

Fictional Reality

Issue 19

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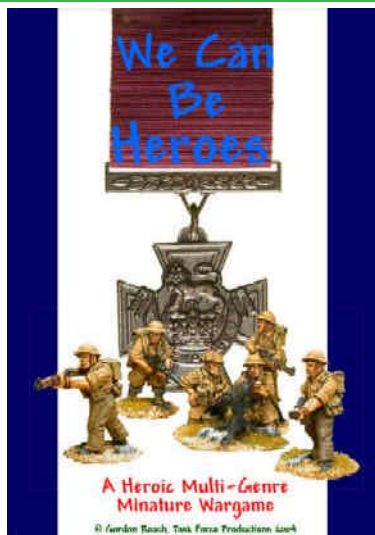
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www.urbanmammoth.com



Game Reviews



BASICS

Described on the cover as “Heroic skirmish miniature gaming” this set of wargame rules is designed to recreate the fun and excitement of “Hollywood” fight scenes on the tabletop. Suitable for 15mm to 54mm model soldiers but as evidenced by the excellent photos used to illustrate the book, largely aimed at the most popular 25/28mm scale. The skirmish nature of the game and a clever “skills” system allows individual figures (Heroes and Sidekicks) to have abilities which give

them some aspects of “Character” normally found in roleplay games. The rules are largely “period free” and can be used for games in historical, sci-fi or fantasy settings with equal ease. Changing the weapons in use and genre specifics does not alter the game mechanisms. The designers stated aim when developing WCBH was for games which are “fun, light hearted, high pace...” to use small numbers of figures which they, like most gamers, have sitting largely unused on shelves. 20 or so miniatures, being enough to give 2 players a game lasting around an hour and half.

INSIDE

WCBH is a 67 page book (or PDF download) which, at first glance, seems to be a lot of pages for a quick “fun” game, however reading them through you realise that less than half of these are rules and game play examples. The remainder being scenarios and comprehensive sample force lists for 5 different game genres: WW2, Vietnam, Modern Urban Warfare (Somalia... Blackhawk Down), Science Fiction and Fantasy. Each genre, also having its own free play sheet. Another element worthy of specific mention is the profusion of colour illustrations, which feature superbly painted miniatures from the collections of Agis Neugebauer and Tom Weiss. Very inspiring.

After an outline of how the game works and the concept of “heroic skirmish” the rules develop through:

- Troop types,
- Turn sequence,
- Initiative and Actions
- Movement and Combat
- Character skills and abilities
- Vehicles and Horses

Each section is made up of simple tables and a brief text. Game play examples then show how the rules are used in practice.

PLAYING THE GAME

Game play is largely intuitive; the mechanisms are based on D6 rolls against a target score, with a distinct D6 being rolled each turn for Command Points. These points then being used to alter dice rolls and combat results or undertake specific actions like spotting hidden enemies or interrupting initiative. Initiative is based on a player continuing successful actions until either interrupted or failing in an attempt to complete an action. Initiative then passing to the other player. The use of initiative and the order in which actions are done is very important. High-risk actions may bring good rewards, but may also lose you the chance to do something else. Within the first game, even novice gamers will have mastered the game mechanics and as all detailed information needed is on the play sheets, reference to the rulebook becomes unnecessary.

The crux of the game mechanism is a concept of “superior” and “inferior” troops that compares the specific forces being used in the game. So against WW2 French infantry the Germans will be “superior” but against British Commandos they will count as “inferior”. This allows a very simple reference table based on the 2 classes rather than long lists of specifics. This makes balancing forces for the games very easy.

Historical Games: Think “Kelly’s Heroes” or “Raid on Rommel” and you will be on the right track for how “We can be Heroes” recreates WW2 actions. Here the characters are larger than life, doing impossible things and walking away unscathed with some immortal one liner. Great stuff! Not to say that the games are simplistic, the ToE are extensive and well researched, game details for all the common US, German, Russian and British weapons and vehicles are included. The Vietnam and Somalia sections are smaller but still give enough information for gaming actions like the sniper hunt from Full Metal Jacket and Black Hawk Down. In fact the data table goes so far as to include heavy weapons such as 75mm howitzers which will probably see very little use in skirmish gaming.

Sci Fi Games: This is near future stuff and equipment wise fits very well with figure ranges from GW 40k and VOID. It is more Paul Verhoeven’s Starship Troopers than Asimov. The designers point out that this section will be developed in more detailed and varied sci fi supplements in due course. (In fact one of the first free supplements expands it into Post Apocalyptic games)

Fantasy Games: Based around Force lists and Magic for Human and Orc/Goblin armies. The Magic system is functional and deliberately simple; do not expect volumes of unique spells and magic powers. Here a simple spell or two sets a wizard character apart from the non-magical minions and magic swords are rare enough that only true heroes get a sight of them. Game wise “We can be Heroes” fantasy is Conan and Hawk the Slayer.

SCENARIOS AND ARMY LISTS

Six generic scenarios are included, each fully detailed with ob-

jectives, terrain and force guidelines for a game on a 48" square table. These scenarios cover Sniper Hunts, Capture a Prisoner, Outpost Attack as well as standard Patrol encounter battles. These provide enough of a framework to allow further scenarios to be developed very easily. Similarly, the ToE and Army lists can be expanded to include more unusual or scenario specific equipment by comparing it to the wide range of examples already provided.

VALUE

The book costs in at 39.95NZ dollars (about \$28.50US) the PDF Download at 14.95NZ (about \$10.65US) so is priced on a par with the majority of professionally printed, colour picture wargame rule sets currently on the market. However the fact that it contains rules and information to play 5 different (8, if you count the available free expansions) genres of game you are really getting a great deal for your money. "We can be Heroes" does not compete with Warhammer or Warlord as a Fantasy rule set, with VOID or VOR as sci fi or Rapid Fire or Battlefront for WW2. But then, that is not what it is about. "We can be Heroes" is designed for a very specific type/style of game. If you want to be able grab a couple of dozen rarely used figures from the back of your "will use these one day" shelf, set up a 4ft table and spend a couple of hours having a fun game, you could not do much better than this.

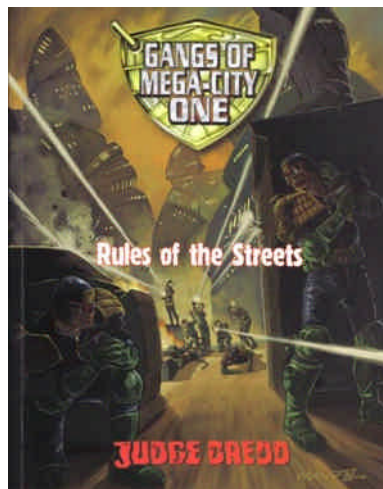
The rules are obviously aimed primarily at WW2 and Modern skirmish gaming, and they are superb for this. The Sci Fi and Fantasy sections being useful "extras", giving a different option for an evenings gaming for no extra investment. However the core mechanisms are sound enough that very little work can turn these into a Gothic Horror Vampire hunt or an Aliens colonist rescue for more variety. As yet there are no "pre gunpowder" historical expansions but I see no reason why the core mechanics should not support Robin Hood or Achilles and Hector.

Multiplayer games are possible with "We can be Heroes" but in our review games required some tinkering with the initiative mechanism and Command dice to keep everyone involved. Given the obvious scope for multiplayer "team" skirmish games I am surprised that this was not included as a standard option.

The rule set does not really support an "xx points, you start this side I set up that side" type of game. In a skirmish game the scenario is very important as it sets the scene for the actors to play. The more effort that goes into this aspect of the game the better, infact the best games the review team had involved a non playing umpire in an expanded Roleplay type game. The designer support seems excellent with a free web forum/ discussion group, which also provides access to the free expansions that are available for download. Currently there are 3 expansions available, Cowboys/Wild West, Counterstrike (Delta Force/SAS vs. Terrorists) and a near future "post apocalyptic" variant. The designers also list SWAT/Gangsta, 1920-30s gangsters, a LotR adaption, a WW1/WW2 aerial dogfight, and "Toy Soldiers" as expansions already in development.

Overall for the cost "We can be Heroes" is a terrific investment, probably the most "user friendly" rule set I have played in a long time and as more of the expansions come out the better the value gets. It more than succeeds in the designers aim. Fast, Furious and Fun. Excellent stuff.

Review by Robert Hooper



BASICS

Gangs of Mega-City One is Mongoose Publishing's foray into tabletop miniature warfare using the grim but sometimes cartoony and comical background of the Judge Dredd universe. The box set will set you back \$49.95 USD and contains everything you need to get started in your career as a gang leader who's out to score some Empty Candy, sugar or cigarettes.

COMPONENTS

What's the first thing you do after opening a new game? No, before checking to see if all of the pieces are there. Yes, that's right, you see if it has that 'new game' smell. But just like with a new car this wonderful odor will not last forever so enjoy it while you can. Oh, by the way, the good smell is definitely present here with Gangs of Mega-City One. Inside the box you'll find a rulebook, six d6's, two large sprues of plastic pieces for twelve miniatures, twelve round plastic bases, four sheets of card terrain and one battle mat.

Nothing special about the dice. They will probably get tossed in with the rest of your growing collection, but I appreciate them being included in the box for players that might not have any. The card terrain is printed on glossy paper that's about the thickness of an index card. They are done in full color and look very nice. You get two buildings, two cars, two ruined buildings and bunches of oil drums and other obstacles. Since the undamaged buildings are meant to serve as terrain to run around and also stand on top of I would suggest investing in a single sheet of foamcore and gluing all of the building facades onto it for extra rigidity. You don't have to, but I think the investment of a couple of bucks will be well worth it and it shouldn't take much more time at all to construct them this way than without it. The battle mat is about 22" x 34" and is a full color representation of several intersecting roadways and concrete slabs on which to place buildings and other terrain features. While it may not be big enough to fill a 4' x 6' table it's still a very nice looking mat and is a nice addition to the box.

A full review of the figures that come in the box set can be found in the miniature review section of this issue of Fictional Reality (since they can also be bought separated from the base game) so

I'm not going to duplicate the same review here. The rulebook is a softcover perfect bound book that is printed on glossy paper with full color illustrations. The binding appears to be very well done and I was able to fold the section I was reading flat without having any problems at all.

THE GAME

Ok, I'll say what you're probably already thinking on your own and that's, "Is this just a rehashing of Necromunda by a different company?" Well, no. Of course, there are similarities between the games (gangs in the future fighting for territory and weapons and trying to get better so they can kick more ass, etc...) but I would suggest that the Judge Dredd comic books presented a view of this type of thing long before Necromunda came out or even Warhammer 40K for that matter. If anything, I'd say that much of Necromunda was inspired by those comics. How many of us that played (play) Necromunda didn't think of how cool it would be to have Judges running around, and sky surfers, and fatties, oh you get the point. Well, now you can have them.

The first thing to understand about the game is that you're not building a squad of Judges to go clean up the streets. Yes, there is an opportunity to use the Judges in your games (more on that later) but your focus is building a gang to go out and wreak havoc. The introduction is short but gives you a glimpse into the Judge Dredd universe. For those of us already familiar with it, either from the comics or the rpg, it's nothing new but to the uninitiated it's a decent start that will make you want to find more on your own.

The basics of putting together your first gang is easy. A "Top Dog" is your leader and then you'll have Punks and Juvies working under him or her. You start off with a set number of credits to spend on the members of your gang and their equipment and weapons. Easy enough. The game rules are broken up into *basic* and *advanced* sections.

The basic rules introduce the die rolling conventions, characteristic tests, actions and game turns. The game uses just d6's to take care of all action resolution but sometimes the die roll will be read as a d2 or d3. Model attributes include Speed (how many inches you can move), Agility (shooting and some other tests), Resilience (toughness), Close Combat (how well you can beat down other models), Hits (wounds or hit points) and Will to Fight (how long you want to stick around when the chips are down).

Characters can perform two actions per turn and these include moving, shooting, charging or being ready. As you would expect terrain affects not only movement but also shooting combat. When shooting at an enemy you roll a number of dice depending on the weapon you're using and then compare that to your Agility characteristic. Some weapons allow multiple shooting dice which represents their higher rate of fire. If you hit a target you then compare the weapon's damage rating (a d6 roll, usually with a modifier) to the target's Resilience. If you equal or exceed their Resilience you cause one point of damage. Close combats are handled in a similar manner but each combatant rolls their

number of Close Combat dice (with modifiers) and the highest single roll (not total) wins the combat. In the basic game you take turns activating models and models are removed from the game when they hit zero wounds. The basic rules take up fifteen pages and have well detailed graphical examples to fully explain the rules. Starting gamers will want to begin here and play a few games but I can see veterans reading the basic rule and then heading right into the advanced ones before playing. I have to admit I would do the same.

Seven more pages make up the advanced rules and they include new rules like being on 'Alert' status which allows you to take action against enemies that stray too close to you and injuries. Unlike the basic game where you are removed if you get down to zero hits, the advanced game has you rolling on an injury table to see how messed up you are. These injuries can range from being stunned all the way up to being blown into many pieces. Injuries in between these two extremes result in degradation of your stats and can pile up to reduce a model's effectiveness during a game. Fumbles and critical hits are introduced to increase the lethality of combat not only to your enemies but maybe also to yourself and you can now fight with two weapons. Grenades are also brought into play along with rules for deviation and you can now fall off buildings, jump across rooftops and destroy objects.

The next twelve pages detail the weapons and equipment you'll be using to trash your enemies with. Weapons come in close combat, pistol, rifle, unique (stuff like missile launchers and lazookas) and grenade varieties with some allowing various ammo options, for an extra cost of course. Armor will boost your Resilience and there's a short list of extra equipment to choose from. After that, there are sixteen more pages on the background of Mega-City one that new and old Judge Dredd fans should enjoy. It's not 100% inclusive of everything in the world but that would be an impossible thing to ask for in this rulebook. There's simply too much that's gone on in the world to cover it all here, but it's a good read that, like the introduction at the beginning of the book, will whet your appetite for more.

If you wanted to stop here and just play the game with new gangs each game and blast away at each other you could do that and be just fine, but you'd be missing out on one of the things that makes the game so much fun and that's the campaign aspect of the game where your gang members get more experienced, you recruit more members, get better equipment, put more turf under your control, gain a fearsome reputation and kick more butt! Of course, you could become so much of a threat that your opponent calls the Judges and tells them where to find you and then you'll have to fight them. But think about it, what could be better to increase your fearsome reputation to legendary heights except for taking down a squad of Judges! Yup, the campaign game is really (in my mind) what this game is all about. Another addition to the game when playing a campaign and keeping track of fights is the addition of traits to your members. There are five pages of traits, or special abilities if you like, that can make your gang an even more fearsome sight walking down the halls of Crispin Glover block. There are eight scenarios to play through when challenged by another gang and you can always make up more as

The background of the cover is a dramatic illustration of a Starship Trooper in full combat armor standing on a rocky, alien planet. The trooper is looking forward with a determined expression. In the foreground, several large, red, segmented tentacles of a giant alien creature are reaching up towards the trooper. The sky is a hazy, orange-brown color, suggesting a hostile environment. The title 'STARSHIP TROOPERS' is written in a large, stylized, red and yellow font with a black outline. Below it, the words 'THE ROLEPLAYING GAME' are written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font.

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long as both players agree on the terms of the fight.

More fights generally means more turn under your thumb and that means more income. That can translate to more 'regular' gang members but can also mean you bringing in Specialists. These are guys like personal bodyguards for your "Top Dog", the flying Batters, Citi-Def members, mutants and, of course, Fatties. These specialists not only require a pretty high outlay of cash to join your gang but they also require that you've achieved a certain reputation before they'll hook up with you. There are fifteen specialists presented in the book, but the Judge Dredd world is large enough to have many more come out in future supplements.

The chapter on The Justice Department explains how you or your opponent can call out the Judges to throw the book at someone. You can call out the Judges against any opponent but I'd suggest not making it a habit of calling on the Judges too often as you really get the biggest payoff from defeating other gangs. Of course, if you're seriously outgunned then that's what they are there for. The size of the Judge patrol that shows up is equal to the reputation of the gang they will be fighting so it's definitely not a pushover. Judges are bought with Justice Points in an equal number to the gang's reputation. For example, a Street Judge costs 5 points and a Senior Judge is 10 and they have access to all of the Justice Department equipment and goodies that you'd expect. Again, fun every once in a while, but probably not great all of the time.

The book ends in some example of painted gangs, an index (a must have!), two ready-made gangs to get you started and a blank gang sheet.

VLAUE

Ok, so do you pony up the fifty bucks for Gangs of Mega-City One? If you're a fan of the rpg or just Judge Dredd in general and have wanted to throw down with some miniatures then I think there's not much question in that you'll want and enjoy the game. It's an easy game to jump into and while you'll quickly want to expand your gang from the miniatures that come in the box there are enough figures here for two players to start off with small gangs of six members each. If you're an old-school Necromunda player you'll find the transition over to Gangs of Mega-City One easy and it's also a game where you can make use of your Necromunda figures that have been lying around gathering dust, not in official tournaments of course. This is an easy game to play and one with a rich background that can be used for lots of cool future supplements and the miniature release schedule posted on the Mongoose Publishing website is encouraging in that it looks like a ton of figures will be released by the time you are reading this review.

Review by Mark Theurer

BASICS

Nin-Gonost is Adiken's entry into the skirmish fantasy miniatures arena and you can buy the game components separately, or as reviewed here, in a set. The first thing that you'll notice about Nin-Gonost is that it's damn heavy! I had expected it to be a



standard game that comes in a cardboard box, but it's actually contained in a wooden case, complete with latches and handle. In the game you play either stalwart adventurers, the good guys, exploring dungeons or the evil orcs

who want to kill the pansy adventurers, of course. It has a MSRP of \$149.95 and is available now.

CONTENTS

The suitcase is packed with stuff, including...

- 1 Nin-Gonost rulebook
- 26 Dice
- 14 Adiken miniatures (metal) and character cards
- 6 Adikolor paints and 1 paintbrush
- 4 Sarcophagus miniatures (metal)
- 4 Door miniatures (metal)
- 10 Wall sections (resin, 4 short and 6 long)
- 32 Floor sections (resin, four 3x3, fourteen 1x3 and fourteen 1x2)

After laying everything out on the table I took a look at the Adiken website and priced everything out. If you bought it all separately (case not available on its own) it would come out to over \$240.00 so the Nin-Gonost case itself ends up being free and the components are at least 35% off the regular price.

The floor sections are the first thing that really caught my eye and were also the first thing that I sat down and played with, even before reading the rulebook. They are all resin pieces that hold together via magnets that are set into the insides of each piece. The pieces are easy enough to pull apart when you're done but should not come apart if your table is bumped. The squares are about 1.5" instead of the standard 1" that you're probably used to in Dungeons & Dragons but I'd have no problem using them in my D&D game and will be very soon. They are base resin and need to be primed and painted but are lightweight, sturdy and detailed with cracks in the tiles. If built into make a 30' x 85' rectangle room with a few squares of tile to spare.

So, that's over 2500 square feet (scale) to build with and you can make rooms, halls, etc... The wall sections are made of the same resin and have magnets set into them which attach to the floors to create enclosed rooms. There are enough wall sections (four 1 square length and six 3 square length) to put wall up around twenty-two floor squares. They are well detailed and should paint up easily with a dark base coat and a quick lighter drybrushing. I think that the floor sections are more useful and would have preferred more floors and could have lived with no resin walls at all, but that could just be me.

The sarcophagus and door miniatures are cast in metal and will match up well with the floors and walls. The coffins are two-piece models that have removable lids. The insides are empty but you could drop a skeleton miniature into them if you wanted. I'm thinking of painting them and then using clear resin (colored) to fill them with goo to represent various oozes or other nasty

creatures for characters to discover. The coffins had little bits of flash on them but not anything terrible. The mold was pretty much unnoticeable. The doors are great! They are also two-piece models (door and frame) and the door fits into hinges on the stone frame and you are able to represent it being open closed, which does matter in the game rules. The mold line was visible but easily removed and there was also a bit of flash on each of the doors but it was mostly minimal.

The dice have a satin, jeweled appearance and have the numbers printed on them instead of being engraved. They are all eye-catching colors that represent different levels of ability in the game, but if you're looking to get double-duty out of them you're out of luck. They are all d6, but not really. Out of the 26 dice two of them go from 1-6. The rest have varying number ranges (5-10, 11-16, etc...). They are an integral part of the game mechanics but generally not usable outside of Nin-Gonost.

You get six bottles of Adikolor paint in the case: Leather, Judgment White, Plague, Despair Black, Orc Flesh and Sterling Silver. I'm already a fan of the Adikolor paint range (been once since the suitcase of paint came out last year) so these were just a welcome addition to my painting table. The brush is a '1' sable brush from Adiken's line and it will be fine for blocking out main colors but you won't be doing any serious detail work with it. From my perspective, I was happy to get it as I don't always take the best care of my brushes (I'm doing better but still leave them bristles down in cleaning water from time to time) and can always use more.

The selection of paints will allow you to get a passable job done on the bad-guys (more on them later) but the heroes get kind of left out here. Since there are more orcs in the set than adventurers I guess it makes sense that all of the paints are useful for them. You'd need to pick up just a few more colors to get enough to finish off the adventurers so it's not a huge outlay that you're looking at and you probably have the needed colors at home anyway. What you really get here is a starter set of Adikolor and you can decide from there if you want to invest in more of the line. Personally, I like their line of paint very much.

Each of the fourteen figures comes with a data card that details its point cost and abilities. You get eight orcs (four warriors, three brutes and three bowman) and all are different sculpts. They are your standard Adiken orcs and have more of a (in my opinion anyway) slender Lord of the Rings feel to them than the bulkier Games Workshop orcs or those from Reaper's Warlord line. With the four (all male and also all human) adventurers you get a knight in plate armor with sword and shield, a fighter wearing a breastplate with hammer and shield, a squire in leather carrying a lantern and mace and finally a bowman in leather with a long-bow. You'll have a bit of cleaning to do before they're ready to be primed. A few of them had some bends on weapons that are sticking out away from the models so be careful when getting them back into place. It would have been nice to have a bit more variety in the heroes. Adiken has an extensive line of figures and putting in a female or a dwarf or elf would have been easy. All of the figures can certainly find work in any fantasy so there's

added value there.

The case itself feels pretty sturdy and has a plastic insert for all of the components to fit in. I don't know if it's really necessary but I think that I'll be staining and sealing the case. It will look very unique and should last much longer that way. Not that I intend to let it sit out in the rain or anything.

THE GAME

The rule book is a digest sized 120-page book that has a color cover and black & white interior art and photos. It's divided into sections for the basic rules, scenarios, advanced rules and a who's who of the world of Gwaindor. The basic game is about moving and fighting and that's what the first section of rules lays out for you. This is an "I go, you go" game where one side activates and performs all of the actions for it's models and then the other side does the same. Each model has a number or action points to do this with and most things take a single action point to accomplish (move once, attack once, etc...) but some will sap you for 2 points (open/close a door or shoot a bow). In the base game everyone has four action points, but when you look at the rest of the stats things start to spread out a bit.

When you move you can choose between walking and running and in the basic game you must start or stop at your walk rate. Heavily armored models will have greatly reduced rates when compared to those in light armor. Hand to hand combat is pretty easily resolved through the use of the different colored dice. When trying to strike someone you start off with your base die, whose color corresponds to the color of the icon of your 'Fight' score. For Eric the Squire this is a red die which has a number range of 5-10. If Eric attacks his opponent from behind he moves to the gold die which goes from 6-11. Let's say that Eric wants to smash in the head of an Orc warrior that he's snuck up behind. Eric gets a +1 modifier for striking from behind, moving his die from red to gold and the orc (who also started at a red die) gets a -1 modifier and goes from red down to purple (range of 5-9). Both players roll their die along with what's called a 'Fate' die.

The 'Fate' die gives each player a chance of something miraculous happening but it's not just a straight 1 in 6 chance. First we must compare the rolls of the colored dice. If the attacker wins then he adds the difference of the rolls to his damage (also found on the reference card) and if this total exceeds the target's resistance the model is killed and removed from the game. If the winner's 'Fate' die had come up with the + symbol then he would have instantly killed his opponent regardless of the difference between the scores. Had the loser's 'Fate' die smiled upon him he would have been unharmed regardless of the other roll. If both roll a + on the 'Fate' die and both colored dice result in a tie then both combatants are killed!

Ranged fire is handled with just one roll for the attacker with similar modifiers that bump you up to the next colored die. In melee combat your range of scores goes up, or down, to create a greater chance of a kill. When you go up in the ranged dice you have a greater chance of hitting and also do more damage. Shooting does take more actions than attempting to strike in hand

to hand but you can concentrate (aim) and spend an extra action to bump up by one die. If you get to the black die, in either ranged or melee combat, you are really going to dish out some major damage unless fate smiles upon your opponent. The basic game ends with a short section on experience points. As your adventurers live through scenarios they gain experience which can allow them to re-roll a die or eventually get an automatic + result on the 'Fate' die. The basic game is just that, basic. It's meant to get you familiar with the dice and combat modifiers.

There are ten scenarios in the book which gives you a lot of replay value, especially if you switch sides and play each one as the good and bad guys. Each scenario has a briefing for each side and there are special rules for each that are easy to follow.

In the advanced rules we deal with attributes like strength and willpower which are used to pick things up and resisting the effects of spells. More importantly we also get more than one wound per model in the advanced rules. All of the orcs in the game have two and the adventurers range from 2-5. Dropping below zero results in a dead model, but you can try to heal yourself by not taking any other actions during a turn. Morale is also introduced and while being 'Inspired' can give you bonuses you're also likely to experience intimidation, being scared and terrified during the course of an adventure.

You can now combine actions in an attempt to do more but your accuracy will suffer and you can save up to two action points from your turn to use as a reaction to your opponent's actions. Unlike in the basic game you are allowed stay at run speed at the end of your turn and you can move through squares containing friendly models, but you will be making a DEX check to avoid a possibly calamity. There are several additions to the melee and ranged combat rules, all of which make for a more entertaining game. You can now attack objects and try to smash through doors instead of just opening them.

Skills, spells and weapon modifiers round out the advanced rules. I suspect that most veteran gamers will read through the basic rules to get an understanding of the game mechanics and then will play using the advanced rules. I did the same myself. First time fantasy gamers will benefit from paying a game or two using the basic rules but the advanced rules are much deeper and will make for a more enjoyable game. The book ends with a look at five special characters in the game world. These range from wizards to a vampire to a dragon and they include their stats in the book, but not on cards.

REVIEW

This was a fun and easy game to play. There are not so many rules that you're constantly looking stuff up in the book but there are enough to keep the game fun and give you tactical options. The basic game is essentially just a run, or shoot, at each other and try to kill them. Ok, using the advanced rules you're still trying to kill each other and move to the next scenario but there are more and better ways to do it. The die mechanic is a different way to add or subtract modifiers to a standard d6 roll and the comparing of rolls does not bog down the game at all and gives

you, as the defender, a chance to do something other than just sit there and get bashed in the head.

After playing with the models and cards in the base game you'll want to use other Adiken figures to play larger games or ones with different adventurers or monsters. I went over to the Adiken website and found that existing models have their stats so you can use them in your games. I expect that all Adiken models will now be sold with Nin-Gonost cards but it's not reasonable to expect you to buy the miniatures again just to get the card. It was definitely a good move to post the stats of existing models on their site. Hopefully, you'll be able to buy the cards for existing models separate from the blister pack. For upcoming models you can see a small version of their card but when you look at the larger version some of their attributes are cut off. Between the two views you can make out all of their stats though.

This is not an inexpensive game, make no mistake about it. But I don't think Adiken is trying to push out a quick and dirty version of a dungeon exploration game. You do get a lot in the case for your money as I outlined above when comparing what you get in the case versus buying everything off the rack. The resin floors are absolutely awesome and I'm glad that you can buy them separately to build bigger dungeon complexes.

The rules are easy to follow and the starter paint set is a welcome addition. Yes, you can get into other game for less money, but you do get a very complete game for the price that you'd probably pay incrementally without even thinking about it very much. I know that I've spent far more than this on just about every miniature game that I own. Ultimately, whether you drop about \$150.00 in one fell swoop on a game comes down to how comfortable you are in spending that kind of money all at once. It's definitely worth a look if you're in the market for a game that you can play easily without too much table space or set up that simulates an old-school, high fantasy dungeon crawl with a lot of replay value.

Review by Mark Theurer



BASICS

Urban War is Urban Mammoth's (formerly I-Kore) entry into skirmish based sci-fi tabletop wargames. Their larger scale game, VOID, has been out for more than a few years now and this ruleset should be equally easy for VOID players and newcomers to get into. The rules come in a full-color, glossy, stapled softcover format and are available now. It has a retail price of £4 / 6€, or between \$7-\$8 depending on the exchange rate. Buying the basic rules also gets you a coupon for a free Triad Boss miniature, reviewed later in this issue of Fictional Reality.

PRESENTATION

The 48-page book has plenty of great artwork inside. The cover is only a sample of what you'll see. The artwork, all full-color, is contained in the latter third of the book, but it's wonderful. The

army lists are really more pictures than text and serve as a great painting guide for the miniatures. There are a few female pics with partially uncovered upper torsos so just beware if that's not your cup of tea. The text was all easy to read and even though I mentioned that you can use the artwork as a guide to paint your figures there is also a detailed painting example of a Viridian Sniper and Junker Secutor that will help out beginners.

THE GAME

Urban War is based in the VOID universe but concentrates the action around very small units of combatants instead of whole armies. Instead of controlling the actions of entire squads of figures you'll be in command of several individuals. This means a greater choice of actions and function for each miniatures and also an added importance to each of your figures.

The rulebook is broken up into several sections ranging from setting up your game table, rules for shooting, movement and hand-to-hand combat, special rules and abilities and an armory. The game uses exclusively d10's to resolve actions and the flow of the game is based on orders that are given to your troops and an initiative roll. There can be alternate activation of troops, but there could be situations where the orders that are given by each player result in me using all of my troops for the turn and then you using all of yours.

There are three phases to each turn. In the first, Marker, phase you remove counters leftover from the previous turn. Next, you assign one of three orders to each of your models. These orders dictate which actions your figure can choose from this turn. Then each player rolls a d10 and we go through the order hierarchy and resolve actions. All of the rules are easy to read and understand and take up 21 pages of the book.

Combat is easily resolved by comparing your models relevant stat to a pre-determined 'to-hit' number and then applying modifiers. Your standard modifiers for cover, range, etc... exist but there is also an additional bonus that your fighters can get based on their quality, or "Calibre". The more experience your troops have the better they are at choosing between targets, when aiming a shot at the enemy, when trying to avoid an enemy bullet and passing a morale test.

Army lists are provided for all four races but they are not exten-

sive, yet. The plan with Urban War is for each 'issue' or expansion to include new rules and troops for the game. These will be released bi-monthly along with new figures. Also, there is not a lot of the book is spent on fluff and I'd expect more to come in future issues. The Synth have five and Junkers have four troop choices, while the VASA have three and the Viridians just two. Even with just two choices I did like the Viridian's Colonial Marines the best. It's here in the army lists that you'll choose between the various calibres of troops. As an example, there are three calibres of Colonial Marines (my faves), zero through two. All of their basic stats are the same but the higher in quality you go the better chances you have of getting additional positive modifiers on certain rolls. Based on that you might want to go right out and buy nothing but the highest calibre troops that are in your list but there are rules that ensure that you have at least as many lower level troops as the higher ones.

One addition that I'd expect in an upcoming issue is related to damage and wounds. Right now, in the basic game, wounds are marked off as they are taken and as soon as you're at zero the model is pulled off the board as a casualty. In a skirmish game like this I'd like to see rules for various levels of damage and degraded abilities. Yes, that would involve more bookkeeping but I don't think that's a problem when you're pushing 5-10 models around the table. I'd also expect experience and campaign rules in upcoming supplements.

VALUE

Urban War is an easy game to pick up. The rules are straightforward, there is not a huge outlay for miniatures needed to get started and the rulebook itself is very affordable and you get a free figure to boot! Just on price alone Urban War is worth a look and I think you'll find it to be an entertaining skirmish game that's easy to play and does not have a huge investment of either time or money required. If the upcoming supplements are as inexpensive as the basic rules then fans should have no problem keeping up with each bi-monthly release. Also, I checked the Urban Mammoth website and all of the miniatures in the current army lists are available so you'll have no trouble outfitting your force with the correct figures.

Review by Mark Theurer



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Miniature Reviews



2879 Vidor Northam \$4.99
Sculpted by Ben Siens



Vidor is a single piece model with a very low profile solid metal integrated base. By the looks of him, I'd have to guess that he is a barbarian type fighter that swings a sword that can bring down buildings. He is wearing scale mail on his torso with armored shoulder pads but beyond that he is only wearing some leather fur-lined boots and fur loincloth. If I didn't know better, I'd think that this model might represent some dude that wrestles on TV for a living, or maybe he even gets elected as a

governor somewhere. In any case, the sword this guy swings is gonna hurt the first half dozen guys it reaches in a swing. Mold lines on one side of this model were fairly substantial. On the other side, they were there, but not nearly as bad. Flash on the other hand was not an issue on either side. The facial detail is fairly impressive, and his ham sized fists are big enough that you can actually see the fingernails plainly. If you want a great big ole beefy fighter type that looks like he has little on his mind beyond smashing his next foe, then I think you don't have to go any further.

2880 Lion Man \$5.49
Sculpted by Julie Guthrie



The Lion Man figure is a single piece sculpt with an integrated broccoli base. The model is about 30mm tall and is sculpted facing to the right. In his left hand is a large sword and his right has twin metal claws. The model is well-cast, with only a few mold lines around the metals claws. The overall sculpt is two-dimensional with the lions tail sculpted into the back of the right leg. The sword is attached in the same

way to the front of the left leg. Some work with a razor saw and repairs with green stuff can fix this. This is a fantasy miniature, but for those that play pulp era games: Rejoice! For Thun, King of the Lionmen, enemy of Ming the Merciless, and ally of Flash

Gordan is finally available in miniature!

2881 Dara, Psychic Warrior \$3.99
Sculpted by Sandra Garrity
Dara is a single-piece female figure with integrated broccoli base. She is wearing a cloak and banded armor. Her left hand holds a cavalry shield and her right is brandishing a scimitar over her head. Her hair is corn-rowed and she is sculpted as if she is either levitating or jumping down.



This model is poorly cast. There are extensive mold lines along the shield (about 1 mm high) as well as along the right arm and the right side of the cloak. There is about a 1" long extrusion from the underside of the base. I was unable to find the model listed in the on-line store. The quality of this figure is very much below the Reaper Standard that I assume that it either was a bad mold (and it may have been pulled from production) or just a rare bad cast that was not caught in packaging.



2882 Torie Doman, Dark Elf \$3.99
Sculpted by Bobby Jackson
This guy is a single piece mold with an integrated solid metal base. There was only a small amount of flash and there were minor mold lines on the swords and in a couple other places, but none were hard to file off. There are a couple of pieces of waste that have to be cut away, one that supports the hilt of one sword, and another that supports one of the two scabbards. Torie himself has very sharp facial features that include large angry looking eyes. This definitely gives him an evil appearance.

He has two swords, one large and another not quite as large, and is heavily armored. At first glance, you will notice that there is something odd about this model that makes it look not quite right. It's not until I looked closer that I noticed that he is holding both his swords in a reverse grip so that the sword blades are actually behind his arms. This should make for an interesting choreography when he fights. This guy will make a good elven two weapon fighter (could actually pass as a good guy or bad). The other thought that might pass through your mind is that he would make for a decent vampire character as well.

2883 Sir Kimball, Crusader \$4.49
Sculpted by Bobby Jackson

This is a two piece model, the second piece being attached to the base with a bit of extra metal. The detached part is Sir Kimball's

VERIDIUS



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of the Woodspike
In the ruins of the
sacred city Quessallas,
the unwitting protector of
the antediluvian elven magic
awakens after a deep slumber

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of his breath lingers
in the air
as he leaves the
crumbling temple
to feast upon the
sacrifice tithed
by the orcs of Kargir

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emanating from the
maiden sacrifice and
the bloodthirsty cheers
of the orcs...
Viridius,
the ancient evil,
claims his right.



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2884 Lord Jester, Mercenary
Sculpted by Bobby Jackson



Lord Jester is a human fighter wearing a mix of heavy plate and leather armor. He carries a sword (mine was slightly bent in the package and had to be carefully straightened) and axe and stands with one foot atop a pile of skulls. He looks very much like he belongs

as part of a Crusaders army for Warlord and I'm surprised that he didn't show up as a sergeant for a unit of troops or a hero in that game. A horn and scabbard hang on his belt and there are more clasps and buckles across the front of the figure. Facial detail is very good and the armor has nice embossing and details that will be pretty easy to pick out when painting him. I like the pose of the figure quite a bit as he looks like he's moving forward in an attack motion with his sword coming around to strike. The mold line was really only visible on the sword and on one of the plates of armor. Flash was limited to around the base and cleaned up easily. A very good model that will make a fine player character or a leader/hero in any skirmish or mass combat game.

2885 Khalith, Mummy Lord
Sculpted by James VanSchaik
Khalith is a one-piece model of a mummy whose flesh is remark-

able well preserved, but his wrappings are in tatters. His muscles are also equally well preserved and he's one undead king who's seen time in the gym. In addition to his traditional wrappings Khalith is also wearing a skirt and Egyptian headdress.

There were some bits of flash along the dangling wrappings and on the sword but there was only one small place where the mold line was visible and it was hardly noticeable. He's standing on a block of stone that has some glyphs carved into it that will be easy to show off with an ink wash and there is also a cobra coiled up by the block. A nice added touch to the overall figure. I'd use him either as a main bad guy at the end of a dungeon stomp or as a leader for a unit of mummies either in Warhammer Fantasy or Wargods of Aegyptus.



2886 Dark Creeper
Sculpted by G. Van Horne



The Dark Creeper is a short (gnome-sized, I'd say) one-piece model depicting a malevolent little guy dressed in long flowing robes and carrying a dagger. The robes are one of the most distinguishing parts of the model as there are a lot of them and they have a nice flow to them. They look quite heavy so they could also offer some protection in combat but I'd guess that this guy is very much the opposite of a stand-up fighter. The other very noticeable feature of the model is his

very large nose that's poking out over his scarf. That is one big nose! You could paint up the face as a colorful mask if you'd like and not have a guy with such a big nose running around. He carries a dagger in his left hand and his right is clutching a layer of robes, drawing it around his body. The mold line was just barely visible and there was a bit of flash on the underside of the base. There is a piece of metal connecting the dagger to the robes that you'll need to carefully clip off. Just be careful not to mar the robes when doing so. A nice figure that would do well for a short rogue player character or maybe as an enemy npc.

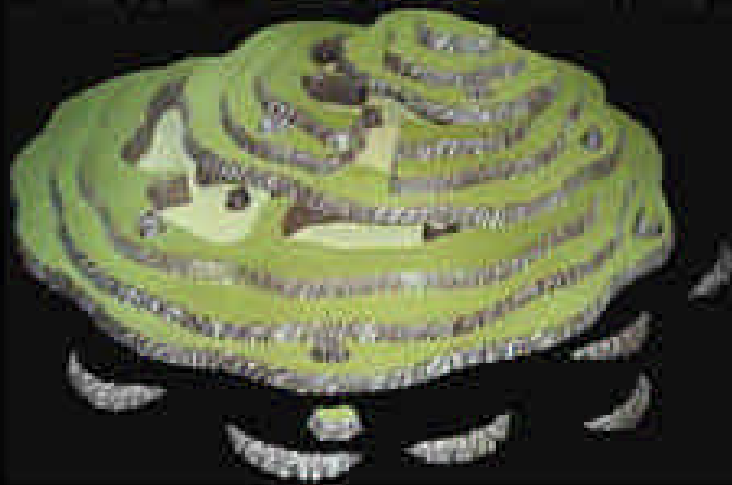
2887 Evil Toys
Sculpted by Various

In this blister you get six menacing little toys that are all under control of some malignant spirit. You get a teddy bear, a pony, a jack-in-the-box, a rubber ducky, a slinky hellhound, and one of those freaky little wind up monkeys



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that bangs together cymbals. The first three all have a little skull on the miniature to really let you know they're evil, I guess. The bear is the least menacing of the group, even with the skull. The pony is baring its teeth and looks quite angry. It also has a tail more akin to a devil than the "My Little Ponies" that my 2-year old daughter plays with. The jack-in-the-box is the most animated and probably the most menacing. It carries a pair of scissors and has a naughty smile on his face. The rubber ducky is similar to the pony except it's missing the skull on its backside. Its teeth are also bared and its base is molded as if it's sitting in some water. Alternately, you could use the water molding on the base as blood and put the ducky next to a dead body that's bled out all over the floor. The monkey isn't wearing the standard shirt and shorts that I remember with the real ones but does have the handle with which to wind him up sticking out of his back and his mouth is open as if he's screaming. The slinky hellhound is a nice take on a slinky dog. Each of them had more of a mold line than I'm used to with Reaper's miniatures and some expected little bits of flash. They did take longer to clean up than other figs but this alone should not put you off from buying them if you have a use in mind. For me, they will make up all of the enemies in a single Call of Cthulhu or d20 Modern encounter. I

haven't made up my mind yet in which game to use them, but it will be a nice



change of pace to have the heroes/investigators fighting for their lives against a slew of possessed toys. Kind of like the Chucky movies. I liked this set partially because I do have a specific use in mind for them but also because of their novelty factor. If you wanted to you could also use them as familiars for a spellcaster but it might be hard to come up with the right figure to accompany one of these.

2888 Trathus Varr, Wizard

Sculpted by Sandy Garrity

There is so much going on with Trathus I hope that I don't miss something. This one-piece model is wearing a hooded outer cloak over more robes and has pouches and gear galore. Across his chest is a bandolier of spell component pouches and a large bag. There is also a set of potions around his back and a quiver full of scrolls and magic wands behind one shoulder. On his other shoulder sits a dragon familiar that looks great. I think I'll paint him up as a baby red dragon. There are also more scrolls and wands down the right side of the figure. The only mold line that I found was on his staff and there were very minimal bits of flash here and there. His bearded face is under the hood but easily visible. A truly superb model that will need an experienced hand to do it justice, but it's just too good of a figure for anyone to pass up. Awesome miniature!



2889 Dire Rats

Sculpted by Sandy Garrity



In this pack you get four unique dire rats, each in a different pose. They are easily as large as a small dog (definitely big New

York City sewer rats) and sit on a small integrated base that looks like a stone dungeon floor. Two of the four had visible mold lines but it cleaned up easily enough and none of them had any defects. The only flash was along their bases and there was very little of it. If placed in a 2x2 square these four rats would take up the space of a standard 1" base. In D&D scale I'd say that they each take up a 2.5" square. They will paint up easily and serve as a good menace to low-level characters.

2890 Wereshark

Sculpted by Jason Weibe

As soon as I saw the green for this figure on the Reaper website I've waited for it to come out. This is a three piece model (tail, left hand and the rest of the figure) that is easily as tall as an ogre. It's skin is mostly pretty smooth and has good muscle definition where appropriate. He (it?) carries nothing in his right hand but



has a squid or octopus (or some kind of tentacled creature) in its left hand. I'd say that it's more likely to be his lunch than a weapon. His claws and massive jaws and teeth will serve well enough to rend and tear anyone he meets. The gills are clearly visible on both sides of the creature's neck and his dorsal fin is very prominent. The peg on his left arm (where it fits onto the upper torso) was a bit long and needed to be clipped, but the tail fit into place perfectly. The tail comes down to the same level as

the base and serves as a balance point for the figure. The mold line was visible around the figure but I didn't need to spend too much time cleaning it up. There was a bit of metal between the tentacles of his lunch and his right foot that needs to be clipped away so just be careful, like with the Dark Creeper above. If you want to ditch his lunch you could easily clip off the hand at the wrist, where he conveniently has a beaded bracelet, and swap in another hand with a weapon. I have a second one of this miniature for just this very purpose. Now, I just need to search the Reaper catalog to find a guy with the right sized hand that's carrying a sword. I (Mark) like this model a lot and it's one of those figures that can easily be used as inspiration to create a new and unique player character.

2891 The Gor-Gor \$9.99

Sculpted by Jason Wiebe

The Gor-Gor is another of my (Clay's) favorite models this issue. It comes in two pieces with an integrated solid metal base. The part that comes detached is the right arm and the axe that it holds. The pin in the arm is excellent, so even though the arm is really sticking out there, there is not a strength issue at the joint. There were a few mold lines, but no real flash to speak of. The thing I really like about this model is the uniqueness and the detail on the torso and face. His armor is all natural (and it looks very substantial I might add) and the only weapon he carries is this huge barbarian style axe. He has the head and lower torso of a Rhinoceros but the chest and arms of a man... well mostly. He still has



some rhino armor on his forearms and shoulders, and has only three meaty fingers on each hand. But besides that I'm sure he can go unnoticed in any disco. The artist did an excellent job on the skin and armor of this beast, and I'm quite sure that it will look awesome painted. His stance is as if he is

standing guard over something, or surveying his realm. Either way, he looks to be a creature that will make for a very interesting encounter.

2892 Arethusa, Nereid

Sculpted by James VanSchaik

A water elemental in the form of a female, the Nereid is about the size of a tall human female that is wearing next to nothing. Her buttocks and breasts are exposed so you may or may not want to drop it onto the game table depending on your audience but I did not find it offensive and would bring it into my D&D game. She has a length of cloth, created out of water, no doubt, covering part of her body, but not a lot. She is very sleek athletic without being over-muscled. Her face is sculpted with a somewhat sad look on it. There were a few bits of flash at the ends of her fingers but the mold line was undetectable. She might look good painted up in just one color (plus highlight and shade) to try and get a water-like effect.



2893 Cazalet, Plague Priest

Sculpted by Julie Guthrie

Right off the bat I liked this figure a lot. He has a lot of fine detail so it might intimidate newer painters but he's worth working on. Cazalet is a one-piece model of an evil cleric that is carrying a large staff in his right hand and a scroll in his left. The staff is probably big enough to be used as a spiked club, but painting it up as a glowing magical staff seems better to me. The scroll has a large flat area



where you can really go wild with writing or other glyphs. He's wearing plate armor under light, but detailed, robes and wears an animal skin cape. His long, stringy, thin hair tops a very angry looking face that is somewhat sunken. No flash or mold line to speak of and overall a good bad-guy model here.

2894 Nerea, Anti-Paladin

Sculpted by Bobby Jackson

When I saw Nerea my first thought that she would make a good companion for Cazalet, above. I also noticed a bit more flash (mostly on the sword) and a more prominent mold on this figure than on most other Reaper figures. Not terrible, but there's just a bit more cleaning needed on her. She's wearing plate armor with a horned helmet that reminds me of Loki from Marvel Comics. Hmm,



maybe painting her up in green and yellow would look good. I might have to try that. The face is well done and there is lots of detail on her armor that will be easy to pick out. The pose is a little flat but her sword-arm can be carefully posed to give her some more animation.

2896 Aserlis, Liche King
Sculpted by Werner Klocke



Aserlis is a two-piece model whose staff and right arm are separate from the rest of the model. There was a metal tab left on the staff that you'll need to cut off. It is right up next to the ornamental detail at the top of the staff so be careful when removing it. He is pretty tall and if standing fully upright he'd be a bit taller than standard human-sized models. He's dressed in flow-

ing robes that are tattered and worn at the ends and carries a couple of scrolls on his belt. There is also an ornamental necklace that he wears that goes along with his headdress. The figure has an Egyptian feel to me and this is enhanced by the glyphs that are carved into the base upon which he stands. A light ink was should bring these out nicely. His face and arms/hands are the only exposed flesh on the figure and they are withered, but not quite skeletal. The face is sunken with his lips pulled back to reveal his teeth and his nose is also on its way out, with most of the flesh having already rotted away. The staff has some ornamentation at the head but is mostly a pretty plain looking magic item. I found no defects on the model and the mold line was undeletable. Flash was also not an issue, except for the molding tab on the staff. I'd paint him up to have the flesh as the focal point of the figure and if you can give a glowing effect to the head of his staff that would also look excellent. As with Khalith above, Aserlis would fit well into a Wargods of Aegyptus army.

2897 Hellhounds (2) \$8.99
Sculpted by Jason Wiebe

This is a blister containing two hellhounds, both in different poses. Flash and mold lines are present on both of them, and because of the fur, the mold lines are something of a pain to remove. Both hellhounds are single piece models with integrated solid metal bases. Both have very distinctive and clear features that stand out nicely. When first looking at these guys, my first thought was that "wow, these will paint up nice". From just behind the front shoulder to the face, the body of the hound appears to be engulfed in flames. The re-



mainder of the hound looks almost normal with the possible exception of an errant flame licking down the backbone. Oh, and there seems to be these bone elbow spikes on their back legs. One of the hellhounds is in an all out running stance with his tongue lolling out the side of his mouth (the tongue is very well done I might add), and the other hellhound appears to be walking and panting. I have to say that to date, these are the best hellhound models I've seen, and I can't wait to "paint them up".

2898 Kanaag, Half-Orc \$4.99
Sculpted by Gene Van Horne



Finding a model for a half-orc character is not always the easiest thing in the world to do. Well this model should help out. Kanaag is ugly enough to make any Orc mama proud (Of course a human mama might not be quite as happy). He comes in two pieces, one of the pieces being his left hand

which holds some sort of brawling blade. From his right hand hangs a wicked looking falchion. On his back are a horn bow and his adventuring "kit". There are three different supports on the model that have to be cut away, and the mold lines are a bit more prevalent on this guy than normal. This all leads me to say that this model might fall into the dreaded "more work" category, however I still think the model is well worth it. The detail and features are very nice on this model, and well suited for classic D&D. I wonder if that's healing potions I see strapped to his chest. The model, like the dude it represents, is very solid and is not likely to bend or break easily. As for painting, there is so much detail on this guy that the avid painter will find enough to keep him busy for some time. An added touch that I like is that Kanaag looks like his hair is in dread locks. Appropriate I'd say.

2899 Death Knight \$6.49

Sculpted by Sylvain Quirion

Often, you can change the paint scheme and turn a model originally meant to be a bad guy into a good guy or vice versa. Well this guy is not one of those models. This is a bad guy from the tips of his armored toes, to the tips of his horned head. The knight's armor is completely made up in the likeness of bones. Skulls adorn his knees and shoulders not to mention his helmet, and skeletal ribs cover just about every other spot on his body. He comes in three pieces, with his axe and shield being detached, and the solid metal



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base is part of the figure. The base looks to be from a dungeon, ruins, or rocky soil setting, but the cool part about it is that his steel clad right foot is standing on the skeletal remains of a ribcage. For the most part the little flash and mold lines, what little there is, has been kept to just the axe and shield. On the knight himself, only the horns had a little cleanup work necessary. The shield is done in such a way that it does not necessarily have to be put on the model (as in, there are no pins or straps to indicate that something needs to go on the left arm). The pin for the right hand holding the axe is better than usual, so it should make for a good strong joint. This guy would make a great "head bad guy", or anti-paladin. Of course, he could also do well as any heavily armored fighter in an evil party.

2900 Beastmen of the Wyld \$12.49

Sculpted by Drew Williams

Okay, this is not your ordinary blister of miniatures. In fact this blister has to be my (Clay) favorite that I've seen for this issue. It comes with three models, two of them being two-piece models and the other being a single piece model. All of them are crosses between humans (presumably) and forest creatures, and come with solid metal integrated bases. The first has the head and cloven feet of a wild bore. He is wielding a great big two-handed



studded mace (that comes detached) and it's wearing some patchwork armor. He also wears a skull on a chain around his neck, so that, combine with a boorish temper, probably makes this a dude you love to hate. The second model is a single piece model of a bipedal vixen (as in female fox). She has the shape of a female human, but is completely covered in fur and she wears only enough leather to cover strategic body parts. She is the archer of the group and she carries her bow, a quiver of arrows that she is in the process of drawing from, and a dagger on her hip. The last

model is the largest. It stands twice as tall as either of the others and has the head and lower torso of a stag. He comes in two pieces and is armed with a longsword (the part that is detached) and a shield. His rack is what makes him tall as it accounts for at least a third of his height. All three have hardly any flash and the mold lines were less than minimal. All in all, these are three excellent pieces all of which are full of really great detail.

4430 Dragon Clan Samurai \$4.49
Sculpted by Jim Johnson



The Dragon Clan Samurai is a single piece model sculpted in full Samurai armor with two swords - a Katana and a Wakizashi. The swords are held to the left of the body, one in each hand. The model has no flash and a barely noticeable mold line along the right shoulder armor plate. The Samurai armor is very detailed, which means that there is a lot of texture on the face of the model. It will benefit from dry brushing, but it will play the cat and banjos with your regular brushes.

4432 Lion, Elite Samurai \$4.49
Sculpted by Bob Murch



The Lion Elite Samurai is a single piece model sculpted in full Samurai armor and carrying a Naginata. The model has no flash and no visible mold lines. However, the Naginata was bent in the package. This is because the plastic packaging was too small for the figure, even at an angle. Like the Dragon Clan

Samurai, the Lion Elite Samurai has lots of detail on the armor that will benefit from dry brushing.

4433 Crane Saboteur \$4.49
Sculpted by Tim Prow

The Crane Saboteur is a single piece model sculpted with a rope in his left hand and a katana in his right. The model is wearing quilted armor with some wooden plates. The model is well-cast with no flash and nor visible mold lines. However, the sword blade was slightly bent when I pulled it out of the package, but that was probably done during ship-



ping. The model has quite a bit of detail and would benefit from delicate dry brushing.

14107 Overlord Warriors (3) \$13.49
Sculpted by Chaz Elliot



There are three models in this blister, all of which are in different poses. All three of the models come with the shields detached, and one of them also has sword and the hand holding it, de-

tached. Also, all three come with square plastic slotta bases. The armor these guys are wearing is very basic looking heavy plate armor covered partially by ankle length robes from their waist down which are flowing and wiping around their legs. One of the models also has a cape. For the most part, the pieces are very sturdy with no real weak points. Unfortunately the swords appear to be the exception, and the only straight one in the bunch was the one that came detached. The good news is that the flash was very minor, and the mold lines were next to nothing. Although these guys are fairly basic, their action stances still make them cool models, especially if fighting them in a unit of some sort. Since one comes with a cape, it would be easy to designate him as the sergeant. In a RPG setting, these guys will do well as any basic heavily armored fighter, either good or bad. Their final look will definitely depend more on their paint job than most models.

14126 Overlord Spearmen (3) \$13.49
Sculpted by Chaz Elliot



The three spearmen are single piece models and all are armed with (duh) spears. All three models are well cast with no flash and little mold lines. The

spears were slightly bent in the package as a result of shifting during shipping, but they were easily straightened. All figures are holding their weapons in front of them. Their stance provides three different angles of the spears, which allows them to be ranked up easily. The Overlord Spearmen are part of the Overlords force in Warlord.

14136 Thorvald Clawhelm
Sculpted by Klocke and Valley

A new addition to the Dwarves of Warlord is Thorvald Clawhelm, a unique hero in the army. Thorvald rides a large bear (brown by the card that comes with the figure, but you could go with black or even make it a Polar bear if you like) and other than his left hand and axe, it's all one piece. The fur is uniform all around the bear and should come out look-

ing good after dry-brushing. There was a tiny bit of flash at the tail of the bear and a little on the axe. Other than that the model was very clean and had no noticeable mold line. It comes with a large plastic base and you'll want to mount it towards the rear of the base to ensure the best balance of the figure. As the picture suggests the bulk of the weight of the figure is in the center but with the front raised up it could tilt forwards if glued too close to the front



of the base. You could also solve any balance issues by picking up one of Reaper's metal bases and mounting the model on it. The bear is wearing a harness, saddle and collar and the rider is in plate armor along with what looks like some scale mail too. He's also wearing a cloak that appears to be made out of bear hide, maybe his previous steed/mount pissed him off? You can rotate the axe a bit to change up the model a bit but with the rest of the model being just one piece that's about where your adjustment options end. If you're looking for a model to use as a dwarven paladin or cavalier I think you've just found it.

14140 Battle Nuns (3) \$13.49

Sculpted by Bobby Jackson



The three nuns are single piece models and all are wielding two swords. The models are little or no flash and no visible mold lines. All three figures had at least

one sword slightly bent, but this was the only packaging issue. The figures are finely detailed with chain mail and plate grieves visible under the nuns' habits. These models are sculpted with a very two-dimensional feel, with the swords in the plane of the body, in-line with the shoulders. The nuns are part of the Crusader army in Warlord.

14147 Andras, Overlord Captain \$5.99

Sculpted by Chaz Elliot

Andras is a single miniature that comes in two pieces - the sword with both hands, and the rest of the body. There is a slight mold line along the helmet and some flash on the tab. The spike on the helmet was bent slightly in the package, but it was easily straightened. The figure is sculpted in full plate with a tabard and skirt. The skirt is being blown back from figure. The figure is holding his sword in both hands in front of him. The sword piece has two nubs which fit into depressions on the end of the wrists. Though the numbs are



small, there is enough area on the wrists to make a strong bond with glue. Andras is a character for the Overlords faction in Warlord.

61019 Sayn \$3.99

Sculpted by Jim Johnson

At first glance, this guy looks like he might be the village ironsmith with his trusty hammer resting comfortably on his shoulder. Even the nonchalant look and his mustachios lend weight to the image. But then you may notice that though he is bare armed and bare chested, he wears armored grieves and steel shin guards. Then when you look REALLY close, you see that he is not bare chested at all, its just that his breast plate is so form fitted that it might as well have been painted on. Okay, maybe that's not the process you will go through, but it sure is the process I went through. Sayn is a single piece model with a solid metal integrated base.



There was only a tad of flash and mold lines of any sort were very difficult to detect. The best part of the model is the detail, which is great in all respects. The base is a little smaller than normal, but all the metal is directly above it so as long as you don't bump the table he should be stable enough. This guy could be a player character but his appearance to me says he would work better as a non-player personality. He just has that unique "air" around him that will make it easy to build some intrigue around, plus the ladies will go for his tight fitting armor.

1409 Christmas Sophie 2004 \$19.99

Sculpted by Sandra Garrity

he latest installment of Reaper's annual Christmas figure features Sophie in a flying sleigh with bat-wing sides. Sophie, for those who don't know, is the spokes succubus for Reaper's fantasy lines - Dark Heaven and Warlord. The 2004 model is composed of seven pieces - Sophie, toys in a bag, slay bed, left side, right side, front, and a flying stand. There is noticeable flash on all pieces with some rather large pieces at the bottom of the packages and on the sleigh bed. However, it can all be easily cleaned up with a knife and file.



The assembly of the model is pretty straightforward - but there are two fiddly bits of the assembly. The base attaches to the sides and then the packages go onto the rear of the bottom. Sophie then sits on a seat on the bottom of the sleigh. Finally, there's the recurved front that attaches to the front of the bottom. The first fiddly bit happens when attaching the packages to the bottom of the sleigh. The package piece is molded to include Sophie's wings. After attaching the packages to the base, there place where Sophie attaches to the wings is at such an angle that Sophie is not sitting on the seat (which is cast as part of the sleigh bottom). Given the size of the attachment point prohibits bending with out cutting out a notch - I'd suggest green stuff to build up the seat.

The recurved sleigh front attaches to the sleigh bottom. The base of the recurved front is wider and has two bumps which fit into two indentations on the bottom of the sleigh. Even so, this piece doesn't hold itself up very well - it should be pinned for strength. This model is a nice addition to Christmas line and would make a nice little "gamer display" over in one corner of the living room.



PIP 31026 Cygnar Trencher Chaingun Crew \$11.99

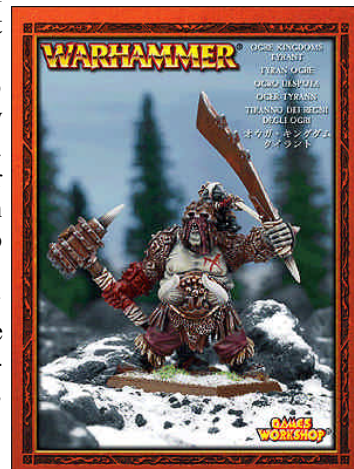
There are many pieces, ten in all, that make up this model. Actually, models or maybe diorama would be a better terms for what you get out of this blister. The final result is a crew of two Cygnar Trenchers manning a heavy chaingun. The guy tending to the ammo is assembled using three pieces (guy, ammo box and rifle), which all fit onto a small base. There were some bits of flash down on his feet but the mold line was very hard to see. The rifle fits into a hole in his backpack but it might be a weak fit as the pin on the gun and the hole in his backpack don't meet perfectly and there's a bit of a gap left. Nothing that can be seen after painting the model, but it's there. As you can see in the picture the whole assembly fits onto the small base with just a tiny bit of overhand from the ammo box. The hands are molded as part of



the ammo box and fit perfectly onto the rest of the body. The second figure, firing the gun is mounted on the large base and takes up the remaining seven pieces. The gun is made up of three pieces (barrel, tripod and shield) and while they each needed just a tiny bit of cleaning they went together easily. The gunner's right hand is molded as part of the gun but it was not hard at all to get it to line up correctly with the rest of the body. His legs area each separate pieces that went into place easily and did not leave any visible gaps. I suppose that they could be used as part of an encounter in the Iron Kingdoms rpg world, but even that's a stretch to warrant their purchase. If you're a diorama builder they could also be part of a dynamic battle scene and all of the Cygnar Trenchers could pull believable double-duty as Imperial Trenchers in Warzone. Of course, their main use is clear and if you're a Cygnar player then I can't really think of a reason that you won't want one (ok, probably at least two for me) in your army.

WARHAMMER

There's a new army on the block in Warhammer Fantasy, the Ogre Kingdoms, and we've got a leader to take a look at. Actually, he's called a *Tyrant* and comes as a boxed set for \$35.00 USD. Inside you'll get one body, two heads, two belly plates, a left arm holding a huge cleaver, a right arm holding a massive war hammer, a right and left arm without hands and a huge two-handed weapon with a spiked ball on one end and a giant mace on the other. You also get two separate Gnoblar. There is a third Gnoblar up on the shoulder of the arm that's holding the cleaver. In sorting out the pieces I found that each of them had some flash or a molding tab to clean/clip off. The mold line was visible on just about every piece, but it was never heavy or thick. Once you decide which version of the Tyrant to put together you'll find that the parts fit together easily enough but there were some gaps left after assembly, especially where the shoulders/arms fit onto the body. The resulting model ends up being significantly taller than other ogre models (like Rackham or Reaper) but it could easily be used in a role as a typical ogre in an rpg encounter if you're not putting together a new Warhammer army. I did like this model a lot and it's a worthwhile investment, but it is on the pricey side of things. Except for the body you have enough pieces to build two of these massive warriors. What I'd suggest is that if you're picking him up to use in an rpg go ahead and order an extra body bit from Games Workshop. That will run you another \$12.50 USD but you'll then have enough pieces to build two complete models and will have saved \$22.50. Sure, you'll only be able to build one of each type of ogre, but what were you going to use all of those extra bits for anyway?



MAGNIFICENT EGOS

This set reminded me of the Ral Partha miniatures where you get three representations of one character. Each one represented a different stage in the character's career. In this pack you do get three figures, but they represent three different stages of the character's current life. A very good set that I liked a lot.



The Eviscerator and Eviscerated Zombies MEO4016 \$21.99

The Eviscerator comes in five pieces (along with a large metal base) and is packaged with three zombies. Looking at the Eviscerator pieces before assembly you could mistake the model for being pretty one-dimensional, but this ends up not being the case. The pieces consist of a humanoid body, two large thin arms that end in claws, a stabilizing base piece and a large alien-looking piece that makes up the back, or spine I guess, of the overall creature. There is also a large square metal base that comes with the figure. The mold line was visible and needed cleaning but it was pretty thin and easily taken care of. Each piece had some

tiny bits of flash. There are three holes in the base and the spine piece and stabilizing piece fit into these to form sort of a tripod at the bottom of the figure. The humanoid torso then fits onto the spine piece and rests a bit forward of the bulk of the figure and ends up looking somewhat suspended by the spine part. It's a pretty cool effect that you don't really see until the model is assembled. The two arms fit into holes in the lower back of the humanoid. I had to bend the arms on the suspended humanoid a bit to get the two extra appendages to fit correctly. This was an easy enough process and the resulting bend in the arms looked fine. The result is a figure that looks quite inspired by either

Josiah Arable, Psionic Werewolf ME10076 \$15.99

Is he psionic or is he a werewolf? He's both and this set of three miniatures allows you to represent all three stages of his existence on the tabletop. You get the humanoid version of Josiah (three pieces: both arms and the rest of the figure), the wolf form (one piece) and the werewolf form (two pieces: head and the rest of the miniature). Metal bases are included for all three figures. The humanoid form is that of a tall human with a short cropped haircut who is wearing flowing robes. There was a bit of flash down by his feet and the mold line was just barely visible on part of his robe. There was more cleanup needed on the arms than the rest of the figure as the mold line was a bit more prominent and went around both arms, but the glued into place easily. He wears a crescent shaped medallion on a chain around his neck and could easily be used on his own as a sorcerer or even a monk if you clip off the spell effect that is being manifested in his right hand. A very good first third of this set.

In the werewolf form things, this guy suddenly really gets big (comparatively speaking). He now stands a full two inches tall and stands on a two inch by two inch base. The crescent shaped medallion still dangles wildly from his neck. The head fits on nicely with a very substantial post to hold it. Bits of flash were scattered around the body and in some places it was a little work to remove. This model could be used as a monster outside this set, but in the same vain as the larger then normal wolf, this guy is larger than the werewolf models that I'm used to seeing. Still, it's a cool model that no sane PC is going to want to bump into in a dark alley.

The wolf had a bit of flash also but no visible mold line. It's in a nice pose and seems a bit larger than a normal wolf. Of course, I'm basing this assessment on other wolf miniatures and not real contact with one. The wolf retains the medallion on the chain from the humanoid form so its uses might be a bit more limited outside of this set, but it's definitely a good second third of the group.



NIGHTMARES

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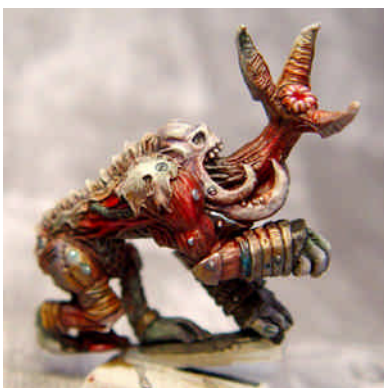


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MAGNIFICENT EGOS AND THE MAGNIFICENT EGOS LOGO ARE TRADEMARKS OWNED BY MAGNIFICENT EGOS.

Clive Barker or HR Giger. The only problem I can see for this figure is transportation. The final figure is not exactly in a standard shape and it could be prone to breakage if you're not really careful.

The three zombies are human sized messes of flesh that are each much more than your standard brain-eating zombie miniature. The first over-long arms and hands that are bound in front of him with what look like long wooden stakes pushed through his upper torso. Two skulls, fused together, make up this zombie's head and a third skull is strapped to it's crotch. Three long tongue-like protrusions stretch out from his mouth and dart above his head. There is exposed flesh, muscle and bone all over the figure and it's definitely the picture of a tortured soul that's the result of some kind of experimentation. The second zombie looks to be less tortured but no less of an experiment. It also has oversized hands but they are not bound in any way. It also has a tail and looks to be much more of a meld of flesh and technology. It has hoses and belts all over the place and either metal plating or what might be a chitin shell protecting it on the hands, legs and head. It reminded me a little bit of the Borg from Star Trek. The last zombie (pictured below) is even more unusual than the first two. It's has a humanoid appearance but is down on all fours.



The arms, or front appendages, do have a bit of an animal look to them but I could still see this creature walking upright at some point. Outwardly, this one has a bio-mechanical appearance close to the second zombie but has more exposed muscle and bone. It also has a whole bowl-full of innards falling out from its back end. The jaw has a large bottom extension that juts out with two large tusks.

From inside the mouth comes a very large stalk-like tongue that splits into three prongs and has a sucker right in the middle of it. It has some similarities to each of the other two and maybe is a blending of both of them. I could not detect the mold line on any of these three, but each did have just a tiny bit of flash that needed to be cleaned up.

Unlike the Eviscerator, these are all single-piece models that needed no assembly other than gluing them to their bases. These are all nightmarish creatures right out of some twisted horror movie and would do find in a D&D game but even better in a d20 Modern or Call of Cthulhu session.

Budock

The first thing you notice about this figure (bottom, left), is the helmet. No, its not meant to be a fantasy version of the X-men villain, Juggernaut. This figure is of an orc chieftain who defeated a great ogre warrior and took his helmet, sword and shield as trophies. The model is composed of five pieces and a separate metal base. The pieces are: the model's body, including head and arms, a



shield, two horns and a tassel. The last three pieces are all on one sprue of metal.

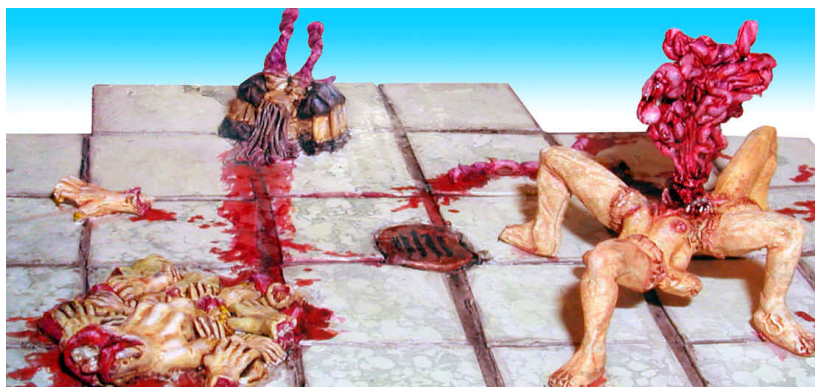
The body

of the model is cast as a single piece without any mold lines. There are large pieces of flash at the tip of the sword and between the tabard and the base tab. The sculpt of the body has a very two dimensional feel, but adding the other pieces adds depth to the figure. The shield has a bit of flash and a noticeable mold line along one side - nothing that can't easily be cleaned up. There is no post or slot to attach the shield, but there is sufficient room to glue, or even better to pin, it on the body. The additional horns and the top knot have lugs on their base which fit into depressions on the helmet. This is where the casting of the model causes problems. The horns are attached to the sprue on their bottom near the stud. Removing the horns requires quite a bit of fiddly cleaning up to make sure the stud fits into the helmet depression. The depression for the top knot is too shallow to get a good gluing area - it must be pinned. Altogether, this is a rather unique figure which would make a great orc leader for a larger greenskin band.

Gross Anatomy MEO4013 \$8.99

This blister is a rather interesting collection of animated body parts. From the looks of things, the sculptor must have been watching a marathon of John Carpenter's The Thing.

First is a 2 cm square model of a mass of hands - like Thing, from the Addams Family - most of which are human scale, but there is one that is giant scale. The casting has no flash or mold lines, however, it is hard to make out what's on the base. This cleared up after priming.



The second piece is a 1-cm wide spider who's body is a semi-human head. The mouth is open with a long tongue extending out. As with the hands, the model has no flash or mold lines.

The third model, as best I can tell, is of something right out of H.P. Lovecraft's darkest nightmare. Anyway, this multipart model consists of a armless and legless torso split down the middle, what can only be called an eruption of entrails, 4 legs, two hands, and two eyestalks. All the pieces are cleanly cast - no mold lines nor flash. A few manufacturers provide assembly diagrams for their figures - and this is one that really needs it! I'd say that this last part of the set definitely pushes the PG-13 envelope and treads very close to being R rated. Just FYI in case you have younger aged players at the game table.



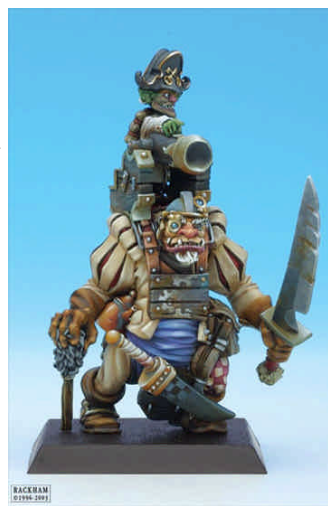
**Furnock, Half-Orc Monk
MEO1017 \$5.99**

Okay, this has got to be something you don't see everyday, a half-orc monk. You just got to love it. Well, maybe the bloodlines are not exactly half and half. At least that's what his looks might imply. In fact, except for his ears and barely visible lower tusks, he could easily be a full blooded human. This model comes in three pieces;

is right arm which is twirling a pole, his pony tail, and the rest of him. He also comes with a slotta base. As monks often do, this unique dude has an oriental look to him. He is bare footed and bare-chested with normal monk looking duds on. The only weapon he has is a staff that he holds in a standard martial arts stance. Mold lines and flash were somewhere between nil and none making him about as clean as a model can be. All in all, it's a pretty cool model, though I can't say I've seen too many half-orc monk characters, but hey, for those who want to try the out of the ordinary, look no farther.

Reviews by Mark Theurer, J Michael Tisdell and Clay Richmond

The Firebrand Ogre is a mercenary figure for use in Confrontation and Ragnarok. It has a regular retail price of \$17.50 USD and has been available for a while now. The model comes in nine pieces, many of which are molded together on metal tabs and need to be separated and cleaned. The body of the ogre is right in line with those from Reaper and properly taller than human-sized models. The head, both hands and extra sword are all



separate pieces but each of them fit into place perfectly and really did not leave any unsightly gaps to fill with putty. The cannon and crew that sits on his shoulders come in four pieces. There are two goblin crew, one of which has a separate head. The bodies of both goblins are attached to the cannon, but the sides are separate. The whole cannon/crew assembly went together pretty easily and sits on the ogre's shoulders. You'll want to paint the ogre separate from the cannon and then put it on his shoulders. In fact, you might want to paint the cannon and goblins

without the cannon's carriage, then paint the carriage and then assemble the whole thing.

The ogre is wearing fairly frilly clothes, indicative of his more civilized nature. At least more civilized than other ogres that are traipsing around the woods waiting to ambush a party of adventurers. The sculpting is top-notch and clean. Detail abounds and this model might be a bit intimidating for novice painters but is worth taking on. I'm certainly not nearly as good as Rackham's painters but he'll still be appearing in my Living Dead army as a mercenary soon. Three cards also come in the blister pack which detail his stats and special rules in Confrontation and Ragnarok. If you're going to pick him up for use in an rpg he would make a cool character with the Leadership feat and the goblin crew could be his flunkies. As a monster he'd also do very well, but he's unique enough to really be given a better role than just a monster to kill. He's a bit more expensive than other ogres of his same size but the cool factor makes it worth the money. If I wasn't playing Ragnarok or Confrontation I think that I'd still find an excuse to pick up this blister.

Review by Mark Theurer

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by
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John Morris



Kalee



Fantasy

*Hasslefree
Miniatures*



HFV008 Kiddies £3.00



In this pack you get three children, probably in the 3-5 year old range, suitable for use as villagers in a fantasy setting. The boy holds a wooden sword at his side and stands, proudly emulating his father or some other local hero. The middle child is the youngest, and shortest, of the group

and she is wearing a long dress and holds one hand up to her chubby cheeks. The last is another girl and she has her arms crossed in front of her with a defiant look on her face. Man, I've seen this expression on my two-year old daughter and they sculpted it just right. Hair and facial features are very well done and the two girls could also serve double-duty in a Victorian-era game (rpg or miniatures) or even in a modern game in a stretch. The boy is really only suited to a fantasy game but that's the intent of the whole group of three so anything beyond that is really just gravy. Sure, you're probably not likely to use them for player-characters but they'd make great victims to same from zombies that are overrunning the local town and combined with the rest of Hasslefree's Villagers line of figures and maybe even throwing in Reaper's Townsfolk range of figures you'd have a village of people to rescue.

HFG020 Silvia £3.00

HGF021 Sylvia (B) £3.00

These two figures are sold separately but they are simply different poses of the same space-dwarf, excuse me Grymn, sniper chick. Silvia is dressed in what looks like an armored bodysuit and carries a rifle that's probably as long as she is tall. The regular pose has her lying down looking through the rifle's scope and ready to drop someone. She has a couple of pouches on her belt and boots but no visible backup weapon, but a nice added detail is the tread on the bottom of her boots. The second version of Sylvia finds her crouched on one knee in what looks to be more



of a cautious observation pose. Except for the change in pose the original has been faithfully reproduced in this new pose. There is a bit of flash in various places on each model but I was unable to see the mold line. One thing that I really liked about Silvia was that while she's definitely a dwarf (ok, you

can even call her a Squat if you really want to fondly remember the GW days when they were around) she's not portly or ugly. She's a very nice-looking little person. I also like that instead of just a flowing mane of hair they gave her pigtails, which just gives a greater sense of uniqueness to the figure. Either would be perfectly suited for Traveller²⁰ or d20 Modern of Future if you are allowing non-human races.



HFZ001 Druuschan Stryker £3.50



Stryker is listed as being from the 'Zombies in Space' line at the Hasslefree website and he comes in three pieces (gun, right arm and the rest of the model). Not sure exactly if he's a zombie or not but he definitely looks evil. Stryker is a patchwork of different parts that end up making a sci-fi monster. His legs are one part camo pants and combat boot and one part cybernetic replacement. His upper torso is round with an electronic device on his back that plugs into his shoulders

and spine. His right arm has been replaced with a large gun which glues onto the stump where his elbow was removed. His right arm glues into place and cradles the weapon. These two separate pieces had more flash bits than the rest of the figure but they cleaned up easily. The head is hairless and has a ghoulish quality to it. This guys probably has a bit less player character appeal than others but could be a good henchmen or boss villain that needs to be taken down.

HFS001 Ieuan Trooper £3.00

This spaceman (well, yes it's a male but he has pointy ears so space-elf may be more suitable) comes as a single piece model that carries a large organic gun and a spacesuit that looks slightly armored but is probably more useful in a stealthy application. The face, and ears of course, have a bit of an angry elf look to them (ok, just the face as I don't know how you get angry looking ears) and his hair is a very unique blend from the 80's. It's somewhere between A Flock of Seagulls and many hair-metal bands. Aside from his big hair the most striking part of this miniature is his gun. It's a squid-like projectile weapon that's strapped to his right arm and trails up to his shoulder and has tentacles that reach onto his back and chest. The snout, I guess, of the creature/gun goes down past his knees and up by his hand is a large bladder that I would figure is an ammunition store. There were a few bits of flash, mostly from air vents down by the feet of the model, but the mold line was pretty much undetectable. A good figure for use in



any space rpg.

HFA004 Kat, Adventuress £3.00



Kat is the next entry in the Adventurers line (behind Eve, the Archeologist) and is also a female in search of fortune and glory. She comes in three pieces (right and left arm and the rest of the model). Once assembled, she has a sword sung back in her right hand and her left is extended forward. Not a bad action pose but not quite as intriguing as Eve either. She has a short blunt haircut that ends above her shoulders and she does not suffer from an over-inflated bust. Just a good, athletic build that would serve any adventurer well. The arms

glue into place at the shoulder joints easily enough and I think you can forego any pins here. Of the models that I (Mark) got to look at this time around she had the most visible mold line. It was not heavy or excessive but I got use to having just about nothing to find on the others. A great model for any spy, modern or even futuristic game that needs a female player character.

HFG035 'Geezer' O-Grymn £10.00

The circumstances behind this large figure is unique as far as I'm aware of. James Wilson was a gamer and painted that was a fan of Hasslefree figures and a regular on their forum who died of cancer in NOV of 2004. A portion of the proceeds from this figure are being given to a charity. Geezer is a sci-fi ogre (Ogryn if you prefer) or an)-Grymn since he's technically part of the Grymn line of figures that has a definite military infantryman look to him. He comes in four pieces (gun, right hand, left arm and the rest of the figure) and the casting was very clean with just a few bits of venting flash here and there. The left arm slid into place in the shoulder area easily and has a large surface area for your superglue to hold on to. You could easily pin the arm into place if you'd rather. The gun is frickin' big! It's probably enough metal to cast up two regular sized figures just by itself. It looks a lot like a chaingun or some other kind of rotary death machine that will lay waste to whatever is in front of it. Lot of pouches can be found all over Geezer and the detailing of his boots (the buttons and soles) are very well done but are not too fidly to be hard to paint well. There's lots of flat armor pieces on the upper torso that can be easily painted up with lots of glyphs. Now, making a figure in memory of a miniature enthusiast is one



thing, but Hasslefree has gone one step (actually a pretty darn big step if you ask me) and they sculpted the face of the miniature to match the

face of James. You see, James' favorite race was ogres so that's what lead to 'Geezer' being an ogre and his face is definitely that of James. A small picture of James is included with the miniature and I'm sure that you'll also find that right on the money. All in all, Geezer is a very good large figure that is well suited for a fantasy or modern arcane game. Add to that that the proceeds are going to a good cause he's worth picking up.

HFL001 Mrs. H

Mrs. H is another sculpt of Sally White, this time as that "right jolly old elf". She is wearing a Santa outfit and has a bag of presents over her left shoulder. The figure is cleanly cast, with only a little flash near her right wrist and the heel of her left boot. There are no visible mold lines. This is an actual 25 mm figure, so it is a bit small for most modern RPG figures.



HFE001 Lilalith £3.00

Liralith is a true 25 mm sculpt of a female drow. The figure is wearing a only a bikini bottom, high heel shoes, and is holding a large sword in her right hand. On her shoulder is perched a very



large spider. This is an exceptionally clean sculpt and cast. The only flash is at the tip of the sword and the only mold line is along its back. Like the other nudes and semi-nudes in the Hasslefree line, the figure is well purporting - meaning she isn't top heavy nor spindly legged. As there is little texture to the figure, extra time is required when painting this figure.

HFX001 Gen £7.00

Gen is a 3-part figure consisting of a pedestal, a pedestal top with a pentagram, and Gen figure herself. The pedestal is about an inch in diameter and about half inch tall. There are some small bits of flash along the top. The pedestal top has a notch on the underside, but there is no corresponding knob on the pedestal. The top has a slightly rough texture. Gen herself is sculpted sitting with her legs crossed. There is quite a bit of flash on her right hand and from each of her feet. There are no mold lines. Assembly of the model is obvious, however a quite a



bit of fitting must be done to get the pedestal top be snug - and even then there must be some work to smooth done to reduce the assembly line. Care must also be taken to fit Gen as she only fits well in one spot. Some indicators such as knobs or indentations would have sped up assembly of this model.

HFG017 Antar £4.00

This model comes in four pieces, the torso, supporting arm, hand with grenade launcher, and a string of grenades. The model also comes with a plastic round slotta base. There was only a tiny bit of flash and no detectable mold lines. The meeting surfaces on the arms and torso are flat though there is a slight socket on one



side. Even so, as long as you use decent glue, I think the joints will be plenty strong. The modeling detail is very nice, and the model stands exactly one inch tall. This guy has a vaguely storm trooper look to him, or perhaps a starship trooper type armor (the movie, not the book) with helmet, visor, and body armor all around. The string of grenades that he comes with I am assuming attaches to the



launcher somehow, but I don't see an easy way to do it (and I noticed that it's not shown in the picture). Oh, well, perhaps at the very least it can be another addition to me "bits n' pieces" collection.

HFG016 Horgan £4.00

I'm betting your going to get some superglue on your finger putting this little guy together. He comes in six pieces. Yes that's right, six pieces, and some of them are pretty small, and that's not counting the plastic slotta base. That's the bad news. The good news is that this bad boy looks pretty awesome after you suffer through the stuck fingers. Hoisting a weapon as big as himself (but not without mechanical help I might add) this helmetless trooper looks like he is leaning back to help support his gun (I'm betting no one can claim that "their gun is bigger"). Flash and mold line were nil to none and detail is clean and distinctive. This is a very nice one inch tall heavy weapon trooper model, though something of a challenge to get together.



HFG030 Bonni & Klyde £5.00

I have to admit, I like the name of this model, though it might be misleading for those who don't have a sense of humor. I guess even our friends across the pond have heard of our infamous romantic dynamic duo. This model comes in three pieces and an inch and a half round plastic base. Of the three pieces, two are prone guys (a loader and a gunner) manning a M60 type machine gun. The other piece is a tripod to hold up the weapon. These guys are dressed like the other base troopers in the grymn line, but their body armor looks a tad lighter. I'm guessing this had to be done because in the prone/crouching position there simple was not enough room on the model to fit on the extra shoulder pads



and stuff. Still, this is a cool little machine gun nest that took extremely little work to clean up. Of course this is one of those models that I would suggest you paint prior to gluing together.



This guy is decked out in some heavy power armor. The armor is basic and unadorned, but it looks like it would take a major direct hit to dent the stuff. That is unless he gets hit the head as it's the only unarmored spot on his

body. The two arms come detached and a plastic slot base is also included. One arm carries a power axe that appears to have just finished a swing at some poor victim in front of him. The other arm/hand holds a hand pistol. The joints are flat faced, but there is a lot of surface area so the joint should still be strong. There was no flash on the torso, but the detached arms had some minor pieces that took about a second to clean up. There were no mold lines to speak of on any of the pieces. Even with all the extra heavy armor, the guy still only stands an inch tall like the other troopers.

HFG102 Squad Pack £12.00

This pack has five single piece models each with their own plastic slot base. Of these troopers, two are women, and three are men, and all are armed with a pair of hand guns each. The detail for these guys is surprisingly nice and very distinctive from basic troopers. Flash however was a little more substantial on these guys than the rest of the Grymn line that I have seen, but still nothing that wasn't easily taken care of. Mold lines still were nowhere to be seen. All stand about an inch tall, except of course the one lady that is crouching. As they are fairly lightly armed and armored, I think this group would make a good fast attack/close assault light weapon squad. Being all armed with a handgun in each hand, I figure they plan on getting up close and friendly to be effective.

Reviews by Mark Theurer, J Michael Tisdell and Clay Richmond



An addition to their 30mm Elf line is in our hands from the folks at Thunderbolt Mountain. The Wood Elf Huntsman with Dogs has a retail price of \$6.00 USD and comes with six pieces. The dogs immediately reminded me of Scottish Wolfhounds and as soon as my 2-year old daughter saw them she instantly exclaimed, "Dogs!". Now that's a good sign. While certainly not duplicates of our real-world hounds they do have a resemblance to them and that gives them some added credibility and realism. Both hounds had some flash around their paws but neither had a noticeable mold line. Their heavy coats match well and they should paint up easily.



The huntsman is cast separate from most of his gear. His bow, sword and horn are all cast on another metal sprue and it's up to you to detach them and then glue them on to the main figure. The bow and horn will clip off very easily and cleanly but you'll need to be a bit more careful when removing the sword. The handle is thin and could be damaged if you don't take care. The mold lines were visible but not heavy or thick on the gear.



The main model wears a heavy cloak and clothes with his face being the only visible flesh. On his belt is another sword and a quiver of arrows. Detail on the cloak and belt is fine and will look great after a steady hand or a bit of ink is applied. The mold line was nowhere to be found but there was a small web of metal up by the hood that was easily cleaned. There was also a very small bit of flash on his right hand. Having three pieces of gear (horn, bow and sword) and but two open hands you get a choice on how to arm him. The horn or sword could easily attach to his belt if you like. This model has a very 'woodsy' feel to him and would serve perfectly as a ranger, fighter or even a druid player-character.

Review by Mark Theurer

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From Urban Mammoth we start off with some of the terrain for their new game, Urban War. These Platform Builder sets are plastic kits that require complete assembly by you. They come with several sprues (5 in the small and 13 in the large) of pieces that are nicely detailed and similar to the plastic bits that you'd get in children's toys. From what I can tell the plastic is probably about as dense and sturdy as the plastic figures that you've become accustomed to playing with.

The pieces cut away easily enough from the sprue with a hobby knife but I'd recommend using sharp clippers of some kind as there are a lot of pieces to cut off of the sprue and it just seems easier that way. When I started the process I quickly put by knife

away and grabbed my small shears. I began with the small set and just cut everything away from the sprue before attempting any assembly. Mold lines (on each set) were visible if you looked for them but they tended to blend in with the rest of the technological detail on the pieces.

If you're looking at a large piece of flooring that has rivets and metal plating on it another slightly raised line will probably go unnoticed. Depending on how careful you are when cutting pieces off the sprues you might be left with small bits of plastic that you'd consider flash on a metal model. I started trimming these off but then just decided to be more careful when cutting them in the first place and ended up with much less cleaning up before assembly. Now that you have everything cut away from the sprues you have some pre-assembly to take care of before building your terrain. The floor pieces (square and rectangular) have tops and bottoms that snap together and there are connectors that each have two pieces. There are also some one-piece parts like ramps and guardrails that will snap into place with the others.

There are easy to follow directions for putting the pieces together but you're left to using the pictures on the boxes to build the actual structures. Not too big of a problem here and you're likely to build your own creations anyway. All of the structures are built by snapping together various pieces and the end results that I've built, ultimately combining both sets to build larger structures, have been pretty stable. There is some give when you put multiple models on longer stretches of catwalks and such, but I expected that. Of course, I could build something that will collapse under the weight of just miniature, but that would just be bad design on my part. If you wanted to you could use plastic cement or superglue to create really super stable platforms, but then you couldn't take them apart to rebuild them.

If you do this I'd go with the plastic cement to create the best bond between the two pieces. Cutting out all of the pieces can be a bit tedious but it's well worth your time and effort. So far, I've not painted mine and I'm not sure if I will. They come in a grey/silver color and it's really not too bad right out of the box. A quick shot of black spray paint and then a drybrush with gun-metal would really finish them off nicely, but for now I'll stick with them unpainted and in use on my game table. I know that these are marketed for Urban War, but they are absolutely usable in any other sci-fi game, skirmish or otherwise, that uses 28mm figures. They are an absolute "must-buy" in my book!

Urban War - Triad Boss **Free with Issue 0 of Urban War**

This figure comes as a free mail-in offer from Urban Mammoth when you buy issue 0 of Urban War (also reviewed in this issue of Fictional Reality). It's a one-piece metal figure that comes with a separate plastic slot-base. He's wearing a very cool futuristic representation of samurai armor and dress, including



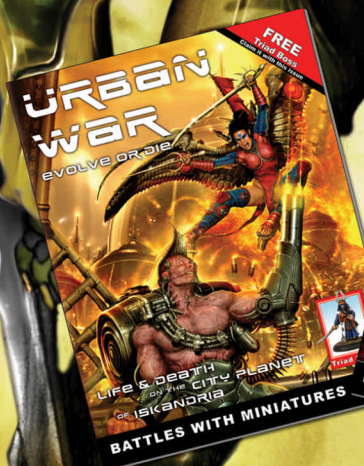
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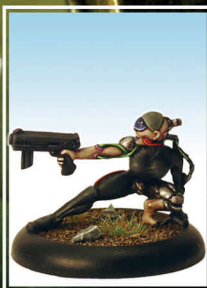
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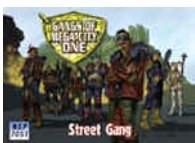


■ Alpha Artemis Class Biomech

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a gas mask and a large helmet. He carries two swords and has a pistol in a holster on his chest. Detailing was crisp and should not be too hard to pick out when painting. The mold line was slightly visible on the sword and down the right side of the figure. It cleaned up pretty easily but the sword was bent a bit in its baggie and needed to be straightened out. There were two small bits of flash on the helmet but they were removed without marring the piece at all. His pose is a bit static, more at the ready to react to an enemy's action instead of an action pose where he's



slicing and dicing someone. Outside of Urban War you could easily drop him into a Mishima army in Warzone or use him as a character in a sci-fi rpg like T²⁰. Not only is this a good giveaway figure, it's also one that would be worth

buying on its own.

Reviews by Mark Theurer

In this set of plastic figures you get four sprues of plastic pieces which contain all manner of body parts. Legs, torsos, heads, arms weapons and shoulder pads. Judge Dredd purists will be glad to know that knee pads are included on every set of legs in the box. The figures are molded in hard plastic and come with separate plastic bases.

The most visible mold lines are on the legs but even these are not bad and require a quick scrape with your hobby knife to remove. I'd recommend using plastic cement to assemble the figures. Superglue will certainly work but plastic cement will create a much more permanent bond. The upper torso fits neatly onto the legs and there's not a lot of room for rotation since they are both in a forward facing pose. You can adjust a little from side to side but extreme turns will look awkward.

Each upper torso has clean detailing of the jacket being worn that will be easy to paint. The arms give the best chance for movement and animation of the figures and with twelve of them you can have a very unique set of individuals here. The mold lines on the hands/arms was quite minimal and while not as detailed as metal figures the fingers were each individually visible and will be easy to paint to not look like the figures are wearing mittens.

All of the hands are open to accommodate whichever weapon(s) you want to arm the figures with. The weapons consist of various pistols and rifles with some hand-to-hand weapons. There are also a few pouches and ammo bags to glue on to your new gangsters. Detail on the faces was pretty good except for the ears where many of them kind of merge into the rest of the head.

The box set runs \$14.95 USD (my box says \$12.95 on it but the Mongoose website has it listed at the slightly higher price) and for that you get twelve pose-able plastic figures that are an easy pickup for players of the new Gangs of Mega-City One game or could be used for old-schoolers playing Necromunda or could also serve as a very cheap (even at the higher price you're still

paying no more than \$1.25 USD per figure and that's dirt cheap) and easy way to build up a gang of enemy NPCs in any modern role-playing game.



Industry News



A Word of Thanks

While 2004 was a good year for Excelsior, 2005 is looking even more promising and exciting. I would like to thank everyone for their support and encouragement this past year and look forward to an even better one to come.

New Year, New Digs

As I said, 2004 was a very good year. Business is good, sales are up and each month new plans come together. We have had to look hard at our setup as the increased business has forced us to revise how we work and expand our staff. At the same time we have to bid farewell to other staffers who have moved on to other exciting prospects. In retrospect, it is all a wonderful state of chaos.

We have been addressing our need for more space here at Excelsior as we have been quite crowded and pressed for room. Thus, after careful deliberation and planning, we are now in the process of expanding our shop and warehouse to accommodate the increased business needs. So we need more staff and we need to revise systems. It is the only way to get things to work to their best potential. The downside of the move is the immensity of the task. Because of various issues the warehouse is in a state of wretched disarray. While this move will force an end to that bit of chaos, it also means taking the time to sort through it all and build. We have slated the upgrade to take two months, but this has already stretched past that date.

We started this at the beginning of January. I assure you it is a cumbersome task; the amount of crap that accumulates in a few years is staggering. You can expect some serious sales on the website once the move is complete.

In any event, we are currently knee deep in the final phases of the move. Most of our time is consumed with this back-breaking work and it has backed up both production and order fulfillment. I know at some point soon we will have to move to a larger building so we are trying to stay as organized as possible in anticipation of that. In the end, this is a good thing. Now would be a good time to thank the many good-hearted and strong backed volunteers who came down on weekends to help us with this task. Your efforts have been appreciated.

A Year in Review

Building upon what we learned in 2004, what can we expect to be different in 2005? Fair question.

2004 brought with it much feedback on things we did well and things we could do better. As always it is a great learning experience and we would be remiss not to take advantage of that information and evolve. To that end I have annotated a series of areas that we plan to improve upon and new areas to expand into.

1) Office Hours. This past year has shown me the value of privacy, of being locked away to work without interruption. I have put myself on a fixed schedule and moved my own office to Center City Philadelphia, away from the factory proper. Here, I expect to be able to better focus on the creative sides of the business as well as the office work that often gets interrupted.

Now the more restrictive office hours means I will be harder to get a hold of personally. I am limiting my time to deal with phones and office work to very specific periods. Having new staff on board also presents some things to consider. With a fresh crop of faces, I want to make sure Excelsior is a fun environment to work at. We are cutting back our office hours to allow for the staff to enjoy the products we make, though you shouldn't notice it as there are more people to cover.

2) Increased Sculpting. Having new and exciting models is what makes this game work, so we have come up with a schedule that should allow for the steady flow of new releases for both Warzone and Chronopia. This has been a criticized area for us and one I hope will be seen in a better light this year. Additionally we will be releasing new models for some of our other upcoming projects.

3) Information Sharing. With a more reliable sculpting system, we are better able to share new release information with our customers. You can expect to see frequent updates here on the site that lets you know both the planned schedule of releases and the progress of those works. It sounds like simple enough tasks, but I have remained amazed at how the simplest tasks get pushed aside for sudden issues and last minute concerns. In any event, I believe we will have this licked following the move.

4) A Bit of a Face Lift. We have had some good feedback on how to improve upon our website. We are assembling a team to focus on a site redesign so I expect to see a more streamlined web page and shopping cart shortly. While the current site is fine, we can do better and we fully plan to.

One of the features of the new site is its interactivity. We plan on installing an events calendar and self-tracking scoring system for the league and tournament results.

5) You Want to Know What? In an effort to help share information, you will see Excelsior participating in both web and print advertising. We have supported the good folks at Fictional Reality but now must expend our offerings. [And we've been very appreciative of their support and have been glad to be one of the first entities to break Excelsior news when it come around. Mark, Ed.]

We will be sharing information with The Miniatures Page and Frothers regularly and making sure Codex Arcanum is updated as well. Codex Arcanum is the best miniatures magazine in print today. While it is in French, I enjoy leafing through it each month anyway and hope to see it one day sold here in the States and in English. Perhaps I will study French in my copious free time.

6) My cloistered new schedule will allow Excelsior to release more print material. This means supplements and resources at a very frequent pace. This is exciting of course for us. We will be offering some new and exciting materials thru Drive-Thru RPG in the spring to support the RPG lines we are launching this summer.

7) The Word. We are debuting a series of novels and anthologies this year. Two are already finished and prepped for editing. Four in all are planned for this year alone. I have found over the past few years of research that fiction books are a needed method of expanding our audience.

8) A Look Inside. People want to know what we are doing, I get that. They like the process, which, while I find it mundane, I would be remiss if I dismissed the feedback I have been getting. To that end we have set up a system in the features to deal with that; to share with our friends and fans what we are up to, how it is going, and what we are planning. You won't need to call here to find out anymore. In the end I agree this is a good thing. I look forward to concluding the move so this can be implemented.

9) Organized Play. It has been a long time in coming, but we wanted it to work and work well. The team that worked on it (spearheaded by Jim Williamson and Bill

Refsland) kicked it around for almost two years to make sure when we launched it players would have a good time and a fair one. The running events and judging events guides have been reviewed and approved and the campaign creator has been finished as well.

I am pleased to say that team is finished and we are debuting that system at the months end. Players will be able to organize their games, participate in sanctioned scenarios and contribute to the game system itself; in all making their time with these games all the more enjoyable.

To that end we have also worked on sanctioned scenario guides. Players will be able to download monthly scenarios to run in their stores or game clubs and report their results right back to us here at Excelsior. That feature should precede the site revamp.

10) Convention Appearances. We have had a lot of data on conventions and we are streamlining our efforts in those areas. While they are wonderful opportunities to mingle with fans and make new converts, I am feeling that we would be better served by supporting the retail chain and supporting an authorized retailer than doing it ourselves. While we are cutting back on personal appearances, we are increasing our support and actively looking for sponsor partners. Our experiences at Gen Con So-Cal has shown us the merits of this thinking.

Because of this we will also be able to make more of an effort to co-host In-Store events at our Premiere Hobby Retailers. We have made some very good alliances overseas and expect to see the European market blossom this year. We have learned the value of friendships and alliances and look forward to the exciting plans they have put together.

11) Painted Beauties. We have assembled a talented team of great painters to bring our models to stunning life. We will show off greens of course, and even castings, but we are also sending our new releases to painters for their special treatment.

So, it looks like a promising year. We have heard your feedback and tried where possible to implement change. Thank you for your suggestions and support. We do appreciate it very much.

Thom Talamini, Excelsior Ent.

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Battle Report



Never being one to turn away from a chance to get beaten senseless again at one of my favorite games I jumped at the opportunity to use the Warlord scenario from last issue. I asked Brian (my usual Warmachine nemesis) if he wanted another change to kick me in the head and he happily agreed. In short, we would be fighting for possession of four objectives and kills would be a secondary consideration. Three of the objectives would be worth 1 VP each. These were the two small shrines on the large hill and a point in the ruined temple. The fourth is worth 3 VP and is an idol on the hill between the shrines. Possession of these sites is of utmost importance as having the most points in kills will only be worth 1 VP. Of course, that single VP could prove important.

Additionally, the scenario has hot lava and boulders being spewed out of an active volcano and the whole game has a variable end time, tied to a d6 roll at the end of certain turns. On turn four a 4+ on a d6 ends the game, on turn five a 2+ ends the game and the game automatically ends at the end of turn six, if we get that far. Even with a scenario to worry about we wanted to play a larger scale game than we've thrown down before so we went for 1000 point of goodness each. To that end I've put together a force that is comprised solely of painted models. Ok, so that might not be a big deal for many of you, but for me it's pretty darn huge so I'm making a big deal out of it.

Stryker will be my primary Warcaster and he'll be backed up by Reinholdt, the Gobber Speculator. I'll also be bringing along a Journeyman Warcaster and Eirys. I recently finished painting up Boomhowler and his crew so they are along for the ride too. I'll add to that units of Gun Mages (ok, I'm still using imposters but they are painted), Long Gunners and Trenchers. For Cygnar Warjacks I'll be taking along a Charger and a Defender. That might seem kind of light but I have also finished up

the paint jobs on Gorten Grundback and the four 'Jacks (three Gunners and one Driller) that come in his box set.

...and Brian spoke

Here we go, again. Mark has asked me to haul out my forces of Menoth to combat his heretics Cygnarans in a battle report. How can I turn down such a challenge? I have a reputation to maintain in beating Mark in all of our battle reports for *Fictional Reality*. So, how do I want to go about maintaining my invincibility? Well, I had recently painted Magnus the Traitor and all of his toys, but after some pondering I decided to go with a pure Menoth force. Getting 1000 points of just Menoth models on to the table was not too difficult as I had been painting units, off and on, for a few months. For my two warcasters I decided to take Feora (since I had never fielded her) and Kreoss (just because I like his feat). To support Feora I gave her a Redeemer, a Revenger and a Vanquisher. Kreoss received a Guardian and my other Redeemer. Last, but certainly not least, I am going to field my two, freshly painted Sunbursts.

Since this was going to be a take-and-hold kind of mission I needed lots of troops. So, units of Knights Exemplar, Temple Flameguard, Holy Zealots (with Icon Bearer) and my personal favorite: Deliverers filled out my army of religious loonies. If I deploy things correctly everyone should count as Fearless. The Icon Bearer will keep the Holy Zealots from fleeing. The Knights Exemplar have the Fearless ability and the Guardians special ability will keep the Flameguard and Deliverers from turning tail if I set them up near by. This grouping of Menoth will not require a lot of subtlety. And that's fine. Sometimes brute force and ignorance (bf&i) can be just as much fun as sub-



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tle and sneaky.

Below you can see the game table prior to deployment. You can clearly see the two shrines on the hill/volcano in the center of the table. The idol is between the two shrines on the other side of the volcano and the last objective is at the far end of the table in the midst of the ruined temple.

TURN 1

MARK

I ended up being 1st Player and to the work of attempting to secure objectives. On the left side of the field, by the ruined temple, Boomhowler & Crew, Eirys and the Journeyman Warcaster all moved up and got ready to fight. Eirys took aim at one of the Sunburst crew with a Deathseeker bolt and killed him to mark the first bloodshed of the battle.

Stryker allocated 1 Focus each to the Charger and Defender and all four models, including Reinholdt, ran towards the center of the board, more in the direction of the ruined temple than the volcano.

In the center of the board the Trenchers advanced and proceeded to lay down smoke while the Gun Mages skirted around the right side of the volcano and headed toward the closest shrine. The Long Gunners held their ground and made ready for any of Brian's forces that came into range. This pretty much meant that my forces that were advancing around the volcano would have to be overrun before they would get shots off. Gorten doled out 1 Focus to each of the four 'Jacks under his control and they all ran towards the Trencher's location.

BRIAN

Things started off with the Sunburst shooting at Eirys with no success. The vast bulk of Brian's army ran forward to close the distance between our forces and make his own claim on the objectives.

The Flameguard walked forward and formed into a shield wall and the Choir also walked, but began singing "Safe Passage", a sure comfort to the troops around them. Kreoss kept close enough behind the Guardian to cast "Ward" upon the mighty construct.

VOLCANO

A huge boulder flew out of the volcano and landed right on one of the Gun Mages, flattening him like a pancake. To scare them even more a big splotch of lava landed right behind them but failed to coat any of them. Finally, another splotch of lava landed between the Trenchers and the Driller. All of the volcano's rage seemed to be directed at the Cygnar troops.



THOUGHTS

I don't think that either of us expected too much from the first turn of action. I was pleased to reduce the crew of one of the Sunbursts by one, but am still worried about them in general. I already fear that the Long Gunners are going to prove less than worthwhile in their current position, but am also concerned about moving them and missing an opportunity to fire.

TURN 2

MARK

Things started off well enough this turn with the Gun Mages running up the side of the volcano and taking possession of the first objective, one of the shrines. The Long Gunners maintained their aim on incoming Menoth troops, but could not fire on any. A volley of fire from the Trenchers killed three of the Deliverers and those that did not commit shots dropped more smoke. The Rhulic Gunner 'Jacks poured shots into the Flame Guard and managed to drop two of their number. The Driller simply moved forward and Gorten stepped up and also cast "Solid Ground" in an attempt to protect those around him from the volcano's wrath.

Boomhowler & Crew continued to move up into the ruins and tossed out three stink bombs while the Journeyman Warcaster moved up and cast "Arcane Shield" on the Trollkin. Eirys again took aim at another of the Sunburst crew and killed him with a Deathseeker bolt.

Stryker and Reinholdt moved up and the warcaster cast "Snipe" on the Defender who used the extra range, 3", to shoot at the ad-





vancing Vanquisher. It missed and the Gobbo could be heard cussing up a storm. The Charger ended my turn by simply moving up.

BRIAN

The Sunburst close to the ruined temple let fly against the Trollkin and killed one outright and three more were hit by the burst, but none of the additional ones were killed. The Holy Zealots ran up to the ruins and threw fire bombs. This resulted in three more dead Trollkin who made their morale check and held steady. The Priest moved up with them and recited a prayer.



The Deliverers split their fire between the Defender and Trenchers and ended up killing two Trenchers and causing a total of four points of damage to the Defender. The Vanquisher also took aim at the Defender and blew off four more points of Cygnar engineering.

Kreoss channeled "Immolation" through the Guardian for minimal damage. Feora moved upfield and the second Sunburst shot at, and hit, one of the Gunners for nine points of damage. Of the resulting three bursts another Trencher fell. One of the Redeemers shot at the Defender and missed and then used a Focus point to shoot at a Trencher and also missed him.

The Choir continued to move forward, now singing "Infuse". The mighty Guardian charged two of the Rhulic Gunners and just trashed one of them while doing very minimal damage to the second one. The Flame Guard and Knights Templar ended Brian's second turn by moving up.

VOLCANO

I think we both breathed a sigh of relief when all of the volcano's projectiles for this turn rained down on ground nowhere near any troops.

THOUGHTS

I feel good about being able to step up the amount of damage I dealt this turn but Brian has started his own kill count and has managed to start doing damage to my 'Jacks, something I've not yet been able to do to his.

TURN 3

MARK

Eiryss started things off by killing the last of the Sunburst gunners that were on her side of the field. The Journeyman Warcaster maintained "Arcane Shield" on the Trollkin and then shot one of the Holy Zealots dead with his pistol. He also tried to kill another with "Arcane Bolt" but was unsuccessful. The Trollkin then charged two of the Zealots and killed one.



Stryker cast "Arcane Shield" on the Defender and then moved up with Reinholdt. The Defender then shot at the Vanquisher and I miraculously managed to cause four points of damage to it. The Charger moved up and shot at a nearby Holy Zealot but missed.

The Trenchers fell back to allow room for the Rhulic 'Jacks in the fight. The Driller charged and nailed the Guardian for ten points of damage which was turned right back on to me via "Retribution".

Both of the remaining Rhulic Gunners took shoots at the Flame-

In a tragic die roll Boomhowler missed the lowly Zealot that he was trying to tear apart. A remaining Trollkin charged the Revenger and did two points to the construct.

On the volcano the Gunmages continued to move up and around towards the idol and took shots at the advancing Knights Templar, killing two of them as gunshots echoed through the hills. Sadly, I fear that the Long Gunners are now out of the fight and will prove to be a wasted unit on my part. They held, again.



guard and one of them was killed. Gorten again moved up on his stubby little legs.

BRIAN

The Revenger started off Brian's turn by killing one of the Trollkin. The Holy Zealots threw more of their Fire Bombs into the ruins where the Trollkin were and managed to kill another. Unfortunately (for Mark) Eiryss was caught in the blast of several Fire Bombs going off nearby and she was killed. Two Zealots tried to put a pounding on Boomhowler, but were unable to harm him.

The Redeemer took aim at the Cygnarian Charger but missed. The deviation still caught the 'Jack and also Stryker. The reduced strength blast bounced off of the light 'Jack but did cause one point of damage to Stryker. The Vanquisher then took two shots at the Defender and plinked off another four points of damage.

Feora, about done with Boomhowler being among the living, casts "Immolation" on him through an arc-node but only manages to cause two points of damage. The Deliverers then ran to better positioning while the Choir moved up while singing "Infuse".

In the center, the second Redeemer shot at the closest Gunner twice and hit once for seven points of damage. The Flameguard then charged in and finished it off.

The Guardian then unleashed all kinds of holy hell on the Driller hitting it not just once, but a second time. The second hit was a critical hit which resulted in the Driller being thrown onto Gorten



(two points of damage) and one Trencher (killed). The remaining Sunburst then shifted over while the Knights Templar charged up the volcano and met the Gun Mages in hand-to-hand combat. This resulted in the Gun Mage Lieutenant being killed. The Paladin also ran up the hill and Kreoss ran forward.

VOLCANO

Again, the volcano belched up giant hot rocks and kiddie-pools worth of lava, but it all avoided, sometimes narrowly, the troops climbing all over it and those fighting on the ground.

THOUGHTS

Arg! Things have definitely taken a turn for the worse. I fear now that if I have a chance of pulling out a win here it will be by being able to hold on to the idol and one shrine and conceding the other shrine, the objective in the ruined temple and the VP for kills to Brian. That could result in an overall 4-3 win for me, but I'm even skeptical of being able to hold on to what I have at the moment. If the game goes past four turns I truly fear losing 0-7.

TURN 4

MARK

The Journeyman maintained "Arcane Shield" on Boomhowler just to keep him tough as a two-dollar steak. He then took a pistol shot at a Holy Zealot and sent him to the afterlife. Boomhowler killed another in hand-to-hand combat.





Stryker, but missed. The Revenger charged the super-tough Boomhowler and hit him for one point of damage. The turn ended with the Holy Zealots moving farther into the ruined temple and claiming the objective. Two Fire Bombs were tossed at the Journeyman Warcaster, but both deviated and caused no damage.

VOLCANO

If it wasn't for the impotence of the Long Gunners the volcano would get the award for least impressive thing on the table. Again, lots of flash and bang but nobody flattened or burned

The Charger, as his name eludes to, charged a nearby Zealot and managed to not score a single hit out of two tries! Stryker used his feat at this point just to try and keep those around him alive through the fourth turn of the game. The Defender shot twice at the Vanquisher and plinked off nine more points of damage after hitting on both shots.

A Rhulic Gunner shot at and killed two more Flameguard, while the Trenchers began moving up the side of the Volcano. Gorten then used his feat to push back the Menoth forces in an attempt to deny their claiming of the idol. The Gun Mages unloaded their pistols again at the Knights Templar and didn't manage to kill any of them but their Thunderbolt shots did knock two of them down the volcano.

BRIAN

The Choir keeps up singing "Infuse" and the Redeemer in the center shoots at a Rhulic Gunner but misses. The Guardian moved up and then Kreoss cast "Cleansing Fire" through its arc-node. This resulted in two dead Gun Mages and one dead Trencher. The Gun Mages lose their nerve and run away.

The Knight Templars head back up the hill and the Templar goes around. The Sunburst held of the turn, not having a clean shot to anything and the Deliverers walked to the top of the hill and let fly. This proved to be a very unlucky turn for the Deliverers as one of them blew himself and two of his mates to smithereens and none of the others managed to hit any targets this turn. The Flameguard moved up and poked at the Rhulic Gunner but could not damage it.

The Vanquisher plinked away two more points of damage on the Defender and the Redeemer on that side of the table shot at

got land?

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well and more of them would have been all the more difficult for Brian to dislodge from the ruins. I was kind of indecisive with what to do with Stryker and his two 'Jacks at the start of the game. I should have committed them either to the center or to the ruins at the deployment stage.

Brian: Well, for the most part things went my way. Actually, things were going well enough by the end of the third turn I really did not need to use either of my warcasters' feats. Even if I had used them nothing much

to a crisp. On another note, it was time to roll and see if the game ended and indeed it did with Brian in certain control of pretty much the entire board.

THOUGHTS

Mark: Well, I guess I could moan about being rolled over and say that was another humiliating kick in the crotch, like the song says. But, I had lots of fun playing this game. Sure, I'd rather be on the winning end of things, but I've never had a bad time playing with Brian.

But on to what went wrong. First, the Long Gunners were a complete waste. What could have replaced them and done better? Well, more Trollkin for one! I think they held up reasonably

would have changed. I was very pleased with how all of my units performed. The Holy Zealots held their own against Boomhowler and crew. The Temple Flameguard did an admirable job in holding the center and the Knights Exemplar climbed the volcano TWICE to help secure a win. The Deliverers did not do much due to poor deployment on my part. They could have done more if I had put them on the right to help take on Boomhowler. My freshly painted Sunbursts failed to have the impact on the game that I had hoped. No worthwhile targets really came in range. One trollkin is not the body count I was hoping for. My warjacks did what they were supposed to. The Guardian and the Vanquisher got into close combat and did some impressive damage; especially The Guardian. My two favorite moments of the game came on the critical hit by



The Guardian so that I got to fling The Driller back at Gorten and when one of the Deliverers loaded his rocket in backwards, blowing himself and one of his buddies back to Menoth. High comedy! Oh, can't forget the retribution from The Guardian that blew off The Driller's drill. That made a big difference in how the fight in the center progressed. My only real worry was Gorten's feat. But, my going last in the final turn pretty much offset his landslide.

My plan of bf&I worked pretty well. Everyone moved forward and engaged the enemy wherever they were encountered and were successful from one flank to the other. I hope Mark wins one of these games that we play. Otherwise, he might stop asking me to play them. [Nah! No chance of that, I'm enjoying Warmachine very much...win, lose or draw. Mark]

Battle Report

RAG • NAROK

Wolfen Incursion

Introduction

With the English release of Rag'narok, the editors of FR decided to include a battle report of Rackham's new regimental game in this issue.

I've been playing Confrontation for years, back when the only English language rules were the ones I translated myself, but for Rag, I'm only a newbie. Prior to this game, I've only played three times - and, yes, lost all three! But, never fear - I always say you learn more from losing a game than from winning. Yep, I think I've learned a lot.

In this game, I'll be fielding 1,500 point army of the Griffins of Akkylaine versus Clay's 1,500 points of the Wolfen of Yllia.

We'll be playing on a 4' square board, with some terrain - hills, a copse of trees, a tall berm, and an ancient eagle building. The hills are by War-Zone GTS and the Eagle building is the Talon Gate from Excelsior Entertainment.

Clay and I are playing a basic "kill 'em all" type game using the Battle setup. This divides the board into 3 horizontal regions. The middle region is 45 cm across and the other two regions are the deployment zones.

About Rag'Narok

As this is the first time many of our readers will have seen a game of Rag'narok, I wanted to take a moment to cover army construction. Like most games, Rag has its own rules for how to build your force, but like all Rackham games, these rules are unique to Rag. If you've played Confrontation, you will see some similarities in its big brother game.

First off, your army is composed of units. A unit is composed of individuals, such as characters, warrior mages, or warrior monks,

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or troops, or a combination. If the unit is composed solely of troops or of troops and individuals, the unit total must be 50 points or more. Individuals on their own can form a unit of less than 50 points.

Like Confrontation, Rag'Narok uses the cards included in the miniature's blister. When calculating a model's points, you use the AP (or PA) listed on the bottom right of the unit card. This is cost per model. So, for example, a unit of 4 Griffin Thallions, at 22 points apiece, costs 88 points.

There is no limit on the number of models in a unit (well, you must have at least one). Units that have fewer than 5 model are "detachments" and gain certain advantages. These include being harder to shoot (-1 modifier), other units (both detachments and regulars) may move through a detachment without penalty, and regular units may charge through a detachment.

Unit composition in Rag is different from most games - no surprise there. You can include different types of models in a unit. Most times, the composition of a unit is homogenous, with the addition of an individual or two.

Units in Rag'Narok move and fight based on the orders that they are given. For a unit to receive an order it must have a leader in its ranks or be in the leadership range of a leader. A leader is a model with the "Leadership/X" ability - where X is the leadership range of the model in centimeters. As there are not a lot of models with the Leadership ability, the Rag rules allow you to promote a model without the Leadership skill. The promoted unit gains the Leadership/0 skill, +1 to his Courage or Fear and Discipline statistics and can give orders to the unit he is in. Promoting a non-character model to a leader costs 10 points. A character can be upgraded to a leader for 15 points, but does not get the Courage/Fear or Discipline bump.

Right - so here's an example unit:

Unit 1: Total points 406.

- Sere, Templar Commander, Warrior Monk (151 points)
- Griffin Armour (33 points)
- Sceptre of Submission (20 points)
- Emblem of Felicity (12 points)
- Pillar of Severity (11 points)
- Seal of the Temple (5 points)
- Liturgy: Kelgar's Ashes (13 points)
- Miracle: Occult Dubbing (17 points)
- Minor Virtue: Veneration (4 points)
- 7 Griffin Templars (140 points)

Yes, this is a tooled up unit, but in a 1,500 point game, its not over the top. As you can tell, an army construction program like Army Builder would be of great help here. And it is, but to date the Rag'Narok data files are all in French.

Griffin Force

With the above information, here is my 1,500 point Griffin army for this game:

Unit 1 (406 pts)

- Sere Temple Commander w/ Armor of the Griffin, Sceptre of Submissions, Emblem of Felicity, Pilliar of Severity, and Seal of the Temple. Kelgar's Ashes, Minor Virtue: Veneration, Miracle: Occult Dubbing
- 7 Templars

This is my hard-hitting major combat unit. Its the punch in my army.

Unit 2 (189)

- Melkion the Flamboyant w/ The Phoenix, Spells: Arrows of Hecate and Fire Elemental Summoning.
- Fire Familiar

Melkion is in this list to add magical support. He can either blast opponents with his force 5 Arrows of Hecate or summon a Fire Elemental to provide some burning smack-down where its needed.

Unit 3 (236)

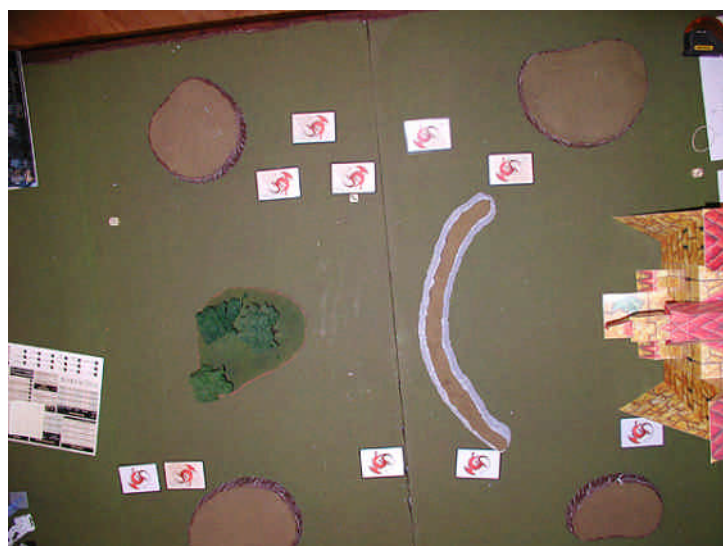
- Priestess of Steel, Second Incarnation, with the Ardent Icon, Minor Virtue: Veneration, and Miracle: Occult Dubbing.
- 7 Fusiliers

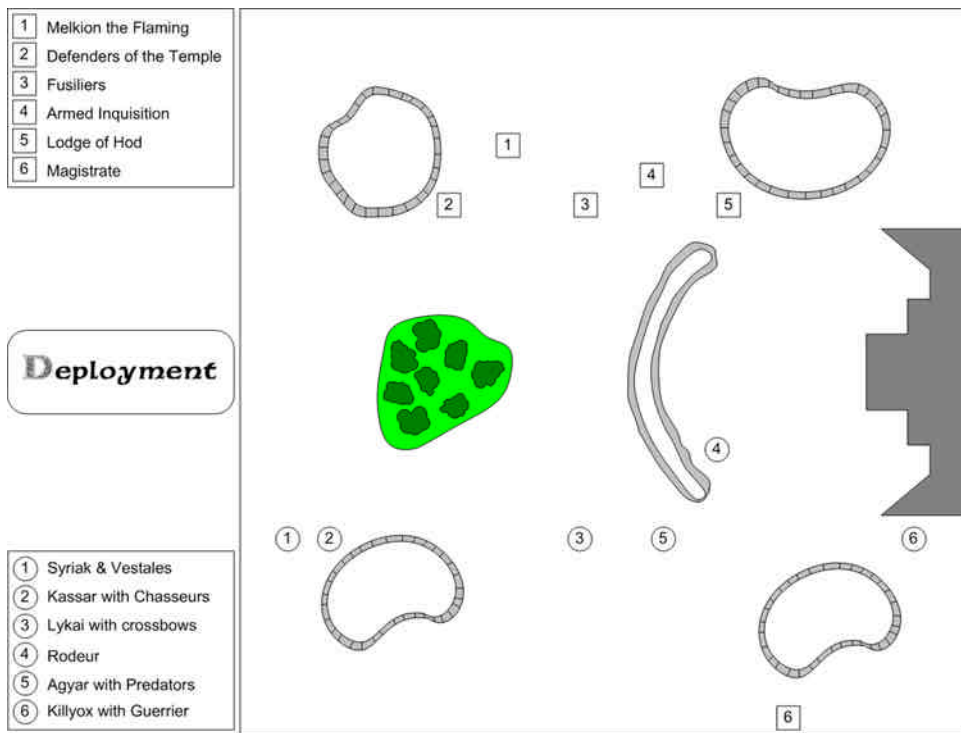
The Fusilier unit is almost mandatory for the Griffin. This one is lead by the Priestess of Steel whose miracle, Occult Dubbing, will make the Fusiliers rifles into Sacred Weapons (halving the armor characteristic of their targets)

Unit 4 (172)

- Magistrate of the Griffin w/ Leadership/0, Minor Virtue: Veneration, and Miracle: Sentence of the Condemned.
- 4 Thallions

The Magistrate and Thallions is my scouting unit - they are to deploy in the backfield and snipe at the wolfen fighters. If they pull off a Wolfen unit, that's one less that's hitting my main force.





knew I would be learning a great deal about the system during this game. With that in mind, I decided to go for a force with no magic in order to take out one of the dimensions of my force. For Confrontation, I currently have only two armies. The one that I thought could survive the best with no magic backup was the Wolfen. So that is the force I went with.

The force I came up with out of the Wolfen ended up being:

- Killyox and 5 Wolfen Warriors (312 points)
- Agyar with 5 Wolfen Predators (333 points)
- 4 Prowlers (204 points)
- Likai with 4 Crossbow Wolfen (231 points)
- Kassar with 5 Chasseurs (206 points)
- Syriak with 4 Vestals (218 points)

Each of the first five groups I paid the extra points to make one of the leader, usually the character.

Unit 5 (255)

- Inquisitor Taetarius with Spell: Immolation
- 2 Inquisitors with Spell: Primal Fire Attack
- 3 Templars of the Inquisition

Okay, I admit it, this is a trick unit. The three Templars of the Inquisition are there to be the front rank, backed up by the Inquisitors. Since the Templars of the Inquisition can channel the spells of the Inquisitors, I can shoot off my Primal Fire Attack from these guys without exposing my Inquisitors until everyone gets into melee.

Unit 6 (250)

- Miseracord w/ Hauteclair/2, Minor Virtue: Veneration, and Miracle: Sword of the Vengeful Angel
- Knight Templar of Hod w/ Leadership/0
- 3 Temple Purifiers

The Lodge of Hod includes troops with both guns and swords. Led by Miseracord, these guys are meant to hold off the inevitable flank attack.

So, my deployment plan is to have the Fusiliers in the center of my battle line with the Templars and the Templars of the Inquisition to either side. Melkion will be behind the line and the Lodge of Hod will anchor which ever flank is open. The Thallions and the Magistrate will sneak up on the Wolfen from behind and cause as much mischief as possible.

Initial comments from Clay

Luckily Michael was nice enough to play a practice game with me before doing this game for the battle report. So at least I didn't come into the game completely blind. I have played some Confrontation, so that too helped to a great extent. But still I

The Approach

The Wolfen player's highest Discipline is 5 and the Griffin's is 8. The Griffin wins the approach roll with a 14 versus the Wolfen's 9. Since both sides have 6 units, neither has an option to refuse a deployment request. The Griffin player requests the Wolfen deploy the first unit, then each side takes turns deploying a unit.

In Rag'narok, units are not deployed on the table at this time. Rather, each player places a stack of cards for the models in a unit in his deployment zone. There is one card in this stack for each different set of characteristics. So, for example, there are 2 cards in the stack for the unit composed of Killyox and the 5 wolfen warriors.

Since both players have units with the scout ability - the Griffin Magistrate and Thallions and the Wolfen Prowlers - these two units are no deployed with the card stacks.

A second Discipline test was made and the Griffin one again. The Wolfen started revealing units - replacing the card stacks with the actual miniatures - followed by the Griffin.

After all the cards were replaced, the Wolfen then deployed his unit of scouts. The Prowlers were deployed in no-mans land between the deployment zones. The Magistrate and Thallions were deployed in the rear of the Wolfen force, out of range and, thus, invisible to Wolfen troops.

Turn 1

Rally Phase:

There are no troops to rally yet.



The Magistrate rolls his Just Punishment die and gets a 4. During the turn, any model in the Magistrate's aura of faith may use this score instead of making a roll.

For the Tactical roll, the Griffin player rolls a 2 for a final total of 10. This gives the Griffin player 3 additional orders. The Wolfen player rolls a 1 and fails the Tactical roll, but does gain one additional order.

Reserve Entry Phase:

There are no reserves in this game.

Order Attribution Phase:

The Griffin orders are:

- Magistrate: Fire or Receive Charge
- Templars of Hod: Fire or Receive Charge
- Inquisitors: Move or Counter Charge
- Fusiliers: Fire
- Templars: Immobile
- Melkion: Move

The Wolfen orders are:

- Syriak: March
- Kassar: March
- Lykai: Fire
- Rodeur: Move and Fire
- Agyar: Charge or Charge Reception
- Killyox: Run

First firing/Incantation Phase:

No units were ordered to Rapid fire; no magician is casting a ritual.

Movement Phase:

The models move as they were ordered. The unit of Predators has a Charge and a Charge Reception order. Since they are unable to charge - there is no enemy in LOS, even after maneuvering to turn around and face the Magistrate and Thal-

lions, they use the Charge Reception order.

NOTE: This is illegal. Maneuvers are only allowed after revealing an Action order. Charge Reception is a Reaction Order. At the time, Clay and I didn't know this, so we played on. As you will see, this oops made a difference. Rather than a Charge, Clay should have ordered this unit to move or be immobile - either of which would have allowed him to turn around.

Divination Phase:

Fist up, the Magistrate tries to call "Sentence of the Condemned" on one of the Predators and fails his roll - needing a 2+ I roll a 1. Yes, I forgot to use the Just Punishment die, which would have allowed the miracle to work. This miracle moves the target one range band closer. In this case, it would have allowed the Thallions to unload on a Predator that otherwise was out of range.

Both the Priestess of Steel and Sered cast Occult Dubbing on a model in their respective units - one Fusilier and one Templar. Miseracord did nothing this turn.

Second Firing Phase:

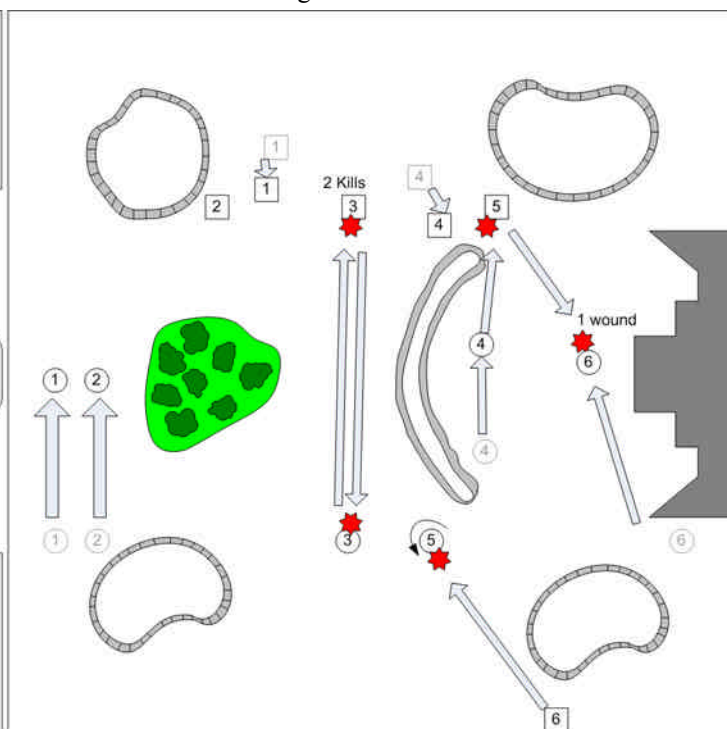
In the second firing phase, targets are declared by units in ascending order of their initiative - and then executed in descending initiative order. Here is the list of targets and results in ascending order, though they were resolved in descending order. :)

- Initiative 2: All the Fusiliers target Lakai; they score one hit but fail to wound.
- Initiative 3: The Wolfen Crossbows target the Fusiliers and kills one.
- Initiative 3: Temple Purifier targets a Prowler, but its out of range!
- Initiative 4: Prowlers target the Lodge of Hod and score one hit that does no damage.

1	Melkion the Flaming
2	Defenders of the Temple
3	Fusiliers
4	Armed Inquisition
5	Lodge of Hod
6	Magistrate

Turn 1

1	Syriak & Vestales
2	Kassar with Chasseurs
3	Lykai with crossbows
4	Rodeur
5	Agyar with Predators
6	Killyox with Guerrier





- Initiative 5: Lakai targets a Fusilier and kills the one with the sacred weapon.
- Initiative 5: Miseracord targets a wolfen warrior and does one wound.
- Initiative 6; Melkion casts Arrows of Hecate at Lakai - and blows the roll.

Hand to Hand Combat Phase:

No one is in melee this turn.

Mana recovery:

Melkion regenerates 5 mana (thanks to his Familiar), Inquisitor Taetarius regenerates 2 as does one of the other Inquisitors. The last Inquisitor regenerates one gem.

This ends turn one - at this point I (Michael) note two things...

- (1) Casting Occult Dubbing on Fusiliers in the front rank only draws fire.
- (2) If you've got a big, honking, unit of Templars with one bad-man of a warrior monk, don't stand around picking daisies.

...and from Clay's view of things on turn one.

Well, except for Michael's little backfield surprise, things went fairly well, and so far, my "perfect scenario" was still in the realm of possibility. I really pulled a bonehead with the set of orders I gave to Agyar since neither of the orders were possible to execute (oh well, live and learn). I was very lucky that I didn't pay dearly for that blunder. The Crossbowmen in the center lived up to their expectation and traded two wounds for none. Of course two wounds on Michael's side means that next turn there will be two less bullets coming my way, and that's always good. If Michael keeps up his rolls, I will really be glad I didn't bring magic. For this turn at least, not having magic didn't hurt me in the least, and all Michael's did was paint targets on the heads of a couple shooters.

Turn 2

Rally Phase:

The Griffins roll a 1 on the Discipline test and the Wolfen roll a 2 - for a total of 6. The Griffin gets one extra order while the Wolfen gets four. The Magistrate gets a 2 on his Just Punishment die. The elemental gives Melkion an additional fire gem.

Reserve Entry Phase:

There are no reserves in this game.

Order Attribution Phase:

Griffin Orders

- Magistrate: Receive Charge
- Templars of Hod: Receive Charge or Fire
- Melkion: Immobile
- Inquisitors: Immobile
- Fusiliers: Rapid Fire
- Templars of the Inquisition: Move

Wolfen Orders:

- Syriak: Run
- Kassar: Charge or Move
- Lykai: Fire
- Rodeur: Rapid Fire
- Agyar: Charge or Charge Reception
- Killyox: Charge

Rapid Fire:

Both players have one unit marked with Rapid Fire orders - the Wolfen Prowlers fire first at the Lodge of Hod but score no hits. The Fusiliers then fire at the Wolfen Crossbows and score one wound.

Movement Phase:

This time, there are no hitches in the movement.

The Wolfen Predators charge the Magistrate and the Thallions. The Griffons fail their Fear roll. The Domination Factor of the Wolfen is 8 while the Domination Factor of the Griffons is 5, so the Griffons are in the Rout state. In this state, all models are at -1 to initiative, attack, and defense rolls. Also, the models in a routed unit may not attack. This effect is in addition to the penalties for being charged (-1 to initiative, attack and defense).

Kasar and the Chasseurs charge into the side of the Templars - the great wolf taking on Sered himself!

The unit of Warriors lead by Killyox were ordered to charge, but at the last instant they attempt to change their order. Killyox passes the Discipline 10 test and the unit is immobile.

The other moves go as ordered.

Divination Phase:

In the Divination Phase, Sered calls Occult Dubbing on himself and one other Templar. The Iron Priestess calls Occult Dubbing on another Fusilier. Miseracord and the Magistrate do not call any miracles.

Second Firing/Incantation Phase:

Once again, targets are declared in order of increasing initiative and firing is resolved in descending order.

- Initiative 3: Wolfen Crossbows shoot at the Fusiliers and score two kills.
- Initiative 5: Lakai shoots at the Fusiliers and whiffs it.
- Initiative 6: Melkion summons a Fire Elemental with great mastery and it appears in combat with a rather surprised Chasseur.

Combat Phase:

This turn, blows finally fall with two melees: Agyar and the Predators versus the routed Magistrate and Thallions as well as Kassar and 5 Chasseurs fighting the Templars led by Sered.

First up is the combat between the Predators and the Thallions. In Rag'Narok, combats are handled between models of the same characteristics. For this battle, there are four different characteristics - Magistrate, Thallion, Agyar, and Predator. Due to figure placement, there are three frays to resolve:

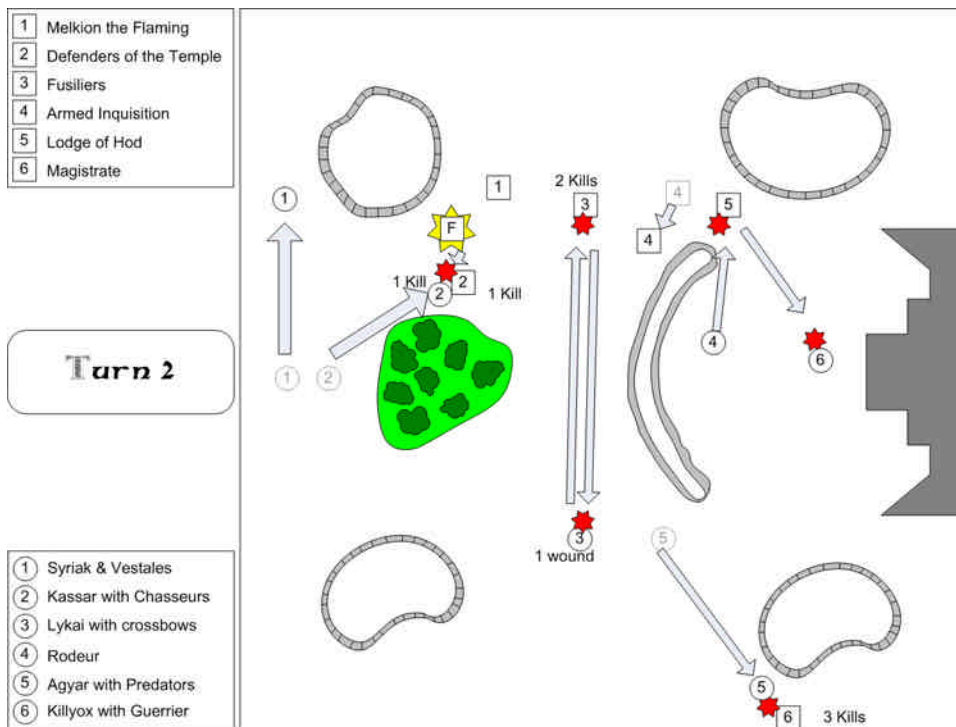
- Magistrate versus Predator
- Thallion versus Agyar
- Thallion versus Predator

In the fight between Thallion and Predator, the Predators have 3 dice and the Thallions have 2. The Predators win the initiative and the Thallions put both dice into defense (as they must, being routed). The Wolfen sets the mark to 9 and scores 1 hit. The Thallions roll two dice and neither blocks the hit. The damage is rolled on the damage table resulting in 1 wound, which kills a Thallion.

In the fight between the Thallion and Agyar, the Thallions win the initiative, but are unable to attack, so it reverts to Agyar lay-



ing the smack down on the Griffin - resulting in two dead Thallions.

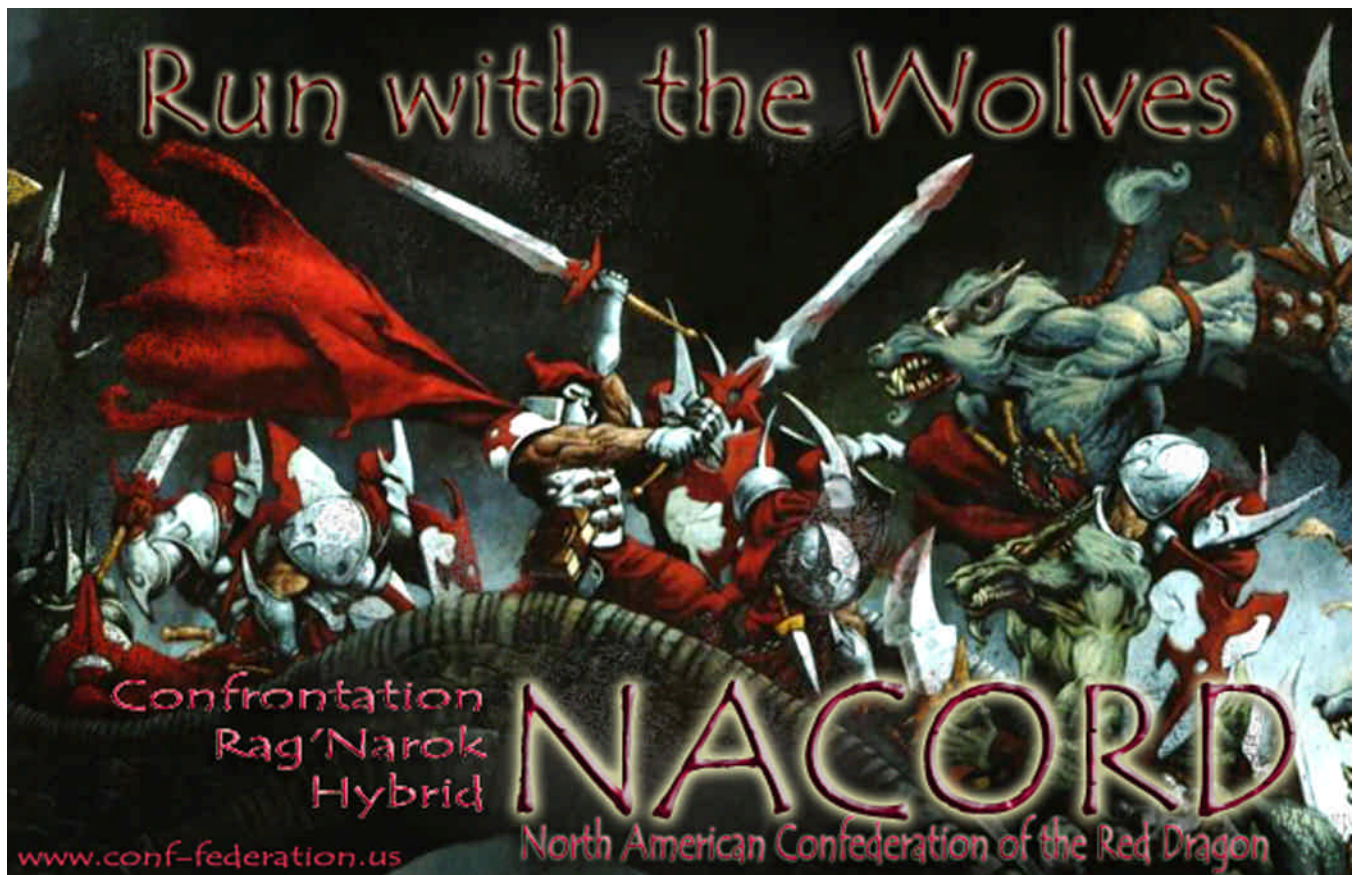


In the fight between the Magistrate and the Predator, the confidence of the Wolfen is shaken as the Predator fails to hit with either of his attacks.

The second combat has much more going on. In it we have:

- Chasseur versus the Fire Elemental
- Chasseur versus Templar
- Chasseur versus Sered
- Kassar versus Sered
- Kassar versus Templar

In the combat between Sered and Kassar - the clash of titans - Sered is -1 to his initiative, attack, and defense rolls since he was charged by Kassar. Kassar is -1 to his initiative, attack, and defense rolls due to the Scepter of Submission. The Pillar of Sovereignty adds 2 to Sered's strength and the Griffin Armor subtracts one from Kassar's attack die rolls. What a mess.



Kasar wins the initiative test. Sered places one die in attack and one in defense. Kasar places all three in attack and sets the mark at 6. Kasar hits will all attacks and Sered blocks one. However, when rolling for damage, Kasar scores three wounds on Sered - and down goes the Templar Commander!

Up next is the Chasseur versus Templar - the Griffin wins initiative and the Wolfen places his one die into defense. The Templar places two dice into attack and scores two hits. The Wolfen is able to block one - and the other results in no wounds on the damage table.

In the fight between the Templar and Kasar, Kasar has no dice left to defend. The Templar sets the mark to a 5 and scores a hit. This is the Templar that received the Occult Dubbing, so Kasar's resistance is cut in half. Rolling to wound, the Templar rolls a 6 followed by a 6, resulting in 2 wounds for Kasar.

The final fight is between the Chasseur and Fire Elemental. The Fire Elemental wins initiative and the Wolfen places one die into defense. The Fire Elemental places both into attack and scores two hits. The Chasseur is unable to block anything and goes down under the fiery blows of the Elemental.

The thrust move brings more Templars and the Fire Elemental in contact with the Wolfen.

Mana Recover Phase

During Mana recovery, the last Inquisitor maxes out. Melkion regenerates 5 gems and uses them to increase his hold over the Fire Elemental. With the death of Sered, Taetarius takes over command of the army with a -1 modifier to his Discipline.

Thus spoke Michael about turn 2...

Thus ends turn two. At this point, things don't look good. Sered is down and the Thallion diversion will probably last only one more turn. The Fire Elemental, however, is cooking along nicely.

...and from Clay

So now the rubber meets the road. And my plans begin to change (as always). My left flank charge and my "behind the lines" charge both went off well, though it's obvious to me that my Chasseur Wolfen are outmatched. But I can't complain since Kasar was able to Take out Michaels biggest baddest dude. Michael still was having the greatest of luck with his magic, but he did get that Fire elemental on the board and that guy is going to give me a headache I'm sure. Kassar actually has Bane/Elementals, so that fight might be fun. The reason I held my right side was because they were getting free shots (the Prowlers) at Michaels guys with little risk to themselves. I figured I might as well drag out the freebies for another turn if I could.

Turn 3:

Rally Phase:

The Magistrate is able to rally the remains of his group - now they are Disorganized. They can receive orders, but must make a Discipline test when they are activated to see if they can act on it.



Reserve Phase:

There are still no reserves in this game.

Order Attribution Phase:

Griffin Orders:

- Fire Elemental: Immobile or Pursue
- Fusiliers: Rapid Fire
- Inquisitors: Run
- Templars of Hod: Move and Fire or Receive Charge
- Templars: Immobile
- Magistrate: Disengage
- Melidor: Move

Wolfen Orders:

- Syriak: Run
- Kassar: Immobile
- Lykai: Fire
- Rodeur: Rapid Fire
- Agyar: Pursuit
- Killyox: Charge or Immobile

Rapid Fire Phase:

The Fusiliers rapid fire on the Wolfen Crossbows and miss. The Prowlers rapid fire on the Lodge of Hod and kill one Purifier.

The magistrate scores a 4 on his Just Punishment die. Melkion gains a +2 on his Mana recovery die from the familiar. The Griffin scores a 6 on his Tactical roll and the Wolfen rolls a 1. The Griffin gains 2 extra orders and the Wolfen 1.

Second Firing Phase:

Initiative 3: The Wolfen Crossbows fire at the Templars of the Inquisition and drop two.

Initiative 5: Lakai fires at the Templars of the Inquisition and misses.

Initiative 6: Melkion casts Arrows of Hecate at a Wolfen chasseur but does no damage.

Combat:

The first combat to break down is the Chasseurs/Fire Elemental/Kasar/Templars. There frays are:

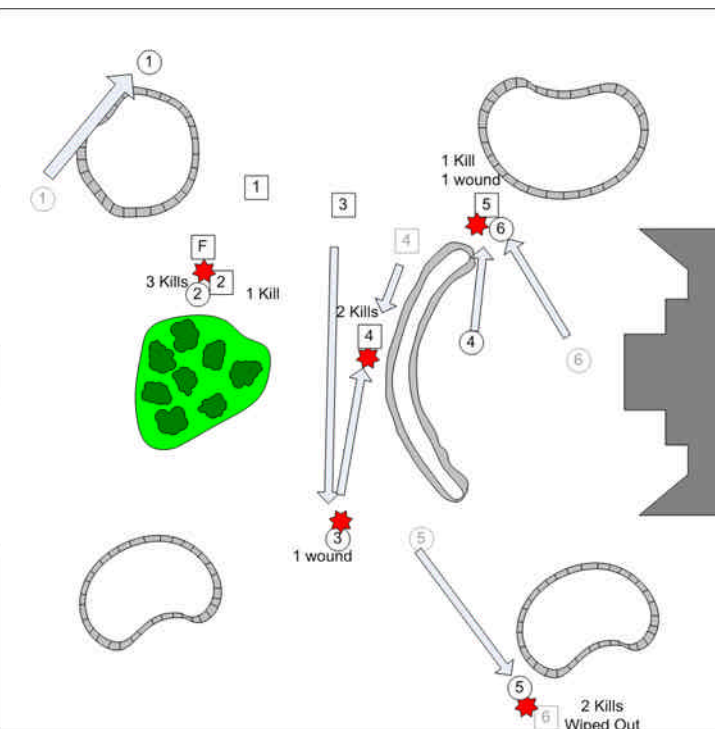
Fire Elemental versus Chasseur - The Fire Elemental wins initiative and the chasseur puts one die into defense and one into attack. The Fire Elemental puts two into attack and scores two hits. The Chasseur misses with his block and suffers two wounds. Get the mustard, we got another hot dog.

Templars versus Chasseurs - Five Templars bring the smack down on a Chasseur - the Chasseur loses initiative and places

1	Melkion the Flaming
2	Defenders of the Temple
3	Fusiliers
4	Armed Inquisition
5	Lodge of Hod
6	Magistrate

Turn 3

1	Syriak & Vestales
2	Kassar with Chasseurs
3	Lykai with crossbows
4	Rodeur
5	Agyar with Predators
6	Killyox with Guerrier



one die in attack and one in defense. The Templars place all 5 into attack and swing. There are 5 hits and one is blocked. Four rolls on the damage table results in one wound.

Templar versus Kasar - Mano-a-mano Kasar wins the initiative. The lone Templar with the sacred weapon puts one die into defense, Kasar puts three into attack. Setting the mark to a 10, two hits get through and are not blocked, but only one wound is scored.

The Griffin win the combat 3 wounds to 1 and so the thrust move puts the Fire Elemental and templars on Kasar like stink on a skunk.

The next combat is with the Lodge of Hod. There are three possible frays:

- Warrior versus Miseracord
- Warrior versus Knight Templar
- Warrior versus Temple Purifier

The Wolfen decide to allocate dice to fighting Miseracord and the Temple Purifier. Since the Lodge of Hod is routed, the Knight Templar can't attack so that fray is not even rolled. In the other two fights, Miseracord receives a wound and the Warrior misses the Purifier. The Wolfen win the combat and their thrust move brings more warriors into combat with the Lodge. Killyox stays back and laughs.

The final fight is the Magistrate and Thallion versus Agyar and his Predators. The Magistrate and Agyar face off first with the Magistrate winning Initiative. His luck doesn't hold as his attack misses and Agyar drops him with two unblocked hits. The Thallion and Predators square off. The Thallion wins initiative and places his die into attack - the Predators place one in defense and three into attack. Setting the mark to be a 15, the Thallion hopes to sell his life dearly, but he misses. The Predators take no mercy and pummel the Griffon into gainsburger.

At this point, we called the game. The Griffin force was shredded and the Wolfen were barely scratched - only Kassar's unit had suffered any notable casualties.

Clay's turn 3 thoughts...

This turn didn't really have any surprises. The fight in the backfield started very poorly for Michael and ended that way as well. The Crossbows continued their deadly artillery fire which I'm sure Michael must be getting tired of (I know I would be). The backfield is now secure and Killyox is finally in the fray with great results, routing the enemy detachments. That Fire elemental is the only thing that is cleaning my clock. Kassar might have a chance except for all the support the elemental has. Kassar's support kind of just melted away before that Fire Elemental.

Analysis

So, my (Michael's) record extends to 0 and 4. As I said earlier, I think you never learn anything from winning a game, only losing. At this rate, I figure I'll have a Rag'Narok PhD by summer.

Being new to the game, there were some rules that we got wrong. First off was Agyar's maneuver on turn one. Subsequently Clay and I forgot the rout status due to losses - which would have affected the Griffin more than the Wolfen.

Sered couldn't have been equipped with as he was. In Confrontation and Rag'Narok, there are restrictions on how many artifacts, miracles, and virtues that a model can have based on his rank. This is a purely mechanical goof on my part - I drew up the army list w/o checking Army Builder to see if it was valid. Most times, AB is a good check for force construction. So, an overpowered Sered going down to a vanilla Kasar is even more humbling.

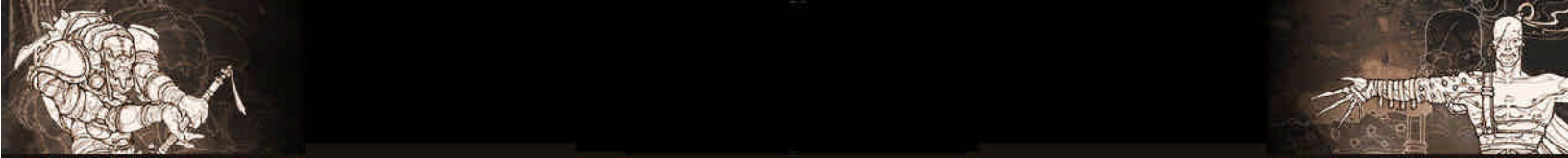
Tactically, I made two mistakes:

- (1) The group of Templars sat still for a turn - this definitely put the advantage of initiative in the hands of the Wolfen - they could maneuver on the battlefield freely. A more determined attack with them would have allowed me to better select the battlefield. This also applied to the Lodge of Hod.
- (2) The Fusiliers trading shots with the Wolfen crossbows was to his advantage. I had more shots, but when I hit, I had less chance of doing damage. The wolfen hit less often, but their Force 10 meant that they were rolling on the +8 damage table against my thin-skinned fusiliers.

Clay deployed with his army strength on the flanks in an encirclement maneuver. By standing still, I only fell for this attack. In hindsight, I should have advanced up the middle of the board - the berm would have protected my left flank and the wood my right. The Wolfen would have had to chase me. Their higher movement means they could have done it, but I should have been able to punch through the thin line of crossbowmen that held his center - especially since the Thallions had pulled off the Wolfen's mobile reserve. Ah well, tomorrow is another day and another game of Rag'Narok with my weekly gaming group. I think I'll refine my list that I used for this battle report and see if I can get my first win. I'll be playing against the Living Dead...

...and from Clay

That was a fun game, and I really like the system. I can see that I still have a lot to learn about the game, but after playing it a couple times, I am very motivated to learn and play more. I rolled a whole bunch of one's and two at the beginning of the game making me think that it was going to be a long night. But Michael was kind enough to match, and possible exceed my foul luck so that mostly evened out. My missile fire really did well, and I was able to keep a large portion of Michael's force ineffective, allowing me to concentrate my forces, while keeping too many of those pesky humans from getting around my Wolfen. Lykai and his crossbowmen may well have been the MVP's, but Agyar and his Predators might rightfully have a claim to that title with their mop up job. Kassar gets honorable mention for taking out the enemy commander, but he didn't get the chance to do much more than that.



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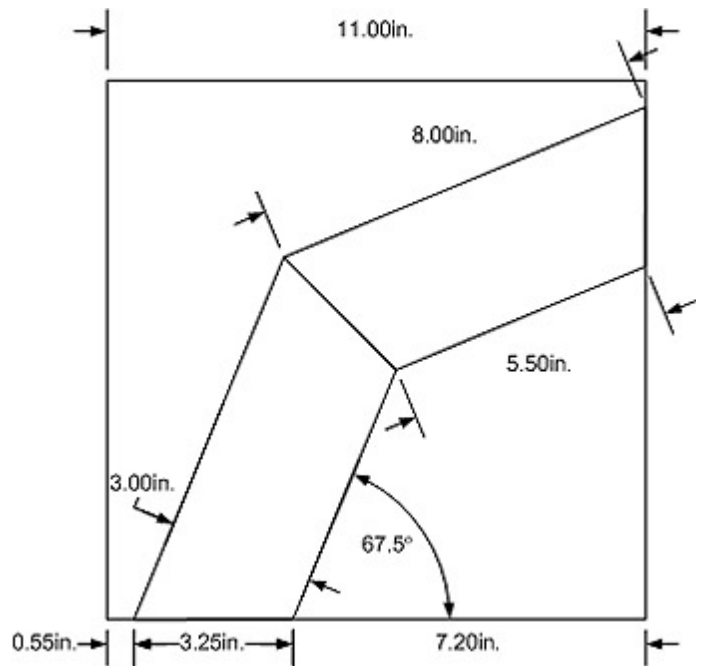
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Terrain Workshop

Fall of the Korryan Sanctorium, Part 1

This issue it looks like I will be taking on a special request. I've been asked to do something along the lines of a building with a special scenario built up around it. What I have decided to try, is to build a complex that will be full of "trigger points" where random events might occur. Of course the primary objective will have to be some sort of "Sword in the Stone" located in the center, after all, why else would anyone risk life and limb to enter this potentially lethal place?

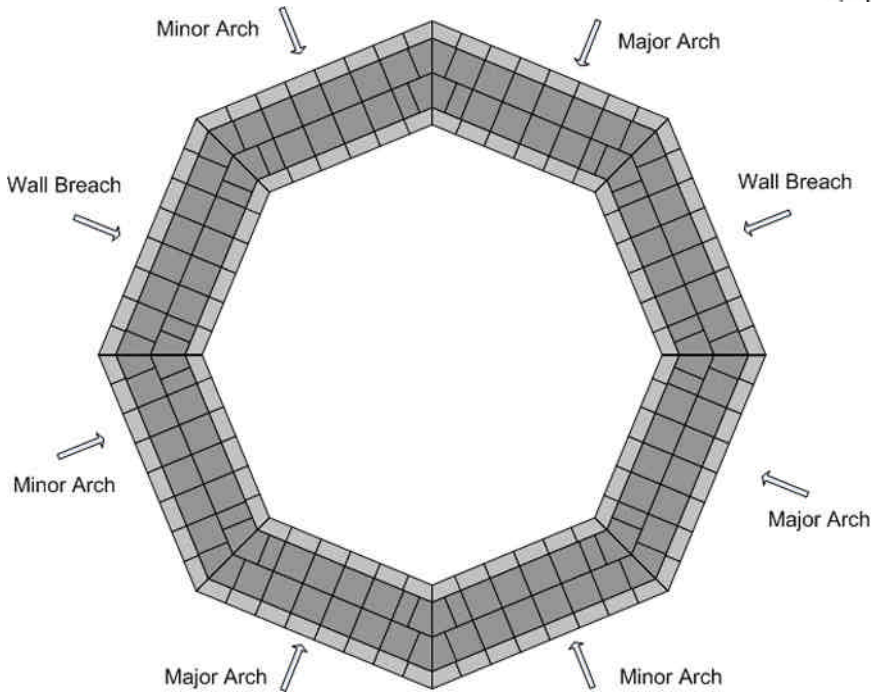
The complex I am envisioning has to be fairly simple, and easily accessible from a variety of directions, and it also has to take up a fair size of the battlefield. The reason that I think it has to be fairly large is that I don't want the trigger points to be too compacted, or rather, too close to each other. I figure there has to be enough room for multiple models to be inside without being forced to interact directly with each other. After going through a variety of possibilities, the final project that I came up with is actually a five piece single level structure. In all, the complex will measure 22" by 22" and stand about 6" tall. In other words, it will definitely fill a good portion of the game table. What I have decided to call this terrain set is the "Korryan Sanctorium",



will have been destroyed/breached at some time in the not so distant past. The primary medium I will be using for the structures will be Plaster of Paris bricks made for molds made by Hirst Arts.

The quick and dirty behind these pieces is that the Sanctorium was never a place built for defense. It was a magical place built up as a meeting place and a worship place for a variety of deities. Each of the eight gates into the sanctorium was constructed by a different set artisans brought in from across the continent...

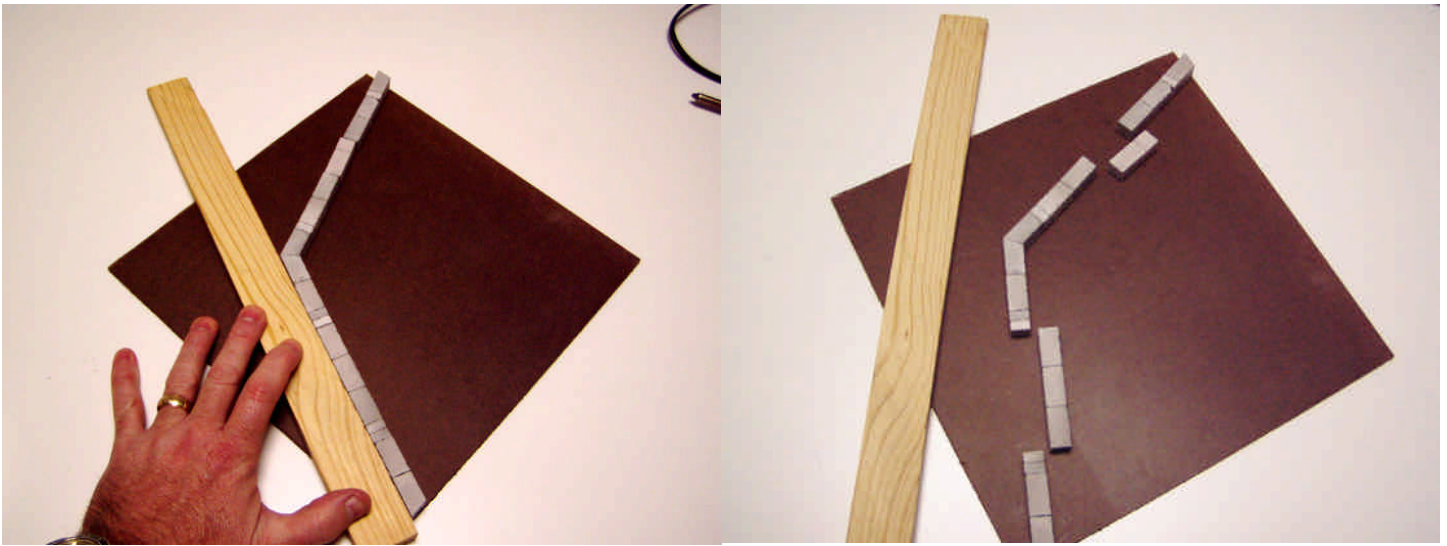
The rest of the story you will have to wait for in the next issue. But that's enough to give a basis for my construction. First I had to come up with the general shape and plan to build from. The first four pieces will form a large octagon. The fifth piece, which we will go into in the next issue, will be the centerpiece of the octagon. Each wall of the octagon will either have a gate (or an archway that passes through the wall), a collapsed portion of wall, or both. To do this, I have divided up the octagon into four squares, each containing two of the walls.



and the scenario will then be entitled "Fall of the Korryan Sanctorium".

The concept will be to have four 11" x 11" pieces that fit together to give you the entire 22" square piece. The structure I have envisioned will have originally had a gate in each of eight walls to maximize the number of access points into the Sanctorium. I say "originally" because this complex will be partially in ruins. To fit in the story line, and to add some variety, a couple of the walls

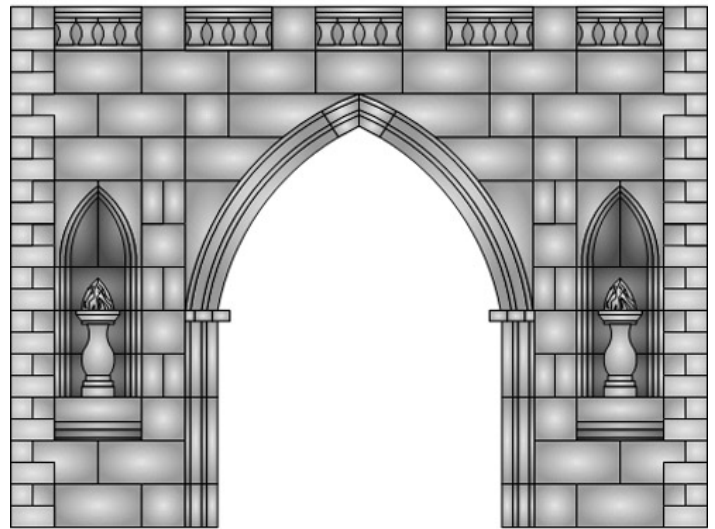
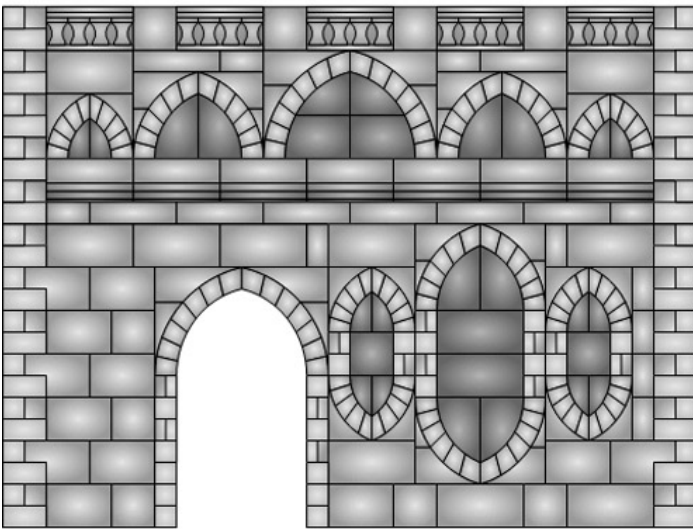
Coming up with the proper sized square was something of a challenge, and put my high school geometry skills to the test. In the end, the eleven inch square seemed to work out well. This gives me an eight inch wall face which is enough space to do most of the arch designs made possible by the Hirst Arts molds. As you can see from my "sky-cam" figure at the start of the article, I



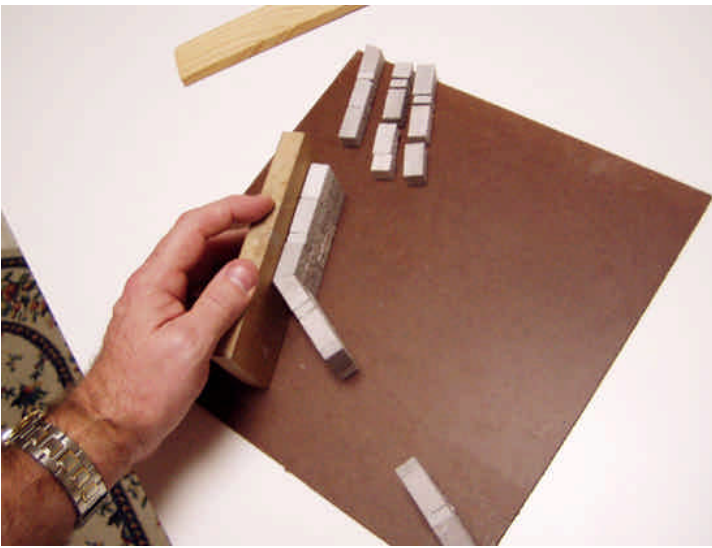
have in mind to put a walkway around the interior to give another dimension to the Sanctorium. I put in three “major” arches, three “minor” arches, and two “Wall Breaches”.

First I had to cut out my bases. I used regular old eight inch hard board and cut out four eleven inch squares. Then I carefully drew out the design show above (without the numbers of course). Unless you happen to be really good at drawing angles at exactly sixty-seven and a half degrees, this step is not as easy as it looks. I found that gluing together the bottom row of bricks, and using spacers for the open areas, was very helpful. All four pieces are exactly the same, so the same floor plan can be used on all of them.

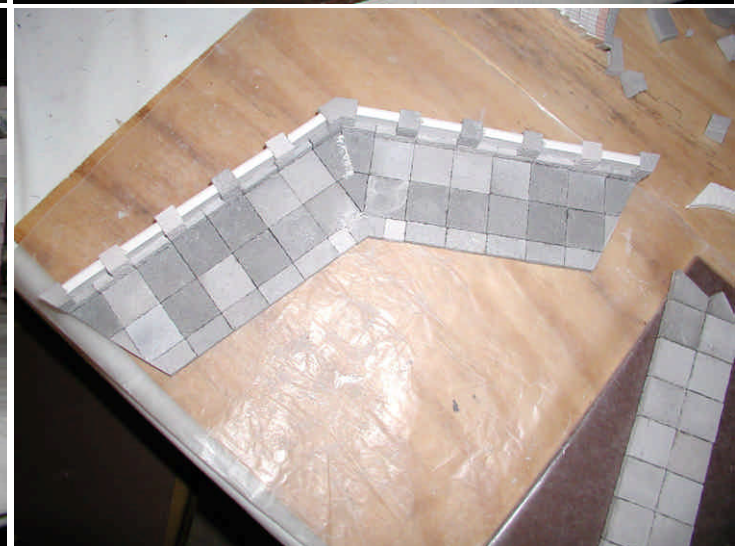
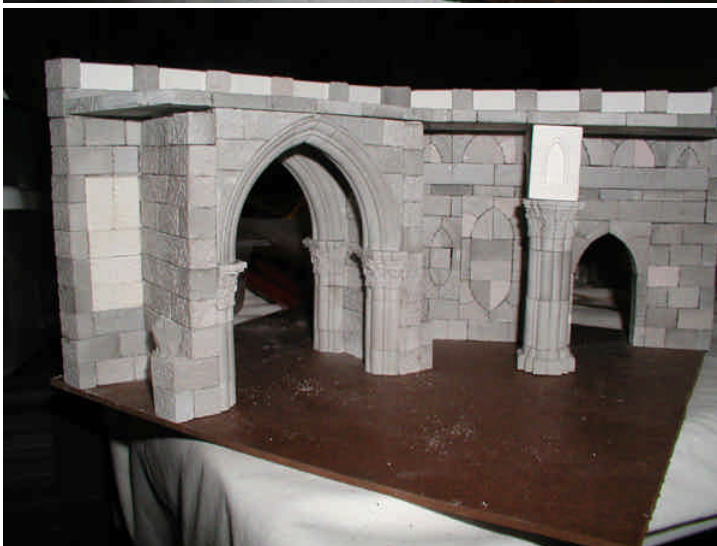
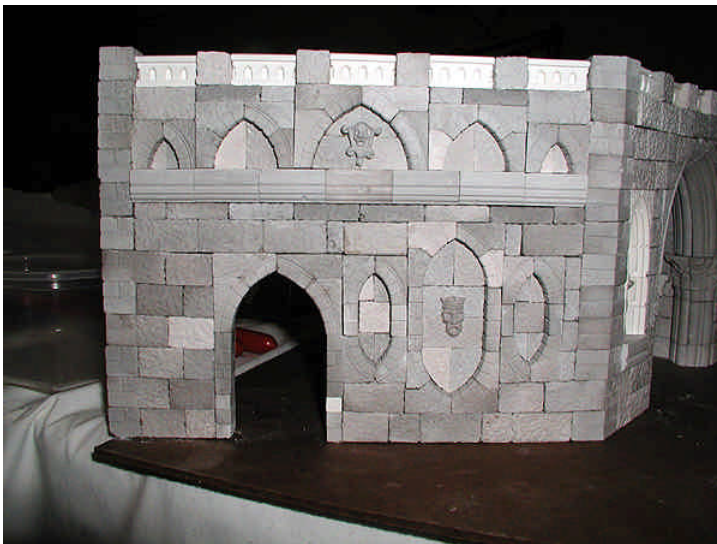
The fun part is now coming up with essentially eight different designs for your gates. I personally laid them out flat and played around with a variety of bricks until I came up with something that I liked. I also tried to make sure that I used different primary pieces for the arches each time to insure that they each looked unique.



My first “Major” arch comes from mold #44. As decoration it also includes the recessed arch from Mold #55 and the sconce and flame from Mold #45. For the Minor arch, I used the other arches also found in molds #44 and #45. The railing I went simple with the railing found in bridge mold #53. The corner pieces that I used throughout this project are in mold #63. Mold #63 is an important mold for this project as I will end up using quite a number of pieces from that mold. I guess you should expect that since this is after all an octagonal piece, which is what that particular mold specializes in.



After laying out my design, I then started building it up a bit at a time. I like to use pieces of straight wood to help align the bricks and insure the wall is square with the base. For the arches themselves, I normally glued them together separately, and then glued them into the wall after they have dried. The recessed arches (in the minor arch piece) are also easier if glued together separately. For the Major arch I had the wall extend into the interior two and a half additional inches. This will align it with the inside edge of the interior walk way. It also allows me to put an additional great arch on the interior which not only enhances the look (giving it some depth) but also provides additional support for the walkway. Behind the minor arch I put a large pillar (also from mold #44) to support the walkway on that side.





Druuschan Stryker
painted by
Ian Haynes

Sci-Fi & the Grymn



'Geezer' O-Grymn
Painted by
Ian Haynes

**HMG team
in emplacement**



Sniper in hide



**RIGHT: Bohkin painted
by Ben Brownlie**



**BELOW: Sleiti painted
by Ian Haynes**

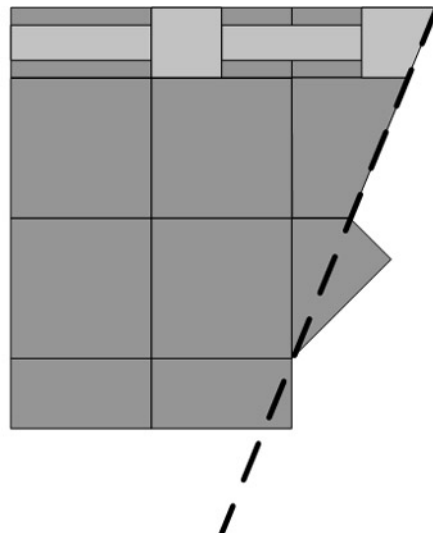
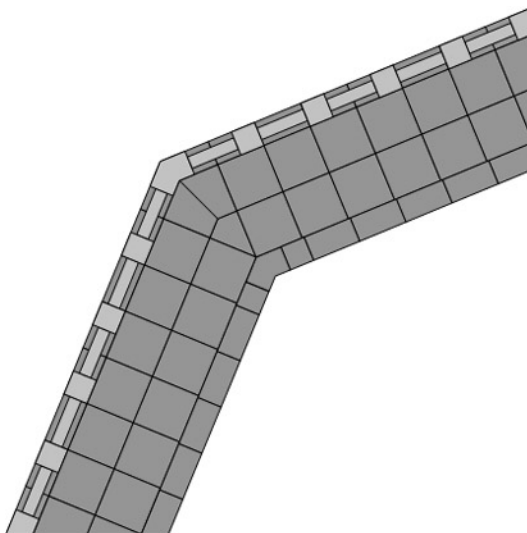


**Sniper and
spotter team**



All terrain pieces shown
have been designed
and made specifically for
the figures shown.

The walkway itself was very basic. It consists of a single layer of one inch tiles butted up next to the row of bricks directly below the railing, making the bottom of the tiles one inch below the top of the wall. Not counting the railing, the walkway is two and a half inches wide (making the entire wall section a total of three inches wide) so I used two one inch tiles and a half inch tile. The only really tricky part comes at the angled parts. The center tiles are easy as it takes the tiles bricks from mold #63 and are used as designed. The angled half inch tile is another story. This guy is a regular angled block (again from mold #63) that I cut off the bottom half thus turning it into a tile (a bit of sanding cleans it right up, but measure it next to the other tile blocks to insure a consistent tile thickness).

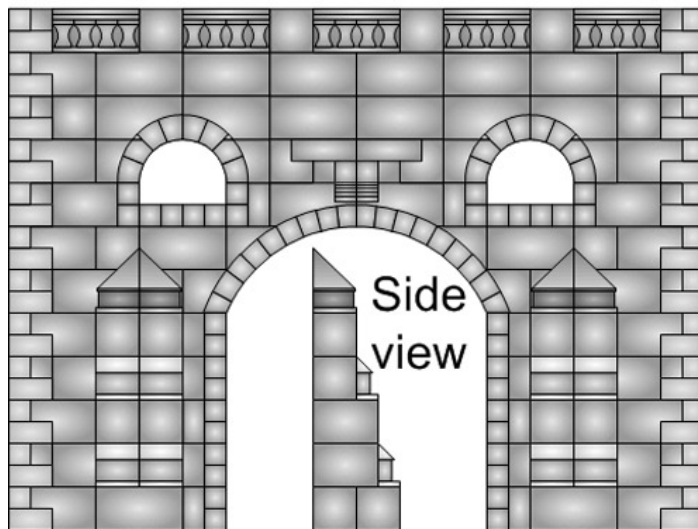
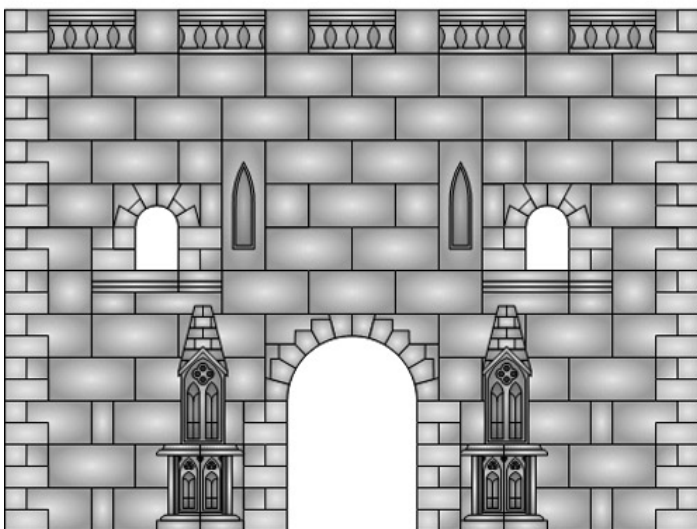


The railing pieces as mentioned before come from mold #53. These are placed between half-inch by half-inch blocks, an angled block in the center and the half-angled blocks on the ends. Once again, the angled blocks and the half-angled blocks come from mold #63 (I told you we would be using that mold a lot). The last trick is cleaning up the outside edges. Here I glued the pieces on as they were done in the center (except for the angled tile) and then simply sawed off the excess. Not fancy, but effective. I normally saw it off so that there is a little extra, then sand it down smooth.

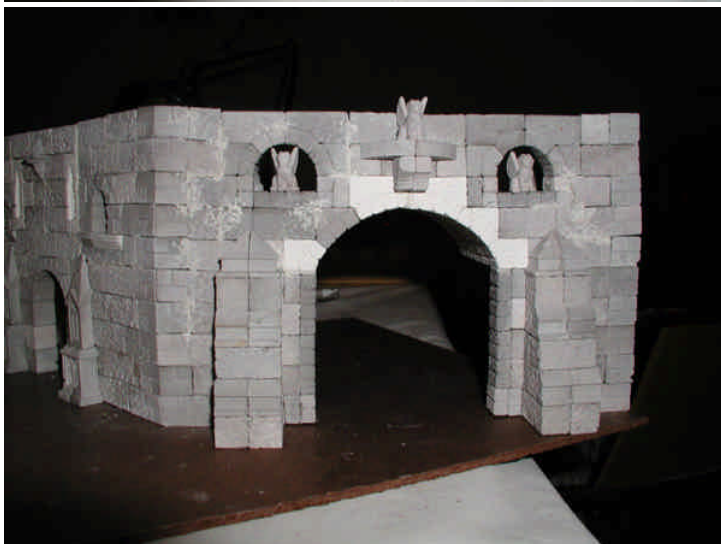
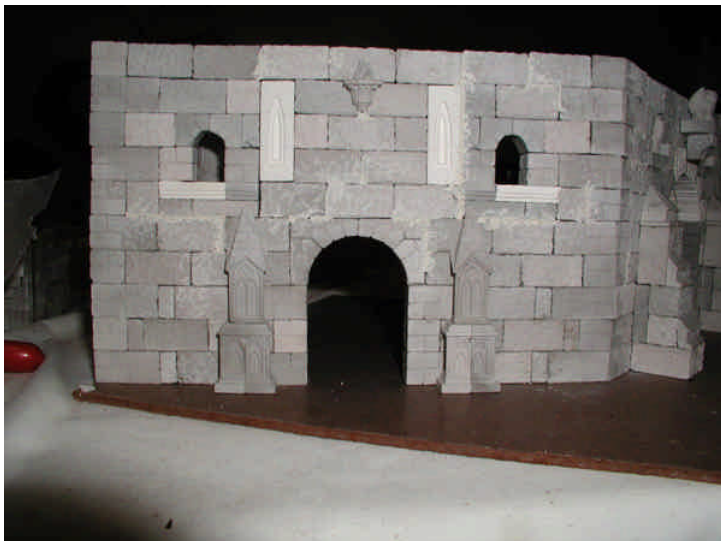
For the second set of walls I chose to use arches from mold #60 (this will be the minor arch) and from mold #53 (the major arch). Not shown in my drawing of the major arch, are the gargoyles that I placed in the two windows and the gargoyle on the shelf

between the two windows (try as I might, I could not draw something that did justice to the gargoyle that is found in mold #43. Also in the drawing is the side view of the stanchions to either side of the major arch. This arch I once again extended back into the interior by two and a half inches, the difference being that I only extended the actual arch (or rather the six blocks that the arch consists of) and not the vertical walls. Then on the inside, I put in four roman style columns from mold #62 to support the arch. The support stanchions to either side of the arch were made using basic blocks and the corner toppers come from either mold #42 or mold #43 and decorative caps also from mold #43.

The blocks that make up this next minor arch come from mold #60 as I mentioned before. The windows though came from mold #63, and the recessed arches came from mold #137 (that one might date me since I don't think mold #137 is available any more). The decorative columns to either side of this arch come from molds #42 (the bottom two blocks) and mold #43 (the top block). Again, not shown is an additional wall sconce and flame



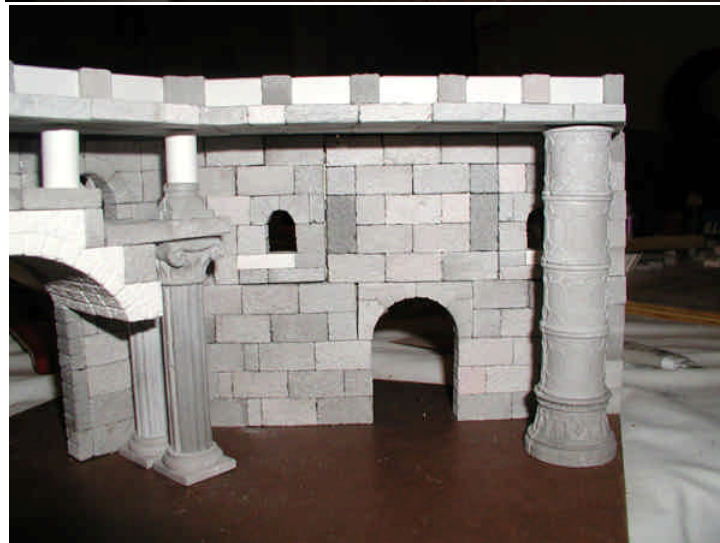
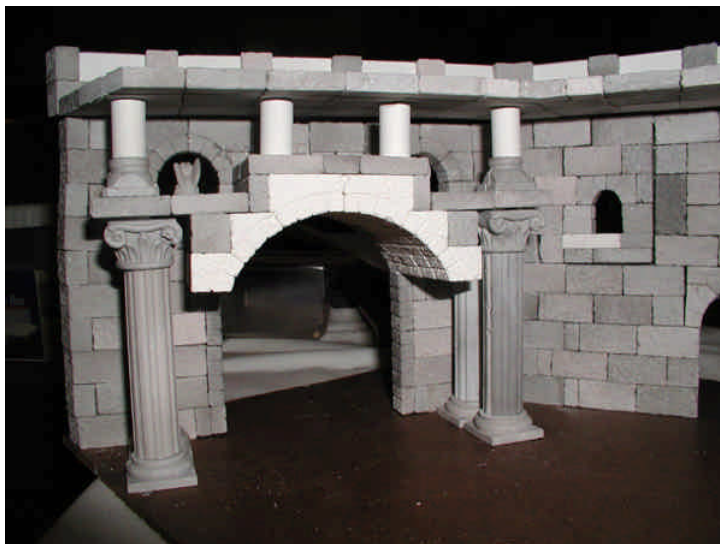
(molds #41 and #45 respectively) that I put on for decoration. I left enough room in the center of this wall to mount another figure head. But that will come later.



I found that sometimes, due to inaccuracies in my making of the blocks, or gluing, a whole slew of other possibilities, I would end up with spaces that were larger than I wanted between the bricks. This I fixed by using some modeling putty. The putty I crease with a toothpick where the line between the bricks should be, and then I knock off any spurs after it dries.

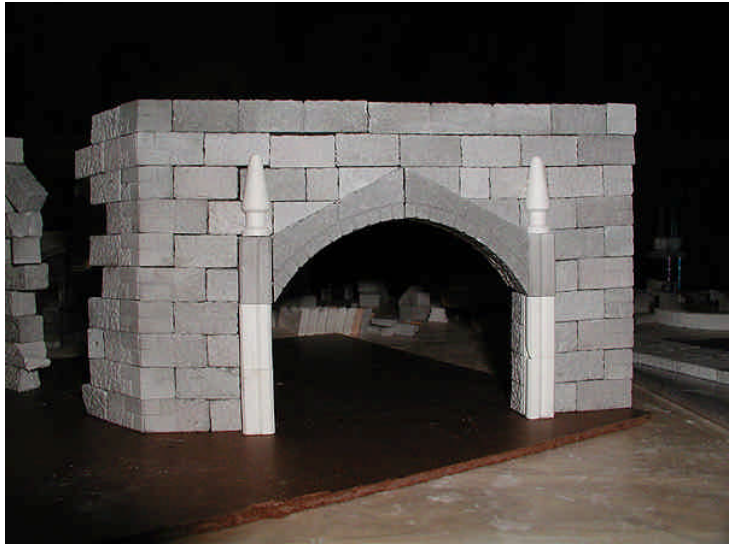
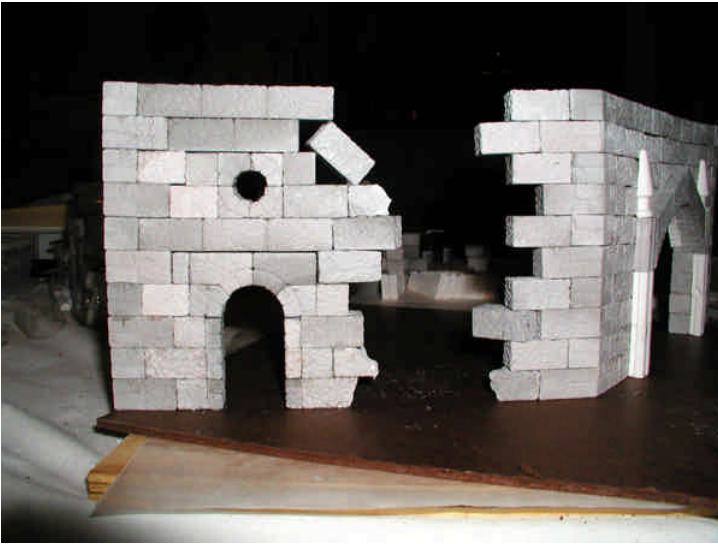
The walkway for this guy was done exactly the same as described before. On the one end, it's supported by columns that support the arch. On the other side I put together a large column all the pieces of which came from mold #42.

Okay, let's go on to the third section. This section will have one of the two wall breaches. I'll put the wall breach on the minor arch side for this one. For the major arch, I'm using one of the two arches available in mold #56, the opening will then be flanked by columns made from decorative rail pieces from mold #54, and topped with a finial from mold #56. For this one I ex-

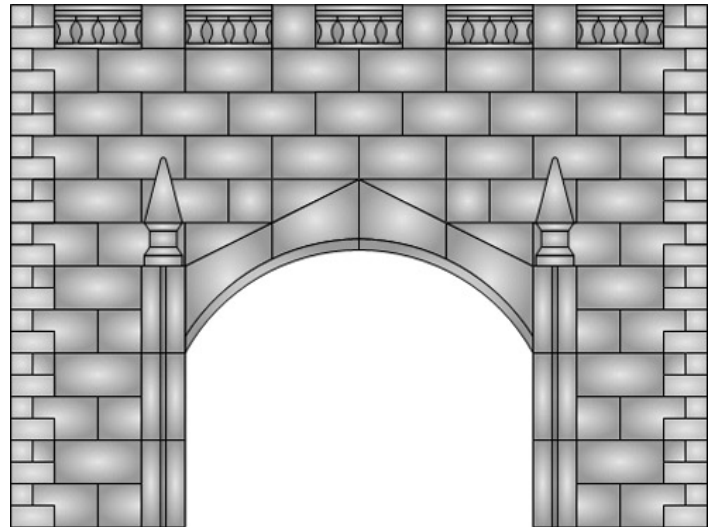
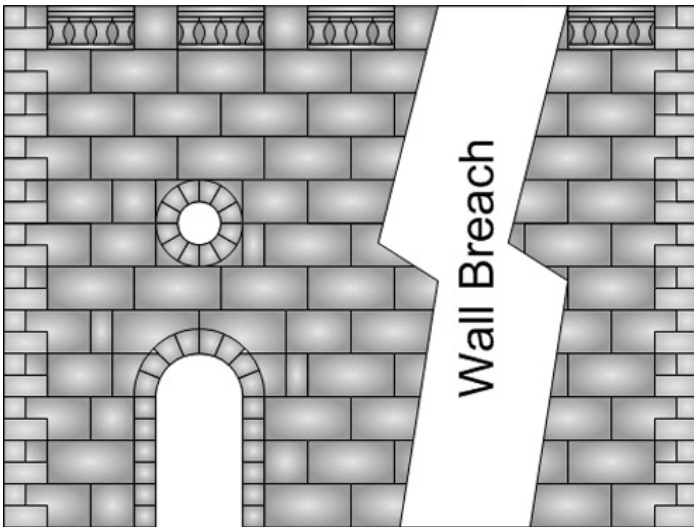


tended the walls and arches back like the other two major arches, but this time there were no frills. On the angled roof of the arch (under the walkway) I used some angled blocks (this time the angled blocks I'm speaking of are the one inch ones that come from mold #51) to make the surface horizontal, then used some short twisted pillars from mold #80 to support the walkway.

For the minor arch, I put the doorway that comes in mold #51 and above this door, I put a circular window from mold #50. As for the breach, I kinda made that one up as I went. The only rule I played by was that I wanted to be able to move a model easily through the breach. This means that I made it about two inches wide. As for the walkway for this piece, I built it separately as a whole piece, then took a pair of pliers and broke off chunks until I had it so that I liked the look. Then I took a piece of wood to use as a plank spanning the break in the walk. This allows models to cross it if they want to take the chance. Behind the wall I put two tall pillars, one intact, and the other broken and lying on the ground. The pieces I used for these two pillars are in mold #80.



Stay tuned for next issue where I will build the last two pieces, finish them up (as in painting and some finishing touches) and then lay out the whole scenario. Who knows, maybe we will even give it a play test.



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Fear and Loathing in Mega-City One

Mega-City One is a vast metropolis that covers the entire length of the eastern seaboard side of what was once North America, it is home to over 400 million citizens and judges, housed in mile high buildings that would dwarf anything of the 21st Century. The city is so large that it is almost impossible to chart its vast size and most citizens will never leave the relative safety of their city block during their lives, let alone go out and explore the rest of the Big Meg. Gangs on the other hand are a hardy bunch and will relish the opportunity to expand their influence into other areas, even sectors, carving out a small empire as they go and it is often the case that former Top Dogs can make it as crime lords if fate deems them worthy and the judges don't catch them first.

Despite the gangs who are a constant irritant in the side of the Justice Department, there are far more dangerous perps and creeps on the loose in Mega-City One, and your gang may be lucky or unlucky enough to come across them. Here I will take a look at some of the most famous villains and anti-heroes who have graced the pages of the comic's long history and their use in your games of Gangs of Mega-City One. Full rules for how to use each character are presented following the description of the character. And so to get moving on we will focus first on the most famous creeps of all The Dark Judges.

The Dark Judges

Whenever you mention the name of the Dark Judges in Mega-City One, most citizens and gangers for that matter will look behind them nervously, checking for any signs of these alien super fiends. Hailing from another dimension, the Dark Judges; Fear, Fire, Mortis and Death have brought havoc, death and misery to Mega-City One on more than one occasion, and they are perhaps one of the greatest threats the city has ever faced.

They come from Deadworld an Earth-like world where they deemed long ago that since all crimes were committed by the living then only the dead were innocent and as such life itself must be a crime. The judges on Deadworld were already a heartless set of sadists who would gladly beat a confession out of an innocent citizen, but of them all one young man set himself more lofty goals, his name was Sidney De'ath.

Sidney was the son of a dentist, his father a brutal sadist and bully who wanted his young child to become the same kind of man he had turned out to be. Sidney had other ideas however and soon enrolled in the planets version of the Justice Department and become a Judge dropping the hyphen from his name and calling himself Judge Death, he and his loyal friends would terrorise the planet, eventually exterminating all life. Death realised the if all

crimes were committed by the living then the only course of action was to outlaw life itself, but to do so he would have to cross over and become death incarnate, and so using arcane sciences and the aid of the self titled Sisters of Death, Nausea and Phobia; the young man died and was reborn as a walking corpse, dressed in a mockery of a judges uniform and gifted with unholy and deadly abilities. Soon after Death crossed over his three most loyal lieutenants took their own lives and joined him as malevolent sprits, and thus the Dark Judges were born.

Once all life had been extinguished on their home planet, the Dark Judges turned their eyes elsewhere and using their advanced technology Judge Death crossed the vast gulf of space and time to our own world to bring his own brand of justice to Earth. Death landed in Mega-City One and saw a world ripe with crime and decadence and set about judging the guilty. The judges were baffled at the sight of normal citizens who had seemingly died of sheer terror, their faces wracked in rictus screams and Judge Dredd called in Judge Anderson of Psi Division, a flippant yet brilliant telepath; to help investigate.

After a running battle with Judge Death and the cost of many lives, Dredd and Anderson finally managed to defeat the creature, forcing his spirit to leave his decayed corpse and seek out another, before he could escape however Anderson made the ultimate sacrifice and trapped the alien super fiend in her extraordinary mind, forcing Judge Dredd to encase her in Boing™ a miracle breathable plastic, until such a time as a way could be found to extract the vile creature.

For many years Anderson lay in her cocoon of Boing™ and would have remained there for eternity if it had not been for the actions of Deaths fellow Dark Judges who crossed over the dimensional void to free their brother who had not returned. With Judge Death loose on the city once again, it fell down to Dredd and Anderson to track down the Dark Judges and capture or destroy them forever.

Once again the Dark Judges were defeated and contained, but at a cost of many hundreds of lives, all deemed guilty by the Dark Judges and sentenced to death to purge them of their sins. It would be a long time before the Dark Judges would be let loose upon Mega-City One again, but when they were it was one of the darkest times in the history of the city!

Channelling through the young Psi Judge Kit Agee, the Sisters of Death, Nausea and Phobia; brought the city to its knees, releasing their dark brothers and turning Mega-City One into a Necropolis or city of the dead. Millions died as the Dark Judges cut a swathe through the city, their dark magiks and technologies turning many of the weaker willed judges into puppets who they used to execute the populace. With the aid of a crippled Judge Anderson, Judge Dredd and former Chief Judge McGruder and a handful of cadets, fought back and took the city piece by piece from the grip of the Dark Judges, capturing Judges Fear, Fire and Mortis,

though Judge Death escaped the city and has been in hiding ever since.

The death toll of Necropolis was staggering, over 58 million citizens and judges died at the hands of the Dark Judges or as a result of their control, ending one of the darkest chapters in the history of the city. Though Judge Death has cropped up from time to time, he is always careful not to attract the attention of his hated nemesis Judge Dredd, and works secretly to free his brothers.

Judge Death

Spd	Ag	Res	CC	Hits	WtF	Rec	Cost	Rep
5"	6+	6	1D	4	2+	-	-	-

Traits: Deadly Close Combatant, Powerful Psi-Talent, Possession, Sheer Terror.

Equipment: Dark Judges uniform, Dimensional - Jump Generator.

Deadly Close Combatant: Judge Death is perhaps the most frightening creature that anyone could ever come into contact with and only a fool would dream of trying to assault this deadly creature and take him on in hand to hand to combat. Though his body is frail and skeletal, Judge Death has the macabre ability to reach into the body of a victim and using a wraith like assault squeeze the heart till it stops or cause instant brain death for the poor soul. If Judge Death is involved in close combat and wins the fight, remove the opposing model, regardless of how many hits it has left.

Powerful Psi-Talent: Through dark and mysterious means Judge Death is gifted with psionic abilities that are far beyond that of mortal man and as such begin the game with the Powerful Psi-Talent Trait. Judge Death may make a psionic attack at any model within a 25" radius and gains the following psionic traits:

Daze: The target is struck dumb momentarily, exposing him to danger at the worst possible instant. A model subject to daze will be unable to take any actions in the next turn.

Demoralise: The psi-judge forces the target to realise that resistance against a patrol of judges is useless – they are better equipped, better trained and there are probably more of them just round the block! All Will to Fight checks made in the next turn by this model suffer a –1 penalty.

Psi-Lash: Gathering his mental energies, the psi-judge sends a bolt of pure psychic rage into his target's brain. The affected model will suffer an automatic hit as if from a shooting attack, causing 1D+3 damage. This attack will ignore any armour the model is wearing.

Psi-Scan: By reaching out with his mind Judge Death can probe

the intentions of those around them and react accordingly. During the set-up phase of the battle Judge Death can force up to two models to re-deploy elsewhere on the battlefield.

Telepathic Suggestion: Some minds are weak when it comes to psionic disciplines and are very easy controlled. As a ready action Judge Death can simply reach into the deepest thoughts of a punk and use them against themselves, creating false images such as walkways where there are none, or confusing a friend with an enemy. Both the target and the psi judge make a WtF check against each other, if the target beats Judge Death then nothing happens, if the attempt is successful, then the Player controlling the psi judge may take an immediate action with the model, moving it or shooting a friend or making an immediate close combat against a friend in base contact.

Possession: The Dark Judges are little more than malevolent spirits that are housed in the corpse of a sacrificed creature, and once the mortal shell has been destroyed they are forced to seek a new host to contain their spirit. If a Dark Judge is reduced to zero hits it will immediately flee the now useless corpse and seek out a fresh new body. The Dark Judge must take possession of a new host body within four turns or it will dissipate and be removed from the game. To take possession of a new host body the Player controlling the Dark Judge rolls 1D against the WtF score of his opponent, if the Dark Judge Player exceeds the other Players score the possession is successful and replace the model with that of the Dark Judge, if unsuccessful the Player controlling the Dark Judge must seek out another host during its next turn and begin the whole process again. Even if the check is successful the Dark Judge may do nothing on the turn it takes control of another model.

Sheer Terror: The Dark Judges are truly a terrifying sight to behold, looking more like something from a horror Tri-D movie than normal judges, and their goals are well known to all citizens of Mega-City One. Anyone wishing to close combat a Dark Judge must make a WtF check with a penalty of +4 on the roll. If passed the model may roll to close assault the Dark Judge as if it were a normal ganger, but a failure means that the model is struck down with the awesome terror that the Dark Judges seem to ooze and may only make a Move action away from the Dark Judge and may not engage in either ranged or close combat with the Dark Judge for the rest of the turn, regardless of how many actions it has left.

Judge Fear

Judge Fear is the most human looking of all the Dark Judges, he is tall and cuts an almost elegant swath when he walks, his face hidden behind a portcullis on his helmet, and most of his body covered in a flowing dark cloak. Fear knows the things that terrorise mere mortals and as such he is able to literally cause anyone who looks upon his face to die of sheer fright, added to this his deadly mantraps which he can throw with unearthly accuracy, making him a force to be reckoned with.

Spd	Ag	Res	CC	Hits	WtF	Rec	Cost	Rep
5"	2+	9	4D	4	2+	-	-	-

Traits: Close Combat Master, Face of Terror, Possession.

Equipment: Dark Judges uniform, Dimensional - Jump Generator, Mantraps.

Face of Terror: Judge Fear can reach down deep into the subconscious of anyone foolish enough to come close enough to him and can bring those deeply buried thoughts that haunt us all to the surface with such a force that they will cause the victim to literally die of fright. Anyone within 6" of Judge Fear must make a WtF check with a penalty of +2, if successful nothing happens and they may fight and move as normal, if the check fails they are removed as a casualty regardless of how many hits they have left.

Judge Fire

Of all the Dark Judges, Judge Fire is the most awesome to behold and perhaps the most deadly. Dressed in the ruminants of his office, Judge Fire appears as a skeletal humanoid, wrapped in a blanket of dancing fire, and carrying a flaming trident. Fire leaves a stench of sulphur and brimstone wherever he treads and is able to project sheets of flame from his trident that will incinerate anything in their path.

Spd	Ag	Res	CC	Hits	WtF	Rec	Cost	Rep
6"	2+	8	3D	4	2+	-	-	-

Traits: Accurate, Destroy Weapon, Possession, Wall of Flame, Weapons Expertise (Flaming Trident)

Equipment: Dark Judges uniform, Dimensional - Jump Generator, Flaming Trident.

Wall of Flame: By cutting his trident in an arc, Judge Fire is able to leave a wall of flame that sprouts from the floor upwards and will ignite anything that is caught in its radius. Place the wall of flame counter from the back of this book down anywhere within 5" of the Judge Fire model, anything that is within 2" of this wall must make an immediate Agility check or become engulfed in flames and take an immediate hit with no save allowed from armour.

Judge Mortis

Judge Mortis is perhaps the strangest looking of all the Dark Judges, his skeletal body is topped off with a horse like skull that makes him look totally alien and strikes fear into the hearts of anyone who sees him. Mortis is a master at decay and can destroy or age almost anything with a touch of his hand. Ever since the dark days of Necropolis Judge Mortis has had an enmity against Judge Giant a feeling that is totally heartfelt.

Spd	Ag	Res	CC	Hits	WtF	Rec	Cost	Rep
5"	2+	7	5D	4	2+	-	-	-

Traits: Close Combat Master, Decay, Destroy Weapon, Possession,

Equipment: Dark Judges uniform, Dimensional - Jump Generator.

Decay: Judge Mortis has the unique ability to advance the age on almost anything he touches, bringing destruction and decay with a simple wave of his skeletal hand. Victims age decades in a matter of seconds and vital organs fail to work, causing death almost instantly, walls crack and age and begin to crumble into dust, even roadways become unsafe to traverse and fall into ruin in moments. Judge Mortis may make a decay attack on anything he touches, causing victims to rapidly advance in years in moments and die in agony, or walls, weapons and such to fall to dust. Each time Mortis is involved in a close combat situation the Player controlling him rolls his combat as normal, and after all rolls to hit have been resolved and damage been calculated the Player rolls 1D and on a result of 5 or 6 the victim is killed outright as its body is aged, regardless of how many hits it has remaining.

Using The Dark Judges

Judge Death is one of the most dangerous of all the Dark Judges and is their leader, with all of the other Dark Judges answering to him alone. Death is a master of psionics and will use his considerable powers to alter the minds of those weaker willed around him, and if involved in close combat he becomes deadly with a single attack he can snuff the life from even the most hardy of Top Dogs or judges. The biggest downfall for Judge Death is perhaps his lack of a ranged combat attack, which forces him to advance towards an opponent, rather than attack from a distance. If he is destroyed he will seek the nearest ganger or judge and attempt to posses them.

Judges Fear and Fire have long ranged attacks and can be deadly to anyone within range of their weapons, and causing most gangers to think twice before rushing in for the kill. Judge Mortis, like Judge Death has no ranged attacks but is able to decay structures and is ideal to rout out those models that have gone to ground and are hidden, forcing buildings to age and crumble.

The Dark Judges are killing machines and can very easily make short work of anyone foolish enough to challenge them, and as such they may only be used with the agreement of both players. Each Dark Judge has no set points or costs and only one of each of the four Dark Judges may be on a battlefield at any time, and must be used and equipped as they are presented here.

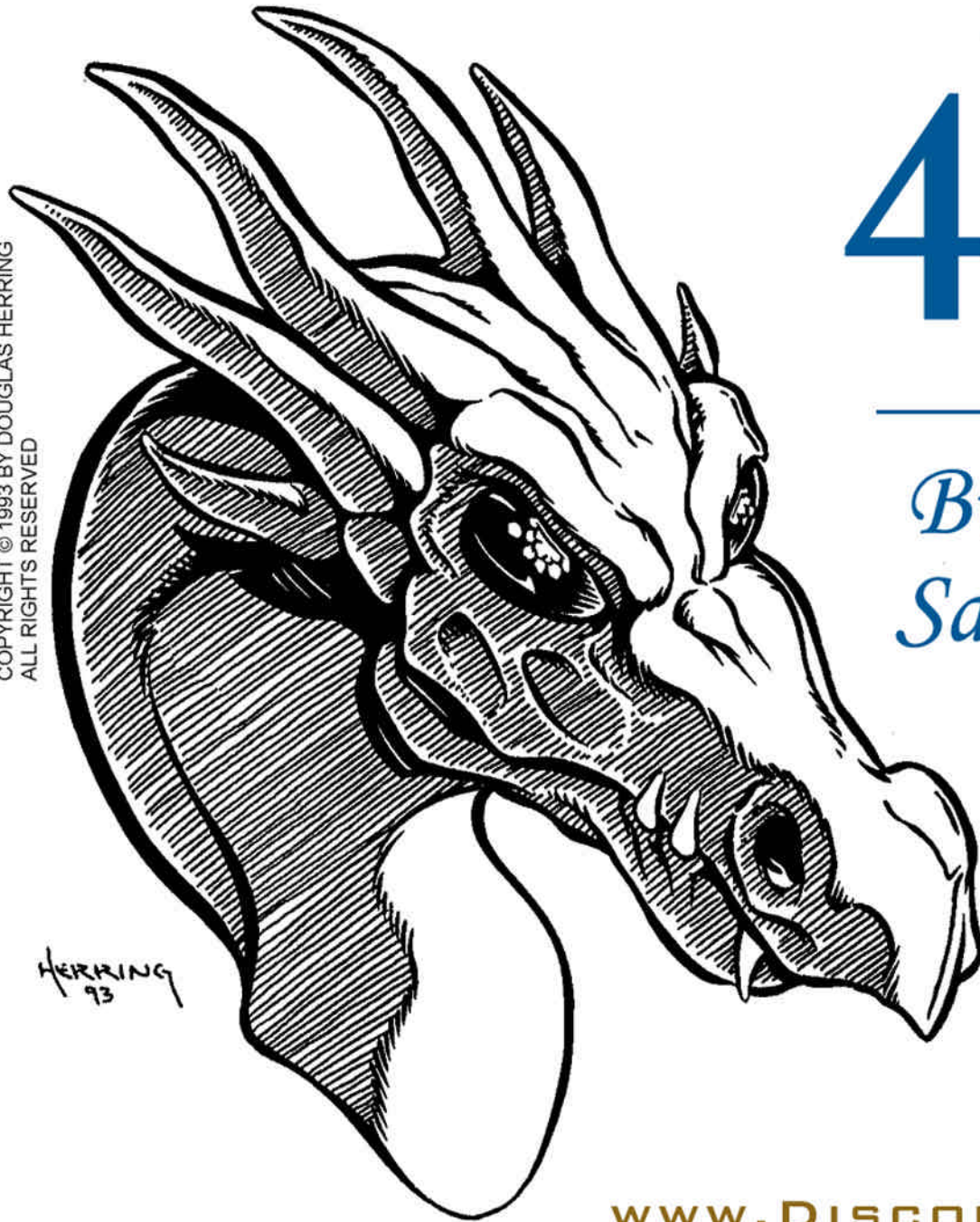
For every Dark Judge that is used in a battle, the opposing player gains an extra 1D+2 gangers (generated normally but armed with up to 5,000 credits of weapons and equipment between them) for that specific battle, as the gang sees the encroach of the Dark

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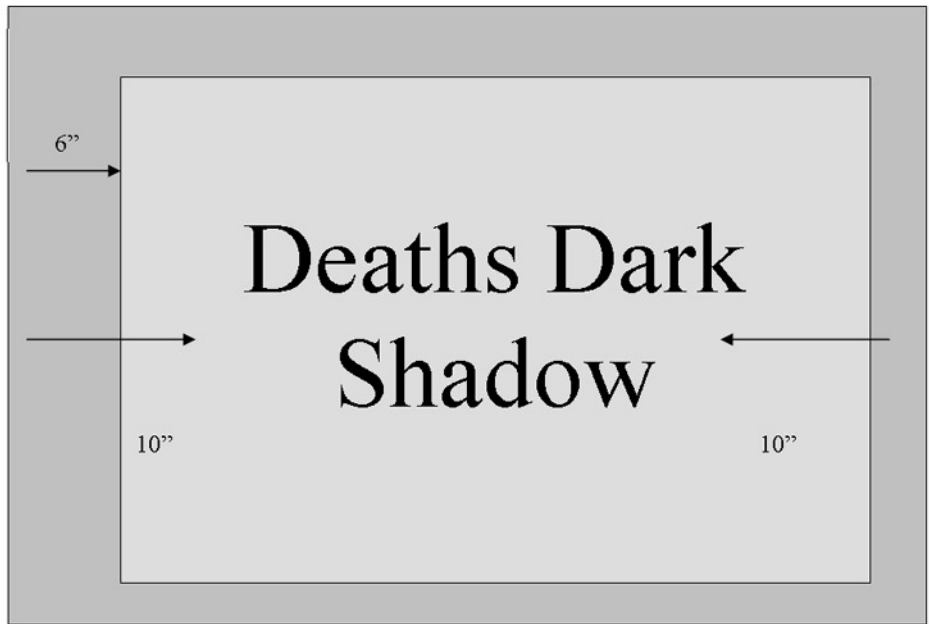
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Judges on their turf as an insult and will stop at nothing to drive them off. Once the battle is over however the extra gangers and their free equipment are taken off your gang roster sheet as they blend back into the turf.

It is unlikely to happen but not unheard of for gangs and judges to put aside their differences during times of great need and fight side by side. If all four of the Dark Judges are present on the battlefield they may be controlled by one player and the opposing player may use a patrol of judges and a gang. If the Dark Judges are defeated or captured during the game, the gang will simply disappear into the city during the confusion, but will still gain any experience for taking part.

Deaths Dark Shadow

The Dark Judges have brought much death and destruction to Mega-City One over the years and the Justice Department is always worried about another attack should the Dark Judges ever escape confinement and as such makes contingency plans. Though street judges get to hone their skills on the mean streets of the Big Meg everyday, the perps that they run into are nothing when it comes down to the Dark Judges and every judge must undergo training on how to deal with these alien super fiends. Every eight months street judges report too the Grand Hall of Justice to undergo the Death Returns simulator, which pits the judges against the most evil creatures ever to walk the face of our planet. Failure can result in the judge being reassigned or worse.



Set-up

The Dark Judges set up first, placing all four of their models anywhere on the table but no closer than 10" from the table edge. Each Dark Judge is placed separately and they do

not need to maintain any sort of cohesion. The judges are set up on the table as detailed on the map and enter play 6" in from the edge of the table.

The judge player goes first and follow all the usual rules for Judges found in the core Gangs of Mega-City One rulebook.

Victory Conditions

The player controlling the judges is victorious if all of the Dark Judges are either destroyed or captured using either psi judges or Boing™ canisters. For every Dark Judge destroyed the judges gain 2 points, for every Dark Judge captured the judges gain 5 points, if all four Dark Judges are defeated and captured the judge player or players gain a bonus of 20 points. The player controlling the Dark Judges wins the battle if he destroys all of the judges present, or if he gains more victory points. For every street judge that is killed the Dark Judge player gains 3 and for every street judge that loose more than 1 hit the Dark Judge player gains 2 points. For every senior judge that is killed the Dark Judge player gains 5 points, for every judge that loose more than 1 hit the Dark Judge player gains 3 points. For every psi judge that is killed the Dark Judge player gains 8 points, and for every psi judge that looses more than 1 hit the Dark Judge player gains 5 points. If all judges are killed the Dark Judge player gains a bonus of 20 points

Special Rules

This scenario will take the judge players to the extreme of their talents and it is suggested that this game will work best with each judge present being played by one person, rather than all being controlled by the same person. The judges are chosen from normal street judges, senior judges or psi judges, as the players deem fit, though a maximum of 3 psi judges and a maximum of 4 senior judges, may be used. This scenario works best with around eight players playing as the judges, though a cap of ten judges should be imposed to help keep the game play balanced.

Possession

If the Dark Judge player manages to kill any judge during the course of the scenario, and subsequently has one of the Dark Judges slain, they may attempt to posses the body of the slain judge as detailed above. The computers simulating the scenario will make adjustments and those judges who are possessed will be replaced by the relevant Dark Judge model. Remember that you may only ever have

one of each of the Dark Judges in play at any time.

Capturing the Dark Judges

Once its physical body has been destroyed, the sprit of the Dark Judge will escape and force the judges to capture it. This may be

done in two ways. One the players controlling any psi judges within 15" of the body of the Dark Judge may attempt to make a Mind Trap check. Roll 1D and add +1 for every other psi judge within 10" of the Dark Judge, on a roll of 6+ the spirit is captured.

The other way to capture the Dark Judges is to use Boing™. It is assumed that all judges, both psi and street in this scenario have access to Boing™ canisters to capture the spirits of the vile creatures. Once a Dark Judge has been destroyed, any judge model that is within 8" may use a Boing™ canister as a Ready Action, simply roll 1D and on a roll of 5+ the spirit is captured.

Dark Judges Weaponry

Weapon	CC Bonus	Range	Dam	Special
Fire Trident	+3	18"	1D+3	Blast, Explosive Parry, Power Shot
Man Traps	+5	12"	1D+4	AP

Representing the Dark Judges

One way to represent the four Dark Judges in your scenarios or games of Gangs of Mega-City One is to use the HeroClix miniatures of them found in the Indyclix expansion. These miniatures should be carefully removed from their clix bases and then mounted on an ordinary round base, and may be painted up as needed. The Dark Judges can be found quite cheaply now in most stores or on eBay. Wargames Foundry also produce a range of white metal Dark Judges, from the talented hands of Tim Prow, but these can run out quite expensive.

By Marc Farrimond

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SHOWS & WHERE TO GET YOUR METAL FIX



'LIBERTEE'

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**We had a fantastic time at Partizan in Newark on 13th February.
A great show with lots to see. Thanks to every one who helped us safely through our first show.**

We will also be at:

Compulsion (<http://geas.eusa.ed.ac.uk/convention/>). This is a whole gaming weekend based at the Teviot students Union. Kev will be there as a 'guest'....so come along and say "hi". Weekend of March 26th & 27th.

Salute 2005. (<http://www.salute.co.uk>). A humungous place with lots of goodies to see and buy. We are at Stand **T:108** which is on the main floor. See the HF range in all its metal glory. Saturday 23rd April at Olympia " in London, UK.

Bifrost 2005. (<http://www.bifrost.org.uk/>) SFSFW 11th annual convention. Sunday 3rd July in Birmingham, UK, should be very good.

If you arent in the UK then I am sorry that we wont be over in USA for any shows. We will however be represented by Fantisation (<http://www.fantization.com/>) at quite a few. Check out their site for details.

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Thanks for reading

Sally :)

WARLORD

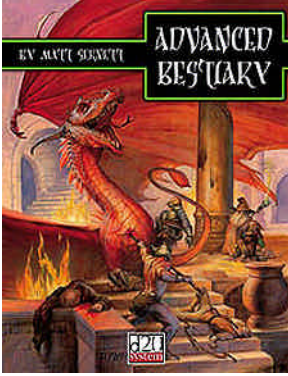
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BASICS

Advanced Bestiary is a supplemental book for use in D&D, and as it says on the cover, it requires the use of the Dungeons & Dragons Player's Handbook. Although it is not specifically mentioned, it also requires the use of a Monster Manual, or some other source of monsters written for D&D 3.5. Advanced Bestiary is an advanced monster building toolkit for Game Masters, and it is assumed that you have the statistics for the base

creature to which you will be applying the supplied template. The book is a hardbound book of 255 pages published by Green Ronin Publishing, and written by Matthew Sernett. The cover art is an excellent piece of work by William Eaken, and is definitely on par for a book of this level. The interior art comes from a variety of sources and varies in quality somewhat, but on the whole I give it a thumbs up. I also like the page borders as they are not too thick (giving more room for material) and have the primary contents of the page listed in the margin in the style of the MM. These tabs make scanning for a particular template a breeze. The book has in it about a hundred advanced creature templates, and each has its own sample creature which in effect gives you about a hundred new monsters that vary in challenge rating from a half to a painful twenty four. Most of the sample monsters fall into a nice spread from one to twelve, but the beauty of this book lies not so much in the sample monsters (though in a crunch they might come in handy) but in the templates and the infinite number of unique opportunities they bring to personalize an adventure. The book's retail price is \$36.95 USD.

BETWEEN THE COVERS

As one might suppose, there are only two sections in this book. The first section is a brief description on "how to use this book" and the second section contains all the good stuff (as in templates and sample monsters). The first section is only eleven pages long, so it doesn't take a genius to see that the vast majority of the book is spent on the "good stuff".

The book starts by giving a good procedure on how to apply a template, and what might be involved. It even gives you the proper order or steps one would need to go through to apply the template. After going through in detail how to create a creature using a template, there is even a section on how to modify an existing template or create a template of your own.

The templates themselves are presented in alphabetic order. This, combined with the detailed index, and the page tabs I mentioned before, makes finding the various templates very

easy. Of course you would have to know what you're looking for, which might not be as easy as it sounds. It's not that the names are all that difficult or "out there". But you might not be expecting what is actually available in this book. Of the hundred or so templates, I'd be willing to bet that there are more than a couple that will get the creative juices flowing in any self respecting Game Master.

One of the things that make the possibilities of the monsters you create with this book so limitless is that by using a template, you make any already existing monster into something completely different. In fact, there is nothing to stop you from using more than one template on a creature to REALLY create something unique.

Most of the templates will increase the base creatures challenge rating, though there are a half a dozen that "depends" and a bunch that leaves the challenge rating unchanged. Most of the templates will raise the challenge rating by one, two, or three, but there are a few that will raise is even higher (all the way up to six). There is one template that actually lowers the challenge rating and that template is called Feral Dragons, which turns intelligent magic using dragons into something a relatively lower level party might have a chance at defeating. By the way, that does not mean that they are turned into wimps. As a point in fact, the sample dragon given after the template has a respectable challenge rating of seventeen.

So I've mentioned one specific template. But that one in reality is the odd ball since it scales down the base creature rather than adds to it. The types of things you can do with the other templates range from things as simple as making a creature into nocturnal creature (one that comes out at night only), to as tricky as making an Amalgam creature (a cross between ANY two creatures of your choosing). Now tell me if that might not bring to mind some interesting possibilities.

Other categories of templates are about as varied as you can imagine. You can turn any creature into something elemental, something two-legged, four legged, Gigantic, miniscule, hell cursed, heaven blessed, sonic, plant like, steel clad, psychic, I mean you name it, the list goes on. One category that I like is the "Dread" category. Here there are templates to turn most any undead creature into a "Dread" undead creature. Usually these are undead that are more intelligent than their counterparts and are the natural leaders among the undead. It also normally means that they can command the other undead of their same type. They are the "undead generals" in the armies from the grave. All I can say is 'bout time.

A cool addition the author has added to each template is a difficulty rating. This essentially tells the reader the amount

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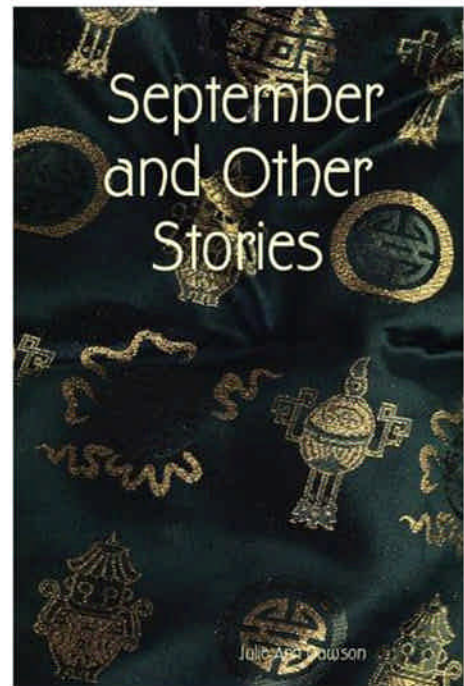
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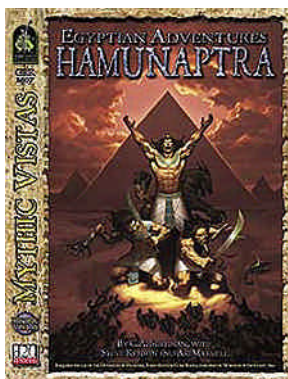
of effort that will be needed to use the template. There are three levels, one, two and three. One is "easy" and should take only a couple on minutes. In fact they are so easy that a Game Master might be able to use them "on the fly" with only a couple minute interruption. A good number of the templates fall into this difficulty level (about forty). The next level, two, is moderate. This one is advertised to be a little more difficult but it should still only take fifteen or twenty minutes to use. A little less than half the templates fall into this level. The last difficulty level is three, which is the "difficult" rating. Essentially this template will require a total rewrite of the creature and will take some thought prior to game time during the adventure write-up. There are just over a dozen at this level.

As a last point, there are windows here and there through the book that give little tips, suggestions, adventure hooks, and in general ideas to again get those creative juices flowing. I thought some of these are really great, but since they are not really indexed anywhere; you will have to page through the entire book to catch them all. Something I would suggest anyway for anyone getting the book, after all, it's full of good stuff to read about and stock your campaigns with!

VALUE

I think this book is a real keeper. The myriad of creatures that can come from using this book makes me think that it is one of the more usable books for a Game Master that I've seen in a very long time. It allows monsters to be scaled to suit the party level and allows for every adventure to be personalized with unique monsters quite easily. I mean, Everyone has beaten up on a few orcs, but how about the time you bumped into those fire engulfed Magma orcs and their bat-winged worgs? I can easily see this book being used to some degree in every adventure or campaign a Game Master will ever write. That makes this book a valuable and very reusable resource in my opinion. I give it a hearty two-thumbs up.

Review by Clay Richmond



"Egyptian Adventures: Hamunaptra" is Green Ronin Publishing's latest release in the Mythic Vistas line. Hamunaptra is a fantasy RPG campaign setting based on ancient Egypt and has a retail price of \$39.95 USD. Hamunaptra is a boxed set that contains 3 soft-bound books and a full color map of the Hamunaptra setting. As Dungeons and Dragons is based on a popular image of a fantastic land rather than a historical one - more "Lord of the Rings" and "Le Mort d'Arthur" than the actual medieval Europe. "Hamunaptra" is the same - this isn't the land of an Egyptologist's thesis, but the adventurous realm of the Scorpion King.

The map is 17" x 24" and marks all the interesting locations in Khemti, such as the city-states, the oasis, and the Great Pyramid. There is also an inset map of the city of Hamunaptra itself.

"Book One: The Book of Days" covers the history of Khemti, available character races and classes, feats, skills, and equipment. Chapter Three covers Desert Magic.

The history of Khemti starts at Creation and extends for twenty dynasties to the current day, this is divided into four parts. The first part of the history, the Mythic Age, deals with the Gods living among the mortals - and follows the mythology of ancient Egypt closely. The second part, the Old Kingdom, begins when the Gods no longer walk among mortals - after Horus avenges the death of his father, Osiris at the hands of Set and continues through until the reign of Hemaka, the barren Pharaoh. The third part, the Cataclysm, follows the madness of Hemaka and his murder of the son of Ra through the following manifestations of the anger of Ra. The final section covers from the end of the Cataclysm to the current day. There is quite a bit of history sketched out in book one, with enough detail to give foundation to the environment and enough left out to allow the referee to add his own flourishes.

Chapter two begins by describing the seven player character races. The races include the usual ones - Pesedjer (humans), Asari (halflings), Esteiri (elves), Peseshet (half-elves), Ptahmenu (dwarves), and Sutekhra (Gnomes) - plus the Anpur (Gnolls). Its these last that will probably be of interest to most folks. The Anpur are the Anubal warriors from the most recent Mummy series. Each race is described with respect to the personality, physical description, relations, alignment, home lands, religion, language, names, adventurers, and racial traits. These are the standard races for D&D with some minor modifications for the Hamunaptra setting.

The basic eleven classes are also presented with the same kind of modifications for the setting - including some setting-appropriate names. The skills section introduces three modified skills - Handle Animal, Knowledge (Dreams) and Survival. The last isn't modified per se, but in the desert environment of Khemti it certainly becomes more important! The book presents thirty-three new feats as well as plenty of appropriate weapons.

Finally, book one presents the magic rules for Khemti. These are basically the same as for D&D, with some minor modifications to make things fit. One change is in spell components. Khemti uses foci rather than components (unless a spell's components have a monetary value, then that component is used in addition to the focus). This keeps magicians from looking like walking around rummage sales. :)

Another change are the rules for True Names. If a magician has your True Name, then he automatically penetrates any spell resistance as well as a host of other nasty things. The magic section ends with new Domains, as well as a host of new spells.

"Book Two: The Book of Gates" gives information on the general campaign setting. Chapter one covers the people, including commerce, social castes, customs, mores, and politics. Chapter Two presents the cosmology while chapter three describes the various city-states of Khemti. Chapter four rounds out the second book by describing the topography of Khemti.

This volume provides the common known background for both referees and players. It starts off with a description of the calendar - 3 seasons of 4 months with 30 days each. The seasons correspond with the tides of the Yor river. The 5 remaining solar days are celebrated as the birthdays of Osiris, Isis, Anubis, Set, and Nephthys.

Next up is coinage and monetary units, which are basically the same as regular D&D, followed by a Khemti Lexicon. The later adds quite a bit of flavor to the feel of the world since everyone can now use the correct words.

Khemti is a socially stratified society, with castes from the lowly slave to commoners, scribes, bureaucrats, priests, nobility, and finally Pharaoh. This relationship is thoroughly documented in the next section of the book, followed by a survey of social customs and mores, and regional politics. These sections are the meat for the role-player as it gives the background for how the world works.

Chapter two covers cosmology, including the planar structure and the pantheon. All 27 gods are presented, both major and minor, including their domains, sacred animal, favored weapons, portfolio, as well as a description. The description provides information on the role and office of the deity in present day Khemti.

Finally, the book ends with a description of the various city-states and important landmarks in Khemti. Each city-state has an entry that gives its history, people, patron deity, population, ruler, important personages, resources, allies, rivals, and any important locations in the area. The city-states are independent political entities, but they tend to band together in geographical federations. This is what the "allies" and "rivals" entries document.

Khemti is an introverted setting, but it resides on the same planet as Narajan (from Green Ronin's Mindshadows setting) as well as Freeport. It is possible to easily expand either of those settings to include Khemti.

"Book Three: The Book of Law" provides campaign information. Chapter one describes adventures in Khemti. Chapter Two documents secrets and societies. Chapter three presents new prestige classes and chapter four lists new treasures. The final chapter of the final book presents new monsters.

The first two volumes of "Hamunaptra" were for both players and referees, but volume three is solely for the referee.

The first chapter gives guidelines for adventuring in Khemti. General adventure themes include survival (this is a desert after all), exploration (lots of lost tombs), military, bread and circuses,

mercantilism, politics, and religion. The section ends with 100 Khemtian adventure seeds. The first chapter ends with a discussion of the dangers and considerations needed when journeying in a desert.

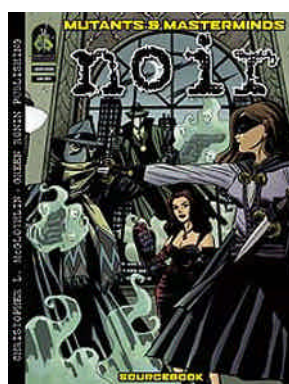
The second section presents various secrets and societies. These secret societies provide the perfect villain for a grand campaign, or an unlooked for ally in time of great need. This, then, is the unwritten political structure which can be discovered by the players as they move through the land - becoming more involved in one or the other as they progress in experience.

Prestige classes, both old and new, are the subject of the third chapter. First off a list of acceptable existing prestige classes is presented. Afterwards, nine Khemti specific prestige classes are presented. These are designed to fit into the Hamunaptra world and may not be viable outside of it.

The book then ends with descriptions of wondrous items and beasts of Khemti - just what you would expect from a full campaign setting.

"Egyptian Adventures: Hamunaptra" is a complete campaign setting - there's everything you need to start adventuring in the United Kingdom. It is the ancient Egypt of Hollywood and the pulp adventure stories there for you to bring to life. Will you help Amunhotep resurrect the Cult of Amun or will you be ready to join the fight against the invading Hitite barbarians, or do the treasures of the eldritch pyramids beckon you? Green Ronin has done an excellent job with this product - easily the best so far in the Mythic Vistas line. A final thought: this campaign is for those who would rather run to their mummy than face another Viking assault!

Review by J Michael Tisdell



Overview: To the left, dear reader, can be seen the nice, neat, concise title of Green Ronin Publishing's new supplement for their *Mutants & Masterminds* game, *Noir*. This little tome takes your superheroes almost entirely out of the "super" realm and drops them into the *film noir* (French for "black film") genre. Ok, you're thinking, "What the heck is this guy talking about?" Allow me to explain. *Noir* (the word, not the title) has to do with darkness. So, think of this genre as The Batman, Sam Spade or Lamont Cranston as The Shadow. The perfect example of the *film noir* is *The Maltese Falcon* with Humphrey Bogart. If you have not seen this movie then rent it. In it you can see how the effects of light and shadow and camera angle add to the overall mood of the film. Sydney Greenstreet plays Kasper Gutman, a guy with too much money and not enough morals. Well, Mr. Greenstreet was a stage actor and this was his first film and John Huston, the director, used the camera to make Mr. Greenstreet's sizable bulk look even larger by hav-

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ing his scenes filmed with the camera down near the floor and “looking” up at Mr. Greenstreet. This simple technique makes Kasper Gutman seem even more intimidating. Ok, ok, I realize that you are reading this article to find out about a new book, not to be educated about old movies from a mid-life-crisis-plagued hack. So on with the review.

Presentation: *Noir* (the title, not the word) open with a much-needed section on what I tried to describe in the paragraph above, but with a lot more detail and much better prose. This page will give you an idea of what you getting into by wanting to give street level superhero-ing a whirl. Next comes the chapter on creating characters that cannot leap tall buildings in a single bound. Characters in this type of M&M game will not be confused by the general populace for a bird or a plane. There is a portion of the book that lists the M&M super powers that are prohibited, i.e. Teleportation and Cosmic Power. Abilities for low-powered heroes mainly comes from technology (The Batman and Green Arrow), some type of mystic background (The Shadow) or he/she is just better than your average person with the fists (The Batman, again or Captain America). Hey, I really, really like The Batman! This chapter describes the film noir type technology that is mainly guns. Because, as we all know, God made men equal, but Colonel Colt made some men more equal than others.

In my personal opinion the most important chapter in this book is the one on how to go about creating and running a campaign in this non-traditional superhero motif. This section provides lots of themes to use as plot hooks/devices and campaign ideas. The gangster theme is one of my favorites just because I like the movie *Goodfellas* and the *Godfather* trilogy so much. Another classic is the wrongly-accused-man-on-the-run device like in the old television series and the somewhat recent movie *The Fugitive*. Another theme that is near and dear to my aging heart is the one revolving around private eyes (Sam Spade and Mike Hammer) and adventurers (The Batman and Doc Savage). Those are just three of the eighteen different noir themes that are described to hopefully give the aspiring game master a place to start in preparing a mood catching game for his/her players.

Now for the setting: if you are a current *Mutants & Masterminds* player, pick up your Freedom City book and in your mind scrub

off all that nice color. The Freedom City for a *Noir* game would not be nice and clean like your usual superhero setting. There would be stray bits of paper blowing around under dimly lit streetlights that seem to create more shadows than they eliminate. To get full feel for this type of setting you will really need to catch *The Maltese Falcon* or *Touch of Evil* (with a Hispanic Charleton Heston) the next time they are shown on American Movie Classics.

Value: The filmography, at the back of this book, almost makes it worth the MSRP of \$17.95 all by itself. But, all of the other information on how to have an anachronistic good time in a 1930s game as well as a modern day, gritty, street level campaign is a true bonus. Green Ronin has done another fine job in enhancing one of their well-established role-playing games. This little tome has some very nice artwork both the cover and interior pictures. This was a very pleasant surprise and I usually find the art that they use in their books to be average at best. But, I am hoping that this upgrade in visuals stays for a long time to come. If you are a fan of the film noir and/or the superhero genres then this 64-page guide will not be disappointing to you. Give it a try.

Review by Brian Ahrens



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BASICS

This book, *Slavelords of Cydonia*, is the first supplement to Bad Axe Games' *Grim Tales*. It is suggested that you need *Grim Tales* or, and I quote, "a core rule book published by Wizards of the Coast", or the 3.5 System Reference Document. The authors do go ahead and give you two and a half pages that will allow you to use the book even if you don't have *Grim Tales*, but from

what I can tell, if you use this book you may well be impressed enough to go out and get it anyway. *Slavelords of Cydonia* is written by Mathew Beall and Eric Tam and published by Bad Axe Games. It is a hard cover book of 234 pages and is adorned with a really outstanding piece of cover art by Ken Kelly. I know one should never judge a book by its cover, but in this case you know you got something good as soon as you see it. The interior art is black and white, and ranges from average to very good (but none of it compares to the cover). The purpose of the book is advertised to be two fold. The first purpose is to present the setting and all the required material for a GM to run a campaign for characters from first to twentieth level. The second purpose of the book is in the material presented in the appendices. Enough background and resource material is presented here for a GM to build up a Cydonia setting of their own (or to flesh out side adventures from the Campaign detailed through the first part of the book). All in all, there is a whole heck of a lot of material presented here, and for the most part it's well organized. Of course, it would have to be considering how much is here. The book's retail price is \$34.95 USD.

BETWEEN THE COVERS

The book is broken down into an introduction, five books, and seven appendices. The appendices take up a full third of the book to give you an idea of how much information is provided there. The introduction provides the framework for the campaign in general, the books, generic information, and as mentioned above, a few pages of tables that allow you to convert a standard D&D world to *Grim Tales* (the conversion is hardly extensive, so don't let this scare you off).

The Books themselves are each organized in a way that really makes for easy reading and more importantly, easy reference. The format used for the sections, and for the most part the books as well, are : Synopsis (a quick "what to expect" section that counts as the mission brief for the GM), Goals (a short but important section on what the PCs must accomplish in order to progress to the next book), Key Campaign points (normally a single sentence that lets the GM know what is the primary thought to keep on mind for the book), Setting (briefly describes the people and places that will made use of in the book), and adventures this is were the rubber meets the road).

As you might guess, the adventures themselves take up the

lion's share of the book. So, that means for the purpose of organization, these are further broke down into sections. These are: Dependencies, Locations, Key Actors, Important Background, Details, Facts/Clues, Events, and Effects/Rewards. These are pretty self explanatory, but still they are all necessary and make a whole lot of sense in their order and their presentation.

One of the things that *Slavelords of Cydonia* claims as a selling point is that it is designed for a "style of roleplaying rather than a genre of roleplaying", and after reading the book, I have to agree. I, for one, think that the style laid out here looks like a whole lot of fun. There is one point of caution and that is there is another phrase used in the selling of this system and that is "low magic". Turns out that magic in any form is not looked on favorably in Cydonia, in fact it's outlawed. For the most part this means that wizards will have a hard time finding news spell books, and any use of magic will attract attention (of the unwanted sort). guess how far that will be taken during the campaign will be dependent on the GM.

Each book has between seven and ten adventures and will presumably take the characters through four levels during each of the five books. The rough campaign map is that the party first finds and activates an interplanetary gate. They travel through the gate to Cydonia where they are likely captured and become slaves. They have to learn the world, the language, and the personalities that will play important roles in their lives. During this time there is a second race trying to infiltrate and destroy the ruling race (which have taken our stalwart characters as slaves). War eventually erupts and the player characters are put in a role where they decide to take the side of their masters and lead them to victory over their enemies becoming the heroes (they do this I guess because they other race is even worse than the ruling race). But then wait; now that the are the heroes of Cydonia, the ruling race turns their hungry eye towards earth as their next conquest. The characters must now become the villains to stop the race that they just saved from being destroyed.

How's that for a mouthful? Needless to say the book covers a whole lot of ground. Included is an appendix that gives a system for mass combat. The characters are placed in a variety of battles so this system is used quite a bit during the campaign. Other appendices cover the two primary races, a bestiary, a list of stats, and Cydonian equipment.

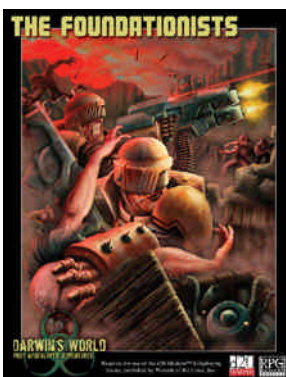
VALUE

This is an amazing book that one heck of a lot of work has gone into. I have to admit that I have never seen a book like this, one that details (or at least as detailed as it could get) a campaign for characters from first to twentieth level. It's very obvious in the style of compressed stat blocks, minimal art work and minimized page borders, they did everything they could to jam as much information as possible into this book.

The other side of the coin is that this book will easily overwhelm a GM that does not have some significant experience under his or her belt. Also it does lock a party into a single primary setting, though there is enough variety in the book to mostly nullify that (you got marshes, dungeons, city etc.). I personally would love to play test the entire book, but that is no small task. I said it once and I'll say it again; the authors of this book have put a huge amount of work into this book. It would not surprise me to find out that this was a project that spanned years.

Does this book take all the work out of being a GM? Not by a long shot. But it does take out a lot of the hard work, and it does a great job of tying all the adventures together into a common theme/goal. I think that if you are up for a real challenge, and a nice change of pace, this would be an excellent book to give a go on your next RPG campaign.

Review by Clay Richmond



The Darwin's World re-write continues apace with the release of two supplements in one volume from RPG Objects. "The Foundationists/The Metal Gods" is an update of two of the original supplements for Darwin's World, bound together in a single volume with a retail price of \$29.95 USD.

"The Foundationists" source book presents all the information necessary to run adventures with or against the Foundationists. The volume covers the

history of the Foundation, Foundation characters, retrieved technology, fortress, and foundation factions.

In the Post-Apocalyptic Darwin's World, the Foundation is an organization dedicated to returning to the pre-apocalyptic world by salvaging and renewing the ancient technology. The Foundation is organized around a military structure with a decidedly Fascist feel. The history section is very detailed - and places the Foundation into the general background of Darwin's World.

There are six character classes in the Foundation: Demolitionist, Guardian, Road Jock, Scout, Air Jock, and Paladin. In addition to the character descriptions and feats, the chapter on character classes covers the organization of the Foundation in great detail - including the ranks and advancement of foundation members.

The third chapter covers the Core - a term used to describe the collected knowledge and artifacts of ancients hoarded by the Foundation. This all is stored in a massive computer in a vault at the center of the Redding base. The various aspects of the Core are covered in great detail - from power generation technologies to space flight to eugenics. Rules for eugenic characters, bionic implants, as well as weapons, androids, vehicles, and other equipment.

The fourth chapter describes in detail all the various fortresses of the Foundation. Area maps, keys, information, and adventure hooks are provided for each of the seven fortresses. There are eight outposts which are also described, though without as much detail.

The final chapter gives NPC's, both of note and mundane, as well as campaign setting information. This is the chapter that allows the GM to integrate the Foundation into his Darwin's World Campaign.

The shorter of the two supplements, "The Metal Gods", adds robots and androids to Darwin's World. Everything from menial robots to highly advanced androids that are more human than not. This supplement includes three chapters; history, character classes, and "terrors".

The history chapter places the robots and androids into the Darwin's World setting. This history is as detailed as that of the Foundation, and it sheds a new light on the Fall and the subsequent state of the world.

The character chapter introduces the android and cyborg racial types with associated features and deteriorations - these are like mutations and defects in the basic Darwin's World book. There are also new classes for robots and androids: Assassin Android, Android Mastermind, Children of the Metal Gods, and Puppet Master. There are also occupations for the androids.

The final chapter describes the various types of robots and androids - everything from the simple to the very complex: automata to androids. Statistics, traits, and advancement for all the types are presented.

Of the two volumes, "The Foundationists" has the most information for campaigns and characters. However, "The Metal Gods" introduces some of the most interesting races in Darwin's World. This volume - these two supplements - are a must have for anyone playing the Darwin's World system.

Review by J Michael Tisdell



WHAT IS IT?

Blood & Relics is an 86-page soft-bound book. It has colour illustrations on the covers with black and white pictures within. It is an accessory for d20 Modern, which is required. The book is published by RPG Objects and has a retail price is \$18.95. It is intended for mature audiences

BETWEEN THE COVERS

Chapter 1, **Characters**, introduces some new allegiances, feats, skills, and advanced classes. There are seven new classes introduced. Each of which has a certain occult angle to it. Witches, cultists,

and believers follow very different paths but all have a degree of occult power. The dark warrior accepts demonic spirits into his or her body to provide awesome physical abilities. The monitor, grave robber, and relic seeker respectively guard, steal, and seek ancient items of power. The new allegiances include sins such as wrath and pride and virtues such as humility and kindness. Two of the key allegiances are Dark Power and Higher Power. In essence these allegiances are followed by evil and good characters respectively, though the book does allow for, and even encourage, shades of grey in characters' moral codes. The allegiances themselves form an important part of both the setting and the rules.

Many of the new feats introduced have allegiances as pre-requisites. There are nearly thirty new general feats, almost half of which have at least one allegiance as a pre-requisite. The most significant new feats are Profane Ritual and Sacred Ritual. Sacred rituals give a character that follows a Higher Power the ability to perform an exorcism or consecrate an area or a weapon, for example. Those who follow a Dark Power can use profane rituals to make blood sacrifices to power up their own abilities, or those of their followers, or even to create zombies. One skill is added – prophecy, and there are new uses for three knowledge skills.

Chapter 2 is dedicated to **Spiritual Afflictions**. These are weapons that demons use against the forces of good. These conditions, such as acute despair or jealousy are particularly insidious as they grow more serious the longer they go untreated. For example, someone suffering from despair for a month must start making weekly Will saves or have a chance to commit suicide or join the forces of a Dark Power. Some afflictions develop in stages. Vanity, as an example, starts with an arrogant self-absorption. In this stage the afflicted character only suffers from a penalty to charisma based checks. Each week the self-absorbed character has a chance to shake off the effects. If, after a month, they are still afflicted they become narcissistic. At this point the character suffers penalties to attack and initiative rolls. The charisma penalty is lost as the character appears to become smooth and glib, actually gaining a bonus to bluff, diplomacy and gather information skill checks. However if left unchecked the vanity affliction can develop into the envy, malaise and despair afflictions. Each affliction is treatable and DC numbers for curing them are listed for knowledge (theology and philosophy) in each case and knowledge (behavioural sciences) in some cases.

Probably the most dangerous affliction, and the one that the most people will recognise, is possession. This involves a fiend slowly taking over the unfortunate host. The possession first manifests itself as obsession. At this point the fiend is attempting to gain a foothold into the victim's body. This first stage normally appears to be another spiritual affliction such as doubt or malaise. Once this has taken effect the victim starts to show the effects of manifestation. These are developing and cumulative symptoms such as blindness, deafness, fits, and contortions. If these symptoms go unchecked for a number of months then the possession becomes complete and the fiend takes on the victim's body as a host. At any point up to this exorcism is possible. Once the possession is complete it is only a matter of time before the process becomes

irreversible and death is the only salvation for the victim.

Secret Societies, is chapter 3. Detailed within are seven cults and societies. The authors chose to define organisations that follow a Dark Power to be cults and those that follow a neutral or Higher Power to be secret societies. Many of them have some degree of historical basis in our world though there is no attempt or wish for the details to be historically accurate.

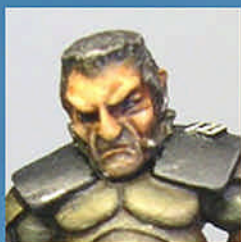
The chapter introduces a ranking system for members of the societies. Each time they achieve a new level they have the chance to be accepted deeper into the society or cult. With greater rank comes access to secrets and, more practically, requisition bonuses. At a certain rank the character gains access to a prestige class. Each society comes with a short potted history; current details, such as base of operations and number of members; membership requirements; recruitment methods; benefits of membership and details of the prestige class. As an example, Frater Torquemada, or the Brothers of Torquemada, is a small group with the goal of destroying evil using any means necessary. The society originates from 15th century Spain when Tomas de Torquemada was promoted to Grand Inquisitor to deal with the fiends that were over-running Spain at that time. By using mass torture he was able to defeat the fiends. Now members of Frater Torquemada use his tactics to keep the world safe from fiends. The prestige class for this society is the Inquisitor. Inquisitors become very adept at torturing as they gain levels. At higher levels they can easily force a confession from their victim, or even force them to change their allegiances, by skilfully keeping them just this side of death.

Other societies include The Doctrine, the modern face of the original Inquisition; Isayaret Omega, an Israeli military organisation that tracks and destroys undead and demonic creatures; the Knights Templar, an ancient organisation of holy knights dedicated to recovering and concealing powerful artefacts; Salem Seven, a collection of seven covens of witches who can trace their origins back to the witch hunts in Salem in 1691; Seers of Fatima, a small group of individuals with the ability to see into the future; and the Teutonic Knights, an order of knights corrupted by the Dark Powers.

The fourth and final chapter, **Campaign Guide**, is also the largest by a small margin, coming in at around 25 pages. This chapter provides the necessary background to give context to the contents of the previous chapters. It starts with a short section giving guidance for controlling the feel of the game. Following these guidelines helps a GM give a Blood and Relics campaign its distinctive flavour.

The next item is an 8-page timeline with highlights from the last three and a half thousand years. Fiction is mixed freely with historical facts to provide a blend suitable for a role-playing game. These brief details of significant events relate to organisations, nations, religions and individuals.

Items of legend come next. There are just over a dozen powerful items described as well as generic rules for tomes of power. The



'HASSLEFRIESIAN'



'LIBERTEE'

NEWS

Since the last edition of Fictional Reality we have celebrated our first birthday and I wont bore you with how exhausted the last year has made us.

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Thanks for reading.

items are mostly objects of deep religious or historical significance and include the Shroud of Turin and the shattered parts of the sword Excalibur. The final part of the chapter introduces the forces of darkness. First are three powerful NPCs, each one a unique fiend and with their own twisted specialty. The ancient Absolla, charming, beautiful, and wretched, is the Lord of Vanity. Once a Roman nobleman of noted cleanliness Celestan is now the Lord of Vermin, as twisted and ugly on the outside as within. The most dangerous of them all though is probably Marcus Adrastus, Lord of Deceit. This immortal fiend has been manipulating people behind the scenes for centuries and intends to do so forever. The Four Horsemen come next, fiendish creatures that herald the beginning of the end. These are followed by stats for the fiends that represent the deadly sins. Green-eyed monsters are actual beings capable of spreading jealousy in this system. Succubi, a familiar creature in other systems, are listed here as the fiends responsible for spreading lust. Finally there are stats for two significant cultists. The book ends with a few tables reproduced for convenience.

VALUE

The book is well presented and mostly laid out well. I would question that the chapter which details the background comes last. When reading the first few chapters it can be quite confusing

at first as some individuals and concepts are referenced to which have not yet been introduced. This should not prove to be an issue once the whole book is read or for someone more interested in the 'crunchy bits'. Overall there seems to be a good balance between rules and background with enough of each to complement the other. I would stress that this book is most definitely for mature audiences only, there are many parts of the book that are not suitable for general use. Keeping this in mind I am sure a skilled games-master could run an entertaining and thought-provoking campaign using Blood and Relics.

Review by Adam Brooks