force the offended to retract their demand for an apology. Failure to make an apology or intimidate one's opponent leads to a challenge.

MAKING A CHALLENGE:

Once an apology is refused the offended may demand a duel. If accepted, both parties then determine conditions for the duel. Even when challenged a character need not immediately enter combat. A character might refuse the challenge or ask for a delay. Characters refusing a challenge suffer the Cowardice penalty (see sidebar opposite page) and risk an outright attack by one's opponent or his henchmen. Characters may delay a duel for a number of weeks using an opposed diplomacy check vs. the opponent's sense motive. Success can delay the duel by a week for each point the roll succeeds by. A duel cannot be further delayed however, and characters that fail to arrive at the appointed time and place suffer the Cowardice penalty.

CONDITIONS OF THE DUEL:

Characters accepting a challenge must agree upon the conditions of the duel, weapons and armor, time, place, and most importantly, the victory conditions. A cunning character can often turn the conditions in their favor. Settle any disagreements on the conditions using an opposed diplomacy roll for each condition, with the successful character choosing the condition.

WEAPONS AND ARMOR:

When choosing weapons, both opponents traditionally use the same type, such as long swords or pistols, but both opponents may agree to use any sort of weapon. In formalized fights – where one’s skill, not gear, should determine the outcome – a third party such as a judge or a character’s second (see sidebar next page) must appraise the weapons. An appraise check (DC 15) gauges the quality of both weapons relative to each other, and a spellcraft check (DC 20) can determine the presence of any enchantments. Typically duelists do not wear armor, an advantage to those trained in Llaeese fencing schools. Any character not meeting the agreed conditions of armor and weapon suffers the Cheating penalty.

TIME, PLACE, AND DISTANCE:

Traditional times for duels include dawn, dusk, midnight, noon, or on particular dates – traditionally no later than a week after the challenge. Duels sometimes take place immediately after the challenge, resulting in formal fights in the streets, social galas, or in crowded pubs instead of the traditional secluded glen, mansion grounds, isolated island, or riverbank. As long as bystanders are not at risk any location is fair game. Any character not arriving at the proper time and place to the duel suffers the Cowardice penalty.

Duelists must also agree upon distance when using guns. Typically gun duels happen at 10 paces but closer fights occur often, an advantage for short ranged weapons or certain shooting techniques. Firing from closer range than agreed, or seeking cover leads to the Cowardice penalty. Most formalized melee duels occur in a 40’ square area

and leaving that area leads to the Cowardice penalty.

THE DUEL:

After meeting all the above conditions combat may commence. The dueling code is complex, like all of Llaeese law, but most Rynn find it second nature. The actual duel can be no less complex, often involving fleet footwork, feints, and various fighting styles. In the rare case of those untrained with firearms, a duel can devolve into a painful display of inaccuracy as two nobles fire pistol after pistol hoping to score a hit. But in fights with experienced pistoleers, now common throughout Llael, a duel often ends with one fighter dead after a single shot.

VICTORY:

Unless stated beforehand all duels are to the death. Most challengers feel neither so brave nor so insulted as to risk their lives, however, and often fight only to first blood or disarming. When fighting to first blood, the first opponent to damage the other wins. When fighting to disarm, the winner is he who retains his weapon when his opponent loses his. When the victory condition occurs, all combat ceases and anyone continuing to attack suffers the Cheating penalty. In legal duels, if the defeated does not meet the conditions of the apology, the local authorities may force them to (thus preventing further duels or bodily harm).

THE SHOWDOWN

Not all duels employ the Llaeese code; sometimes ‘duel’ means a less formalized and even more lethal matter. The optional showdown rules represent the wild-west style, quick-draw gunfight, where only the fastest, most accurate shot survives. Not every gunfight or duel need employ these rules. But for

STEPS TO A LLAEESE-STYLE DUEL:

1. **Demand an apology**
 - a. Characters may stop a duel by making an apology; DC 10+level+chr bonus of challenger vs. diplomacy.
2. **Make the challenge**
 - a. **Refusing** the duel incurs the Cowardice penalty.
 - b. **Delaying** the duel requires an opposed diplomacy roll. The duel may be delayed one week for every point the roll succeeds.
 - c. **Weapons, time, place,** and distance of the combat must be agreed upon. Settle any disagreements with resisted diplomacy rolls for each condition.
 - d. **Victory conditions** must be decided before hand, or opponents fight to the death.
3. **Combat**
 - a. Once the conditions of a duel are met, use normal combat rules to resolve the victory.

Paces and dueling distances.

Gun duels commonly take place at a determined number of ‘paces’ distance. For rules purposes, count a ‘pace’ as one square or 5 feet. So, “ten paces, turn, and shoot” means firing commences with 100’ between opponents; three range increments (–4 to hit) for a small pistol, and two (–2 to hit) for a military pistol. Formal melee duels occur in a 40’ square area, and leaving it before the duel ends results in the Cowardice penalty.

Choosing Your Seconds or Employing a Champion

The code of dueling requires witnesses to the duel, and both opponents must choose seconds as their witnesses if they do not fight in public. A second can be another PC, NPCs, cohorts, or even followers. Choosing a trustworthy second is important because, besides witnessing the duel, they may lend their skills to ensure the fairness of the duel or even swing things in a PC's favor. A second may serve as a go-between and make any of the skill checks or opposed rolls required in demanding an apology, issuing the challenge, debating the conditions, or delaying the duel. Seconds may not, however, give apologies or accept challenges for someone else. Some dueling opponents even employ both their seconds to arrange the conditions of the duel and, on occasion, this leads to the seconds themselves dueling. Less than loyal seconds might even betray a character by willingly committing to unfavorable conditions.

In Llael, high-ranking nobles often hired pistoleers, and sometimes swordsmen, as dueling champions against the slights of other nobles, and many fought proxy wars through their champions. The losers of such wars often found it difficult to recruit champions after a while, and eventually had to face their enemy's champion personally. Such wars continue in a much-reduced fashion under the Occupation. Another character may act as a second and take someone's place in a challenge, with the agreement of the challenger.

Settle any disagreements with opposed diplomacy rolls.

matters of honor, or when the bell tolls high noon, GMs may use these rules to simulate the deadly use of a firearm.

SIZE 'EM UP, OR GET FITTED FOR A PINE BOX.

Before accepting a duel of any sort you might want to size up your opponent. Use a sense motive check to determine if your challenger is a crack-shot or just cracked. For details on these rules visit the No Quarter portion of the Privateerpress.com website.

CALLING YOU OUT:

Showdowns begin similarly to Llaelese duels, although far less diplomatically. After declaring the challenge, the challenger traditionally chooses the distance separating the combatants and the challenged accepts, all with rather colorful language. The characters either meet at a declared time and place or stand at the chosen distance and begin immediately. The similarity to traditional noble dueling ends here. Showdowns are gritty, brutal, lethal ways of settling disagreements. Characters should think carefully before participating as such engagements have shockingly high death rates. Refusing a duel might keep a character alive, but the challenger will probably just attack the character normally in order to settle matters. If both parties have the salt to stand for a showdown, it's always best to notify a cleric right quick.

HOW A SHOWDOWN WORKS:

Before rolling initiative and entering combat, both characters enter a number of *showdown rounds* in which they may increase their damage at the cost to their accuracy or try to make their opponent back down. Both participants must willingly enter into the showdown, stand

What makes a gunslinger?

In the Iron Kingdoms it takes a steely confidence, a trusty side-iron, and a willingness to kill or die. Both fighters and rogues with high dex and con scores make excellent gunslingers. The Gunslinger and Improved Initiative feats make characters much more deadly in showdowns, while Quick Draw and Rapid Shot (combined with a double-barreled pistol) can seal the deal, and Great Fortitude and Diehard often save their lives. The Iron Kingdom's Character Guide has the details on the feats, skills, and gear of the successful gunslinger, including the master of this dueling form, the Pistoleer prestige class. Most people describe entering a showdown with a pistoleer as tantamount to suicide, except for another pistoleer. On the bright side, a sour-tempered pistoleer is more likely to just open fire than to go to the trouble of challenging someone to a showdown.

still and exposed at the chosen distance, and must forfeit any dodge bonuses. Consider both characters flat-footed for AC and any special abilities (i.e. sneak attack). When a character attempts to draw his weapon, normal combat commences with the exception that the first shot is a *deadly shot*, gaining a damage bonus and provoking a saving throw.

SHOWDOWN ROUNDS:

Showdown rounds do not count as full combat rounds, and

last only fractions of seconds as the two gunslingers face each other. Each round the opponents simultaneously pick a *showdown action*:

FOCUS

Get the nerves twitching for a speedy draw (+1 initiative -1 to attack)

INTIMIDATE

Stare down your opponent and test their mettle (-1 to opponent's initiative with successful intimidate check and opponent cannot draw this round.)

ATTEMPT A DRAW

Pull that steel! (Begin combat, resolve the deadly shot.)

Any movement, spell casting, non-showdown actions by the participants, or interference by others negates any bonuses gained through the showdown rounds, prevents a deadly shot, and may initiate normal combat. For example, if Gajan and Valeria square off at ten paces in front of the Buccaneer Bass Inn and the city guard appear to try and grab them, the showdown ends and normal combat starts. Gajan and Valeria will have to settle their differences later.

As soon as one participant chooses to draw, resolve his opponent's action. Intimidated characters cannot draw this round so the moment passes and showdown rounds continue. When a character successfully draws both participants roll initiative adding any bonuses or penalties gained from the showdown rounds.

THE QUICK AND THE DEAD:

The character with the highest initiative may make their first attack a *deadly shot* if within

60' of his opponent. A deadly shot is an attack (standard action) that adds a circumstance bonus to damage equal to the difference in initiatives. Only the first attack may be a deadly shot and gain this bonus. Do not multiply this bonus damage in case of a critical hit.

Furthermore, because both characters are "bravely" (or foolishly) standing still and exposed to one another, if a deadly shot hits the character hit must roll a fortitude save (DC= deadly shot's circumstances bonus + weapon's damage roll) or be instantly reduced to -9 hit points (incapacitated).

For example, Valeria rolls a total of 27 for initiative and her opponent, Gajan rolls poorly for a total of 13. Despite her minus from focusing and using her Gunslinging feat, Valeria hits and adds +14 to her damage from the initiative differences. At 60 feet apart, Valeria rolls 2d6 damage for 7 +14 totaling 21 points of damage. Gajan could normally shrug off such damage, but in this case he must make a DC 21 (14 circumstance bonus plus 7 from the weapon damage) Fort save or fall incapacitated. He fails and Gajan's hit points drop to -9, though thanks to his Diehard feat he stays conscious and can still act.

If the combatant hit survives the initial damage and makes the save they can return fire or take an action. A character incapacitated or killed by the first shot cannot return fire and, if reduced to -9 hit points, will die in one round unless they receive immediate aid. It's important to have friends, or a friendly cleric, nearby if you're not a confident gunslinger.

LOW-DOWN, NO GOOD VARMINTS:

If a character uses anything other than agreed upon weapons or receives outside aid they incur

in the *Cheating* penalty for that locale, if witnessed. GMs may opt to allow showdowns with weapons besides small arms, such as throwing knives, or certain spells, but should keep in mind the lethality and rarity of such showdowns. Since most showdowns occur in seedy towns or on the fringes of society, social penalties often have less impact than with Llaeese duels. However such places sometimes value honor and bravery all the more, and word does get around. A GM can apply *Cowardice* penalties to a character that moves, casts a spell, or otherwise interrupts his own showdown.



CHEATING PENALTY

A character caught cheating suffers -2 to all charisma-based rolls in the community where the duel takes place. Remove this penalty only if the character wins two duels he did not initiate in the same community without cheating. Any outside interference by a dueling character's allies also incurs the cheating penalty.

COWARDICE PENALTY:

Refusing a challenge incurs a -2 on all charisma-based rolls and a -4 to Intimidate checks in the community where the challenge took place. Remove this penalty only if the character wins a duel he did not initiate in the same community without cheating. Fleeing the scene of a duel or trying to take cover also incurs the cowardice penalty.

Characters can suffer both penalties and the effect stack. The effects do not stack with themselves in multiple cases of cowardice, but multiple cases of cheating stack.



COURAGE

ASPHYXIOUS' SKULL ROTATED SMOOTHLY, HOVERING WITHIN ITS HOUSING IN THE MECHANIKA THAT GAVE THE IRON LICH FORM. "SEND HER IN."

A young woman entered. Her walk was agile and sure, the stride of someone who wore authority like a tailored cloak and breathed power like others breathed air. She had dark hair cropped short and pulled into a tight, unsightly bun at the back of her head. She wore only clothes—she was one of the few people comfortable enough in the presence of the lich not to appear in full regalia—but though her clothes were entirely black, they were expertly sewn and their simple design flattered her svelte physique. Per protocol, she took three steps after entering and knelt, one hand on her knee and the other pressed to the floor in a fist. Her head she kept deeply bowed.

"Deneghra," the lich said, the whispering, sibilant sound emanating from somewhere near his midriff. "Rise, honored one."

Deneghra rose. Without her horned helmet, the bright scar that marred her pale forehead was blatant. Beneath the white stripe, dark and narrowed eyes burned with embers of the hatred that was the center of her life. "I... am surprised to find I still carry your favor, my lord," she said.

He stared at her for a moment, his skull and skeletal armor utterly unmoving. He knew it irritated her that she could not read his expressions as she could everyone else's, and he took every opportunity to remind her subtly of that. "I have forged thee from a lump of clay into the weapon thou now art, Deneghra," he said. "Thou hast been my favorite undertaking. How couldst thou not still hold my favor?"

Deneghra's hand started to rise to the scar, but she aborted the reaction, thinking it a sign of weakness. "Because I have not yet reclaimed that which my sister stole from me," she said. "I have failed."

Asphyxious loomed closer, the green aura of the necrotite furnaces flaring brightly. "Do not display such weakness again," he snarled. "Thou hast not failed, neither hast thou succeeded. The testing yet proceeds apace."

"But I—"

"Thou wilt have failed when thy body lies upon the field of blood," continued Asphyxious, crushing her words callously. "Thou wilt have succeeded when thou standest over thy sister's body. Remember, time stands with us, not them."

Deneghra stood in silence.

"I have something which I shall show unto thee." He turned and started to leave.

"And what is that, my lord?"

"Thou wilt have failed when thy body lies upon the field of blood," continued Asphyxious

Turning, Asphyxious extended his hand, his fingers like a broken, blackened rib cage. "Why, a celebration of thy birthday. And the festivities shall be held in the crucible of our victory."



"What in Morrow's sorrows is that?" asked Allister Caine.

"Sits on me," said Haley. She shifted her stance and planted the butt end of her vortex spear in the ground, then let the haft rest in the crook of her arm as she studied the battlefield.

From the rise upon which the warcasters stood, they surveyed a broad open swath of the Thornwood stripped utterly bare of trees. The helljacks and bonejacks had left nothing but splintered shards of stumps in their wake, creating an open wasteland of ruined wilderness. Only that morning the last of them had crawled away from the ravaged site to avoid the Cygnaran army.

The Cygnarans had dared not pursue and wreck the Cryxian 'jacks, for a sizeable Cryxian force lay gathered on the other side of the open field. Worse yet, armies of Khador and the Protectorate had also arrived, a foursquare of enemies gathered in nearly perfect symmetry.

Above their heads, the banner of Cygnar twisted in the wan breeze. Across the field, on three similar hills, three other hated symbols waved likewise.

What most demanded attention, however, was the ancient monument in the center, something akin to a temple. Six curving obelisks rose to the sky, spaced evenly in a hexagram, like a serpent's fangs or the limbs of a skeleton waiting to crush those

within. In the exact center was a black dais inscribed with ancient runes. Not only had the area been deforested, but the hills had been roughly leveled as well for a solid quarter mile in every direction. As near as they could reckon, the hillock upon which they stood was nothing more than a pile of dirt shifted away from the strange plinths. Why Cryx had wanted the area flat remained a mystery.

To Haley's left, Commander Adept Sebastian Nemo lowered his field glasses and settled his goggles over his eyes. As he raised his arm to do so, the electrical effects of his warcaster armor caused his hair to flare up like a silver aura about his face.

"Neither have I an idea," he grumbled. "It may well predate the Orgoth Invasion. That Cryx has an interest in it means nothing good to anyone of Immoren. 'Tis a fine thing we arrived to wrest it from their bony claws, though I'd rue the Menites seizing it, as well."

"I'd not be so brassy," said Haley.

"Captain?" asked Nemo coolly.

"The odds of four armies all camping here at the same time are...smaller than a midge in the Bloodstone Marches. It's no coincidence."

"Our spies had good intelligence, captain," said Caine with a condescending sneer. "So yes, that we're here is no coincidence."

"And I'm sure that the others are consoling themselves with the same words," pressed Haley. "Two of them, at least. I'll give bullion to bullets that someone wanted us all here."

There was a pause of several heartbeats.

“Lieutenant Caine?” said Nemo. “I want a detailed sketch of the battlefield. Tomorrow will be an iron rain for certain, and I need to know the ground.”

“Aye,” said Caine tensely. He pulled out his map case, called over an orderly to act as his desk, and got to work.

Haley looked at her commander, who stood with arms crossed, one hand rubbing his stubbly chin. He glanced sidelong at her and gestured her over with one finger. “You are right, captain,” he said quietly. “One of those three planned this. It might be Cryxian guile, but if so, why risk a find like this? I’d reckon they’d prop such a trap elsewhere. It might have been Khador, but such manipulations seem unlike them. While Irusk is a better hobnail than I on the field, I don’t think either he or his damned queen are capable of the sort of subtle skullduggery a feat like this requires.”

“The Protectorate?” asked Haley.

“Possible. Perhaps they seek to barter with us for their emancipation. But then again, that would be uncommonly civil of them. And recent events have shown that relations between them and Khador have been ruined.”

“Perhaps they hope to appease Cryx, trade support this day for safety tomorrow.”

“Not a bloody chance,” blustered Nemo. “Not even the Grand Scrutator is that foolish!” Nemo sniffed. “At least, not so far as I reckon,” he added quietly.

“Even so, we’re all here,” said Haley. “I have good reason to hate them all, but in truth I’d almost sell Cygnar to either hand just to see Cryx utterly undone. The question is, can we trust Khador and the Protectorate to understand that Cryx is the greater foe?”

“Trust?” bellowed Orsus Zoktavr. He clapped Kommandant Irusk heavily on the back. “Ha! Good one!”

“I’d sooner invite the Pirate Queen to tea than trust any foreigner,” said Nemo. “Make no mistake, captain, we are on our own here.”

“High Exemplar, you hope for too much,” Feora said. “Both countries are overrun with Morrowan heathens. Enlightenment and trust may come only after a great flensing.”

Asphyxious chuckled. “At least we are clear on who our enemies are,” he said, his voice tinged with anticipation, “and who will be our allies.”

“I’d sooner invite the Pirate Queen to tea than trust any foreigner,” said Nemo. “Make no mistake, captain, we are on our own here.”

From his position a short ways away, Caine snorted. “Alone, just like Cryx, eh?” he said without taking his eyes off his work.

“Indeed,” said Nemo darkly. “But at least they are certain of their position, whereas we can still hold some faint hope that Severius or Irusk will...” The thought trailed off.

“Will what?” asked Haley.

“Develop some social skills,” offered Caine.

Nemo held up one finger as would a professor at the Strategic Academy, which, in point of fact, he had been. “Cryx knows they have no allies,” he said. “For everyone else, the situation is murky—we could risk a temporary truce, for example—but for them it is clear. They have no help here, nor can they hope to betray anyone, for none will trust them.”

“So?” asked Haley.

“So they are the only ones that have the luxury of being able to plan such an event as this without fretting that some portion of their scheme might fall apart.”

“Then you think Cryx is behind this?”

“Yes, captain. I am certain of it.” He surveyed the field, nodding slightly to himself. “Whatever else happens, Victoria,” he added, turning to her, “we must be certain that we do whatever it takes to thwart the designs of Cryx. We must give our utmost.” He waved his hand in dismissal. “Go. Make preparations. We meet again in two hours.”

Haley turned and strode toward the Cygnaran camp. As she passed Caine, furiously working on his sketch, she heard him chuckle.

“Jolly birthday, Haley,” he said.

The thunder started rolling just before dawn, as Khadoran artillery served as reveille for the four armies. Not that any of them had slept.

Within minutes Cygnaran mechaniks had all the boilers running balls out, and journeyman warcasters moved squadrons of warjacks into position. Black smoke rose from the coal furnaces but then, weighed down by the dampness of the dewy air, slowly sank back to earth and filled the camps with a gray mist.

Victoria Haley, now turned twenty-six years old and having nothing to show for her day but an extra slice of undercooked bacon at breakfast, ascended the hill to where Nemo had set up his command post. As she rose, the low-lying morning fog abruptly ended and she found herself beneath a clear sky with the horizon just starting to lighten in the east. When she crested the hill, she saw the battlefield below them enshrouded with a light haze that glowed softly in the light of Calder, which was just past the full.

Across the field, a pale green pulsating glow betrayed the Cryxian positions with their vile necrotite engines. Red and gold shone beneath the mists to either side as Menite and Khadoran forces started to move.

Commander Adept Nemo stood atop the hill. To one side aides prepped his armor to be donned. The armor's electrical generator whined as it accelerated

to full power, and as Haley approached her commander the armor began to hover over its cross-shaped support. Nemo slid on a padded greatcoat and walked over to his suit.

"Are you ready, Captain?" he asked as he slid his arms into the heavy iron gauntlets.

"Aye, sir."

"Excellent," he said, wriggling himself into his armor as his aides pulled the supports out. "The plan remains as we decided last night. You move out and secure the center of the field just on the far side of the Orgoth whatever-it-is. You act as a stumbling block to our enemies' plans; keep anyone from taking control of that place. Caine leads the skirmishers and fast 'jacks and acts as our cavalry reserves, quick and hard-hitting. I lead the main body with the heaviest 'jacks. Once the others engage you, we'll see the best way to counterattack them and rout their forces."

Haley forced a smile. "You're looking forward to this, aren't you?"

Nemo blew out a heavy breath. "We're asking a lot of you this day, Haley," he said. His aides drew the armor closed about him and began fastening the latches that held it in place. "You'll be the mouse among moorcats. You can't let anyone have that circle down there. I just wish I could tell you why, but we don't know what it is."

"It wouldn't make a difference. We'll hold it. My troops are ready."

"Then get to it, Captain. There's no time to waste."

"Journeyman Brock

Halfshank is already down there, rousting some 'jacks. He started deploying the trenchers to my order 'round about midnight. My long gunners await below. That's why I came up the front side of the hill, not up from the camp."

Nemo flexed his arms. The generator on his back hummed as he started exerting his control over the mechanical fields. "Then why are you up here yammering away at some old man?" he asked.

"To make you feel better. And to carry any words to the troops."

"Tell them... tell them that they are the line, the eye of the storm. Everything that rages about them is stuff and nonsense. It's all just for show. Their duty, protecting that cairn, is what matters."

"Aye that," said Haley. She tossed off a perfunctory salute and began jogging down the hill. The steady chuff of her armor's furnace helped her mind to focus on the impending chaos, and the weight-countering effects of the warcaster armor made the descent smooth as well as easy on her knees.

She was impatient to get back to her troops before the battle began in earnest, but her own tactics gave her to wondering. She'd snuck her troops into place around the circle of obelisks, but it was an ancient ruin; Orgoth, or perhaps earlier. That Cryx wanted to plumb its secrets indicated that it was possessed of no small magic. And magic of that sort tended to attract unwanted visitors. Mightn't there be some of those yet about, in spite of Cryx's presence? Worse yet, there must be fell beasts acting as camp followers of such a despicable

"We're asking a lot of you this day, Haley...you'll be the mouse among moorcats."

force as theirs.

As if in answer, a bellowing roar resounded from behind a nearby boulder and a hulking, furry shape surged out from the predawn shadows and charged her.

Haley's heart shuddered in her breast. A gorax? Warpwolf? And here she was, caught unawares by the beast, alone within her own lines.

Whatever it might be, she had only a split second to react. She leveled her spear to the barreling creature. She also started to drop the butt end to brace against the ground, but the thing was faster than she thought, and it struck the point of her spear before she was fully set.

The impact staggered her, knocking her off balance, but she managed to recover by planting the butt end of her spear into the ground. The attacker's momentum carried it off the ground for a moment, and Haley was able to use that extra sliver of time to get her feet in under her.

Then her eyes caught the crescent glimmer of two huge axes in the creature's burly arms. A Khadoran manhunter.

Startled, she started to retreat, instinctively clutching her spear and pulling the impaled manhunter along. He swiped at her neck with one great axe, but she ducked to the right and twisted her spear to the left to throw the strike off. He swung with the other hand, and the blade carried through the protective field of her armor and marred the surface of her breastplate.

Haley backed off, shifting her grip hand over hand backwards, putting as much space between her and the manhunter as possible,



As if in answer, a bellowing roar resounded from behind a nearby boulder, and a hulking, furry shape surged out from the predawn shadows and charged her.

until she held one end of the spear with the business end still in her attacker's gut. She was barely out of his reach, and every time he tried to move away, she stepped forward to keep her weapon firmly planted in his body.

The two of them shifted in the predawn, Haley trying to maintain the stalemate as the manhunter slowly bled to death, he trying to use axe strikes and shifts of weight to loosen her grip on the spear. She wished she could spare one hand for the briefest instant to cast a spell upon the Khadoran, but she feared the legendary speed of the manhunters. Her mind searched about for a warjack to summon, but though she could sense their glowing cortices in her mind's eye they danced just out of her range.

With half her mind working on an alternate means of getting away, Haley found herself outmaneuvered so that she stood backed up against a tree trunk. The manhunter grinned, and pumped his legs forward in the dew-damped earth, pressing the butt end of the spear into the wood. He pushed his body down the long weapon to where the halves met at the steel haft, drawing inch by bloody inch closer to Haley's neck.

Then Haley grinned. Her vortex spear planted firmly against the tree trunk, she let go and yelled out her incantation, gesturing with both hands. Raw

COURAGE

"They're baiting the others, and it's working. Cryx has to have a warcaster nearby. Find it."

magical power arced from her palms and ravaged the body of the manhunter. He screamed a gargling cry of frustration as the twisting fingers of energy carved blackened furrows into his muscles. Then, with her strength spent channeling the fear and fury of her soul, Haley sagged. So, too, did the manhunter, smoke rising from his still-open mouth.

Haley gripped her spear and pushed the Khadoran over, then braced one boot on his body to pull the spearhead out.

"Bugger me," she muttered. "Best get to the front lines, where it's safe."



The Cryxians attacked at dawn.

"That's queer," said Brock. "Why did they bollix around until it was light?"

"Sits on me," said Haley. "But I don't like it." She scuttled over to the long gunners and trenchers, hunkered low to minimize the chance she'd be spotted. "Spit and polish, boys, spit and polish."

The Cryxian forces formed into a long, narrow wedge and marched unimagatively right at the strange Orgoth cairn. Ranks upon ranks of thralls lurched forward at a shamle like a dark tongue of roiling insects. The clanking of their armor and the spongy noises of their decaying flesh carried across the empty field.

"What in bloody Urcaen do

they think they're doing?" said Brock incredulously. "There ain't no thought nor nothin' about that."

Haley glanced about the battlefield and saw that both the Khadorans and Menites were reacting to this bold move while Cygnar carefully deployed itself in a more neutral posture. "No helljacks, either? With Morrow as my witness, I've no idea what Cryx is up to, journeyman. But it does seem that the imperialist whitenuts and the groveling zealots don't intend for them to take the cairn. And I'd reckon Nemo's plum chuffed to see the three of them fighting it out without him."

The Cryxian army marched closer, but as it approached it split in two, half moving to each side, interceding between the cairn and the two other armies. A smattering of bonejacks acted like sheepdogs, herding the thralls in the rights directions. Soon Haley and her troops could see nothing at either hand but ranks of thralls, and beyond them the banners of the other approaching armies.

"That's just not good," muttered Brock.

"Watch my neck, Halfshank," Haley ordered. She closed her eyes and expanded her consciousness. To the front she sensed a tremor of power, the Cryxian thing that led this teeming mass of thralls. To either side she sensed the unique auras of warjacks, Menite and Khadoran, each twisted with the timbre of their own arcane locks; and the souls of other warcasters, murmuring in unknown tongues not quite audible.

She rose herself higher and higher, then opened her eyes. Her mortal eyes vaguely saw

the battlefield around her, pre-ruined by Cryxian mechanika. A nearby chain gunner swiveled his weapon and checked the sight. But her warcaster's soul saw the battlefield from up above, a view so panoramic she felt like a bird. And she saw that the Cryxians had indeed placed themselves in two thin lines between the Orgoth cairn (and its Cygnaran defenders, carefully dug in and camouflaged, even the light warjacks) and the approaching Khadorans and Menites.

The two mortal armies closed on the Cryxians, most likely thinking they were trying to prevent the undead horde from holding the cairn. She watched as the armies closed, the heavy drumbeat of the gargantuan Khadoran warjacks providing a counterpoint to the anthems sung by the Menite masses.

The two forces closed on the Cryxians like a great vise, and the thrall formations started to ripple in the face of the approaching forces. Then the undead started to fall back, slowly at first, but ever more rapidly.

Haley snapped herself back to her body. "The thralls are retreating."

"Damn," spat Brock. "They never throw coat. It's a bluff."

"I know," said Haley. "They're baiting the others, and it's working. Cryx has to have a warcaster nearby. Find it." She turned to a nearby trencher. "You, fetch me a long gunner."

Halfshank scanned the center of the Cryx line with his field glasses. "Got it," he said. He gestured with one hand. "Asphyxious, or I'm a wanker. I make it about 180, 200 yards."

“Bugger me,” Haley cursed. “There’s no way we can—”

“Wait, spotted a skarlock,” said Brock. He gestured toward the Menites’ lines. “Right there, maybe 85 yards or so. Hard to spot; got us a stump between us and it.”

Haley smiled with relief. Right then, the trencher returned with a long gunner. “Ma’am?” he said, touching his forelock respectfully.

“I need you to plug us a skarlock,” said Haley. “Round 85 yards. Aim for its neckbone right below the skull if you can, but take what fate deals you.” She cast a spell as Brock directed the long gunner toward his intended target, then she lay one hand gently on the back of the sniper’s neck. She split her concentration and let a part of her consciousness roam free, soaring toward the skarlock.

“Woah me,” said the long gunner appreciatively. “I gots me the eyes of a bloody hawk.”

“Just line up the shot carefully,” murmured Haley. She saw with his eyes and hers as he lined up the shot, overlapping the rifle’s sights with the closer view provided by Haley’s spell.

The skarlock stood on the far side of a shivered stump directing the Cryxian forces at Asphyxious’ behest. When it was visible, it looked like a skeleton with gristle and skin stretched over its misshapen bones. Macabre spikes rose from his ribs, and a coil of mail covered its head. As the two of them aimed the long gun, the skarlock raised a soul cage and loosed the valve. It was the longest it had stood still, even if only a small portion of its head

was visible. In that moment, the two images of the target lined up.

“Fire,” whispered Haley. But the flame was already erupting from the sniper’s barrel.

The two of them watched as the lead ball struck the skarlock in its desiccated neck right where the voice box used to be, punching a vertebra or two with it out the back side of the undead creature’s neck. Startled by the impact, the creature staggered into full view. With the sudden loss of support, the skarlock’s head flopped forward. Skin and gristle tore, and the head continued to tumble, peeling a long strip of skin up the side of the skull and over, until at last the head fell to earth. The decapitated body followed it soon after.

“Nice shot,” said Haley, releasing her hand from his neck. At the exact same time, the long gunner said, “Thank ye, ma’am.”

The journeyman pulled his glasses around to the Menite front. “There we are,” he said happily. “Now the thralls are standing to.”

“Well, that’s one side,” said Haley. “Now for the other.” She reached out one hand toward the Cryxian lines falling back before the Khadorans. She held the pose for a moment and then fired a blast of arcane energy into the air. At that signal, a half-dozen Cygnaran chain guns opened fire on the thralls down the length of the Orgoth temple’s perimeter. With their backs facing the unexpected assault, even the bonejacks were easy prey for the fearless trenchers, and chunks of meat and iron flew in a grisly cloud over the thrall line.

“Leto’s wolfhounds are having a feast today,” said Brock.

“Indeed. Let’s look to our own now. Halfshank, move over to the pinion position and hold fast; I expect that the Cryxians will be paying their respects promptly.”



The attack from Cryx did not materialize, at least not as soon as Haley had expected. Still, the Cygnarans found themselves surrounded quickly. Commander Adept Nemo tried to run four warjacks across the cairn to reinforce Haley and her people before they were completely cut off, but it was too late. Haley abandoned the plan of keeping the other armies away from the cairn and looked instead to remaining an immovable stone of Cygnaran resistance.

The other commanders were more shortsighted than Haley had hoped. The Khadorans and Menites each overran the thralls that stood arrayed against them. They overran many of the Cygnaran chain gunners as well, although a scattered few beat a hasty enough retreat to reach Haley’s defensive perimeter. She hoped that more of them had made it back to the main body, for on the far side of the Orgoth cairn, Nemo had begun moving aggressively against their foes.

Once they’d disposed of the thralls and the odd unfortunate Cygnaran, the Khadorans and Menites clashed violently in the midst of the ancient Orgoth creation, whatever it was. Warjacks towered over the mass of humanity. Flame pikes inscribed circles in the air, Khadoran bombards thudded heavily amidst the screams, and the ugly sound of metal hacking and piercing flesh was as constant as a waterfall.

"They're baiting the others, and it's working. Cryx has to have a warcaster nearby. Find it."

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The forces of Cryx hung back, letting the two foes bleed each other over the ruins, while Nemo tried to discern how best to commit his forces to rout his foes at the smallest cost. Haley's soldiers and her handful of light warjacks kept the enemy forces at bay for the time, while she took every opportunity to send a wave of lightning cascading through the Cryxian ranks, just because she could.

Between the powder of Khador's great cannon, the oily flames of Menoth's fury, and the steam and smoke from a hundred coal furnaces, a heavy haze settled over the battlefield, the so-called fog of war that every soldier knew by sight and smell. While it was a curse to commanders, it was a blessing for the foot soldier, for it obscured detail at even short distances and made the conflict seem more manageable, more survivable. Many were the soldiers who collapsed in fear and sorrow upon seeing a battlefield clear and bright the morning after.

But for those surrounded, the thickening smoke was another enemy, a curtain of emptiness that made their isolation seem ever more pronounced.



For several long, heart-pounding hours, three large armies surrounded Haley and her troops, each trying to break the back of the other two. Occasionally the forces would smash into the thin Cygnaran line only to fall back in

the face of withering fire.

Haley feared for Halfshank's life and wondered if his position were merely encircled—as if the word 'merely' could apply to the monstrous machines and undead abominations at all points of the compass—or if he and his soldiers had been crushed.

The start of the fall came when the Menites seized the Orgoth cairn. A long, dense line of Cryxian thralls and bonejacks had stormed the cairn in a moment when it had been relatively unattended. In response, Menoth's followers launched a massive assault; a veritable cloudburst of skyhammer rockets fell upon the Cryxian positions, fiery missiles coalescing from the ever-thickening smoke of the battlefield. The furious barrage was followed immediately by a wedge attack of Flameguard led by Feora herself and bolstered by a seemingly endless wave of zealots, gray shadows against the somber haze. The battlefield erupted in fire, shrapnel, blood, and horrifying, caustic venom.

Once the Cryxians had fallen back, Feora consolidated her position by seizing the trenchers' field fortifications. The Menite priestess organized her Flameguard, interspersing cleansers among the regulars, forming the shields into a wall, and advancing upon the Cygnaran position with Menoth's fury blazing a path before them.

The Menites moved in, an awesome wall of righteous might heralded by flaming death. Captain Haley saw in an instant that to remain in place would be suicide against the unstoppable force of the Protectorate; the shield wall would stop much of

the Cygnaran bullets, while the cleansers' fire could burn any trencher in his hole. Haley took a hasty moment to cast a shielding spell to protect her people, then sprang forward. "C'mon, gravediggers," she yelled, waving her spear. "Let's put muddy iron up their powdered bums. To the fray!"

Haley charged out of the shallow diggings, a dozen trenchers at her flanks, bayonets fixed. To either side the chainers opened up, doing their best to keep the Menites huddled behind their shields.

The charging Cygnarans wove through the torrents of fire that the cleansers brought to bear. Haley heard screams on either side of her as her men died. She dodged between two arcing cascades of flames, closing on the line, then another cleanser thrust his weapon between the shields of his companions in the line and enveloped Haley in a gushing fireball.

The heat blistered Haley's skin and singed her hair, but the ablative effects of her armor's mechanical protection kept her alive. Her intense training and frank disregard for her own life kept her mind focused, and she used the comparative safety of cover to pause and unleash a wave of raw electrical power to rip a bloody gap in the Menite lines.

As the oily smoke of Menoth's fury dissipated, Haley saw the ruined, twitching bodies of a half-dozen or more Flameguard in front of her. Curiously, the cleanser still stood, staggering with surprise at the lightening that had just burst forth from his gushing fires. Haley raised her hand cannon and cracked off a

shot, punching a hole in the face of the cleanser's all-concealing helmet. What Haley's sorcerous green eyes saw next chilled her soul.

The Menite warrior's head snapped back, spraying blood in an arc from the mortal wound, his limbs spasming wildly. The cleanser fell to the ruined battlefield, but as he fell Haley saw an afterimage of his surprised visage, his real face, his human face, eyes wide and mouth agape. It was as if the Menite's all-concealing armor fell to the ground like autumn leaves, stranding his naked body to the world, a wan golden aura of the life that had just been wrested from him. The pale image lasted for a mere half second before being pulled away by ethereal winds, sucked up into the air, whirling into a spinning collection of motes, and at last being drawn into the dais of the Orgoth cairn like water down a drain.

"Great Morrow," gasped Haley. She quickly reloaded and fired again, striking a second Menite cleanser in the back. Her projectile tore a hole in the storage tank on his back, and the pack exploded with the damage, ripping another flaming, screaming hole in the Menite line. She reloaded and fired a third time, aiming at another cleanser to her other side, taking him in the hip and felling him.

The Menite advance faltered, and Haley took that moment to bellow, "The cairn. It's a massive soul cage. Everyone out." Her message was intended for friend and foe alike, for as much as she hated the Menites and the Khadorans, she'd never wish either the terrifying torment of the

soul cages. She rallied her troops back to the entrenchments and the remaining Menites likewise withdrew to consider the new implications.

The relief was short-lived, however, as the Khadorans chose that moment to try to seize Haley's position for their own. Belching steam and thick black smoke, two Destroyers and two Juggernauts thundered to the attack. The ground trembled with their charge.

Haley knew her soldiers, despite their bravery, could not last long against such monstrosities. Even as she grasped the danger of the situation the lead Destroyer reached the foxhole of one of her trencher teams. She saw the fire spitting nonstop from the upraised barrel of their chain gun. The Khadoran 'jack's metal armor sparked with the impact of the numerous bullets, but it ignored the damage and aimed its massive bombard squarely at the soldiers and fired at point blank range, disintegrating the trenchers in iron, thunder, and blood.

"Havoc!" bellowed Haley. Knowing there was no chance left of any of them surviving the hour, let alone the day, her people threw themselves at their foes, seeking only to maximize the damage they inflicted before they fell.

Haley sent part of her consciousness into the arcane trance, sensing the four blood-red Khadoran cortices that lumbered about. Despite the arcane locks layered upon them by their creators she could still interfere with their operation. She smote the furthest one with a jarring blast of electricity. The energy grounded itself through the magical protection and jolted

Slowed, the Khadoran warjacks moved even more ponderously. The lead Destroyer staggered.

the warjack's processes, filling its mind with jibberish. Then she spun an arcane web around her position, an intricate magical seine that snared all her enemies, consigning them to watch helplessly as time slid rapidly past.

Slowed, the Khadoran warjacks moved even more ponderously. The lead Destroyer staggered. Haley saw her long gunners blasting at the lead Destroyer's vulnerable areas while a second team of trenchers charged in to ruin its legs completely. The second Destroyer was slowly firing shell after shell into the battle haze in the general direction of the Cryxian forces. Haley's sole remaining Lancer, though badly damaged, charged it. One of the Juggernauts waded through the wreckage of the Sentinel it had just felled and began stalking about, smashing its axe into anything remotely human-shaped, which, after such a long engagement, meant that it was spending much of its energy splitting corpses. The fourth Juggernaut came after Haley herself.

Nine tons of thick, riveted iron plate loomed over her, wrapped in a shroud of black smoke. Although its head was mounted low in its heavy chassis, the Juggernaut still scowled down on the warcaster; its visor glowed with reflected coal fire against the black shadow of its ominous body. In stark contrast, mist spilled from the frost-coated

chamber that powered its ice axe, a grim reminder of the frozen lands from which the machine hailed. Yes, it had been slowed by her sorcerous skill, but its massive iron paw and chilling axe were still very dangerous.

Haley darted about as the Juggernaut struck at her, jabbing with her spear at steam vents, hydraulic lines, and gears. Its axe sprayed showers of cold and bloody mud whenever it struck the ground, and its gargantuan hand ripped great furrows in the dirt as it tried to snare the elusive warcaster.

Haley knew there was no escape for her now. If she turned to run, Deneghra's long, cruel spear would pierce her in the back.

Haley severed one of the two massive cables that connected its head to its chassis, but the Juggernaut clumsily pressed the assault. Then a magical tremor warned Haley that a Khadoran warcaster had slipped into the creature's mind. Before she could disrupt the link, the Juggernaut smashed its axe to earth just barely to Haley's left. She dodged, but the warjack's massive paw came in from the right, catching her against the heavy, hoary blade of the ice axe.

Haley felt the huge fingers close about her. Her armor's field hummed with stress, and Haley mentally urged the furnace on her back to burn hotter. The field's resistance began to collapse beneath the inexorable pressure of the Khadoran 'jack. Haley's armor began to buckle. Desperately she slashed with her vortex spear at

the other cable connecting the head; at such close range she split the cable easily. The warjack's head sagged, opening a gap to the interior of its torso. Inside, she saw a portion of the steam boiler's smooth wall. She lunged with her spear at the core of the construct, fueling her strike with every ounce of arcane energy she had left.

She felt the tip of her spear break the skin of the steam boiler. Its integrity compromised, the metal boiler ripped apart in a second as the high-pressure steam inside blasted its way to freedom. The explosion blew the Juggernaut's left arm out at the shoulder, sending it, as well as Haley still clutched in its fingers, twenty yards across the battlefield. Haley cried out in pain as the heavy metal fist twisted her legs beneath it upon impact. A hail of shards and parts fell all about.

Thankfully, she landed atop the hand. She pried the artificial fingers apart to free herself from the dead machine's grasp and pushed herself to her feet with a groan.

She looked around. Twenty yards away the Juggernaut lay on the ground, its body splayed open like a jagged metal rose. One of the Destroyers also lay nearby, its coal and oil burning brightly, somehow destroyed by her troops. She could not see the other two warjacks in the thick smoke that now covered her position, nor could she see any of her own people yet alive.

Just then, a huge iron plate soared through the air and landed noisily nearby. The bright red paint on the scrap showed long, deep parallel gouges. Curious

and concerned, she expanded her mind. And she found her answer.

She sensed them closing, knew their presence despite the smoke of battle. She felt their vile cortices squirming at the edge of her consciousness, greasy, cold, and unclean.

Four helljacks. Slayers.

She saw them approach, first appearing as shapeless shadows through the sulfurous haze, dark but with a poisonous green halo. They closed in, their six-ton steps shaking the ground, their eleven-foot frames looming over her like mountains.

Panting, her knees trembling with exhaustion, Haley focused her will and slowed the approaching Slayers, causing time to skate easily past them. They closed, albeit slower; the temporal ripples made them look as if they walked beneath the water. Once the effects of her sorcery took hold the Slayers advanced only a few more strides, then their warcaster shifted their course to either side of Victoria, moving to surround her. It was a move uncharacteristic of Cryxian warcasters, and a chill sweat broke out on Haley's brow. She momentarily thought of trying to flee, forcing her aching legs to carry her away from the slowed 'jacks, but then she saw a familiar silhouette resolving from the thick smoke of battle.

Deneghra.

Haley knew there was no escape for her now. If she turned to run, Deneghra's long, cruel spear would pierce her in the back. If she tried to summon reinforcements, Deneghra would loose her helljacks to tear her to shreds. But thanks to the Cryxian

queen's obsession with power, Haley had a reprieve of at least a few more minutes. There was still hope she might escape this battlefield, even though that gateway led through Deneghra's bloodied corpse.

If only she weren't so exhausted from the fighting.

Deneghra walked toward her intended victim, her abdomen undulating, her hips swaying back and forth as smoothly as an eel swims. She let the blade of her long iron spear trail carelessly in the dirt. The soul cages at her waist swung freely, occasionally letting out an empty clank as they collided. She stopped a mere five yards away, planted one foot on a large scrap of metal, and struck a pose. "You look like a badly whipped mule, sister," she said, scratching her navel.

"You look like a cheap dockside whore," replied Haley.

Deneghra sent one of her hands down the outside of her long, lean thigh, and brought it back up the inside. She trailed her armored fingers across the front of her leather skirt. "Funny," she said, "I feel like a victorious warcaster. All this viscera, it's so exciting. Blood enough for a long, luxurious bath." She giggled.

"And you act like a cheap dockside whore."

"Oh, sister dear," she sighed, "you really are a biddy. You'd make a perfect, sour maiden aunt, stuck on top of the pillar of so-called virtue you've constructed on the lies your people foisted on you. Your soul will be better served by being freed from the shackles you so willingly wear."

"My soul is at peace,

Deneghra."

"Peace?" she scoffed. "Your soul is mummified. Look at you, the grim warcaster, bound by 'duty' and 'honor' and devoid of any pleasure." She drew this last word out into a purr. "Killing isn't a tasteless chore, it's an exaltation of your power, the power *you* keep in a Cygnaran kennel. And men... why, manipulating men and women alike is another expression of power, like killing." She giggled again. "Do you have any idea how delightful it is to strangle a man with your bare hands?" She drew in a shuddering breath, her eyes half-closed with the memory.

"Is that how you cope? Bleeding anything you can touch to make your past seem normal?" Haley sneered in revulsion.

"You know nothing of my past, sister," said Deneghra. "It is I who know you, you pathetic crimp-bunged wench."

"Is that so? If you know I'm your sister, you must know something of your past, and how that Great Lizard and his dead henchmen used you." Haley shook her head slowly. "Once, long ago, Gloria, you were sweet and beautiful. So sad that now there's nothing left but a broken soul."

"Broken indeed," snapped Deneghra, the languor suddenly gone from her demeanor, "for you stole the other half!" Blades slowly rose behind her back, the long witch barbs of her warcaster armor rising until they created a circle of defense. They looked like the wings of a great skinless bat, long talons with no membranes.

Haley took a deep breath to give herself some energy and steel her resolve. "I'm your *better* half, bitch," she said grimly. "And for

the sake of our parents, I'll see you sent to Urcaen." She raised her spear defensively, gripping it with both hands. She moved the spear's tip to carve out a symbol of Morrow in the air before combat commenced, channeling her arcane power through her piety to petition Morrow's protection against her unholy sibling.

Deneghra whirled her spear around her waist and snarled like a wolf. "I will be whole," she snapped. She paced back and forth, the wicked barbs on her back rising and falling as if flexing their muscles for an impending strike. She held her spear with one hand, spinning it up and down, side to side as she appraised her sister. A wry smile twisted her face.

She paused in her pacing. "Say, sister, do you know this man?" she asked conversationally. Her free hand strayed to one of the ornate soul cages that hung from a chain. With a deft twist, she opened the valve and a thin hiss leaked out, screeching like a man in pain. "Haaaallleeeeeeeey!"

Haley recognized Halfshank's voice, even though it had been twisted and hollowed by the dark magics of the soul cage. Her eye darted to the side in remembrance and regret, and in that instant Deneghra struck.

The warwitch flashed her hand forth, slinging a dense spray of putrid ochre acid at Victoria's face.

Haley instinctively raised her left arm to shield her eyes, even though the majority of the acid ricocheted off the armor's energy field. Yet as her arm was raised Deneghra followed through with a perfectly aimed strike, hitting Haley's protective shielding at

With a **thundering step**, the Cryxian helljack stepped forward, huge scything **claws raised** to rend Haley into strips of steaming meat.

COURAGE

the exact spot the acid had hit. Deneghra's black spearhead penetrated the defensive magics and struck Haley's armored gauntlet at the elbow. The blow struck with such force that it snapped Haley's arm straight and twisted the metal armor, almost tearing the reinforced hinge loose.

Haley staggered back, her arm numb from the impact, yet thankful that her sister had not penetrated the enchanted iron. She tried to flex her arm to restore feeling but discovered that the attack had all but locked her armor's elbow joint; she could only move her arm with intense effort.

Grinning madly, Deneghra followed up with another spell, clawing at the air with her free hand. Bloody trails of energy erupted from her palm, aiming for Victoria's abdomen. The Cygnaran warcaster reflexively pressed the tip of her vortex spear down, and as the corrupt spell approached, the spear drew in its power and grounded it out harmlessly into the dirt.

Seeing her sister still exposed, reaching forward with but one hand on the long spear, Haley thrust her spear at the Cryxian, using her left arm, despite its immobility, to strike the haft of the spear at the last instant, changing its axis of attack. But without the full use of her limb, the strike at the haft was as a child's slap,

and Deneghra easily parried the attack.

"Is that the best you can do?" Deneghra laughed. "It's a wonder I haven't yet killed you."

Haley backed up, now genuinely afraid. Her left arm, stiff and inflexible, could no longer help her wield the sixty-pound vortex spear. One handed, she reversed her grip with a deft move and hoisted the spear over her shoulder for downward strikes. It was not as nimble a position, but it packed more power. Her left arm she kept free for rapid magical attacks.

Frustrated that her spell had been absorbed, Deneghra began to move in.

"Such a slow step, *sister*," said Haley. "Are you afraid of me?"

Deneghra spun her spearhead in a slow circle. "Fear? Not in the slightest. But your soul—*my* soul—is powerful. I need to ensure that I weaken you enough that you do not escape after death. I must ensure that this time, no untoward events prevent me from reuniting the sundered halves of my power."

Haley let fly with two arcane bolts from her free hand. The first was a snapshot toward Deneghra's face, meant only as a distraction. The second, which followed immediately after the first, was a heavy stroke, driven by the force of Victoria's personality, and struck Deneghra squarely in the pelvis. The force of the blow took the warwitch's legs out from under her and she fell prone. She managed to push herself up to her knees just as Haley closed to impale her through the back. Although the Cygnaran warcaster thrust with all the force she could

muster from her enhanced armor, the blades across Deneghra's back flashed out and deflected the blow, and the Cryxian killer rolled to the side unscathed.

Haley pressed her advantage, stepping forward and striking again and again at Deneghra as she crawled, stumbled, rolled away from the spear's lethal blade. Haley sensed her foe reaching out with her soul, felt the grotesque pulse of Cryxian mechanika as the warwitch portioned out her consciousness to activate one of the Slayers that formed the ring of iron around the two combatants.

With a thundering step, the Cryxian helljack stepped forward, huge scything claws raised to rend Haley into strips of steaming meat. The Cygnaran turned to face her new adversary, charged it, then raised her arms wide, opening herself for an attack.

The unhealthy green light that shone from the construct's necrotite furnace vents glowed brightly as it swept its great talons toward Haley's undefended torso, looking to shred her into three or more separate pieces. Haley froze in place, her teeth clenched. And behind her, she heard Deneghra shriek "No!"

A wave of nausea swept over Haley as Deneghra poured her arcane power into the cruel Slayer, stopping its wicked blades mere inches shy of Haley's armor.

Victoria had counted on that; while she hated the beast her sister had become, she had also learned to respect her power and cleverness. And in that split moment between the warjack stopping and Deneghra recovering her composure,



Haley struck.

Her spear was already raised high, and the fell automaton stood mere feet away, frozen in place by Deneghra's desperation. Haley plunged her spear into the narrow gap between two plates of its massively armored torso, wedging an opening for herself. Reaching out with her awareness, she sensed the core of the helljack, its corrupted mechanical brain, and leaned her weight into the spear to drive it further through the hydraulic lines and wires, until at last the razor-edge spearhead struck and began to part the rune-inscribed layers of metal that made up the warmachine's cortex.

At that moment, she poured what was left of herself into sending a massive wave of energy down the haft of her vortex spear, utterly frying the Slayer's cortex. Behind her, Haley heard Deneghra scream as the warjack's dying brain reached back through the warcaster linkage and tried

to save itself. The thing's fell consciousness disintegrated in the forefront of Deneghra's mind, dragging any thoughts and memories within reach into the void as it evaporated.

The six-ton jack dropped heavily to the ground, sending Haley stumbling backwards. The necrotite furnaces cracked upon impact, releasing a wave of green gaseous matter shrieking into the sky.

Gathering her fading strength, Victoria ran past the fallen jack toward the Cygnaran camp using her spear as a sort of crutch. Once more she interposed temporal slippage between herself and the other helljacks. They turned to pursue, but were too slow. Ahead, through the eye-stinging smoke and ruined fields, she heard the clarion of a Cygnaran war horn, and for a moment thought she saw a shred of blue.

"There will be none of that," she said. "This day I will have your soul, even if it kills me."

She felt her legs weaken, her armor and spear drag at her suddenly enervated frame. She saw the shapes of two helljacks move to cut her off and, though still slowed by her spell, the Slayers moved with an energy she lacked. Haley set herself, turned, and faced her sister, Deneghra.

Then she felt the tug of magic, and a shadow rippled past on either side of her like contaminated water pouring down jagged rocks. Ahead, from the bloody shadows of a darkened crater left by Khadoran bombards, Deneghra rose up.

She tapped her long black spear in one hand like a

COURAGE

"All those years spent training to fight me, and for what? So you can bleed to death in defeat?"

COURAGE

schoolmarm ready to whip a troublesome student. "There will be none of that," she said. "This day I will have your soul, even if it kills me."

Haley almost smiled. "That's a half-way decent deal," she said.

Deneghra readied her spear and moved in, her lean legs stepping catlike over each other and crossing the ruptured terrain with ease.

Haley felt frustrated, momentarily uncertain which stance to take. If she stood with her left shoulder forward, she'd present a narrow target, but her inflexible left arm would be exposed. With her right shoulder forward, she'd have no power to put behind her spear. Facing her foe directly, she maximized the size of Deneghra's target.

She moved to a sideways position, then hesitated and reversed herself, then did so once again. In that moment of indecision, Deneghra charged.

She led with her spear fully extended, aimed right at Haley's left shoulder. Haley reacted immediately, twisting to the right to pull her body out of the way while making an awkward parry to the left with her spear. She hoped to rip at Deneghra's abdomen with a pulling cut as the warwitch backed away.

But Deneghra didn't plan to leave. She allowed Haley's parry to push her. With the witch barbs on her back fully extended she spun in

close, and the cruel curved blades of her armor sliced Haley's arm and cheek and stripped the heavy vortex spear from her hand.

Deneghra's back slammed into Haley, and as Haley teetered from the unexpected impact the Cryxian butted Haley's face with the back of her horned helmet. Stunned, Haley staggered. Deneghra pressed backwards, pushing Haley off her feet, and the Cygnaran warcaster fell to the ground.

With a victorious cry, Deneghra spun around and savagely struck with the spike mounted at the butt of her long Cryxian spear. Her attack struck Haley's elbow right at the crease in her armor. The spike pierced through the thick padding covering the soft spot and, with Deneghra leaning her full weight behind it, glided through the ligaments of the joint, pressed through muscles and sinews, and sank well into the ground. The tiny necrotic accumulator embedded just above the spike flared brightly as it sensed the blood, summoning the darkness of the shadows to rise from the ground and bind Haley into place.

Victoria screamed as insubstantial coils of blackness curled around her arm. Deneghra rocked the spear back and forth, further separating Haley's bones and adding to her agony. Haley writhed on the ground, forcing her left arm to bend the armor's hinge. She clawed at the bloody joint in a vain attempt to pull the iron spike from her elbow.

Deneghra knelt down beside her victim and leaned close. "That's it," she said cockily. "Treasure your last few moments as a weakling." Deneghra gripped

the solid haft of her war spear with both hands and pulled it free, yet the shadows that held Haley's arm held fast.

Deneghra stood up, flipping the spear in her hands so its serrated blade caught the light of the fires that burned about. "All those years wasted," she said with mock compassion. "All those years spent training to fight me, and for what? So you can bleed to death in defeat? Poor girl. And what has all that sacrifice given you, my dear? Victory?" She chuckled. "Pleasure? Of course not. You're as bad as those Menites. Meanwhile I have tasted of nothing but victory, and reveled in every moment of it."

Deneghra's voice began to croon, to seep its way into Victoria's heart, worming its way in via the agony in her arm. "Ah, but it has given you something, hasn't it? It's given you the illusion that you matter. That you could make a difference. But in the end, sister, you will die. Despite your dreams, you will not stop Cryx. No, in fact, by dying, sister, you will grant me even more power to pursue *my* dreams."

Deneghra knelt down again, hands tenderly wrapped around her black spear. "Just think," she whispered as her finger gently stroked the cold iron haft, "in your death, you will undo everything you've done in your life. All those minor little victories you won? They will mean nothing. Poor Victoria. You could have better served Cygnar if you'd just hanged yourself in the ruins of our parents' house."

Haley knew it was true. She'd defeated countless Cryxian horrors in her life, but they'd all been minions, minions that the

Dragonlord Toruk could easily replace. But a warwitch such as Deneghra was priceless, and her power would more than double this dark day. Despair, cold and deadening, flooded through Haley's heart and drowned her warrior's spirit. Her body sagged, no longer acknowledging the pain from her mutilated elbow. Her head flopped back in the blasted mud, and she stared sightlessly at the steely sky, a lone tear of shame and exhaustion forming at the outer corner of one eye. She could feel the cortices of the three remaining slayers nearby, reflecting the cold darkness that was the soul of her sister.

With a barely audible tsk, Deneghra stood up. She flipped her spear into ready position and used it like a crowbar to pry the armor away from Haley's right arm, whistling softly to herself. Without Haley's soul guiding the mechanical field, the rivets of the plate were no match for the persistence of Deneghra's weapon, and soon she had the armor pried away, exposing Victoria's pale flesh to the wan sunlight.

The distant rattle of a volley of long guns rolled across the battlefield. Some small portion of Haley's mind noted that the sounds of battle had diminished greatly. It was almost over.

"There we go," said Deneghra softly to herself. "You won't be needing this any more, now will you?" She thrust the coarse blade of her spear into Haley's right shoulder just above the joint, then began relentlessly sawing the jagged blade back and forth, tearing through the ligaments that held the arm in place.

The pain reached Haley's brain as through a miasma of

darkness. A slight whimper escaped her throat, and her eyes continued to drip salty tears to the ground. Why hadn't she seen that everything she'd done, her whole life, from hiding in the house through training her body and soul all the way to this moment, all of it had been to yield up more power to the forces of Toruk? The world would have been better served if she'd never been born.

With a jerk to get through the last ligaments and muscles, Deneghra finished her grisly task. She touched her spear to the bloody stump and shadows rose, constricting the wound. "Can't have you bleeding to death," she muttered, "at least not yet. I want your soul ripe for the cairn. You do realize that you're in the Orgoth cairn, don't you, my dear?"

Coldness seeped into Haley's body, and she began to shiver. She knew she was dying. Her left arm was all but useless. Her right arm was gone, leaving nothing in its stead but a shooting pain that ran up Haley's jaw. And her meticulously honed magical skill was about to be harvested by the perverted shell that had once been her sister. She realized now that she missed her family, had missed them terribly for years, but had buried the emotions beneath layers and layers of hatred and self-reproach and Cygnaran military discipline. Deneghra was right. She hardly counted as being alive, let alone being herself. She was a Cygnaran military cog, and for what? So that in the end her death would serve the enemy.

She wished she could see her parents one last time, see her sister Gloria one more time, even knowing that such a meeting would be tainted with the sadness

of knowing that her life was doomed to failure. To hear her mother, to see her father, just to feel their love radiating out to her. It had been so long.

With the right arm cruelly amputated, Deneghra stabbed the butt spike of the spear into the ground. With a happy little grunt, she bent over and picked up Haley's arm for inspection, but as she raised it, the twitching fingers formed themselves into a fist. Deneghra sneered derisively at this curiosity and flung the offending appendage away.

Yet that act of defiance by a piece of dead meat prodded a deeply buried memory up from the dark and gloomy well of Haley's childhood. It rose like a crystal bubble from the muck of her repressed past toward the surface of her mind. She remembered seeing her father fighting as hard as he could, steadfastly refusing to yield an inch of ground to the raider who'd ruined her life. She'd since learned that the odds were overwhelming, and understood that he'd known that from the start. Yet in the face of his imminent doom, he had fought like a wild bear for the sake of his loved ones, without reserve, without doubt, without remorse.

What he had fought with was not power, but honor. And although he had been killed that dark night, Haley realized that he had never been defeated.

The memory of her father shone like a piercing sunbeam on her current shameful state, igniting her pride and burning away the despair that weighed her down. By damn, she swore, no child of Boss Haley is going to die like a coward.

She reached for it with her mind, pulled it toward her, and leveled the blade to slice at Deneghra.

COURAGE

At that moment, Deneghra plunged the blade of her vile weapon into Haley's left shoulder.

Haley screamed. In pain, it is true, but more so in rage and self-reproach. It was the scream of the final blow.

Knowing she was doomed Haley reached out with all her soul. She held nothing back, as it did not matter any longer. She reached out to the nearest cortex, a rancid, squirming green thing made of writhing layers of tainted metals and abominable runes. Steeling herself to the task, she gripped the cortex tightly with her mental fingers and pried apart the layers of protection, blasting away the obfuscating enchantments, and forced her way into the foul creation's mind. She became one with her most loathsome enemy, but it was by her choice, not Deneghra's.

Startled, the malevolent iron beast spoke to her in a tongue long lost to the world, the very syllables of which made mortal skin crawl. Ignoring its words, she smote the creature with a psychic blast of fury, whipping it into unquestioning obedience.

For a moment, in her mind's eye, she saw. Looking down at the battlefield from a height of eight feet or so, she saw her desecrated body sprawled in the mud, her eyes crushed tight above a twisted mouth of fierce concentration. It almost reminded her of the look of childbirth.

She saw Deneghra standing over her dying flesh. The warwitch turned about, her eyes wide, her mouth twisted in shock and amazement. Haley tried to speak, but the only noise she managed was to hiss some foul-smelling necrotite steam from the helljack's vents.

She lunged forward with one of the Slayer's mighty claws and snatched up Deneghra by the chest, pulling her a foot off the ground. The helljack had its thumb under one of the warwitch's arms, and two of its three fingers under the other arm. She could sense Deneghra's armor failing under the pressure. All she had to do was squeeze.

Squeeze. She focused her concentration even tighter, desperately trying to maintain control of the Slayer. Her grip was slipping, the mechanical cortex and Deneghra alike trying to drive Haley's soul from its position of dominance. She could tell her chance had already slipped away.

She yanked her soul back to her body, leaving Deneghra and the Slayer to fight each other for control. Casting right, she saw her vortex spear lying on the ground mere feet away. She reached for it with her mind, pulled it toward her, and leveled the blade to slice at Deneghra.

She pushed the spear forward, then raised her legs to catch the haft. She poured everything her furnace and soul had left into her legs; one foot caught the butt end of the spear, anchoring and driving it back, while the other foot kicked at the side, sending the razor-sharp blade scything in a deadly arc. The spearhead sliced through Deneghra's taut, unarmored abdomen, parting the

pallid skin, finding a soft disk of the spine to sever, then traveling most of the way through the viscera on the other side of the backbone.

Deneghra shuddered only twice. Dark blood poured from the massive wound like a cataract, followed by sagging garlands of intestine. Then her wailing, bitter soul was sucked away by the Orgoth cairn.

Haley kicked at the spear once more, driving the blade through the last portions of Deneghra's body. The vortex spear clattered to the ground as Deneghra's lower half crumpled to the dirt. Victoria's legs likewise flopped to the ground; the last of her energy utterly spent.

She fought the encroachment of unconsciousness for a moment. Part of her wanted to surrender to the void, just to be free of the pain, but she couldn't let that happen in the cairn. She saw the helljack stagger in uncertainty, Deneghra flopping in its grasp.

Then a volley of bullets spattered on its armored bulk. One of the heavy bullets struck the helljack's eyepiece, shattering the Cryxian glasswork; another ruptured a steam line that connected its arm to its necrotite furnace. Casting one last cold glance at Haley, the mechanical construct turned and lumbered away, carrying Deneghra's torso forgotten in one clawed hand.

Haley couldn't tell if the thudding she felt was coming from its massive feet, or the beating of her heart.

At last she closed her eyes and wept.



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SCALING UP

PAINTING THE NEW LARGE SCALE
RESIN MODELS FROM PRIVATEER PRESS

Written by Todd Arrington

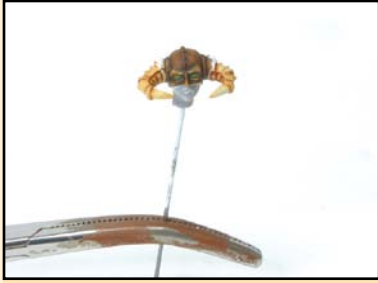
Ever since Privateer Press announced their resin line, I've had the urge to paint some of my first larger scale miniatures just to dive into something totally new and different for myself.

As always the first thing to tackle was the paint scheme. I wanted to do something unique and different from the studio colors but still something someone would consider Cryxian as soon as they saw it. The alternate Cryxian color scheme in Escalation gave me some ideas with its deep jade green and strong gold metallics.

If I combined those colors with the studio paint on the new Deathjack, I would get closer to something I found fun. I decided to use a warm brown faded into a deep drab green contrasted with the bright glow of necrotite and bone. I would frame it with a strong mix of bronze metallics.

The bases merited consideration regarding the colors due to the earthen and neutral tones I chose. I hate seeing colors that stand so well on a model drown when stuck on a similarly painted base. I decided to stick with a browner tone and lean toward yellow sienna and light touches of grey to hint at dusty stone under the feet of our two pieces.





I'll admit I found the sheer surface area of the resins intimidating. Think of this hurdle as a new opportunity to show off your work. I quickly dove into my color development using mostly hand painting and a touch of airbrush. The main hull and



cloth on Denny started with a mid-warm brown that faded into a drab jaded green used to "green up" the areas, then they went into a very rich blue-brown in just the deepest edges. The bone stayed fairly light, for I wanted the glow to bounce off of them. The metals proved tricky because of all the large areas. From my bag I pulled out a trick where I paint dark silver on all metallic areas because of the superior coverage, and then I lay down all my yellow-based metallics on top of it. With the silvers as a base, I have to work a lot less to gain the coverage all yellow metallics need. I kept the leathers on Denny fairly red-brown, with brown inks to keep the rich hues, and sharpened the contrast with crisp highlights

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SCALING UP

SCALING UP



brought almost up to a bone white. As one of the last steps I attacked the green necrotite glows using the airbrush to hit the overall areas with a very primary green. I warmed those areas even more with a lemon yellow tone and made crisp razor highlights with pure yellow to emphasize the glow on hard edges. Glazes



of these colors would have a very similar effect but take a bit more time considering the coverage required.

One thing I had to try on the Slayer's surface areas were runes. All of those great rank and alphabetical runes from Escalation just scream to go on models in some form. I started



with a few words in the deeper toned areas so they would not become overly busy. Then I wanted to try something different and maybe push the envelope of how we see Cryxian runes. Using a very rich, raw umber brown, I created a smooth, free flowing mixture and grabbed my liner brush. I placed one or two runes on the carapace as usual, but one or two shapes into it I decided not to create a mass of individual runes but one large symbol that





almost suggested a story. The past history of this beast or a chapter in its creator's life, who knows, but I was very happy with the end result and can only hope things develop from here.

At the end of it all, challenging myself with these two resins was a total kick in the pants. I learned a few new tricks with lighting and tonal shifts and gained a totally new perspective on painting the more common scale pewter miniatures in WARMACHINE.

I already have a few things like carapace runes I want to try and see how they translate. Now all I need to do is find a happy spot on my shelves and enjoy the finished work.



Todd "Dead Dog" Arrington
 Todd has been painting miniatures off and on since 1991, but in recent years he has found a reason to push himself beyond his limits with WARMACHINE's ever growing line. Trained in illustration and graphic design, Todd enters Privateer's studio with an often unique perspective on color theory and technique. In his Pacific Northwest home, he and his fellow BrushThralls openly share this knowledge on BrushThralls.com for all those who paint miniatures.

I had resolved to return to the crypt of Lady Methilde of Llorvast, in part to retrieve the remains of my old assistant Jek, but largely to seek revenge upon the Tomb Maiden who had slain him. I obtained the best weapon possible against such a mechanical monster, the services of one Uriah Graydon, a member of the Devil Dogs mercenary company, who make their living hunting warjacks. While perhaps a foolish and suicidal profession, they come highly recommended and for the solemn task of avenging an old friend and retrieving his remains I wanted the best, expenses be damned.

Seeing the old tomb again chilled me. I could not banish the thought of that iron killer waiting just on the other side of those huge doors to finish what she started half a decade ago. The inner chamber door, a complicated mechanical

hatchway like the vaults to the banks of Caspia, would completely stymie an intellectual like myself and had taken Jek an hour to hedge through it the first time. Uriah, however, attacked it undaunted. With a few pulls of his flask, two wrenches, and a string of profanities that would cause an Ordic sailor to blush the door screeched open slightly. A tight fit, and not useful during a rapid retreat, but we gained entrance within just a few minutes.

We squeezed past the ruined gears and springs, quite a feat for his bulky Tordoran frame, and found nothing but darkness within. I lit my lantern, fully prepared to look upon a tableau of that long-gone day, but saw instead a more sinister surprise.

Someone had changed *everything*. The lantern light showed

about any crypt that seemed like new, and I wholeheartedly agreed. No one else had entered here that I knew of, only the Maiden, and autonomous creations like her performed only one task; clockwork creatures cannot evolve or *learn*, not like today's cortexes, and I said so to Uriah.

He laughed, saying that I "don't spend much time 'round old 'jacks," while he loaded a fist-sized shot into his slug gun. It was the largest firearm I have ever seen without a cannon's mount, and the confidence with which Uriah handled it reassured me more than I cared to admit.

I slowly moved the light across the room, and saw him. Jek's body lay on a table like an offering and, emotion overcoming logic, I went to him. Uriah shouted but, by the time I understood his warnings,

THE PENDRAKE ENCOUNTERS



walls cleared of dust and repaired. The equipment we had dropped no longer lay about. It seemed as if the thousand years since Lady Methilde's interment - from that moment to this - had never passed. Uriah had a bad feeling

the Maiden had appeared.

That bloody Tomb Maiden had laid an ambush for us. She moved, a blur of rusty steel, and might have bisected me if not for the quick trigger of my companion. I fell back as his slug gun went off and I thought the crypt would collapse from the sound. The shot split the Maiden's faceplate and knocked her off her feet. I stood for a moment in the thundering silence, shocked.

Could a construct like this really obsess and plan and wait all these years for my return?

The Maiden twitched once or twice while Uriah reloaded, but did not rise. We waited a full minute before deciding she was “dead”, and Uriah grabbed his pick to start scrapping her. Just as he reached her I heard the faint whine of tiny gears and she leapt to her feet. A backhand blow knocked Uriah aside and she came directly at me. She had played dead and caught Uriah flatfooted. She could have easily killed him, but she *wanted* me.

I parried two blows and my armor stopped a third, which nevertheless would bruise me for a week, but I could not hold out for long. I tripped and she lifted her halberd, but instead of striking there came only the sound of grinding gears and sparks from her shoulders.

Uriah, blood dripping from a broken nose and split lip, had coiled a thick metal net around her legs and set to jamming a ‘jackwrench into her neck - smiling and singing some Ordic shanty the whole time, obviously enjoying himself. The Maiden lurched and popped, and I swear I heard it growl at me. It fought the heavy netting, strained against the mechanisms Uriah had jammed, and then let out a high-pitched whistle that I could only describe as a locomotive’s singing voice. She sank to her knees, and Uriah said his work would not hold forever. I drove my trusty short sword through her split faceplate, receiving a spray of centuries-old muck that may have once been oil for my trouble. A few shudders and a sputtering whine and the Tomb Maiden lay still.

I remained at the ready for a full hour while Uriah took her

apart piece by piece - he could keep whatever he wanted - but I half expected that thing to start moving again in his backpack. I remained on edge long after I had laid Jek to rest in Ceryl, and Uriah and I parted ways in Pointe Bourne.

The idea that machines might actually *learn* and *think* boggles the mind I say. To tell you Morrow’s truth, I have found myself jumping at the tick of my own pocket watch.

QUICKPLATES:

Detailed in the *Monsternomicon* v3.5, quickplates make monsters more dynamic and challenging. The two below apply to constructs. You may place multiple quickplates on a single creature.

HAYWIRE

This quickplate describes an intelligent construct that has suffered some form of damage to



PENDRAKE:

Western Immoren’s foremost authority on the fauna of the Iron Kingdoms, Professor Victor Pendrake teaches Zoology at Corvis University, and has penned the *Monsternomicon*, an excellent resource for GMs which describes creatures such as June’s Full-metal fantasy miniature release, the Tomb Maiden. Look for more tales of adventure from the professor in upcoming issues of *No Quarter Magazine*.

make it unpredictable, unstable, and extremely violent. It may attack friend or foe, so haywire works best when applied to solitary constructs without friends to attack.

Weakness: A haywired construct suffers from a form of Scramble (*IKCG* p.364.) with the following differences: replace all references of “caster” with “nearest creature” and the result “do nothing but babble incoherently” with “overrun nearest creature.”

The Scramble spell does not affect haywire constructs.

Bonus Feats: Power Attack, Cleave, and Improved Overrun.

CHALLENGE RATING:
INCREASE BY 1

Restrictions: M a y only be applied to constructs and mechanical constructs (detailed in the Liber Mechanika, released in August) with intelligence, wisdom, and charisma scores.

AWAKENED

An awakened construct gains the ability to think, learn, and remember and is no longer mindless and restricted to its original programming. An awakened construct acts instead of reacts, quickly formulates its own plans and displays a keen sense of self. It may anticipate an opponent's moves, seek to intimidate them, or actively search for them if they hide.

Abilities: Gain an Intelligence of 3 and +1 Wisdom and Charisma.

Skills: Gain skill ranks equal to 4 +1 per Hit Die and gain Intimidate, Listen, Sense Motive, and Spot as skills.

Bonus Feats: Improved Initiative. Alertness.

CHALLENGE RATING:
INCREASE BY 1

Restrictions: M a y apply only to constructs *without* an intelligence score, but not animated objects made from with the animate object spell or a special ability, or one without a wisdom or charisma score.

NEW FEAT:

JAM GEARS

Prerequisites: Base Attack +3, Disable Device 6 ranks, Demolish ability.

Benefit: You jam the gears of a mechanical construct, slowing it. Instead of dealing additional damage with your demolish ability, you may jam gears after a successful melee attack. A construct with jammed gears moves at half its movement (round down to the next 5-foot increment), and loses its Dexterity bonus to AC, if any, for a number of rounds equal to half your your current ranks in disable device up to a total of 5 rounds. Multiple jammed gear effects do not stack. The weapon used to jam gears suffers 1 hit point of damage per Hit Die of the construct. Weapons not destroyed are caught in the gears and immediately disarmed from the attacker. You can use a disarm action to snatch the weapon back on a subsequent round.

Special: Characters with the "Toss a hammer at it" ability can jam gears once per day after a successful ranged attack within 30 feet with a thrown weapon.

NEW MONSTER

SUBTYPE:

**MECHANICAL
CONSTRUCT**

Described in the Liber Mechanika (released in August), Mechanical Constructs include steamjacks, warjacks, and tomb maidens among other constructs found in the Iron Kingdoms. Some spells and abilities only work against mechanical constructs (such as warjacks) but not the larger class of constructs (such as flesh golems).





FOUNDRY, FORGE, e CRUCIBLE

Foundry, Forge, and Crucible is a regular column in *No Quarter* magazine, designed to illuminate the reader on the various items found throughout the Iron Kingdoms. Within these pages you will find exotic potions, alchemical solutions, firearms, mechanika, and other assorted gear adventurers might stumble upon, or find they need, in their travels. While magic remains rare in western Immoren, both the mechanical and alchemical appear frequently, and weaponry and equipment devised by such craft often finds use in the able grip of mercenaries and adventurers.

Each month this column highlights the handiwork of an arcane mechanik, alchemist, or inventor in the Iron Kingdoms, detailing them as well as their inventions.

LIBER MECHANIKA

In August of 2005, Privateer Press will release the next in the expanding line of Iron Kingdoms RPG books, the *Liber Mechanika*. This manual illuminates, clarifies, and adds detail to the rules surrounding mechanika and the creation of devices for use in your games.

The *Liber Mechanika* also expands the materials available to the Cult of Cyriss, truly making them the masters of technology. With reality shaping power and the ability to transfer their consciousness into clockwork vessels, the acolytes of the Maiden of Gears emerge as a powerful force in the Iron Kingdoms.

The *Liber Mechanika* revises and reconstructs the Arcane Mechanik to increase the utility of the character class. With a better spell progression, access to more feats and abilities, and far more adept at constructing even the most challenging mechanika items, you'll find the Arcane Mechanik more than capable



MACHORNE STUN SWORD

of pulling his own weight. The class can also take a much more active role in adventuring, and new prestige classes like Field Mechanik, Drone Mechanist, and Ironhead, open many new avenues of play.

Along with this, the Liber Mechanika also includes the long awaited rules for creating mechanical limbs. Now your hardened Khadoran mechanik can sport that fashionable iron prosthetic into combat along with his intrepid comrades.

THE DEVIL DOGS' GEAR

The world of jack hunting is for the strong willed, fearless, and insane. Who else would dodge between the trampling feet of ten-ton giants as they hammered each other into scrap? Yet, the Devil Dogs mercenary company have made their name by employing tactics and mechanika to take down and tear apart warjacks. With skill, precision, and the right equipment, they've gained a notorious reputation for their expertise.

Grover Hollenbach (Amk13/Wiz2) is the company mechanik for the Devil dogs. A rough

voiced, handsome man of middle years, very few recognize his Thurian lineage. His carefree attitude mixed with expertise in repairing older Talon, Mule, and Nomad warjacks fits perfectly with the Devil Dogs. He repairs, rebuilds, and salvages what he can to keep Sam's outfit in jacks, guns, and gear.

For more details on Grover Hollenbach and his history, please visit www.privateerpress.com for a web enhancement treating you to a fully detailed history and overview of the mechanik.

MACHORNE STUN SWORD
MECHANICAL +1 SHORT SWORD OF STALLING

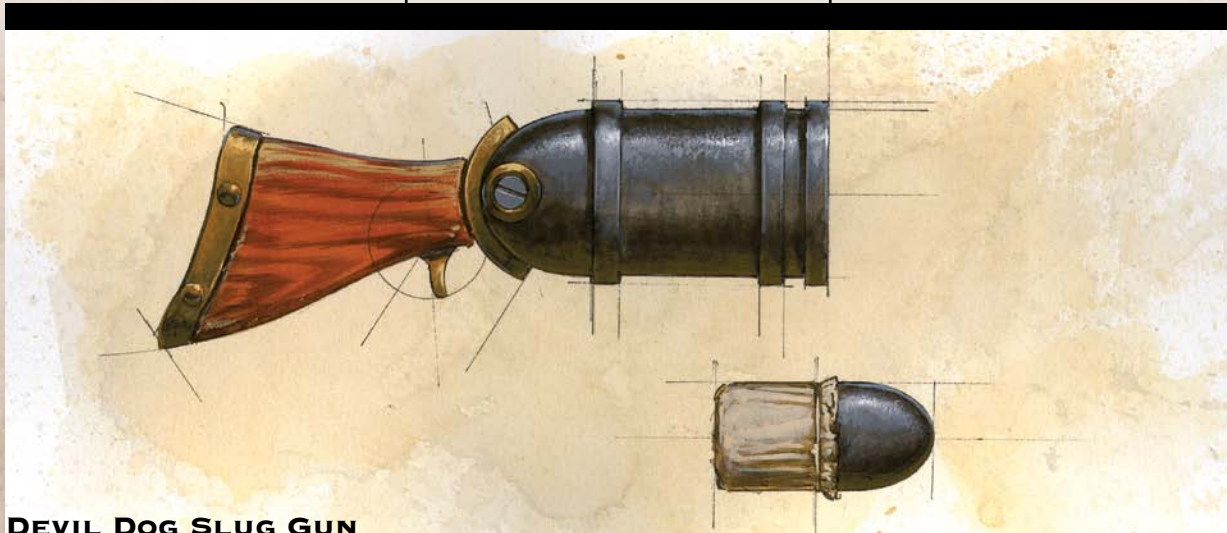
Good old Grover built this sturdy blade for Sam MacHorne as proof of his skill. By attaching salvaged parts from the shock-core of a Talon warjack's ruined

stun lance to a masterwork short sword he created quite an effective anti-warjack weapon. Luckily for Grover – and for Sam – the weapon has proven a reliable frame for the mechanika. Other mechanics have since replicated this innovative design, adding the stall weapon property to other weapons types.

Typical a +1 mechanical long or short sword with the accumulator fitted snugly into the handle, the blade crackles with an intense smoldering yellow aura whenever the stun sword activates. Glyphs blaze along the edges, and the entire sword seems to vibrate and hum.

A steamjack struck by a stun sword must make a DC 15 Will save or be stalled for one round. While stalled, a 'jack's speed is reduced to 5 feet (1 square) per round, and its Dexterity is reduced to 1 (-5 AC penalty). Melee attacks against a stalled steamjack gain a +4 bonus to hit, while ranged attacks gain no special benefit. A stalled 'jack may still take actions. A +1 mechanical stun sword will drain 3 charges per day from an accumulator.

Components: masterwork



DEVIL DOG SLUG GUN

longsword or short sword, *stall* rune plate, trickle socket, conduits

Moderate evocation, Craft Wondrous Item, Craft (mechanika) 4 ranks, DC 19 Craft (mechanika) fusion check; Price 4635 gp

HENDLETORM ENTANGLER

The Hendletorm Entangler is a hardened net made of strong metal links and anchored with heavy weights to improve range and accuracy when thrown. Built for durability to serve on the battlefield and strengthened by an alchemical process, the Entangler can entangle or trip up even the strongest of warjacks.

Characters can use the Entangler to make entangle attacks against any target normally. Use the rules for nets in the equipment section of the PHB. However, an entangled creature can escape with a DC 20 Escape Artist check (a full-round action). The net has a hardness of 10 and 10 hit points. Bursting the net requires a DC 30 Strength check (also a full-round action).

If you control the trailing chain by succeeding on an opposed Strength check while holding it, you can make trip attacks in subsequent rounds against the entangled creature. If you are tripped during your own trip attempt, you can drop the net to avoid being tripped.

Due to the size of the net, Medium size or smaller targets gain a +10 circumstance bonus to escape from its wide mesh.

DEVIL DOG SLUG GUN

Built to pierce heavy 'jack armor, slug guns make up their lack of armor penetration with

sheer power. More a portable cannon than a pistol or rifle, and rare even among mercenaries, most people must have slug guns custom built. The weapon muzzle loads a silk sachet filled with blasting powder and a three-inch sphere of hard iron. On occasion, precision rounds are used (IKCG pg 191) but cost an additional 10gp per shot.

Due to the way these weapons aim, any attacks made with a slug gun against medium sized or smaller targets suffer a -4 penalty

EXOTIC WEAPON RANGED	COST	DMG	CRITICAL	RANGE	WEIGHT	TYPE
Devil Dog Slug Gun	1200 gp	3d8+5	x3	20 ft	30 lb.	Piercing
Hendletorm Entangler	600 gp	—	—	5 feet	40 lb.	—

to hit. A slug gun is considered a rifle for purposes of proficiency, but uses Craft (cannoneer) checks for all care and reloading.

Slug guns are notorious for fouling, and after every four shots they require thorough cleaning, Craft (cannoneer) check, DC 10 requiring 10 minutes. If not properly cleaned the slug gun suffers the effects of having a flawed receiver (IKCG page 184), requiring a Craft (cannoneer) check, DC 14, to clear any misfires.

Loading the Slug gun takes a standard action and a DC 10 Craft (cannoneer) check.

Ammunition for the slug gun costs 10 gp for the blasting powder sachet and 8 gp for the iron slug. The sachet and slug weigh a total of 5 pounds, adding to the considerable weight of the slug gun.

CYGNARAN ARCANA
STALL WEAPON PROPERTY

Mechaniks at Engines East developed stalling weapons as an arcane method of interrupting signal flow between a cortex and the internal reflex mechanisms of mechanical constructs. The mechaniks then infused this potentially devastating method of interfering with enemy warjacks into a rune plate for mass production. The stall rune plate found the majority of its use in the Talon light warjack's Stun Pike.

Constructs with a cortex struck by a stalling weapon suffer normal damage, and must make a DC 15 Will save or suffer stall for one round. A stalled construct has an effective Dexterity of 1 and suffers a -5 penalty to Armor Class due to its high nonexistent ability score. Melee attacks against the stalled construct gain a +4 bonus to hit, though ranged attacks gain no special benefit.

Stalled jacks may still receive focus from their warcaster, and may take actions.

Moderate evocation; CL 12th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor and *hold monster*; Price +2 bonus.



GUTS & GEARS

THE MEN AND MACHINES OF WARMACHINE

Written by Bryan Steele Art by Brian Snoddy Rules by Rob Baxter and Kevin Clark

THE IRON FANG PIKEMEN

Standing against attacking Iron Fangs is terrifying, daunting, and ultimately foolish. A wave of elite soldiers, armored shields, and lethal blasting pikes, the Iron Fang pikemen embody Khadoran martial tradition and honor.

Iron Fangs almost exclusively recruit veteran soldiers, preferably of similar age and experience. From the first days at their dedicated training campus in Volningrad, Iron Fangs endure harsh, almost brutal physical conditioning and learn the litany that so often serves as a battle chant for the legions, "Live for comrades, Queen, and country." Specializing in tight-formation fighting with their blasting pikes, every Iron Fang comes to regard his comrades as beloved brothers. So fraternal do these units become that many volunteer to serve well past their tours of duty, a bond which can come only from shared hardships and battlefield necessity. After all, only the man at your back keeps the enemy at

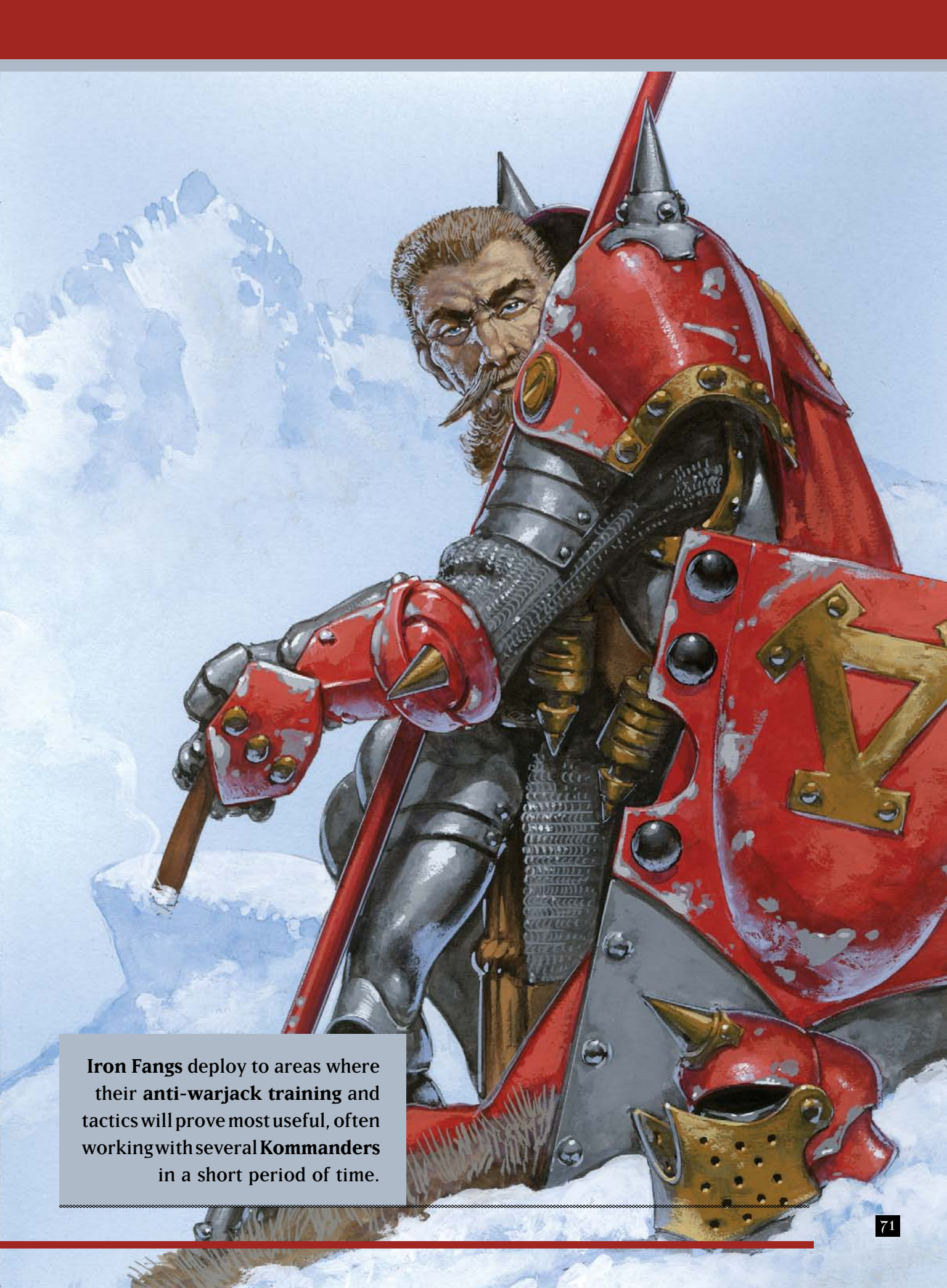
bay when you have spent your last blasting charge.

King Ioann Graznata created the Iron Fangs in 398 AR as a test, not only of their expensive, experimental equipment, but also to see if anyone could face without panic the warjacks rapidly coming to dominate warfare in western Immoren. In those first few years of standing shoulder-to-shoulder against incredible odds with ever-evolving equipment, the Iron Fangs learned they could look for support only to each other. Their tactics and training methods evolved in battle, as did their famous camaraderie and dedication. As their equipment and techniques improved, the Iron Fangs became successful warjack hunters and frightening killers of enemy infantry. Their pride, skill, dedication, and shared experience formed them into a fraternity which quickly became their defining tradition.

Now Iron Fangs stalk the battlefields, bringing honor to

their units and legions, accepting battles other soldiers avoid as suicide. They specialize in bringing down warjacks and other heavily armored targets, but their "wall of iron" formations have proven especially daunting to lighter infantry. Detachments of these elite forces are scattered in forts and cities throughout Khador, and at least four workshops in Korsk produce nothing but their expensive blasting pike charges and multilayered, folded armor. They form an elite corps of disciplined, well-equipped soldiers ready not only to die for their country, but more than capable of making their opponents die for theirs'.

Iron Fang pikemen units approach any engagement as if it might last a fortnight, as so many often do, and see every campsite as comfortable lodgings. They will sometimes find a place on their person for a reminder of home - a lover's kerchief or a family locket



Iron Fangs deploy to areas where their anti-warjack training and tactics will prove most useful, often working with several Kommanders in a short period of time.

perhaps - to keep their minds fresh and focused. Many collect trophies from old "kills", like warjack rivets or officers badges, but keep them tacked or lashed behind their shields so as not to ruin the uniformity of the unit or interfere with their essential arms and equipment.

Iron Fangs fight with a blasting pike, a ten-foot long shaft of heat-tempered iron capped at both ends. Some units coat the palms of their gauntlets in pitch or pine sap or use leather wrappings to augment their grip on the heavy pike. The pike itself weighs almost twenty pounds, with an additional two pounds from the blasting head - of which the average Iron Fang carries a bandolier of four. The butt end of the pike has a simple spiked steel cap useful as a weapon or boot stop when receiving a charge. The opposite end has a socket built around a small tension-spring where the blasting head locks into place with a simple twist - a daunting task in the middle of a heated melee. The tension spring holds the igniting pin into a primed position and rams it through the bags of blasting powder upon striking a target with sufficient force. The resulting powerful

explosion is often enough to knock even the heaviest targets off their feet. Iron Fangs also carry a single disarmed blasting head weighted with shot or sand for inspections and reviews.

Iron Fangs rely on their armor and shields to protect them from weapons designed to destroy warjacks. Reinforced plates attached to heavy chain, the thick, weighty armor includes oversized shoulder plates which restrict lateral movement but protect the wearer's head from the downward blows warjacks often deliver. Iron-toed boots not only protect the Iron Fang's feet but also soak a great deal of the recoil from a pike when it strikes a charging enemy. Heavy gauntlets and raised thigh plating shield the pikeman's extremities. The armor is awkward for the untrained, but a conditioned, fully outfitted Iron Fang can outpace a man in lighter armor making their mobility a key component of their battlefield success.

Iron Fangs use shields a full two inches thicker at all places than most military shields. Thicker at the top than the bottom to ward off warjack weapons, it can easily

withstand small arms fire and infantry attacks. It has notched sides large enough to rest the shaft of a blasting pike in, creating an armored wall of pikes that protect the Fangs while they strike their enemies or await an opportunity to charge. The Iron Fang shield often provides the extra protection required when charging into a thicket of Cygnaran guns.

Most Iron Fangs keep a small weapon tucked away in case of surprise or if the battle moves into walled or close quarters. Each Iron Fang earned his armor and weapons on the brutal campus at Volningrad, and no opponent underestimates these elite soldiers more than once.

In the muck and mire between Ravensgard and Northguard, the Iron Fangs have seen extensive service in the most recent escalation of hostilities. Their blasting pikes have wrecked many of Cygnar's finest warjacks and left their blasted hulks to rust in the mud.

Using simple physics and more than a touch of skill, the Iron Fangs long ago learned to topple the heaviest and hardiest of warjacks with their blasting pikes. When a blasting charge detonates, the explosive force not only tears apart metal and flesh but forces a target off balance. Iron Fangs train to recognize essential joints, vital boiler plates, or other integral systems and aim for these, blowing important components to scrap. Two or three precise blows in rapid succession will knock even a heavy warjack off balance, and the rest of the unit comes in hard and fast to finish the metal beast. In shallow water or mud this maneuver often quenches a warjack's fires.

IRON FANGS QUICKLY LEARN TO LIVE COMFORTABLY IN THEIR ARMOR, AS THEY OFTEN MUST REMAIN IN IT FOR DAYS AT A TIME.



The infamous Black Dragon Iron Fang brigade arose from the

dark mires of the Thornwood War (510 to 511 AR), when thousands of Khadoran soldiers died on the blades of Cygnaran reinforcements. The High Kommand commonly disbands units that suffer too many casualties and assigns the survivors to another unit. The Iron Fang units depleted beyond recovery in the Thornwood, however, came together to form the Black Dragons, a unit dedicated to avenging their fallen comrades. To this day the incredible bond between Iron Fangs often drives survivors of shattered units to bouts of depression or rage and, rather than accept a new assignment, they seek vengeance as part of the dark and relentless Dragons.

The Black Dragons wear the colors of mourning, black armor with brass fittings, and intertwine their Khadoran insignias with a universal Immorese symbol of death - the dragon. Flying pennants and banners of jet black, the Dragons unnerve even other Khadorans when they assemble on a battlefield in silent ranks. Whenever possible

they recover the bodies of their fallen comrades for cremation and scatter the ashes over the grounds at Volningrad, blessing all Iron Fangs with their sacrifice.

Cold and cruel in battle, Dragons happily lame an enemy rather than killing him. They have unspoken permission to draw what supplies they need and go where they wish, hunting the enemies of Khador unfettered by orders or compassion. While many commanders think of the Black Dragons as post deserters and insubordinates, the Queen and High Kommand value their fanaticism. They gain the services of these elite killers while retaining some official deniability for any crimes the Dragons may commit. The escalating violence between the Iron Kingdoms guarantees that the Black Dragon Iron Fangs will see service for a long, long time.

IRON FANG RPG RULES

Equipment: Iron Fang armor, shield, blasting pike (with blasting cap loaded), a bandoleer

Race: human (Khardic)

Level: Fighter 6

Hit Points: 6D10 +12 (42)

Initiative: 5 (+1 DEX +4 Improved initiative)

Speed: 30 ft

BAB: +6/+1

Saves: Fort: 7 Reflex: 3 Will: 2

Abilities: STR 16 DEX 12 CON 14 WIS 11 INT 10
CHA 10

Skills: Climb: +4 Craft (small arms): +5
Intimidate: +4 Jump: +4 ride: +4 survival: +3

Feats: Weapon focus (pike), Exotic weapon proficiency (blasting pike), Khadoran conscript, Iron Fang, Combined melee attack, Shield wall, Power attack, Improved initiative

with 4 blasting caps (reloads), and spearhead for the blasting pike. He also has basic survival gear for the wilderness (fire starters, tent, bedroll, and so on).

COMBINED MELEE ATTACK [GENERAL]

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +4

...AND LIKE THEIR ANCESTORS HUNTING THE WIDOW-BEAR, THEY FELL WITH PIKES STRIKING IN RHYTHMIC ATTACKS.





Benefit: A character may coordinate melee attacks with other characters with this feat. As a standard action you may designate the friend you are coordinating with who must also have this feat. The character you designate gains a +2 bonus to hit and a +2 bonus to damage on the next attack made against a target you are both in melee with, as long as that attack comes before the beginning of your next turn. Multiple characters can coordinate with the same friend and similar bonuses stack.

Special: A fighter may select Combined melee attack as one of his fighter bonus feats.

SHIELD WALL [GENERAL]

Prerequisite: Str 15, Tower Shield Proficiency

Benefit: When using a tower shield and adjacent to one or more allies also using tower shields, and who also have this feat, you can form a shield wall. A shield wall provides cover to all participating members. A condition that makes you lose your Dexterity bonus to Armor Class (if any) also makes you lose any bonuses granted by this feat.

Special: A fighter may select Shield wall as one of his fighter bonus feats.

Iron Fang Blasting Pike: The Iron Fang blasting pike is a 10-foot long masterwork pike with a primary head that houses either a spear tip or a blasting cap, and an additional spearhead on the end used as a back up weapon. The blasting pike has reach. You can strike opponents 10 feet away with it, but you can't use it against an adjacent foe. If the wielder of the blasting pike uses a ready action to set it against a charge, the blasting pike will deal double damage on a successful hit against a charging opponent.

Loading a blasting pike is a move action that provokes an attack of opportunity. A successful attack made with a primed Iron Fang blasting pike causes the target hit to make a reflex save (DC 10+1/2 BAB) or become prone. An Iron Fang blasting pike is too large to use in one hand without special training; thus, it is an exotic weapon. A character can use an Iron Fang blasting pike two-handed as a martial weapon. The Iron Fang blasting pike is military issue and not generally available for purchase.

Blasting Cap: Blasting caps are ammunition for the Iron Fang blasting pike and come with a bandoleer that can hold up to 4. The caps are a one-use item and are destroyed after use.

Iron Fang Armor: Iron Fang armor is a heavy suit of masterwork armor, designed to protect the wearer from the mighty attacks of warjacks. Iron Fang Armor is military issue and not generally available for purchase.

Iron Fang Shield: The Iron Fang shield is an exceptionally thick masterwork tower shield specifically designed to protect against warjack weapons. The Iron Fang shield is military issue and not generally available for purchase.

We have included the Iron Fang in case GMs out there want their PCs to encounter some of these elite soldiers. Keep them as NPCs for right now. Remember, these people attack warjacks for a living. They're so hard you can break your teeth just talking to them. Don't worry about playing them as characters yet; that will come later.

THE BLACK DRAGONS ASK ONLY TO GIVE THEIR LIVES FOR THEIR COMRADES AND THE MOTHERLAND.

EXOTIC ONE HANDED WEAPON	COST	DMG (M)	CRITICAL	RANGE INCREMENT	TYPE	WEIGHT
Iron Fang Blasting pike	500 gp*					18 lb.
Spear head	5 gp*	1d8	x3	—	Piercing	1 lb.
Blasting cap	50 gp*	3d8	x3	—	Piercing	1 lb.

ARMOR	COST	ARMOR/SHIELD BONUS	MAX DEX BONUS	ARMOR CHECK PENALTY	ARCANE SPELL FAILURE CHANCE	SPEED (30 FT.) (20 FT.)	WEIGHT
Iron Fang Armor	1900 gp*	+8	+0	-6	50%	20 ft.** 15 ft.**	55 lb.
Iron Fang Shield	230 gp*	+5	+1	-11	60%	— —	45 lb.

*Prices given for reference as these are military items and not generally available for purchase on the open market.
 ** Iron Fang Armor does not incur any penalty to the Iron Fang NPC's speed.

THE IRONCLAD

Born in the steam and sweat of the Engines East workshops in Caspia, the Ironclad is the most common and recognizable heavy warjack currently in Cygnaran service. Its reputation has made its name a slang term for strength and its image an icon. Its utility has made it a mainstay of Cygnaran commanders on every battlefield.

The Ironclad fought in all of Cygnar's modern battles, guarded the nation's borders for decades, and marched as the honor guard of Cygnaran nobility. When the logging companies of Fischerbrook went on a taxation strike, a dozen Ironclads hauled lumber on their backs to the mills. An Ironclad's quake hammer shattered the barricaded doors of the Cygnaran palace, opening the way for Leto and his stormblades during the last moments of the Exile's rule.

The Ironclad's durability and strength make it the standard by which Cygnaran commanders

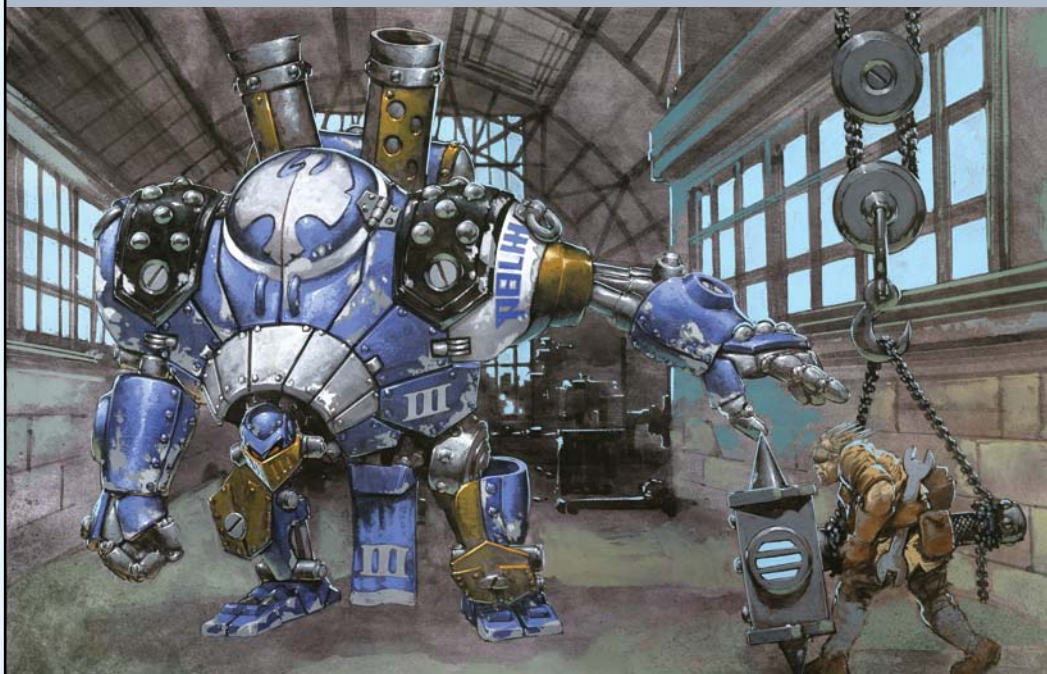
judge all other heavy warjacks. Despite technological advances and shifting design aesthetics, the Ironclad remains a nearly indispensable part of Cygnar's arsenal, a testament to efficient design, and a source of great national pride.

Though functionally simple to the untrained eye, the

Ironclad remains just as much a mechanical marvel as any of its metal brothers. Under its armored skin and reinforced steam piping it contains a sophisticated array of internal mechanisms that give the Ironclad superior mobility and flexibility in a combat situation.

When the Ironclad shifts into combat mode extra steam routing conduits, normally closed off by "combat valves", open for greater

THE IRONCLAD HAS BECOME AS MUCH A SYMBOL TO CYGNARAN SOLDIERS AS THE CYGNUS ITSELF.



pressure and faster use and transfer of power. These pipes become very hot very quickly, and bodgers and mechaniks often learn the hard way the dangers of hasty repairs on an Ironclad fresh from the battle. These extra conduits allow the six-ton machine to move as fast as a fully armored man and fight with a great deal of reflexive capability.

The Ironclad's standard equipment includes a highly advanced mechanika weapon, the quake hammer. A one hundred and twenty pound iron shell surrounding a two-foot diameter "tremor-coil array" and the accompanying arcane accumulators, the quake hammer provides a sturdy and powerful weapon capable of smashing a target to bits in a single blow.

The quake hammer transfers waves of tangible force into the ground from the churning coils inside of it. These rippling waves can knock down all but the strongest targets surrounding the Ironclad. They take a moment to build before surging outward, making the warjack immune to its own attack. If the Ironclad can time its strike properly, cortex studies show that power routes to the coils automatically, sending the target sprawling - if it survived the blow. Only a deficiency in the power valves leading into the hammer itself prevents the quake from triggering upon *every* attack, but no warcasters have complained.

The Ironclad's reinforced arms have made it a powerful workhorse for Cygnaran commanders and lucky mercenaries who have cannibalized the chassis for their own use. It can lift and drag great amounts of weight and is capable of a high degree of fine manipulation in comparison to many of its peers.

The Ironclad has proved itself countless times against the newly revealed hordes of Menite fanatics storming out of the Protectorate. The overwhelming numbers of zealous Menites easily mire down Cygnaran infantry to the point that their superior training and equipment become useless. The Ironclad provides a fine solution for these throngs of attackers and many have returned to Caspia for "urban defense", something never imagined before these dark days.

Instead of using the 'jack to crush attackers one by one - a brutal and inefficient option to say the least - commanders use it for crowd control. With a single surge from the quake hammer an Ironclad can incapacitate a throng of Menites long enough for the awaiting Sword Knights or Trenchers to sweep in and take prisoners. With the abundance of Ironclads in service, the utility of this tactic makes it a favorite of commanders facing the Protectorate.

Word of the "merciful Ironclad" maneuver has spread to other theaters and more than a few Cygnaran commanders, fatigued and cynical from months on the front line with relentless enemies, use the same maneuver with great success - except instead of taking prisoners they dispatch the enemy with volleys of Long Gunner and Trencher fire. A useful tool of capture or execution, the maneuver only increases the Ironclad's utility and ensures it will continue to appear with Cygnaran forces for years to come.

IRONCLAD RPG RULES
STEAMJACK QUALITIES:

Slow (Ex): Steamjacks can make double moves, but they may not run.

Furnace Vulnerability (Ex): A

CHASSIS: Ironclad

IN SERVICE: 556 AR

HEIGHT: 12'3"

WEIGHT: 6 tons

MAXIMUM SPEED: 18 Km/h

ARMOR THICKNESS RATING: 2"
riveted plate

CARRYING CAPACITY: 800 Kgs

MAXIMUM LOAD: 1200 Kgs

OPTIMAL BOILER FILL: 40 Gallons

FUEL LOAD: 120 Kgs of coal

FUEL CONSUMPTION: 6 hours
general labor, 1 hour combat
maneuver

DESIGNER NOTATIONS: "Beware the backlash of an improperly secured quake hammer, as the haft is the primary anchoring point for recoil. After testing, we added the secondary kill switches to the tremor-coils for safety reasons." -Chief Mechanik Holden Frieg

BATTLEFIELD RECOMMENDATIONS: "When attempting to recover equipment for study or salvage, do not look where the Ironclads have fought. The shock damage renders most things useless, provided you can find enough pieces." -Commander Adept Sebastian Nemo

STEAMWORKERS UNION COMMENTS: "When bodgin' these beauties, stay away from that 'ammer! It can go off without warning if ye ain' careful, and then ye be pickin' up the pieces of ye'r workshop for a week." -"Guf", Point Bourne Steamworker

steamjack's furnace fails when the unit spends more than 10 rounds completely submerged in water or any other liquid. Steamjacks with quelled furnaces are considered stunned and the furnace must be re-lit.

Reliance on Fuel: Steamjacks consume coal and water to function. Newer steamjacks require refueling—roughly one hundred pounds of coal and one hundred gallons of water—once

IRONCLAD



THE IRONCLAD (RPG RULES)

Name: The Ironclad

Height/Weight: 12' 3", 6 tons

Armament: Quake Hammer (left arm)**Initial Service Date:** 556 AR**Cortex:** Aurum grade cortex**Hit Dice:** 22d10+30**Hit Points:** 151**Base Initiative:** +0**Speed:** 25 ft.**Armor Class:** 20 (touch 11, flatfooted 19)**Base Attack Bonus:** +16/+11/+6/+1**Melee Attack Bonus:** +26/+21/+16/+11**Ranged Attack Bonus:** +17/+12/+7/+2**Base Attack Damage:** 1d10+10 Slam / 2d6+10

Quake Hammer

Space/Reach: 10 ft. by 10 ft. space/ 5 ft. reach.**Saving Throws:** Fortitude +7, Reflex +8, Will +7**Abilities:** Strength 30, Dexterity 12 Con -, Intelligence 8, Wisdom 11, Charisma 1**Special Attacks:** Tremor**Special Qualities:** Darkvision 60 ft., Low light vision, Mechanical Construct traits, Steamjack Qualities, DR 10/Serric-steel

every five to six hours. If not refueled, the steamjack's next 30 minutes of operation are spent fatigued. After that, the unit becomes exhausted for the next 30 minutes, after which it is stunned. At this point, the furnace must be re-lit before the steamjack can function again.

Older steamjacks require refueling more often, as does any steamjack engaged in strenuous activity or combat. Steamjacks using inferior fuel are considered shaken in addition to other effects.

Challenge Rating: 14

QUAKE HAMMER

This Large mechanical warhammer contains coil mechanisms that allow it to transfer the effects of a *tectonic surge* spell (detailed in the Liber Mechanika) into the ground surrounding it. As a combat

A SINGLE BLOW CLEARED THE PATH, DESPITE THE MENITES' OBJECTIONS.



action, the wielder of the hammer may strike the ground, creating a localized tremor which requires that anyone within 20 feet of the impact (except for the wielder) makes a DC 22 reflex saving throw or be knocked prone.

This weapon is manufactured solely for Cygnaran military purposes, and requires a Large sized creature or larger to wield. The hammer weighs roughly 120 lbs and has a hardness of 10 and 25 hit points. Each use of the quake hammer drains 4 charges

from the accumulator within it (total 40 charges).

Components: masterwork large warhammer, tectonic surge rune plate, charge socket, impact trigger. Weapon requires a Heavy accumulator.

Faint evocation, CL 3rd, Craft Wondrous Item, Craft (mechanika) 6 ranks; Craft (mechanika) fusion check (DC 21), Price 6249 gp.



COLOR VARIATIONS IN THE IRON KINGDOMS



In the throes of war, and across a hundred battlefields, there are many incarnations of wargear and equipment of the front line soldier. In each Guts & Gears, we will try to explore with you new and different options for your paint schemes on each of the units

or warjacks presented. You are in no way restricted to use just these color schemes presented here. A player should feel free to invent his own and march them gloriously off to battle in your own original color scheme.

IRON FANGS

Using the traditional colors of Khador, a player has many options when painting his Iron Fangs. The heavy plate armor makes a wonderful and striking place to apply color and keep the theme heavy throughout your army.



IRONCLAD

Here are three superb examples of Ironclads ready for war. Even with a non-traditional color scheme, they always present a solid composition for displaying your armies colors.

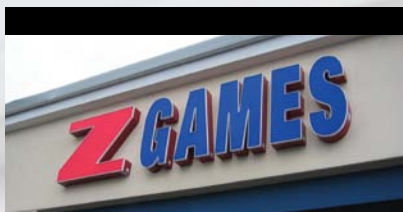
Painting by the world famous Brushthralls, Dave Perrotta, Finn Kisch, David Ray, Todd Arrington, and Dan Smith. For more great work from the Brushthralls, visit them online at www.brushthralls.com



WARMACHINE AT

Z GAMES

VANCOUVER, WA



When we can, Privateer Press likes to get out in the field where WARMACHINE really lives. We like to talk to retailers, field test our tournament systems on live subjects – uh, players, and spend quality time with fans. On March 26th, we jumped into the steam-mobile and headed south to Z GAMES in Vancouver, Washington.

All right, we don't have a steam-mobile yet, but we loaded a car and hit the road anyway. We wanted to run a great event at one of our favorite local shops, and three and a half hours later we found what we wanted: twenty-four WARMACHINE fans ready to throw down and play.

Sean and Kendra Zern opened Z GAMES in April 2001 "to make money at something we love – not just another job." To Sean it's all about the passion for the community that a game store fosters. "The toys are great, but to me it's about the friendships and people – folks who bond over games but would give you the shirt off their backs. It's a family."

That community spirit really made the day for us. We had a fantastic WARMACHINE crowd energetic, enthusiastic, and fun to hang around – exactly

what we like to see. They played four rounds of the devastating STEAMROLLER tournament system (see the preview on page 88), and at the end we had the feeling if we asked them to play four more, they would have shouted the roof down and hit the tables.

We asked Sean what it is about WARMACHINE that appeals to him and his customers. "It is so easy to get started with WARMACHINE. Just a simple \$40.00 boxed set and you're playing a game with your friends that same day. You can't get that kind of quality game experience anywhere else for the price. It's the only game I carry that my customers pushed me into buying. It's a great investment for us. Our customers are very picky and they simply had to have your line."

By the time we handed out the awards (Marshall Karg and his Cygnar list took the day), we had seen some great games, witnessed some true IK carnage, met some fantastic friends, and were reminded of exactly why we love what we do here at Privateer Press. It was a great day by any standard.

If you are in the Vancouver, WA area, stop by and say hello to Sean, Kendra, and the gang. You will feel right at home.

Go to www.privateerpress.com/steamroller to find out how you can run a Steamroller event in your shop.



Z Games
2100 SE 164th Ave.
Vancouver, WA



THE DUELIST'S GAMBIT

WAR MACHINE

BATTLE REPORT

By John Cadice, Jason Soles, and Chris Bodan

Since the fall of Llael in the spring of 605 AR, the Khadoran occupiers have fought an ever-growing insurgency of Llaese rebels and mercenaries. This once peaceful land increasingly echoes with the sounds of skirmishes and pitched battles. Support from Cygnar and exiled nobility provides enough gold to keep rebels and mercenaries in the field, and perhaps they may someday form a true army of liberation for occupied Llael.

THE MISSION AHEAD

We find our intrepid commanders Jason Soles and Chris Bodan ready and willing, with their trusty Battle-scribe John Cadice on hand. This battle is a modified King of the Hill scenario where instead of points, the player who remains uncontested on the hill for 3 rounds wins the game. This will encourage some early movement and make sure getting stuck-in is top priority.

DISPATCHING THE KHADORAN DOGS

The Highborn Covenant Mercenary Contract army may hire any mercenary unit that will work for Cygnar except for Boomhowler & Co.

Jason: Mercs provide an almost infinite number of combinations and dirty tricks that enable a player to run the table. Setting upon an army construction strategy, I went to work.

Since I would face Khador, I wanted to build a force that was both fast and resilient. Gorten Grundback is one hard warcaster and his *Solid Ground* spell would go a long way toward neutralizing Khador's notorious area effect barrages. With an ARM 19 in shield wall, the Hammerfall High Shields were also just what the doctor ordered, so I took two fat units. Ashlynn and the Piper of Ord gave me the speed I required.

My main firepower would come from the Mule and my Gunners, and Ashlynn's feat is a blast with these 'jacks. The Nomad and Vanguarders were just icing on the cake.

Gorman and Eiryss rounded out my motley crew and lent me the air of unpredictability I desired. Throw in an Ogrun Bokur and I was ready for serious business.

JASON'S ARMY LIST

Ashlynn d'Elyse	67
Mule	110
Nomad	82

2 Vanguarders	152 (76 each)
Gorten Grundback	60
5 Grundback Gunners	240 (48 each)
2 Hammerfall High Shield Gun Corps units, +4 troops each	164 (82 each)
Eiryss, Mage Hunter of Ios	29
Gorman di Wulfe, Rogue Alchemist	28
Ogrun Bokur	39
Rupert Carvollo, Piper of Ord	22
Total Points:	993

CRUSHING THE INSIGNIFICANT REBELLION

Chris: I've never faced 1,000 points of pure mercenaries before, and with Jason at the helm, I knew this game held nothing but surprises for me.

I chose Vlad both for his amazing close combat power and for *Signs and Portents*. Properly used I could increase the effectiveness of virtually my entire army for three focus every turn and help negate some of the speed and defense of the mercs. For that reason I also took four Destroyers and gave only one to Vlad. I suspected I'd see Gorton across the table, and *Solid Ground* would negate my blast damage.

A second Destroyer went to a Kovnik. I normally use Eiryss in all my armies, but for this battle I could not. I have to say it felt, as General Longstreet said, "Like going into battle with one boot off."

The other two Destroyers I put on the Butcher. I wanted a powerful warcaster, and the Butcher's feat would help me carve through even the toughest mercenary 'jacks. I added Greylords for their *Ice Cages* to increase my chances of hitting things further and Widowmakers to assassinate unit leaders. The Manhunter would lurk in cover and hold objectives. Finally I added a Berserker for the free charge ability and because I wanted a dedicated melee 'jack. This gave me a well-rounded force that has a good chance of taking on anything Jason would throw at me.

CHRIS' ARMY LIST

Butcher of Khador	69
2 Destroyer	
Heavy Warjacks	252 (126 each)
Vladimir,	
the Dark Prince of Umbrey	76
1 Destroyer Heavy Warjack	126
1 Berserker Heavy Warjack	84
Man-O-War Kovnik	34
1 Destroyer	
Heavy Warjack (marshaled)	126
2 Greylord Ternions	86 (43 each)
2 Units of	
Widowmakers	106 (53 each)
1 Manhunter	22
Total Points:	981

SETUP

Chris's Khadorans lined up in a determined wall of heavy 'jacks with Greylords and warcasters in reserve. He fully intended to drive his 'jacks hard and fast while providing a good

screen for his softer support troops.

Jason took a similar posture. Creating a large and imposing wall of iron, he lined up six warjacks shoulder to shoulder to screen the lighter infantry and the ever-precious warcasters from the initial attacks of the Khadoran lines.

OPENING ACTIONS

The battle plans of each commander took form immediately in the first round. True to his plan, Chris charged like a metal wave toward the undefended objective, running his heavy warjacks at full steam to make it to the riverbank. At an equally fast clip, the Widowmakers and



The battle lines are drawn.

Chris advance deployed his Widowmakers and Manhunter, placing the snipers on both flanks to protect them and offer a sizable distraction to assailants like Eiryss or Gorman. Jason responded by deploying his deadly advanced deployment troops, Eiryss and her Bokur, in a ruin close to the objective to match the Manhunter and Widowmakers on that flank.

Jason: The Ogrun Bokur offers some fantastic deployment options when paired with advance deployment troops, another nasty surprise in the ever-expanding mercenary bag of tricks.

Chris: It was a foot race to get in range, and the full unit of dwarves on the far side of the board really had me worried.

Manhunter legged it to land the first boots on the objective and take positions well covered from the mercs' considerable arsenal.

After glancing at the encroaching Khador army, Jason had Ashlynn and Gorten make haste to form battle lines. Gorten's Gunners received a large share of the focus in order to capture some ground by running, but Gorten kept enough for *Solid Ground*. This control area upkeep spell lets friendly models ignore knockdown, nullifies blast damage, and consequently reduces the effectiveness of those pesky Destroyers considerably. Ashlynn cast *Quicken* on her Mule, which then proceeded to form the hinge of the advancing wall of 'jacks.

The supporting Greylords used their magic to cover the 'jacks in *Blizzards* to defend their advance.

SECOND ROUND

Chris scratched his beard knowing this next round would set the tone of the battle. So far, with his Manhunter and Widowmakers high up on the right flank, he had successfully held the objective for two turns. The mercenaries had to get models on the hill this turn or they would lose the game. He knew the merc charge was coming, but he did not know where. With any luck he could

draw them into the impressive firepower of his Destroyers. Chris laid out focus to run the warcasters' heavy 'jacks toward the hill.

Jason's turn began with upkeep on *Solid Ground* and *Quicken*. Ashlynn lead the charge by casting *Feint* on her Vanguard, and it would join the Bokur on the hill. Ashlynn then used her feat, *Roulette*. This amazing feat allows Ashlynn's controller to roll two additional dice for attack rolls made by all friendly models in her control area and drop two of his choice. Moreover, any

attacks against friendly models in her control area in the opponent's turn also roll an extra two dice, and Ashlynn's controller still chooses which two are not used. Just to prove her point she blasted the Kovnik in the face with her hand cannon for a hefty twenty-six points of damage. Following Ashlynn's lead, a nearby Gunner finished the wounded Kovnik with a boosted shot. Two more Gunners opened up and damaged a near Destroyer.

The Mule wreaked havoc on the flanking Widowmakers when Jason rolled a *critical devastation* with its Steam Lobber. The attack threw the Widowmakers to their deaths with its mighty explosion. The remaining Widowmaker barely passed his command check mostly because of Vlad's reputation for dealing with cowards personally.

Jason: Chris took the hill on the first turn, so if I didn't get up there post haste it would be all over by the top of the third turn. I had to get that Vanguard on the hill. Although I was pretty certain the Manhunter was about to reduce it to scrap, I had little choice. I cast Ashlynn's *Feint* spell so it could survive the imminent attack.

Next I used her feat mostly for defensive reasons, of course throwing a couple extra dice never hurts when it comes to *critical devastation*. Needless to say burning Widowmakers fell to the ground like bloody, smoldering rain.

Chris: He had to charge, and I knew I couldn't stop it. My hope now was to get my 'jacks across and onto the hill, try to meet him near the crest, and push him back. Losing those Widowmakers and the Kovnik weakened my flanking maneuver, and his 'jacks



Two armies steam into round 2.



Mercenaries retake the hill in round 3.

were coming on full steam with *Roulette* in play. He would be hard to slow.

THIRD ROUND

With *Solid Ground* and Ashlynn's feat up, Chris took a moment to survey his troops. On the far right flank, the Widomakers opened fire, wounded the Bokur, and made him really mad. Vlad then activated, cast *Signs & Portents*, and popped his feat *Forced March*. With *Solid Ground* in play Chris thought it better to charge and get stuck. Because the Kovnik's Destroyer was left without a controller, Vlad cast *Boundless Charge* on the Destroyer to send it charging into the Mule. Even with *Roulette* working against him, the Destroyer did enough damage



Battle is joined the start of round 4.

Anyone who's ever played with me knows what a quiet and gentlemanly player I am. When Chris' Destroyer tore apart my

beloved Mule, I just bit my tongue and sat in silence. I did not unleash a barrage of curses upon Chris' family line and upon his character in general because that's the sort of guy I am.

Chris: ...and Jason is a filthy liar!

Jason didn't miss a beat; he knew keeping those heavy 'jacks away and destroying them was priority one. From Gorten's protected position, he launched his feat *Landslide*. This feat basically picked up and dragged all the 'jacks out of combat and moved them 5" back up on the hill. To make his point, Gorten



The Butcher's Destroyers race over the bridge.

to sever the Mule's lobber. However, across the board the Khador advance did not fare so well. Ashlynn's feat saved a Gunner from a boosted bombard shot, the Berserker swung twice and missed the Nomad, and two incoming bombard cannons on the lead Vanguard missed and nearly killed the nearby Manhunter.

Jason: Vlad casts *Signs and Portents*...again.



The Bokur joins the fray.



Khador's hold weakens by the start of round 6.



Round 7 sees the battlefield strewn with wreckage.

pointed his double-barreled hand cannon at the nearest Destroyer and let loose with both barrels. The damage dice tipped over onto two sixes. "Boxcars!" hollered Jason, celebrating like a tourist at Mari Gras as he totaled a whopping twenty-eight damage to the heavy 'jack.

The first Vanguard tied down the Manhunter in rough terrain as the nearby Bokur slammed the Berserker into the Destroyer next to it to knock them both down.

Jason took the opportunity to move an entire unit of mercenary dwarves through the lines and use their *covered fusillade* on the

downed warjacks. It only took six dwarves to wreck the Berserker and render it useless.

Rather nonchalantly a lone Gunner walked up to Vlad's Destroyer and knocked it down with a boosted head-butt. The *coup de grace* came from a boosted Nomad swinging its mighty Caspian battle blade to destroy the flailing Khador 'jack. He wrecked a Berserker, took out a Destroyer, and advanced onto the hill; it was not a bad turn for Jason.

Jason: Alright, after using Gorten's feat to set up multiple slam lanes I was feeling pretty smug about this turn. Then

Chris reminded me I was playing against Khador.

Chris: Ouch. Okay, okay. *Roulette* was over and I had a chance of actually hitting things. The Bokur needed to die and so did the Nomad, but I couldn't guarantee anything. I was disturbed by the fact I hit his stuff but did not kill any of it, and with the Berserker gone, this was going to be tricky.

FOURTH ROUND

Chris surveyed the field and brooded. He activated Vlad and put up *Blood of Kings* and *Signs and Portents* to keep things together. The supporting Greylords wrapped the Mule in enough *Ice Cages* to render it stationary. Chris didn't have much success with his second unit of Greylords, for only two of them successfully hit the Bokur with *Ice Cages*. It still impaired him with -4 DEF though. The Destroyer on the left flank hit the stationary Mule automatically and once again we saw "boxcars" on the damage roll. Miraculously, the Mule survived with one hull point, two right arm boxes, and one cortex box remaining. The Butcher's Destroyer who kept its feet last round stepped over the wreckage of the previous Destroyer and took a rage-fuelled swing at the offending Nomad. With *Signs and Portents* still up, three repeated whacks did a total of twenty-five damage to the Nomad, shearing off its weapon arm and destroying its cortex.

The Widowmakers fired at the dwarf unit advancing along Jason's far left flank and made them pay for their maneuver by dropping four dwarves.

The Mercenary counter came hard and fast. Gorman kicked things off by throwing a rust grenade into a still standing

Destroyer. Ashlynn put five damage on the rusted 'jack with her hand cannon, adding her injury to Gorman's alchemical insult. The Bokur landed two solid hits on the downed Destroyer at his feet and inflicted twelve points of damage. Now that's an ogrun-sized bucket of hurt!

Chris: Who do I have to bribe to get a Khador 'jack with reach? Better question: how can I hit a Nomad three times with a POW 18 weapon under *Signs and Portents* and still not kill it? At least my units in combat were unlikely to get hit by the Gunners or dwarves, and every turn brought his army closer to my 'jacks—provided they could survive.

FIFTH ROUND

Vlad lead again with *Blood of Kings* and *Signs and Portents*. The Greylords again failed to *Ice Cage* the Bokur; only one of the five attempts landed for a total of -2 DEF. Cool and calm, the last Widowmaker on the left flank carefully took aim at a weakened plate on the Mule's impressive boiler. Full breath in, half breath out, and he squeezed the trigger. He let a grin creep across his mouth as he watched the metal monster die in a sputtering gout of steam. The Mule was down.

Advancing with menace in his eye, the Butcher roared a bestial challenge at the mercenary forces and passed into his *Blood Frenzy*. With all the hatred and fury he could muster, he threw his focus into his remaining warjacks. The Butcher's first Destroyer rose up and struck swiftly and accurately to cut down the mighty Bokur. The Destroyer turned and lashed out again with its axe and nearly hacked the Nomad in two at the waist with the power of the hit. Finally on the downswing, the Destroyer buried its axe deep in



Beginning of Round 7.

the armor of the nearest Gunner. Only a steaming sigh escaped the little 'jack as its heart fire was extinguished. The Butcher's last Destroyer fired a long shot at Gorton and Ashlynn clustered together. With *Solid Ground* down and the Butcher's feat up, Chris stood a chance of severely damaging at least one of them, but the shot missed.

The feral Manhunter used the Butcher's feat and *Signs and Portents* to overcome the Vanguard finally by cleaving it with his terrible axes. The Widowmakers fired into the advancing dwarves again, but the Piper's song toughened the stout warriors and saved two from certain death.

Jason: Then I was reminded I was playing against Khador... again.

Chris: That's what I'm talking about.

The mercenaries picked up the pieces after a series of devastating losses on the hill. In order to reacquire ground and advance on the enemy, all units stepped up the aggression. The dwarves on the far flank engaged the Widowmakers, and the Butcher took some damage from all the incoming Gunner fire. An accurate hand cannon slug wiped the smug look off the face of the last Widowmaker on the far flank, and a satisfied Ashlynn blew away the smoke rising from her weapon.



Frostbite spells an icy death for the dwarves.



Round 8 spells doom for Vlad.

The remaining Vanguard turned and engaged the Greylords by the bridge while the other Gunners maneuvered for position.

Jason: The Piper, seldom mentioned before, had been playing his part like a champ. He gave the Hammerfall Gun Corps the extra inches they needed to reach those pesky Widowmakers. One other important point to make here is that this hill had something like five destroyed warjacks on it at this point. It was getting hard to find places to stand and forget charge lanes unless you had *Boundless Charge*. What I wouldn't have done for a *Boundless Charge* about then!

Chris: Those Gunners were going to be the death of me. Between them and the two units of dwarves coming up the hill there were accurate, powerful guns everywhere and precious little cover.

SIXTH ROUND

Chris had Vlad and the Butcher press home their attack. With *Signs and Portents*, the Greylords managed to freeze Gorten in an *Ice Cage* and spell an icy *Frostbite* death for four dwarves. The Widowmakers fared better against their stout opponents with sharp wits and sharper steel, seeing off two dwarves and routing the rest. The Butcher's all-star Destroyer

fired another heavy shell, this time in the direction of Gorten, and dealt **ten** damage points! The Manhunter turned and charged the remaining dwarf unit. Not able to close fast enough, the Butcher moved up and put his arcane energies into an unearthly *Howl* that sent the remaining dwarf unit scrambling for their lives.

Chris: I needed those dwarves gone and I never had a chance to cast *Howl* before. Maybe now I could move in with the Butcher.

Fate took a cruel turn this round when Jason began gleefully placing focus on his remaining 'jacks. An unexpected move came when Rupert, the Piper of Ord, rushed to engage the Manhunter on the hill. Things came together as Ashlynn bounded lithely up the hill and dispatched the distracted Manhunter on the tip of her saber.

Gorten threw out all his focus, and with eruptions of smoke and cannon fire the Gunners struck. The Butcher's warcaster armor gave way and he fell, heavily ridden with cannon shot. His two Destroyers went inert a resounding cheer from the beleaguered mercenaries.

Jason: This is when I did a little dance.

SEVENTH ROUND

With dwindling forces, the remaining Khadorans threw out everything they had. The mystic Greylords ensnared Ashlynn in an *Ice Cage*, and the supporting Widowmakers fired off crack shots hitting her for seven points of damage.

Jason: Damn you *Signs and Portents*!

Chris: Ladies and gentlemen, the man, the myth: Vladimir, the Dark Prince. I just wish I rolled better for damage.

Eiryss charged the Widowmaker leader and impaled her on the end of her slender Iosan blade. The Vanguard lashed out in a mechanically perfect arc to drop a Greylord in a heap. Gorten followed up with a torrent of magic that ripped a hole in the earth around the inert Destroyer with *Crater* and killed another Greylord in the vicinity.

Jason: While Greylords are hard to hit, inert warjacks are not. Oh Greylords, how I hate thee!

Chris: Got to remember he can aim at my cover.

EIGHTH ROUND

As the battle began to wind down, a frantic Vlad tried to hold together his crumbling army. Out of the corner of his eyes he saw the Butcher's prostrate form, and though he would call him a fool, he mourned the loss to the Motherland's forces. Desperate for a chance to engage the enemy warcasters, he vented his rage on a rather surprised looking war bard that fell in a wheezing heap. The man's pipes droned on for a moment longer to mark his passing. The remaining Greylord blasted down two more dwarves with *Frostbite*.

In a glittering arc, a canister with an attached handle came sailing through the air, smashed against the inert Destroyer to Vlad's side, and showered him with sticky black oil. Gorman

scampered out of sight after releasing the blinding potion that left Vlad staggering to wipe the liquid from his eyes. Gorten turned his attention to the last enemy caster and let loose with his Gunners, but they only blasted debris onto the stumbling Umbrean. Gorten focused a mighty explosion under Vlad's feet with *Crater*, but still he could not manage to topple the warcaster.

The black oil stung Vlad's eyes, but he could still see the enemy. "Their mistake," he thought to himself as he began to concentrate his energies on his next destructive attack. From out of nowhere a whistling dart clipped his right breast. Though the armor stopped the shot from penetrating his flesh, he could immediately feel his power sapped away, and his power field reduced. A *Disruptor bolt!* With flashing eyes he noticed the hooded elf dodge back into the milling troops. He barely had time to raise his sword to the next attacker when a vicious hand cannon shot sent Vlad reeling, and his vision went black. His hands dropped Skirmisher and Ruin as he felt for the gaping rent in his breastplate now dribbling blood. Against the sky a small shadow appeared holding a blade in a practiced fencer's salute. He never felt the blow land.

Ashlynn watched the Umbrean prince slide off the end of her blood-slicked blade and topple backward into the dust.

The day belonged to the mercenary forces of Ashlynn d'Elyse and Gorten Grundback.

Jason: That is to say after tossing Black Oil targeting the inert warjack, I caught Vlad in the splash. Who knew? Eiryss then moved out of combat with the Widowmaker and drilled Vlad with a disruptor bolt. I then charged in with Ashlynn. Despite missing with my first attack—even blind Vlad is a pain to hit when he is under the effect of *Blood of King's*—Ashlynn's

hand cannon rang true. Boosted to four dice of damage, it had to hurt. With five focus remaining, Ashlynn took her time and did Vlad right.

Chris: What did I say about aiming at cover?

MOP UP

Jason: This was an amazing game. The carnage was nearly complete. Warjacks were spread across the table in piles three deep in some places. Now that's WARMACHINE! I felt really good about my army until I saw all those heavy warjacks hit the table. At that point I knew I had a real fight. Despite patting myself on the back from time to time, I was constantly reminded by Chris of a simple fact: Khador hits very, very hard.

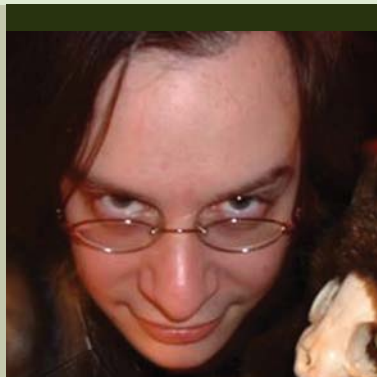
I feel like my real accomplishment of the game was the slam fest following Gorten's feat. In retrospect, slamming Destroyer's with Gunners really just makes them mad. While this tactic was cute, maybe I would have been better served shooting up the Butcher a little earlier before he blew his feat. Hindsight being what it is...

In all, I had a blast and will certainly give Chris a rematch any old time.

Chris: Despite the outcome, I really enjoyed this game. I prefer objective-based games as it places greater emphasis on planning. Not only do you have to kill the other guy's army, but you also have to position yourself to complete the mission. I might choose a different army next time—probably some mortars in place of the Berserker, or Sorscha instead of the Butcher, but that's all hindsight.

I don't think I can pick out one point where the battle turned. If I had managed to damage Gorten or Ashlynn with the Butcher's feat, I might have killed her with the Widowmakers or him with the bombard shot the following round. If the Kovnik hadn't died...well, if wishes were horses, beggars would ride, as they say.

I can say I enjoyed playing with Jason. His obvious joy when something cool happens—to either player—just makes the game a blast. I'd be glad to do this again, but probably after I get some mercenaries of my own.



Jason Soles is lead developer of WARMACHINE and looked forward to this battle to show off some of the new streamlined features a mercenary contract army can bring together.



Chris works in the production department of Privateer Press ("making miracles so you don't have to!") and has contributed both to *No Quarter Magazine* and the upcoming WARMACHINE: *Apotheosis*.



STEAMROLLER

TOURNAMENT SERIES OVERVIEW

As some of you already know, Privateer Press released an update to its popular local tournament format in Spring. Hundreds and hundreds of WARMACHINE players take part in official tournament play every month and, since not everyone has had a chance to play with the new system yet, we wanted to take this opportunity to give everyone a peek at the changes and the next step in WARMACHINE tournament play.

WHY THE NEW FORMAT?

Two reasons. First, we wanted to make a format that all players would understand and know what to expect no matter where they played or who was judging. Our customers and stores asked for a simple, accessible format that required as little work for an organizer as possible but remained compelling and challenging.

Second, because we use a true Swiss system, rather than a finite number of rounds, we needed to minimize ties and ensure a fast and exciting game.

STEAMROLLER solved all of those problems and created an extensible system we can add scenarios and game elements to as WARMACHINE changes and grows.

It's not intended as the "only" format – we fully expect

many variants all over the globe. One of the great things about WARMACHINE is the variety of ways to play it, and STEAMROLLER simply provides a solid platform for "standard" tournament play.

Duncan Huffman

*Organized Play and Events Manager
– Privateer Press*

FEATURES:

New battle modifiers like "Attrition" and "Move Out" to keep the action heavy and reduce ties.

Four fast paced scenarios with alternate objective based win conditions – you can kill the caster or win via scenario.

Innovative "Alternate List" rule that allows players more flexibility in army building and dynamic strategic possibilities.

Tips and Tricks for running a great event.

Clarified and simplified "Strength of Schedule" tiebreaking.

POINTS:

Steamroller events are a series of scenarios played at 500, 750, or 1000 points. Tournament organizers will determine and post the point values prior to the event. All event games must be of equal point value.

PLAYER REQUIREMENTS:

Players must bring their armies (kind of hard to fight without one), at least two printed

or handwritten copies of their army lists with costs and totals, dice, measuring device, tokens, any templates required for play and stat cards for each model or unit fielded. Other printed media used to track damage are subject to the Judge's approval. Players must register all army lists with the Judge before the event begins and keep a copy of each list for opponents to view upon request.

ARMY COMPOSITION:

Armies may not exceed the point value for the event (500, 750, or 1000 points), nor may they total more than 100 points under (for example, a player could not field just a warcaster and her battle group if that left him more than 100 points under the event point requirement). Armies must include one warcaster at 500 or 750 points and 2 warcasters at 1000 points. All other field allowance and construction rules apply.

ALTERNATE LIST:

Players may bring a second previously prepared list for use at the event. This alternate list is subject to the same point constraints as the primary list, must be from the same faction, must adhere to all composition rules, and be registered with the Judge before the event begins. Players may choose one of their two lists before each round begins. After pairings have been announced, both players place their selected army list face down on the table, reveal it, and

continue set up normally. Players may not change lists for the round after making their selection.

THE FOUR SCENARIOS: SCENARIOS AND SETUP

All games are played on 4' x 4' surfaces with 10" deployment zones. Judges place terrain before the tournament begins. Judges should try to position terrain as evenly as possible to ensure neither side gains an advantage. Tables should have enough terrain to make games interesting while not bogging down play.

At the start of the game players roll-off to determine who sets up and moves first. The player who wins the roll has the option of going first or having his opponent begin. The player who sets up first moves first.

NEW SPECIAL RULES:



Warcaster Casualty -

A player wins the scenario when his opponent's last warcaster has been destroyed or removed from play.



Move Out! -

If a player has any friendly units or independent models in his or her deployment zone at the end of the game, award 1 bonus victory point per unit and independent model to the opposing player. Do not count units with the designation "Immobile" when calculating this bonus.



Attrition -

For every unit at 50% or less of its starting model count still on the table at the end of the game, award 1 bonus victory point to the opposing player. Calculate all other victory points normally.



Fixed Terrain -

Players do not alternate terrain setup. All table features are set at the beginning of the event and only Judges or event organizers can move the terrain to

accommodate the scenario needs.

Play the following three Scenarios in order for the first three rounds and the "Condemnation" scenario for all subsequent rounds.

SCENARIO 1 - Foothold



"Sir;

We sighted the enemy at dawn. It looks to be an expeditionary force approximately the size of our own, patrolling along the tree line. Steam plumes were seen from at least 5 jacks. Engagement is imminent. We will attempt to hold the high ground until Kapitan Petrovitch and the remainder of the column arrive. Urge all speed.

In the Queen's service, and yours..."

- Excerpt from a field message taken from the body of a Kossite runner on the outskirts of Llael, 605 AR.

DESCRIPTION:

Keeping your enemy from choosing the best ground grants a tremendous advantage. The objective is to take and hold the center point of the table.

SCENARIO 2 - HOLD THE LINE



"Get those damn Gunners out to the left flank. If we hold this position and the Knights keep our right, we might break the Gboul's back yet..."

-Gun Mage Capitan Adept Davis Epson facing Goreshade the Bastard at Red Horn Powdermines, Rynyr, 604 AR.

DESCRIPTION:

Once you have the good ground on the field, the trick is keeping it. The objective is to take key positions and keep your opponent from pushing you back.

SCENARIO 3 - PENDULUM



"Back across the line! We cannot let them push us a fourth time no matter how many we lose..."

-Iron Fang Kapitan Pravoli's last words. Ravensgard, 605, AR

DESCRIPTION:

There is a time for holding and a time for driving for the heart. Push into the enemy's ground and take control. The objective is to get your men across the center of the field and keep your opponent from crossing to your side.

SCENARIO 4 - CONDEMNATION



"I do not wish to beat them. I wish to break them, for His glory. Make their commander pay for his hubris. Do not take him alive."

- High Priestess Feora, to Temple Flameguard Leader Foy

DESCRIPTION:

The head of the beast. Eliminating the opponent's general can save you time and resources and throw your enemy into chaos. The objective is to eliminate all of the enemy warcasters.

All the details and rules are available in the full STEAMROLLER kit. Go to www.privateerpress.com/steamroller to request a prize kit and download a copy of the rules.



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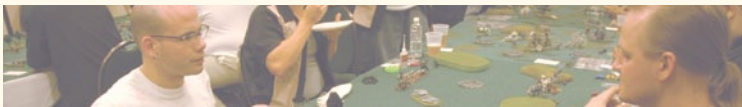


AT GENCON INDY AUGUST 18TH-21ST 2005

THURSDAY, AUGUST 18TH

CLASH OF GEARS: 750-POINT WARMACHINE TOURNAMENT

It's a full-metal showdown! Fire up your 750-point force and get ready for some metal grinding, bone snapping, gut-wrenching WARMACHINE action! Five rounds of STEAMROLLER system, Swiss format with a half hour lunch for the weak. Prizes will be awarded to the top player from each faction. Leave 'em dead and dying in your dust.



SATURDAY, AUGUST 20TH

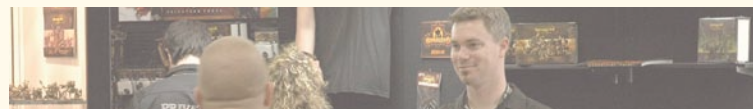
WARMACHINE: TOUR OF DUTY

Tour of Duty is a multi-player cooperative faction event in which players battle through four separate theaters of war. Rack up victories & body counts for your faction as you annihilate rival forces and travel through the Iron Kingdoms. Bring along a 500-point army and a selection of warcasters. Players can jump in anytime if there is an opening. Prizes awarded to the faction with the most points at the end of the day.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 19TH
AND SATURDAY AUGUST 20TH

WARMACHINE NATIONAL OPEN: 500-POINT WARMACHINE TOURNAMENT, DAY 1 AND DAY 2

Sure to be a classic, this is the first annual WARMACHINE National Open championship. Day One, we separate the wheat from the chaff... All comers will be ground down to just the top eight players. Those who make the cut will play-off Day Two. Day One, 500-point forces, four rounds of STEAMROLLER system, Swiss format with a half hour lunch for the weak. Day Two, we up the stakes to 1000-point forces, three rounds of the best of the best.



SUNDAY, AUGUST 21ST

FULL METAL SUNDAY: 500-POINT WARMACHINE TOURNAMENT

Still looking to rack up some last minute kills? We got your back. Grab your 500-point force and get ready throw down! Four rounds of STEAMROLLER system, Swiss format with a half hour lunch for the weak. Prizes will be awarded to the top player from each faction.



Other events will be added dependant on demand. We will have bring-n-battles and after hours gaming throughout the week.

THE POOP DECK

IN THE NEXT
NO QUARTER
MAGAZINE



Khador unleashes the **BEHEMOTH!**



Go inside the secret wars of the **ORDER OF ILLUMINATION.**



The **girl who started it all** returns like you've never seen her before!

PLUS, Apotheosis conversions with the Brushthralls, more mighty mechanika, and the lowdown on Privateer's "Next Big Thing"!

Fer' all you pathetic deck swabs out there who can't muster the gristle to wield a paintbrush, resident Hobby guru, John Cadice, imparts some worldly wisdom to motivate that barnacle crusted dungbie o' yers.

As a miniatures gamer and painter myself, I find I often need a swift kick in the aft to get my models painted. A bit of personal motivation can go a long way and if I can share with you what helps me work, maybe you can finally get that army of yours done.

- 1) **Make room.** Set a space aside with good light and all the necessary tools and paints at hand. It only takes a little preparation to make a space to paint, so don't let that stop you.
- 2) **Pick your poison.** Caffeine, need I say more?
- 3) **Stay on target.** Keep a bite size chunk of painting in front of you at one time. Putting out your whole Khadoran army to cheer you on while you paint is a bad idea. Keep it simple and stay focused on a few models at a time.
- 4) **Ambiance.** Ambient music, an old movie, or bad TV seems to do the trick. Why bad TV or old movies? Simple. You will want to watch something good. The goal is to take the tedium out of that tenth rifle you just painted.
- 5) **Breaks.** Interrupt anything longer than 90 minutes by getting up and stretching or walking around. It works when studying, and it works for other mental exercises as well.

6) **Assembly Line.** This works well for units. Paint several models together one stage at a time. You can save quite a significant amount of time.

7) **Don't work alone.** Having a buddy close by easily fulfills the need for ambient noise. Your friend also gives you a motivator for not quitting. Company makes you more inclined to get through something if you both have a painting goal.

8) **Stop caring.** Caring too much about the models can lead you to spend too much time planning and pondering your next move. Simply throw down your base colors, and take your time on the important stuff. Which takes us to...

9) **Details.** Your models live on a table at least an arm's length away. Paint for effect from a distance and you will have an excellent, standard playable army in half the time it takes some of our crazy painters (you know who you are) to finish a handful of models.

10) **Whaddy think?** Lastly, have a friend take a look at your figures and give an honest critique. A second set of eyes can do wonders to help you find any mistakes. Happy painting!



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