

WHITE DWARF



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TYRANID ATTACK: PLANETFALL! •
BATTLE REPORT - ELDAR VS. ELDAR

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Subject: Tyranid Bio-Weaponry Thesis

Lord Commanders,

While the development of natural projectile weaponry is known to occur in nature, the extent to which symbiotic organisms are utilized for this by the Tyranids is astounding. Somatic, pulmonary, bioelectric and biochemical munitions are commonly employed by and nurtured within the Tyranid organisms. What follows is a brief description suitable for dispensation to troops that may encounter this menace to the Imperium.

Magos Biologis Salk,
Draco Legion Biomedical Research station, New Hallefuss

BIO-WEAPONS: SYMBIOTIC RANGED ADAPTATIONS

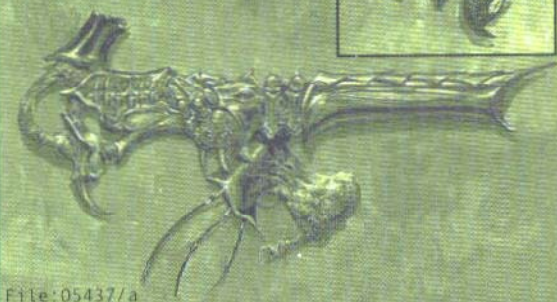
While some of the more bestial members of the Tyranid species lack any sort of ranged weapon capability, an increasing number of the larger, more advanced creatures are making use of them. Horrifying in effect, these biological weapons are quite efficient against even the might of the Adeptus Astartes.

BARBED STRANGLER: HAMUS GULALAEQUEO

The actual mode of delivery utilized by this weapon is nearly identical to the venom cannon with respect to somatic methods. The main difference between the two weapons lies in the projectile. The weapon itself, while symbiotic, also plays host to an Epiphyte-like parasitic plant, which produces the fruit that forms the ammunition for the weapon. These large mutant seeds are heavy and dense. The typical rind is replaced by a catalytic epithelium. Upon impact this causes germination that is explosive and extremely rapid. Root tendrils and

HAMUS GULALAEQUEO
<<low velocity somatic
animate flora projectile,
exo-symbiotic.>>

File: 05437/b
Mutant seed
ammunition.



File: 05437/a

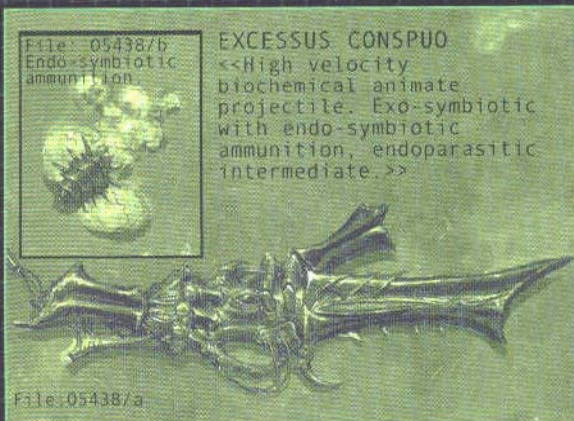
rhizomes erupt in all directions adhering to anything they cannot penetrate. As the metabolic apocalypse continues, silicate thorns and barbs begin to form, tearing and piercing anything captured and draining moisture and nutrients at horrifying speeds.

Hypothesis: Evolutionarily speaking these seedpods exhibit characteristics one would expect to find in many deathworld floras. Rapid growth would allow the plant to avoid predation and possibly ensnare food sources. In its current form the flora undergoes the entire growth cycle from seed to mature plant in a matter of seconds. This is a tremendous outlay of metabolic energy and the resultant plant appears to be a sterile mutant, albeit a stable one. The parasitic version incorporated into the weapon is likely to be the natural form of the plant. However once again we see the Tyranids are able to manipulate the genome of a species radically by producing a parent capable of generating offspring vastly deviant from its own morphology.



DEATHSPITTER: EXCESSUS CONSPUO

[The deathspitter bio-weapon is a complex system. The highly volatile nature of the ammunition has hindered efforts to adequately describe its composition prior to firing. However, analysis indicates that the following information is highly likely. Magos Biologis Salk]



The main structure of the weapon houses a brood chamber wherein lies the incubating young of a creature which may possibly be the protoplasmic cleaning creatures reported during boarding missions against Tyranid bioships in space by the Space Wolves Adeptus Astartes. Adjacent to this is a crustacean that tends the brood and performs a critical function in the firing process. The firing chamber is a tight tube of horn and bone sealed with a powerfully muscled flap. Firing this bio-weapon is accomplished in the following manner. Bioelectric signals goad the crustacean to retrieve an embryonic cyst and take it to the firing chamber. Once there the crustacean splits the cyst exposing the immature flesh of the embryo as it places it in the firing tube. [Note it appears to be a conditioned response as the crustacean is then allowed to eat the highly nutritional cyst husk as a 'reward' for the action. Within the firing chamber the biological breech block closes. When this occurs the enzymes on the breech block react explosively with the exposed flesh of the embryo, launching it screaming towards the target. The biochemistry of the embryonic acid blob is extremely volatile with most atmospheres,

causing it to audibly hiss as the epidermal layers are stripped away in a chemical fire. Upon impact the embryo is slain and the semi gelatinous mass of incomplete protein congeners, acids, caustics and enzymes is splattered over a significant area. The results to exposed personnel are horrific and many of the chemicals are of sufficient potency to damage Imperial armored vehicles.

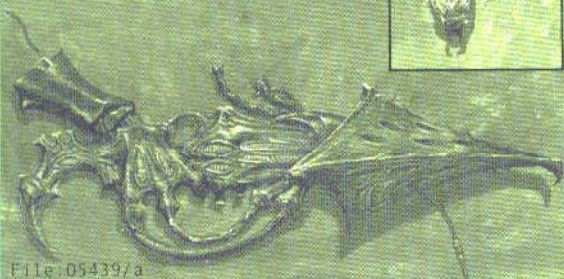
Hypothesis: Unable to formulate any hypothetical evolutionary path for the development of this weapon other than significant bioengineering and opportunistic utilization of multiple resources.

DEVOURER: PEREDO UORO

This weapon is more of a hive than a distinct organism. The weapon is meshed with the host in such a way as to provide food and incubation for a host of malformed Ripper larvae. It is these larvae which form the ammunition for the weapon. A large conical horn is perforated with multiple breathing tubes that also serve as avenues of egress in times of danger. Pheromone signals call the larvae to the breather tubes when the host senses the need to utilize the weapon. A bioelectric surge signals the brood to attack. When they encounter any object they immediately begin biting and burrowing in a frenzied attack while secreting highly corrosive bile. These creatures show a distinct taste for neurological tissues and move to the spinal column and brain with extreme haste causing an agonizing but mercifully quick death.

PEREDO UORO
<<High Velocity Bioelectric
Animate Projectiles
exo-symbiotic colony.>>

File: 05439/b
Devourer larvae





Hypothesis: This would seem to indicate bio-manipulation of an aggressive defense mechanism in the original species. <Note. The demoralizing effects of this weapon have been noted and all Imperial officers should be prepared to bolster any troops that encounter them.>

FLESH BORER: PULPA TEREPRO

PULPA TEREPRO
<<High Velocity Animate Projectile.>>

File:05440/b
Borer beetle.



This weapon, employed by base troops of the Tyranids, is a brood chamber. Housed within is a large brood of Borer beetles that, once mature, is kept in a state of torpor by hormone emissions. These beetles are hatched and grown within the weapon and presumably spend their entire lives within its confines until they are called upon. Neurological stimulation from the host signals the weapon to move one of the beetles to the firing sphincter. Once there the beetle is awakened from its sleep and awaits the bioelectrical signal to attack. Genetic engineering seems to have produced these blind beetles; their halteres are configured in such a way as to prevent any significant deviation in flight trajectory. When it receives the attack signal the sphincter opens allowing the beetle to streak towards the target. Upon impact, the beetle, clinging tenaciously, begins to secrete digestive enzymes and uses its powerful jaws to begin burrowing into the target. All this is accomplished with blinding speed and ferocity. This activity persists until the beetle's meagre energy stores are depleted and it dies from exhaustion or some trauma ends its short and violent life.

Synopsis: Similar in form and function to the devourer, presumably an aggressive fauna whose natural instincts have been utilized to create effective weapons. It is theorized that the weapons are radically modified versions of the beetle and actually produce the eggs they brood.

SPINEFIST: SPINOSUS MANUS

This organism is typically seen attached to an upper appendage with a long larynx coiled around to the main body of the host where it connects to the respiratory system. The spinefist is a crustacean that develops a set of lethally poisonous spikes similar to many oceanic echinoderms. These spines are loosely connected and situated upon a series of baffled airways. Employing an unusual method of delivery, the spinefist is powered by large heavily muscled breathing bladders within the host's body. When channeled to the creature the gas volume expended by the rapid contraction of these bladders serves to propel the munitions. The creature itself only allows one section of its arsenal to be open to the airways at a time thus ensuring multiple volleys can be fired if needed.

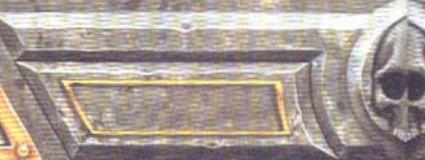
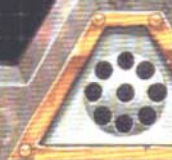
SPINOSUS MANUS
<<Medium Velocity Pneumatic Projectile.
exo-symbiotic.>>

File:05441/b
Poisonous Spikes



File:05441/a

Hypothesis: The organism in its present form is incapable of delivering its spines to any target without the aid of the host. It appears to be engineered from an inter-tidal predatory crustacean that likely utilized the compressibility of gaseous atmospheres to charge its weapon's batteries. The long umbilical larynx would indicate it likely remained firmly attached to the seabed or coral reef.

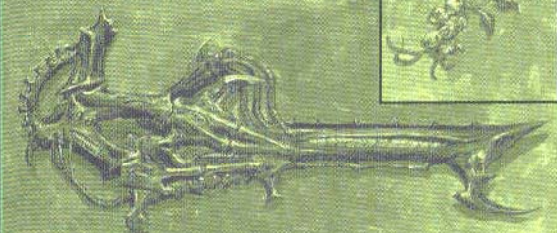


while raising this larynx to acquire gases. Liquids would require more energy to compress to a viable degree than the gases. Autopsies indicate vestigial gills and tethers where the spines appear to have been anchored. This would have allowed the organism to spear a prey item in the violent surf and reel it back in without having to release its anchor. [Even compressed to the expected biological degree this organism may have been able to attain, the gases would have adversely affected its buoyancy necessitating the tenacious grip on a firm anchor to avoid acceding the water-column and thus being vulnerable to predators.]

VENOM CANNON: SANIES EFFUNDO

This large slender horn-like weapon is a hollow tube, lined with concentric muscles, which expels with great force a cyst. Large pulmonary sacs have been observed in some creatures' autopsies, which may provide force upon the projectile as well. These cysts are produced within the body cavity of the host Tyranid that is connected to the weapon by several umbilicals. These provide the weapon with neural stimulus, nourishment and ammunition. The cyst has a carapace hull with an insulating internal lipid layer, the contents of which are highly pressurized. It contains a voracious cocktail of acids, enzymes and toxins that are released upon impact. This is capable of dissolving armor and flesh with equal relish. The cyst, however, is not extremely dense or hard and thus most armored vehicles can withstand impacts without critical damage.

SANIES EFFUNDO
<<High Velocity somatic biochemical projectile.>>



File:05442/a

File:05442/b, Cyst ammunition



Hypothesis: From an evolutionary standpoint it is hard to imagine how such a symbiotic organism came to be. One might suspect that this is a defensive adaptation taken out of context and utilized. It is known that these weapons are widely used to exterminate large indigenous lifeforms on planets prior to tyranoforming. Perhaps they act as a first stage digestion process as well as an effective weapon.

BIO-WEAPONS: MELEE CLASSIFICATIONS

LASH WHIPS: VERBERO VERBER

VERBERO VERBER

<<Non-symbiotic melee bio-weapon.>>



File:05443

These typically exhibit three radiant tendrils that terminate in hooks of rigid horn. The 'body' of the organism is contained within a bony sheath that is characteristically grasped by the wielder. Data collected from auspex and field examinations indicate animal intelligence. The lash whips will continue to attack any who approach long after the wielder is eliminated and tests seem to indicate they do this by sensing brain-waves, perhaps another natural predation tactic appropriated by the Tyranidic horde for weapons applications. The 'hive-mind' wavelengths do not stimulate the creature to attack, most likely due to long periods of pseudo-symbiotic relationship or bioengineering. However, it is suspected that the neural linkages and sensory nodes on the sheath may allow for more direct control of the weapon's actions.

Hypothesis: Presumably the product of bioengineering a common radiant marine organism <Echinoderm>.

Magos Biologis Salk,
Draco Legion Biomedical Research station,
New Hallefuss

ARAGA STOOD UPON the crest of the hill, leaning on his spearstaff, and looked out across the savannah. The rolling grasslands stretched for miles in every direction, a yellow sea swaying gently in the wind, broken only by the occasional tree or rocky outcrop. On the horizon he could make out the darker green of the jungle canopy. The tribesman took out a red-colored root from an animal skin pouch around his neck and began to chew it. As he crushed the root between his teeth, he felt its juices spreading their effect through his body, loosening the ties between mortal flesh and spirit. His limbs began to go numb and he felt his mind ready itself for the journey to the world of the gods. He looked vaguely up into the yellow sky, his gaze attracted by movement.

From out of the heavens dropped a star, rapidly falling towards him, straight as an arrow towards the ridge. This was an omen, but Araga was not sure if it was good or ill. For almost a hundred heartbeats the tribesman watched the object growing larger and larger, until it impacted into the ground at the base of the hill in a shower of mud and dust. It looked like a gigantic egg, made of thick leathery skin and ribbed bone plates. As Araga watched, the egg cracked open, its upper half peeling apart like a grotesque flower. There was a spray of purplish ichor, and a large, gangling shape flopped from the star-egg onto the ground.

The shape stretched itself up to its full height, the fluids of its cocoon dripping from its body. It was over twice Araga's height, and as it stood on two thick legs it unfolded four upper limbs, two of them wicked-looking claws over a man's height in length. Its purplish flesh was protected by overlapping chitinous plates, and powerful muscle and sinew rippled under its dark skin. Araga's heart began beating faster and faster and he felt cold sweat prickling all over his body, making him shiver uncontrollably as the creature looked around, seeming to sniff the air. With a sudden snap of its monstrous insect head, the beast fixed its hellish glare on Araga, snaring him in the gaze of its red eyes. With a pace startling for its size, the star-beast bounded up the slope, its forelimbs ripping at the earth to increase its speed.

Araga found himself transfixed, unable to move or shout. He realized this must be one of the creatures from beyond the Void which the newcomers had warned his people about, a predator from beyond the distant stars which had come for his soul. As the monster sped towards him, Araga felt something nagging at the back of his mind, and realized he could hear a rumbling from off to his right. He wanted to look but could not tear his eyes away from the demon of destruction racing towards him. The creature was only a few great strides away from Araga, its claws arching back to deliver the killing attack.

Without warning, a dazzling storm of light lashed into the Void Demon, blasting it sprawling to the ground, its limbs flailing wildly. Snapped out of the beast's hypnotic

spell, Araga span to see metal creatures advancing along the ridge, spitting fire at the monstrous intruder. The Sky Spirits had arrived to save him!

THE NATIVE JUST keeps on staring dumbly at us as we open fire again. I guess it ain't that surprising, considering that to these guys a simple mono-edged knife is a creation of the gods. Dumb locals. If they weren't so stupid they'd be able to fend for themselves and we wouldn't be here risking our necks to protect them. My attention's distracted away from him when the Lictor gets to its feet again and the Chimeras have to fire another volley into the creature. I order the rest of the platoon to take up firing positions, keeping up a steady stream of las bolts as we advance. The Lictor then leaps at Franx's squad, but even as it races towards them, hissing like some damned Oviran cobra, they tear it apart with their lasguns and heavy bolter. It kind of collapses in on itself, those huge killing claws folding over its body.

I walk up to make sure it's truly dead. You can never tell with these fragging Tyranids. Some of them have got powers of regeneration you wouldn't believe. Its dark blood is spattered all over the thin grass, and it certainly looks like a corpse. To make sure, I level my laspistol at its head and fire six shots.

"Okay, Last Chancers!" I call to my platoon. "Mount up and move out!"

Some of them begin to walk back to the Chimera transports, but Franx, Letts and some others walk over to where I'm standing. It's Letts who speaks first.

"We've been thinking, Kage. We've got the perfect opportunity here. I mean, we've got a great chance to get the hell out of this fragging outfit, once and for all."

I look at them, not knowing what they mean. "What've you got in mind?"

"Well," Franx says, "It's two leagues to the jungles. The Colonel would never find us in there, and there's plenty of food to forage, shelter, everything we need to survive. We just have to turn the Chimeras south and we're free men again."

His eyes are intense now beneath his thick curls of hair, and he takes another step forward.

"Think of it!" he continues. "No more Last Chancers! No more fragging suicide missions for the Colonel. No more spending every minute wondering which of a thousand kinds of hell we're going to end up in next. Free men, Lieutenant, free men!"

I can hardly believe it. I've been fighting with Franx for a year, and Letts has been with the XIIIth Penal Legion for twice as long. Like me, like all the Last Chancers, they were thrown out of their regular units for breaking the Imperial Guard's rules in a big way, to serve the rest of their lives in a penal legion. We've walked across a dozen battlefields together, in the worst fighting you can imagine. We've been through them all – suicide assaults, rearguard actions and any other no-hope situation you can think

of. It takes more than guts and brawn to survive for that long and I can't believe they're being so stupid now.

"What kind of fraggin' scheme is that?" I snap, and their jaws drop. Franx starts getting angry, and I can see the blood rushing to his face. He's gonna start trouble if I don't do something right now.

"Look, boys," I say, trying to calm them down, "you haven't thought this through, really. There's a Tyranid hive ship up there, full of specially evolved killing machines, all hungering to eat you up as soon as look at you. The only reason the sky isn't full of mycetic spores yet is 'cause we've managed to pick off the Lictors before they found Deliverance, so they ain't sure where to commit their forces. But it's just a stalling action, 'cause we can't get them all, no way – and even if we could, as soon as they find out there's more Imperial transports on the way, they'll send every bio-engineered little fragger they've got onto the planet. So the way I see it, you've got two choices. There's your plan, which means hanging around in the open. I know it's jungle but they'll still find you when they come down, and then what kind of chance are you gonna have? Or, you can come back with me to Deliverance, where there's a big wall to hide behind, three hundred more Last Chancers, the Battle Sisters and two thousand natives to help us fight. Your choice, but if you ain't going my way I'm gonna have to insist you go on foot. The Colonel would skin me if I let you take the Chimeras. It's only midday, so you've got eight hours walking to sundown, plenty of time for you to hole up and wait for the damn Tyranids to come."

I see realization dawning on their faces like the sun breaking out from behind a cloud. I thought I'd taught them better than this, but it just goes to show that some people never learn anything unless they get taught the hard way. Unfortunately, when you're in the Last Chancers, most people who learn the hard way are food for the worms.

They don't say anything, they just turn around and start walking back to the Chimeras. I take one last look at the Lictor, just to be safe. It's strange, 'cause any other type of cadaver would be crawling with flesh-ants on this damn planet by now, and there'd be a flock of carrion birds circling overhead. But there's nothing; not even the bugs will touch a Tyranid. Frag, of all the things in this galaxy, those fraggers make my skin crawl the most.

SO WE FINISH the firesweep, and I'm back in Deliverance, debriefing with the Colonel in the central keep. I can see the rest of the missionary station out of the window, the mid-afternoon sun blazing down fiercely. It's not big, little more than a large village really, half a mile across, with a large central compound, some scattered buildings and, of course, this keep which doubles as an Ecclesiarchy shrine. I can see the men walking sentry on the curtain wall and even at this distance I reckon I can feel their tension.

"Kage!" Colonel Schaeffer barks, and I snap back from the outside world. There's him.

me and the other two Lieutenants – Green and Kronin.

"As I was saying," the Colonel continues pointedly, "We've had contact with the relief force. They are no more than two days away. If we can hold for just forty-eight hours, there will be two whole regiments of Imperial Guard. The wall should be fairly straightforward to defend. It is eighteen feet high, so we just have to worry about their Hormagaunts and Lictors leaping straight up it; the others we can pick off as they climb up the walls. That leaves only the gate, but that is flanked by two towers with emplaced autocannons, and we can park a Chimera behind the gates themselves to make them harder to force. Any questions?"

Kronin clears his throat nervously and wipes a hand through the thin hair plastered across his scalp. He's a skinny man, kind of jittery in my experience. Emperor alone knows how he had the guts to have his squad incinerate an Imperial temple after stealing the artifacts inside. Even more of surprise is that the Ecclesiarchy didn't demand his head on a pole and his entrails decorating the roadway.

"What about Gargoyles, sir?" Kronin asks.

"No problem," the Colonel assures us. He's ice cold, as usual, as calm as if we weren't going to be fighting for our damned lives in a few days, perhaps even in the next few hours. As always, he's wearing his full dress uniform, clean shaven like he was fresh out of the barracks. He's a big man, physically I mean, but there's more to him than that. Those cold blue eyes and his own force of will make him seem twice as tall as anyone around. I wouldn't call it charisma, 'cause he's an uncommunicative and surly man. He just has this sheer presence that fills the room. "We have two Hydras and this keep has four point-defense emplacements. If anything tries flying over the walls, we have the firepower to gun them down. In any case, Kage and his platoon are acting as mobile reserve behind the walls. If the Tyranids get a breakthrough at the walls or gates, or we get some unexpected visitors dropping down, he'll move in and bolster the defense. Anything else?"

I glance out of the window again and see the sunlight glittering off highly polished armor, which makes me think of something.

"The Sisters. What's the deal there?" I ask, already knowing the answer.

"The Adepta Sororitas are under Ministorum authority, so we have no direct control over their actions. I have spoken to the Sister Superior in charge and outlined our plan. I am sure they

will play their part. The same applies to the levies. They will be manning the walls, and we will concentrate our guns around the gatehouse. That is where the fighting will be fiercest. If you need to see me, that is where you will find me."

No surprise there, then. The Colonel is always in the roughest of the fighting, and he always walks out, too. Emperor alone knows what makes him do it. We're here because we did wrong and got caught. But him? What did he do wrong? I mean, what kind of man would choose to lead an Imperial Guard Penal Legion? What kind of mind do you need to walk into so many situations where you must be blessed by the Emperor to ever take another breath again, and then march straight out and into the next one? He must be mad, I mean seriously insane. They say he spends his time on board ship practicing ways to kill himself in the event that he's wounded. I take it back about the Tyranids. There are some things which are a hell of a lot more scary, because they're in human form. That's what they say he is, a devil in human form, and when he's ready for a fight like now, and you look into his eyes like I'm doing now, you can believe it.

IT'S ABOUT NOON the day after and the Tyranids have found us. Maybe a Lictor slipped through the net, which wouldn't be surprising considering that for big brutes they can be really sneaky. They can sniff you out ten miles downwind, and they're covered in scales which shift colour so that you can't see them. Or maybe the 'Nids just got fed up with waiting and decided to come and get us, wherever we are.

I stood on the wall last night and watched the spores dropping down. Scary sight, believe me. It was like ten meteor storms all at once, these falling stars coming down, wave after wave of them. There's an old saying, if you see a shooting star you can offer a prayer to the Emperor and he'll grant it. Well, with all of those flaming stars that's one hell of a lot of prayers to be delivered on, but I decided to use them all in one go, for one big, huge prayer to the Emperor. Do you want to know what I prayed for? I prayed that those shooting stars would stop coming down. But they didn't, so I guess a murderer like me hasn't got the right to pray to the Emperor anymore, which is why I'm here fighting now, serving Him in the only way I know.

Frag, being here, in this missionary station with all these Ecclesiarchy types, it must be

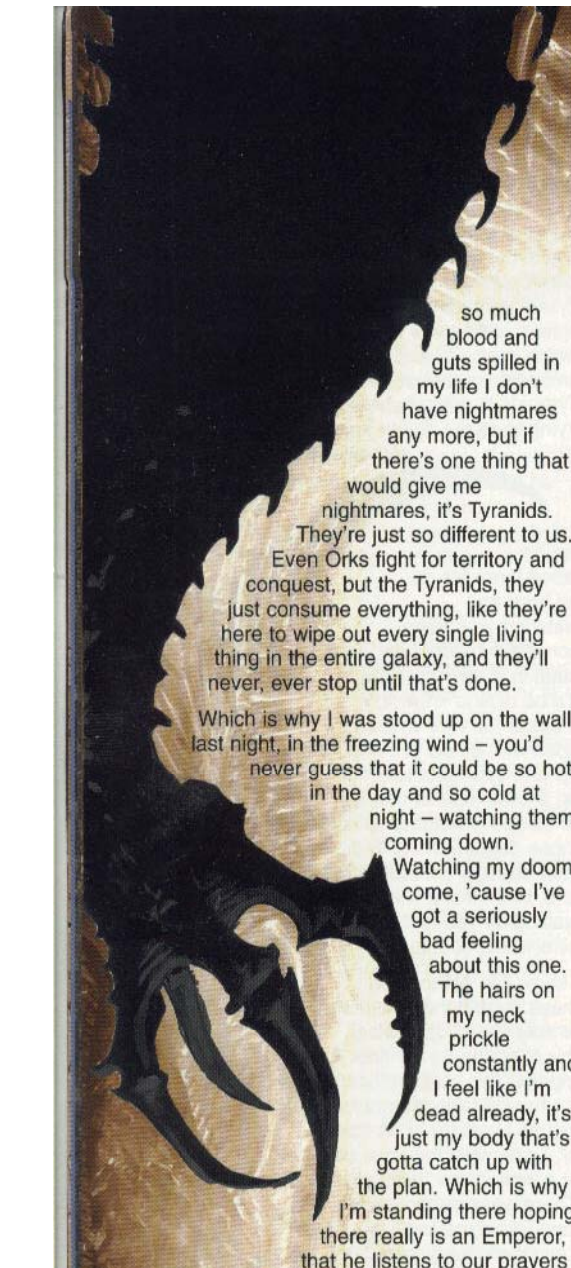
having an effect on me. I mean, I know the Emperor's our Lord and is watching over us, but I've always figured that those of us who can, have to watch out for ourselves, 'cause he's there to watch out for those who can't watch out for themselves. Just like we're here to defend the tribespeople from the Tyranids, 'cause all they've got are crappy knives and spears and brave warrior hearts, which is all well and good if you're fighting amongst yourselves, but against the Tyranids is going to be about as effective as trying to stop a Saber shell from blowing you away by holding up your hands. But I guess, when

you've stood there for an hour and watched your doom come down out of the stars in a constant flow, it'd be nice to know that if this is the time when it goes wrong and you end up with your guts torn out on a Lictor's flesh hooks, or some Hormagaunt stabs those dagger-talons through your chest, it ain't really the end, that there's someone waiting for you and it wasn't all a waste of time.

I know I've got to ditch these morbid thoughts. Got to stay sharp, otherwise this is gonna be my final trip with the Last Chancers. It's hard though, so hard, 'cause I was there on Ichar IV, I saw what they can do to a world, how they fight. There were six thousand Last Chancers back then. Less than five hundred of us made it out. The regular troops, I hear, lost over a million men defending Ichar IV. There were Titans there, and Space Marines too, if the rumors are true, and even those Eldar turned up, I heard someone say once. All those guns, all those men and we only just won the fight. I've seen

DELIVERANCE

by Gav Thorpe



so much
blood and
guts spilled in
my life I don't
have nightmares
any more, but if
there's one thing that
would give me
nightmares, it's Tyranids.
They're just so different to us.
Even Orks fight for territory and
conquest, but the Tyranids, they
just consume everything, like they're
here to wipe out every single living
thing in the entire galaxy, and they'll
never, ever stop until that's done.

Which is why I was stood up on the wall
last night, in the freezing wind – you'd
never guess that it could be so hot
in the day and so cold at
night – watching them
coming down.

Watching my doom
come, 'cause I've
got a seriously
bad feeling
about this one.
The hairs on
my neck
prickle
constantly and
I feel like I'm
dead already, it's
just my body that's
gotta catch up with
the plan. Which is why
I'm standing there hoping
there really is an Emperor,
that he listens to our prayers

and comes to our aid. But I can't count on
that, which is why I'm here now as the sun
starts dipping towards the jungles, ready to
fight like I've never had to fight before,
ready to do anything I can, because death
is stalking across those plains right now.

THE MAIN ASSAULT wave has hit the
walls. The sun's low on the horizon and
they attack from that direction to blind us.
The Colonel was right about the Gargoyles,
our air defenses were more than a match.
About a hundred of them came flying in,
diving down onto the fort. The guns opened
up, blowing them out of the sky. Some
managed to get over the walls, and then the
Hydras got them, firing high explosive shells
into the broods, blasting them apart. That
was horrible, pieces of bloodied and
charred meat dropping down on you like
obscene hailstones. No time to clear up the
mess, though, 'cause the rest of the swarm
has just arrived. It's hard to tell what's going
on from back where we are in reserve, a
couple of hundred paces from the wall.
We've cleared a killing zone, demolishing
the buildings inside the perimeter and using
them to make a redoubt around the keep,
so that if the Tyranids get inside we've got a

second firing line. Most of the action seems
to be going off around the gatehouse, just
like the Colonel said it would. The men are
three ranks deep on the walls on the south
side, while the Battle Sisters are holding the
west wall. There's about half as many of the
Sororitas as there are Last Chancers, but
they seem to be holding out better than we
are. Then again, give me a bolt gun and
power armor and I'd show you just how
mean and nasty a Last Chancer can get.

It's about a quarter of an hour since the
attack begun when the Tyranids get their
first breakthrough. I'm watching the eastern
end of the south wall when I see a horde of
Termagants running around, and I realize
there's nobody else up that end anymore.

"Okay, Last Chancers! Time to die!" I bellow
as usual, and then we're running across the
killing ground towards the wall, fast as we
can. The gunners in the Chimeras take the
hint, and suddenly there's a fusillade of
heavy bolter fire and multilaser shots
directed at the Termagants. Thirty heart-
pounding seconds later and we're leaping
up the steps, snapping off shots with our
lasguns as we close in. The supporting fire
from the Chimeras stops as we reach the
top, and suddenly I'm surrounded by
the creatures.

I see one of them levelling its living gun at
me and just manage to take it down before
it can fire. All of a sudden, they charge at
us, and I rip my chainsword from my belt
and get the blades whirling, while the others
make ready with their bayonets. The
Termagants are biting and clawing at
everything in their path, and I'd swear they
were mindless if it wasn't for the
coordinated fashion of their attack. As they
sweep around me I feel like I'm going to get
washed away in the wave, and panic hits
me, bile rising out of my stomach as I see
those fanged, nightmarish faces all around
me. One of the Termagants leaps at me, its
four upper limbs drawn back ready to
attack, but I bring the chainsword round and
the blades crash through its carapace,
sending thick, alien blood splattering across
my face. It tastes foul and I'm almost sick
with the stench of it. I put a shot through the
bulbous head of another one and then
something hits me hard in the back. This
thing is latched onto me, and I can't get at
it. I feel its claws scrabbling at my flak
jacket, hear the material tearing away, and
its hot breath is on my neck, a long pointed
tongue slithering over my neck. Its jaws
latch onto my shoulder and I try to angle my
laspistol round for a shot, desperately trying
to rip this beast off of me, 'cause I don't
want to be killed by some damned
Termagant. I'm not going to go like this, not
like this.

Before it gets the killing blow in, Truko is
there, one of Franx's squad, his bayonet
skewering the Termagant, and I feel it let go
and drop to the floor. There's no time to
thank him, though, as he gets thrown to the
ground, half his face ripped off by a vicious
claw. The creature is hunched over him, all
six limbs on the ground ready to spring, and
its red eyes turn to look up at me. I shoot its
legs from beneath it then drive the

chainsword into its soft, unprotected guts.
Truko's screaming, wailing his head off, but
there's no time to give him peace. No rest
for the wicked, as they say.

We push them back, inch by bloody inch, to
the edge of the wall. I see Franx pick one of
them up and hurl it bodily over the parapet,
its limbs and tail still flailing around even as
it plummets down. I look over the edge of
the wall, and I see how they managed to
get up. A pile of their bodies stretches two-
thirds of the way up the wall, almost ten feet
high, body upon body upon body, creating a
ramp of corpses for the others to run up.

"Grenades! Blow those bodies away from
the wall!" I shout, even as I dodge aside to
avoid a barbed tail lashing towards my
throat. My chainsword bites again, making
an ear-piercing screech as it shrieks
through chitinous plates. The others heard
me, though, and they're tossing frag
grenades over the parapet, trying to
dislodge the fleshy pile. I see Marshall
standing atop the wall, gripping his lasrifle
by the barrel and swinging it from side to
side like a club, battering away at the brood
as it scuttles up towards us. The grenades
blossom, sending bits of torn flesh flying,
and something gives. The pile of bodies
slides outwards along the walls, falling to
the ground leaving smears of blood along
the rockcrete.

Then the Termagants are falling back, away
from the wall. But things aren't over yet,
there's something else coming towards us,
coming at us real fast. With long flea-like
leaps and bounds the Hormagaunts speed
in, almost flying over the litter of corpses
leading up to the wall. We're trying to shoot
as many of them as possible as they close
in, but there's still twenty, maybe thirty of
them when they get to the base of the wall.
They stop there for half a heartbeat,
bunching those powerful leg muscles and
then they spring up, clearing the wall by a
good two or three feet, those four deadly
dagger-talons jabbing out. One of them
punches its claw into Marshall's shoulder
and he grabs its arm in one hand, holding it
close. He wraps his other arm around the
throat of another as it tries to push past,
and then throws himself off the wall, taking
them both with him. A serrated claw sweeps
up towards my groin, but I manage to get
there with the chainsword, lopping off the
limb, my laspistol scoring a hit through one
of its glassy red eyes. The rest of the fight
just blurs into a waking nightmare of
hacking and slashing and stabbing, kicking
and shooting, punching and screaming,
bestial faces and hot breath, flailing talons
and ripping claws, blood and filth and guts
slick across the walkway, a constant fight
until your arms are leaden with fatigue and
your brain can't process the information
anymore, you're just fighting from instinct
and nothing else.

WE MANAGE TO stave off the assault and,
as the Tyranids fall back across the plain, a
cheer starts up by the gatehouse and
spreads along the wall. I let my men cheer
along as well, though we've got little to
celebrate. The shock of the close call with
the Termagant is beginning to creep up on
me, and I look around for something to do

to keep my mind occupied and not think about how close I came to going down this time. I see the Colonel striding along the walkway towards me, his face as grim as ever. I've never seen him break into a smile, not once.

"Kage! Clear away the dead. I'm sending flamer teams to clear the front of the wall." Then he's gone again, issuing orders, getting the wounded divided into those that can fight and those that need to be given the Emperor's grace. That's it, no thanks, no "Well done, Kage: you held the wall." Just more orders, more work, more fighting and dying to be done. I detail some of my men to start throwing the bodies over the parapet and see that the flamer teams are already at work, jets of fire turning the piles into pyres. I leave them to their dirty work and seek out the Colonel.

I find him outside the keep, talking to Nathaniel, the missionary in charge of the station. They seem to be arguing about something.

"But these men need treating, you cannot make them fight again," Nathaniel's complaining.

"If these men cannot fight, they are dead, missionary. We need every single man we can have for the walls," the Colonel replies in that low, grating voice of his. It's the first time I've had a chance to get a proper look at him since the fight began. His uniform is soaked in blood, alien and human, but none of it appears to be his. There's not a scratch on his skin, not a fragging scratch. My spine goes to ice and I try not to think about it.

Nathaniel's still arguing, but the Colonel holds up his hand to stop him.

"These men do not deserve your pity," he says, his eyes flashing like sun on ice. "They are thieves, murderers, looters, rapists, insubordinates and heretics. Every sin you can conceive of has been committed by at least one man here. More than that, they are traitors. They once served as free men in the great Imperial army. But they betrayed the trust placed in them by the Emperor and his servants. They have broken the proscriptions of Imperial Law and have profaned the Emperor's benevolence with their selfishness and I will, I *must*, punish them for it."

"Only the Emperor can judge our sins," argues Nathaniel.

"And only in death can we receive the Emperor's judgement," the Colonel completes the catechism. Nathaniel takes a long look at him, then turns away.

"Remember, Nathaniel," the Colonel calls after him, "Serve the Emperor today, for tomorrow you may be dead!" And then, just for an instant, a tiny fraction of a second, there's a ghost of a smile on Colonel Schaeffer's lips, a minuscule hint of satisfaction, like he knows something the rest of the galaxy doesn't.

"Kage!" he calls, like he must have sensed I was there, beckoning me over with a finger. "As I am sure you know, that was just the

first assault. I do not know when the next one will come, so stay ready. It is only an hour until the sun goes down, so I think they will wait until nightfall. I want you and your platoon to stay near the gate. This first attack was just to test out our defenses, to count our guns. They know we were most hard-pressed around the gate, so they'll throw the bulk of their forces there next time. We must hold the gate at all costs, Kage, otherwise it's all over. Stay close to the gate, but wait for my signal. Do not, at any costs, allow yourself to get drawn away from the gate. Is that clear?"

"Perfectly, sir!" I reply, as if I couldn't see the scenario for myself. This time we just faced Gargoyles, Termagants and Hormagaunts. They're all expendable troops. Next time, it'll be much worse. They'll come in with the Warriors, the Carnifexes, and maybe even the big bug himself, the Hive Tyrant.

"You have your orders then, Lieutenant. Snap to it, I want clear fire for everyone in half an hour." Then he's off again, shouting for Green and Kronin.

THE COLONEL WAS RIGHT, as I knew he would be. He's always so damned right. Nightfall comes sharply, the Tiranids waiting us out for the moment. I help Kronin's platoon rig up some searchlights scavenged from the Chimeras and get them set up on the wall. The constant hum of the portable generators fills the air, but listening won't do us any good, 'cause those Tiranids can move as silent as you like when they want to. That's one of the scariest things about them – the silence. No battlecries, no war chants, just waves of them sweeping on towards you. When they're fighting, they hiss a lot, but I doubt if they've got any real language to speak of. They're just animals, bugs, but they're well organized for all that. They're like the wasps I saw on Antreides, who seemed to know what each other were up to. When one of them found you, the rest would soon come buzzing in, just like the Lictors finding the prey for the rest of the swarm.

So I'm up on the wall checking everything is okay, when the searchlights blaze on at last. The stupid grunts start angling them far away from the wall, like they want to get the earliest warning possible, which I can understand. Problem is, the light doesn't hit the ground before it's too weak to show anything. I grab the nearest one and point it further down, about seventy yards out. I catch a glimmer of movement and shout for the others to train on that point. What I see makes my spine tingle with fear. A sensation, I might add, that I'm not all that familiar with, though far too familiar for my own liking. There's a big brood of Termagants out there, crawling through the grass on their bellies, sneaking really close. Behind them are crouched the Warriors, big beasts twice as tall as a man, their four upper limbs evolved into a variety of deadly ranged and close combat weapons. They're creeping forward, bony joints and chitinous plates shown up in the white glare of the searchlights. The light glitters off their eyes, countless shining orbs reflected back at me. Those eyes seem dead, there's no emotion,

nothing. Not even a touch of hunger, which is what you'd expect, considering that this race devours whole planets. No, the only eyes I've ever seen colder than those white-fire stares are Colonel Schaeffer's, and we all know he's not really human.

"Mark your targets! Open fire!" I bellow. I see them opening up, first with the missile launchers and autocannons and then with volleys of lasgun fire as the 'Nids realize the game's up, and they rise up out of the grass and charge towards us, a wave of multi-limbed monstrosities intent on our destruction. I take one last look as they come streaming over the plain, blossoms of fire exploding in their mist, showing up their snarling faces in brief glimpses of hellfire, before jumping down the steps three at a time to get back to my platoon.

"Right, men," I tell them, "Stay steady. Follow my lead, stay tight. If you get separated, they'll pick you off, no problem. When you shoot, aim for the flesh. Your lasguns will have about as much effect on their carapace as punching a Leman Russ. Watch your ammo counters too, 'cause tonight's gonna be a long haul and I don't want to face those fraggin' bugs with just my bare hands. One final thing: don't get yourselves killed, 'cause otherwise I'm gonna have to put up with another fresh draft of no-hopers. If you let me go down, sure as hell I'm gonna come back and haunt you for the rest of your miserable lives, reminding you just what a bunch of fraggin' slack-jawed sons of Orks you are!"

That gets a smile. Personally, I couldn't give a frag about all this pre-battle speeches dung, but some of them need it, I can tell. Just like me, they're getting awful nervous. I mean, they're a bunch of hard-nosed, thick-skinned meatheads for the most part, but even when you've got nothing but air between your ears you can't get over the unreasoning horror that the Tiranids bring out in you. It's not just like they kill you. They devour you, take everything you are, everything you ever were gonna be, and change it and pervert it into something else. It's a horrible thought, I don't mind telling you.

The fire's still pretty steady from the top of the wall, so I guess we're holding out okay. I give myself the luxury of watching the Battle Sisters for a while, fighting alongside the natives. It's a really bizarre scene, I can tell you. You have a thousand or so of those dark-skinned warriors, hurling spears and firing bows, their skin glistening with sweat, their booming war chants echoing down from the wall. And then there's the Sororitas. They're chanting too, their voices raised in constant prayer to the Emperor, a choir all singing as one. I can't make out the words, but it reaches inside me, lifting my spirits. It's a song of defiance and devotion, and as they sing they fire methodical bursts from their bolters, fusillade after fusillade pouring into the darkness, every round sending a streak of light into the shadows from its internal propellant.

Then I see a swathe of the natives jumping in all directions, screaming like mad, clawing at their faces and chests. That'd be

a deathspitter then, fires some kind of explosive bug that sprays acid all over the place. Burn through near enough anything, given time, and against the exposed flesh of the native irregulars it's utterly lethal. Dragging my eyes away from the scene, trying to turn a deaf ear to their agonized screeches, I watch what's happening around the gatehouse.

There's hand-to-hand fighting going on now, and I pick out the Colonel, a glowing power sword in one fist and a bolt pistol in the other. While the others are desperately hacking and slaying, he's just stepping to and fro, felling a foe with every blow or shot, as if the chaos going on around wasn't happening at all. I see the shape of a Lictor rise up behind him, but he just turns on the spot, fills its face full of bolts and then chops its legs from underneath it with two swings of the power sword. Calm as you like, as if he were just taking a stroll in the morning airs. Damn, but he's so cold, it makes the Battle Sisters seem positively emotional, and the glance they reserve for scum like us would freeze worse than a night on Valhalla.

Then something appears on the western gatehouse that almost makes me swallow my tongue in terror. Silhouetted against the rising moon is the figure of the Hive Tyrant. It's almost three times as tall as the men around it. Two arms are molded into some kind of massive living gun, while the other two end in enormous, wickedly curved scythes. A thick tail lashes between its legs, tipped with a sting the size of your arm. Mandibles that can chew a man in two snap hungrily in its jaw, and its body is covered in chitinous armor and bony protrusions.

It fires the venom cannon into the packed mass on the gatehouse, blasting apart Guardsmen and Tyranids alike. Its head stretches back and lets loose a horrifying bellowing screech, which seems to roll along the wall like a wave, sending men staggering in fear, making them pause in their fight so that they're cut down with ease by the Termagants and Warriors they're fighting. The Tyrant steps down from the parapet, its hoofed feet sending splinters of masonry flying as it stamps down with all of its massive weight. Gazing around, it fixes its evil eyes on the Colonel as he musters his men for a counter-attack. They charge in, las bolts bouncing harmlessly off the monster's armored hide, their bayonets snapping against its chitinous plates. Then one scything talon sweeps down and I see a spray of blood fountain into the air as four men are cut down with that single blow. The thing lashes out again, tearing across the chest of another Guardsman, his ragged corpse flung from the wall to land in a limp heap in the courtyard. Surely even the Colonel has met his match this time. He's chopping his way through a brood of Warriors to get at the Hive Tyrant. There's a pause in the fighting and he glances over the parapet to the ground outside. He stops for a moment and looks over to where we're positioned. With a wave of his arms, he signals us to attack.

16 DELIVERANCE

"Here we go again, Last Chancers!" I shout out, and start heading for the wall. I've taken perhaps five steps when something seems wrong. I realize that I'm alone and I stop and look around. They're all just standing there, looking up at the Hive Tyrant as it butchers another squad of men.

"What the frag is this?" I howl. I grab Sergeant Feonix by his lapels and push him towards the wall, but he turns round and snarls at me.

"This is madness!" he shouts over the cries from the slaughter on the wall. "That's a fraggin' Hive Tyrant, it's gonna kill every one of us! We've gotta get the hell out of here while we can. Deliverance has fallen, Kage, face it." He calms down a little and fixes me with an intense stare. "There's nothing more we can do! We've gotta save ourselves. You ain't no fraggin' martyr, Kage, and you know it."

He's right, but then something catches my eye over their heads. There's lights dropping down from the stars again, curving down from orbit towards Deliverance in a long arc. I glance back at the gatehouse, and see the gates shuddering as some titanic beast tries to break them down. I make a decision.

"Look," I tell them, pointing up to the pinpricks of light falling to the south. "There ain't no escaping Deliverance, boys. That's more mycetic spores coming down, we're gonna be surrounded. There's no way we can get clear of the area before those things reach here."

Kruzo, from Letts's squad, opens his mouth to argue but I cut him off.

"There ain't no getting outta this one, lads. We're all gonna die in Deliverance. Now I see it two ways. You can die running from the fight, like the thieves and cowards everyone thinks we are. Sure, you can do that, just get over the wall and hide out. But it won't take them long to find you, when you're all alone out there in the night, cowering in the grass, trying not to sh..." A crash from the gatehouse distracts me and I turn around to have a look. The Chimera behind the gates is rocking heavily on its tracks now, it's gonna go over any second, so I better make this quick.

"For frag's sake! We ain't got anything worth fighting for 'cept our pride. Right now I don't give a frag about the natives, or the Emperor, or the Colonel, but what I do care about is how I'm gonna die, and it ain't gonna be with my back turned or on my knees. I'm gonna go down fighting like a man. If there's any men here with me, then you better come too, otherwise you boys can just go running off to cry, dying on your bellies like the scum you are." I spit on the ground in front of them and then start walking towards the gate. I'm taking a hell of a risk, 'cause if they don't follow me I'm gonna be standing in front of the gate on my own when whatever it is that's so big and nasty batters its way through three feet of plasteel. Then I hear the thud of boots and they're there with me, so I guess the suckers fell for it.

I look up and see that the Hive Tyrant's gone from the gate tower, but I can still see the Colonel, slicing away with that big power sword of his. Emperor knows how the frag he managed that one. Well, if I live to see the dawn, I might just find out. With a screech of tearing plasteel the gates are torn apart and the Chimera gets shunted towards us. There's a sound like a tank ramming a building and the personnel carrier is flung upwards, spinning through the air. It crashes down and its fuel goes up, a massive fireball that shoots a hundred feet into the air. In the flames and smoke I see a sight that will follow me to my grave, long may it be before I get there.

In the red glare comes this huge Tyranid creature, about twelve feet tall and just as wide. It's some kind of Carnifex, but nothing I've ever seen or heard of before. It's got four massive scythe-like arms as normal, but the bony extrusions across its shoulders jut forward, rows of spikes thrust outwards like it's some kind of living battering ram. Nestled between its immense shoulders, its head is kind of fused with its chest, a large fang-ringed mouth open in a permanent roar. Pieces of twisted metal hang from the spines as it stomps through the smoke and flames like some monstrous devil from the pits of hell. Without pause, it shoulders aside the wreck of the Chimera and I'm horrified to see that some of the burning vehicle tears off along one of the creature's armored plates. The debris carries on burning, the flames crawling along the Carnifex's carapace but it just keeps advancing steadily as if nothing was happening.

"Blow that fragger away!" I shout, and everyone snaps out of the spell. Breiden opens up with the lascannon, a bolt of energy powerful enough to cripple battle tanks scoring a wound across the Carnifex's armored skull making thick, dark blood dribble down the exoskeleton of its body. The heavy bolter in Franz's squad kicks in, explosive shells rippling across legs as thick as tree trunks in a shower of detonations. But it still comes on, the ground shaking as those massive feet thud down into the dirt. It pauses for a second, its beady eyes reflecting the flickering flames and fixes us with a stare. Its arms arch back, spreading wider than the length of a tank and its cavernous mouth opens to bellow forth a roar that can probably be heard offworld. It breaks into a run, gathering momentum. Lasgun fire, heavy bolter shots and lascannon shots bounce off as it lumbers towards us. Once more its mouth opens for another terrifying roar, but Breiden picks his moment precisely, his aim guided by the Emperor I'm sure, and the next lascannon bolt lands in its mouth, smashing its head to a pulp, scattering fragments of skull across the courtyard. For a moment I think that even that isn't enough to stop it, as it comes rumbling on towards us, but then the rest of the body catches up with what's happening and it collapses to the ground with dark, thick ichor oozing out in a gigantic puddle around the mammoth corpse.

I breathe a sigh of relief, glad that those useless fraggers decided to follow me after

all, otherwise I'd be little more than a smear along those claws by now. However, just as my heart rate drops to something just below a million beats a minute, the rest of the Tyranids start to pour through the opening. At the front is a brood of Warriors, deathspitters and devourers firing as they advance. Men are going down all around me and a stray spatter of acid splashes onto my arm. The pain is almost unbearable and I stoop to grab a handful of dirt to rub the acid off. My right arm's almost numb, so I drop my laspistol and grab my chainsword in my left hand. The lead Warriors go down to fire from the lascannon and heavy bolters, but there's more and more of the things pouring through the gap now. I look around to see how the platoon's holding out, and I see there's only about two dozen of us left now. Franz catches my gaze and I see his desperation turn into fierce pride in that single glance. As if a subconscious order is given, we all charge forward, throwing ourselves at the tide of beasts sweeping into Deliverance. My chainsword bites flesh and I hear an inhuman shriek of pain. I'm not really looking at what's happening, I'm just chopping left and right, hacking blindly, knowing that I can't miss in the tight press of alien creatures swirling around me.

Then a massive clawed paw, larger than a Cthellian Cudbear's, comes out of the darkness, smashing me across the face. My head spins and I only dimly feel a sharp blade cutting across my thigh. I feel something wet and sticky pouring down my legs and I gaze down numbly, seeing my blood spilling to the dirt. I try to take a step forward but all my strength seems to have been sapped from me. I drop to my knees, feeling rough alien skin rasping against me, pushing past, leaving me for dead. Then a shadow descends and I feel like I'm falling, falling down a deep, dark hole.

My ears pick up singing, my mind ringing to the sound of angelic voices singing the praises of the Emperor. So this is what it's like to die. There is an Emperor after all, and I shall receive my judgement, just like Nathaniel and the Colonel said. My thoughts are getting slow, but for the first time in ten years of fighting I feel proud. I didn't run this time, I stayed. I'm dying, but I went down fighting. Surely that's got to count for something.

I CAN HEAR VOICES, shouting, orders being bellowed. So I guess I'm alive then, and I really was right about those falling lights. I try to open my eyes, but the left one seems closed up. I raise an arm, feeling so weak, and touch my temple. Instant pain tells me that there's a bruise the size of a small moon up there, and it's probably blood crusting up my eye.

My right arm is swathed in bandages and won't move at all.

Through my good eye I see there's troops running backwards and forwards,

and I watch a line of three Leman Russ tanks warming up, ready to go out of the gate. I guess I'm propped up against the redoubt; I can feel rough stonework poking into my back. I turn my head slowly left and right, wary of dizziness and nausea, and I see that there's others like me, bandaged and bloody, all along the redoubt. The Colonel walks past and he notices that I'm awake. He strides up and stands in front of me, thankfully blocking out the bright light of the sun. I can't see his face, it's in shadow, but he's looking down at me.

"Still alive then, Kage?" he demands, his voice as gruff as ever.

"Fraid so, sir. Guess I can't kick the habit just yet." I try to manage a smile, but my face is just a mass of aching and pain.

"I heard what happened," he says, dropping down on one knee so that I can see those icy eyes as they fix me with their stare. "Tell me one thing, Kage. You could have run out on me, you had the chance and you have done it before. What made you fight?"

I fix him with my good eye, returning his gaze with a steady look of my own.

"Well, sir, it's like this," I explain. "I saw the lights coming down, and I knew they were Imperial Guard transports. Mycetic spores just come straight down, whereas these had a landing trajectory. So I knew that Deliverance was saved. Thing was, though, we had to hold out, 'cause if the Tyranids got into the compound we'd all be dead. There's nowhere to run from those creatures."

The Colonel frowns at me.

"So why did you tell your men that there were more spores coming down, rather than the relief force?" he asks.

"You must know why, sir," I reply, because it seems so obvious to me. "If I told them that help was on the way, they'd lose what little stomach they had left. They'd think they could give up, get away from here. But like I said, there wasn't any escape from Deliverance, not a chance. So I did the only thing I could. I stripped them of that false hope, I gave them nothing to live for except life itself. You see, sir, when you ain't got frag-all worth fighting for, you'll still fight to be alive. Give a man a chance to back down and he'll take it, but give him nothing and he'll grab what he can with both hands and not let go for as long as he can. He'll fight to his last breath just to take one more breath, to feel his heart beat just once more before he dies. If you stick a man in the middle of a fight and give him a gun, he'll fight like a cornered rat 'cause there's nothing else he can do. That's the way the

Last Chancers work, sir. It's exactly what you do to us all. We ain't got no choice but to fight, and fight good, 'cause if we don't, we're dead. None of us wants to die so we'll do all we can, everything that's possible including going on your damned suicide missions just to breathe one more time. It's why I fight, why they fight."

He just grunts and stands up. He turns to walk away but I call after him.

"There's another reason why I'll fight my damndest, sir!"

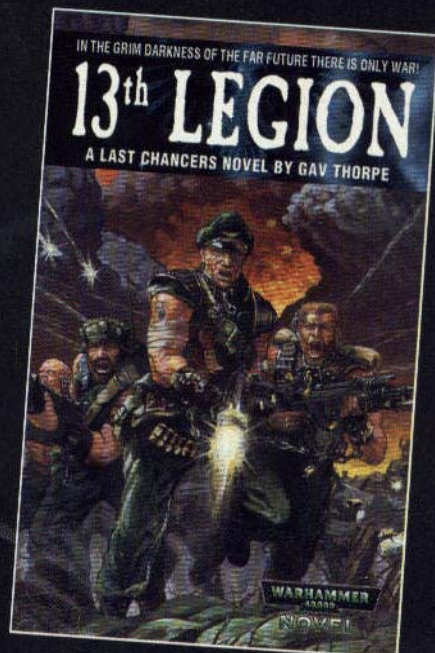
He spins around and looks at me, an eyebrow raised in question.

"I ain't gonna give you the fragging satisfaction of seeing me dead just yet!"

'Deliverance', which first appeared in *Inferno! 12*, is set scant minutes before the start of '13th Legion', the Black Library novel by Gav Thorpe...

Across a thousand blasted war zones, upon a thousand bloody worlds, the convict soldiers of the 13th Legion fight a desperate battle for redemption in the eyes of the immortal Emperor. In this endless war against savage Orks, merciless Eldar and the insidious threat of Chaos, Kage and the Last Chancers penal battalion must fight not only to win but to survive!

This is the first novel from the Black Library by chief Warhammer developer Gav Thorpe, and it's a cracker!



The new plastic Space Marine Dreadnought kit presents plenty of possibilities, be it on the modeling table or on the battlefield.



The new plastic Dreadnought kit, although essentially mirroring its metal predecessor, has one main advantage: versatility. Jes Goodwin, whose plastic kits are renowned for the numerous modeling options they present, has ensured that the new kit is extremely adaptable.

Provided within the kit are the principle weapons of the Space Marine Dreadnought. The four different weapon arms allow you to choose from an assault cannon, a twin-linked lascannon, a missile launcher and a power fist. The power fist can be augmented by the heavy flamer or storm bolter attachments, both of which can be attached as underslung secondary weapons beneath the primary armament.

The equipment options provided include smoke launchers and a searchlight, and there are a number of icons and purity seals with which to adorn your armored behemoth. There is a choice of three intricate sarcophagi, allowing you to really go to town on the front of your Dreadnought. The kit also contains one Space Marine transfer sheet, ensuring that your Dreadnought bears the appropriate Chapter markings as it strides into battle.

Finally, the kit comes with a fully detailed scenic base, complete with rocky terrain, spent ammunition cartridges and even some unfortunate's skull!

HEAVY DUTY

Modeling options with the new plastic Dreadnought kit

Space Marine Dreadnoughts are armored bastions of sheer martial power, many of whom have fought in the Emperor's name for millennia. When a revered Space Marine hero falls in battle and is deemed so grievously wounded that he is beyond even the skill of the Apothecaries, he may be bestowed the honor of interment within one of the Chapter's ancient Dreadnoughts. His broken body is held suspended in an armored sarcophagus, housed within a towering adamantium killing machine that enables him to fight on for many centuries in a twilight existence of darkness and war. Thus it is that the heroes of the Adeptus Astartes can cheat death itself.

The options available to the Dreadnought tend towards its various roles on the battlefield. For instance, a Dreadnought can act as a mobile firebase, able to fire two heavy weapons even whilst on the move. In this capacity, it can be armed with the twin-linked lascannon and missile launcher (see right). This provides you with an exceptionally durable and mobile tank hunter, capable of penetrating the thickest armor whilst withstanding enemy fire. However, due to the exceptionally long range of these weapons, a wise player can ensure their Dreadnought can pick off its targets with impunity.

Another weapons combination in the plastic kit can provide you with an unstoppable close combat machine (above left). The assault cannon, although relatively short ranged, can rip through heavily armored infantry with alarming efficiency, whilst the infamous power fist ensures the Dreadnought can tear open tanks as if they were armored in nothing more than tin foil.

Needless to say, other combinations of these armaments are also undeniably effective.

So don't be afraid to experiment, grab some polystyrene cement and get building, so you can wreak some serious havoc on the gaming table!



This Black Templars Dreadnought is equipped with twin-linked lascannon and missile launcher arms; the Imperium's deadliest heavy weaponry.



Dark Angels Dreadnought with both long range and close quarter armaments.



The Storm Giants Dreadnought provides covering fire as its battle brothers advance.

STORM GIANTS

Jim Butler equipped his Storm Giants Dreadnought with twin-linked heavy bolters.



Jim: I'd just put together a Land Raider Crusader for my Storm Giants and, as I equipped it with twin-linked assault cannons, I was left with a couple of heavy bolters. All it took was a little sawing and filing and I had a twin-linked heavy bolter that makes a well-fitting replacement for the Dreadnought's original assault cannon.



SALAMANDERS



Dave Thomas's Salamanders Dreadnought is customized to include one of the Salamanders' signature weapons: the multi-melta, taken from a Space Marine Land Speeder.



Dave: I wanted to get a bit of narrative into this piece, so I stuck a Tyranid rending claw to the base, covered in chestnut and black ink to represent ichor (see above right).

The Tyranid's claw marks on the Dreadnought's shoulder were simply scored into the plastic with a sharp knife.



ALPHA LEGION

Rich Baker's hideous Alpha Legion Dreadnought is a prime example of just how different your Dreadnought can look with a bit of conversion work.



Rich: Although many of the additional pieces of this insane creation are from the Spiky Bits frame, I also used plenty of other bits and pieces, including scythes from the Zombie kit as the Dread's power claw!



TACTICA sees a veteran gamer taking a close look at the strategy and tactics for how to get the best out of a particular force and from the game itself. This month, Mike Major takes a detailed look at the tactics he uses in the Assault phase. Be warned, however, that these are advanced tactics for tournament players and experienced gamers.



Mike is a member of 'The Taken', a group of dedicated hobbyists who produce the Apocrypha 40,000 webzine (www.thetaken.org). He's been playing Warhammer 40,000 since it first came out, and in 1999 won the Canadian Grand Tournament.

TAKE IT TO THE FOE!

On the battlefields of the 41st Millennium, battles are often won and lost in the ferocity of hand-to-hand combat. Many armies utilize close-combat troops or can be heavily assault oriented. Correctly utilizing these key forces – or thwarting them – is often the difference between victory and defeat for a commander. Despite this key fact, many players simply fling their warriors into the fray willy-nilly, trusting to the Emperor or to Gork to carry them through. While this will often work, there are refined tactics that can be used to increase your chances of victory in any assault regardless of the army you field. In this, the first of two articles which conclude next issue, I'll detail how to get the most out of your assault forces and also how to defend against those of your opponent's.

Before we begin, though, I'd like to borrow a phrase from Jervis and talk about 'the most important rule.' I'll be reviewing some very advanced tactics here – high end usages of the rules which push the limits but are still within the spirit of fair play. These tactics literally came about accidentally through game play. They weren't so much developed as discovered. "Hey! If I set up like this, I can do that!" Sadly, however, some players use this kind of discovery to push well beyond what is reasonable and into the abusive. We've all heard of players who read that when a vehicle is destroyed it can be turned on its side and interpret this so as to build walls or 'Rhino laagers' out of wrecks by orienting destroyed models exactly how they want them. Or folks who take the kills off from one end of a fight when a character at the other end dealt them out just because 'the dead models are still in base to base with the enemy.' Wrecks don't conveniently become castle walls

TACTICA ASSAULT

ADVANCED TACTICS FOR THE 40K ASSAULT PHASE. PART 1

and guys with powerswords don't fling them to the other side of a giant combat rather than killing the guy in front of them! Think of how you would feel if such a tactic was routinely used against you. Would you be content playing against it? Is it a solid reading of the rule or is there really some question over it? Good sportsmanship is the key. By all means, develop new tactics – but remember that the very best game of Warhammer 40,000 is a close run fight that's in question down to the last model. If a new 'tactic' is getting in the way of that then you may wish to rethink it, as an enjoyable game is always far more important than winning.

I've structured this discussion of tactics in a 'turn sequence' order. One of the largest misconceptions of a Warhammer 40,000 assault is that it takes place exclusively in the Assault phase. Nothing could be further from the truth. In part one of this series, I will discuss the preparation and ground work of the assault as well as its opening phases. I'll first talk about concerns that you should consider during deployment and the early movements of the game. Then I'll discuss the critical preparation for your assault, which will include a brief discussion of transports, deployment of models during the Movement phase for greatest impact and pre-assault fire in the Shooting phase. Finally, I'll move on to the Assault phase proper, touching on common assault wargear.

Part two of this series will continue this trend with a discussion of unusual traits such as fearsome troops. Then the nitty gritty of the Assault phase itself and your options within it will be pried open for examination. Finally, I'll cover the close of the Assault phase and such things as sweeping advances and post assault positioning and what happens when the enemy reacts to what you've done. Check next month's White Dwarf for these discussions of the later portions of your assault.

Now without further ado...

ADVANCE AND STRIKE

The Deployment Phase...

One of the most important aspects of your assault is how you prepare your

troops and the deployment of enemy forces. Given this, your assault planning should begin early. Well in advance, you should begin the selection process of targets for your close combat strikes. This is best done during deployment, at least for the initial targets. Striking a flank is usually better than attacking straight into the center of an enemy force. Your approach is often easier, and enemy shooting during any sweeping advances you make later is more restricted by the enemy's line of sight and range. However, such flanking moves also take longer to set up and will clue your opponent in to your plan of attack unless you can distract him somehow. In addition, your objective may very well be straight up the middle.

Plan your assault carefully. There is a good chance that your assault troops will be outnumbered, at least in the initial phases, until the rest of your army gets there. Try to pick fights you are sure you can win! Finally, be aware that savvy enemy commanders may keep a 'counter-charge' unit in reserve. Watch for these as they can often be a long way from the action waiting in a vehicle. Such units can engage quickly and, depending on their composition and your firepower, they can stop your assault in its tracks.

While this target selection begins naturally during deployment, you cannot afford to ignore it at any time. It is a process of consideration which you must continue all through your game until victory has been achieved.

Offensive Tactics:

1. Avoid carefully deployed armies, or attack bravely but with the utmost precision.
2. Never fail to use cover. It can make all the difference.
3. Hit the flanks where you can. Fire is too concentrated in the center battleline.
4. Watch for counter-charge units. Even if you are winning a fight they can ruin your day. This CANNOT be stressed enough!
5. Always remember that in close, your BEST defense is the hurly burly of a mêlée. You cannot be shot at there.

Mêlées also block line of sight and so can be used as cover for the advance of the rest of your army.

Defensive Tactics:

1. Maintain your distance: Good 'shooty' or defensive army players will deploy in ranks distanced by over 3" apart to prevent assault forces consolidating from one rank to the other and thus avoiding Sweeping Advance fire. If attackers win a fight at the wrong time, they either have to sweep or consolidate, but either way they're a big target.

FLOOR IT!

The Movement Phase

Many armies have access to inexpensive vehicles to transport forces in. Transports are a key consideration when setting up your assault. While their individual advantages are more properly discussed in detail in a Tactics all of their own, there are some general rules to consider for all transport-borne assaults.

Offensive Tactics:

1. ALWAYS use cover when you can. Cover will either keep your vehicle out of line of sight or give it the ability to remain hull down – a tremendous advantage over the possibility of a penetrating hit, particularly an Ordnance one which can eliminate the entire unit along with their ride! Despite the distinct advantage of all damaging hits only being glancing on fast moving skimmers, they should still seek cover to hide behind. Skimmers are fragile and even glances are dangerous to them. If it's there, make use of it.

2. Remember that vehicles block line of sight just as hills and other terrain features do, so you can also put key units behind others to shield them from enemy fire.

3. Vehicle Upgrades: Review the options available to your army carefully and choose ones that fit your style of play. Proper use of these can go a long way in getting your vehicles to their disembarkation points.

4. To Fire or Not: Many transport vehicles, in particular those of the Orks and Eldar, are equipped with support weapons. The choice of whether to move at a slower speed and fire or go full bore and get into range is a tough one and will depend on the scenario, your opponent and play style as much as anything else. That being said, there are a few things to consider. The first of these is that many races have fast transports, and if these go their full 24" allowance they cannot fire. In this case, the troops usually cannot disembark, either, and are sitting targets for enemy guns. In such a case it's often best to move the 12" and fire, which also still leaves your assault options open. There will be times, however, where you will wish to move straight at the enemy at fast speed. Ork Trukk Boyz with their additional ability to survive the destruction of their transport usually fall into this category.

5. Line Breaking: Use tank shock as a line breaker. Even against a really savvy player this can work. If the transport is destroyed, it then becomes cover to limit line of sight. You can hide your assault troops from the worst of the shooting behind the wreck using a consolidating move after the Assault phase is done. You can break an opponent's shooty army into easily consumed pieces with this tactic, but it's got to be done just right in order to work. Be especially careful of 'Death or Glory'. When the vehicle access points are blocked by the enemy, the troops inside will be killed if



After routing the Imperial Guard in close combat, the Space Wolves use the wreck of their Rhino transport as cover.

their vehicle is destroyed and they cannot alight. (See *Chapter Approved – Transport Vehicles*, WD252)

Defensive Tactics:

1. Target Priority: When facing an assault army that is primarily transport borne, such as Blood Angel Space Marines, Speed Freeks or certain styles of Eldar, be very careful in choosing your targets for shooting. Unless your own army can win the ensuing fights, consider making transports a priority target for long ranged heavy weapons fire over support elements. Pedestrian assault elements do not become effective for a long time unless they are already close to your lines.

2. Suppression: As an addition to the above, carefully watch your damage results. If a unit will not move for a turn (*Crew Stunned, Immobilized or Destroyed*), stop shooting at it! It is not an immediate threat, and you can always renew your fire on it during your next Shooting phase. Move on to other targets.

3. Death or Glory: Be aware of possible tank shocks your opponent may perform and place your anti-vehicle troopers in a position where they will be likely to be able to fire. Given the nature of some transport models with limited egress, and the fact that models which do not break from a tank shock return to their places, it may be possible to wipe out both transport and passengers if they cannot escape the vehicle due to the presence of your troops. (*Warhammer 40,000* page 89 'Death or Glory'. Note that while the rules say 'any model' may fire, more recent interpretations from the designers limit Death or Glory attempts to models actually struck by the tank, so placement within your unit of that blaster or meltagun is important! 'Clipping' the edge of a unit is still not permitted, however).

CLOSE AND DESTROY

The Movement Phase

Once you've selected your target and your models are within near assault range, you must plan the nuts and bolts of your attack. You'll have several important choices to make at this stage, the first one being the positioning of your models during their Movement phase.

Before anything else, you need to decide which units you are going to attack. This will usually be a single unit, but there are times when you'll wish to engage multiple enemies. This is permitted (See *'The Ultimate Secrets of the Galaxy Revealed!'* at the end of the *Warhammer 40,000*) and occasionally an excellent idea, particularly when attacking with a very large unit, or when you do not wish to win the combat in the first round so as to avoid a sweeping advance at an inopportune time (See 'Pursuit and Consolidation' next month for a full discussion of why). Keep in mind that you still have to move models closest to closest even in this situation and may even have to sacrifice a model to a Dreadnought or other nasty if you do this. Also note that you are not required to assault more than one unit if you don't want to, but you cannot bypass a closer unit in favor of a further one along your direction of assault, unless you engage the nearest one first. Direction of assault bears some mentioning. There is no requirement to engage the nearest unit or go a particular direction in an Assault phase. If there are several possible targets that you feel are within range, you can go in any direction you like, but you cannot simply scatter willy nilly to the winds and attack in all directions of the compass. Your entire unit should travel in the same direction and in a specific line of assault toward the enemy unit or units you wish to attack. I've found that thinking of the direction of

assault as being like a fallback corridor pointed at the enemy unit(s) you wish to assault is really helpful. Move your unit in a column or very slightly widening funnel engaging models within that corridor as you reach them, and you've got it right.

Once you've settled on a target, it's time to get specific. When models are performing an assault move, 'the closest models move first and towards the enemy by the most direct route.' (*Warhammer 40,000* page 62 'Moving into Assault') This can be used tactically in a number of different ways.

Offensive Tactics:

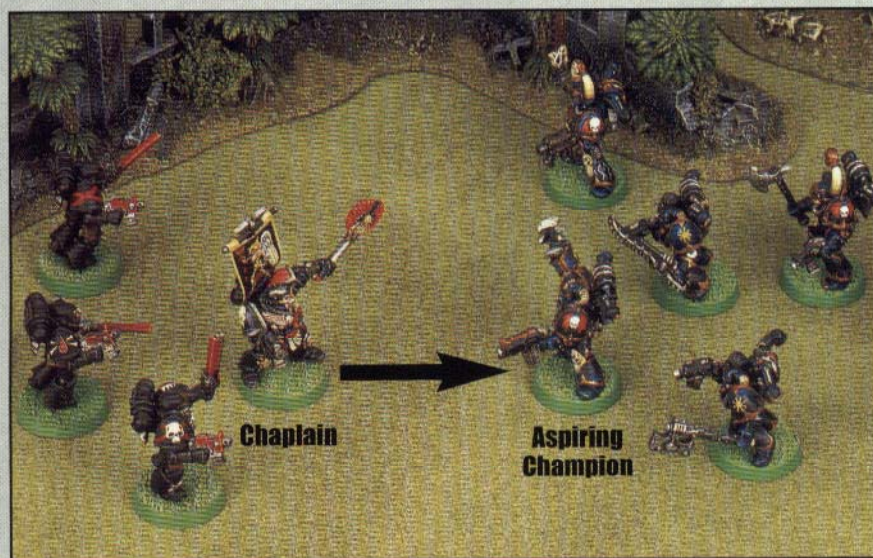
1. Closest to Closest: You can deploy character or leader models with different weapons or assault characteristics in such a way that they can 'pick their targets' from amongst the nearby enemy models. For example, if you want your Chaplain to attack the enemy Veteran Sergeant (armed with a power fist), so as to cut him down before he can use the ugly thing, you'll be able to do so if he's at the front of his squad. Simply ensure that when the time comes to move your Chaplain, the Veteran Sergeant is the closest unengaged model and you must attack him. If he is the nearest model to your attacking squad this is easy. Just put the Chaplain up front to be moved first. If he's back a bit then you'll have to 'eyeball' it, placing other members of your attacking force to engage the lead enemy models. Since the assault is done one model at a time, your Chaplain should get to his target if you position your troops properly. This may take some practice, but it's worthwhile if you can cut down some nasty adversary with a higher Initiative model or get someone with an invulnerable save squared off against that Avatar or Daemon to protect the rest of your unit.

2. Troop Borne Wargear: Another variant of this tactic is the use of 'invisible' assault weapons to accomplish your objectives. Some units allow normal trooper models to take specialty assault weapons, and by careful utilization of this rule you can get them where they need to be. More on this below in the 'Wargear in Assault' section but their positioning can be critical so it bears mentioning here.

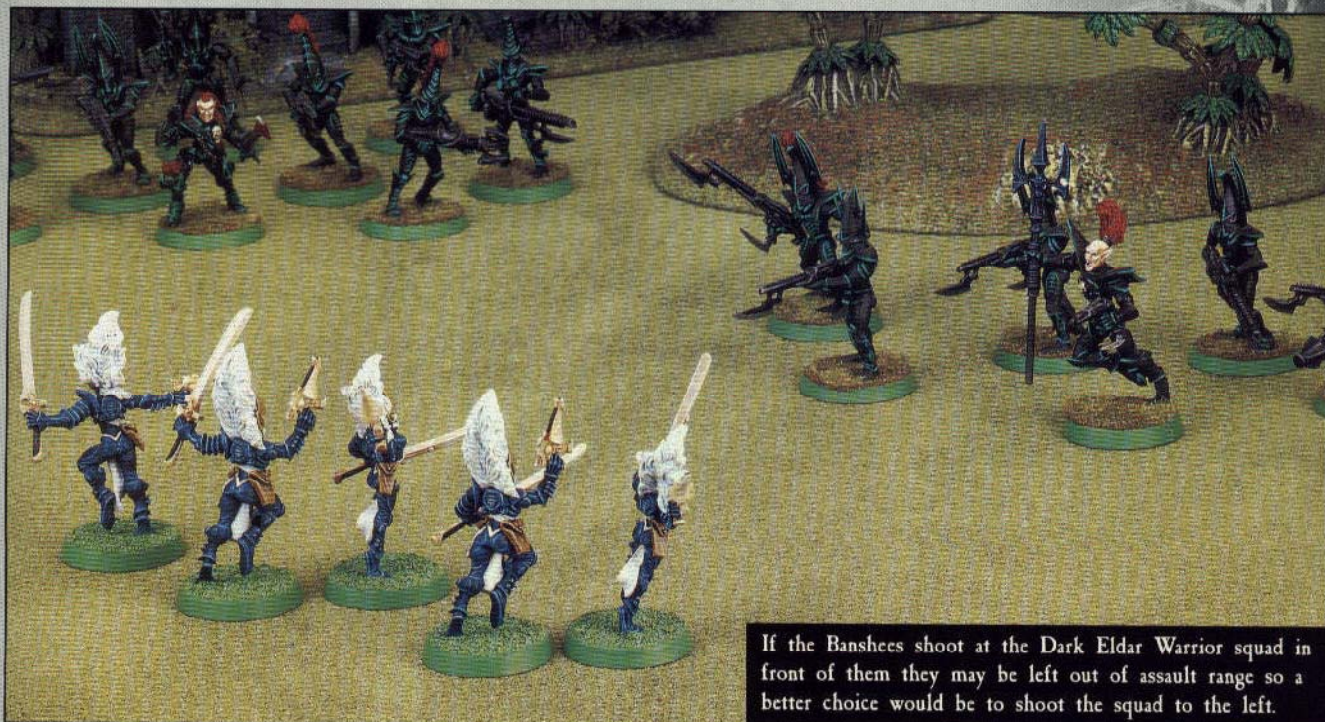
Defensive Tactics:

1. Protecting a Model from Assault: You can use the reverse of the Closest to Closest rule to protect models that you don't want cut down by Crozius wielding loonies. Place your model behind a wall of other troops and you are safe from this kind of selective attack. After the enemy pile in, you'll be able to get your model into contact if your unit holds firm.

2. Wolfen Howl: Finally, the Space Wolves 'Counter-charge' ability is highly useful here. You can shield your leaders as well as allow them to do their



As he is the nearest, the Chaplain will have to assault the Aspiring Champion, enabling him to kill his opponent before he's had a chance to fight back with his deadly power fist.



If the Banshees shoot at the Dark Eldar Warrior squad in front of them they may be left out of assault range so a better choice would be to shoot the squad to the left.

business in close combat. The best of both worlds, really.

GIVE 'EM THE WHOLE NINE YARDS, SIR?

The Shooting Phase

All right! Now you've lined your troops up, prepared your attack with the utmost care and done everything to maximize your chances in the assault. So, how do you snatch defeat from the jaws of victory? Indiscriminate shooting.

All appropriately armed models may fire before assault if they wish, but all too often it's best not to. The number of times that carefully prepared assaults have been foiled by their own gunfire is tragic. If you are right on top of the enemy and facing only basic troops or getting ready to attack something that you've little chance of beating, it's an excellent idea to open fire at point blank range to whittle down the odds a bit – but what if you are right at the edge of assault range? Or you're not certain?

The answer in these cases is usually either don't fire at all or fire elsewhere. If you fire into the enemy and the opposing player doesn't want to be assaulted, he'll simply remove the nearest troopers to your assault force. Perfectly reasonable, except that now there is an excellent chance that you are no longer in assault range. Your expensive assault troops are left standing in the open at the mercy of the enemy guns, twiddling their collective thumbs/tentacles. Not a good situation at all. Be very careful with your preparatory fire. Use it where and when it's needed or when it will not mess you up or you'll lose your attack force before they ever get to fight.

Offensive Tactics:

1. Watch where you fire: You may do too much damage and so foul up your assault. If you think this may be the case either shoot at another unit or don't fire at all.

2. Get the Guy with the Big Horns!: One preparatory shooting tactic that bears mentioning is that of picking off enemy independent characters. My usual opponent loses many Wolf Lords this way. An independent character can be targeted if he is the 'closest target at short range (up to 12")' (*Warhammer 40,000* page 75 'Shooting at and by Characters'). If your opponent should wind up in this unfortunate position don't hesitate – take out that character! Remember, however, that a unit still cannot split its fire, so all of your fire must be directed at that poor unfortunate soul. If you choose to fire on him, it will cost you any other kills from that round of fire.

Defensive Tactics:

1. Strand the Assault Troops: If your attacker is overeager in his weapons fire, remember that you can remove models closest to his forces. If he's far enough away, he may destroy his own chances of assaulting and leave his attacking force vulnerable to shooting, a counter-charge or both.

2. Get back Sir!: Targeting of independent characters works even if he's part of a unit, so be careful of leaving an independent character out in front – he's just become a big fat target! If you wish to protect your leaders, put them just behind a regular trooper or two. This will still leave them in a position to fight in an assault if your models are spaced well, but will keep him from

getting picked off. Another tactic is to place the character 'down the line' of an arrowhead formation and keep it pointed at the enemy. The model on point becomes the target and, if the character is just behind, he'll likely still wind up in base to base contact. This is a bit more dangerous, however, as the enemy may attack from an unplanned direction.

3. Protect the Lascannon: When deploying your forces always be aware of advantages that your opponent may exploit in assault. Special and heavy troopers are sometimes best left further back where they will survive the initial charge.

4. Wolfen Howl: Just as in engagement, the Space Wolves counter-charge ability is again highly useful. You can shield your leaders from gunfire and still have them available to fight in close combat.

WARGEAR IN ASSAULT

Movement/Assault Phase

We've discussed HOW to get specific models into base to base contact in an assault. However no treatment of the Assault phase can possibly be complete without some discussion of how best to use wargear. We all know that there are advantages to using an army's various wargear elements to increase damage capacity and staying power. While I couldn't possibly cover every combination in any reasonably sized article, we'll discuss weapons first and a few other articles of wargear as examples later on. Use these listed tactics as launching pads for your own ideas.

Wargear weapons all have their own characteristics and only some elements are common from army to army but we can really break the weapons down into four main types. These are weapons which ignore armor, those which provide additional ability to wound, combination weapons which do both, and those weapons which strike last but hit hard. Most of the last are really combination weapons, but their special characteristics merit separate discussion. There are, of course, very esoteric weapons which are found only in certain armies, and I'll give an example of how to use one of those, as well.

Power Weapons

Weapons which ignore armor, power weapons and their ilk, are always useful. In the hands of a model in close combat they'll deny any save that isn't invulnerable. In addition, models equipped with such weapons still strike in Initiative order and can be used to 'take out' enemies that may strike more slowly, preventing them from attacking. Utilizing a character bearing a power weapon is fairly straightforward. Stick him in where you want the damage and let him swing! The only real choice is whether or not you should allocate the model's attacks, if it is allowed to. This might be desirable should some of the target figures happen to be characters or specially equipped models. See the 'Bring Out Yer Dead' section next month for a more detailed discussion of attack allocation.

Poison Blades, Witchblades and other anti-tough-critter things

Weapons which increase the wounding ability of a model, such as Dark Eldar

poison blades and Eldar witchblades, can be highly useful in certain situations and nearly useless in others. Since these weapons do not provide any additional armor penetration, they are far better against lightly armored opponents than those encased in ceramite. Given that non power armored models also tend to be of moderate to low Toughness, things you don't really need help to hurt, these are really specialty 'niche' weapons that just aren't needed against the vast bulk of models. Keep their numbers in your army down and use them for what they are intended to do – take out the big, high Toughness monsters that have little armor. These weapons can be amazingly useful against Daemons and Avatars but should not be used lightly against Wraithlords or Talos which have an excellent armor save. Combination weapons are better against those.

Combination Weapons

When discussing combination weapons note that these aren't as rare as they seem. The Imperials have power fists, the Space Wolves frost blades, the Dark Eldar their agonizers, the Orks power claws, and that list certainly isn't comprehensive. Most armies have some type of combination weapon available. These are often boosted power weapons of various types. Those which don't affect strike order can be used just like conventional power weapons but will stand a better chance against the tougher opponents due to their higher Strength. Some are so useful as to even be able to take down the toughest of opponents! Dark Eldar agonizers in particular are known for this.

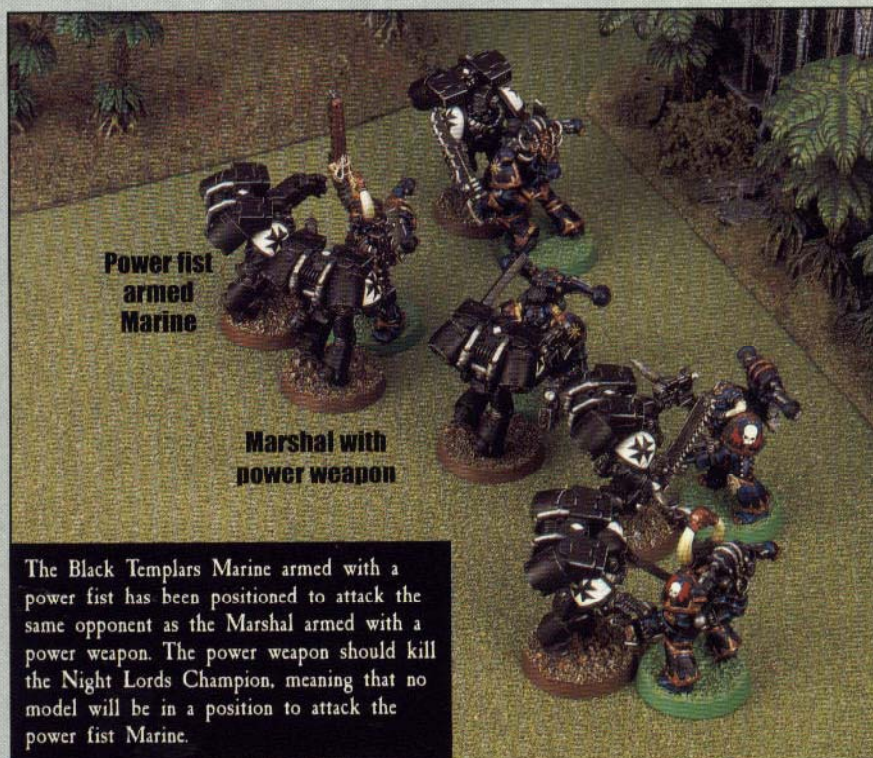
Power fists, Power claws, etc.

Weapons which strike last such as power fists and their Orky equivalent the power claw, are tougher to use correctly but definitely worth the effort. Remember, in the hands of a Strength 4 character, a power fist will cause Instant Death, the destruction of the model regardless of the number of wounds remaining, on nearly every model in the game. (Warhammer 40,000 page 53 'Instant Death') Even with the reduced effect of Instant Death, a model with Strength 3 armed with a power fist will still wound most models on a 2+ and deny them a save as well, making them an excellent choice for low Initiative troops who are likely to swing last anyway.

Since these weapons always swing last, they have to be used far more carefully than regular power weapons, but their incredible strikes make up for these shortfalls in many situations. Put these models up against regular troops or characters of any description and watch the casualties accumulate. The downside is that you've got to risk taking a hit to use them but there are some solutions:

Offensive Tactics:

1. "You drop him, Ernest!": Position your power fist model so that he moves into base to base after your other models



have engaged, and then place him in contact with the target enemy of another of your attacking characters, preferably one with a power weapon! According to the Assault rules (*Warhammer 40,000* page 66 'Removing Casualties') a model in base to base contact at the beginning of the Assault phase still fights with his full effect as he dashes through the mêlée striking left and right at his foes. So even after the character with the earlier attacks has dropped his opponent to protect the power fist model, the one with the fist can still rip through the unit.

This particular tactic will only work if you are fighting normal troopers. It's too dangerous to try with any but the weakest of characters and hits on them do not carry over onto their unit, anyway. (See Chapter Approved – Close Combat Notes WD232).

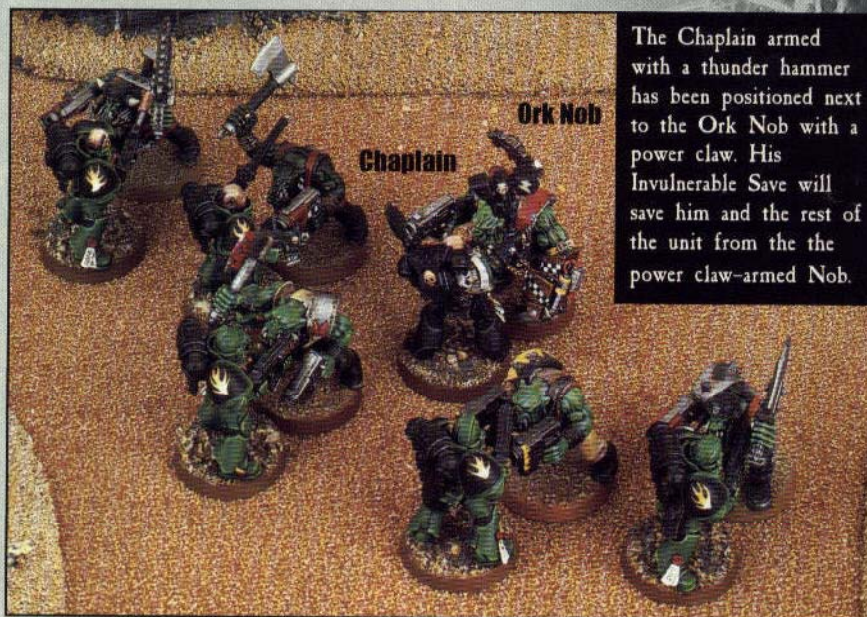
A variant of this tactic is the Dark Eldar 'Dirty Wych Trick' for hydraknives which consists of moving a hydraknife wielder in last next to a Succubus with an agonizer to ensure that the weapons get used before the wielder is killed.

2. I can take it!: Quite simply, give the power fist to a multiple wound character. Even if his opponent gets a hit in and does some damage, the power fist wielder still gets his licks in if he's not killed.

This is a very good choice for Imperial Guard characters with multiple wounds. The key to making this work is to avoid enemy characters with the 'oomph' to cut you down before you get to swing. One local Guard player, Kevin Dooley, uses his Command HQ and Commissar team as a counter-charge force with this tactic and has even been known to stop the Death Company with it.

Esoteric mêlée weapons which don't fit in any of the above categories are found only in certain armies and can also benefit from careful placement. As an example, here's another Dark Eldar 'Dirty Wych Trick' that makes use of careful engagement tactics. This maneuver involves using a razorsnare to pull a powerful character into base to base with a pair of Wyches (one a Succubus, for those wondering) with shardnets – thereby greatly reducing his chances to hit.

Having shown how to make use of specialty weapons in close assault we'll now touch on the way these weapons can be countered. Items which provide Invulnerable saves are lifesavers in close assault. While few armies can have very many of these (most are limited to one), correct use of that item can win your assaults or allow you to tie up powerful opponents for a very long period of time. I've had a Chaplain with only a bolt pistol take on an entire battle flank of Space Wolves and tie them up for several turns even after his accompanying Tactical



The Chaplain armed with a thunder hammer has been positioned next to the Ork Nob with a power claw. His Invulnerable Save will save him and the rest of the unit from the the power claw-armed Nob.

squad had fallen – all because of that Rosarius. One of the best places for an Invulnerable save is facing off against other characters. Even against a power fist, that save gives him a chance. Models with Invulnerable saves can also be used to tie up such hard to deal with things as Dreadnoughts, Talos and Wraithlords if you have no handy way of defeating them at the moment and need to keep them off your troops. This is risky and may cost you your character, but it can be a game winner.

Many other pieces of wargear can and do affect the results of your assault. These can be anything from things which increase the number of attacks your character has to items that affect pursuit, morale or combat outcome. Examine your wargear list carefully, as many of these can be very useful in the most subtle of ways. While overbuying for a character is usually a poor idea, a few items of wargear can greatly enhance both the character of your force and their efficiency if they have a dedicated place in your battle plan.

The above sections have covered the groundwork and opening shots (literally) – of your assault. We have looked at deployment, target selection, transports, pre-assault fire, the nuts and bolts of an assault move and how to use many of the more common pieces of assault wargear.

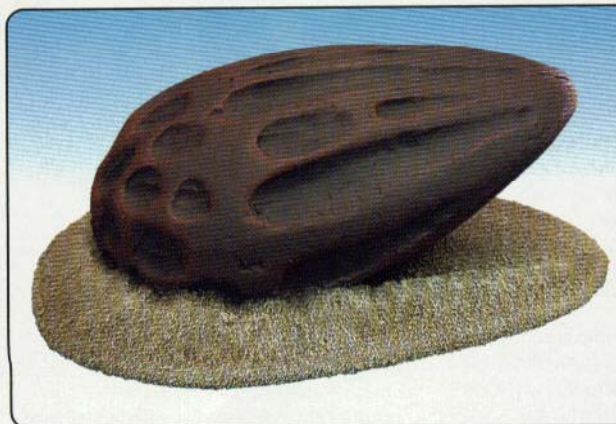
Part two of this series will continue this trend with a discussion of the unusual abilities of fearsome troops. Next, your options within the Assault phase itself will be considered. Finally, we'll cover the close of the Assault phase and such things as sweeping advances and post-assault positioning, as well as what happens when the enemy reacts to what you've done.

See you next month!

WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- A sheet of 2 inch thick pink insulation styrofoam
- MDF board (hardboard)
- Quick-dry spackling
- Tooth picks
- White glue (Elmer's brand)
- Gesso (available at artist's stores, available in both white and black)
- Liquid Nails and a caulking gun (check your Dad's basement or shed, but Elmer's will work in a pinch)
- Jig saw
- Sharpie brand marker
- Cutting mat and some newspapers to protect your work area
- File
- Retractable knife
- Handsaw
- Foam cutter (Wonder Cutter) and a "shaped" foam cutter
- Sandpaper and sanding brick
- Selection of differently sized brushes

TYRANID ATTACK! PLANETFALL!



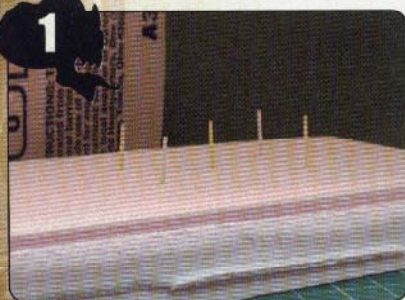
By following a few easy steps, you can have your Tyranids arrive in style! This Mycetic Spore isn't hard to make at all. Read on and give it a try!

MYCETIC SPORES!

When an Tyranid invasion begins, the sky of the doomed planet is dotted by thousands of streaking objects. Those poor citizens might not even realize the horror that is about to befall them. This Tyranid planetfall could easily be mistaken for a simple meteor shower, a harmless cosmic event. But once the realization hits home, once the true terror has been unleashed upon the populace, it will be too late!

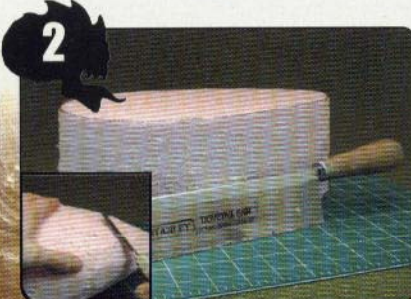
In this article, you will learn all the tricks you'll need to send your Tyranids into battle in style! While there aren't any rules for

Mycetic Spores as Tyranid drop ships, per se, they still add a ton of character to the tabletop (and your army) and are really simple to make. During a Tyranid invasion, hiveships release a variety of spores to the planet's surface. These include weather modification, fertilization and necrotic varieties, as well as explosive and poisonous types. However, the truly deadly ones, the Mycetic Spores, carry a horrifying payload: the 'vanguard' and 'main force' ground assault swarms. That's right... the bugs you've grown to know and love! Let's get started!



your hands on and you'll be set. Let it dry overnight... just to be sure that the two halves are together! The next step is a simple one! Use a black Sharpie marker to sketch out the shape of your Mycetic Spore. Make sure you plan for the top, the side and the front. These guides will help you plan out your cuts and keep you on track. Even though you'll be cutting off the guides on the front and sides, just drawing them on reinforces the plan in your mind.

Now that you have guides and know exactly what form you're going for, take a fine toothed handsaw and cut downwards, following your pen lines. Don't try to cut a curve... a saw like this just isn't suited for that kind of maneuver. Just make a cut straight down through the foam and then turn your block and make another pass. Soon you'll have a shape kind of like a malformed layer cake. At this point, you're ready to get down to the nitty-gritty of actually freeing your spore from its foam prison! Using your retractable knife (and make sure you cut away from yourself) shave off large chunks of foam until you have the shape you're aiming for. This is one of the most time consuming steps of the foam-forming process. Just keep plugging away until you get the form you want. Don't worry if it's really ragged looking... in Step 3 you'll sand it into a smooth, atmosphere-piercing pod!



3



Now that you're done with the carving and cutting, you're ready to start personalizing the alien drop pod and give it life! These stages aren't as hard as they look, and if you're missing some of the tools, they can be replaced by easier-to-find gadgets. The hot knife can be replaced with a soldering iron in a pinch, for example. After you've freed your Mycetic Spore from the excess styrofoam, you're really ready to get down to business! Using your sponge sanding brick (a piece of sandpaper will work just as well) smooth your spore down to a well-rounded surface. Make sure you get rid of any gouges, scrapes or marks. This stage allows you to do a little fine-tuning too! You can refine the edges of your spore with the sandpaper, giving the foam a graceful taper. Just be slow and steady... too much pressure, and you could add gouges instead of getting rid of them!

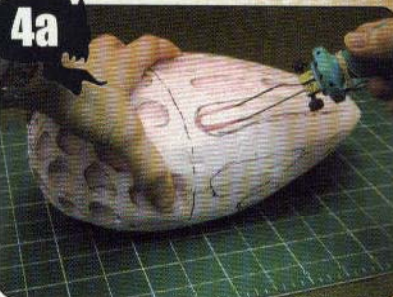
So now you have nice smooth surface to work with! This next stage will give you a chance to add some character and detail to an otherwise boring surface. Pick up that Sharpie again and start drawing on your spore. To delineate one side from the other on this piece, we've drawn smaller circles on the "nose" of the spore and longer, stretched out ovals on the "tail". To accentuate the feel of a heavy, bulbous "nose", a line was drawn closer to the front of the spore. All of the small circles will be on the front end of the Mycetic Spore while the longer grooves appear on the back portion. You can imagine this thing screaming down through the atmosphere, the smaller pock marks on the front slowing its decent as the longer grooves guide its course. Once you've planned out your proposed cuts, it's time to move onto the next phase! Once you feel that you're happy with what

4b



you've laid out, grab your hot knife and start digging holes in your spore. Don't melt in too deep... the Tyranids inside won't be able to stretch out their legs! When you make a cut, try to gradually cut in, reach the depth you want and then gently guide the hot knife back out. This will make it look more organic and less pre-planned and manufactured. Well, you're almost done but your Tyranids will need a door to escape from once they've made it to the surface! Now, Tyranids wouldn't utilize a typical door, but they still need an exit nonetheless. If you've watched movies like *Alien* or *Dune*, you're bound to have the workings of an alien "door" trapped somewhere in your head. To make a door in your spore, try taking just the tip of the hot knife and dragging it across the back edge of your foam. Then cross it with another shorter line. All of a sudden you have a Mycetic Spore that's capable of disgorging a brood of nasty critters!

4a



Now you have a Mycetic Spore that's almost ready for a paint job, but what about a base? Yes, you've put all this time and effort into carving and sculpting this foam into a masterpiece and now you're wondering why we want you to hack the bottom off the thing! Well, it's simple... this thing has impacted into the earth at tremendous speeds. In order to achieve this "dug in" effect, take your trusty saw and cut the bottom front bit off. This will make it look like it's sticking out of the sand in an ungainly manner. Just decide on how much of an angle you want your spore at and start sawing. If your cut was too ragged or uneven, try sanding it down with some sandpaper. Next, using a Jig saw (and make sure you get some parental supervision with this power tool, kids) cut an ovalish shape out of your MDF board. Leave a "lip" around the Mycetic Spore of about an inch and a half to two inches. This will give you a area to build up an "impact crater" with your spackling. Use a file to sand down the edges of the board so that they gently slope into the tabletop. When you're done with that, take your Liquid Nails and adhere the actual spore to the hardboard base. Let this dry for a bit and then you can get started on the crater. Quick drying spackle is perfect for this, as you can press into it with your fingers to shape and manipulate it until your happy. You'll want to pile it up in front of your spore, encircling the sides and trailing off to the back... making an elongated horseshoe shape. Even though it says it's quick dry, we've found that the spackling being piled this thickly will still take a while to harden. So, sit back and take this opportunity to plan out the color scheme for your Mycetic Spore. Once your base is completely dry, you can cover it with sand if you like. This will give you a perfect texture to drybrush, and, depending on the environment you're fighting over, you can paint it to match! To flock your base, cover your hardboard and spackling with a watered down layer of white glue. Try to work quickly. If you move too slowly, some of the glue may dry before your ready to lay down the sand and may cause strange streaks when it's finally dry. That's the end of the actual construction process, so let's start painting!

5



6



The first step in painting your spore is making sure it's surface prepared to receive paint. Gesso, a thick white acrylic paint that artists use to coat their canvases, is perfect for "priming" your foam scenery. Art stores also carry a black version, which will speed up your painting process immensely! Give the entire surface a coat of gesso, making sure you don't put it on too thickly. You don't want to obscure any details or obliterate your sandy base. Once you've given your spore a good layer of gesso, put it aside and let it dry. Once it's completely dry, paint the entire spore with Chaos Black paint (spray primer could dissolve it!). To paint the Mycetic Spore we chose a simple color scheme! We decided that the entire thing would be a deep shade of red, so, in successive layers, Scab Red, Red Gore and finally Blood Red were drybrushed over the entire surface. The Blood Red was concentrated around the "craters" make them pop out from the rest of the surface. We felt that the exit of the Mycetic Spore should receive some special attention! Being the exit by which a brood of

bugs would escape we wanted to make it a brighter area to unnerve the opposing players a bit. By simply concentrating on the tip of the spore with a strong drybrush of Tentacle Pink followed by a lighter mix of Tentacle Pink and Skull White you can make this pod look extremely threatening. Well, that's that... we hope you enjoyed this Tyrant scenery extravaganza! To read the unabridged version of this article, check out the News section on the Games Workshop Website at www.games-workshop.com.

HATCHING A GAMES DAY TABLE



Matt Boles
US Studio Scenery Designer

With Games Day just around the corner things are starting to turn and focus upon this awesome yearly event. And what would Games Day be without some cool tables to fight battles across? We asked US Studio Scenery Designer **Matt Boles** to take us through the steps to create the Tyranid Hive Ship table, one of dozens and dozens which will be featured this year at Games Day 2001! Take it away, Matt...

Hey, troops! The guys at White Dwarf thought you might like a peek behind the scenes at the US Scenery Studio. Preparations for Games Day 2001 and the Grand Tournament Season are in full swing, so we've already built a load of amazing new terrain. Specifically for Games Day, and, in observance of the new Tyranids' release, we've decided to tackle the project of a bug table. Not just any table on any old world, but the interior of a hive ship for those Space Marines to ravage. Below is a step-by-step process for how this table was created.

STEP 1: CONCEPTUALIZE IDEAS - First of all, you'll want to draw up some basic ideas for how you want the table to look. For this task we had Rick "Lobot" Smith whip up a few really cool sketches that depict how the inside of a Tyranid hive ship might look. Then, I melded those ideas with my own initial concepts for the table. I wanted to create a

chamber of Stasis Pods, where the 'Nids can burst forth, pick up their bio-weapons, climb into a mycetic spore and be fired down to a planet to consume it.

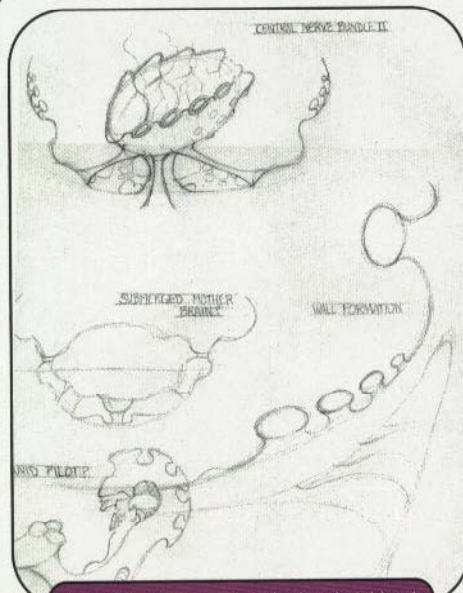
STEP 2: DECIDE ON TABLE'S CONTENTS - This step is to get measurements for all the items that will be affixed to the table's surface. That way, you'll know how much room for each item you'll have, and you'll know how many of them you'll need. I decided on three Stasis Pod Bays, a Central Nerve Bundle in the middle of the table, nine Capillary Towers, a Spore Forest and some Weapons Pods.

STEP 3: BUILD THE BLANK TABLE - Using a 4'x8' sheet of plywood and a few 3/4" x 3 1/2" boards I built the blank, bare table you see in the picture (and my mom said I was all thumbs...).

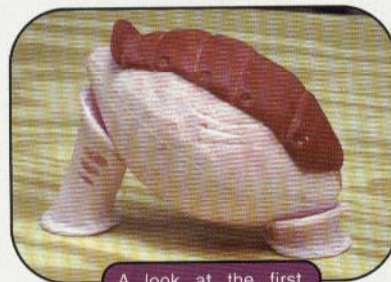


The bare bones of a beautiful bug-infested Games Day table

STEP 4: CREATE THE CENTRAL NERVE BUNDLE - I wanted to create an elongated oval to represent this "brain" of sorts, kind of like a mini-football. With a little discussion of how to actually do that with some of the other studio folks I was able to create this shape from two pieces of 2" foam. After gluing and sanding the pieces together I carved little squiggly lines into the Bundle with a heat cutter (a soldering iron would work well, too) to give it that "brain-esque" feel. Then I took some two-part epoxy modeling compound (you can also use a LOT of green putty!) and shaped it into a carapace to cover the Nerve Bundle, making sure that it had five ridges just like the Tyranids do!



A detail of one of Lobot's sketchbook pages, detailing his ideas about the table



A look at the first stages of the Nerve Bundle's creation

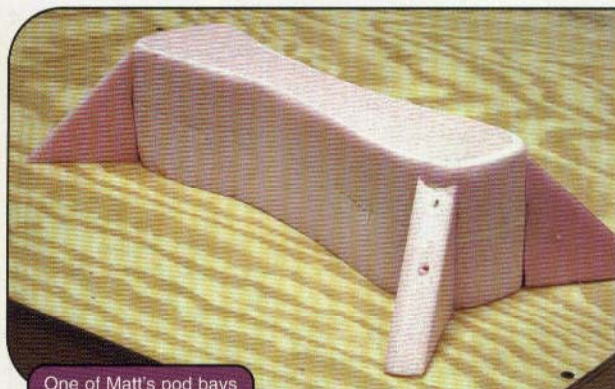
STEP 5: CREATE THE CAPILLARY TOWERS - I knew the Nerve Bundle would have to sit on something other than the floor of the hive ship (it would look kind of funny rolling around trying to squash the Space Marines!), so I created a couple of short Capillary Towers using the steps from Lobot's article in WD #254. These were made to correlate with the nine Capillary Towers that went behind the Nerve Bundle.

STEP 6: CREATE TELEPORTER NEXUS - These are used to transport the Mycetic Spores to the launch tubes, ready to shoot them down to the planet. They are made by carving 1" foam into a rough hill and etching a star pattern at the top. Then I carved more squiggly lines into the sides to tie them visually to the Nerve Bundle. Next, I placed a number of 'tentacles' around the edges using metal tail bits from various models and affixing them with putty and wood glue.

STEP 7: CREATE WEAPONS PODS - These are where the bio-weapons grow and are ready for use. Once again, I went to the 1" foam and set it up just like the teleporters but smaller. Then, I inset a number of Tyranid weapons from the Mail Order Archives into the foam using a combination of putty and wood glue.

STEP 8: CREATE RIPPER EGGS - Here is where the Hive Mind gestates rippers for use in planetary assaults. These are made by painting a number of metal and plastic rippers black. Then I took a plastic sphere half that you can buy at any craft store (you can usually find them with the plastic boxes) and filled it 1/4" with a two-part high gloss resin mixed with yellow ink. This particular high gloss resin is similar to the kind that coats bartops, counters and similar surfaces. You can find it at most home improvement stores. Follow the directions on the package carefully, as the resin heats up while it sets and could end up melting your plastic sphere half if you use too much at once. Please, remember when using the resin to be in a well ventilated area.

I put several layers of resin into each sphere half, but each layer **MUST** be dry before you begin to pour the next. As you build up the layers, put the rippers in there, too. Make sure you put a couple of rippers in different layers, so it'll give the feeling that they're floating in the ooze. I finally put some foam runners over the top of the sphere to attach it to the tabletop. To finish our ripper pods, I put some wooden eggs on the runners to add to the organic feel of the swarm sphere.



One of Matt's pod bays before the resin egg pods are attached

STEP 9: CREATE STASIS POD BAYS

- These are where the gaunts gestate and are kept in stasis until they are needed. Then they burst out of their pods and terrorize anyone unfortunate enough to be close by! The bays themselves were formed by carving 2" foam into vague peanut-like shapes (see above photo). The four legs, of sorts, were cut out and attached, two on either end, to the peanut shapes. Ten gaunts for each bay were then painted black, and plastic egg halves were filled with resin in much the same fashion as the ripper eggs. Each pod has one gaunt added to it during the layering of the resin. Once the pods are done, openings are carved on the sides of the bay to hold the ten pods. The interiors of each opening are painted white to reflect as much light as possible, and the pods are then glued into the bay with a hot glue gun.

STEP 10: CREATE MYCETIC SPORE FOREST - These are used to transport Tyranid forces to a planet's surface. I made these by using various sized styrofoam eggs bought from a craft store. I secured them to the table using screws and more hot glue.



Matt pouring some of the resin carefully over a submerged Gaunt figure



The Mycetic Spore Forest, Teleporter Nexus and a few ripper eggs amidst the texture painted floor of the hive ship



The texture spreads across the table like a ravaging horde of Tyranids!

STEP 11: TEXTURE TABLE - When seeing the table in my mind I kept coming back to organic structures like mud dauber nests and termite mounds. I knew I wanted to have that type of texture covering the table. To simulate this I used a joint compound (also found at most home improvement or hardware stores) that I spread across the hive ship floor and Stasis Pod Bays. Then I stippled it by rapidly patting it with a large rough sponge. Once the compound had dried, I knocked down any small peaks that had formed by rubbing a towel over the table. That way, those bits wouldn't break off after I painted it.

STEP 12: PAINT!! - I imagined this table as a mixture of skin tones along with the classic Tyranid color

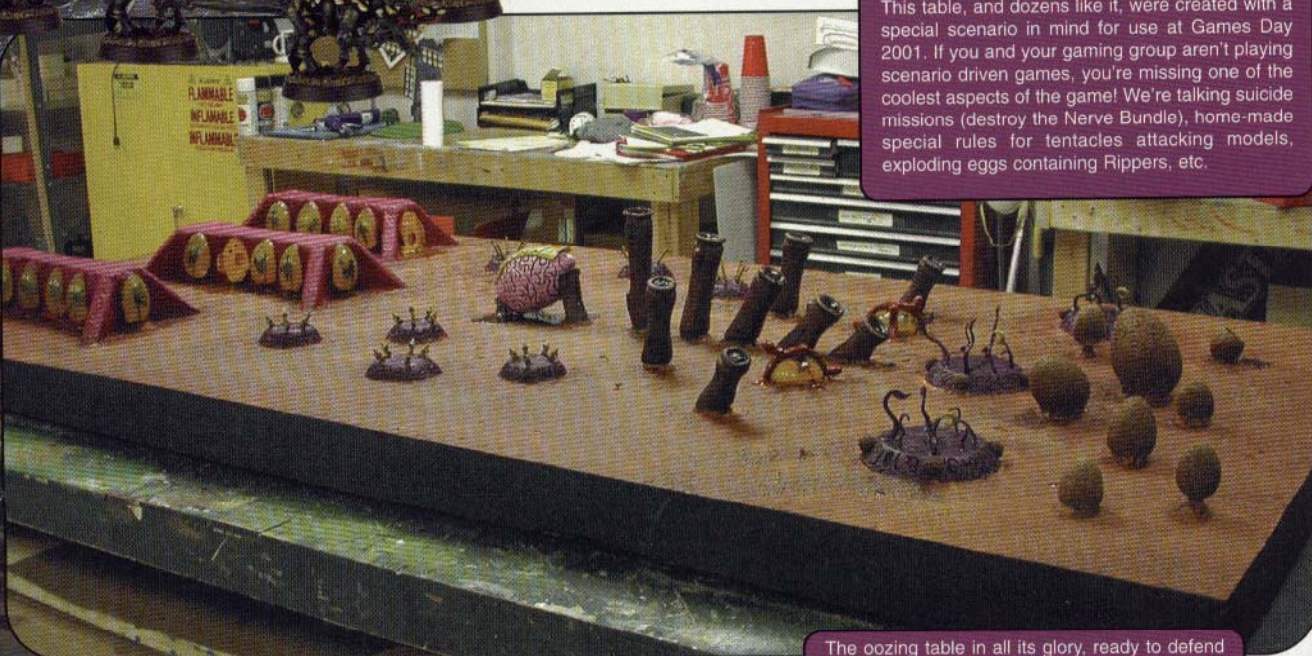
scheme of deep violet and pinkish-purple. I took paint samples (just a 2" circular area on a scrap of paper) to a local home improvement store to get quarts of the colors I needed. The only thing that was painted a bit differently was the central Nerve Bundle, which I did in pink and bone with yellow ink wash. Once I finished painting the table, I took some more of the two-part high gloss resin and mixed it with some purple ink to ooze around the Nerve Bundle and the Capillary Towers.

Well, there you have it in a nutshell. The entire table took about 2 weeks to create, and most of that time was spent mixing and pouring the resin for the stasis pods. You really have to be patient with that stuff! In the end the effect was well worth the wait, and I'm sure it will create a lot of buzz at Games Day 2001!

Do you have questions about building terrain for your home or gaming club? Write to the US Scenery Design Studio at the address listed below, and we'll answer some of the most popular questions in White Dwarf or online!

Games Workshop Scenery Studio
6721 Baymeadow Drive
Glen Burnie, MD 21060-6401

This table, and dozens like it, were created with a special scenario in mind for use at Games Day 2001. If you and your gaming group aren't playing scenario driven games, you're missing one of the coolest aspects of the game! We're talking suicide missions (destroy the Nerve Bundle), home-made special rules for tentacles attacking models, exploding eggs containing Rippers, etc.



The oozing table in all its glory, ready to defend against all those who dare come aboard

Pretty soon, the Web Department will post a current and updated draft of the most commonly asked and answered questions on Warhammer and 40K. Until then, here's a little taste to whet the whistles of our loyal and enthusiastic fans...

THE OFFICIALLY OFFICIAL Q&A LIST OF OFFICIAL QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS WARHAMMER WARHAMMER 40,000

•On page 54 of the Warhammer Rulebook, at the bottom of the left column, you'll find the following phrase: "Individual models (the assumption being that individual models are part of a larger unit as opposed to single character models) can turn to face the chargers and avoid this test *and any other penalties*, unless they are already engaged in close combat."

This seems to indicate that if I charge an unengaged unit in its flank, individual models are turned to face the attacker (because it looks better), and the unit does NOT lose its rank bonus, does NOT allow the attacker to claim the +1 bonus to combat resolution, and does NOT take a Panic test. Is this correct?

No. Normal ranked units can't be worked this way, for if they were, the whole point of flank charges would be lost. Units only get a rank bonus if they are fighting to the front, so if they are charged to the flank first, they wouldn't have a rank bonus yet.

•Page 80, item #3, Panic Checks for Side/Rear Charges: It says that you use the Unit Strength (5 or more) to require the check, but then says at the end that no test is required if the charging unit is less than 5 models. Is that last sentence a typo, or do you do a test if you have both 5 or more models *and* a Unit Strength of 5 or more?



Just mentally delete the last sentence. A Unit Strength of 5 is the only requirement needed.

•Page 95 Characters Marching: Do these rules only apply to foot characters or are mounted characters included?

We've decided that all the special character movement rules apply only to characters on foot - the marching rules, 360° arc of sight, etc. Characters on mounts or monstrous characters (i.e., those with 6 or more starting wounds) follow all the normal movement rules regarding arc of sight, marching, terrain, etc. Note that like chariots and monsters, such characters do not need to wheel or turn as such and can move freely in any direction.

•Comet of Casandora will remain in play but doesn't have the standard, "stays in play until Wizard chooses to end it, dies, etc." Should it have these words, or is it so powerful that it goes on even without the Wizard?

Once the Comet is on its way, that's your lot - you can jump up and down on the Wizard all you like, but it ain't gonna stop 50 tons of star iron slapping into the battlefield!

•Does a twin-linked heavy bolter get:
a) 3 shots re-rolling misses
or
b) 6 shots re-rolling misses
when it shoots?

The answer is a. Twin linking does not increase the number of shots the players roll, but it allows the players to re-roll any misses. Accuracy through overkill!

•May troops assaulting a vehicle or Dreadnought be fired upon?

Yes to the no-Weapon Skill vehicles, no to the Dreadnought.



•A multi-wound creature suffers instant if hit with something big enough, right? But what if he's on a bike and gets this +1 T from the bike? What T should be used for the wounds taken? His natural T or his boosted T?

You should use the model's *original* Toughness for working out Instant Kills. No modifiers for things like bikes, war gear or other special abilities are taken into account (for example, the +1 T from a character with the Mark of Nurgle would be ignored) This keeps a lid on players bumping up the Toughness of multi-wound characters, making them very difficult to kill.

•You can't shoot an independent character if he's within 6" of a unit, unless he's the closest model at short range. Does this hold true if the Independent Character is, say, a Hive Tyrant or Avatar near a unit of small critters that are less than half its height?

By the rules, this is true, though as a House Rule you might want to allow players to target them.

•A Dreadnought is a vehicle, so can turn and fire and such while mobile.... But if it is immobilized, does it have a limited field of fire, or is it considered to be its own turret? How should the field of fire be resolved for an immobilized Dread?

Best to think of it as a turreted tank, so it can still rotate and fire after being immobilized unless it suffers another immobilized result.



CATCHING UP WITH CHRIS FITZPATRICK

A couple of issues ago, White Dwarf staffers caught up with Chris Fitzpatrick in our US Scenery Studio and forced him at gun poi--er...asked him nicely...to talk to us about how he got a job with Games Workshop and to give some advice for budding new sculptors, some tricks of the trade and a bit on the miniature sculpting process as a whole. After many bribes of free drinks and bootleg Duran Duran albums he settled down long enough for us to pry into his work life with a few questions.

(White Dwarf) Basically, Chris, we wanted to talk to you a little bit about sculpting. The last time you had an interview with White Dwarf, it was about 2 years ago with the UK White Dwarf team. As a refresher, tell us how you got your job as a Games Workshop sculptor, especially being a yankee.

(Chris) Well, the first step was doing some sculpting work with some American companies, and I felt like I had gone as far as I could in the American industry, so I decided to try and get a job with the big boys. So I sculpted what I thought was a Games Workshop-style figure. I sent it the headquarters in Nottingham, and they were pleased enough with it to fly me out there for about a month.



A walk down Memory Lane with a picture of Chris' first Morathi figure, sculpted as part of his interview with Games Workshop, and his brand-new version of the sorceress mounted on a Dark Pegasus. Coming later this year.



I did a couple of figures out there, so they would be sure that I was someone they wanted to hire. That's when I sculpted the first Morathi figure, the Hag Sorceress. As it turned out, it happened to be the hottest month of the year then. And, if you've never been, almost nowhere in England has air-conditioning. The biggest problem was that when the "green stuff" putty gets warm, really warm, it begins to feel like wet chewing gum. So it sticks to EVERYTHING, and nothing you sculpt holds its shape. And here I was, trying to impress people with my sculpting when everything was sticking together! I spent two weeks trying to sculpt and getting no results, so in the last week and a half it cooled off enough to get something done, and I managed to pull it all together at the last minute.

Obviously, you did well enough to get the job! And then you moved over there?

Yeah, I moved over there about 5 months later. It took that long to get all the paperwork done...work visa and stuff.

How long did you stay over there working?

Two years.

And then how did you convince them that it was a good idea for you to come back over and work from home?



Chris Fitzpatrick, Games Workshop's only American sculptor, working in the US Studio

Well, there wasn't any convincing, really. I worked until the permit ran out, so then I had to come back to the States to continue working.

Now that you're sculpting most of the Dark Elf range for Warhammer, it looks like your style has changed a bit since you first started. Is that due to the drawings you did for the Dark Elf figures?

Well, not everything I do is based on drawings the artists do. But certainly, a lot of the Dark Elf stuff was inspired by Dave Gallagher's work. He's the main illustrator for the Dark Elves; he's doing all the art for the Dark Elf book.

And you collaborated with him and other sculptors and games designers when the whole Dark Elf project was first getting underway?

Yeah. We all got together to see what we wanted to do with the entire feel of the Dark Elves, what we wanted to keep or change about their look.

How do you go about getting your stuff sculpted? You just mentioned that you had a meeting with them about what was gonna be done. Do they actually fly you out to the UK for that meeting?

Yeah, I go out to the UK about every three months, and we get together and make sure that the line is going in the right direction. Then we talk about what I'll be doing in the next three months. Then I'll come back and do some more sculpting for the next meeting.

So it's not like you do a couple of figures and send them over, then they critique them and send them back and you do some more work...none of that, huh?

Oh, no. I'll basically go back for a quarterly check up and see what comes next, and then I fly back and start some more sculpting. I try to make sure everything is ready to go when I send it out, that everything is done exactly the way they want it. Now and then a couple of changes have to be made because maybe the figure won't cast or something, but usually they just have one of the designers there touch it up. The mold guys just love me...I always make things that seem to have a hard time casting.

Well, how do you actually go about, from start to finish, sculpting a model?

First we begin with the idea. Sometimes I'll do a sketch, if it's some-

thing I feel that I need to come up with before I start sculpting. I have armatures that I've made, which are just simplified human skeletons that I've had GW cast for me. Most of the other designers use wire, but some of them use armatures. Everyone has their own method of how they go about starting a miniature. But I find that this works best for me.

So I'll basically take this armature and bend it into the shape I want it to be and then put it onto a cork, which gives me something to hold onto while I'm sculpting. Then I'll start adding a little putty to start "blocking out" the basic shapes of the figure...the chest, a little bit of putty to the legs and the feet. By sculpting the feet, it will get the model to adhere more to the cork, make it stay on there a bit better. Once all that dries, then I'll start the actual sculpting proper. I'll work from the feet up. The reason I do this is it helps to keep it sitting on the cork. Then I'll do what's called "dressing the figure," where I'll sculpt the body then sculpt whatever clothes on top of it. But I won't necessarily add all the detail. But I'll shape it up and add all the detail on top of that. Then usually the last thing I'll do is the head. The face is the most expressive part of the body, and you wanna get it right.

Getting started is always the hardest part for me. Once I'm halfway done



Chris' Wax #5 tool, which he especially likes to use for sculpting fabric folds

with the figure, then it becomes fun for me. The first part is more work. After that, I enjoy myself a lot more.

Do you have any special tools that only you use, something that no other Games Workshop designer might have in his collection?

I'm sure that I do, but I've found that every designer has their own "secret weapons" that they use. Their own little Excaliber. Mine is this dentist's tool. An "interproxial carver," or something like that.... My dentist knows what I'm talking about! It's good for those "hard to reach" sculpting areas. (laughter) My dentist and I connect on a level that most people can't. We talk about dental tools! (much more laughter)

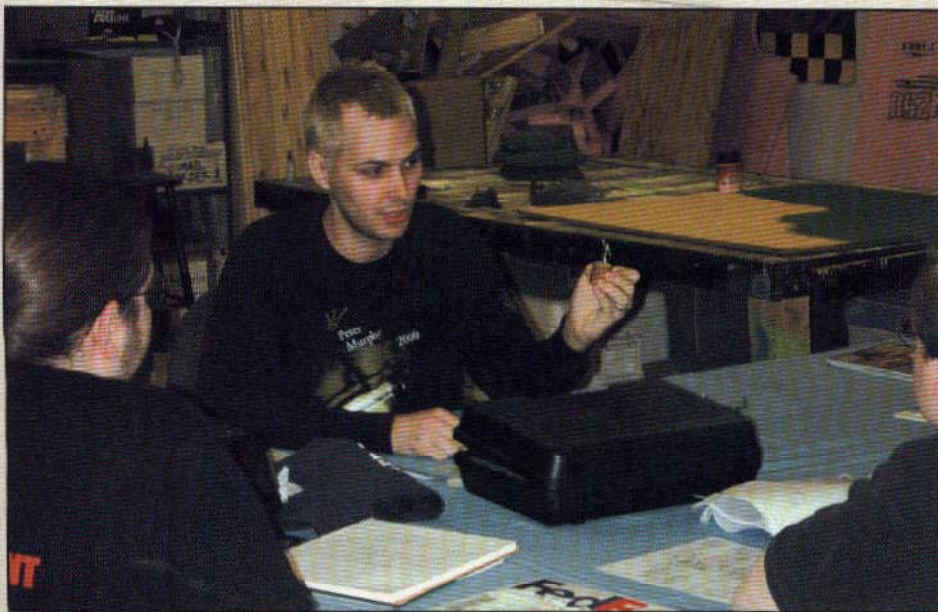
Do you swipe the tools off the tray while he's not lookin'?

No, no, I don't.... I don't know where those have been.... (the yuk-yuks and guffaws continue)

I also use another tool, one that most of the UK designers use, called a Wax #5, and it's used primarily for making dentures. Dentists use it for sculpting wax. The blunt end is great for doing folds in fabric.

The other thing I use is this, which is sort of like a tool used for sculpting clay. I use this end, the blunt end, for doing fine folds in fabric and anatomy, musculature. This end, the little hook, I use for sculpting chain-mail, and I use the round end of that for sculpting faces.

And I should probably give credit where credit is due. This tool was made by Richard Kerr, a sculptor who used to work for Ral Partha. When I worked for them, one of the guys there gave it to me. They all have one. And then I use files and a needle tool. But these are all pretty conventional. My advice to up-

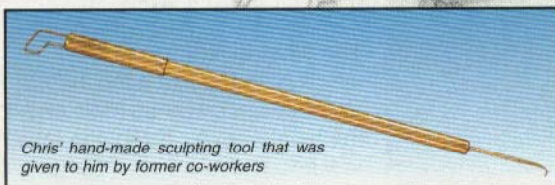


Chris talks to the White Dwarf staff (William "Goat-Boy" Stilwell, left, and Drew Will) about some of the finer points of sculpting miniatures.



Chris talks to a few of our co-workers about what he's been doing with the new Dark Elf range.

and-coming sculptors is that no sculpting tool is going to do the job for you. Everyone seems to think that once they get a dental tool, they'll be able to sculpt like Aly Morrison or Brian Nelson. And that's not what it's about. A tool can certainly help a little bit, but the bottom line is that you need to find a tool that works for *you*. Everybody uses different things. Manicurist tools are good...you could make tools...I know another designer who uses pencils with the pencil leads filed to various shapes that he uses to sculpt with. So the name of the game is experimentation. And always keep your tools clean, as well, 'cause you can get putty caked all over it and never get a good result. You can use water to keep the putty from sticking to it, I know others who use vaseline.



Chris' hand-made sculpting tool that was given to him by former co-workers

Do you have any other tips to the budding young sculptors out there?

Sure. Take your time. Never rush the figure. The putty is such a strange medium to work in. It's so sticky and so mushy, you have to do it one step at a time. You have to wait until it dries before you add more. But you can accelerate the drying process with a regular desk lamp bulb. And learn anatomy. Because it doesn't matter how good of a sculptor you are, if

you're sculpting the muscles wrong, it's going to look wrong. So you have to have that knowledge first.

Do you have any particular tome of anatomical knowledge you'd suggest?

Yes! *Dynamic Anatomy* by Burne Hogarth is the sculptor's Bible. All of his books are very good, but *Dynamic Anatomy* is the best for reference while sculpting miniatures.

Do you ever work in an "assembly line" fashion, having more than one figure in progress at a time?

Yes. I always try to have at least 3 figures going at once. While one is drying, then I can work on the others.

That way, I'm never waiting around for something to finish.

And I try not to have more than four going at once, because it's kind of distracting. It also helps at first to have a piece of artwork or reference material to work

from, because it helps to keep your scale in check, as well. If you plan it out well to begin with, then you're halfway there.

What about sculpting plastic figures? Do you still use the same process with a bigger armature and everything?

Well, the plastics, we make those piece by piece, so we don't actually use an armature for those, for the most part. They

all have *something* underneath them, but now they've finally started using something other than "green stuff" to sculpt the plastics, since it's not the ideal medium for large scale work. Wax, for instance, is very good for sculpting plastics.

Do they have certain designers who only do certain things, like, just *this* guy sculpts our war machines...?

Yeah. We all get pretty typecast, in a way, mostly by what people think we're good at sculpting.

And you're the "Elf Guy"

Right. I'm the Elf Guy. (laughter) And I sculpt a lot of women, too. And Brian Nelson's the "Orc Guy," but he could do anything! But everybody gets their own specialty, pretty much.

Do you know what's coming up in the next few months, or is it literally, "Right now, we're looking to finish the Dark Elves," and don't know what's coming next?

Well, everything is done WAY way in advance. Most of the figures we see on the shelves were sculpted 6 months to a year beforehand. You get sort of "out of the loop", so you can't really tell what's gonna be coming out.

What about between now and Games Day, when we'll hopefully be seeing you again, do you know what you're gonna be doing?

My immediate plans are to finish up this range. I still have to do two more characters, including Malus Darkblade from *Warhammer Monthly*, which is a really cool crossover between the



A look at Chris' great new Dragon Rider, the Witch King Malekith painted by 'Heavy Metal' artist Kirsten Mickelburgh

game and the comic. It's been really great to collaborate with the Black Library to do a sculpted figure of a comic book character. The artist for the "Darkblade" comic has changed Malus' appearance a little, to kind of coordinate with the new look of the Dark Elves. It's pretty exciting to see your own ideas come to life like that.

Morathi also has a fashionable new look, based on some of Dave Gallagher's drawings (seen in the background of these pages!). Next, I'm working on some Special Edition wizards for this year's Summer Battle Tour, the Albion campaign. But they're not your typical wizards, they have a neat Celtic feel...really different from anything else in the Warhammer World. They'll be a nice change after a whole year of Dark Elves.

(To the White Dwarf Staff) I think that's all I have...Lobot, do you have any other questions?

I love all the nicknames you guys have here! Lobot... Dirty... Goat-Boy... Go-Go... Where do you get these?

Sadly enough, the White Dwarf Staff just look at each other sheepishly and decline to comment.



Malus Darkblade, from the Warhammer Monthly series, painted by 'Eavy Metal artist Keith Robertson

Here's a sneak peek at some of the fantastic new Dark Elf Corsairs that Chris has been working on, painted by 'Eavy Metal artist Neil Green!



Look for more installments of the epic saga of Chris Fitzpatrick, and be sure to come by Games Day 2001 to ask him your own burning questions in person! Games Day tickets go on sale REALLY SOON, so keep your eyes glued to White Dwarf for more exciting details!



Last month Space McQuirk told of the spread of the terrible curse of Vampirism into the world. This month the story continues with the fate of the Strigoi and Necrarch blood lines.



Space got the job of Warhammer Writer after seeing the ad in U.K. White Dwarf. He now writes for Armies books as well as WD itself.

You have heard how the curse of Undeath was brought into the Old World, and how the Vampires were driven forth from their city of Lahmia to seek shelter with the Great Necromancer Nagash. On the eve of a massive battle the Vampire alliance crumbled and each of the trueborn Vampires decided upon their own course of action. The world had been spared the wrath of a combined force that would undoubtedly have been able to conquer any resistance it came across. Now, though, a new and more elusive danger threatened each and every civilization.

For many decades the six trueborn Vampires who had deserted Nagash

remained in hiding from each other. Plotting in their dark and secret lairs, they dreamed up dark schemes as to how best they could forge enough power to withstand the other trueborn, who would no doubt seek to destroy them.

Wsozan was the only Vampire to remain loyal to Nagash. As the other Vampires fled into the dark night he remained at his master's side, agreeing to lead the army into battle. He hoped that by staying with Nagash his dark master would reveal more of his Necromantic secrets. Wsozan accompanied Nagash into battle in a mighty scythed chariot made of the sun bleached bones of a once monstrous creature.

He led a massive horde of skeletal warriors into combat, riding at the forefront of the army, casting his corrupt magic across the battlefield. As the bloodied bodies of his foes fell to the sandy desert floor, smashed by dark bolts of crackling energy, he would awaken their spirits, commanding them to rise and fight against their own kinfolk. The battle was savage and Alcadizaar's army was weakened by the dread plague that

had swept across the land. The horror of having to fight their own decayed friends and family who had been summoned from their plague ridden graves led to Alcadizaar's army crumbling under the massed assault.

Nagash was pleased with his apprentice and as a reward gave Wsozan one of his dark tomes to study. Wsozan gleaned terrible arcane knowledge from the crumbling pages of the unholy book, whilst the other Vampires fled north. It is thought that one sought passage on a merchant vessel. Tales tell of how a ship was found crewless, drifting along the coast around the lands now known as Norsca. All the cargo had been thrown overboard save for a single coffin. Another headed east towards the lands of Cathy and Nippon. Little is known of the fate of these Vampires. None can know the exact routes that the Vampires chose to walk, but stories of their passing can be found amongst the myths and legends that still haunt the children of those realms to this day.

During the brief period of time that Wsozan was able to study under Nagash he learned much of the other realm, the world of Undeath. Unfortunately for the Vampire trueborn, his master was slain by



Alcadizaar only a year after he had risen to power. Nonetheless Wsoran escaped, with the tome Nagash had presented him still in his possession. Wsoran did not harbor the ambitions of the other Vampires. Conquering the world of mortals was not enough for the Necrarch. Instead, he sought to master the world of death. He knew that if he were to achieve ultimate power then it would come from knowledge of the spirit world that was the essence of his very being.

With no aspirations to build a great nation, he was not inclined as were the other Vampires to create an army of Thralls. Wsoran selected a few of Nagash's most intelligent priests who had escaped the wrath of Khemri. He decided to make them into his Vampire students and went into seclusion in order that he could teach them the dark arts of Necromancy, unthreatened by the other Vampires.

Little is known of where Wsoran hid away after the defeat of Nagash. He locked himself away for centuries, studying the art of Necromancy with little interest in the affairs of his fellow Vampires. Using knowledge gained from the Book of Nagash, he would spend great amounts of his time walking in the Undead spirit world. It was this that ultimately led to Wsoran's undoing. In order to cross the border between the mortal realm and the land of Undeath he would go into a trance-like state. In this way, his soul became free to explore and converse with the spirits of the dead.

His finest and most diligent student, a Vampire named Melkhior, seized one such moment to use to his advantage. Who knows what made Melkhior betray his master. Some rumor that the Book of Nagash spoke to him, beckoning him to slay Wsoran, others believe it was simply his own twisted mind that led him to plunge a stake through the heart of his master. Nonetheless, in doing so, Melkhior plunged those Vampires that Wsoran had created into a world of darkness.

During this time, the remaining trueborn fled north through Orc infested lands, crossing mighty mountain ranges on their travels. Each of them came upon small secluded realms around the Old World. In these lands they began to found minor domains. No single Vampire was stronger than the next and so they

kept their locations secret, waiting patiently for the others to expose themselves before choosing whether to strike against them. Realizing that they would need strong allies were they to stand any hope of defeating the other Vampires, each of the trueborn created Thralls with the Blood Kiss. For many centuries they continued to exist this way and it came as little surprise to the other Vampires that Ushoran would be the first to emerge.

Ushoran had a unique skill with diplomacy and was a fine warrior whose lack of skill at swordsmanship was more than made up for by his immense muscular strength and finely honed strategic mind. Ushoran came across a city known as Mourkain in the Kingdom of Strigos which flourished in the Western foothills of the Worlds Edge Mountains. Over a brief few decades he was able to create a small following of Vampire Thralls each of whom held high positions within the city's nobility. Once he felt that they were in a strong enough position he made his move and with the support of the Thralls he declared himself ruler of the realm.

Ushoran had learned from the mistakes of the Lahmian court and bade that his Vampires only drank from those that deserved to die. With such a strong leader the realm prospered and before long it became obvious to the other Vampires that one of their kind must be behind the success. Ushoran in his foolish pride sent his Thralls out to seek the other trueborn Vampires and bid them to come to his realm where together under his leadership they could found a new deadly dynasty.

It was Neferata, Ushoran's own sister, that was the first to scorn his invitation. She imprisoned the Thrall messenger, sending the bloodied fangs which she had herself torn from his mouth back to Ushoran as a sign of her contempt. Neferata had built up a network of Vampires amongst the flourishing tribes that were to eventually become the Empire. Making good use of this, she warned the kings and princes of these lands of Ushoran's deadly power. Together they raised an army and marched south against Ushoran.

Had the humans known what they faced they might have decided against their course of action, but the subterfuge of Neferata's Lahmian



sisters was subtle. Ushoran had amassed a great army. They were a disciplined force comprising many strong and skilled warriors, with well crafted weapons and armor. He gathered his troops and marched north to intercept the armies of men.

Unfortunately for Ushoran the Orcs and Goblins had overcome their fear of the terrible fanged beasts that had stalked through their land and, in true Orc fashion, now sought to fight these monsters. Mounted on mighty Wyverns, the Orc Warboss Garsnag Craktoof and his Shaman Fuzzgig led

a massive Waaagh! and headed north to seek vengeance for those Orcs that had been slaughtered by the dread Blood Dragon Abhorash.

Ushoran's force had virtually smashed the united tribes. His Thralls had been merciless on the battlefield, slaying thousands with their unholy fury. Ushoran's army would have easily defeated the men of the northern lands, but during the long campaign rumor spread of Craktoof's mighty Waaagh! Ushoran knew he had left his capital city defenseless and had to quickly march his army back south.

They were harried and pursued by the humans and much of his force was destroyed as the rearguard collapsed.

Finally, when they reached the plains of dust, a short distance from the capital, Ushoran saw the might of the Orc horde. Countless numbers of Greenskins were amassed before him ready to sweep through his tired and depleted force. Bellowing savage guttural war cries, they smashed crude weapons on their shields challenging the Vampire army. Ushoran knew they were outnumbered but he had little choice other than to fight the horde.



The Orcs had underestimated the power of a Vampire and in the first assault upon the city, Craktoof himself was slain by Ushoran, who it is said tore the Orc's head from his body with his bare hands. None dared face the Vampire and the Orc attack might have faltered had not Fuzzgig called upon the mighty powers of Waaagh! magic and struck down the Vampire Lord, engulfing him in a green, sorcerous blast of energy.

Upon seeing their master destroyed, the remaining Strigoi fled the battle knowing that the city was doomed. They desperately sought safety amongst their own kind, searching for the other Vampires. It was not long before they found a small Vampire sect hidden within the chill, dark forests inhabited by the Sylvanjas peoples. They begged that they be allowed to join the Vampire coven, but those Vampires who are now thought to be the first of the von Carstein lineage remembered Ushoran's arrogance. They turned upon the stricken Vampires with ferocity, and few escaped their murderous vengeance. Each time they came across other Vampires they received similar treatment. The hunter had become the prey. The Strigoi were forced into hiding; everywhere they turned foes sought to destroy them. They had little option but to live in the barren wilderness, feasting off beasts. Their only refuges were those places shunned by civilization. Over many centuries the harsh elements changed their once fine bodies into tough muscular frames. The Strigoi became feral and beast-like, a mockery of their former aristocratic selves.

They became increasingly bitter and twisted as they watched the many races of the Old World grow strong, but more than anything else they hated the other Vampires for what they had turned once noble and proud Vampires into: monsters lurking at the edge of civilization who would gnaw the bones of the freshly buried dead, gathering followers from the Ghouls who inhabited the cemeteries. Lone travellers often fall prey to the Strigoi and villagers living on the poorly patrolled borders of realms tell tales of the terrible creatures that live in the dark forests.

As for the fate of Wsoran's Necrarch pupils they, too, scattered across the Old World. Perhaps because of the direct blood lineage or maybe due to some terrible sorceries from the spirit

of Wsoran, the Necrarch pupils found that they were somehow drawn into the world of Undeath. Their bodies remained on the mortal world free to walk that land at will but no longer able see the world as others do. Now they can only see the spirits of the dead. Mortals appear to the Necrarch Vampires as ghostly apparitions, whilst they can freely command the spirits of those who have passed into the other realm.

Many Vampires such as the von Carsteins and the Lahmians wish to rule over the Old World as immortal masters. From that fateful day when Melkhior slew the body of Wsoran, the Necrarch Vampires' sole purpose has been to turn all life into death. Naturally this twilight existence has led to most Necrarchs losing any sense of rationality they once possessed. Most are insane and spend their lives locked in remote towers plotting the fall of mankind, but occasionally one will march to battle.

Of all the Vampires that are known to exist the Necrarchs are the most reviled. Due to their unearthly Necromantic skills they have the ability to summon vast hordes of Undead warriors when they march to war, replenishing the broken corpses which fall in battle with the mutilated bodies of the opposing army.

Now the Vampires have spread themselves across the whole of the Old World. Each night their numbers grow as more fall prey to the deadly Blood Kiss of a Vampire. With each battle their armies are swollen with the re-animated bodies of the fallen, and in the war torn lands of the Old World there are countless reinforcements for their unholy hordes. Who can tell what secret plots they hatch in their ancient crypts. Decades, even centuries, are of little importance to a Vampire, and they can patiently bide their time waiting for the perfect moment to strike.

One thing is certain; there are none who can safely sleep in their beds whilst the dark menace of the Vampire Counts casts its evil shadow across the land. Many have attempted to wipe the threat of the Vampire from the face of the Old World but, as of yet, none have succeeded. The Bloodlines flourish still, and it is only through the acquired knowledge of their dark histories that the mortal world stands any chance of saving itself from the legions of death.



HIGH STANDARDS

A step-by-step process to creating your very own VAMPIRE COUNTS Army Standard

Robert Hawkins is an extremely talented individual. He graduated cum laude with a Bachelor's in Fine Art from Hartford Art School in 1995 as an Illustration major. In fact, he is so talented he spent a bit of time working on a few MARVEL COMICS titles, including X-Man, Amazing Spider-Man and Iron Man, just to name a few! (Check out the self-portrait to the right.) Robert now works at the Games Workshop Store in the Cherry Hill Mall in Cherry Hill, New Jersey.

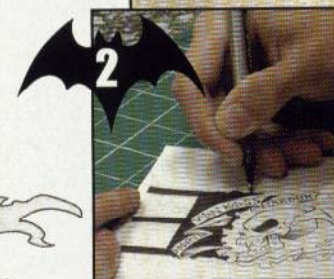


1) First, sketch the banner out in pencil, making sure that you draw it in scale so that it fits onto the banner pole. Using a pencil allows you to correct any mistakes that you may inadvertently make! As you can see in Rob's banner to the right, his comic book background is coming to the fore... he has put 'x's in the areas that he will paint with black ink.

2) Trace the image in ink. Black India Ink (available at art stores) works best, but you can use a black felt tip pen in a pinch.

3) Use a light box or window to trace the image to the other side of your piece of paper if you're making a double-sided banner.

4) Finally, it's time to color your banner. Rob uses Berol Prismacolor design markers to bring his banners to life, but there's no reason why you can't use Citadel Paints, colored pencils or anything else, for that matter. Now you can go ahead and cut your banner out and adhere it to the banner pole with Elmer's glue!



As you can see, Rob used the banner from the previous page to decorate this piece of **Forge World** scenery. This eerie addition to his Vampire Counts army makes for a perfect objective for a special Warhammer scenario. Beware of the Von Koss family!

Even though it's not part of Rob's Vampire Counts army, this Khemranian Mummy Standard Bearer is amazing! The bright blue (which could only be crushed lapis lazuli) really stands out against the stark tans and browns of the rest of this banner. If you look carefully, those are real ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics. Maybe those historians out there can figure out what it says...



The regiment of skeletons with sickles (above) is not only filled with great conversions, but has a standard that contains iconography reflected in the actual unit. This wraith has had his horrifying visage emblazoned onto it... as well as his weapon of choice!

This skeletal standard bearer (right) is carrying a truly brutal banner into battle. The holes, tattered edges and yellow coloration give it a aged and moth-eaten appearance truly befitting a legion of the Undead.

Mike Walker takes a regular look at the finer points of Warhammer, in his own unique way.



Mike, a regular White Dwarf contributor, has been examining the Warhammer World through the shattered lens of his gaming club for many a year, but has only recently started inflicting the details upon unwary readers.

Very bad ideas:

"Let's build a bigger and even more powerful Death Star."

"What is needed to make this show funnier is another cartoon canine – Lets call him Scrappy-Doo."

"Why don't we invite that nice Mr Poirot to join the shooting party this weekend at our somewhat remote house in the country."

"You can just ignore Joe's Dire Wolves."

* * * * *

In White Dwarf issue #254 you may have come across my piece on setting up a league. Well, this month the league games have begun, and the early results are in. Points are scored as follows:

Draw (No one wins by more than 299 Victory points):
Both players earn 2 points.

Marginal victory (Game won by 300-599 Victory points):
Winner earns 3 points.
Loser earns 1 point.

Solid Victory (Game won by 600-1,199 Victory points):
Winner earns 4 points.
Loser earns 0 points.

Massacre (Game won by 1,200 Victory points or more):
Winner earns 6 points.
Loser earns 0 points.

Eight of the fifteen league games have been fought. Eight opportunities for

DANSING WITH WOLVES

Mike's league players find that the dead can dance

players to display tactical brilliance, demonstrate extreme jamminess and to refuse the offer of some taste bud threatening tortilla crisps from Alan.

The early league leader is Joe and his vampireless Vampire Counts army. Somewhere near here is a copy of the army list he is using (it shows how some players 'experiment' with the army lists – Fat Bloke).

My first game (using Grok Greenshanks and his Savage Orcs and Goblins army) was against Joe, and I had lost it by turn two. During the practice games it had become pretty obvious that the main threat in Joe's army comes from the *Danse Macabre* powered Dire Wolves and Wight Cavalry.

Using the ability to re-cast (and re-cast, and re-cast, and re-cast) the very cheap *Danse Macabre*, Joe was able to double the movement of any of his fast moving troops that he wished, bringing them into positions from which he could launch devastating flank attacks. Okay, there was also the small matter of a vast quantity of offensive spells ripping through your units (the Zombies were basically barely mobile walls of rotting

flesh, brought along to stand between any threat and Joe's cowering Necromancers).

During the first few moves of my first league game I displayed all the tactical acumen and intellectual prowess of a slightly stunned Telly Tubby¹.

If your main combat units can only march move forward a bit faster than an athletically challenged Dwarf, sending them on a mission to have a close encounter of the stabbing kind with opponents who are cowering several feet away across the table is not a terribly good idea. Add to this the fact that at any moment they might decide to have a perfectly justified and necessary (but nevertheless mightily frustrating) movement-halting squabble, it makes even less sense.

But that's what I did.

Of course what I should have done was used my Savage Orc Boyz and Big 'Uns to protect my faster moving stuff and to kill Joe's. But by the time the Telly Tubbiness had worn off, my Boyz were well out of position, and I was done for. Joe scored a minor victory and three league points.

WARHAMMER ROSTER SHEET

Hollowhand's Vengeance (aka Joe's Haemophobic Horde)

Models/Unit	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Save	Notes	Points Value
HOLLOWHAND Level 4 Necromancer	4	3	3	3	4	3	3	1	8	-	Ring of the Barrow, Staff of Damnation	300
MORHAN Level 2 Necromancer	4	3	3	3	3	2	3	1	7	-		100
ESTERN Level 2 Necromancer	4	3	3	3	3	2	3	1	7	-		100
VIN GREENSH Level 2 Necromancer	4	3	3	3	3	2	3	1	7	-		100
50 Zombies	4	2	0	3	3	1	1	1	5	-		150
50 Zombies	4	2	0	3	3	1	1	1	5	-		150
50 Zombies	4	2	0	3	3	1	1	1	5	-		150
50 Zombies	4	2	0	3	3	1	1	1	5	-		150
10 Dire Wolves	9	3	0	4	3	1	2	1	3	-		110
10 Dire Wolves	9	3	0	4	3	1	2	1	3	-		110
10 Dire Wolves	9	3	0	4	3	1	2	1	3	-		110
5 Wight Cavalry	4	3	2	3	4	1	3	1	8	2+	Unit includes Standard Bearer, Champion, Wight weapons, heavy armor, lance, barbed Nightmares. Magic items: War Banner	155
1 Bonefire	6	3	0	3	4	2	2	1	8	-		100
1 Bonefire	6	3	0	3	4	2	2	1	8	-		100

TOTAL

1835 points

¹Suggestions on how you slightly stun a Telly Tubby are welcomed. The best we came up with was a football sock stuffed with some of Little Dave's mum's cold mashed potato – which has an abnormally high density for a vegetable-based compound.

Stopping Alan's incredibly fast moving Lizardmen requires three things:

- Concentrated and effective firepower.
- Aggressively positioned fast cavalry and flying troops to strip away enemy units' ability to march.
- Tough combat units moved to intercept the fastest of the attackers.

Instead, Stuart, in his first turn, achieved a misfiring Mortar, combined volleys of Handgunners and Crossbowmen who felled but a single Skink, a panicking Pegasus and a unit of Flagellants positioned so far from the action that they were nearer my troops on the next table than any of Stuart's.

Alan's army swept across the board, paused momentarily to beat the snot out of any Empire troops they came across and celebrated a solid victory. Only Stuart's Greatswords equipped with a Griffon Banner stubbornly prevented a massacre by seeing off countless waves of assorted reptiles.

These games were fought on a Saturday morning, so naturally there was a break to consume giant battered sausage and chips. Between all the munching on fried food, the post game analysis² discussed the benefits of fast moving troops, how artillery should be deployed and if the battered sausage experience was best enhanced by tomato, brown or chocolate sauce.

The artillery question is an interesting one. Stuart, Craig³ and I all have very different ideas about how to place these important war machines.

For Stuart, survival is important. His guns go where he can protect them. They will be placed in cover (behind a stone wall is an absolute favorite). On one occasion two of them ended up being deployed behind a hill. What they can fire at is a secondary consideration. Stuart hates giving away easy points. His guns are protected until they can unleash a vital shot. The rest of his army is deployed to protect his guns⁴.

Craig is the absolute opposite. His Dwarf guns go wherever they can get

the best shot. Often this is at the extreme ends of his army's line. This enables them to send cannon balls careening along the width of the tabletop. It is very hard to deploy in a formation to lessen potential casualties. A shot fired from the board corner will often be able to bounce along the line of troops rather than through them. Naturally these guns are often isolated and make reasonably easy targets to pick off. That was until the new Dwarf Miner rules. Many is the time a unit of skirmishers are about to enthusiastically massacre a lone gun crew only to be suddenly confronted by a unit of grimy warriors with muck-encrusted tools and sweaty beards.

As for me, I use my guns as bait. The guns are there to annoy the enemy. My Great Cannons and Mortars roar "come and get us" with each discharge. In close attendance (but not always too close initially so as to dissuade an attack) are my main combat and missile units ready to assault or pour fire into attackers. Knowing where the main battle will be fought is a huge advantage. I can ensure that my troops are going to be there in force. Attempts to fight the battle elsewhere merely means that I get to lob loads of extra cannon balls and mortar shells enemywards.

Interesting conversation over the afternoon's play resumed with a commentary on the two massacres.

It is just possible that thanks to a couple of summoning spells, Joe actually finished with more figures on the table than when he started his battle against Ron. Ron's army (Chaos Warriors, Chaos Knights, Marauders and Dragon Ogres) moved forward in a tight clump in an effort to prevent Joe's flanking maneuvers. This ruse failed utterly.

Observers winced their way through the last couple of moves as Joe clinically dispatched the last of Ron's troops. It was rather like watching something unnecessarily harsh being done to an Andrex puppy.

Scott and I were about level in points at the end of turn three. By the end of turn four all that Scott had left were two Wizards.

My Giant killed his General and then terrified two units of Archers. Having entirely failed to dodge three comets, Greenshanks and the only surviving Big 'Un hacked through just enough Handmaidens to rout them. The Boar Boyz did for the other archers and the game was over. Six lovely league points for me and a big casualty box for Scott.

The fight between my Giant and the High Elf General on his pet Griffon was the subject of a steward's enquiry. I had rolled 'Jump Up and Down' on the Giant's Special Attacks, and because Scott's General was man-sized in every respect other than the ear department, I claimed that my Giant had snatched him from his Griffon-top position, thrown him to the ground and jumped up and down on the hapless prince.

After everyone read slowly and with moving lips the relevant section in the Orc and Goblin book (the bottom of page 22) I was vindicated and it was accepted that the attack that reduced the Elven General by a dimension was legitimate.

Further debate ensued concerning cavalry models. The official line turns out to be that they are treated as man-sized targets, as the Giant is attacking the rider rather than the mount.

The next game perfectly illustrates that 'importance of the first move' thing.

Scott crammed his whole High Elf army into the left corner of his deployment zone⁵ (he was drawn to the hill located there like a cat to my freshly made tuna sandwich).

Joe piled all the Dire Wolves and Wight Cavalry at the opposite end of the table. He planned to make a massive sweeping move around some woods and away from all the bow fire.

To keep the Archers entertained and held in position, the Zombies and Necromancers were ordered to shamle directly towards them.

²Our post game analysis mostly consists of comments stating the utterly obvious or of barely disguised insults, but just occasionally an interesting new insight will sneak through into the conversation. These are a bit like those on Match of the Day, obviously without the participation of any silver-haired, crunchy snack sponsored, ex-international players or some Scots bloke whining on about inadequate defensive maneuvers.

³Craig was present this Saturday, not to play but to indulge in his other favorite hobbies: photography and Stuart baiting.

⁴The Jelly Tubbiness proving to be momentarily contagious when Stuart positioned those wayward Flagellants.

⁵Scott is renowned for his love of raised terrain. Ridges, hillocks, hills, cliffs, and escarpments; Scott loves them all. If one turns up in his deployment zone it is usually subject to gentle words and a soft caress, just prior to having every available archer plunked on it.

WARHAMMER ROSTER SHEET

Prince Gersky's Elven Host

Models/Unit	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Save	Notes	Points Value
PRINCE GERSKY Elf Prince Griffon	5 6	7 5	6 0	4 5	4 5	3 4	8 5	4 4	10 7	-	Lance, longbow, Griffon, Armor of Protection, Radiant Gem of Horth	481
MAGHARA Level 2 Mage	5	4	4	3	3	2	5	1	8	-		125
TAESTRO Level 2 Mage	5	4	4	3	3	2	5	1	8	-		125
THREQUON Level 2 Mage	5	4	4	3	3	2	5	1	8	-		125
20 Archers	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8	-		240
20 Archers	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8	-		240
20 Archers	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8	-		240
10 Shadow Warriors	5	4	4	3	3	1	5	1	8	-		150
15 Handmaidens of the Everqueen	5	5	5	3	3	1	5	1	8	-		270

TOTAL

1846 points

Joe prevailed. The wide sweeping flanking attack worked and a single unit of Dire Wolves was able to munch through a large chunk of the Elven army. During the obligatory after-battle review there was a majority agreement that Scott could have prevented it. On turns three and four his Griffon and General destroyed two units of Dire Wolves. Had they moved into position on the left flank during Scott's first move they could also have smashed the other Dire Wolf unit before it struck. Instead Scott opened the battle by moving the monster so as to allow a *Fireball* attempt on Joe's Banshees from the Elven Mage.

This was a fascinating game and one in which Joe had a simple plan which he was able to execute well. This was a solid victory for Joe and puts him in a very strong league position (thirteen points after his first three games).

Should you wish to recreate this encounter, Scott's army list is above⁶.

The next opponent for Greenshanks was Stuart's Empire army. I knew it was going to be a duff game when, during turn one, Stuart's first Great Cannon shot made a cannon ball-sized hole right through my Giant. Moments later five of my units failed their Animosity tests and spent a precious turn bickering rather than advancing. Throughout the game I was plagued with Animosity (I think my Boar Boyz failed three times in six turns). Only on the very last turn did a number of my Boyz finally manage to bring choppa and Human in contact with each other.

My army's last minute acts of brutality reduced Stuart to a marginal victory and earned me a league point.

On the adjacent table, Scott and Ron had slaughtered each other to a standstill. Just as a devastating volley of Elven arrows would remove a unit of Marauders, so the Chaos Knights would plow messily through another unit of pointy eared bowmen. A half empty matchbox was all that was required to carry away the battle's survivors. Thirty two Victory points separated the contestants, indicating a draw and two league points each.

The final battle this month found Ron and his murderous horde facing Alan's pond spawn. Once again Ron caused bin liners of blood (both hot and cold) to be shed. The battle swirled as unit after unit opportunistically charged an

exposed flank or rear. Alan displayed an ability to expose his rear rather less frequently than Ron and eventually became the marginal victor.

All of which gives us a league table looking like this:

Player	League points per game			Total
Joe	3	6	4	13
Mike	1	6	1	8
Alan	4	3		7
Stuart	0	3		3
Ron	0	2	1	3
Scott	0	0	2	2

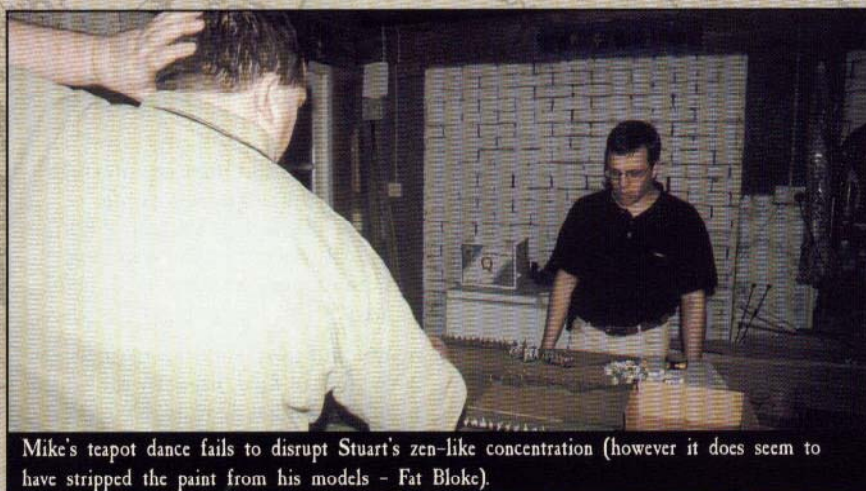
I am quite satisfied with my second place, one massive victory and two close losses seems okay to me.

Join me next month for more battles, footnotes and fast food consumption.

Will Joe or Alan remain unbeaten? Can Scott move off the bottom spot? The excitement is almost undetectable.

Right, I'm off to clean some dirty finger marks off my hills (and what looks disturbingly like dried drool). See you next month.

Mike



Mike's teapot dance fails to disrupt Stuart's zen-like concentration (however it does seem to have stripped the paint from his models - Fat Bloke).

⁶Should you wish to truly recreate this encounter you will need to get loads of plastic High Elf archers (the ones with the ankle-length skirts) and smear them with bright yellow paint. This color is hardly in keeping with the more noble whites and blues of conventionally colored High Elf armies, but as Scott is quick to point out, none of his Archers have ever been involved in a late night road accident in a poorly lit country lane.

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

If you think you have a good article for Warhammer Chronicles then send it to:

Gav Thorpe
(Warhammer
Chronicles)
Games Workshop
Willow Road, Lenton
Nottingham, NG7 2WS

Any rules queries, etc, will be shredded for Skaven bedding, so send them to the Roolzboyz at Games Workshop Mail Order, and not to Warhammer Chronicles.



Warhammer Chronicles

By Gav Thorpe

This month I've opened up the brain of veteran gamer and scribe Jake Thornton, using nothing but a blunt screwdriver and a Necrarch training manual. The following is what plopped onto the operating slab.

Against all Odds...

Sometimes even the lowliest bunch of Gobbos can surprise you, and sometimes that surprise might even be nice!

House rules are little variations of the main game mechanics that players adopt to tailor the game to their own taste. They are, quite simply, the rules you play round at your house. These are a fine idea, as you know far better what you want in a game than the writers of the rules do. So if you feel that you want rules for weather or to have a chance to rally even the smallest unit then you can change the rules to suit.

For many years now I've played a house rule that units always pass Break tests on a roll of double 1. It's a great rule, partly because it's so simple, but mainly because it adds to the story that a battle tells. Instead of the craven Gobbos fleeing all the time, sometimes they hold their ground for that one vital turn and help to turn the tide. Once in a blue moon your hard-pressed humble Halberdiers will stand and fight despite the fact that they are surrounded by hideous monstrosities. It won't happen every game, and that, too, is part of the fun. It's a rare thing, but an easily remembered one and one that can add an exciting twist to any battle. Why not give it a try yourself!

Wobbly Terrain

WHAT?

Over the many years I've been playing Warhammer I've fallen into something of a rut with regards to setting up the terrain for a game. Almost without exception, one of us will set up the terrain as we please and then either our opponent will decide which side to take, or we'll dice for it. Now this is fine and has served me well for many moons, but it does end up with rather predictable set ups, as you'll have seen countless times.

When you're setting up terrain and you don't know which side you'll end up with, there's a tendency to make it safe – either side is playable, neither particularly different from the other. The extreme of this is the set ups sometimes seen at tournaments where each side actually has an identical view.

I think this is rather dull to say the least, and have been messing about with a few variants for a while, including the various methods described in the Warhammer rulebook. However, the following variant that Gav and I came up with was a spur of the moment thing that grew out of nowhere whilst we were setting up a game the other day. It's currently all the rage in the Warhammer end of Games Development, and we thought you'd like to try it, too.

RANDOM TERRAIN

So, you've already tried umpteen random terrain generators, and they all involve fiddly charts that call for things you don't have in your terrain collection. Me, too. Don't worry, though, the following is far more practical and means that you can set up a game in moments. Not only that, but (and this is my favorite bit) you get a whole host of new tactical problems presented to you each time

you deploy. It really matters who wins that dice roll and which side you pick. A proper test for a tabletop general!

It's simple. Once you've cleared your gaming table, select a bunch of terrain pieces. You'll need about one piece per foot length of table, perhaps one less or more. Normally I'd use a couple of hills, a couple of woods and one or two other bits for a 6'x4' table. You could even make a little table and roll a dice to decide how many pieces to use. For example, you could try the following. Work out how long in feet your gaming table is and roll a dice:

D6 result

- 1 Use half this number of terrain pieces.
- 2-3 Use one less than this number of terrain pieces.
- 4-5 Use this number of terrain pieces.
- 6 Use one more than this number of pieces.

Once you've worked out how many pieces to use then lay them out on the tabletop, scattering them roughly evenly. Then comes the fun bit.

Taking them one at a time, roll 4D6 and a Scatter dice for each. Move each piece that many inches in the direction indicated before moving onto the next. This will scatter the terrain about in an unpredictable and entertaining fashion, creating a much more challenging battlefield to fight over.

There are lots of ways you could add to this basic idea, but only a few things you actually need to consider. These are firstly what you do if you roll a HIT on the Scatter dice, secondly what you do when pieces overlap, and thirdly what you do when they partly fall off the playing area.

A HIT! A PALPABLE HIT!

Before you start to roll your Scatter dice for the terrain, decide what you'll do if you roll a HIT. Basically you've got two choices. What I do is use the little arrow to scatter the terrain as normal. After all, what I want is an unpredictable shuffling of pieces, not a bunch of hills sitting where they started. On the

other hand, some folk who've tried this like to use the HIT to mean that the terrain stays where it is and that's fine, too. It's your game, so make up your own mind.

OVERLAPS

If pieces overlap whilst you're moving them it obviously doesn't matter, but what do you do when they still overlap when the music stops and everyone sits down? Well this depends on what they are. If you have a wood or a farmhouse overlapping a hill then you can simply have a wooded hill, or a house with a good view. If two hills overlap then you probably won't be able to make your terrain work by sitting the pieces on top of each other. Either replace it with a bigger hill if you have one, move one slightly to fit them next to each other, or simply decide that this 'cancels out' one hill and remove it.

LEMMINGS

If a piece of terrain falls off the table completely then it's obviously decided not to take part. However, if terrain scatters only partly off the table then you have to choose what to do with it. You could choose to remove it (just like a fleeing unit).

This will greatly reduce the amount of terrain on the table as it's very common to have a piece or two touching the edge. That's OK, just be aware that



it'll happen. What I tend to do is rather more fuzzy a 'rule'. If a piece is only just off I push it back on, leaving it at the edge. Sometimes rotating it will give a closer approximation to the 'proper' position. Of course, if you have a smaller version of the same type of terrain then you could just replace it with that. If more than half of the terrain is off the table and I don't

have a smaller replacement, then it goes back on the shelf for next time.

Which way you choose to deal with either of these is entirely up to you and largely depends on what terrain you have available. But please don't worry about adhering exactly to these 'rules'. They aren't really any more than a few guidelines for what we thought was kind of amusing. Hope you find it fun, too!

Interactive Magic

Whilst we were writing the new Warhammer, we came up with all sorts of variations and alternative rules for the game. Most of these were discarded in favor of the ones we printed, because they were simply not as good. However, the following alternative casting rules for the magic system were abandoned

EXAMPLE 1

A Level 2 Empire Battle Wizard casts Fiery Blast at a unit of High Elf Archers who can see him and will surely turn him into a porcupine next turn if they're still there. He needs an 8+ and decides to roll two of the four dice he has in his pool. He rolls a 3 and a 5 for a total of 8, just casting it. The High Elf player isn't keen on this and rolls two of his Dispel dice in reply getting a 4 and 5 for a total of 9. It's a dispel, but only just!

As the Empire Wizard has only used two dice so far he's allowed to use one more for this spell if he wants (Level 2 Wizards can use three dice to cast a spell). He decides to go for it as he only needs to roll a 2 or more to power the spell up and overcome the dispel. He rolls a 6 and raises his total to 14 and the ball's back in the High Elves' court. The High Elf player knows that the Empire Wizard can't add any more to that total as he's rolled the three dice he's allowed. He also knows that the one dice left in the Empire pool isn't enough to cast the other spell he has: Burning Head. Safe in the knowledge that there's nothing left to dispel the High Elf rolls his last Dispel dice and gets a 5 for a total of 14 as well, dispelling the Fiery Blast. The Empire player then uses the Doomfire Ring he's been concealing to immolate four of the Elves, causing a Panic test which breaks them. The Elf player says several rude words.



EXAMPLE 2

The High Elf player casts Healing Hand on his Wizard after a nasty run in with some Empire Handgunners. He rolls two dice and gets 3 and 6 totalling 9. This is more than the spells casting number of 7+ so the spell is cast. The Empire player chooses to roll two dice as well, but only gets 2 and 4 - 6. The dispel has failed and the spell is cast. Note that the Empire player cannot 'power up' his dispel since he has failed in the first place. You may never 'power up' a spell or dispel twice in a row, nor can you immediately 'power up' if your initial roll to cast or dispel fails. You are still taking turns here, and if you fail to better your opponent's total they won't take a turn so neither can you. The trick here is to roll the right number of dice in the first place, and getting that right is part of what makes this variant interesting.



because I thought them up so late in the day that we just didn't have time to playtest them properly. This being the case, we thought you might like to have a go yourselves.

This isn't a replacement for the rules in the book, they're just some ideas you might like to try out. I don't think they alter the balance a lot, but I've simply not used them enough to be really happy about saying they're 100% fair. Anyway, give them a go and let me know what you think.

OVERVIEW

The basic idea is to allow you to 'Power up' spells and dispels in a similar way to the old magic system in the fifth edition of the Warhammer rules. This is something that a lot of our playtesters said they missed when they first tried the new system. Personally I'd forgotten it

was ever possible until I sat here trying to write down why I came up with this in the first place. I rather like the magic system as it is now, but I also like tinkering...

GET ON WITH IT

Sorry, waffling again! The rules are easy to use, if a little trickier to explain. To start with, you work out Power and Dispel dice just as normal, all casting numbers remain the same, as do Miscasts and Irresistible Force. In fact, all that changes is the actual mechanism for rolling the dice you have in your pile.

Roll to cast a spell as normal. If you succeed, then your opponent may decide to try to dispel it. Let's say he does. In the normal system this is where it ends - your spell has been stopped. In this variant, you can add

another dice or two (or three...) as long as you would normally be allowed to roll the total number of dice to cast that spell. You see, the maximum number of dice you may use (in total) to cast doesn't change, just when you can use them.

The extra dice add to the total score, and if this beats the Dispel then it counts as cast. Unfortunately your opponent can then add one or more of his remaining Dispel dice and add to his Dispel total. This goes on until one side fails to beat the other or runs out of dice it can (or chooses) to use. You'll see more clearly if I give you a couple of examples.

Take



EXAMPLE 3

Another game, and this time the Empire have brought along a Level 4 Wizard Lord. He casts Wall of Fire in front of a big unit of Silverhelms with the General in. This may decide the battle as they're clearly about to join in a decisive fight in the middle of the battlefield. The Wizard Lord can use up to five dice in total, but starts with just three: $2 + 4 + 6$ totalling 12. It's cast. The High Elves have a total of six Dispel dice available to them as they are a very magic-heavy army, but they haven't got any Dispel scrolls left. They eventually decide to roll four dice and get $1 + 3 + 3 + 6$ totalling 13. Not great on four dice, but it's enough to dispel.

The Empire Wizard Lord decides to use another dice to power up the Wall of Fire. He only uses one as he will overcome the dispel on anything but a roll of a 1 on the last dice and wants to save some for another spell. He rolls a 2 for a total of 14 just casting the spell. The High Elves roll a single dice and get a 1. This gives them a total of 14 as well, but it also gives them two 1s so the dispel is automatically a failure. Disaster! A sheet of roaring flames erupts from the ground in front of the Silverhelms and their chance to turn the battle is lost.

Note that a double 1 or double 6 among the Power or Dispel dice will have its normal result (Miscast, Irresistible Force, etc.) regardless of whether the dice were physically rolled at the same time or added later.



Space McQuirk reports on a bit of fun to see who'd win a straight scrap between the Vampire Bloodlines.

ARENA OF UNDEATH

The five Vampire Count Bloodlines fight to the 'death'.

This epic conflict started from a minor debate as to which Bloodline had the best Vampire Lord. What should have been a simple civilized discussion soon turned into a free-for-all. Only the timely intervention of Jake Thornton saved the Studio from all-out war. He came up with a set of basic rules in which each of the Vampire Counts could take part in a battle to settle once and for all who was the Master of the Night. After being prided apart and having their wounds bandaged, Gav Thorpe, Space McQuirk, Alessio Cavatore, Mark Raynor and Anthony Reynolds retreated to their desks to tool up their Vampire Lords.

PLAYING ARENA OF UNDEATH

by Jake Thornton

'ARMY' SELECTION

Each player picks a single Vampire Lord character of a different bloodline. There are the normal points restrictions on magic items and the normal limits to equipment. As only some of the Bloodlines are allowed to ride monsters, we decided to even the playing field and ban them all, with a Nightmare being the only steed allowed. This is not too powerful or unbalancing a mount and also gives the players an interesting choice between having a 360° movement and charge arc (on foot), or moving further (riding a Nightmare).

SET UP

The tabletop should be scattered with graves, tombs and necropoli, with a particularly striking piece in the center. The rest of the terrain isn't important as long as there are a reasonable number of pieces for the characters to chase each other round. Remember, though, that there will inevitably also be summoned regiments of Zombies and Skeletons wandering around. Each of the Vampires sets up at least 18" from the central feature and more than 12" from any already placed Vampire.

TURN SEQUENCE

As there are five sides instead of two, the normal turn doesn't really work. Instead, make a counter for each player and put them in a cup (the counters, not the players!).

MOVEMENT

Each Movement phase, draw the counters out one at a time, the player whose counter is drawn moves before the next is drawn. Once he has finished moving all his troops the next counter is drawn, that player moves and so on until all players have had a turn.

MAGIC PHASE

Again, because there are more than two players, the way this works is a

little different from the usual game. Basically there is a single combined Magic phase in which everyone gets to cast and dispel spells.

Start by working out Casting dice and Dispel dice for each player at the same time. This is done as normal, but gives each player the Power dice he'd normally have in his own turn, and the Dispel dice he'd have in his opponent's, eg, a Level 2 Strigoi would have 4 Power dice and 3 Dispel dice. These will be used until they run out and are not regenerated between casting attempts. If you can, use different colored dice for Power and Dispel pools to make keeping track easier. If you want to dispel something that's already in play then you can do so once everyone's finished casting everything, and you may use both Power and Dispel dice to do so. Note that you may not do this to dispel a spell that was cast this turn, just like normal – you'll have to wait until next turn if you failed to stop it when it was cast.

When everyone is ready, draw a counter to see who goes first in the same way as with movement. When it is his turn, a player gets to try and cast one spell as normal. Then, starting with the player on his left, the other players declare how many Dispel dice they will use to try and stop it. These are all placed in the middle of the table and when everyone has had the opportunity to contribute, the last player rolls them all at once. It's more fun if you have to stick to your decision once you've put dice in or refused. If someone uses a scroll then the rest of the players get their Dispel dice back and the spell is stopped as normal. When the spell has been resolved and either cast or dispelled, draw another counter and see who gets to cast the next spell. When everyone has had the chance to cast a spell then place all the counters back in the cup and do another round. Only place counters back in the cup if the player has Power dice/items to cast spells with and hasn't

passed on a previous opportunity to cast this turn. Once you decide not to cast a spell you may not come back and cast again later in the turn: stay casting or drop out. However, you may still contribute any remaining Dispel dice.

When all the Power dice and items have been exhausted, the Magic phase is over.

In addition, because you can have close combats which don't involve anyone from your side, and because Vampires are cruel, heartless and uncaring folk, we need a new rule about casting spells into mêlées. If a close combat includes anyone from your side (you or your minions) then the normal rules apply. However, if all the models in a close combat are enemies then you may cast spells at them even if they are not normally allowed to do so. Randomly determine which unit is affected. When I wrote this it was obvious that it might cause some problems with complicated multiple combats, but we decided it was a cool idea, so we'd just sort it out if anything fiddly happened. Roll a dice if you can't agree.

CLOSE COMBAT

Apart from making sure that everyone's clear on multiple chargers in the same combat, this should work like normal for the actual fighting. The sequence of who fights when, if several sides charged, is simple: fight in the order they charged, first charger fighting first.

Combat resolution is a little more tricky on the face of it, but works out alright when you delve deeper. One on one combats are just as normal. Multiple combats involving three or more sides are the potential worry, but can actually be sorted fairly straightforwardly by looking at each side individually. Did they beat the enemy they are in contact with? Then resolve the combats as normal. Luckily the Undead are unlikely to flee, so that potential headache is avoided.

In a game that was to eventually last an incredible fourteen turns we would need to dedicate a whole issue of White Dwarf to truly tell the tale of the battle. Instead we've managed to bring you the highlights of this mammoth struggle.

Eyeing each other with venomous stares, the players placed their Vampires on the table. An aura of mistrust filled the air, and rightfully so. Dark pacts had already been agreed upon before the game had even begun. As a banshee howled in the distance to signal that the fight was to commence, Anthony's Necrarch found himself coming under the attention of the two strongest close combat fighters on the table as Alessio's Strigoi and Space's Blood Dragon both closed in on the physically weak master of Necromantic magic.

Coincidence? I think not!

Fortunately for the Necrarch an ally came to his aid. No sooner had Count Drako Harkon, Knight of the Blood Dragon order, spurred his steed towards his prey, than Gav's Vampire, Nicoli von Carstein, dashed from his forest hiding place. Using *Vanbel's Danse Macabre* he bounded across the table towards the armored warrior.

With such an open challenge the Blood Dragon turned his attention from the Necrarch and steered his Nightmare within charge range of the von Carstein. All Space needed was to go before Gav in the following Movement draw. With baited breath everyone waited to see if the ploy would pay off. Breathing a massive sigh of relief, Gav smiled, drawing his own counter from the cup first. Nicoli von Carstein speedily moved out of the charge arc of the battle hungry Blood Dragon. All a dejected Space could do was to turn and prepare himself in readiness to charge next time.

Meanwhile on the other side of the table, Alessio's Strigoi, whom he had inventively named Quasimodo, let out a fearsome howl. In response to their master's call, six Ghoul minions ran to his aid. Having summoned a small unit of Zombies in a previous Magic phase, Alessio decided to move them into combat, casting *Vanbel's Danse Macabre* on them. In a desperate attempt to stop the attack, Anthony threw all four Dispel dice into the pile but he hadn't counted on the guile of

Gav Thorpe. It was a simple, yet cunning plan. By adding all of his Dispel dice to Anthony's, the chance of getting a double 1, thereby failing, was massively increased. Karnius the Gibbering, Necrarch lord, soon found himself in a desperate battle for his unlife. As if the balance wasn't already tipped in favor of the Strigoi, Alessio now called for more Undead to surface from their graves. But what should have been a simple invocation was miscast and uncontrollable raw magic coursed through his bestial mind. Unless he rolled a 6 at the beginning of each Magic phase, Alessio could no longer cast spells!

Cursing his bad fortune, Alessio concentrated on destroying the Necrarch with his unholy minions. The close combat was brutal, with the Ghouls and Zombies threatening to swamp the Necrarch through sheer numbers. Against all odds Anthony's Necrarch managed a draw. Battle had



The Vampire Lords. (from left) Space, Mark, Anthony, Alessio and Gav.



A pack of Ghouls emerge from the forest to join their Strigoi master.



In a hidden corner of the battlefield, the Lahmian Queen summons up an army of Undead.

begun but as the individual Vampires' conflicts began to unfurl, it dawned on the combatants that someone was missing from the fray. Mark and his Lahmian Queen were adopting a more subtle tactic. Hidden behind a building on the other side of the table he was busy creating a mass guard of Skeletal warriors. Like a true lady, Mark's Vampire watched as the boys fought it out between themselves.

Knowing that only a fool would take on a Blood Dragon alone, Nicoli von Carstein summoned a Zombie horde to his side. Gav's Vampire was now prepared to meet the Blood Dragon's challenge. Seizing the initiative he charged in, sending his Zombies

crashing into the flank of the mounted warrior. Bound by his code of honor Drako Harkon called out a challenge to the von Carstein Lord. Gav's Vampire rained blows onto the Blood Dragon, but the knight's suit of armor protected him from most of the harm. Bringing his magical sword in a downward arc, the Blood Dragon hit Gav's Vampire. As the enchanted blade struck, a small gem around the von Carstein's neck glowed bright in the dark night, rebounding the wound back to the Blood Dragon. The combat was resolved and first blood had gone to the von Carstein. Dragged from his steed by the clawing hands of Zombies, the Blood Dragon was destroyed.

Over on the other side of the table, the Strigoi tore apart a unit of Skeletons that Anthony had summoned to protect his flank. Not to be outdone by the Strigoi, Anthony's Necrarch sent the remaining Zombies he was fighting back to their dirt-filled graves. In a quiet corner of the battlefield the Lahmian attempted to summon another unit of Skeletons to her aid. Everybody picked up Dispel dice in preparation. Mark let out a twisted grin as his spell was cast with Irresistible Force and a second unit of 15 Skeletons rose from the ground. With what looked like an army at his disposal, Mark now felt brave enough to join in the slaughter.

Protected by a Skeleton regiment freshly summoned to unholy service, Anthony moved his Necrarch away from the Strigoi in an attempt to lure it towards the Lahmian. Gav's von Carstein, having decided to attack Queen Elsabet, found himself in all manner of difficulties. Yet more Skeleton warriors had been summoned by Mark and were in the process of charging the von Carstein. The Studio was coming close to running out of Skeleton models, and most were under the command of the dark queen. Unable to fight through the mass of bone white warriors, Gav soon found his Vampire at the wrong end of a charge by Mark's deadly mistress of the night. Having suffered wounds from his fight with the Blood Dragon and the seemingly endless ranks of Skeletons, Gav became the second to drop out of the game. Nicoli von Carstein was hacked down by the rusty blades of the Lahmian Skeleton warriors.



The Blood Dragon is killed by the combined efforts of the von Carstein and his Zombies.



The Strigoi and Necrarch are surrounded by the minions of the Lahmian Queen.

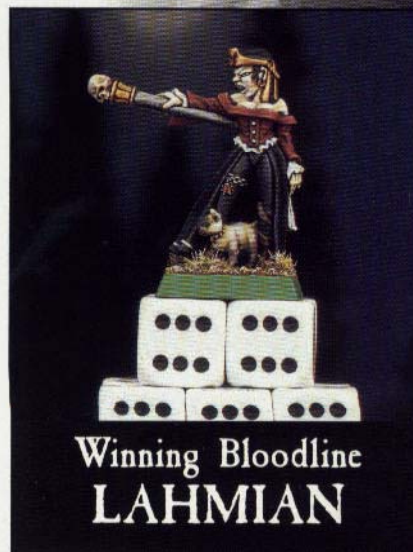
Having fled across the table, Anthony soon realized he was only postponing an inevitable fight with the Strigoi and decided to take the offensive. As he moved his Skeleton regiment into charge range, Alessio managed to shake off the effects of his earlier miscast and summoned a unit of Zombies around him. As the two units collided in combat not only did Alessio manage to miscast again, but in an unparalleled display of poor dice rolling whilst attempting to hit the Skeletons, got five 1s. With such appalling luck, Alessio breathed a sigh of relief as his Vampire still clung on with a single wound remaining. It wasn't to last long though, with magic fitting for such a master of necromancy, Karnius cast *Hand of Dust* on the Strigoi. An unamused Alessio was helpless as he watched the dice land on a 6, killing his Strigoi. With that death, the Necrarch and Lahmian prepared to end the conflict.

Before the Necrarch had a chance to recover from the previous battle, Anthony once again found himself locked in a bitter struggle. Mark, confidant of his Vampire's skills and backed up by rank after rank of Skeletons, defiantly challenged the Necrarch. The game was now in its fourteenth turn. Weary eyed spectators sat up, realizing the end was near. Seeing the need to finish the game before Bugman's closed,



Anthony's 'Hand of Dust' has no effect on Mark.

Anthony reluctantly accepted. With the dawn sun rapidly approaching, the two Vampires faced each other, ready to decide who was the true master of the night. There could be only one. As Mark had charged he got to strike first. Yet again the dice fell in his favor and he scored a grand total of five hits. As the dice rolled across the table, bouncing off the spectacular graveyard scenery, everybody held their breath. Amazingly, he managed to wound with each of the dice and, having failed his Ward saves, the Necrarch exploded into a cloud of dust. The battle was over and Mark had emerged as the victor. The dispute had been settled and, against all expectations, the Lahmian had come out on top.



Index Astartes

First Founding



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

LIGHTNING ATTACK

The White Scars
Space Marine Chapter

by Graham McNeill
and Pete Haines

Known and feared throughout the Imperium for their highly mobile way of war, the Space Marines of the White Scars are the masters of the lightning strike method of attack, able to tear into their foes and vanish before they can respond. Fierce warriors, bearing the ritual scars of bravery, they fight with all the tribal savagery of their home world and bring swift death to all enemies of the Imperium.

Origins

The Apocrypha of Skaros speaks of the White Scars only rarely and even then the text is colored by the fact that much of what is said comes from the White Scars themselves. One legend tells that their young Primarch set out on his own from Terra to discover the galaxy for himself, while another speaks of him being abducted as a baby. The truth is likely to be somewhere in-between. Whatever the true story, the Liber Historica Vangelia records that Jaghatai Khan arrived at a world in the Segmentum Pacificus designated by Imperial cartographers as Mundus Planus, but known to its inhabitants as Chogoris. It was, and still is, a fertile world with lush greenery, soaring mountains and azure seas, which, at the time of the Great Crusade, had achieved a blackpowder level of technology. A Census Imperialis of the day records that the dominant Chogorian empire at this time was an organized aristocracy which had conquered most of the planet with well-equipped and highly disciplined armies. Armored horsemen and densely packed blocks of infantry had won every campaign their ruler, the Palatine, had fought.

The history of the White Scars begins with Jaghatai Khan, one of the greatest military strategists of all time. It is thought that one of his generals, Ogedei, penned 'The Great Khan of Quan Zhou' after the Primarch's disappearance, and it is this ancient text which has provided Imperial historians with one of the best accounts of his life. Chogorian sources have also left copious and often wildly exaggerated records of his exploits.

To the west of Palatine's empire was a vast, wind-blown steppe, known as the Empty Quarter, home to nomadic tribes of savage horsemen who for centuries had roamed the vast grasslands. The tribes of the steppes lived in tents and followed a cycle of seasonal migration from summer pastures to protected winter valleys in the Khum Karta Mountains. Consummate horsemen and archers, these disparate tribes frequently fought one another for control of ancestral pastureland or – as Ogedei's Opus would have it – the sheer joy of battle. Chogorian armies had never invaded the Empty Quarter as the dry and desolate lands were of no value to the Palatine. However, Chogorian nobles would often lead hunting bands into the steppes and take whole tribes east as slaves or capture a lone tribesman to hunt through the mountains for sport. (Many passages in 'The Great Khan' are devoted to detailing the full extent of Chogorian atrocities. The blood rituals and sacrifices described within these passages have led many Imperial scholars to postulate that the Palatine's empire may have been dedicated to worship of the Dark Gods.)

Jaghatai Khan's legend began near the Quonon river when Ong Khan, the leader of a small tribe known as the Talskars, encountered the Primarch. He believed that the glowing

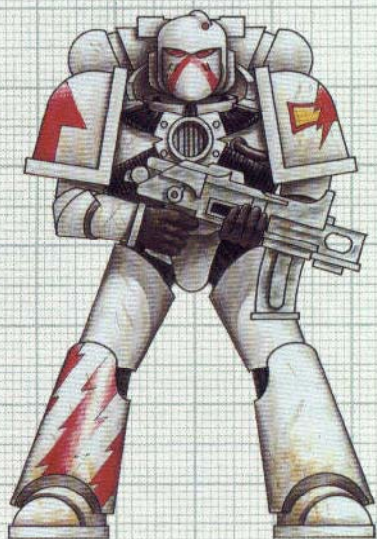
child was a gift from the gods and took him into his family and named him Jaghatai. It was said of Jaghatai that since his early childhood he had a 'fire in his eyes', a Talskar term for a great warrior. It was also said about him that rival tribes hated the child because he had the wisdom to see beyond the constant warfare of the steppes.

A colorful passage in 'The Great Khan of Quan Zhou' known as 'The Bleeding' relates that while Jaghatai was young, raiders from the rival Kurayed tribe slew his adopted father and killed many of the Talskar men in a vicious

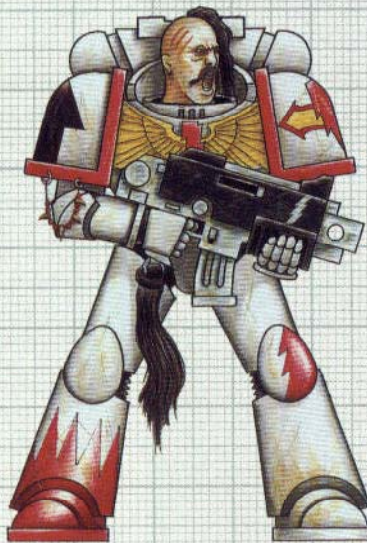
ambush. Jaghatai was already the greatest warrior amongst his tribe with many ritual scars of courage, and warriors flocked to join him when he set out to avenge these deaths. He led an attack on the Kurayed village and razed it to the ground, killing every man, woman and child in a frenzied massacre. Jaghatai bathed in his enemies' blood and took their chieftain's head to mount above his tent. It was these events that were to shape the Primarch into the man he would become – a man of fierce honor, loyalty and ruthlessness. With blood and honor satisfied,

Chapter Approved Access Level: B seventeen

White Scars, Progenitor Legion M.31



Pre-Heresy Codex color scheme of white power armor



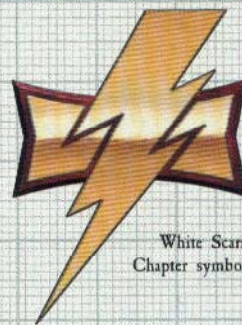
Contemporary White Scars Codex color scheme



Auto reactive shoulder plate: Attack bike markings



Auto reactive shoulder plate: Chapter badge iconography



White Scars Chapter symbol



Librarian Psychic hood



Ritual dueling Tulwar



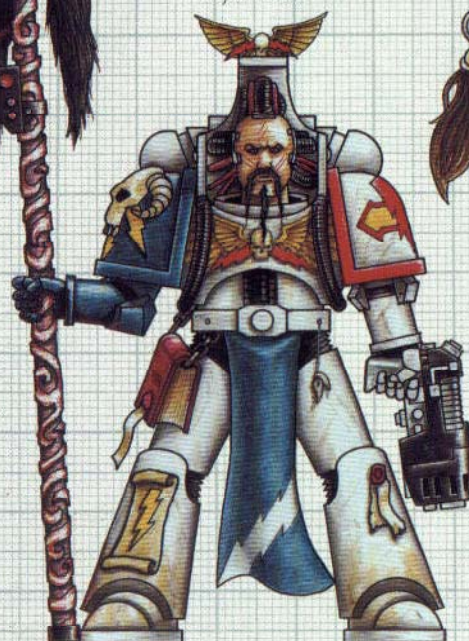
Godwyn pattern Bolter with assault attachment



Feral power weapon (damaged)



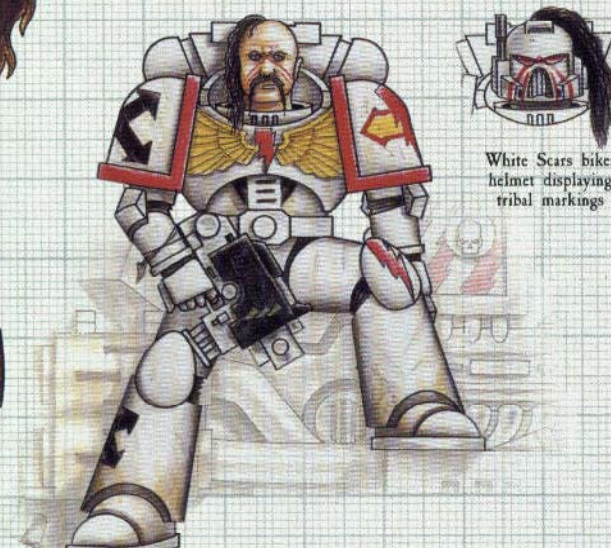
Force staff close combat weapon



White Scars Librarian 'Storm Seer'



White Scars biker helmet displaying tribal markings



White Scars Bike squad Space Marine

Thought for the day: Damnation is Eternal

Jaghatai swore to bring an end to the destructive internecine wars that were destroying his people, to unite the people of the Empty Quarter, and to bring an end to brother fighting brother.

Following this victory, Jaghatai became Khan of the Talskars and fought many battles against Chogorian hunting bands and other tribes of the steppes. Each defeated tribe was brought within the Talskars and became part of his army. His military talents and the sheer force of his personality won him many followers and soon his warriors numbered like the stars, the army becoming known as the Mathuli, a Talskar word meaning 'irresistible force'. He made military service mandatory and combined warriors of different tribes into the same units to break up tribal associations, fostering a fierce loyalty to the army and ultimately to himself. He promoted men purely on the basis of ability and brought a feeling of shared purpose to everyone he came into contact with.

Ten summers after Jaghatai's victory against the Kurayed, while the army was moving to its winter camp in the mountains, Jaghatai was pitched from the treacherous cliffs when a freak avalanche carried him and dozens of

others thousands of feet to the rocks below. After much lamentation, the tribe continued onwards. But while the fall had killed the tribesmen, the Primarch managed to survive. Chogorian history records that at this time a hunting band led by the Palatine's only son discovered a wounded tribesman deep in the mountains and began hunting him through the snows. What exactly happened in the freezing valleys of the mountains is unknown, but a single, horribly mutilated rider tied to his saddle was all that finally returned to Chogorian lands, the head of the Palatine's son hung around his neck. The man also carried a message from Jaghatai, 'The people of the steppes are yours no longer.'

When the snows retreated, the enraged Palatine gathered an army and marched west, determined to wipe the barbarian tribes from the face of the planet. But he had underestimated the skill and cunning of Jaghatai Khan. In the Valley of the Khans, on the Lon-Suen Plain, the Palatine's armies met Jaghatai's forces. The battle was said to have lasted a day and a night. The tribes of the steppes fought like they hunted, a ring of lightning fast horsemen coordinating movements to corral their human quarry. Unlike their enemy, who wore heavy steel mail, the Mathuli wore light leather armor, allowing for less protection, but greater mobility.

Accustomed to decisive hand-to-hand combat with their foes, the Palatine's army was no match for the Khan's horsemen and their relentless bowfire. Though significantly outnumbered, Jaghatai outmaneuvered, out-thought, and



out-fought them. The defeated Palatine and his bodyguards were only just able to fight their way through the Mathuli ring of death and fled to the capital city. Those soldiers who remained were slaughtered almost to a man. One Chogorian survivor described the battle plain as an ocean of blood. The tribal leaders and holy men, the Stormseers, gathered after the battle and proclaimed Jaghatai the Great Khan, Ruler of All Within the Lands.

Jaghatai Khan then began the invasion of the Palatine's realm, three of his armies drawing off forces by attacking cities on the outskirts of his enemy's domain. Jaghatai and his most able general, Subedei, led another army across a secret route through the Kuzil Quan desert, a region believed to be impenetrable. Emerging seemingly from nowhere, Jaghatai's army surprised the Palatine's garrison at the gates of Kushaba and slaughtered the entire force. Other cities fell in quick succession and Chogorian historians record that bodies littered the roads like stones in a quarry, razed fields smoldered, and those few who were spared the carnage prayed for deliverance from the fury of the Khan.

In the years that followed, Jaghatai's army overran Chogorian lands, defeating their best armies, storming their walled cities, and slaying its nobles. Cities that lay in Jaghatai Khan's path had two choices: surrender or face total destruction. Never before had such pillage and plunder been witnessed. Some sources claim that millions were killed by the bloodthirsty tribesmen, but contemporaries of Jaghatai Khan assert that these figures are vastly inflated. However, it is certain that many hundreds of thousands died and the people of the Chogorian empire believed that the 'devil-faced savages' were supernatural demons exacting divine vengeance for the sins of man. Eventually Jaghatai's invasion reached the Palatine's stronghold, Cophasta, a magnificently rich city on the eastern coast. He demanded his enemy's head on a spear or the city would die and he would leave no stone standing. Within the hour, a group of nobles from the city brought him that very thing.

The Khan's power now stretched from ocean to ocean, the largest empire the planet had ever known, conquered by a single man in less than twenty years. Though Jaghatai Khan dominated a vast area, he knew that his people had no desire to rule such a realm. His new empire had grown from his urge to unite the tribes and exact vengeance upon his enemies, not from any hunger to occupy their lands. Ultimate power rested with the Khan and his generals and although they were well organized militarily, the tribes had no developed concept for ruling settled populations.

The historian, Carpinus, who compiled a detailed history of the Great Crusade (the so-called *Speculum Historiale*), notes that Jaghatai's armies finished the destruction of the Palatine's realm a mere six months before the Emperor reached Chogoris. When the two men met, it is said that the Khan knew he had met someone who embodied the ultimate ideal he had striven for, a man who could unite all the stars in the sky. At his palace in the city of Quan Zhou, in front of all his generals, he dropped to one knee and swore eternal fealty to the Emperor. The Primarch was given command of the 5th Legion, which adopted the long facial scars of the Talskar tribesmen that ran from forehead

JUBAL KHAN, GREAT KHAN OF THE WHITE SCARS

When the Great Khan of the White Scars dies, the Stormseers of the Chapter gather in the deepest caves of the Khum Karta in the Valley of the Khans to decide upon his successor. Each Brotherhood Khan who believes himself worthy must present himself before the Stormseers and prove himself to them. The horrors the Stormseers subject each claimant to are a mystery and those that survive the trials never speak of them. When the Great Khan Kyublai vanished fighting the Dark Eldar in 943.M41, four hopefuls gathered in the Khum Karta mountains. Only Jubal Khan survived the Stormseers' ordeals and returned to Quan Zhou to be anointed Great Khan.

Since then, Jubal Khan has proved himself time and time again, leading many successful campaigns against Orks, Tyranids, Eldar and countless other alien races. During the Jopul Uprising, his First Brotherhood was so successful at destroying enemy supply lines and disrupting communications that a huge proportion of the main rebel strength was diverted from front line operations to deal with them. Imperial Guard regiments were then able to smash through the weakened rebel line and bring the insurrection to a close.

Jubal Khan is currently involved in the Armageddon war where Imperial forces have been stretched to the limit after Ghazghkull's invasion. The Great Khan's forces are launching lightning raids on Ork held worlds and vanishing like smoke before the Greenskins can muster sufficient forces to engage them. Thus far his White Scars have proved to be instrumental in delaying many Ork offensives, allowing Imperial garrisons to better prepare for the onslaught. White Scars operations in the Deadlands region of Armageddon were so successful that they were able to effectively destroy an entire Ork brigade without taking a single casualty or expending a single round of ammunition.

to chin, and renamed themselves the White Scars. The Great Khan ascended to the heavens with the Emperor, passing the Khanship to his general Ogedei. Many of Jaghatai's followers elected to join their Khan and became Space Marines within the Legion.

The White Scars went on to fight in some of the bloodiest battles of the Great Crusade and the lightning fast style of warfare employed by Jaghatai Khan on the steppes would prove to be equally effective on the nightmare battlefields of distant worlds. During the Horus Heresy, when the Imperium tore itself apart in a bloody galactic civil war, the White Scars fought on scores of different worlds and their banners indicate that the Legion helped to defend Terra and fought at the gates of the Imperial Palace.

Jaghatai Khan fought alongside his warriors for perhaps another 70 years before his eventual disappearance in a region of space close to the Maelstrom. After the defeat of Horus, Jaghatai had embarked on a quest to rescue his fellow tribesmen captured by the Eldar in his absence during the Great Crusade. The White Scars maintain that

THE LOST KIN

The Great Khan of Quan Zhou dedicates an entire volume to the Lost Kin of the White Scars. This volume tells that many years after Jaghatai's departure with the Emperor on the Great Crusade, an evil storm fell upon the world of Chogoris in the shape of the Eldar's dark brothers, who brought terror and pain on a scale never before seen. With their superior technology and weaponry, the aliens were able to easily defeat the scattered tribes, and tens of thousands of slaves were dragged screaming from the planet. It was only following the death of Horus that Jaghatai learned of these terrible events and swore mighty oaths of vengeance against the Dark Eldar. The Khan was relentless in his pursuit, and it is said that during the horrifying battle of Corusil V, he and his First Brotherhood pursued a mighty Dark Eldar lord through a pulsing gateway to the shadowy realm of blood which these degenerate aliens call home. The alien portal closed before the rest of the Khan's soldiers could follow and, the mighty Jaghatai Khan vanished forever from the Imperium. Robbed of their Khan, the White Scars have held an enduring and unquenchable hatred for these bloodthirsty aliens, and whenever the White Scars encounter the Dark Eldar, their fury knows no bounds. To this day, the ultimate fate of Jaghatai Khan remains a mystery, and whether he and his warriors still battle between dimensions or have long since perished, none can say.

he and his veteran warriors fought the leader of one of the murderous alien kabals and that they were drawn into the horrifying realm that exists outside of space and time to battle the Dark Eldar for all eternity. How much of this tale can be taken at face value is uncertain, and it is more than likely that the Khan's ship was simply lost in the warp as travel through this region of space is fraught with peril.

Home world

Chogoris is a fertile world that still exists in a semi-feudal state. With the departure of the Great Khan, Ogedei became the new leader of the tribes and, while he was a great warrior, he was no Jaghatai Khan. Without the Primarch, the tribes soon returned to their warring ways and within the space of a few years, the unified nation created by Jaghatai had ceased to exist. The tribes went back to their homelands and life carried on much as it had before the arrival of the Great Khan. Some of the Primarch's biographers claim that Jaghatai Khan must have known that this would happen and yet left anyway. They suggest that perhaps he desired it in order to keep his people strong to provide future recruits for his new Legion. Indeed, in the millennia that followed, many men would rise to unite the tribes, but none as spectacularly as Jaghatai Khan.

To this day the leader of the White Scars is known as the Great Khan and dwells in Jaghatai's palace of Quan Zhou, atop the highest, most inaccessible peak in the Khum Karta mountains. The marbled fortress monastery is a magnificent sight, but few outsiders have ever been allowed within. The city and its savage beauty is famed

throughout the Segmentum and its walls are said to contain rivers and forests running with game, which the Khan hunts for sport.

The Stormseers of the White Scars venture down into the steppes every ten summers to observe the tribes and their battles, picking the best and bravest warriors and returning them to Quan Zhou to become Space Marines. The pyretombs of fallen White Scars in the Khum Karta (which means 'The Mountains that Scrape the Stars') are places of great pilgrimage for young tribal warriors, and those that survive a journey through one of these dangerous valleys are considered especially courageous.

Combat doctrine

The method of war taught to the tribes by Jaghatai Khan has served them well in the millennia following his reunification with the Emperor. Lightning fast hit and run attacks by highly mobile forces that destroy the enemy piece by piece and never allow a decisive engagement is their *modus operandum*. Speeding bikes and ultra-rapid deployment means that the White Scars can react much more swiftly than most Chapters and are almost never outmaneuvered on the battlefield.

Heavily armored opponents find themselves chasing shadows as the White Scars encircle their forces and attack where they are weakest. Many an enemy who thought himself safe behind his lines has learned the error of his ways when howling White Scars Scout Bikers come speeding out of nowhere to attack his flanks and rear. Having been born in the saddle, the Scouts regularly take to the field of battle mounted on their bikes.

Though the Space Marines of the White Scars prefer to keep their enemies at arms length, they are fully capable of engaging in bloody assaults. The elite bike squads are rightly feared and Assault squads dropping from the skies on trails of fire and attacking with howling bloodlust are a terrifying sight with their fearsome scarred faces.

Organization

The predominant organizational unit amongst the people of the steppes is the tribe and a measure of this is true of the Chapter itself. Fierce rivalries, blood-feuds and internecine warfare are a way of life for the young men of the steppes and help to prepare them for when they must fight to prove their worth to the Chapter's Stormseers. However, once a warrior has been chosen to join the White Scars, his tribal allegiance is replaced with loyalty to the Great Khan of the Chapter. Warriors from different tribes are therefore mixed with one another in squads to break up individual tribal loyalties. Squads are then organized into Brotherhoods, units which are roughly equivalent in size to a Codex company, though on average are slightly smaller.

The remainder of the Chapter is organized slightly differently to most Codex Chapters, due to the higher proportion of Bike squads and Land Speeder squadrons. The White Scars preferred fighting style does not allow them the use of as many heavy weapons as other Chapters and as a result they have no Devastator squads. Their reliance on fast moving fire support also means that

most tanks are too slow for the White Scars, and those they do have are stripped down versions that can keep up with the rest of the army. Dreadnoughts are not employed by the White Scars, as the cold, metal sarcophagi of these mighty constructions evokes a horror of eternal confinement that goes against the White Scars' philosophy that when a warrior dies, his soul should be free to travel to the afterlife.

Beliefs

The White Scars Space Marines hold true to the vision of Jaghatai Khan in the ultimate unification of Humanity. They venerate the Emperor as the ultimate Uniter and as their founding father, but not as a deity. The Stormseers teach that it is the White Scars' duty to destroy the enemies of the Emperor in preparation for the day when he will rise from the Golden Throne to begin the next Great Crusade to unify the galaxy. And on that day, Jaghatai Khan will return from the void to once again lead his people to their destiny.

The lightning bolt is a potent symbol to the White Scars, as it exemplifies their style of battle and echoes the warrior scars they bear on their faces. It also represents the lightning which the Stormseers call to smite their enemies, and these sinister warriors preach that so long as the spirits of air and land heed their call, the White Scars will never falter in battle.

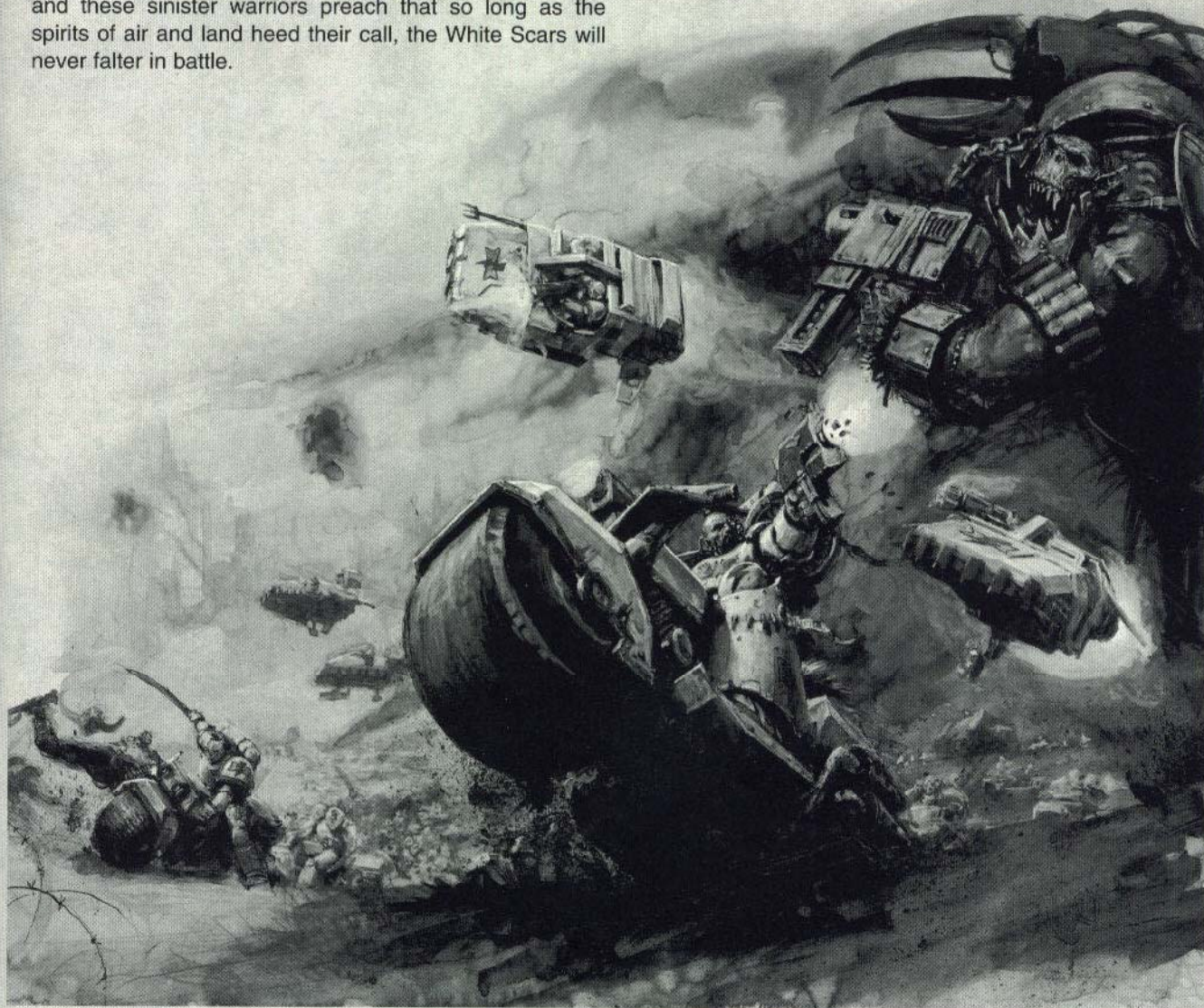
Gene-seed

The gene-seed of the White Scars appears to be stable and initially displayed no aberrations or mutation. However, with the introduction of genetic material from the steppes tribesmen, the genome seems to have inherited their wild savagery and thirst for war. Despite the teachings of the Khans and Stormseers, it is not unheard of for tribal feuds to flare up between fellow squad members. In addition to this, there have been several recorded instances where White Scars Brotherhoods have bloodily exceeded their mission objectives, such as the infamous 'Red Highway Massacre'.

Whether such incidents are as a result of some inherent flaw in the White Scars' genetic material or came about after the integration of the tribesmen is unknown, but the Adeptus Mechanicus is eager to know which. The White Scars successor Chapters, the Rampagers, Marauders, Destroyers and the Storm Lords are all equally ferocious and fine examples of the combat teachings of Jaghatai Khan.

Battlecry

'For the Khan and the Emperor!'



USING A WHITE SCARS ARMY IN WARHAMMER 40,000

White Scars use the following units from Codex Space Marines.

HQ	Space Marine Hero, Librarian, Chaplain, Command squad*.
ELITES	Terminator squad*, Terminator Assault squad*, Veteran squad*.
TROOPS	Tactical squad*, White Scars Bike squadron, Scout squad.
FAST ATTACK	Assault squad (<i>cannot remove jump packs</i>), Scout Bike squadron, Land Speeder squadron, Land Speeder Tornado, Land Speeder Typhoon.
HEAVY SUPPORT	Attack Bike squadron, Predator Annihilator, Predator Destructor, Land Raider (<i>may only be used as a Terminator transport</i>), Whirlwind.

**Must be equipped with a transport or be mounted on bikes (see below).*

The following rules and Codex changes apply when using a White Scars Space Marine army.

SPECIAL RULES

Born in the Saddle: White Scars are the best natural bikers in the Imperium. They can control their bikes over the most difficult ground and maintain control with their legs while handling weapons.

They may re-roll any failed Difficult Terrain test but must accept the new result. They may also use an additional close combat weapon while riding a bike for +1A where this equipment is available to them. Normally, this is not possible as one hand must be used to control the bike.

This ability is possessed by bike-mounted Command and Veteran squad, Bike squadrons, Attack Bike squadrons, Scout Bike squadrons and Independent characters equipped with Space Marine bikes.

Bike Squadrons: White Scars Bike squadrons may be up to 10 models strong. All squadron members not armed with a plasma gun, meltagun or flamer may be armed with an additional close combat weapon at +1 point. They may use these in conjunction with their bolt pistols for +1 Attack.

Mounted Veterans: White Scars Veteran squads and Command squads may be mounted on Bikes for an additional +20 points per model. Their basic weaponry will be bolt pistol and additional close combat weapon. No heavy weapons can be carried, but all other weapon upgrades remain available. If one model in the squad is mounted, then the rest of the squad must be, as well.

Counter-Attack: White Scars mounted on Bikes can react quickly to any attack. To represent this unengaged White Scars mounted on Bikes (but not Attack Bikes) which are part of a unit that has been assaulted may move up to 6" to get into base contact.

Flankers: The White Scars often deploy Scout Bike squadrons in wide, flanking positions to exploit hasty or ill-advised enemy moves. It is widely reckoned that every mistake made against the White Scars is paid for in blood. Any Bike-mounted White Scars Scout unit may begin the game in reserve regardless of whether reserves can be used in the mission being played. When they enter the table they may arrive from any point on the table edge not available to enemy reserves.

Hit & Run: White Scars mounted on Bikes (but not squads including Attack Bikes) may choose to leave close combat. Declare this at the end of the Assault phase after all Morale checks have been taken. The Bikes fall back 3D6" in any direction and then regroup at the end of the move. Enemy models may only consolidate. Note that units which have been forced to fall back because they failed a Morale test may not make a second fall back move in the same turn.

Drop Pods: If a White Scars army elects to deploy from drop pods, then the requirement to mount Terminators in Land Raiders and to provide transport vehicles for Veteran, Command and Tactical squads is waived – the army may not, therefore, contain any Rhinos, Razorbacks or Land Raiders (not at all, no exceptions!).

NEW WARGEAR

Power Lances: The White Scars fight so much from their saddles that their Techmarines have built appropriate weapons to suit this style – the power lance being an example of this. It is an alternative type of power weapon costing 15 points which is available as a one-handed weapon with no special limitations to their Armory. The power lance grants +1 Initiative to any bike-mounted model that is charging or counter-attacking. Once an opponent gets inside their guard, though, the improved weapon length becomes a disadvantage, and they get -1 Initiative whenever they aren't charging or counter-attacking.

Holy Relic: Horsetail Talismans – these replace the normal Codex Space Marines Holy Relic costing 40 points. The Horsetail Talisman is a powerful reminder of the Chapter's origins. It can be revealed in each and every White Scars Movement phase during which the bearer has moved and is no longer in a vehicle. Any unit of White Scars (not vehicles other than Bikes or Attack Bikes) that has at least one model within 6" of the bearer of the Talisman when it is revealed may move an extra D6" rather than firing in the following Shooting phase. This is similar to a fleet of foot move, although it represents crazed riding as well as powerful running.

Chapter Banner: If the White Scars have a Chapter Banner then it will combine the abilities of a Horsetail Talisman and a normal Sacred Banner.

Arcane Lore is a series of ruminations and cogitations by the Warhammer Games Development team on different aspects of the Warhammer game. This month Gav Thorpe scrutinizes the mechanics of combat resolution.



Gav Thorpe is the evil mastermind behind all things Warhammer, squatting malevolently at the head of the Warhammer Games Design team, and is currently causing havoc in the U.K. Warhammer Staff Tournament. Gav caused great controversy recently by actually visiting a hairdresser.

Combat is at the heart of Warhammer – the best way to defeat the enemy is to hit them with swords and prod them with pointy sticks until they fall over or run away. We've had a few questions regarding working out combat results, which I'll discuss here,

ARCANE LORE

Combat Resolution in Warhammer

large blocks of enemy soldiers. We've had a few questions regarding the Unit Strength of certain troop types, so below is an expanded version of the Unit Strength table. Unit Strength is not just a measure of numbers though, it also takes into account such factors as the size of the warriors, how fearsome they are, etc. – having a Goblin charge you in the flank won't scare you much, but having a massive Dragon pouncing on you will! As we produce more Warhammer Armies books, we'll detail the Unit Strength values of particularly weird and wacky troop types, but until then you should be able to fit them into one of the categories below.

Some units may contain a mix of

REGENERATION AND KILLING BLOW

Several people have asked if a successful Killing Blow can be regenerated, and also how many wounds does it count as for Combat Resolution? Well, taking the first question, a Killing Blow or any other attack (such as from a magic weapon) that kills instantly rather than removing individual Wounds, cannot be regenerated. It's just that – a Killing Blow! Secondly, the number of wounds it counts as inflicting is equal to the number of Wounds the dead model had before it was killed. For example, a model with 3 Wounds remaining that is felled by a Killing Blow would add +3 to the Combat