

FICTIONAL REALITY

MARCH 2002

ISSUE 07

CHAINMAIL

INSTANT CARNAGE
WARZONE

THRONOPH

DUNGEONS
DRAGONS

CONFRONTATION

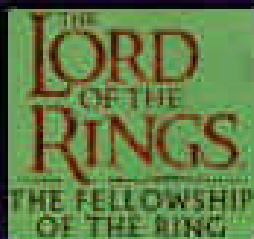
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Fictional Reality

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Well, here we are, two years and counting. I can honestly say that putting out Fictional Reality every quarter is a lot of fun. Sometimes frustrating, but still a lot of fun. I've gotten to play a lot of fun games, read and write about a lot of games that I might not have otherwise picked up and met a lot of great people. Gosh, this almost sounds like some kind of sappy 'Goodbye' message. No way, I just wanted to let all of you know that I really enjoy putting out Fictional Reality and hope to do so for a long time to come. I'd like to hear from any of you that have suggestions for improvements. Also, what would you think of a real print version of Fictional Reality? Would it be something that you'd want to pick up in your local game store or do you prefer the free online version that it is currently in? Drop me a line and let me know.

You'll see a lot of Chainmail articles in this issue and that's due to the fact that I have really taken a liking to the game. I am also very, and I mean very, excited about the upcoming release of Chronopia 2 and after that Ultimate Warzone. Those are two of my all-time favorite games and I cannot wait to see what the crew over at Excelsior has done with them. In addition to two battle reports you'll find a whole pantload of miniature reviews, four d20 product reviews, new spells for Dungeons and Dragons, new troops for Chainmail, press releases from I-Kore and Excelsior and the low-down on the new Lord of the Rings game from Games Workshop in another installment of Standing Orders.

See you in June,

Mark Theurer
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"Break on through to the other side."

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THE EGG HATCHES

Ursula stood at the crest of the foothill, watching the sunset. She was tall and well built, hailing from the northern territories. White-blond hair cut quite short topped her pale body, and icy blue eyes reflected the gold of the disappearing sun beautifully. Her hands, callused from years of abuse, were planted on her hips. She let out a heavy sigh, and let her eyes follow the last edge of the blazing orb fall past the horizon. "Here we go again," she lamented.

The darkness of dusk swept across the hills like the tide, and she could almost feel its portent wash over her. Tonight was going to be a special night. She looked up at the blackening sky around the summit of Dragonspire Peak, and chewed her lip nervously. She had good reason to be nervous...Dragonspire Peak was the home of a rather sizable Draconum war host, and the destination of her employers' mission. The last attack on the Peak ended up in disaster, and the Atlantean force responsible was never seen again. It was probably the most brainless thing Ursula had ever heard of, but it paid quite well...and gold was the great equalizer when it came to feats of courage or stupidity.

The last of the light vanished, and night had fully set in, when the air shimmered nearby. Ursula jumped back and raised her fists instinctively. A dark shape slinked out of the invisible portal wrapped in a blood red cloak. It moved strangely, like sliding between or through reality. Crimson eyes cast an eerie glow over a horrific face. Long savage fangs bisected its mouth, and coarse dark hair...or rather fur...covered most of the creature. Ursula frowned, and then lowered her hands as the vampire glided towards her. She shivered as he spoke, never truly prepared to hear the voice of the damned.

"It is good to see you, spawn. We were afraid you would not show," he hissed. *"The Necropolis Sect pays well, no?"*

"I'm a professional, Sanguari. I would never shirk a contract," Ursula lied.

"Excellent," the vampire lifted his taloned finger and pointed at the open portal, *"Then we may begin."* As if his grating words turned a mystic key, shambling hordes of Necropolis creatures began to file out of thin air. Zombies, skeletons, undead hounds, bloodsucking lurkers, and even a pair of mounted banshees appeared.

"Pretty big force, Sanguari. You've got enough soldiers here to overtake a small stronghold. When do we move forward?" Ursula asked.

"As soon as the sorcerer arrives," the vampire answered.

"Then we may move on," the necromancer Hubris laughed as he emerged from the shadows. "I have arrived." Hubris was a dark skinned elderly man in stitched armor made from leather and bone. His head was covered in white bleached tattoos, and one of his eyes was chalky from seeing things no mortal man was meant to see. "We should go...timing is important if we are to succeed."

"Move out!" Sanguari roared, and the assembled horde began the ascent up the mountain. They moved with little noise other than the occasional groan or clatter of bone against bone. Ursula, Hubris, and the vampire stayed near one flank of the force in order to keep a decent eye on the surroundings. The Draconum was a difficult and dangerous foe, and one that should never be taken lightly.

They marched, shambled, or floated up the paths of Dragonspire Peak until they were standing outside of a huge temple carved out of the sheer cliff side of the mountain itself. The forces of the Necropolis stood ready for anything outside the carved stone dragon's mouth. Heavy wooden doors creaked inward, and the doorway was filled with the massive form of the feared Draconum Magus. The huge creature lifted its scaly muzzle and let out a booming order, "DESTROY THE UNNATURALS! DESTROY THEM ALL!"

The pass immediately filled with scaly bodies as the Scalesworn Thralls filed out of their hidden tunnels and hideaway spots. Slaves mostly, but physically fit from long hours of labor and abuse; they wielded crude spears and stone working tools like hammers and pickaxes. There were nearly a dozen of them led by a trio of more powerful Whelps. The Thralls surged forward, clashing with the Zombies and Zombie Hounds first. Dead flesh parted for blades and blows, and other Scalesworn moved forward. Sanguari curled his lips into a snarl, and leapt powerfully into the mass of Thralls. His talons and fangs sliced through the slaves' flesh like a hot knife through lard. Draconum soldiers fell away from him like trees from a woodsman.

The Whelps pushed their way past the Thralls, swinging their manacles like flails, smashing into the skeletons

with bone-shattering force. As they approached, Ursula felt sweat beading up on her forehead and her blood began to burn inside of her. She unsheathed her blade, ready to defend herself from their attack. It was unnecessary, however, as one of the Banshees flew by overhead. She opened her ghostly maw and let out a horrible wail that turned all three of the draconian Whelps gray with death, and they collapsed from their own momentum at Ursula's feet. Ursula raised her sword to waive her thanks to the spirit, but it had already moved on to cause more destruction elsewhere. Ursula shrugged, and moved forward toward the temple.

The Thralls began to thin, and were soon replaced with the tougher Whelps. The Magus had even stepped out, throwing red lightning bolts into the ranks of undead and rending them with powerful claws. Hubris concentrated on his magic, knitting undead flesh almost as fast as the Draconum soldiers could tear it. Sanguari was frenzied with the smell of the spilled blood, raging toward the enormous Magus with reckless abandon. Bodies of fallen combatants, Draconum and Necropolis alike, littered the ground. Yet still the Whelps pulsed out of the temple. Sanguari lifted his head from a dying Thrall, and spat a bellowing order through his blood-soaked lips.

"Magespawn! Get inside the temple! Look for the prize!" he screeched.

"The prize?" Ursula answered him, looking for a hole in the wall of draconian flesh to run through. Her pulse began to pound in her head.

"The dragon's egg! Get it! We will hold them here!" the vampire commanded, and spun to face a pair of Whelps that had just finished pulling apart a pack of Lurkers.

Ursula ducked an incoming blow from a Thrall's spear, and felt her blood begin to thicken. She tried to clear it from her head, but burning embers began to form in her muscles and a glacier froze in her gullet. Her sword dropped from her fingers, and the Draconum Magus stepped forward...seeing the opportunity for an easy kill. Its talons began crackle with arcane energy and it leered at Ursula hungrily. In seconds, she would be a crispy, well-cooked morsel.

Except that her body uncoiled upward, tearing out of her clothing like a sponge dropped in a water bucket. Her pale flesh sprouted white fur, her muscles thickened and her fingers swelled into gigantic clawed paws. Bear paws. She exploded into the huge shape of a polar bear. Her icy blue eyes took on the feral glint of her own rage and fury, and the Magus Draconum looked surprised when she swatted it to the ground. Her claws dragged across its reptilian hide like knives, and her second blow knocked some of the draconian's teeth from its muzzle. Her final blow crushed its face, ending its life with a *splut*. Ursula roared as she sank to all fours and leapt over the fallen

Magus and barreled into the gateway, knocking two Whelps over as she pounded by. Without the Magus to direct them, the Thralls and Whelps began to falter. The forces of the Necropolis Sect started to overtake them, their sheer numbers bolstered with Hubris' black magic forced the Draconum into a war of attrition. A war they were about to lose.

Ursula loped into the temple, and sniffed at the air for signs of trouble. Smoke, some kind of incense, and the thick reptilian stink of the Draconum; she could smell them all. Her ears perked at the sound of heavy footfalls, and twisted her head to look down the main hallway. Walking her way was two of the greatly feared Magnus Draconum, heading with swords readied toward the battle that was raging outside. Ursula tried her best to duck her polar bear body behind a corner, and the huge dragon like warriors stomped by her without a second glance. If they did know she was there, they were not going to bother with her. The battle must be more important, or there was something else inside that could take care of *her*. Either way, she had to push on.

She charged outward into the next chamber, a huge circular room surrounded with white marble sculptures of the various breeds of Draconum. In the center of the room was a pile of silken pillows and satin blankets; upon which sat a roughly oval-shaped object the color of newly fallen snow. It was an egg...a dragon's egg. She was alone with the egg, and she walked over to it.

She went to grab it, and her claw clacked against its tough shell. *I'll need better hands for this*, she thought. With a forceful exhale; she melted back into her more feminine form. After a few seconds of the transformation, Ursula reached out to grab the egg. Something moved in her peripheral vision, and she turned to see what it was.

All of a sudden, she felt a jolt of pain in her side. She could feel a hot sticky wetness growing speedily across her ribs. Everything seemed sort of hazy, and she slowly turned her head toward the cause of her pain. Standing next to her, punch dagger still dripping with her blood in its hand, was one of the treacherous Mortis Draconum. He was painted bright white, like one of the statues around the room. On his brow he wore a brand, like the slave markings of the Whelps outside. A wicked toothy grin was wide on his face. Ursula felt dizzy, and slumped to her knees.

"The rest of your kind have been dealt with," Sanguari hissed as he strode into the room. He glanced at the Draconum assassin and smiled, then looked down at the bleeding werebear. *"She lives...good."* He knelt down, and the vampire spoke to her as much as to the reptile standing above them. *"The living blood of a Magespawn will not only guarantee a Venom Dragon's birth, but it will also makes the incubation instantaneous,"* he grinned

down at her evilly, *"I thank you for your help, Ursula. Your services will only be needed for a few seconds longer."*

He lifted her body up with his powerful undead arms and walked her over by the egg. With a flashing smile he plunged his fangs into her and sucked away the last of her dying blood. He fought hard not to swallow the final mouthful of the coppery stuff, and tossed her body aside with a *thump* of dead flesh. He drooled the sticky stuff into his hands and then laid them on the egg's shell. He smeared the blood all over it, like a child smearing paint on a canvas. He felt a shudder from within its armored shell, and recoiled back in happy surprise. The blood sank away into the shell like water into a sponge, disappearing completely into the bleach white without even so much as a reddish stain. The egg trembled and shook, and something began to darken inside.

"The dragon...it hatchessss..." the Mortis Draconum said with awe. "Ssssoon you will have your monssster, and I get thissss temple, yessss?" it ground its hands together greedily.

"Yes, yes...whatever. Shut up and get back...it needs to see me first! Shh..." the vampire moved in closer to the rattling egg.

With a sharp whining squeal a light blue snout poked out of the top of the egg, sending shards of shell bouncing across the floor. The hatchling shook its head back and forth, knocking the rest of the shell apart in a few quick thrashes. In seconds the newborn dragon was free of its shell, glistening with the remnants of the yolk, and creaking open its eyes for the first time.

"My little instrument of war...I shall call you Oblivion" the vampire grinned as he looked into the young female dragon's icy blue eyes. It cocked its head and let out a low growl as it regarded the Necropolian mentally.

...Call me what you want vampire...but my name will always be...Ursula. My name is Ursula...and I will have my revenge upon you!



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MINIATURE REVIEWS

REAPER

We have two behemoths from Reaper to look at this issue.

The first that we'll be looking at is Orankar, Ogre Boss. Orankar measures 2 1/8 inches tall from the bottom of the base to the top of his head. There were no defects found on the model, but the bottom of the base needed to be smoothed out a bit and there was just a little bit of flash that needed to be cleaned. The mold line was nearly impossible to spot and even though I took a few seconds to take care of it once I found it, it could have easily been left alone without a problem. His massive sword was bent in the blister pack and had to be repositioned. The store where I picked him up received two more blisters of this figure and each had the same problem of the sword being bent. One of them was bent around the back of the figure.

Orankar is wearing a lot of armor. He has animal hides, plates of armor and even a chain shirt covering his upper and lower torso. Heavy boots and gauntlets finish off his armor. Facial detail is very nice and not cartoony at all. Very realistic. He's carrying a couple of large pouches on his belt along with a honkin' big mace and a pig strapped around his back. The pig is a nice touch and reminds me of the Reaper Ettin that is also carrying around a snack. A couple of geese or maybe a calf would have been nice for some variety, but the pig is ok. Muscle detail on his arms and legs, where it is not covered up by armor, is very nice and should paint up well.

Orankar (stock number 2537) retails for \$4.99 and would make an awesome leader to any group of ogres. Outside of the fact that this is a really nice model it's also a very cheap model. Five bucks for an ogre is just about unheard of. I'll be dropping him straight into my Dungeons and Dragons game, but he could fit the bill for just about any request for a ogre that is needed when you need to re-color the walls in arterial red.



The second big ugly from Reaper is Bullgoth, Troll King. If being the king of the trolls means that you are the biggest, baddest motor-scooter out there then Bullgoth gets my vote. If he doesn't get yours too he's got a great big club to change your mind with. Bullgoth is a two-piece model, unlike Orankar who comes as a single piece, with the head coming apart from the rest of the model. Like Orankar, there were no visible defects and Bullgoth did not get bent up in the blister. There was also a little cleanup needed with this model, and its

mold line was easily visible, but was cleaned up quickly.

Bullgoth is wearing just about nothing in the way of armor. In fact, his only clothing is a loin cloth that is held up by a chain that shows more of his butt crack than the plumber that came to fix your sink and some cloth wrapping around his legs and feet. Being a troll he doesn't need a lot of armor. Can you imagine a Troll in plate armor!?! His body, including a great big belly, is covered in scaly bits, warts, horns, and occasional stitches. There's a collar around his neck and a simple three pronged crown atop his head. Wasn't there a Judas Priest song about a three-pronged crown? His giant club looks like little more than a medium sized tree

trunk with three spiky metal bands attached to it. Perfect for showing someone the error of their ways when they disagreed with the king about anything.

Bullgoth (stock number 2542) retails for \$5.99, and while he's not really taller than Orankar he does have a bit more mass. Reaper's trolls are different enough from the WOTC and Rackham ones to have their own style (which I like by the way) I have no trouble whatsoever putting them all together to make one big inbred (try and tell me they're not) troll family that will have a good old time putting knots on the heads of your favorite enemy or adventuring group.



www.reapermini.com

MINIATURE REVIEWS

CONFRONTATION

To start off the miniature reviews in this issue of Fictional Reality we'll look at some short dead dudes. No, not Napoleon from 'Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure', but some new Dwarven Zombies from Rackham for use with Confrontation. The Dwarven Zombies, or Nain Degenere (Dwarf Degenerates, aren't they all? Just kidding I really do like dwarves.) come three to a pack with the stat card needed to use them in the game.



The first one (above) is armed with a pole arm and has seen better days. Actually, just about any day would be better than how this poor soul looks now as he's had his skin flayed from his body and looks pretty angry about it. The muscle that was left will come out looking very nice when painted and even part of his spine is peeking through his back. Not quite all of his skin has been removed. Part of his left leg and his right foot still need the attention of a good filleting knife. Whoever did this to him was nice enough to leave his beard though. A length of chain and a padlock serve as a belt. There was no flash to speak of and just a small amount of cleanup was needed on a faint mold line.



Second out of the blister was the guy to the left. He's armed with a very long chopper and an axe. He's more skeleton than zombie, but his left arm and foot are still bearing flesh. He doesn't look quite as mad as the first shrimp, but he looks just as messed up. His undead masters left him his shorts to wear (how nice of them) and there are various wormy things crawling over him. He's also got a nice big crack on the top of his head.

As with the first model there was really no flash and just a very short cleanup time was required to take care of the faint mold line. Over the past couple of years I've probably picked up around 100 Confrontation blisters and I have to say that you'll be hard pressed to find figures that need less cleanup time.



Last up on this hit parade is another dwarf with a pole arm and a small axe. He's the least decomposed of the group, but has a large section of skin missing from his head with a big crack to go along with it. Someone thumped his melon good. To go along with the bump on his head are all of his guts that are hanging out. He's not even trying to keep them organized like a good zombie should. He's got a couple of body piercings and his left arm is pretty much all skeletal while the rest of him is just a bloody rotten mess. I couldn't find any find any bugs on him, but there are boils a' plenty on his flesh.

I love these little guys! Of course, they will become part of my Living Dead army and do double duty in my Dungeons and Dragon game and maybe even triple duty in my Chronopia Sons of Kronos army.



MINIATURE REVIEWS

CHAINMAIL

SKIRMISH GAME

With as much fun as I've had playing Chainmail lately I had to pick up some of the newer miniatures to add to my armies. Yeah, I've fallen into the diabolical trap of pretty much having one of each army. Right now my Naresh and Mordengard armies lead the pack in number of miniatures I've picked up, but the others are not lagging too far behind.



As you can probably guess, I picked up the Tiefling Fighter as soon as it was released. As much as I still dislike the packaging that Wizards of the Coast has chosen for the Chainmail miniatures (the sealed box rather than a clear blister) I am very glad that previews get posted

on their website regularly. The Tiefling Fighter is a single piece model carrying a large halberd and has a dagger at her waist. She's wearing very little in the way of armor. There are some plates covering the upper half of her torso, but not very much. She's also wearing a chain skirt that does nothing to cover her thighs. This is a very stylish figure with cloven hooves a mohawk style haircut and an evil snarl on her lips. Facial detail is very good and I only found a very faint mold line and just a bit of flash that needed to be trimmed. There was an obvious flaw, however. My Tiefling Fighter, and many others apparently, are missing their right ear. The ear is quite plain so see on the game card, but I do have to say that in my opinion the 'flaw' actually adds a lot more character to the model. It's a very clean miscast, not like a big pit in the side of her head or anything. Her ear is just missing. The pole of the halberd is not quite as straight as in the game card, but I was able to bend it back to get almost completely straight. Even with the 'defect' of missing an ear I still like this figure a lot and it's worth the \$4.00 USD. If you don't play Chainmail it also has uses in a Beastman army for Warhammer Fantasy Battle and has obvious uses in Dungeons and Dragons.

Next up is the Crazy Minotaur Cultist for the Ahmut faction. It's an \$8.00 USD model that comes as only two pieces; body and head. He's running forward with a huge two-handed axe ready to come down on top of some poor fool. If you've seen pictures of the painted

figure and thought "blah" then I'd have to tell you that you're fears were not needed. The figure looks great. There is a lot of movement in what is essentially a single piece model. If it weren't for the horns on his head it could have probably been cast all as one piece.

It is not flat or static at all. He's got a huge mane of hair with skulls tied to it like trophies and his face is bearing a ferocious look. The mold line did require a little bit of work, but I could not find any defects or an excessive amount of flash. I didn't think it was necessary to give him a navel piercing. Piercings, to me anyway, seem to be a little too common on miniatures. Hey, maybe we'll see a D&D feat 'Pull Piercing' soon that will confuse and enrage your opponent. Anyway, very cool model and even though they come from different armies he, like the Tiefling, would fit nicely into a Beastman army and he's way cheaper to buy.



To the left you'll see the Otyugh. It comes as a five piece (body, two tentacles, and two legs) model and retails for \$8.00 USD. It's in a pose where it is lumbering forward ready to gobble up someone that can't get out of its way fast enough. The mold lines were pretty

evident and while there was no significant flash the figure did need a bit of filing before I assembled it. All of the pieces fit together nicely and there were no gaps that required putty to fill in. All three of the tentacles could easily be bent into another position without breaking them. Just don't get crazy and try to make the Otyugh give himself a high-five or anything. The best feature of this model is his gaping maw. That's a huge mouthful of teeth that I wouldn't want anything to do with! If you're not playing Chainmail or Dungeons and Dragons your use of this model might be pretty limited, but otherwise I found no problems with this beastie.



Moving on we find the Dwarf Ranger to the left. It's a one piece model that will set you back \$4.00 USD. He's holding a pick in each hand, with both of them ready to come down onto a foe. He also has a small hand axe on his belt. His armor is a mix of chain and studded leather. In addition to his leather boots and gloves he also has several bands of leather that

wrap around his arms and face. His long hair is tied back into a single braid and his beard is tied into two braids that join at a large metal ring. Facial detail is very nice and he's yelling at whomever he's ready to perforate with the picks. There was a little flash that needed to be cleaned off of this model and the mold line was visible and needed filing. If you're a Mordengard player then he'll fit right in to your army and if you're looking for a nice model to use as a dwarven PC in Dungeons and Dragons or any other fantasy-based rpg then he'll do just fine. I can easily see him fitting into a dwarven Warhammer Fantasy Battle or Chronopia army as a champion or unit leader. If there was a second pose of this model they could make great line troops, but twenty of this one guy could be a bit much.

Up in the bottom corner you'll see the new Orc Trooper. I was really hoping that you would get two in the pack, like with the Human Conscripts and the grunt troops, but unfortunately there's only one guy in there. At \$4.00 USD each these line troops come out a little more expensive than most of the others for Chainmail. Out of all of the Chainmail models reviewed in this issue the Orc Trooper had the most flash and needed the most attention. Additionally, the javelin on his back was bent when he was packed and came out of the box broken. WOTC has been great about replacing defective/broken miniatures in the past so I expect no problems getting a new one. With that out of the way this is a pretty cool orc figure. He's wearing a mixture of armor and is carrying a massive spiked club to go along with his javelin. Since I'm putting together a Drazen's Horde army I will certainly be adding at least one Orc Trooper to the rest of the unwashed mass, but I feel jealous of many of the other armies that have grunt troops in multiple poses. Outside of Chainmail, this trooper would fit right in with a band of orcs to menace your players of an rpg and is close enough in look to make a good



champion in an Orc and Goblin Warhammer Fantasy Battles army. I don't think he'd fit in very well with the Chronopia orcs though. This is a nice model, but I'd have been much happier with it if I'd have gotten two in the box for \$6.00 USD as with most of the other low level troops.

Last up this time around is the Bugbear Trooper below. He comes as a four piece (body, right arm, left arm, and shield) model. Cleanup was not bad at all, but assemble gave me fits for a little while. His right arm and some of his body has chains that wrap around it. If you line up the ends of the chains on his back then the arm will glue into place just fine. If you just try to stick the arm on there you're very likely to have it hang below the base and quite likely below the ground level on your table. Muscle, facial, and hair detail are all really nice on this model. Other than a large metal shoulder pad he's mainly wearing animal skins and leather strips on his feet, sort of like makeshift sandals. His left hand holds both a javelin and a shield. The javelin is going to be the weak link on this model and I'm surprised it wasn't bent or broken in shipping like the Orc Trooper's. Looking at his face you can see that he is really mad at whoever peed in his cereal this morning. Also, he's in terrible need of a dentist. Along with the Orc Trooper, he'll fit in nicely with a Drazen's Horde warband and can also do double duty in a fantasy role-playing game. He does not have a lot of easy conversion possibilities. If you want to move his arms into another position you can expect to break out the modeling putty and put in some time at the workbench. If you want to put the fact that he's a Bugbear out of your mind he would make an awesome wild or feral orc. Just paint him green and you'll be ready to go. He'll also run you \$4.00 USD and you get one to a box.



www.wizards.com/chainmail

MINIATURE REVIEWS

SuperFigs

Greetings citizen and welcome to another look at truth, justice, and a bunch of super-hero miniatures. Another batch of figs from Four Color Figures is waiting to be looked at so without further delay...

First up is a BLASTER named Doc Shock who either has powers that shoot some kind of energy beans out of his hands, or based on his pose he just wants people to think that. He's wearing a long trench coat and his shirt



and pants underneath show good muscle definition. He also has what looks like a utility belt around his waist, but being a BLASTER it's probably not for super-gadgets. Facial detail is very good on this model. The ears are a vast improvement over the batch that was reviewed in last issue, but could still use a tiny bit of work. The nose, eyes and mouth are great though. His flat-top haircut

looks good and he's not wearing a mask so his secret identity must not be an issue. There was a little flash to be cleaned off of the figure and the mold line was visible almost all the way around the figure. He could easily be dropped into a Necromunda gang or a modern-day role playing game and not miss a beat if super hero stuff is not your cup of tea. Very nice figure.



A couple of BRAWLERS are next. Devil's Knight is first and is one of my personal favorites. At first glance you have to think that this is some yahoo with a pumpkin on his head, but what if he was just this normal guy that was walking through a pumpkin patch while some secret government agency was testing a micro-nuclear device? Our guy 'joe' wakes

Up to find himself looking like this. Of course, he goes insane, grabs the two closest knives and sets out on a killing spree. He's wearing pretty tattered clothes and has a belt of what are probably grenades, or baby pumpkin-nukes! Good detail, not too much flash and usability as a new kind of undead in my Dungeons and Dragons campaign make this a winner for sure.



like your more standard "punch everyone in the face" kind of girl. She's wearing a bodysuit with a couple of pockets and buckles that looks nice and she's in a fighting pose. Facial detail

was not as good as with Doc though. There was minimal flash and a mold line to be cleaned, but nothing terrible. I did notice a crack in the figure right along her waist. It certainly does not require taking her apart and pinning the model, but just to be aware that this is a weak point in the model. Her hair has been done into cornrows and looks pretty good.

Two figures with more movement based powers are next. First is a FLYER named Blackbird. She's dressed in a tight bodysuit without a lot of muscle tone, but that's obviously not her mode of attack. She has a pair of huge claws that fit



over her hands. Her

hands can be easily made out under the claws. I like that they are not just claws at the end of her wrist and they actually took the time to sculpt in her hands. Nice touch. The wings fit into a small notch in her back and look very nice. Not much cleanup here and my only gripe is the usual 'detachable land' thing that I have. Not a lot of crossover usability here, but a very good figure anyway.

The Blur is a SPEEDSTER and is next. He's wearing a form fitting suit that does not show off a lot of muscle,



but helps to give a sense of movement. He's kind of tall and lanky, more so than a normal sized human. No real mold line to speak of, but another round of 'detachable land' to deal with along with some flash. His helmet looks very good and is probably the best part of this figure. You might get him into a



Two big-un's are next. I really like that they have really fleshed things out with giant sized models that can be commonly found in comics. Ox is the first BRICK and friggin' big! He comes as a single piece and required no more cleanup than his smaller cohorts. There was a web of metal between his right arm and body that needed to be cleaned up though.

He's dressed in fatigues, combat boots, and a muscle shirt that shows him to be just massively built. Of course, the trade off has to be somewhere and his head seems to be about two sizes too small for his body. Great big muscles, little pea-sized brain! He must have also been the one to come up with the old-school Joker mask like on the old 60's Batman television show. Great figure and my favorite from this group. Major uses in Inquisitor for this behemoth.

We've got a big girl (GIANTESS) next who is not covered in muscle, but just in sheer size along could kick you for a field goal. She's wearing a bodysuit, high heel boots, and a belt, but does not have as much detail put into her as with Ox. Her hair and face came out very well, but there could have been a bit more done with a model this size. Like Ox, Giantess comes as a single piece model and there were no defects to be found. Cleanup was minimal and was really limited to a faint mold line around the model. Also like Ox, she has major crossover appeal to Inquisitor players. She's just as tall as Devotee Malicant and all you'd need to do is drop a gun into one of her hands or write her up as a hand-to-hand combat machine.

At way less than half the cost of a typical 54mm figure both of the giants are a great find.

Last up for this time around is a group of agents, or spares as we used to call them. They are the guys that get beat to hell in countless numbers by the super good and bad guys. The Katusha Rockets pack comes with five models of guys in heavy power armor, each with two wrist

mounted rocket launchers and a jet pack. There was minimal cleanup required and while they don't have the detail of Space Marines or Blood Berets you get five guys in the pack and each one is in a different pose. For me this is a major bonus. Having just endless masses of the same model again and again would bore me to tears. I like customizability first, and if I cannot have that I like choices of already posed models. At just over a dollar each these are a good buy. If you're not into supers then they could easily work as a futuristic police force or as Viridian Shock Marines in VOID.

The regular size figs retail for \$2.95 each and the giants for \$6.95 (Ox) and \$4.95 (Giantess). The pack of five Katusha Rockets will set you back a measly \$7.95. If you have a use for them the giants are your biggest bargain. Many of the regular size models have good crossover appeal and can add a lot of flavor to an army. I get a certain degree of satisfaction dropping models onto the table and having people wonder where it came from.



www.superfigs.net



Chronopia, War in the Eternal Realm



From beyond the grave, the mythic One King has returned to reclaim his lost kingdom, sending cries of hope and wonder throughout the Firstborn people. His usurpers have squandered their spoils of war and the great Triad of the Elven Dukes, the Dwarf Overlords and the Ogre Emperor has collapsed. The sinister power of the serpent people known as Stygians, asleep and forgotten for millennium, has been awakened and their march to reclaim the lands of Chronopia has just begun.

The four dark prophets, twisted by their hatred for the One King, have made terrible pacts with an unearthly evil. Now, with the Dark One's power behind them, the prophets wage an escalating war of conversion and annihilation. In the Empire of the Blackbloods, the Swamp Goblins have seceded, carving a new kingdom for themselves and their Elven Allies. Far to the North beyond the great barrier wall, the Sons of Kronos, a once proud and united people, now fragmented in their beliefs prepare for the last defense of their lands against the growing enemies that surround them.

On the battlefields all across Chronopia, the carrion birds feast as mighty Repulsar Knights trade blows with Beast Clan Dwarves, all the while Blackblood Myrmadons rend and gore Elf Dragonbane Riders. The Dark Banners of the Devout, with

their Dusk Realm Demons and Warped Lords cast an ever-increasing shadow across the land. The Stygians blood magics have cast the civilized lands into chaos as they begin their war of reclamation. Searing new magics crack across the sky as Elven Lotus-Eaters battle with the time magics of the Chronomancers and the Devout's Abominations from the Void.

The Sun is setting on the Dark World of Chronopia. It is a time of uncertainty and treachery as kin fights kin in a bitter struggle not just for domination, but also for their very survival. It is a time of heroic deeds, great armies and blasphemous evil.

It is a time of War in the Eternal Realm.

This book contains:

- ♦ A detailed history and background on the races of Chronopia
- ♦ A lavish body of artwork depicting Chronopia
- ♦ A complete game section with detailed examples
- ♦ Detailed Army lists and a comprehensive Armory
- ♦ Quick Reference Sheets
- ♦ Templates and More...

EXE-02201

MSRP- \$34.95

March

MINIATURE REVIEWS

mithril

What's this, Lord of the Rings figure that aren't from Games Workshop? Yeah, and they are BIG! Here's the first of a two-part article taking a look at the new line of 54mm Lord of the Rings figures from Mithril.

Each of the figures in this line comes packaged in a blister pack with a full color insert and painting guide. There are actually two painting guides depending on which scheme you want to use. Each miniature also comes with a sculpted base that ends up elevating the figure a little bit above table level.



Legalos, the elf, comes as four pieces; (not including the base) body, right arm, left arm, and quiver. There was a slightly visible mold line on each piece that needed a bit of cleaning, but there was no excessive flash or any defects. The bow has some nice detail on it that should paint up nice, as does the quiver.

He's wearing leather boots, leggings, a somewhat poofy shirt and what looks like a rigid leather breastplate. His hair is not too long and you can make out his pointy ears easily. Facial detail is good and his cloak has many folds that will hold several different shades of a base color well.

Gimli, the dwarf, is next. As you can see below he's standing in more of a neutral position, probably just waiting for someone to say the wrong thing so he can kick their butt. Other than the base Gimli comes as just two pieces, the body and then both hands holding the axe that rests on his right shoulder. Even though he's shorter than Legalos, duh, he's got more stuff. He's wearing leggings and a long shirt that reaches down past his waist. Over his shirt he has on a chainmail vest and a



belt which holds a pouch and a dagger. Leather boots, gloves and a long cloak finish off his garments. Facial detail is good. He has a wrinkled brow to go along with his receding hairline. What hair he does have left is shaggy and unkempt, with a long scraggly beard. He required very little in the way of cleanup. No flash at all and a very minor mold line on the arms holding the axe.

On to everyone's favorite, ok maybe not, **Frodo**. Being a hobbit, Frodo is considerably smaller than any of the other figures in the set, but he's still at least as tall if not taller than a regular 25mm figure. With his base he's even a bit taller still. The model comes as just two pieces; his right hand and dagger and the rest of him. He's in a pose that has him walking forward with dagger in hand. As is befitting our diminutive hero he's not wearing anything in the way of armor, but has a couple layers of regular clothes, including a slightly bulging outer vest. That's what second breakfast will get you! Facial detail is a little less on Frodo than on the previous two figures, but it's still quite passable. His hair is a big curly mop and his feet are bare as they should be. As was routine with the first two figures there was no flash to speak of and no imperfections. The mold line was so faint that I really had to take a couple of closer looks to make it out. Could have been easily missed and not harmed the paint job at all.



Gandalf is next. As he should be he's dressed in flowing robes and is wearing a rather large pointy hat. His robes and cloak have many, many folds that will really be able to show off shadow and highlights well. He has a rope belt around his waist that's holding a single pouch. A leather strap goes over his left shoulder and attaches to a sword, which comes as a separate piece. His left hand, also a separate piece, is holding his staff, which is actually kind of thin and non-descript. On this model, the staff is the only part that I wish the sculptor had spent some more time on. It looks



More like a slightly gnarled broomstick than a wizard's staff. Like I said, this is the only part of this model that I find lacking. The facial detail is good and hair and beard are very full and detailed. In addition to the clothing and items that you can see in the picture he's also carrying a sack that's slung over his right shoulder. The mold line on Gandalf was a bit more prominent than with the other figures, but not

excessive at all. It took maybe all of five minutes to clean them up. Like most of the figures in this group he's in much more of a passive pose than anything else. Many of them look like they're all just out for a walk. No defects were found on this figure either.

Last in this issue's batch of Lord of the Rings 54mm figures is Aragorn. He appears to be dressed in leather armor with regular trousers and a shirt on underneath. He's also wearing boots, bracers on both wrists and a long flowing cloak that is pretty standard on all of these models. A belt goes around his waist and is attached to a small pouch. Two straps cross over his chest and strap onto a backpack, bedroll, a sack, and a what looks like a small water jug. The hood of his cloak is pulled up over his head, revealing just a bit of his hair which is straight and parted on the side. Facial features are crisp without being exaggerated or over done. The only separate pieces on this model are the sword/right hand and the scabbard. His pose is a little bit less relaxed than most of the others, but still not a combat oriented pose. He looks more like he's either scouting up ahead of the party and taking a look at something specific or just daring someone to draw their own weapon so he can get into it with them. I found no defects whatsoever with this figure and the mold line was nearly invisible. It was so faint that this figure could have been primed right out of the blister. The scabbard also has some nice detailing.



To the right you can get a look at two of the bases that these figures are meant to be mounted on. Each of them has a slightly different rocky texture and looks very nice. Each figure also goes onto his particular base.



If you look at other 54mm Figures as a price comparison you'll find that these are quite a nice value. Below you'll find their stock numbers, price in Euro, and approximate price in \$ USD.

Legalos	LO5	€12.99	\$11.15
Gimli	LO6	€12.99	\$7.72
Frodo	LO2	€8.99	\$11.15
Gandalf	LO1	€12.99	\$11.15
Aragorn	LO4	€12.99	\$11.15

I did some quick looking around on the net and did not find a fantasy game that uses 54mm figures. That's not to say that there are not a lot of 54mm figures out there in both the fantasy and historical genres, because there are a ton of them. This group of figures would not only do well on their own as part of a diorama, but if you regularly game with 54mm figures they would easily fit in. If you're looking for them to add to an Inquisitor game you're probably barking up the wrong tree. I could see Gandalf possibly used as a chaos magus or cult leader without too much conversion or use of green putty, but the others wouldn't cross over well. Unless you are using a modified set of Inquisitor rules for a fantasy setting and then all bets are off. Of course, if you are a really enterprising Dungeons and Dragons DM you could do everything at 54mm scale! If you are simply a fan of Lord of the Rings or enjoy the diorama building and painting aspect of our hobby regardless of its usability off of your display shelf then these models are all wonderful and have great potential. I found them all to be very clean models with scant mold lines, no flash to really speak of and not a single defect.

Overall a fine set of miniatures. I was also very pleased to see them sold separately so you didn't have to buy them all if you only wanted one figure. On the other hand, if you do want them all Mithril has a deal that will save you about 15% off if you grab all ten of them at once.

They can be ordered directly from Mithril via their website if you like. If you're looking for a local retailer and cannot find one Mithril has a listing of retailers from around the world that would be happy to do business with you.

www.mithril.ie

MINIATURE REVIEWS

EXCELSIOR entertainment



with knee and elbow pads and a breastplate. He has a sidearm on his belt and a backpack, bedroll, and knife on his back. There were no defects on the figure and the mold line, while visible, took just a minute to clean up. One thing that I really like about the Capitol Infantry (Heavy and Light) is that if you're not into Warzone, and you should be by the way as it is very cool, they make great Imperial Guard for Warhammer 40K or could be used as human grunts in pretty much any sci-fi setting. I could even see them being used in RPG's like Star Wars.

OK, on to a handful of other figures that you'll find on the Excelsior website under the Iron Claw link. These are all suitable for PC's in RPG's who are using non-standard races. You'll notice that they all have a fox-humanoid or dog-humanoid feel to them. The color pictures that accompany the standard pictures came from the Excelsior website and will give you a very good idea of how nicely these will paint up.

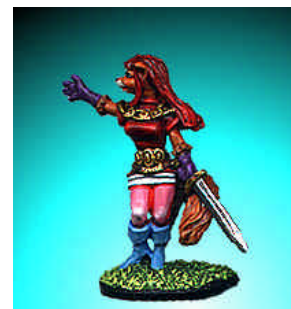


Hendrick (left) looks like a dog or maybe a badger humanoid. He's moving very low to the ground and is carrying a sword in one hand and a pistol in the other. Other than his rather large snout sticking out from under his hat there are no features that reveal his non-human nature. The model's base needed some trimming to get it level, and there was just a touch of flash and an almost invisible mold line that needed to be cleaned. He also has a few throwing daggers across his chest that you could easily miss seeing. His clothes all have

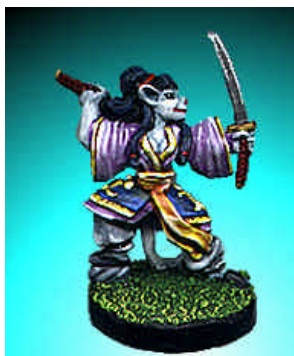


nice folds and will probably stand out more than his non-human face. I like the addition of the pistol as it is a weapon that you'll probably not see too many PC's running around with. Just a little something else to stand out on a figure that's already a bit away from the norm. He's listed as being an 'Expert Burglar' and I can see him being used as a Rogue in Dungeons and Dragons. As long as he doesn't shoot someone and alert the whole town as to his whereabouts he should be fine.

Marva is a 'Sorceress Supreme' and appears to be some kind of a fox breed. Her base also needed just a bit of work and there was a little more flash that needed to be cleaned. She appears to have one hand extended, either in a greeting or casting a spell. I'd bet on the latter. As you would expect from a sorcerer she's not wearing any armor. What you may not expect is the very short mini-skirt that she is wearing. Can you talk about a half fox half human girl wearing a short mini-skirt without feeling weird? I'll have to get back to you on that one. I carefully adjusted her extended hand to be flat (kind of John Woo style) rather than the way it's pictured above. Looks a bit more like you'd be expecting some kind of magic bolt to come flying forth. Detail is good on the figure and while the one I got had a small bend to the sword it was bent back easily and without any damage to the model.



Mei Ling almost looks like a mouse breed, but I cannot be 100% sure. She's definitely dressed in a more Eastern variety of clothes. Flowing robes and a sash make up her dress and there's not a bit of speck of armor to be seen. She's billed as a 'Mercenary Wonder' but I'd go with either some kind of monk or samurai with her. She looks close enough to pass as a Ratling Samurai in the Dungeons and Dragons Rokugan setting. Her flowing robes can be painted in very colorful ways and could make the figure very eye-catching. Her sword also had a bend in it, but



Like with Marva it was easily bent back into the right shape. Other than needing to clean up the base a bit there was really no flash on the figure.

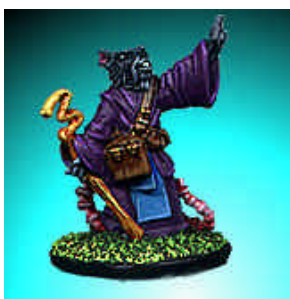
To the right you'll see Tycho, not the Blood Angel Space Marine, but Tycho the vermin sorcerer. His face has a little of Terrier in him, but his long rat-like tail keep him out of the canine family. I like this figure a lot. It's in a remarkably simple, but effective pose. Tycho could pass for a cleric, sorcerer, or wizard. He (it) could even easily fit into the role of a Shugenja. He's carrying a staff and a large book attached to a strap across his shoulder. Other than those he has just a couple of pouches and his robes. Painting the robes in brighter colors will probably help them to stand out more. I found

no defects on the model and like the ones that we looked at earlier his base needed no cleaning and there was no flash or a mold line to be found.



The last Iron Crown guy that we'll look at here is **Mansur**. He stands out very much with a fox-like appearance and is another spell caster. Either that or he's just delivering that book that he's carrying and there's a suit of armor on underneath his cloak. Yeah, I thought not. Facial features on Mansur look nice and like many of the others his long robes have many folds that will

bring out a lot of detail. In addition to the sword in his right hand, he's also carrying a large book and is wearing a crown. There are a couple of pouches and a very delicate rope belt around his waist. You can barely make out his left foot peeking out from under his robes. I found no defects and clean up was very quick. No major flash or mold line could be found. His base took just a second to clean up to get level. All in all, Mansur is a decent magic-user figure, but he probably stands out the least of the bunch.



As you can see, all of these figures from Iron Claw (distributed through Excelsior Entertainment) would make very nice models for PC's of various animal-humanoid races in Dungeons and Dragons. If you'd rather, you could also pick up Ironclaw, Anthropomorphic Fantasy Role-Play, the game which spawned these figures.

A couple of things you'll also want to know before heading right out and picking up all of these little critters.

Even though they are 28mm scale figures they are all a bit short. Knowing that they are all some sort of fox, dog or vermin-humanoid this makes sense, but here's a quick size comparison for you. All figures were measured from the bottom of their feet to their eyes.

Hendrick	13mm
Marva	24mm
Mei Ling	22mm
Tycho	18mm
Mansur	26mm

Chainmail Goblin Scout	15mm
Chainmail Half-Orc Fighter	28mm
Chainmail Elf Duelist	26mm

Hendrick can be expected to come in short as he's stooped over. I plan on dropping each of them on to either a round or square 25mm base and using some green putty to even it out so they match up with the rest of my D&D miniatures, which is where I'll be using them.

You could certainly drop some of them into a Skaven army for Warhammer Fantasy or another mass combat wargame. The uniqueness of the figures will most likely find them at home in RPG's and that's fine with me. If you are running a non-standard PC race and don't want to drop a Skaven or something else that's just 'close' to the ratling samurai that you are playing onto the table then these, Mei Ling in particular, will fit the bill perfectly. These are all wonderfully strange and unique and will add a lot of flavor to whatever game they find their way into.

I also recently found out a bit of information that you should find useful. Excelsior will sell the 'bits' to any of their figures. I'd suggest calling or faxing them your needs first. Their contact numbers can be found on their website.



www.excelsior.cc



What's New with Confrontation V2 By J. Michael Tisdell

Rackham began releasing the second edition of their skirmish game system earlier this year with the publication of Confrontation 2. These new rules began appearing in the January releases. The new version keeps much of the original, but there are some significant changes. In the following article, I outline these major changes in the rules.

This article assumes that you are familiar with the original version of Confrontation, so no attempt is made to explain the basics of the game. If you are new to the game, I would suggest reading the Confrontation review in Fictional Reality #1, September 2000.

Characteristic Test

The first big change in Confrontation 2 has to do with the mechanics of the characteristic test. As in the first edition, rolling a 6 for a characteristic test allows you the option of making a subsequent die roll and adding the result to your total. However, unlike first edition, if you roll a 1 on the subsequent die roll, it counts as a failure!

In addition, the Courage test is no longer a special case. Now if you roll a 1 on a Courage test, it counts as a failure.

Reserve Cards

In Confrontation 2, you still have the option when drawing one of your own cards of holding it in reserve. However, the way you play a card from reserve is changed. You cannot choose to play a reserve card instead of a regular card. You can only play cards held in reserve in addition to playing a card that was drawn.

What this means is that when you play a card that you drew, you may also play any and all cards you are holding in reserve. Cards played at the same time are considered to activate simultaneously, so they will count as a group if they all charge the same target.

The restriction on holding one card in your hand remains. You may hold two if you won the tactical roll at the beginning of the turn (tactical roll is the name of the Discipline roll from first edition). This change to the reserve card rules changes the tactics of card play. In first edition, you would use reserve cards to delay activating an important model until the end of the turn. With the new version, you are more likely to hold a line unit in reserve to support an elite or character unit. When your Super Bad Dude card is played, you can use your line troopers you've held in reserve to lend support to his attack.

Movement

Most of the movement rules remain the same in the second edition. However, there are some new types of movement:

- *Entering Melee* - This allows a model to engage a miniature in close combat without charging. Since charging requires a model to have line of sight to its target when it begins its movement, entering melee allows you to engage someone around a corner. The Specter's ability to walk through walls means that he uses this movement quite a bit. When entering melee, the target does not suffer the -1 to Attack, Defense, and Initiative tests as it would if it was charged.
- *Swimming, jumping, and climbing* - Second edition has extensive rules for models to swim, jump, and climb. They are too detailed to list here, so I will just mention them and refer you to the rules themselves. With these rules, there will certainly be more fights in villages, shores, and mountainous regions.
- *Dodging* - This new movement type reduces the effectiveness of shooting. A model that dodges moves at half-rate but is considered to be at one range band greater when attacked by missile weapons. In addition, you may fire through a unit that is dodging, where a non-dodging unit would block line of sight.

Shooting

Second edition has some major changes in the shooting rules. In addition to the dodge movement covered above, there are now rules for accurate shooting (+1 to a model's Shooting characteristic and -2 to the model's Initiative characteristic) and quick shooting (+2 to a model's Initiative characteristic and -1 to a model's Shooting characteristic).

Models are now ranked by size from small to extra large with a +1 to -2 die roll modifier for shooting attacks. Size is also taken into account when firing into melee - the larger the model the better chance it gets hit.

Melee

Second edition made few changes to the melee combat system. The biggest change is with Sustained Defense. Only a model that is outnumbered in a combat may use sustained defense. The model may only use one die for sustained defense and may not have more dice in

Attack than Defense. Sustained defense cannot be combined with the ambidextrous skill or with a counter-attack.

Damage Levels

The effects of damage have been changed, now a light wound or a stun results in a -1 die roll modifier; a serious wound results in a -2 modifier, and a critical wound results in a -3 modifier.

Skills

The majority of the changes in second edition are in the skills. Space does not allow me to list all the changes and new skills, but I will summarize them below.

Some existing skills now have a '/X' added to them, where 'X' is a number. This number is a modifier for the skill. For example, "Command/10" means the unit can use the Command skill out to 10 cm away. The skills affected by this include: Command, Courage, Mutant, Regeneration and War Cry.

There are extensive changes to the way certain skills operate in the new edition. The changed skills are: Assassin, Duelist, Extra Arms, Harassment, Instinctive Shot, Leap, Possessed, and Reinforcement.

Second edition includes these new skills: Enormous, Gigantic, Huge, Marksman, Quickness, Rallying Cry, Self-Preservation, and Warhorse.

Card Changes

There are changes to the unit cards for Confrontation 2, however these are minor. The changes to some abilities to add '/X' has already been mentioned.

All units are now ranked as Irregular, Regular, Veteran, Special, Elite, Creature, Walking Legend, or Major Ally. The ranking has little effect on play so far. It will probably mean more with the publication of Incarnation 2.

In addition to this, some units are getting new skills and point values. For example, the Mutant Goblins will now have the Mutant ability.

Rackham will be publishing new cards for existing units over the next year.

What's Missing?

Some of the rules from first edition didn't make it into second edition. These "anachronistic rules" are blood rage, competencies and aptitudes, heroic charge, polearms, and rate of fire.

What's next?

Rackham has already published Incantation 2 and Incarnation 2 is sure to follow. Sometime after that, we will probably see Divination and, if we're lucky, R*g'n*k. Although there is a rumor that Rackham is working on a role playing game for the Confrontation universe, so who knows what will come next.

The banner has a black background with a subtle pattern of white dots. At the top center, the text "WWW FANTIZATION.COM" is displayed in a stylized, glowing yellow font. Below this, a black banner contains the text "This site requires an imagination!" in white. To the right of this banner, the text "Dealers' inquiries welcomed!" is written in a yellow, outlined font. The banner features four main product images: a bottle of Vallejo Model Color paint (yellow), a Reaper Miniatures figure (a warrior with a sword), a Rackham Confrontation Miniatures figure (a warrior with a sword), and a Games Workshop Lord of the Rings figure (a large, dark, multi-headed creature). Below each image is a label in a red, outlined font: "Vallejo Paints Kolinski Brushes", "Reaper Miniatures and Bases", "Rackham Confrontation Miniatures", and "Games Workshop Lord of the Rings". At the bottom, the website address "http://www.fantization.com" and the email address "sales@fantization.com" are displayed in a large, glowing yellow font.

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NEW SPELLS

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS

This issue we take another look at the d20 Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay project that's being put together by Christian Selzam. A spellbook for Wizards and Sorcerers follows and while each spell does have stats that are native to the d20 WFRP conversion they are also useable as a new school of spells for 'generic' Dungeons and Dragons with just a few modifications.

The entire Battle Magic spell book can be found below. For spells that have a Dungeons and Dragons equivalent it is listed in *italics*. New spells from the Battle Magic school are found later.

Animate Sword	
Arrow Invulnerability	
Aura of Invulnerability	
Aura of Protection	
Aura of Resistance	<i>Mage Armor</i>
Blast	
Cause Animosity	
Cause Cowardly Flight	
Cause Fear	
Cause Hatred	
Cause Instability	
Cause Panic	
Cause Stupidity	<i>Confusion</i>
Change Allegiance	
Cure Light Injury	<i>Cure Light Wounds</i>
Cure Severe Wounds	<i>Cure Serious Wounds</i>
Cure of Arrow Attraction	
Dispel Aura	<i>Dispel Magic(Aura Spells only)</i>
Enchant Weapon	<i>Greater Magic Weapon</i>
Fire Ball	<i>Flame Arrow(Fiery Bolts only)</i>
Flight	<i>Fly</i>
Hammerhand	
Immunity to Poison	<i>Delay Poison</i>
Lightning Bolt	<i>Lightning Bolt</i>
Magic Bridge	
Mystic Mist	<i>Fog Cloud</i>
Smash	<i>Shatter</i>
Stand Still	
Steal Mind	<i>Ghoul Touch (no stench effect)</i>
Strength of Combat*	<i>Bull's Strength OR Cat's Grace</i>
Strength of Mind	
Transfer Aura	
Wind Blast	<i>Gust of Wind</i>
Zone of Sanctuary*	<i>Prot. from Evil, Good, Law, or Chaos</i>
Zone of Steadfastness	

* Choose one of the listed effects each time the spell is cast. The effect may be different on different castings of the spell.

Battle Magic spells primarily affect combat situations. Altering Armor Class, attack and damage rolls, morale, spell damage, etc. Spell casters that specialize in Battle Magic are very often seen supporting units of troops in massed combat, but they are also not rare in parties of adventurers.

If you are using the full d20 WFRP conversion, which can be found at

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/d20_WFRP

you won't need to alter the following spells at all. If, however, you are going to use them as part of a 'generic' Dungeons and Dragons game you'll certainly need to get your DM's permission before unloading with any of the spells, but you can also ignore the entries for Magic Points (MP) as it is native to the d20 WFRP conversion and you'll also need to have your DM adjust the Spell Level of each spell to fit into the power level of your particular campaign. Christian suggests multiplying the Spell Level by a factor of 1x or 2x to get a good spread of the normal Dungeons and Dragons spell levels. Also, any references to Magic Level (ML) should count half of the caster's level if used outside of the d20 WFRP conversion.

Cause Animosity

Spell Level	1
MP Cost	4
Components	V, S, M (Any part of a dead goblinoid)
Casting Time	1 action
Range	Close
Effect	Group of living creatures
Duration	1d6 rounds
Save	Will (negates)
Spell Res.	No

This spell affects a group of creatures of up to 5 HD per ML of the caster. Each designated creature must make a Will-save or become Subject to Animosity against each other. The spell ends after 1d6 rounds or someone attacks the creatures, which will then attack their normal enemies.

Hammerhand

Spell Level	1
MP Cost	2
Components	V, S, M (A small silver hammer)
Casting Time	1 action
Range	Personal
Effect	You
Duration	D6x10 turns or until wounded
Save	None (harmless)
Spell Res.	No (harmless)

The caster's damage for melee and thrown attacks has a +2 magical bonus. In addition, he may make one additional attack per round at his highest BAB. The spell lasts until the caster is wounded or the spell's duration ends.

Aura of Protection

Spell Level	2
MP Cost	3
Components	V, S, M (A small, iron ring)
Casting Time	1 action
Range	Personal
Effect	You
Duration	1 hour per ML
Save	None (harmless)
Spell Res.	No (harmless)

This spell gives you damage reduction of +1 per ML against all normal weapons.

Cause Hatred

Spell Level	2
MP Cost	4
Components	V, S, M (Blood from a giant spider)
Casting Time	1 action
Range	Close
Effect	Group of living creatures
Duration	3d6 rounds
Save	Will (negates)
Spell Res.	No

The targets of this spell must make a Will-save or become Subject to Hatred. The spell may effect a number creatures with HD equal to the caster's ML x 5, chosen by the caster individually within spell range. The caster also chooses the cause of their hatred.

Cause Panic

Spell Level	2
MP Cost	3
Components	V, S, M (the tooth of a dragon)
Casting Time	1 action
Range	Close
Effect	Group of living creatures
Duration	2d6 rounds
Save	Will (negates)
Spell Res.	No

The targets of this spell must make a Will-save or become panicked, with all Int-checks, Will-saves, and Cha-checks and all related skill-checks automatically failing for the duration of the spell.

Zone of Steadfastness

Spell Level	2
MP Cost	3
Components	V, S, M (1 pint of dragon blood)
Casting Time	1 full round
Range	Personal
Effect	15 feet radius
Duration	1 hour per ML
Save	None
Spell Res.	No

The zone is centred on the caster and remains until dispelled, overlaps with another zone or the caster moves. The caster may not cast spells while maintaining the zone. All creatures within the zone become immune to any and all psychological effects. In addition they gain +1 extra attack made at their highest BAB and a +1 magical AC-bonus per ML of the caster while within the zone.

Animate Sword

Spell Level	3
MP Cost	6, +2 per round to maintain
Components	V, S, M (A sword)
Casting Time	1 action
Range	Close
Effect	1 sword
Duration	1+ rounds
Save	None
Spell Res.	No

The spell animates a sword, the caster can direct to attack a target. The sword's BAB is 3 + 1 per ML of the caster. The sword does normal damage for a sword of its type. The sword's number of attacks per round is dependent on its size: 3 for short swords, 2 for longswords or 1 for greatswords. If the sword has a magical bonus, this is also taken into account, but other magical properties of the weapon cannot be activated. The sword attacks on its own and the caster may change the sword's target by making a move-equivalent action and directing the weapon to its new foe. Maintaining the spell needs no concentration, only the expenditure of MP after the first round. The sword attacks the same target until directed otherwise or the caster stops powering the spell.

Cause Cowardly Flight

Spell Level 3
 MP Cost 6
 Components V, S, M (The blood of any demon)
 Casting Time 1 action
 Range Close
 Effect 1 group of creatures
 Duration 3d6 rounds
 Save Will (negates)
 Spell Res. No

This spell affects a group of creatures with up to 5 HD per ML of the caster chosen individually within range of the spell. Each target must make a saving throw or immediately flee from combat.

Cause Instability

Spell Level 3
 MP Cost 6
 Components V, S, M (Hand of a necromancer of demonologist)
 Casting Time 1 action
 Range Medium
 Effect 15 feet radius
 Duration Instant
 Save Will (negates)
 Spell Res. No

All creatures Subject to Instability within the area of the spell, failing their save become unstable and roll 1d6 to determine the effect on the Subject to Instability table found in the psychological rules section.

Curse of Arrow Attraction

Spell Level 3
 MP Cost 6
 Components V, S, M (A magical arrow)
 Casting Time 1 action
 Range Close
 Effect 1 group of creatures
 Duration 1 hour
 Save Will (negates)
 Spell Res. Yes

This spell affects 5 HD of creatures per ML of the caster, chosen individually within the spell's range. Those failing their save after failing spell resistance are cursed and any missiles fired on creatures within 15 feet radius of a cursed creatures are attracted to the cursed target.

Magic Bridge

Spell Level 3
 MP Cost 8
 Components V, S, M (A twig from an oak tree)
 Casting Time 1 full round
 Range Personal
 Effect 30 feet long per ML, 15 feet width
 Duration Instant
 Save Will (negates)
 Spell Res. No

This spell creates a solid, wooden bridge, extending from before the caster's feet up to a length of 30 feet per ML of the caster. The bridge can be up to 15 feet wide. The bridge can be dispelled anytime by its creator or lasts until the next sunrise when it crumbles to nothing.

Transfer Aura

Spell Level 3
 MP Cost 5
 Components V, S, M (As for Aura being transferred)
 Casting Time 1 action
 Range Touch
 Effect 1 Aura
 Duration 1 transfer
 Save Will (negates)
 Spell Res. Yes

This spell enables the transference on an Aura from the spellcaster to any other creature touched. The creature receiving the Aura may make a Will-save and use Spell resistance if it wants to resist the spell. In combat the caster must make a melee touch attack to transfer the Aura.

Aura of Invulnerability

Spell Level 4
 MP Cost 16
 Components V, S, M (A piece of dragon hide)
 Casting Time 1 action
 Range Personal
 Effect You
 Duration 1 hour per ML
 Save None (harmless)
 Spell Res. No

This spell nullifies the next 4d6 +1 / ML hit points of damage for any non-magical weapons

Blast

Spell Level 4
 MP Cost 10
 Components V, S, M (Gunpowder 10 shots)
 Casting Time 1 action
 Range Close
 Effect 50 feet radius
 Duration Instant
 Save Ref (halves)
 Spell Res. No

This spell creates an explosion within the spell's range. Creatures within the area of the spell suffer 1d12 points of damage per ML of the caster (Ref-saves for halve). Flammable targets suffer 2d8 points of additional damage, not subject to save-reduction. Creatures subject to Fear versus Fires must make a Fear test.

Change Allegiance

Spell Level	4
MP Cost	8
Components	V, S, M (Heart of a doppelganger)
Casting Time	1 action
Range	Close
Effect	1 group of creatures
Duration	1 hour
Save	Will (negates)
Spell Res.	Yes

The spell affects 5 HD of creatures per caster level, chosen individually within spell's range. Those failing their saving throws after spell resistance fails, change

sides and work for the caster, treating him a friend and ally. If these affected by the spell succeed at any Will-save during the spell's duration, the Change Allegiance spell is dispelled.

Stand Still

Spell Level	4
MP Cost	12
Components	V, S, M (The eyes of a basilisk)
Casting Time	1 action
Range	Close
Effect	1 group of creatures
Duration	d6 turns
Save	Will (negates)
Spell Res.	Yes



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This spell affects 5 HD of creatures per ML of the caster, chosen individually within spell's range. Those failing their save after spell resistance fails, are unable to move, fire missiles or do anything at all, but may use purely mental abilities. Their AC does not gain the Dex-bonus and enemies can hit them with a +2 circumstance bonus).

Strength of Mind

Spell Level	4
MP Cost	6
Components	V, S, M (Various animal parts)
Casting Time	1 action
Range	Personal
Effect	You
Duration	Until next sunrise
Save	None (harmless)
Spell Res.	No

This spell increases one single attribute, chosen by the caster by +1 per ML with all relevant effects accompanying this increase.

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NEW TROOPS

Chainmail

SKIRMISH GAME

I have really come to enjoy Chainmail, both as a stand-alone game and also as a source for new figures for Dungeons and Dragons. I do wish that the release schedule would pick up a bit, but I'm sure that will come with time and more exposure of the game. In the meantime I have started converting Dungeons and Dragons monsters for use with Chainmail. The conversion system in the back of the Chainmail rulebook is a good start, but when it comes to determining the cost of your new creation it's kind of hit and miss.

Below and on the following pages you'll find the first six of many conversions that you'll see in coming issues of Fictional Reality. In addition to the cards which you can print out and use along with regular Chainmail cards I've also tried to explain some of the choices I made when converting each monster. As you can immediately see I did use pictures out of the Monster Manual for each card. They are 100% property of Wizards of the Coast and I make no claim to them whatsoever. I don't have painted models of each one of them to use pictures of and if I had hand drawn them myself you'd have a bunch of stick-monsters on the cards. With that out of the way, on to the cards.

Ettin

He's (Imagine a 'she' Ettin. You can't get one woman to

make up their mind. What about a two-headed one. The universe would probably implode. Just kidding.) big, rather stupid, tough and will beat you down like nobody's business. His stats translated over pretty easily. Extra Melee Attack is obvious for him and he also has Power Attack so his Melee Attack dropped by 5, but his damage went up by one. In Dungeons and Dragons he has a reach of 10' so he ended up with a Chainmail reach of 1". He also has Superior Two-Weapon Fighting which should count for something so I upped his Melee Attack by one. He has an absolutely monstrous Armor and Health and his Save and Level will keep him safe from many spells. Even though his Melee Attack is not as powerful as the Ogre Mercenary he should have more staying power and do more damage over the course of a battle. I would only recommend use of the Ettin in a 100 point or higher game though. I also gave him Difficult Troop x2 because he's ornery and probably prone to arguing with leaders. The Ettin was a pretty straightforward conversion.

Mummy

What's an undead army without a Mummy? Lacking a mummy, of course, and we cannot have that. The Mummy's stats converted without trouble, but I had to work with his special abilities from Dungeons and Dragons a bit. Let's start off with the easiest. He's

Ettin

Drazen's Horde
Evil Giant
Cost: 46



Level: 10
Speed: 8
Armor: 18
Health: 13
Save: +5
Melee Attack: +6
Melee Damage: 3
Ranged Attack: -
Ranged Damage: -

Special:
Extra Melee Attack, Reach 1",
Difficult Troop x2

Mummy

Ahmud
Evil Undead
Cost: 25



Level: 6
Speed: 4
Armor: 17
Health: 8
Save: +3
Melee Attack: +6
Melee Damage: 2
Ranged Attack: -
Ranged Damage: -

Special:
Undead, Vulnerability: Fire x2,
Scary 1, Resistant to Blows 12+

Undead so he's still Undead. He has a Despair ability that I translated over to being Scary 1. The DC of the ability in D&D is not too high and Scary 2 just seemed a bit high. I stuck with Scary 1. Vulnerability to Fire was pretty easy. The Mummy just takes double damage from any fire-based weapon. He is also Resistant to Blows and has Damage Reduction of 5/+1. I gave Resistance to Blows the same effect as being skeletal and then upped it from 11+ to 12+ to account for his Damage Reduction. He's tough, but not unbeatable at all. I wouldn't have a problem seeing him in a 50-75 point warband.

Lizardfolk

Here's the first of two non-faction troops that anyone can use. I based the conversion off the entry in the Monster Manual that is carrying a shield (higher AC therefore higher Armor). The picture and miniature are carrying javelins so I made sure to add those to its profile, but I did not give him the Thrown Weapon ability. If he's carrying a greatclub, a shield and some javelins he really will need to attack with either the greatclub or a javelin. Reading the Monster Manual you'll find that the Lizardfolk have an affinity for human flesh, but they are also Neutral in alignment. I figure that a Thalos general can pay them enough or maybe offer them prisoners of war as partial payment for services to keep them from eyeing their own troops as appetizers.

Krenshar

The Krenshar is a magical beast that has the ability to peel back the skin around its head and scare the bejeezus out of its enemies. Again, this was a model with a fairly easy stat conversion, but a special ability that took a bit of thinking to work into Chainmail. In D&D

the Krenshar can use a standard action to pull back the skin around its head and be all scary looking. To keep things simple I decided that to use the Scary 1 ability the Krenshar would have to give up one of its attacks, of which it can have up to three once it's in base-to-base contact with an enemy. I meant for the Krenshar to be a fast attack shock troop and I think it worked out that way pretty well. It's low damage means that it probably won't take out any of your enemies heavy hitters, but it could soften them up or thin out the ranks of the more standard troops.

Displacer Beast

A staple of Dungeons and Dragons games and I saw no reason for it to not cross the line to Chainmail. I dropped it into the Naresh army just because it looked like it would fit there best. Outside of a decent Armor (but not too high) and a way high Health the Displacer Beast is not too tough. Until you get to the rest of its special abilities. It can muster up to three attacks, but two of them are with its tentacles that have a 15' reach in D&D. I dropped this down to a 1" reach instead of 3" to keep from having to switch between bites and tentacles. That and I thought that a 2" reach was just a bit excessive. I also kept its Melee Damage at 1 instead of bumping it up to 2 because it can get off plenty of attacks and will end up being hard as hell to hit as you'll see right now. Its Displacement ability means that it has a 50% chance of not being hit by any attack that would have struck it. This is like Skeletal or Resistance to Blows on crack. After being hit, roll a d20 and if it's an 11+ you didn't get hit. Being fast as fast can be and very hard to actually hit you can quickly get into your opponents troops and cause all sorts of havoc while the rest of your army does their thing. With its rather high point cost and nasty

Lizardfolk

No Faction
Neutral Humanoid
Cost: 10



Level: 2
 Speed: 6
 Armor: 17
 Health: 2
 Save: +1
 Melee Attack: +2
 Melee Damage: 1
 Ranged Attack: +1
 Ranged Damage: 1

Special:
 Extra Melee Attack, Ranged Attack:
 +1 ■■■, 6"

Krenshar

No Faction
Neutral Magical Beast
Cost: 8



Level: 2
 Speed: 8
 Armor: 15
 Health: 2
 Save: +3
 Melee Attack: +1
 Melee Damage: 1
 Ranged Attack: -
 Ranged Damage: -

Special:
 Extra Melee Attack x2, Scary 1* (must
 give up one attack to use this ability)

habit of not getting hit I would recommend the Displacer Beast be used in 100+ point games. In D&D the Displacer Beast also gets +2 on saves against ranged spells and ranged magical attacks that are targeted against it, but I decided to drop it in favor of ease of play.

Earth Elemental, Large

The last conversion for this issue is an Earth Elemental, a large one in fact, for the dwarves of Mordengard. This guy is all sorts of bad and has the highest point cost of any troop in this article. Like pretty much all of the conversions in this article its stats came across pretty well and his special abilities made me pause to think a bit. Right off the bat it got Extra Melee Attack and Cleave. So far, so good. Power Attack reduced its Melee Attack rating to a more reasonable level and upped it's damage a bit. In Dungeons and Dragons it has Earth Mastery which gives it bonuses if it and its opponent are both touching the ground. If this condition is met in Chainmail then the Earth Elemental gets +1 to its Melee Attack rating. If, however, its target is airborne the Earth Elemental suffers -4 to Melee Attack and -1 to Melee Damage. I decided that since the Stone Spike had the Difficult Troop x2 ability that it should also apply to its larger cousin. Also, even though it's not on the card (I ran out of room) the Earth Elemental is quite obviously an Elemental Creature.

Miniatures

What good are new troops with stats and cards if you don't have figures to use. Not too much. Sure, you can proxy figures, but here's a short list of some usable figures.

Ettin

WOTC	40021	\$9.99
Reaper	2479	\$5.95

Mummy

Reaper	2156	\$2.50
Games Workshop	74530-1	\$3.75
	74530-6	\$3.75
	74530-11	\$3.75

Lizardfolk

WOTC	88284	\$2.99
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Krenshar

WOTC	88272	\$2.99
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Displacer Beast

WOTC	40050	\$2.99
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Earth Elemental, Large

WOTC	40095	\$6.99
Reaper	2250	\$5.95
Rackham	ELTR01	\$9.99

A final word

All of these troops are intended to make Chainmail even more fun to play, but they might not be welcome in a tournament setting. They are 100% not-official and are best used in a group of players that have all agreed to bring them into the game. Next issue you can look for troops for bruisers for Thalos and Ravilla, some more non-faction troops and maybe a flyer or two.



BATTLE REPORT

CHAINMAIL

SKIRMISH GAME

After playing several games of Chainmail and having lots of fun we decided to play a game for a battle report in this issue of Fictional Reality. One of my regular opponents, Christopher, was free and had taken as much of a liking to Chainmail as I had and was eager to kick my butt in front of the world once again.

We've played games with 50-point armies, 75-point armies, and 100-point armies and have really taken a liking to the latter. Even with Chainmail being a skirmish level game we've come to prefer having a few more models on the board and have found that the game does not bog down, but you do need to be very aware of properly commanding your troops when you start getting more guys into the fight.

We decided to play a standard skirmish scenario on a 4' x 4' table with four pieces of terrain each. In my review of Chainmail back in the DEC 2001 issue of Fictional Reality I dismissed the terrain cards rather quickly, but have now discovered that I do like them quite a bit. Don't get me wrong, I'll take real terrain any day, but the cards make playing a pick-up game easy and makes keeps terrain from getting beat up. What I'd like to see is some standard Chainmail terrain like has been done with Warhammer and Warhammer 40K.

Mark's Warband

I'm going to be using a slightly modified version of a 100-point Ahmut warband that I've done pretty well with. I have not become a huge fan of cross-faction troops yet (except for the Ogre Mercenary, but you won't see him in my army today) so this will be a 100% Ahmut warband. With a commander choice between the Human Death Cleric and the Half-Orc Fighter I went with the Cleric and then took a second one for good measure and a nice increase in command points. My heavy hitters will be a Slaughterpit Zombie Gnoll and a Crazy Minotaur Cultist. Each one of these has a downside, the Slaughterpit Zombie Gnoll just kind of shambles along with a regular move of 3 and the Crazy Minotaur Cultist requires someone to keep a watchful eye on him or he could get mobbed by himself, but each one can also absorb a lot of damage and can just break the back of your enemy. To keep the big guys safe until the bell for the main event is rung I'll be using a screen of five Skeletal Orcs. The basic plan is to get Shield of Faith onto the big guys on the first turn of the game and then have the Skeletal Orcs head up towards the enemy in front of them. Having the bruisers with a higher armor and other troops to take some hits for them should put them into hand-to-hand in really nice shape. Of course,

this depends on the effectiveness of my screen. As you can see I am running at a command point deficit so issuing orders or just keeping everyone under command will be a trick. For my terrain pieces I've chosen two High Walls to prevent any missile troops that Christopher might bring from getting too many free shots at my guys and two Quagmires which I'll try to place in an effort to herd Christopher's guys where I'd like to pound on them.

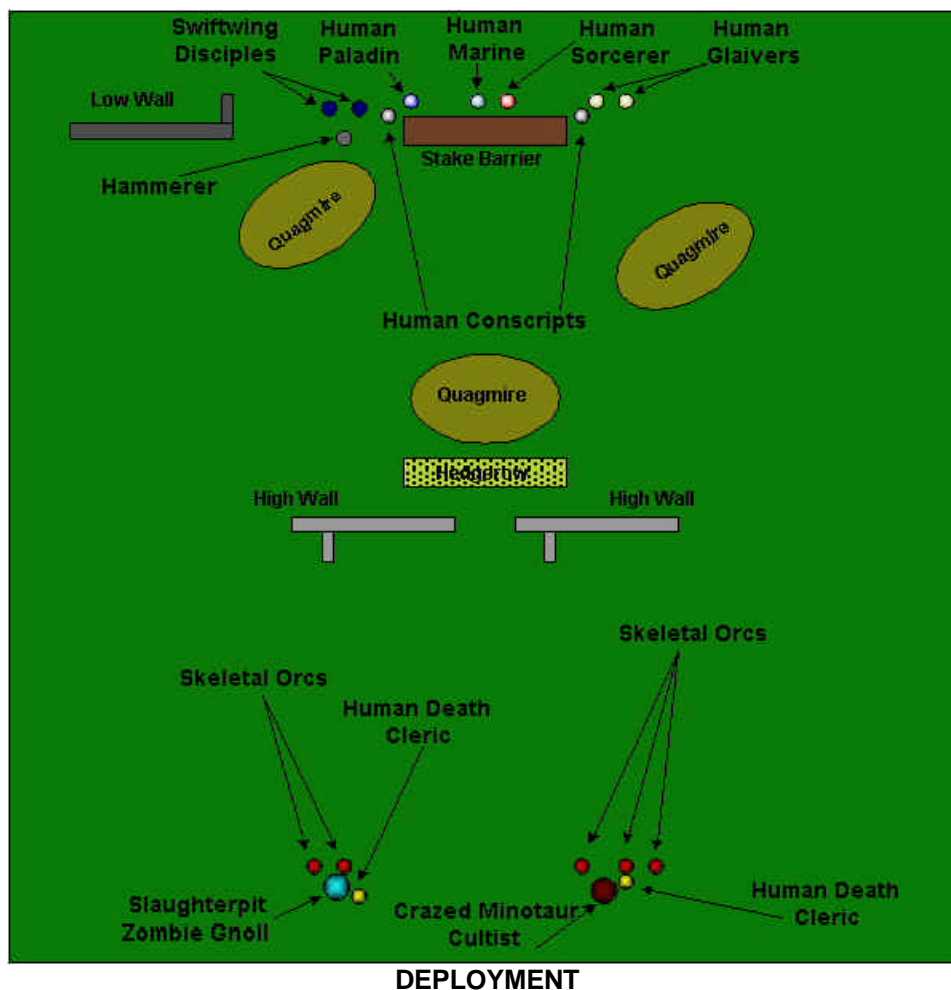
TROOP	Lev	Spd	Arm	Hlt	Sav	MA	MD	RA	RD	Cost
Human Death Cleric (x2)	2	4"	17	3	+3	+2	2	-	-	14 ea
<i>Commander 4; Death Touch 1(x1); Spontaneous Inflict; Guidance +1(x3); Resistance +1(x1); Cause Fear (x2); Shield of Faith +2(x2)</i>										
Crazy Minotaur Cultist	6	6"	14	8	+5	+4	4	-	-	25
<i>Difficult Troop x3; Extra Melee Attack; Powerful Charge +1; Reach 1"; Scary 1; Scent</i>										
Slaughterpit Zombie Gnoll	4	3"	17	6	+2	+5	2	-	-	15
<i>Undead Creature; Extra Melee Attack</i>										
Skeletal Orc (x5)	1	6"	15	1	+1	+2	2	+1/6"	1	6 ea
<i>Undead Creature; Skeletal Creature; Thrown Weapon</i>										
Total Cost = 98 points (2 points of Tactical Advantage)										

Christopher's Warband

Chainmail is a relatively new game to me. Unlike most of my battle reports, I am still in the process of getting the feel for the game. Normally I can dispense advice or tactics, but honestly...I have yet to win a single game of Chainmail. In fact all my games have resulted in the death of every one of my guys, for a sum total of maybe three or four kills. Things do not appear good for my Thalor faction. As I have looked back on my exploits, or lack there of, I try to figure out what went wrong. Well in this case I lay a lot of my problems on that cursed mercenary ogre. I have yet to find a way to neutralize it. I have been unable to shoot it down, as it moves too fast and Mark continually cures it of light wounds. I tried ganging up on it, but was unable to pull it down. This game however, I plan on trying to beat it into a nice paste. That is right, the mechanical, and unreliable; jackhammer of doom should at least slow it down. My plan is to at least knock off four wounds before it reaches to Hammerer so that one hit will drop it. To accomplish this I have my trusty Sorcerer. He can instantaneously cause a single wound with no roll to hit. He is a sniper if I have ever seen one. His 24" range of his magic missile allows him to fire at will, and when he is out of missiles, he has his daze ability to render close opponents unable to attack. These two models alone have put me back 44 points. My next choice is the Paladin. Her five command points are the highest in the game. I wish she had more hit points, but for a mere 17 points you really cannot complain too much. Her AC of 19 normally keeps her alive, and her "aura of courage" keeps troops that are close by from running away. Her

cure light wounds is useful, but I rarely get to use it as the Ogre Mercenary insta-kills all of my troops but the Hammerer. The Sorcerer and the Paladin give me a grand total of 7 command points, with one spent on the Hammerer I have six slots to fill. I have learned the hard way not to exceed this number if you want to have full control of your warband. Two Swiftwing Disciples cost 14 points. These guys are full of special abilities that I always forget about. Tumble and Evasion help them avoid the attacks of opportunity that will be coming their way, but the most important ability in my opinion is the independent troop ability. These two fighters will not use up any command points. While their hand-to-hand skills are low, they have a +0 to attack, the stunning attack, extra melee attack, and the thrown weapon make up for it. The Disciples are supported by the Glaivers. Two of these at 8 points apiece give me two guys with the reach 1" ability. These guys do a respectable damage 2 and will be used to follow behind the disciples or to screen in front of them daring an enemy to charge past them. All of these guys together come to 91 points. Nine more points to work with and the Human Marine will find his way to the battlefield. For five points he will assist the Sorcerer in whittling away the enemy troops as they cross the great wide open, and his sneak attack ability will hopefully help in a last ditch effort to pull down a big guy. The remaining four points will buy 2 conscripts. Cheap and expendable, I expect nothing of these guys, and hopefully will be pleasantly surprised. We shall see if these theories work out. I am hoping for a good fight, winning would be nice, but at least a close fight this time would be appreciated. Let's see if mediocrity might finally succeed.

In recounting the battle for this report you'll not see our use of Command Points referenced too much. I figure that a re-telling of the battle, with some commentary thrown in of course, would be more enjoyable without telling you about our Command Point management. The report will include the screaming of orders by characters, but no so much of "I burned two Command Points to give so and so...."



Above you can see the base deployment of both terrain cards and troops. Between the two of us we placed a total of three Quagmires, two High Walls, one Low Wall, one Hedgerow (in the center), and one Stake Barrier. Ahmut's troops were arranged in two cells that I hoped would be able to support themselves and Christopher deployed his Thalos troops into a single rough battle line.

TROOP	Lev	Spd	Arm	Hlt	Sav	MA	MD	RA	RD	Cost
Human Paladin	2	4"	19	3	+4	+4	2	-	-	17
<i>Commander 5; Aura of Courage +4; Fearless; Smite Evil +1(x1); Cure Light Wounds 1(x1)</i>										
Hammerer	5	4"	21	6	+1	+10	4b	-	-	22
<i>Unreliable Troop 11; Construct Creature</i>										
Human Sorcerer	2	6"	11	2	+3	+0	1b	-	-	22
<i>Commander 2; Sorcery; 0-Level Spells (x6) Daze and Ghost Sound; 1-Level Spells (x5) Mage Armor +4 and Magic Missile 1</i>										
Swiftwing Disciples (x2)	1	6"	15	2	+4	+0	1b+3/6"	1	7 ea	
<i>Independent Troop 0; Evasion; Extra Melee Attack; Stunning Attack 12(x1); Thrown Weapon; Tumble 13</i>										
Glaivers (x2)	1	6"	15	2	+2	+4	2	-	-	8 ea
<i>Reach 1"</i>										
Human Marine	1	6"	13	1	+2	+2	1+2/24"	1	5	
<i>Point Blank Shot +2; Slow Ranged Attack; Sneak Attack +1</i>										
Conscripts (x2)	1	6"	11	1	+0	+0	1	-	-	2 ea
<i>Untrained Troop</i>										
Total Cost = 100 points										



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come to life
and stalk the darkness while
the mighty church is corrupted,
rotting away from the inside-out.
Only a few mighty adventurers
stand in the way
of pure evil...
Will you join them on
THE HUNT
and stop the
RISE OF EVIL?



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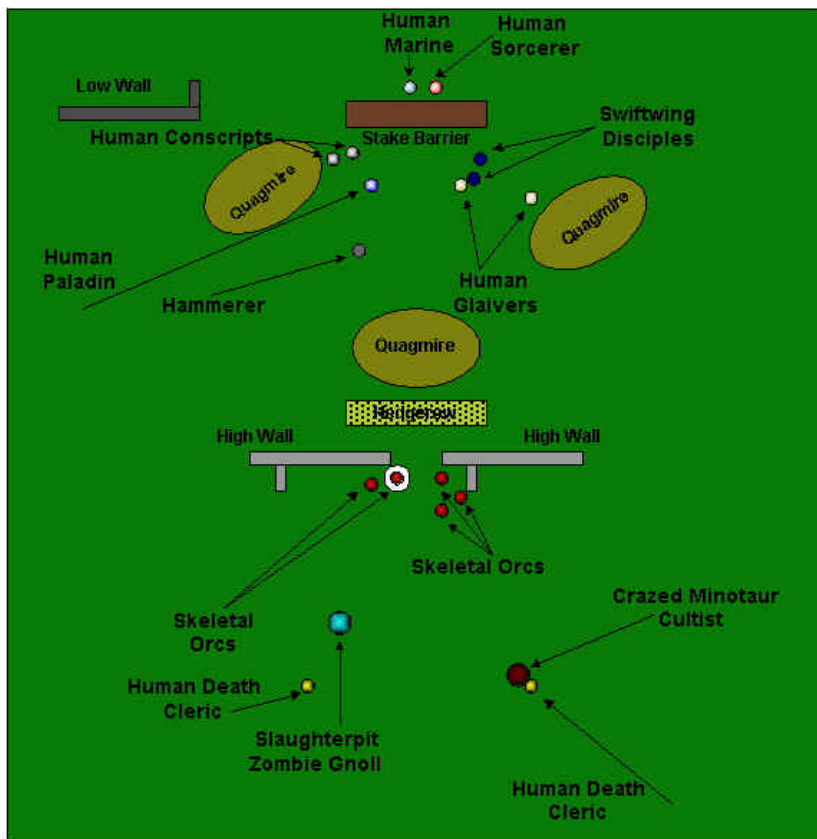
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Nightmares & Dreams: A Creature Collection,
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TURN 1

INIT
Mark: 1
Chris: 2

After seeing Chris roll a 2 for Initiative I knew I had to win. Then I had to go and roll a 1! Chris had me go first and I advanced three of my Skeletal Orcs forward. He responded by having his

Hammerer, which actually activated, and a Conscript move up. He also took a shot at a Skeletal Orc with his Human Marine, but missed. I then had one of my Death Clerics cast Shield of Faith (gotta love that spell) on the Slaughterpit Zombie Gnoll, who then also shambled forth towards the humans. Another Skeletal Orc also advanced. Both of Chris' Swiftwing Disciples went sprinting off to the other side of the board and his Human Sorcerer blasted the one Skeletal Orc that he could see to little bitty bits with a Magic Missile. The Crazy Minotaur Cultist was kept under control long enough to have Shield of Faith cast upon him by the other Death Cleric and my final Skeletal Orc headed towards the battle line. Chris ended his turn with his remaining Human Conscript, both Human Glaivers, and his Paladin all coming to a more central part of the battlefield.

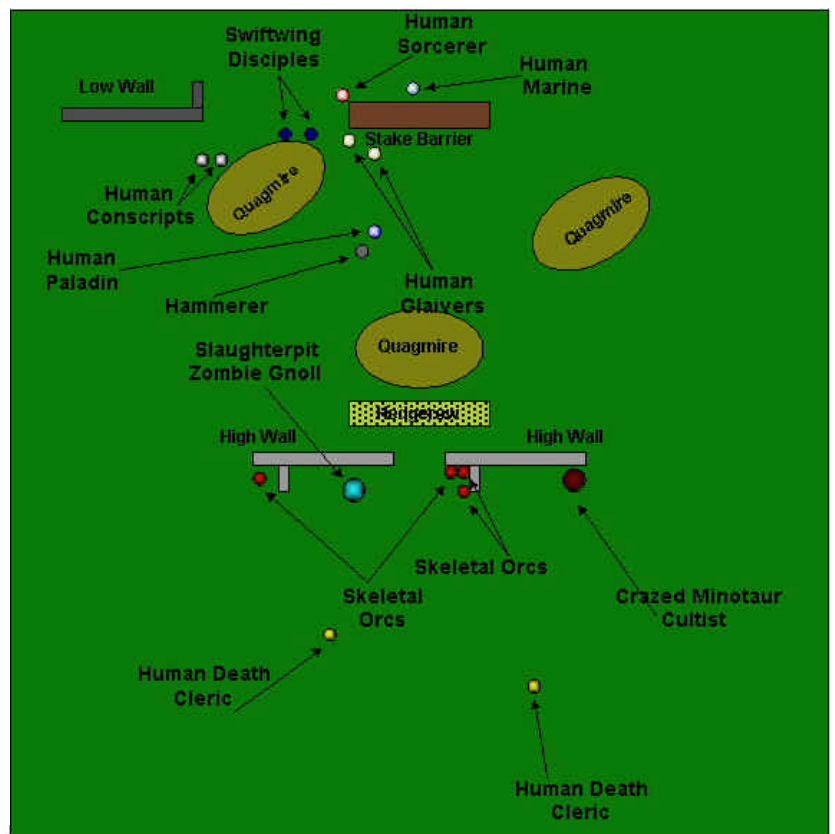
First blood, well not really blood because it was a skeleton, went to Chris. On the upside, it used up one of the Sorcerers Magic Missiles, which I truly fear as they are basically fire-and-forget missiles that can be very effective at whittling big guys down.

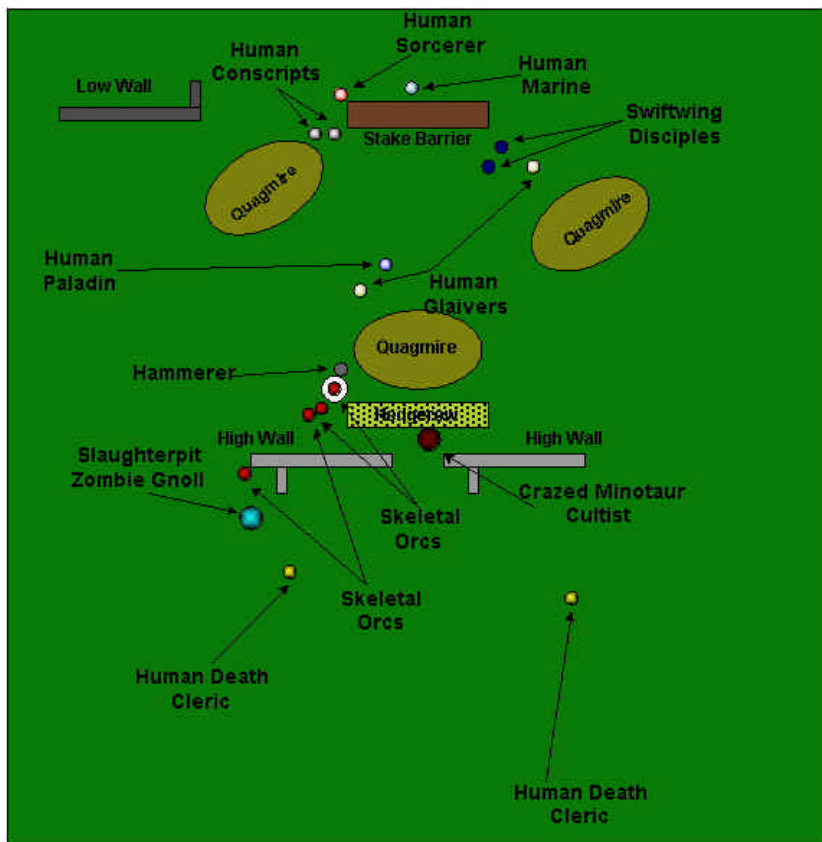
TURN 2

INIT
Mark: 10
Chris: 19

Chris won Initiative again and had me start off the turn. A Death Cleric moved up and touched the Slaughterpit Zombie Gnoll giving him Guidance +1 and one Skeletal Orc altered his position. Chris tried to activate the Hammerer, but it wouldn't budge. Both Conscripts then took off, skirting the edge of the West quagmire. My Slaughterpit Zombie Gnoll kept up his slow advance and another Skeletal Orc repositioned. Both of the Swiftwing Disciples now ran back to the other side of the board (if Chris was trying to mess with my head it was working) and one Glaiver followed behind them. The second Death Cleric cast Guidance on the Crazy Minotaur Cultist and then sent him off towards fresh meat. Chris then maneuvered his other Glaiver, the Paladin, and the Sorcerer into better positions. My two remaining Skeletal Orcs also got tucked in a bit deeper into the corner of the high wall and Chris' Human Marine stayed put.

A turn without any part of my screen coming down is a good turn and that's exactly what happened on turn 2. I have been able to pump up both of my big guys and make a decent advance towards the center of the table. Whatever Chris is doing with those Swiftwing Disciples is starting to get to me and that's probably exactly what they are supposed to be doing.





TURN 3

The Initiative rolls we not any kinder to me on this turn. Chris won and advised me that I'd be going first again.

To start things off both of my Clerics moved up towards the center of the table and cast Shield of Faith on themselves. Every little bit helps!

Both of Chris' Swiftwing Disciples and a Glaiver continued their zig-zag pattern of movement and headed back to the East.

My Slaughterpit Zombie Gnoll and a Skeletal Orc started over to the West side of the far high wall and responded by having his Human Marine move a bit and take a shot at the Skeleton. Thankfully, he missed. Both of his Conscripts moved towards the center of the board.

I then had two of my Skeletal Orcs head through the pass between the high walls and prepare for combat. Chris' Hammerer activates, but is caught short when it tries to charge a Skeleton. The Sorcerer has to cast a magic missile on the Skeleton that the Hammerer could not connect with. A Glaiver also came a bit closer to where the battle line would be forming.

INIT
Mark: 15
Chris: 19

Seeing where the buffet would be laid out the Minotaur cruised around the high wall and waited for the dinner bell. My last Skeletal Orc also made his way up there.

Ending the turn, Chris' Paladin repositioned a little and waited for the proper moment to start smiting the unholy minions of Ahmut.

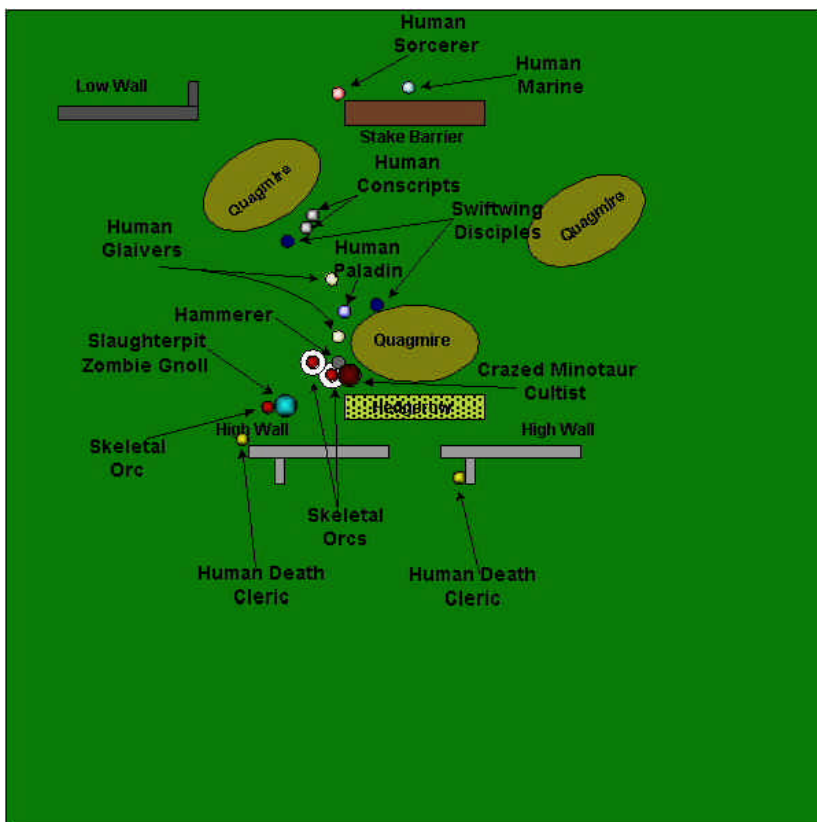
TURN 4

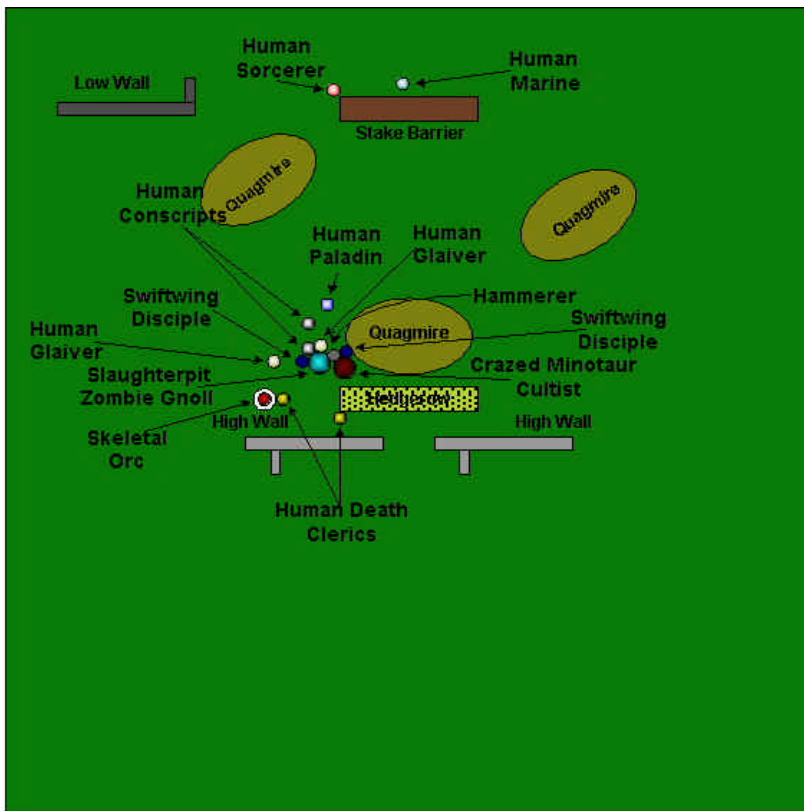
INIT
Mark: 20
Chris: 3

Ahmut, and the Initiative dice, say that the time is now to begin the assault. Unfortunately, my combat dice don't agree and a Skeletal Orc and the Minotaur both miss the Hammerer. Chris' Sorcerer is quick to cast a magic missile on the Skeleton that is on the Hammerer, while a Glaiver and a Swiftwing Disciple both move up.

One of my Skeletal Orcs tries to move past the Hammerer and Charge a Glaiver, but gets pounded into the ground like a tent stake for his trouble. The Slaughterpit Zombie Gnoll shambles forward. Then, a Conscript and Paladin both cautiously approach the fray while the Marine shoots at the Slaughterpit Zombie Gnoll and misses!

Both Death Clerics then moved up and the Hammerer could not turn on! A Conscript and Glaiver both moved up to get into position.





The turn ended with the last Skeletal Orc and Swiftwing Disciple heading towards the clashing of flesh and steel.

TURN 5

INIT

Mark: 19-6
Chris: 19-14

A tied, and then eventually lost, initiative roll saw Chris going first and attempting to activate his Hammerer, but it would not turn on. The Marine did get a shot off at the Minotaur, but thankfully he missed and his Paladin, not ready to commit yet, shifted over a bit.

Losing the Initiative roll may not turn out too bad after all. The Slaughterpit Zombie Gnom charged the Hammerer, avoided an Attack of Opportunity from a nearby Glaiver and hit the construct for 2 points of damage. The Minotaur let loose with two attacks, but didn't hit at all.

A Conscript who felt particularly brave charged the Slaughterpit Zombie Gnom, and while he avoided an Attack of Opportunity from the Minotaur, failed to connect against his target. A Glaiver also charged in, but missed. The Sorcerer eliminated the last of the Skeletal Orcs with a, you guessed it, magic missile.

The Death Cleric on the West side moved up and cast Cause Fear on a Glaiver, but he made his save. The other Cleric moved up

towards the fighting. With all of my troops activated Chris finished off the turn with one Swiftwing Disciple charging the Minotaur, and missing, and the other charging, and missing, the Slaughterpit Zombie Gnom. His final Conscript and Glaiver also moved up.

TURN 6

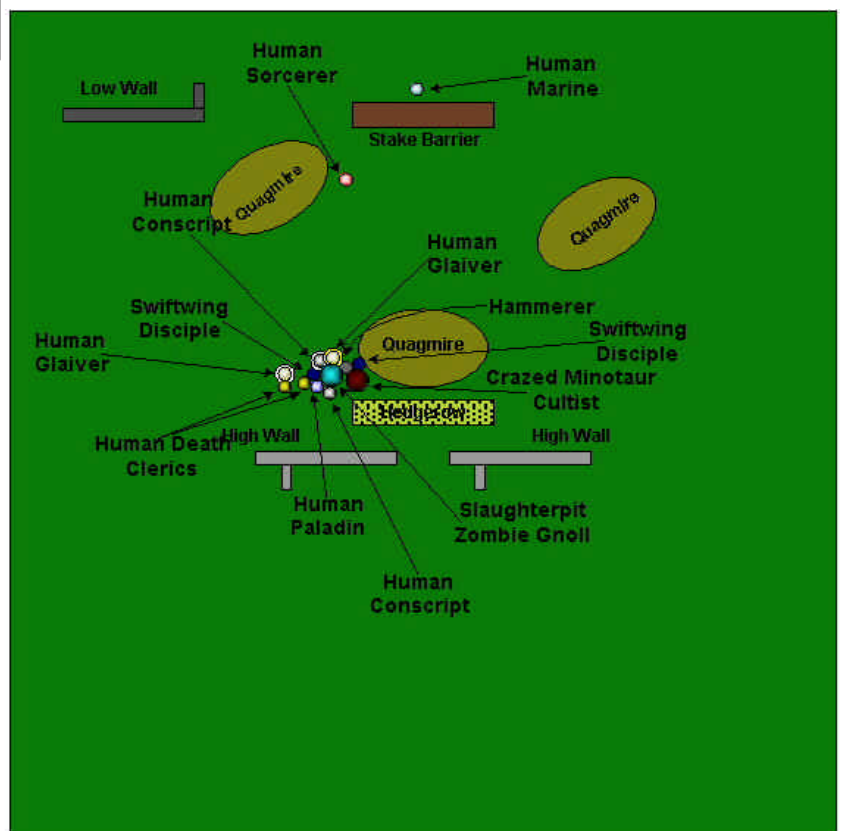
INIT

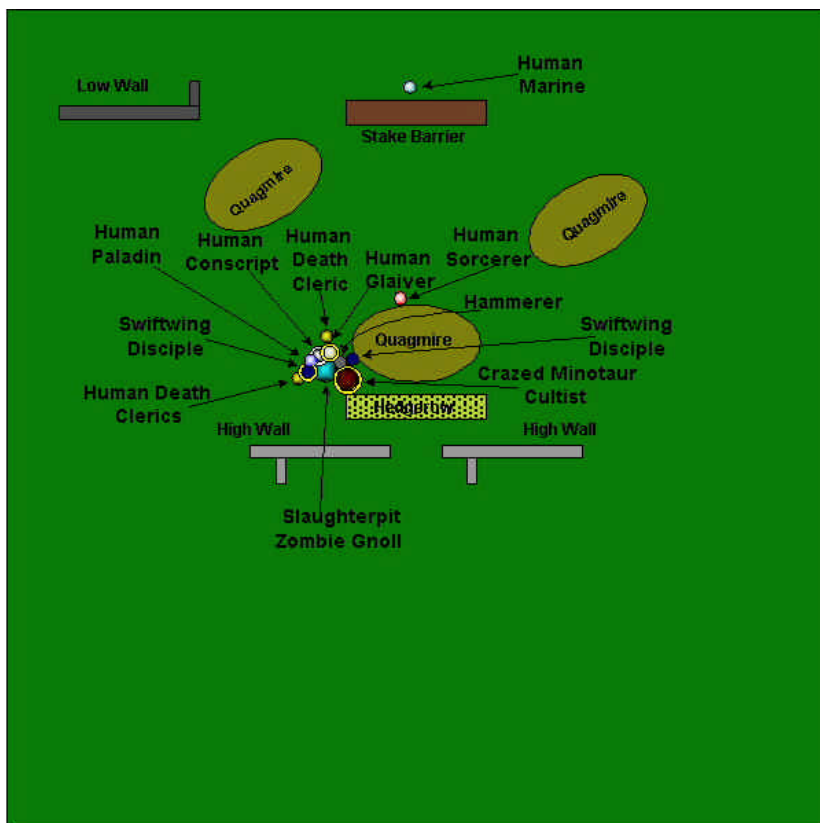
Mark: 2
Chris: 8

I've gotten used to losing the Initiative roll so this one was not too much of a surprise.

Chris started off in a less than impressive display as one Swiftwing Disciple and a glaiver missed the Slaughterpit Zombie Gnom and his Hammerer did not activate. My push had to start coming now, but with only one figure activating at a time I could start going down quickly. Luckily, the Slaughterpit Zombie Gnom squished the Conscript that was on him and knocked down the Glaiver.

While the Sorcerer was moving up, the other Swiftwing Disciple attacked the Minotaur, stunned him and smacked him in the head. The time was right to act and the Paladin charged the undead gnom and came close to scoring a critical, but had to settle for 2 points of damage. The Death Cleric on the West charged a Glaiver, avoided the Attack of Opportunity and sheared him in half with her scythe (Critical and very dead!).





The Human Marine fired at and missed the Slaughterpit Zombie Gnoll and the remaining Conscript also tried to attack the beast, but missed as well. The last Death Cleric moved up and attacked a Swiftwing Disciple, but missed and the Minotaur recovered from being stunned and was ready to rip someone's guts out through their nose.

TURN 7

Argh, to win the Initiative roll only to have it snatched away from me.

INIT

Mark: 11-5
Chris: 2-12

The Hammerer refused to activate and the Paladin (using Smite Evil) missed the undead Gnoll. Oh happy day! To return the favor of being allowed to (un)live a little longer the Gnoll tore apart the last Conscript and knocked down the Swiftwing Disciple that had been bothering him. The Sorcerer moved up and found out the hard way that Daze wasn't going to work on him. The conscious Swiftwing Disciple does the crane pose from Karate Kid and scores 2 wounds. To make matters worse the big girl of a Minotaur blows his morale check and tries to run for it only to get pounded on by the Hammerer, which knocks him down. Oh, so now it decides to activate!

To keep from getting auto-killed I try to get the Minotaur to stand up, but he doesn't. Chris also

Tries to get one of his Swiftwing Disciples to get up, but they also prefer to stay down. Again the Marine takes a shot at the Slaughterpit Zombie Gnoll, and true to form he misses. The end of the turn came with both of my Death Clerics casually walking over to a knocked down Glaiver and Swiftwing Disciple and slit their throats.

TURN 8

INIT

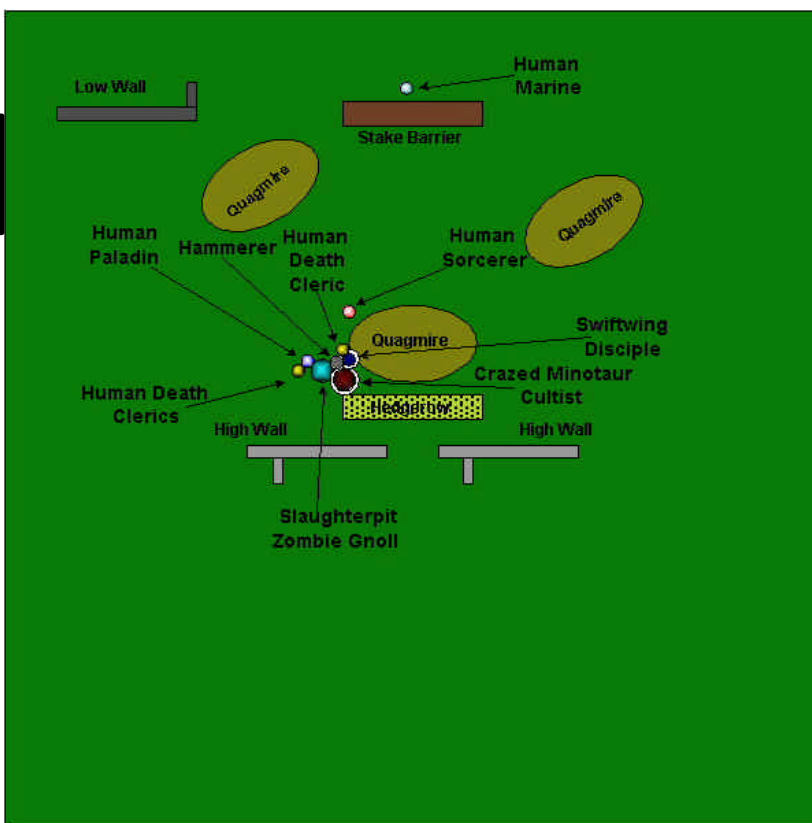
Mark: 16
Chris: 5-4

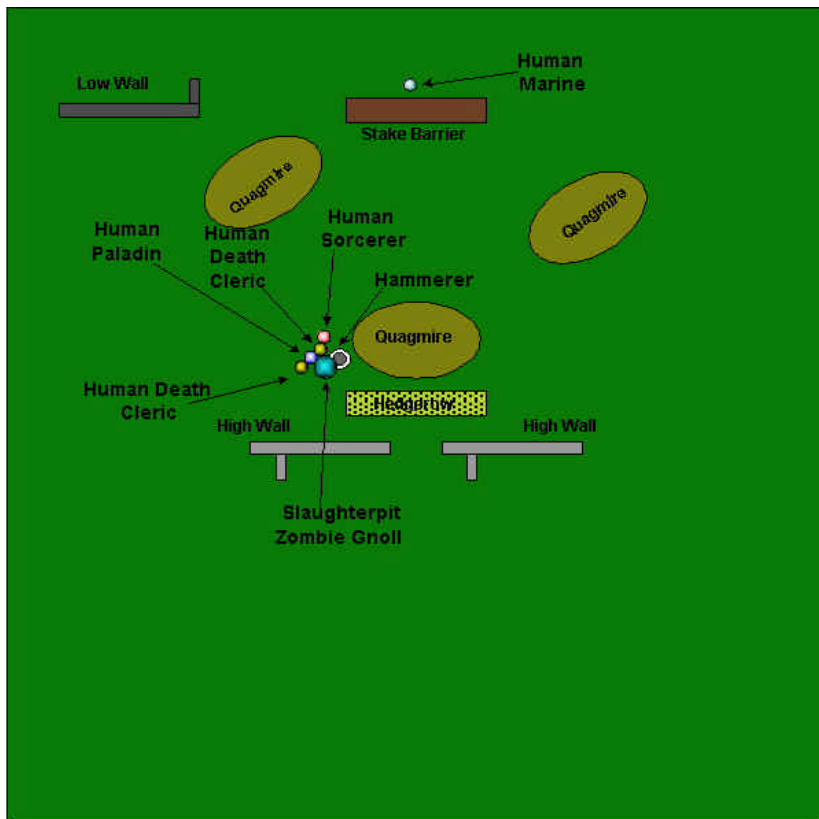
I win a contested Initiative roll and the Slaughterpit Zombie Gnoll hits the Paladin once. I get a bad feeling as the Paladin and Hammerer, which finally activates, both attack the Gnoll. The feeling passes as they both miss. One Death Cleric moves up to the Paladin and fails to hit her. Oh, girl slap fight!

Chris' Swiftwing Disciple snaps the thick neck of the Minotaur and his Sorcerer casts Daze on the Gnoll only to find out that it's not effective against undead. Argh!

The other Death Cleric charges the Swiftwing Disciple that killed the Minotaur and cuts him up into many, many pieces (Crit and dead!).

Once again the Human Marine shoots, this time at a Death Cleric, but the result is the same as we've become used to. A miss. That crossbow must be cursed.





TURN 9

INIT

Mark: 3-9
Chris: 17

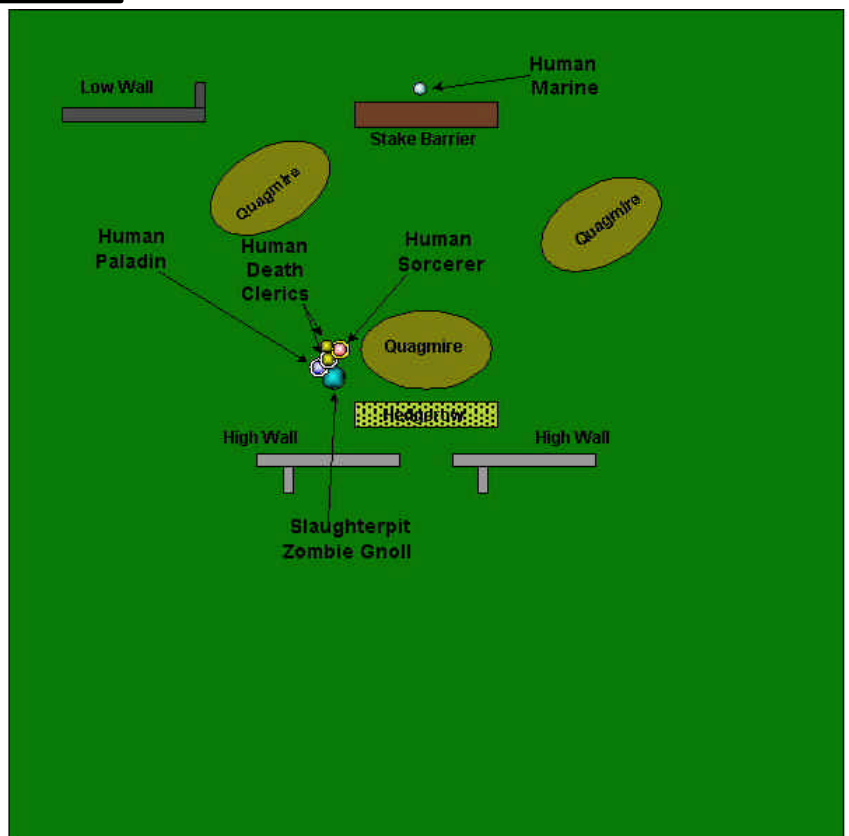
I lost the Initiative roll, but could see the light at the end of the tunnel anyway. If I could keep my three models alive through this turn I could wrap up the game.

Chris started off with his Paladin attacking the Cleric that struck at her, but missed. The Slaughterpit Zombie Gnoll proceeded to dismantle the Hammerer. I guess they don't come with that lifetime Craftsman © guarantee.

The Sorcerer, seeing his army in dire straits, charges and actually hits one of the Death Clerics. The Cleric tries to return the favor, but misses.

I suppose that I need to report that the cross-eyed Human Marine took a shot at a Cleric, but missed. I'm pretty sure that you could have guessed the outcome of his shot on your own though.

My other Cleric tried to hit the Paladin, but sadly she missed.



TURN 10

INIT

Mark: 9-12
Chris: 12

I tried to beat Chris' Initiative roll, but was only able to tie, and lose.

The Paladin starts off by knocking down one of the Death Clerics, but things quickly swing back in my favor as the Slaughterpit Zombie Gnoll tears the holy warrior limb from limb.

The Human Sorcerer auto-kills the Death Cleric that got knocked down by the dearly departed Paladin, but then gets hit and knocked out by the remaining Death Cleric.

An overhead flock of geese distract the Human Marine and, true to form, he misses again.

At the end of turn 10, with only his Human Marine left standing, Chris conceded the game.

Just Kill and Kill again!

The dark forces of Ahmut stand triumphant, well just barely. That game was a lot of fun and a nail-biter to boot! I think that my army selection was quite sound. I have to get used to playing a screen army though. I wince in pain every time one of my 'expendable' troops goes down. I know that they are there to take the hits until the big guys can get into the mix and beat the crap out of the other guys, but I just hate throwing guys up there just to get killed. It didn't help me any that Chris was nailing them with magic missiles and denying me any chance at keeping them around. He perfectly negated their skeletal ability.

At the beginning of the game I was needlessly worried about his Human Marine who, as it turned out, would have had a hard time taking his own life much less one of my troops'. Holy Cow! Are two Human Death Clerics effective or what? I'll answer that one, yes they are mighty effective. You have got to love Shield of Faith, I know I do. I was very glad to have taken two of the Death Clerics and worked the Half-Orc Fighter out of the army. The Fighter would have just turned into a makeshift leader for the screen troops. I would have had fewer spells and command points, which was a problem for me from the start of the game. Speaking of effective, the Human Paladin's Aura of Courage is a pain in the butt and now that her armor can be boosted up to 21 by the Aasimar Cleric I'll have a whole new problem on my hands.

Even though my screen crumbled about a turn before I would have liked it did what it needed to do. The Skeletal Orcs took shots that would have gone to my two big guns instead. Getting the Slaughterpit Zombie Gnoll and the Crazy Minotaur Cultist into hand-to-hand with as little damage as possible was essential. I can't believe that the Minotaur turned all wussy and started to run away and then he got plastered by the Hammerer. Yeah, great time to decide to activate you big hunk of tin! Ok, realistically, I'm much happier that it activated for a single Attack of Opportunity rather than on the many regular turns that it just sat there.

I want to do a bit of tweaking to the army and try it out again. I'm thinking of dropping the Crazy Minotaur Cultist and adding a second Slaughterpit Zombie Gnoll and then replacing all of the Skeletal Orcs with Zombie Troglodytes. I'll end up with just three Zombie Troglodytes, but my screen of paper will turn into a wall of flesh.

This was a wonderfully enjoyable game and I can't wait for the rematch.

Mark Theurer
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The Fall of Thalos...Death of the Everyman

Well, this was easily the best game I have played of Chainmail ever. I still did not win, but the game was very close. In hindsight I really cannot see a whole lot that I did wrong. As far as army selection goes. If I am just going to bring one archer or ranged attack guy other than the Sorcerer, then I might as well take two extra Conscripts, or upgraded a Conscript to a Swiftwing Disciple. A single missile troop doesn't do much.

Tactics-wise, there was one turn in the game when I chose to use my command points to give an order and that left my Hammerer out of command and it stumbled forward. I could have bought one or two more turns of shooting and better placement if I had been a little more circumspect. Once the big melee started I really thought I had it down. I had the numbers and the big guy with armor, but alas fate was fickle. I went three turns with no activity from the Hammerer, everyone except one lone Swiftwing Disciple missed, even after he had stunned the Crazy Minotaur Cultist. For two turns I could not hit a lick. During this entire time Mark's two big guys took full advantage of their extra melee attacks. Dealing as much damage as each guy had quickly thinned the ranks. By the time I pulled down the Minotaur I did not have enough left to even begin the cultists. I could have tossed the Marine in instead of taking impossible pot shots at a distance. His sneak attack would have helped some.

The Thalos army still does not sit very well with me. Their overall health is too low, they do not do enough damage, and their armor class is too low. I do not understand why the Gnome Infiltrator has the best armor class barring the constructs and the cleric. The commanders have a lot of command points, but this is quickly used up by the large quantities of troops that are in the warband. I do not know if it is lack of selection, but still something seems missing in my opinion. I am hoping that the human warriors due out in the next releases will fill this gap. To even drive the point home, until the recent release of the Aasimar Cleric, no Thalos person had the shield of faith spell. After I had taken care of Mark's fodder troops, there was not a creature on the board that had an AC of less than 16, and most of them had an armor class of 19. When most of my troops had a +0 to hit and I was out of magic missiles, I was literally out of luck. Even my paladin only had a +4, which meant I still needed a 15 or better, and she only has one attack.

All in all I was very pleased with the game, I really think dropping one of those big guys sooner would have helped, but alas it was not meant to be.

Christopher Carr
fuzzystrawberry@attbi.com

STANDING ORDERS

BY DEANO C. WARE

THREE RINGS FOR THE ELVEN-KINGS UNDER THE SKY
SEVEN FOR THE DWARF-LORDS IN THEIR HALLS OF STONE
NINE FOR MORTAL MEN DOOMED TO DIE,
ONE FOR THE DARK LORD ON HIS DARK THRONE,
IN THE LAND OF MORDOR, WHERE THE SHADOWS LIE.
ONE RING TO RULE THEM ALL, ONE RING TO FIND THEM,
ONE RING TO BRING THEM ALL, AND IN THE DARKNESS BIND THEM,
IN THE LAND OF MORDOR, WHERE THE SHADOWS LIE.

THE LORD OF THE RINGS STRATEGY BATTLE GAME

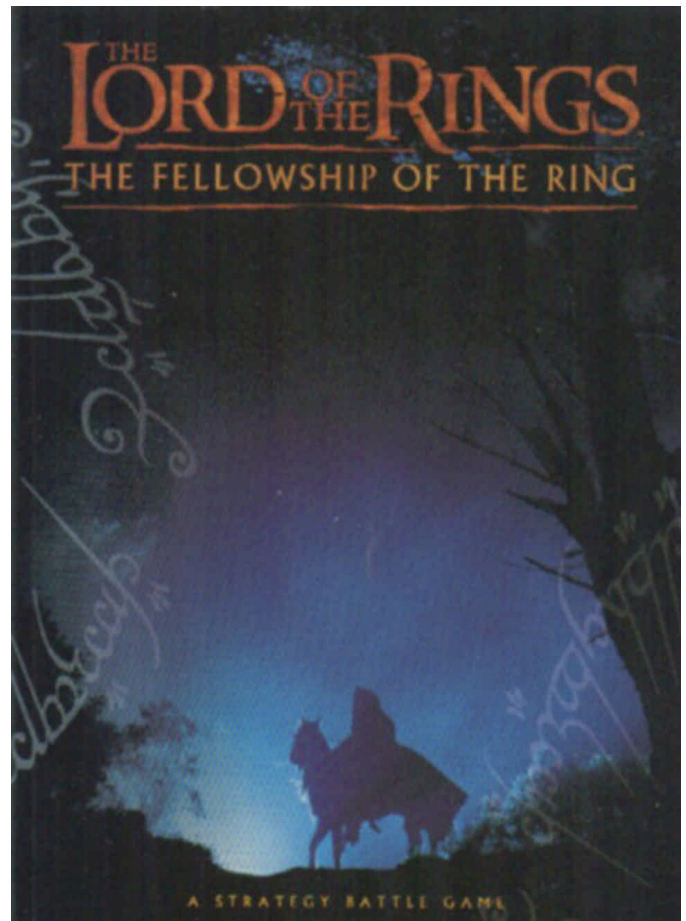
The passage above is all the introduction that is needed for this month's profile of Games Workshop's highly anticipated Lord of the Rings miniature strategy battle game.

First of all, a couple of reminders are necessary before beginning the actual profile: 1) Standing Orders only profiles games, this is not intended as a game review so it is quite reasonable to expect a full fledged review of this game to appear at some later date in the pages of Fictional Reality. Again, what we attempt to do here - is open the box, dump the stuff out and give the curious an idea of what to expect if they are contemplating a purchase of this product and where it would fit in with their current collection. 2) The Lord of the Rings game is based on the movie, not the books! Whether or not this is significant to gamers I can't say, but to Tolkien enthusiasts it is a necessary disclaimer.

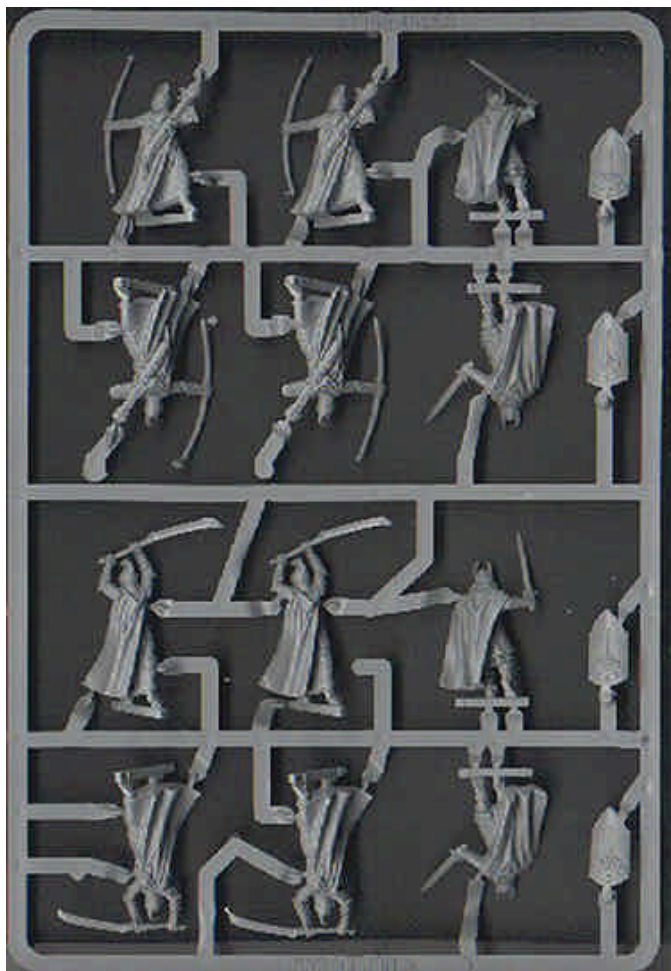
What You Get - The Lord of the Rings Game contains a 128 full color rulebook - mostly with still pictures from the movie. 48 Games Workshop plastic miniatures (8 men of Gondor, 16 Elves, & 24 Goblins), a building template, dice AND a postcard offer for a free metal miniature of Bilbo Baggins. I actually sent the card away and received the miniature in about two weeks so it is well worth it to mail it back with the little info they request.

What You Need - Other than the items in the box, you will need a ruler or measuring tape and some basic terrain. Most of the game play is centered around scenarios from the movie so it is necessary to be able to recreate the various locations and environments where the scenario takes place.

What You Are Told - The introduction to the rulebook describes the game as "...a game that uses miniatures and dice to stage all manner of battles from the world of Middle-earth - from tense encounters between a handful of warriors to huge battles with hundreds on each side.



What You Will Discover - Heroes are VERY powerful!! I played a quick scenario using Aragorn against six Moria goblins - three with bows and three with spears. Not only did Aragorn defeat them within two turns, he was NEVER wounded and NEVER used all his MIGHT points! Combat is quite quick and fairly uninvolved with literally the highest roll winning. Characters with multiple attacks also roll multiple dice so can easily unbalance a combat. In addition, they also inflict multiple wounds. There are no save rolls - at least not for standard fighters - so one wound will almost always be fatal.



What's Old - Frankly, the d6! For obvious reasons, if you intend to mass market a game that potentially involves rolling a lot of dice then the six sided (d6) dice is the universal standard. Unfortunately, there are only six possible results of rolling a six sided dice and the limitations this imposes on a game of skirmish level combat do far more harm to the game than the good that is achieved by ruling out a range of other dice. For example, Aragorn has Three (3) attacks compared to a Goblin's one (1). However, Aragorn has a Strength value of four (4) compared to a Goblin's three (3). This means in combat, when fighting an opponent with a Defense of three, BOTH Aragorn and the goblin must roll a 4, 5 or 6 to wound.

What's New - The Combat resolution in Lord of the Rings is new for Games Workshop anyway and when you incorporate MIGHT, FATE and WILL points into the game they also add a new aspect. Basically, MIGHT represents a Heroes overall heroic ability and allows them to modify die rolls or act heroically (i.e. move out of turn, follow up an attack). FATE represents a Heroes uncanny ability to escape death and gives a hero a 50/50 chance of replenishing a wound. WILL represents a heroes ability to resist magic or fear and allows re-rolls of these types of failed rolls.

What's Familiar - Anyone that plays Games Workshop games will be familiar with the statistical profiles to some degree and the 'Wound' charts. In addition, for a skirmish level game, there isn't much variance in movement rates, weapon abilities or fighting skills until you play with Heroes and incorporate the Advance Rules.

What's Good - All of the models are very well cast. Games Workshop perfected its plastic injection molding system back when it released Mordheim and has continually reaped rewards off of its investment since that time in each and every one of its products. I have also purchased most of the Lord of the Rings metal miniatures which are all sculpted and cast to Games Workshop's usual quality. As for the game, it is definitely quick to play and easy to learn. I was playing using some proxy miniatures within ten minutes. And for those who like just plain ludicrous fantasy battles you can definitely pull off some one man against an army scenarios using these rules. If using a hero like Aragorn I would recommend you at a least fifteen (15) to one ratio if using Moria goblins. Finally, Games Workshop has at times been criticized for some of its darker themed products and armies, but whether as a result of marketing or the conditions of its license, this game is very youth friendly. There are a few photos in the cover art and in the book from the movie that might scare very young children but overall there isn't any objectionable content that adults would need to worry about exposing to their children - no chaos or references to demons or blood. In fact, there really aren't any "Magic" rules although magical abilities are covered in the 'Heroes' section.

What's Bad - This should probably be called "What's Missing". Most notably there are no real modifiers or bonuses for such things as "charging", "being mounted", or even "terrain". In addition there are no 'Army Lists' or force lists or 'points' assigned to the models. If trying to balance the game - which was not a design priority for obvious reasons - I suggest you match 'Attacks' on a one to one basis. So for Aragorn, who has three attacks, you would give the other side three Moria goblins who have one attack. However, if using a Hero versus non-heroes then for each point of MIGHT or FATE he has the other side should also receive another 'Attack'. Finally, there is no "magic" phase or turn that some fantasy gamers might otherwise be used to. Other than these omissions what I was most disappointed with in the game is that it is obviously incomplete. Games Workshop has already said that when it releases the companion games to the movie sequels, these will supplement this game but still be able to stand on their own. In the meantime, we are unfortunately left trying to fill one whole year playing a game that depicts a three hour movie.

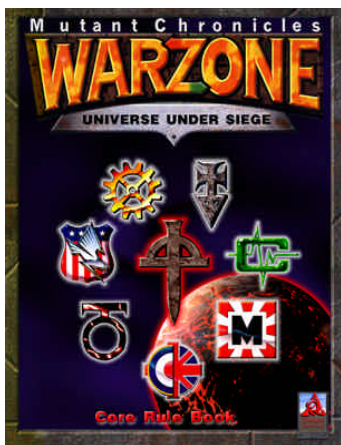
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Mutant Chronicles Ultimate Warzone, Universe in Flames

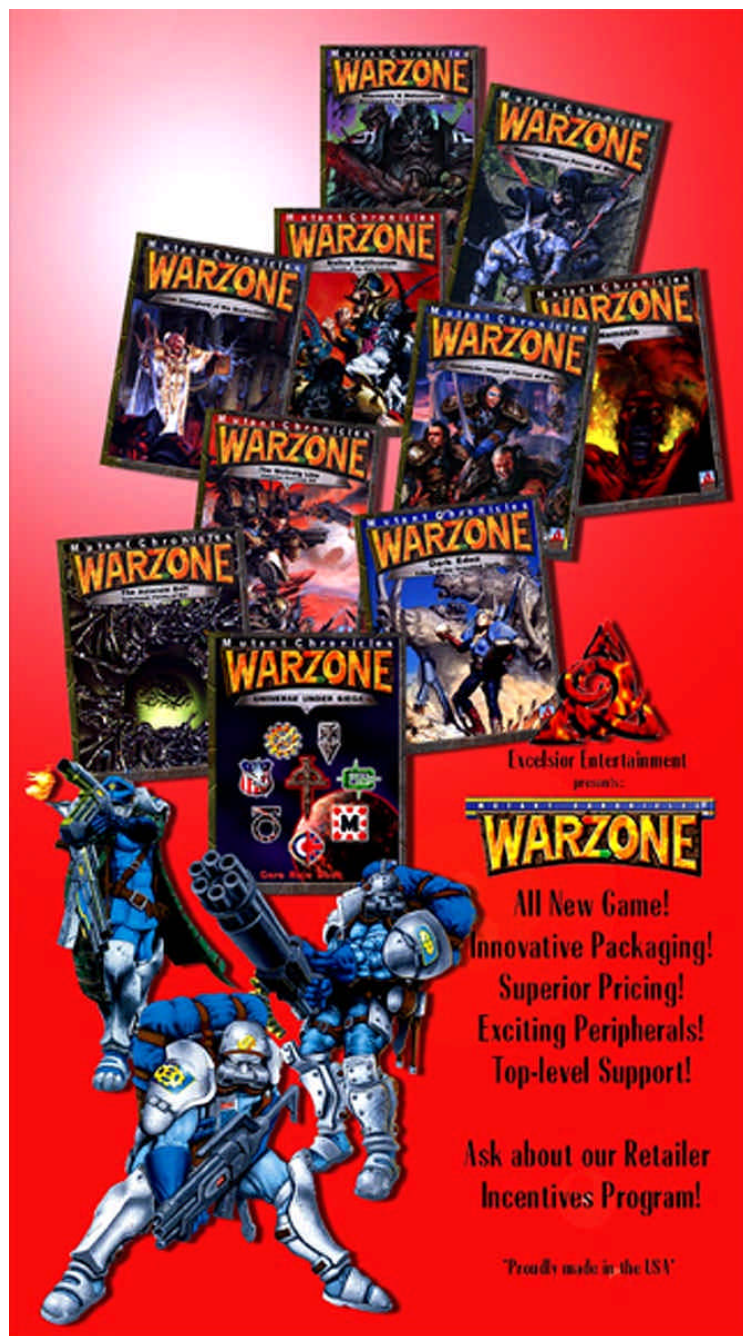
For nigh a thousand years the nightmare of the Dark Legion has been allowed to fade from the minds of men to occupy in our psyches a place reserved for myth and legend. Now however, it has returned and much more terrible than before. The Solar System is a roaring maelstrom of death and war, being torn apart by the fury of the Second Corporate Wars. From the sun-baked planet of Mercury to the ice fields of Ganymede, the five megacorporations wage fast, clandestine battle in an effort to extend their control. Armies of Nepharites, Razides, Undead legionnaires and other monstrosities march indiscriminately on the forces of man, too preoccupied with their own struggles to have noticed the return of the Dark Symmetry. In the enormous cities of the far future, Heretics devoted to the destruction of humankind stalk the dark back streets and gloomy alleys spreading their teachings of greed, jealousy and war, corrupting humanity from within while their armies conquer it from without.

The spiritual forces of the Brotherhood must try and hold humanity together against the growing threat from the Dark Legion. Now, for man there can be no respite, no safe haven to ignore the return of ultimate evil. The only hope lies in the brave souls that enter the War zones against the Dark Menace hoping to turn the tide of corruption and death.

The Universe In Flames Core Book is the next evolution in the Mutant Chronicles tabletop saga. This massive tome brings back the vivid details and flavor of the Mutant Chronicles setting along with a balanced and exciting game mechanic that will leave you gasping for more. We have spent eight months fine-tuning the ultimate game system that will make for fast and furious battles as well as exciting game play. In addition to the various improvements made to the game itself, you will find the first unique double-blind deployment system, alternate unit activations, single figure activations, improved and realistic close combat, rules for fighting in the various environments of the War zones as well as rules for vehicles and campaigns.



Player familiar with first edition Warzone will thrill at the return of the brilliant detail that set Mutant Chronicles apart from other sci-fi games. Players of second edition will find an improved game mechanic that makes for faster games overall yet maintains a perfectly balanced symmetry within the armies themselves.



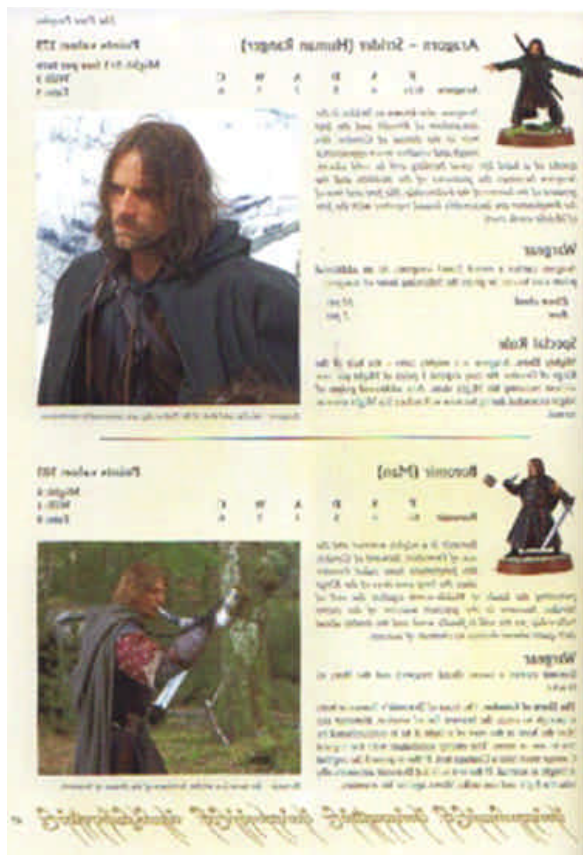
This book contains:

- ♦ A detailed history and background on the Mutant Chronicles Universe
- ♦ A lavish body of artwork depicting the Mutant Chronicles
- ♦ A complete game rules section with detailed examples and diagrams
- ♦ Detailed Army lists and a comprehensive Armory
- ♦ Quick Reference Sheets
- ♦ Templates and More...

EXE-02430

MSRP- \$34.95

May



What I'm Going to Do with These Rules - Before I say what I will do with these rules, in case it didn't come through I was actually quite pleased with The Lord of the Rings: Strategy Battle Game. I definitely intend on playing some wild scenarios with my 10 year old son - and HE'S going to get to be Aragorn!

CONVENTION NEWS

10/18-20: [Fields of Honor 2002](http://www.regalminiatures.com/fieldsof.htm)

www.regalminiatures.com/fieldsof.htm

Des Moines, Iowa

Location: Four Points Sheraton Des Moines Airport, Des Moines, IA 50315

Phone: (515) 287-6464 or (800) 325-3535

Fields of Honor regularly hosts RPGA games thanks to the DragonWing Role-Playing Society, (a local RPGA club). This year's events include Living Greyhawk, Living City, 3rd ed. D&D and Living Force adventure games. In addition LARP, Vampire games, Magic, Pokémon tournaments, other card games and much more! Fields of Honor has regularly held Warhammer and 40K tournaments and demos, there has been Warzone a tournament for the past three years, Fantasy Flight Games are sure to be prominent this year also, many others games of this genera. The Mid-Iowa Association of Wargamers (MIAW) has been a constant at Fields of Honor and hosts many historical games including DBA tournaments, Civil War games, and World War II games. Silent auctions are held to give attendees an opportunity to pick up some great old games, or to help clean out closets! Fields of Honor has a special guest each year. Previous guest have included; Duke Seifried, Fredd Gorham, Greg Novak, the designers of Easy Eight's Battleground, and Whizkids

Contact Person: [Darryl Sheldon](mailto:Darryl@regalMiniatures.com)

Darryl@regalMiniatures.com

For more info, contact: REGAL HOBBIES ,1980 94th St. Des Moines, IA 50325



D20 PRODUCT REVIEW



To start off our d20 product reviews for this issue we have another offering from the guys at Mystic Eye Games.

BASICS

Nightmares & Dreams II picks up where the first book (reviewed in the DEC 2001 issue of Fictional Reality) leaves off. It is a 72-page soft cover book that details monsters that come to life from within our nightmares and dreams. The front (see above) and back cover are the only pieces of color artwork and it retails for \$11.95, one dollar more than its predecessor. The collection contains 31 new monsters, a template for creating zombies, and many adventure hooks, new equipment, NPC's and spells.

The CR's of the creatures range from 1 to 19, with many on the low end of the scale. This is good and allows a DM to throw more than just the typical zombie or skeleton at a party of fledgling heroes.

There are many good ideas within these pages and some of my favorites from this collection are as follows:

The Assembled: Sort of an undead flesh golem with a spell to go along with all of the body parts you'll need to put together your very own.

Deadwood Tree: Think about the tree outside the house in Poltergeist and you've got the picture here.

Glutton: Imagine the villain 'Fat Bastard' from Austin Powers, but an orc! These are large, obese creatures that are all sorts of bad news. One of their special abilities will not only catch adventurers unaware, but is also quite likely to result in a similar reaction from them. Ok, it's too cool not to give away...They can vomit forth the contents of one of their four (yikes!) stomachs.

Grove Guardian: Remember 'Swamp Thing' from comic books? Well, Grove Guardians are similar to that, except they are actually constructs built by druids. Very cool idea. "Dude, I guess they were serious when they said stay off the grass."

PRESENTATION

Each monster entry has a picture to go along with it and the artwork is a step up from the first volume. All of the interior artwork is black & white. The text is easy to read and there is a nice summary at the front of the book which details each creature's name, CR, and page number. Nice touch. Open Content sections are easy to identify and each monster's stats (from size/type through advancement) and each spell in the book is listed as Open Content.

STORYLINE

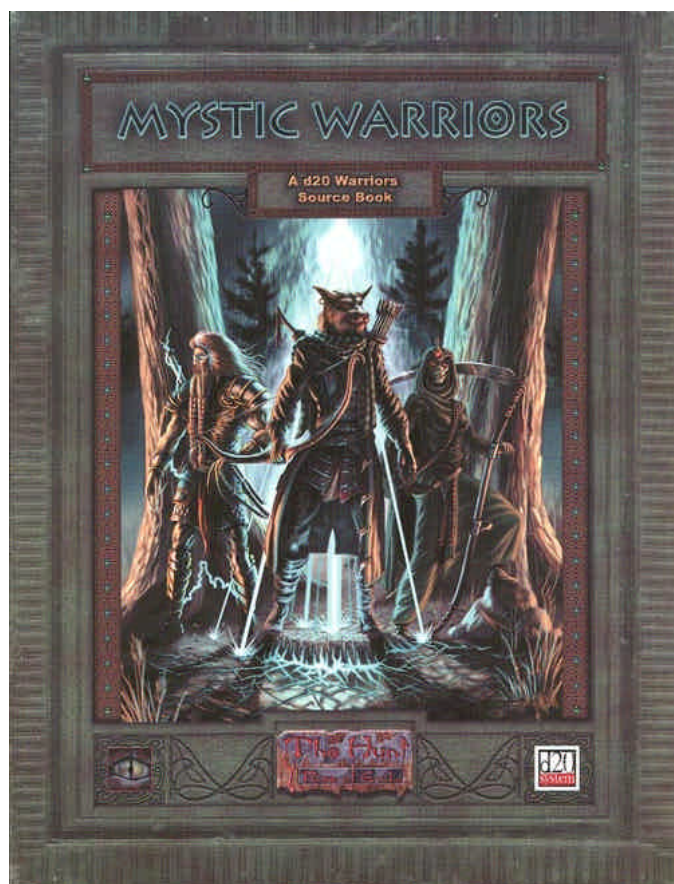
Each creature entry also has an accompanying piece of fiction to flesh it out. As with the previous volume some of these are better than others, but all of them give the DM a better look into each monster. As an example, the **Grotesque Devourer** are not just big old sloppy obese undead. They got that way because of how they lived in their human existence. Some of the fiction is more suited to a modern day campaign, but all are easily usable in just about any setting.

VALUE

For twelve bucks this book holds a bunch of value. I see its main uses as part of a fairly standard D&D game, but a Ravenloft game would benefit greatly from some of these baddies. About one-third of the monsters are undead so clerics will have a field day. The zombie template presented here is very similar to the one by WOTC, but there are some very interesting subtypes of zombies. Kind of like feats for zombies. Overall, the book is a very good buy if you need some horror-type monsters to spice up your game and even if not there are several good ideas in there.

www.mysticeyegames.com

D20 PRODUCT REVIEW



BASICS

Mystic Warriors is a 126-page softcover source book from Mystic Eye Games that gives you twenty-two new prestige classes for use in their 'The Hunt: Rise of Evil' campaign setting or another d20 fantasy setting. The book retails for \$14.95. The front and back covers are the only color artwork in the book. The interior is filled with many black and white illustrations.

The prestige classes presented in Mystic Warriors are not all straight fighter-types. There certainly are those that are suitable for fighters (including Paladins and Monks), but there are also some for players of Rangers, Rogues and Barbarians.

The most significant thing introduced in Mystic Warriors is a new ability called **Vitus**. All of the prestige classes in the book have a common bond in being able to harness the mystical energy called Vitus. Using Vitus, a Mystical Warrior can use special abilities, which are not unlike spells. Each Mystic Warrior will have a pool of Vitus points that are depleted when powers are used. Your Vitus pool is recharged much like a spellcaster regaining spells after resting. What about non-Mystic Warriors you ask? Well, every self-aware creature gets a Vitus score,

but Mystic Warriors get a lot more! There is a limit to the number and power level of powers, called techniques, which a character can know and use. Rules are also presented for using techniques without keeping track of your Vitus score. There are over fifty techniques in the book and stacked upon the many regular feats that a mid to high level fighter would already have (or special abilities of a Paladin or other type of character) a Mystic Warrior could end up very powerful. True, you get a limited number of techniques per day, but you'll always (pretty much) get to use your feats. I found the prestige classes in Mystic Warriors to be a very neat addition, but DM's will just need to take a careful look at them to decide whether or not they might unbalance their particular campaign. In a very low-magic game they'll likely be a bit on the overpowered side. You'll also find a new PC race, the Canite. Sort of a dog or wolf humanoid. It's the center creature on the cover to the left. A few of my favorites Mystic Warriors are:

Congulair: A Nordic warrior that has become fused with a symbiotic creature. One of their special abilities is to create an icy coating to their existing armor, which grants them an AC bonus.

Gogiyo: Ok, you have to get struck by lightning before adopting this prestige class, but after that this warrior benefits from electricity resistance and gets a sonic attack.

PRESENTATION

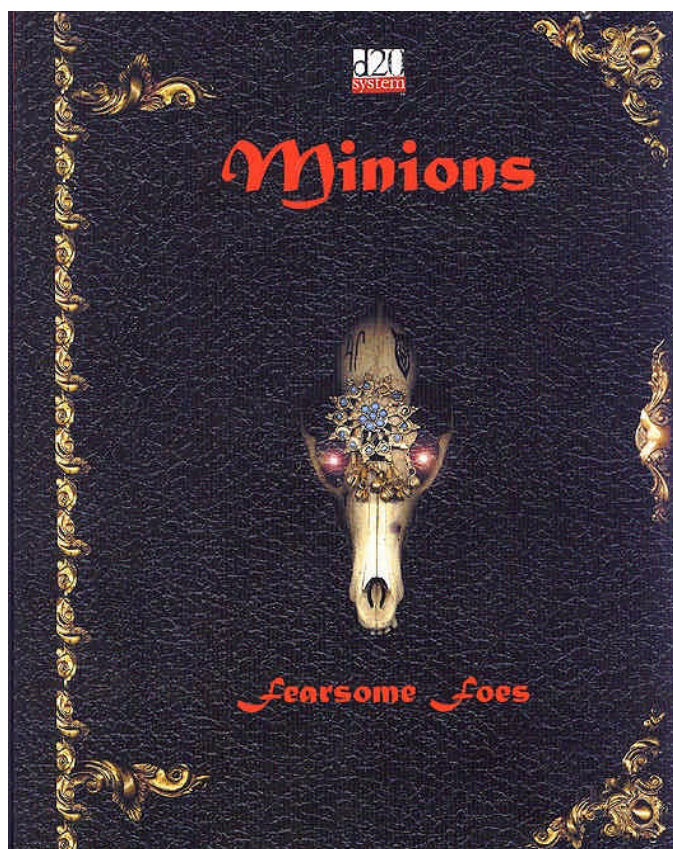
The book is laid out in an easy to read manner and is not hard on the eyes. Each prestige class has a picture showing a typical member of that group. I'd have to say that, in general, the artwork presented in Mystic Warriors is better than that in Nightmares and Dreams II. Since N&D II was a step up from N&D this is a good thing. Out of three Mystic Eye Games products that I've taken a look at the artwork has consistently gotten better.

VALUE

At around fifteen dollars you get a lot of bang for your buck. There's whole bunch of new prestige classes, with backgrounds, special schools and NPC's that can be worked into pretty much any campaign. In addition to the techniques that Mystic Warriors can use there are also over fifteen new feats and some new weapons, with most of them benefiting Mystic Warriors. If your campaign is open to new, usually powerful, and sometimes strange fighter-types running around then this book will give your characters many exciting ways to enhance their characters and make them each a very different kind of hero.

www.mysticeyegames.com

D20 PRODUCT REVIEW



BASICS

Minions is a 96-page softbound book with almost a hundred new monsters for Dungeons and Dragons or any other fantasy d20 system. The front and back cover are full color as is every single page of this book. Retail price on this book is \$24.95.

Monsters range from the mundane (Tumble Ox: a ram-like creature about the size of a bull) to the fantastic (an Ethereal Dragon). Challenge Ratings range from 1/8 all the way up to 20. DM's of low (1-3) and medium (4-7) level games will find a lot of new monsters to spring on your players. Higher level monsters are present, but in less quantity. There are not too many of any one type of monster, with a nice spread of monster categories represented.

Each entry has the stats that you've become accustomed to, a nicely detailed description, a combat entry, and an entry on using them in your campaign (where they will be found, uses, etc). If the monster is part of a society rather than just a loner or then there will be an entry describing how they live.

There are also three templates, but only one (Half-Troll) is really applicable to player characters. The other two, however (The Crowd and The Fallen) are more suited

for use by the DM as NPC's or adversaries.

In addition to the monsters that you will find there is also a small section on new familiars and a new feat with which your magic-user can use to acquire one of these new little buddies. There are six new familiars with all but one of them being neutral, the other is good.

There are eleven monster entries that have a section on using them as player characters. Many of these are pretty wild and would fit well into a monster-PC party where everyone is playing a non-standard race. The Dover is my particular favorite of these. It's a canine humanoid.

PRESENTATION

This book looks great! It is very easy to read with slick paper and clear text. Every monster entry has a color picture and many of these are just begging to be made into miniatures. Good examples of this are the Forlorn and Nightling below. The artwork is not quite up to the level of the Monster Manual, but they are very nice. A lot of effort was put into making this book catch your eye when you grabbed it off of the shelf at your local store and thumbed through it. The artwork stands out on the page and gives a great visual of each monster.



VALUE

The cover price of the book is a little more than you might be expecting, but it's not bad when you consider that it's full color on high quality paper and quite useful. Their website is also very useful. You can download a PDF version of e-Minions that contains sixteen creatures that did not get into the regular print version. As much

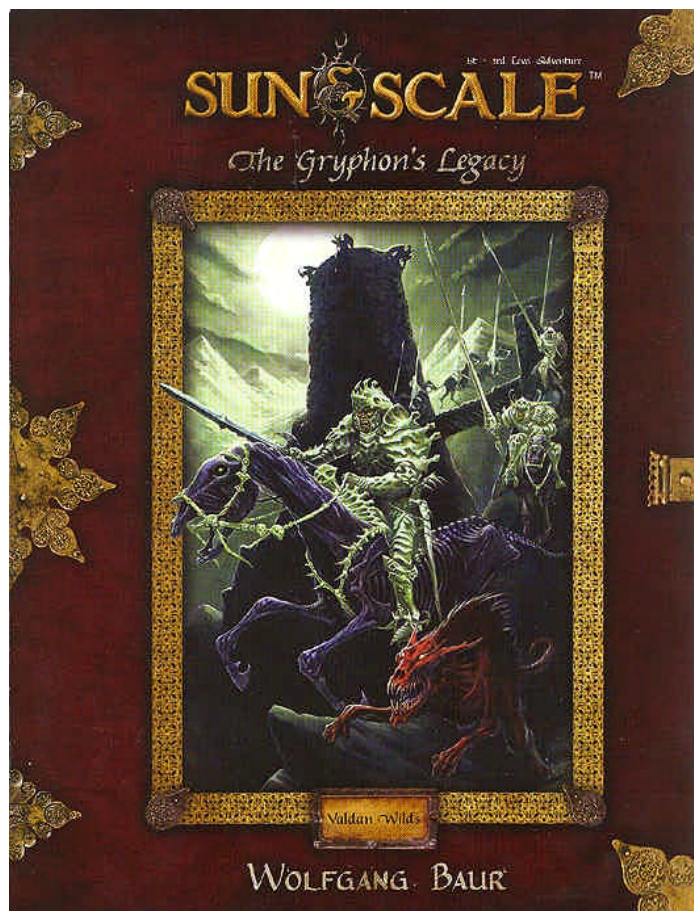
as I'd absolutely love for miniatures to be made of just about everything in the Minions book, Bastion Press has made Battle Tabs of the monsters that are similar to the tokens found in Dungeon magazine.



Overall, I found the book very useful.

www.bastionpress.com

D20 PRODUCT REVIEW



BASICS

The Gryphon's Legacy is a 48-page adventure for a party of characters of 1st through 3rd level. It is published by Gaslight Press and retails for \$12.95.

The adventure is set in the world of Sun & Scale, but with minimal changes to locales it would work in any fantasy d20 setting. Seeing as the Sun & Scale system book has not yet been released the author has given DM's a nice introductory section that gives some background into the world in which the characters will be adventuring. This is a nice touch and will make it much easier for DM's to drop this adventure into their world.

STORYLINE

DM's will find a bit of a discrepancy when reading through the introduction to the adventure. The front and back covers indicate that the adventure is for characters of level 1-3 while the intro section indicates that it is suitable for four to six characters of level 1 and 2. I see no problem running with up to six characters, but I'd suggest erring on the side of allowing at least a few 3rd level characters into the party.

There are three adventure hooks to get your party on their way. All are equally suitable, with one being very

ambitious for low level characters. The party can acquire a charter to claim land from the wilderness, they can work to eliminate a threat from strange bandits, or they can come across a parchment that could lead them to a dungeon. All of these will get the PC's moving towards the meat of the adventure or the DM could make up his own hook. Needless to say not everything works out as it initially looked. Without giving too much away there is a castle to explore and a very nice touch in the module is an easy to follow time table of what kind of opposition the players can expect to find depending on where and when they try to gain entry.

PRESENTATION

The interior of the module is very nice. It is printed on high quality paper and is very easy to read. Sections for the DM to read to players is shaded in light gray and information like NPC's, new spells, new skills, etc is presented in another box. As you can see to the right the front cover looks very nice and does give a hint to prospective players as to what kind of enemies they might be facing. The inside of the front and back covers have detailed maps of various locations that the players will visit. These maps represent perfectly the encounter locations and make mapping them out for combat easy for the DM. There are two appendices at the back of the module. Having these is such a help to the DM. You can devote more time to learning the ins and outs of the module rather than organizing a bunch of monster stats. Interior artwork is in black and white and it all looks good. There's just not too much of it. Sections that need a visual cue for the players will have an associated illustration, but most do not. The only thing that would have added to the interior pictures would have been color, but that would have probably raised the price unnecessarily as there are not enough pictures to warrant the increase.

VALUE

At \$12.95 The Gryphon's Legacy will provide a party of low level adventurers with an opportunity to make a name for themselves early in their career. Most of the encounters in the module have an EL of 1-3, which is appropriate, but there are several that are quite a bit higher and one (early in the adventure) that could wipe out the party and bring things to a screeching halt quickly if not handled correctly by the players. There's plenty of combat to be had, but deciding when to start the fighting will matter a lot. A straight hack and slash party could get themselves into a heap of trouble. A balanced party of thinkers and butt-kickers should see surviving party members advancing about two levels

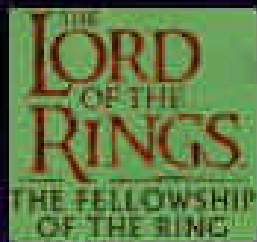
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MUTANT CHRONICLES®

WARZONE

BATTLE REPORT

Along with the information on the upcoming 'Ultimate' edition of Warzone that will soon be out (see page 36), we are also lucky enough to have another example of how the new rules will play. The following battle report was fought as a playtest battle while Ultimate Warzone was being worked on.

I thought of calling the battle report "The Rumble in the Jungle", but I just couldn't bring myself to do it. So instead, may I present...

"How to die like a cricket in the thicket!"

The mighty forces of the Lord of Insanity faced a nearly overwhelming force of Capitol raiders in a scenario based game located at the edge of a jungle flanked by rolling hills. The Capitol force was there to recover a wayward supply drop scattered in a rough line across the edge of the jungle. But Muawijhe has friends in that neighborhood and the only thing they wanted more than the Capitol supplies were some tasty Assault Marines for a late afternoon snack.

The Armies

The Muawijhe Force (510 pts):

1 Zenithian Slaughtermaster with Demonic Fiend Spell
4 Zenithian Soulslayers
4 Karnophages
4 Necromutants
1 Razide

The Capitol Force (499 pts):

4 Heavy Infantry + Sergeant + HMG
4 Light Infantry + Sergeant + LMG
4 Assault Marines + Sergeant + Grenadier
4 Rangers + Sergeant + Grenadier

The Table and Scenario

The table was 4' x 4' with dense jungle terrain starting in the left slowly dissipating as it reached about 3/4th of the table (See page 44 for a detailed picture of the map). The last quarter was low rolling hills leading to a higher hill against the right edge. We did not use the jungle fighting rules, but density of terrain limited LOS on the left table edge to less than 6" in most cases. The right edge held two peaks that commanded a great view of the entire table. There was a series of valleys and

ravines winding between and around the hills on the right where LOS was severely limited unless you held the high ground, but not nearly as limited as the dense jungle to the left.

The supply drop came passing from left to right and dropped the goods short of the target. It was meant to re-supply the Capitol forces in the hills adjacent to the jungle, but the bulk of the drop ran a straight path across the center of the table starting in the dense jungle and ending on the high peak to the right at the edge of the hills. There were four parcels total, but one was damaged beyond having any value. One of the five chits were marked with a hidden dot, signifying that it was worthless. They are designated on the map with X's.

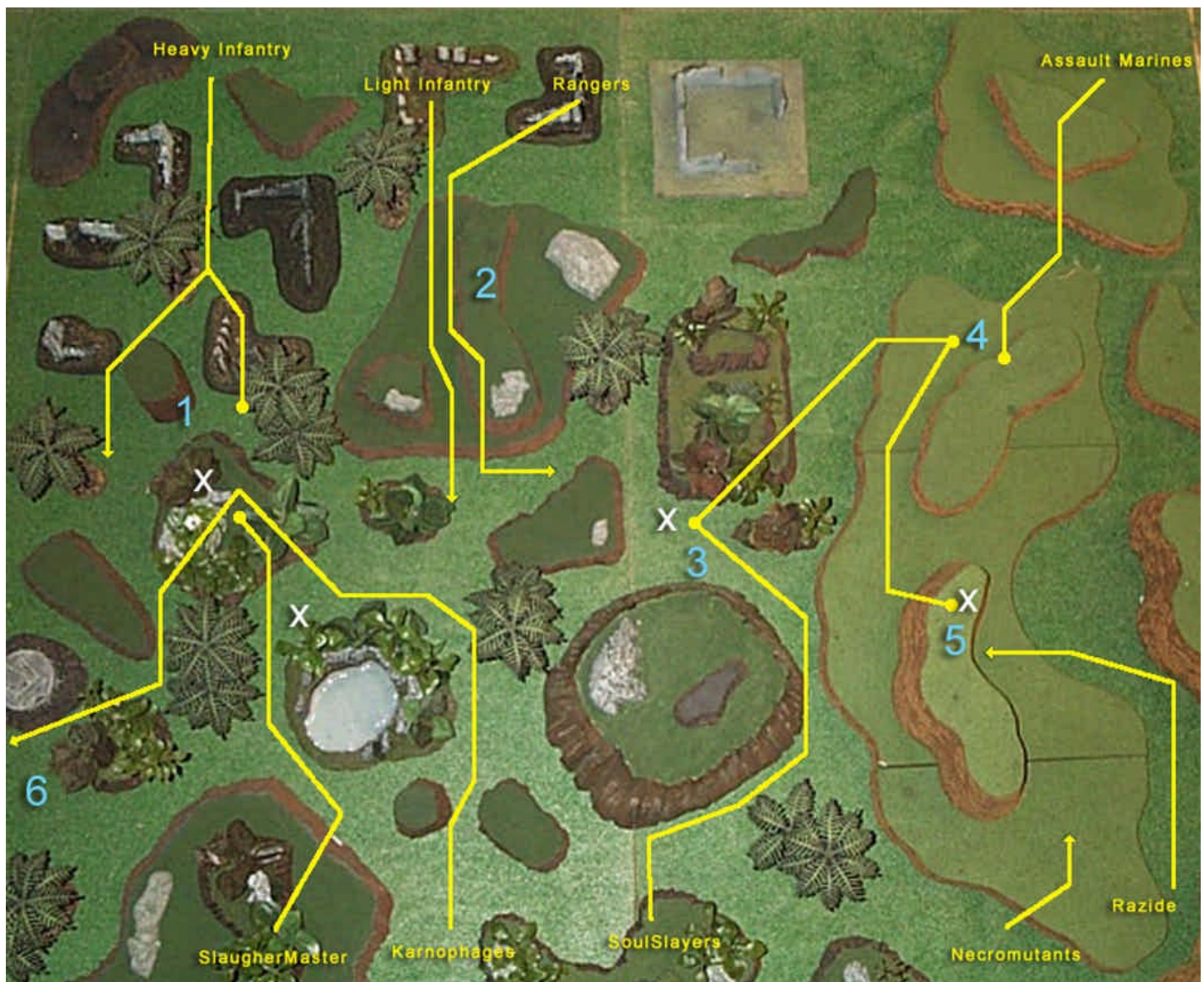
In order to win, the model possessing the chit must retreat it back into the deployment zone. The player who gets the most chits wins. Players who retreat off the sides of the table with chits remove both the chits and model from the game. Ties are broken by number of points killed, with the most lethal player winning in case of a victory point draw.

The Deployment

The Capitol player placed his Assault Marines on the right in the hills. He placed his Heavy infantry in an overgrown ruined village on the far left in the deep jungle, and his Light Infantry near the center. Then he placed his Rangers right beside the Light Infantry on a small jungle outcropping.

I placed my Slaughtermaster in the deep jungle between the Heavy and Light Infantry. I place my Karnophages near him. I put my Soulslayers opposite the Rangers also in dense cover, but closer to the edge of the jungle. The Razide went into the ravines and valleys of the right flank. The Necromutants took a medium hill facing a large squad of Assault Marines. It looked like a long day for them being outnumbered nearly 3-2 and out classed by superior troops. I could only hope the Razide did its job.

A third party placed the chits next. He placed them evenly along the centerline, and then rolled six-inch deviation for each of them. I got lucky there. Two of the chits moved closer to each other directly in the path of the Slaughtermaster. One of them landed on the high peaks to the right. And the last landed in the center directly in front of my Soulslayers.



The Battle Begins

Capitol won initiative and moved the Assault Marines up on a hill overlooking the valley my Razide was traveling in. I was glad to see that. I was afraid he was going to pivot them left and ignore the Razide, thus removing him from combat. That would give me one chit unopposed, but I think I would have done it just to remove the only serious long-range firepower my army possessed.

I moved my Slaughtermaster forward out of LOS toward the target chits.

Capitol moved his Heavies forward to counter my efforts, but he maneuvered poorly. His troops were staggered in two lines, each going around an obstacle but lacking the movement to get back in command.

I then moved the Soulslayers forward and a bit to the right. If the Assault Marines pivoted left, I wanted to be in position to ambush them, while still keeping my options open for the third target chit.

Capitol moved his Light Infantry forward, but once again maneuver became an issue. With so many models so tightly deployed cohesive movement became a problem. Several times the player tried to sit bases on bases because he lacked room to fit the mini, or attempted to stand them on uneven ground only to see them fall over. His frustration was evident. It was soon to get worse.

I moved my Karnophages up behind the Slaughtermaster, but they were falling behind due to lack of 4" movement required to stay with the Slaughtermaster.

Capitol moved his Rangers up behind the Light Infantry. He had one hell of a traffic jam going on, with no firing lanes open and numerous models on wait due to the fact he couldn't move them forward in the narrow jungle paths. I knew we had done well with the terrain when he loudly complained, "How the hell am I supposed to shoot you when I can't see six inches in any direction!" Welcome to the jungle was my answer. He was less than pleased.

I took an aimed shot at the Assault Marines using the Necromutants. Never underestimate the power of the golden BB. I landed six hits in eight shots needing eight! But he saved all but one. Fortunately, he made a blunder in movement once again. The GL specialist was the only mini in LOS of the shooter. Even though he was behind the others, he took the hit and died for the effort. First blood Dark Legion!

Round Two

Dark Legion won initiative. The Slaughtermaster streaked forward nabbing two chits in two moves – both valuable. The game was in his hands. The last action was a pleasure. Special thanks to Morpheus for the education at Archcon; I hit the Heavy Infantry group closest to the center with the Demonic Fiend spell! This action occurred at the position marked 1 on the map. The effect was tasty. The three in the middle along with the sergeant perished in the fray. That left only the other three in range, and if they panic I might live. But they didn't. My doom was upon me, but not by those first three, and I had a plan that would win this game.

In a rather reactionary move, the Capitol player activated the Heavy squad. I was surprised. The first trooper did a wound. The second trooper was the HMG specialist at point blank range. It was over. My Slaughtermaster was vaporized. The last trooper moved forward into command radius. He had lagged behind the others significantly. The chits lay where the Slaughtermaster fell.

I streaked the lead Karnophage who was only three inches behind the Slaughtermaster up on the knoll where the chits laid. Two of the Rangers attempted to come off wait and blast him. They failed the LD check and the Karnophage was off to the races. He dashed back off the rise and hid behind a tree. The other three took up positions guarding his retreat out of LOS and on wait.

Capitol next opened fire on the Razide with two troopers. Six shots scored five hits. I took a single wound. One of the squad fired on a Soulslayer that drifted too far out of cover. He scored two hits for no damage. The other two Assault marines moved left and when on wait, watching the pass I would have to dash through in order to snatch the third objective. I was unimpressed.

The first of the Souslayers dashed forward from cover heading for the prize. Both Assault Marines opened fire. They both passed LD check and both hit. I couldn't believe the rolls he was getting. But I saved the damage and seized the objective – it was a fake! This is marked as number 3 on the map.

I moved the others up behind him hiding behind a jungle outcrop. The first was exposed if the Light Infantry moved forward to get LOS on him. I hoped they would. The victory lay with the terrified Karnophage hiding behind a tree 8" away from them.

I was stunned when the LI pivoted right and went after the Soulslayer. They killed him with a hail of fire, but lacked LOS on the others. I felt this was a major blunder. He should have cut off the Karnophage and saved the game. But maybe the Capitol player figured he would catch the Karnophage with the Rangers and remains of the Heavies. Or maybe he was afraid that the Souslayers were about to eat his Assault Marines. In that fear he was correct.

The Razide fired at short range but scored no hits. I found that to be pathetic. So far the terrible Razide has been worthless being wounded while in hard cover and scoring no hits.

The Rangers moved forward to the position the Light Infantry held earlier. The lead elements went on wait while the others formed up behind them. This delay was ill advised, but understandable. The Capitol force was scattered and disorganized in the center. This area is marked on the map as 2.

My Necromutants attempted another round of sniping. Two fired aimed shots, and two moved to medium range and fired two shots normally. I scored four hits on the Sergeant, and he died on the last one. And then there were four...

Round Three

Capitol won initiative. He activated the Heavy Infantry! I was very surprised. The first trooper started to move down the path toward LOS on the prize holding Karnophage, but changed his mind when he realized I could come off wait and charge him with the hidden Karnophage. The idea of being a light afternoon snack didn't set well with my Capitol opponent. He moved his heavy infantry toward the edge of the table, attempting to get LOS when I move the Karnophage next round. It was a game-ending mistake.

I charged the Assault Marines with the Souslayers. This battle was marked as number 4 on the map. I was thunderstruck when my attacking CC gods only scored one kill and took a wound for the effort. The assault marines counter charged my CC killing machines fighting with an effective CC 10 to my CC 12. So much for Capitol being no good at CC. They killed two of Souslayers, but finally fell. The last Soulayer climbed the hill and took the last objective – a real one at location 5 on the map.

The Rangers opened fire on him killing him with their last few long-range shots. But the Razide was close. And the Necromutants had moved in too. They had no chance to kill the Razide off wait actions, and he could snatch the chit and move out of LOS in the same turn. My Karnophage dashed off the left edge of the board with his two chits at position 6 on the map, thus removing them from play. The only remaining chit was firmly in my Razide's claws heading for home. Capitol had no way to stop him. With a whimper, not a roar, the Capitol player conceded the game.

Conclusion

The Capitol player had superior troops and greater numbers of them. But he lacked the speed of my Muawijhe force, and the dense jungle severely inhibited his line of sight. Because of that fact, and some poor maneuvering on his part, victory was snatched from his reach. The battle isn't always won by the strongest. In this case, it was won by the fastest.

This scenario game seemed to turn into snatch and grab event. I've won many of these by snatching the objective in a headlong rush, and then winning by sacrificing my whatever part of my force is needed to cover the retreat. This game showed how an army that was fast, but very light when it came to ranged weapons can stand up to, and even come out victorious against an army that you'd expect to be able to just stand there and blaze away with their great big guns until the enemy has been reduced to a fine paste. Yes, the terrain played a big part in this game, but all battles are not fought on a flat plane. Adapting to and overcoming the challenges of not only your enemy, but that of the environment is something that you'll have to master to come out on the winning end of things.



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The Celtos range of miniatures initially started life as a purely collectable range. The success of the range has even surprised the development team at i-Kore. i-Kore now plans to release a full-blown tabletop battle system, "Celtos", in early summer 2002. The rulebook is scheduled for 48 pages at the time of this announcement, but this is subject to change, and it will feature art from Clint Langley.

This book will contain the combat system along with background details and artwork for the races of the legendary island continent of Gorla, a place loosely based on ancient Celtic mythology. The Gaels are human worshippers of the Earth Goddess Anu and have their great capital city at Tara, where the Ard Rígh, the elected high king, sits. Beneath Gorla is the dank, watery labyrinth of Lochlann, where the Fomorian offspring of Chaos and Old Night breed in the darkness. In the high mountain ranges of Gorla, half-divine elemental creatures called Sidhe have built strongholds including the great cities of Murias, Falias and Findias. In the south of the continent is the terrible Mag Slecht, the Plain of Adoration, where a tribe of the Gaels' ancestors, called the Fir Bolg, fell from favour with Anu and turned to the carrion worm god Crom Cruich, who now grants them living death in return for blood sacrifices. The threat from beyond the shores of Gorla comes in the form of Vanir raiders, who periodically attack the coast in their ice-bound dragon ships, bringing winter, wolves and food for the hoodie crows with them.



Mercury, Mishima Forces of War

There are few places in the solar system as inhospitable as that of Mercury; sun baked first planet and home to the Mishima Megacorporation. While surface settlements are rare due to the harsh climate, most life on Mercury is found below ground, deep within the massive caverns and tunnels that are being expanded upon daily. Within this subterranean realm, the forces of the Mishima Megacorporation mine and trade with the rest of the forces of humanity, a position that makes them the undisputed lords of Mercury.

Within the vast caverns of Mercury, Mishima cities have evolved to a grand scale, rivaling even the largest above ground settlements of the other corporations. The Kieretsus of the Mishima Corporation are found in great numbers here, though they maintain interests on the other worlds as well. While the other corporations have their hands in Mercury to lesser degrees, they have not been successful at breaking the strangle hold Mishima has on its resources. With fanatic armies of soldiers swarming to their centuries old banners, the Mishiman are a true study in contradiction, embracing the old ways and traditions yet steeped in the most cutting edge technology in the solar system. This is evident from their dress, architecture, and even their weapons of war. The Shoa Battle Armor is perhaps the most obvious blending of tradition with technology in the Megacorp, large stylized suits of mechanized samurai armor loaded with state of the art armaments.

The ruling class of the Mishima Megacorp is the Samurai, a breed of ruthless, savage and totally dedicated warriors who remain largely unaffected by the dictates of the Brotherhood and focus on their own achievements. Its citizens are kept in line by a system of propaganda, philosophy and near heretical teachings designed to create a caste-structured hierarchy of absolute obedience and loyalty. While the teachings of the Cardinal are silent in Mishiman society, the religion of the Seven Sages is very much alive. The priests of Mishiman temples possess powers that resemble the Art of the Brotherhood, a situation

PRESS RELEASE

The rules will be a combat system for 2 or more players loosely based on i-Kore's other game, Void, with the mechanics designed in such a way that players will not get bogged down and game play will remain fast even where there are large numbers of figures involved.

The core of each army will be its heroes, celebrated or notorious individuals who have built up a band of followers as a result of their exploits. These heroes will be capable of all manner of amazing feats including displays of superhuman battle-prowess, magical transformations, and potent spells. The idea is that they will mostly use their abilities to vanquish enemy heroes whilst the followers engage in more traditional forms of combat. Each army will get a starter army list in the first book, enabling them to build a sound, balanced force.

i-Kore plans to support the system every 2 months with the release of a more comprehensive army book for each individual army and there will be miniature releases every month as the range expands. Each army book will include detailed histories, myths, legends and background as well as a complete army listing with painting guides and sample armies. The first army book will be for the Gaels and is due out in mid summer 2002.

PRESS RELEASE

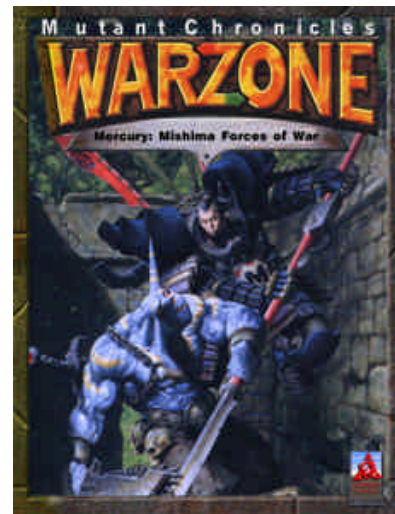
that has the Brotherhood watching them very carefully.

This campaign expansion offers a detailed look at the life of Mishima citizens, the politics of the corporation's Lord Heirs, its relations with the other Megacorporations and its deepest kept secrets. As the Second Corporate Wars spill out into the open, the Mishima Corporation stands ready to advance from its holes and overwhelm the invaders.

This book contains:

- A detailed history of the Mishiman Megacorp including present politics
- New rules for subterranean fighting and general rules updates
- New troop types for Mishima and the other corporations
- New weapons, vehicles and powers
- Notable personages and campaign events
- New chi powers and abilities

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Soft cover



The Asteroid Belt, Cybertronic Forces of War

There are few corporations that engender as many questions as that of Cybertronic or perhaps conjure as much conjecture. New and certainly upstart, Cybertronic has made its fortune developing the very technologies that the Brotherhood condemns. While openly admonished by the Cardinal as being a repository for the Dark Legions newest attack on humanity, the Cybertronic Corporation excels at what it does and hosts of subsidiaries flock to its banner. Life in the Cybertronic Megacorporation boasts the highest standard of living for its citizens of any Megacorporation. Even under the threat of a Holy Ban, the corporation thrives. Inquisitor Malkor has even gone on record of denouncing Cybertronic as the seductive incarnation of a new Dark Apostle. Of course there is a price to pay for the privilege of being a Cybertronic citizen, but the thousands of people that live under this corporation are happy to pay it and would have it no other way.

Free from the stifling hand of the Brotherhood, this corporation keeps its largest facilities away from their watchful eyes in remote locations, slowly expanding its corporation through secret stock acquisitions and the occasional Cartel sanctioned hostile takeover. No concentration of Cybertronic facilities exists for the Brotherhood to rail against, being spread throughout the inner planets and extensively in the Asteroid Belt.

Imperial has long maintained the belief that the resources held in the Asteroids was an untapped gold mine but the distance and relative dangers of these conditions have limited their ability to thrive here. While Cybertronic advancements in asteroid colonization and mining have made them incredibly successful and hugely profitable, Her Imperial Serenity has all but declared war against the smaller Megacorporation. The rivalry between these two Megacorps is both legendary and discreet, neither side wanting to allow the other Megacorporations to see them committed to all out war and hence vulnerable to hostile takeovers themselves.

This campaign expansion offers a detailed look at the Cybertronic Corporation, its policies and strategies, its relations with the other Megacorporations and its plans for improving its inter-corporate standing. The secret bases and newest divisions of Cybertronic are laid bare in this expansion.

This book contains:

- A comprehensive history of the Cybertronic corporation
- A look at their bases, interests and territories
- A complete game section with new rules for all corporations
- Detailed new troop types for each corporate force
- Quick Reference Sheets
- A look at the notable persons behind the corporation
- The Nineteenth Executive

EXE-02530
MSRP- \$24.95
Soft cover



Ganymede, Imperial Forces of War

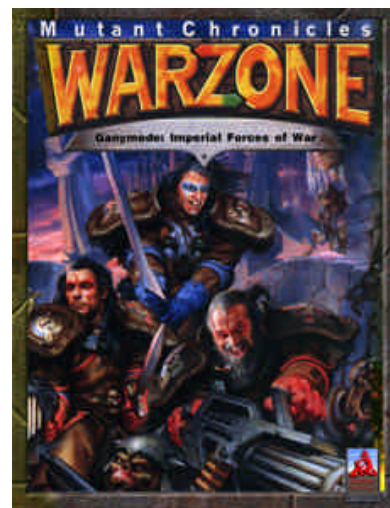
Go into any Imperial corporate structure and you will find somewhere in the boardroom the business motto "It's better to ask for forgiveness than permission", and this slogan is never more prevalent than in their methods of acquiring new businesses, facilities and raw materials. Since the times of the first Serenity, Imperial has openly held the policy that armed conquest is a legitimate means of acquiring properties and opening markets. Conquistadors scout out "potential markets" for the corporation, which usually means some other corporation's production facility, mining sight, or research lab, before calling in the Clan Forces to "liberate" the site from the parent corporation. After the Clan Forces eliminate on-site opposition, Imperial brings in the Defense Forces to hold their position until Imperial puts the proper "Hostile Takeover" paperwork through the Cartel. The other Corporations have threatened Imperial several times with full scale war for this practice but since Imperial can prove that the paperwork was filled out properly, the other Corporations cannot make good on these threats. Often Imperial simply claims the paperwork was held up in its juggernaut of a bureaucracy but can clearly show the takeover was executed "properly". Add to this Imperial's tight bond with the Brotherhood and it slowly becomes evident how they get away with as much aggression as they do.

The leadership of Imperial is centralized on the asteroid Victoria. It is on this massive asteroid that the palace of the Imperial Serenity resides and directs the affairs of the Megacorporation. Victoria marks the first and till recently greatest development of an asteroid by a corporation. To date, Imperial's most audacious program was the terraforming of Ganymede. Attributed by many to be motivated by the asteroid developing prowess of Cybertronic which was cutting off Imperial development in the same region, Ganymede marks the first time Imperial has had a home "planet" of their own larger than both Luna and Mercury. In the heavy gravity of Jupiter, the Imperial forces on Ganymede are quietly building in an uncontested environment; non-Imperial personnel are not found there. While the Imperial Serenity assures the Cartel that the Ganymede colony is stable and alert for the presence of the Dark Legion, only the Brotherhood can say for sure.

This book contains:

- A detailed history of the Imperial Megacorp including its present politics
- A detailed view of Ganymede and Victoria
- New troop types for Imperial and the other corporations
- New weapons, and vehicles
- Notable personages and campaign events
- New rules for asteroid combat
- A look at the Clans of Imperial

EXE-02540
MSRP- \$24.95
Soft cover





MYSTIC EYE GAMES AND THUNDERHEAD GAMES TO PUBLISH ADVENTURES FOR FANTASY FLIGHT GAMES' DRAGONSTAR™

Roseville, Minnesota
March 5, 2002

Fantasy Flight Games has reached an agreement with Mystic Eye Games and Thunderhead Games authorizing these companies to publish adventures compatible with the *Dragonstar* space-fantasy campaign setting for the d20 System.

"This is a great partnership for all the parties involved," noted Greg Benage, the *Dragonstar* line developer at FFG. "FFG wants to focus its in-house production on source material and rules expansions, and this agreement allows us to do that knowing there will still be plenty of adventures to support the *Dragonstar* line. "Mystic Eye and Thunderhead are both new publishers with fresh ideas that have already produced some excellent products for the d20 System. We're excited to get them involved in *Dragonstar*."

Doug Herring, the CEO of Mystic Eye Games, added, "I enjoyed reading the *Starfarer's Handbook* immensely and am absolutely thrilled to be able to have the Mystic Eye Games team write adventures for the fantastic *Dragonstar* setting. What a fun and exciting opportunity for all. With FFG creating fine support material and with MEG and TG producing adventures we hope that this great game will increase its already swelling fan base tremendously. "

Hal Greenberg and Jim Govreau, co-owners of Thunderhead Games, think it's a wonderful opportunity for their company. "We bought the *Starfarer's Handbook* and kept saying how much we loved it. Now, with the ability to publish adventures in the *Dragonstar* setting, we look forward to taking the detail and personality we are known for and adding them to a space-fantasy setting. This is a match made in heaven."

Fantasy Flight, Inc., a corporation with offices in Roseville, Minnesota, is a leading U.S. hobby market producer of boardgames, roleplaying games, card games, and customizable disk games. FFG's products include the *Lord of the Rings* boardgame, the *Twilight Imperium* boardgame, the *Blue Planet v2* roleplaying game, and the *Legends & Lairs* and *Dragonstar* lines for the d20 System.

PRESS RELEASE

Mystic Eye Games is the producer of the popular *Hunt: Rise of Evil* setting for the d20 System and has been an innovator in creating new, quality products to complement fantasy gaming and d20. Mystic Eye Games has produced six bestselling products since June of 2001. The company has launched several original series for the d20 system such as *Foul Locales*, *Arcane Mysteries*, and the anticipated *Fall of Man* that will take the Mystic Eye Games d20 offerings well beyond The Hunt and into every d20 game.

Thunderhead Games, Inc, a corporation with its headquarters in Brandon, Florida, is a new role playing publisher that has produced the critically acclaimed adventure/sourcebook *Interludes: Brief Expeditions to Bluffsides*, along with the city sourcebook *Bluffsides: City on the Edge*. Thunderhead Games is doing what it did for cities and expanding to new regions, including the desert, arctic, and now space.

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Double-Blind Deployment Rules

The new editions of Chronopia (due in March or April) and Ultimate Warzone (hopefully due a few months after Chronopia) will use a new set of double-blind deployment rules. The rules use cards to represent your troops, vehicles, and even false leads that your enemy could close in on just to discover that there was no enemy there at all, they were just chasing shadows.

The cards that are used in this deployment system have a picture representing the corporation or army on one side and a stat sheet on the other. The cards can be ordered directly from Excelsior via their website. Below is the front of the Bauhaus card.



Below (in red) are the actual double-blind deployment rules for Chronopia and Ultimate Warzone.

Once the size of your game, the victory conditions and the deployment areas have been decided it is time to start your foray into the World of the Mutant Chronicles (Chronopia). One of the problems that we have found in Table-Top Gaming is that many games are won or lost at the deployment phase by players using their knowledge of the enemies strengths and weaknesses that they wouldn't normally have in a battlefield. Knowing what and where your opponent is deploying can be a huge advantage. To avoid

players waiting to see their opponent's troops and attempting to second guess their strategy and positioning, you don't deploy the models themselves at this time. Instead, MC: Warzone (Chronopia) uses Unit Cards!

When armies are being deployed, the players place the Unit Cards face down on the table instead of their models. In this manner, MC: Warzone (Chronopia) has the first true double-blind deployment system in a science fiction (fantasy) skirmish game! Additionally, these cards serve to keep track of a unit's vital information, which is frequently required while fighting a battle, drastically cutting down the amount of clutter and paper shuffling needed to access information.

A Unit Card can represent one entire squad, a single model, such as a sergeant or specialist, vehicles or even a False Lead. A Unit Card comes with every pack of miniatures purchased as well as in each box set. If you already have a force of MC: Warzone (Chronopia) figures however, the cards are also sold separately.

Players should have all of their figures and warbands written onto their Unit Cards, transferring all their vital statistics for easy review and reference. Once this is completed, the cards are separated into two piles: individuals, false leads (or dummy cards), vehicles and squad leaders are placed into one pile, and basic squads in the other. If there is no leader in a given squad, that unit's card should be placed in the first pile. Players roll a d20 and look through their army for the model with the highest Leadership value and add that figure to the die roll. The winner is the person with the highest score. The winner can nominate any one player, including himself, to deploy a Unit Card first. The nominated player must deploy a unit card to his or her own deployment area. Players then alternate deployment, one card at a time, until deployment is complete. If there are more than two players and the winner of deployment initiative nominates another player to deploy a Unit Card first, the initiative winner will deploy second, and the other players will deploy in descending order of initiative scores. When placing the Unit Cards make sure the models' description and statistics that are listed on the Unit Card are placed face down so your opponent has no idea of the specific troops you are playing with. The Unit Card remains on the table to represent the unit until the first time that unit activates or a spell/attack targets it. At this point the Unit Card is flipped, remaining in the same place it was deployed. On the stat side of the Unit Card is the center point that the Unit's Leader, Individual, or Vehicle is placed. Once placed on the center point, the Unit Card is slid out from underneath the figure. In the case of a Squad Leader, the remainder of the squad is then placed anywhere within Command Distance around the Leader and within the specified deployment area.

The only other way to reveal an opponent's unit that is still face down and unknown is to get a friendly unit within a certain number of inches from the target card. Your unit/model must be within its LD value in inches of the unrevealed unit and have an unobstructed line of sight. A model with a LD of 12 would therefore be able to reveal a card if it moved within 12 inches of it and had LOS. This does not reveal models that are Hidden however. If this is the case, the player should simply be told that he sees nothing.

If a model has the Hide special ability it does not have to reveal itself when it is activated if it does not perform an Action that will take the model out of its Hidden status. In other words, the Unit Card is placed face down at the time of deployment. When that unit activates and it decides to Wait, Infiltrate, etc., the Unit Card will stay face down or move along the battlefield if the unit can move while Hidden. Once that unit performs an action that will reveal itself the Unit Card is then flipped and the models themselves are deployed as described above.

There are certain spells and effects that may impact Unit Cards at the time of deployment. When these effects allow your opponent to deploy one of your forces, the Unit Cards are not used; instead you place the models themselves on the table. The player chooses blindly (in most cases) from the total pile of cards you have minus any false leads. The card he has chosen has its models placed on the board. In the even that he has selected a warband leader, the whole warband/unit is deployed as well and that card is removed from the to-be-deployed pile. The only exception to this rule occurs if the unit that your opponent chooses starts the game Hidden. In most of these cases, you do use the Unit Card to deploy the unit. Your opponent simply determines the location of the Hidden unit. False Leads are blank cards that you have added to your army roster to throw off your opponent's ability to be certain about your specific plans and strategy. Some forces in Warzone (Chronopia) have special rules regarding how many of these cards you may have at the beginning of a conflict. These cards are covered in the individual armies descriptions and special abilities. Once these cards are revealed they are merely removed from play. Their sole function is to add the uncertainty of warfare between one or more forces. Once you've done all that, you're ready to start fighting.

OK, so there are the basics. It looks a lot easier than the two other ways of playing blind that I have tried. They were 1) draping a bedsheet across half of the table and setting up without seeing where your opponent was placing his models and 2) playing on two different boards. The first worked decently for deployment, but after that you had full knowledge of what was where. It served about half the purpose and could be a royal pain in the butt to actually set up the sheet. The second way meant that you had to have a GM and he would tell each player when they had LOS to enemy models and would place them so you could see them. While very realistic and quite a bit of fun this method has some serious drawbacks. First is the need of a third person, the GM. If I'm going to Gm a game I'd rather it be a role-playing game, not a wargame where I'm just running back and forth putting models on the table for the other players. Second, you need room for two tables for a single game. Third, you potentially need double the normal number of models. And fourth, it takes a long time to play a game in this way. Like I said, it was a lot of fun, but I could hardly see doing it very often.

There are some aspects to the new rules which have not come to light yet. How many False Lead cards can each army have? The rules indicate that this may be different for each army and I would guess that the faster and or more stealthy armies might get more of them. I think that False Lead card could become a very effective game tactic if they could move as if they were infiltrating troops without revealing themselves to be nothing. The blowing of the wind, the rustling of leaves, and little creatures scurrying about could all throw your enemy into a blind-fire panic. Also, I have been told that each army will have specific pre-battle options that can be purchased. These will undoubtedly effect deployment and Unit Cards.

Some questions regarding the new Warzone/Chronopia double-blind deployment have been addressed in a FAQ that appears on the Excelsior website and have been reprinted here.

Am I allowed to overlap my Unit Cards during deployment?

Yes you can. The only rule of thumb you'd want to adhere to is that you should not overlap more than 1/2 of any Unit Card with another. This just makes it easier to withdraw the cards without upsetting the game. Generally, there is more than enough room in a deployment area to accommodate spreading out your cards.

How do I attack an unrevealed Unit Card?

What happens in this instance depends on you and the situation.

- 1) You cannot fire weapons into the unknown. You need a legitimate target to aim at.
- 2) You cannot target an unrevealed Unit Card with a template effect.
- 3) If you were able to charge into an unrevealed Unit Card seeking to engage in close combat, you would need to ask if that card represented a Hidden model. If it does, you cannot affect it. If the unrevealed Unit Card doesn't contain a hidden unit, then the card is flipped and the model(s) are deployed immediately. This can result in your attacking model being surrounded in the even that you charged a squad unknowingly. In any case, unless the attacking card was hidden the models placed as a result of a close combat attack are assumed to be on Wait. In the case that the unrevealed card is a False Lead, the card is revealed as such and discarded from the board.

NOTE: In the even your model charged a single figure consider this. The model represented by the card may be placed anywhere on the card's surface, not just on the center point. As such you get no charge bonus on an action that ends in an unrevealed card, you don't know exactly what you are facing after all.

How are cards used for airborne models?

Just as they are for land-based models. You will not be able to tell if something is flying until it is revealed. If a template is trained on the card, nothing happens. It is treated as Hidden for all initial intents and purposes.

Where are my minis kept during deployment if I am using these cards?

It would rather defeat the purpose of secret deployment if you have the models sitting out in the open for everyone to see. We generally favor having your figures left in the box or figure case where they are pulled as needed away from prying eyes. To minimize delays in this process we recommend organizing your figures into the units you will be using during the game. Otherwise, you may come up with a system that you like.

How does the size of a model affect the games use of Unit Cards? Can't I see a size 4 model from a distance?

Sure you could see it, but this really isn't the issue. The Unit Cards don't represent a model's size, but rather the unknown nature of an opponents force at the onset of the game. It isn't therefore that you can't see a giant model, you are simply not aware of the giant until it becomes active on the board.

Can I play the game without these cards?

You may play as you see fit in the privacy of your own home but in official events, tournaments and the like these cards will be necessary. We are sure that once you use them however, you will not only find them an excellent way to keep track of information, but a dynamic addition to a fantastic game. It considerably changes the feel of warfare adding an unknown factor into the game, an experience we are sure you will enjoy.

Does it matter how the card is oriented in deployment?

No. The orientation of the card doesn't matter. Center points are still in the middle regardless of how the card is turned.