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Warp Rift Publication Team:
Iain (CyberShadow) - Editor, Void Stalker, Scurvy Dog
Ray Bell - New Rules
Chris French - Articles
John Webber and CyberShadow - Painting
Space Cadet - Fiction

Credits:
Title Banner - Nicholas Mariana
Cover Picture - Warmaster Nice
Additional Graphics - Warmaster Nice, John Webber, Lee Eldridge,
        Nate Montes

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WARP RIFT

Another month, and issue seven of Warp Rift arrives with us. Issue seven marks a bit of a milestone for this intrepid publication, as even my poor maths ability can work out that six full issues of a bi-monthly magazine means a completed year. Yes, twelve months ago saw the first issue of this very publication launched on an unsuspecting Battlefleet Gothic community.

It seems a long time ago, small children would push hoops down the street with sticks, everything was black and white, and Gothic miniatures were all made of wood. Ahh, good days. Actually, it is surprising just how many changes have occurred in the last year. When issue one was released, the official Gothic magazine from Fanatic was in the process of being replaced, by a rumoured 'super-mag' called Fanatic Magazine, which was 'White Dwarf for Specialist Games'.

All in all, it has been a good year on the bridge of Warp Rift. Everyone has settled down into their respective roles and we have generally had some fun putting this together. This issue sees the final part of the BFG Alliances, rules for the fleets of the Emperors Children, an article on the commonality of wargames, specific rules for Ork Clans, part two of 'The Bait' and a selection of submissions for the GothComp competition. While on the subject, there is around one month left to get your entries in to this competition, and I am holding out for a last minute deluge of entries. I am relying on you guys. Dont let me down. If all goes well, issue eight will see the winners displayed for all to see and appreciate. Until then, safe passage through the void.
Good hunting,
CyberShadow

Raising the Colours
The Warp Rift Painting Competition 2005

Welcome to the first 'Raising the Colours' Battlefleet Gothic painting competition for Warp Rift and www.epic40k.co.uk (also known as GothiComp'05). I have run a painting competition for Epic for two years now, and it has been reasonable successful, and so the inevitable question was 'when would I do the same for Battlefleet Gothic'? I have held off until now for the simple reason that there was already a painting competition for Gothic. However, now the time seems right to step up to the plate and get this off the mark.

The general aim of this competition is simply to encourage players to get painting and show off what they can do. I encourage people to enter no matter how good or bad their painting and converting skills are. So, on to the details.

The Details

This competition is open from today, and the deadline for submissions is Wednesday 6th April 2005, 1pm (UK time).

The Categories

Generally, there is only a single category and all submissions are entered into this. This will be voted on by the Battlefleet Gothic players. However, in addition, there will be a 'conversion prize'. This will be a token prize for one entry based on the skill and style of any conversion work which has gone into the vessel, in an effort to encourage creativity in modeling as well as painting. This will be judged by a select panel. All entries are automatically submitted into both competitions simultaneously.

The Prizes

Prizes will be announced at a later time. I do not benefit from the backing of Fanatic in this competition, and so prizes will most likely be a single Battlefleet Gothic cruiser or similar. If there are any kind benefactors who would like to contribute to this competition, please do get in touch!

The Vessel

Each separate entry should consist of a single miniature to be used for Battlefleet Gothic (however, note that conversions, scratch builds and even vessels from outside manufacturers are welcome). The only exception to this is:
If the vessel is a light cruiser or lights, one or two vessels may be submitted as a single entry in the same photograph.
If the vessel is an escort or equivalent, then the submission must consist of between two and four vessels in a single picture.

Aside from this stipulation, the entry is largely down to the participant.

The Pictures

You should submit a single picture per entry, no more. Each photograph should be no more than 640 x 480 pixels large, and should remain under 100Kb.

The Submission

To submit your entry, simply email it to me at: gothicomp@epic40k.co.uk. I will compile a gallery of the entrants which will be available online. This gallery will remain as a permanent fixture to the site, and so you will be able to browse the pictures in the future. Please note, I am sure that there will be a rush in the last 24 hours before the end of this competition, and while my email account should be able to handle most traffic, it is possible that it will have problems at the end. Therefore, please don't wait until the last few hours if you can avoid it.

The Voting

Voting will take place in two places - using the Battlefleet Gothic Yahoo Group [BFG-List], and using the EpiComms forums on the web site www.epic40k.co.uk. This means that it is possible for people to vote twice, however the number of voters involved should negate this as a factor in the result. Please also note that the individual heats will be organised in the order which the entries arrive. Therefore, if you plan on entering this competition more than once, it is in your interest to wait a few days between entries. Otherwise you may find that you only three submissions are in the same heat in the first round, and therefore pitched against each other and only one will go through. Waiting to ensure that the three entries are in different heats maximises the odds of at least one of the entries getting through to the next round.

Additional Rules

All decisions are final, any prizes are non-negotiable and the competition organizers reserve the right to remove competition entries or request that they are resubmitted or altered. We will hopefully never need this stuff, but just in case...

That is it. I will present more details soon, and in the meantime feel free to email me with any questions that you may have. Now, what are you doing still reading this? Get painting!

These regulations can also be found online, here:

http://www.epic40k.co.uk/lib/comp/gothicomp05.html

This page also has a link to the gallery of the entries so far.
Please consider submitting your entry into the competition.

The Ancients' Guide
to BFG Tactics
Or, Everything Old is New Again

By Chris French

"In fact, historical wargaming is almost exactly like fantasy!"
"The next time I get banned from a gaming group for life, remind me to have a baseball bat along, so I can BEAT a certain someone with it…."
[Igor and Ken, Dork Tower #5]

Sadly, Ken, Igor might be right.
The idea behind BFG, so it has been related, is to simulate Age Of Sail naval combat, in space. While opinion on how successful it is at doing so is - umm - divided (in much the same way the Union and the Confederacy were "divided"…), it is possible to employ "old" tactics to successfully whomp the stuffing out of the poor fool opposite you.

However, the tactics in question are not only much older than the Age Of Sail (for those who are wondering, approximately late 1500s to early 1800s), they aren't even naval-based. Nope - I'm talking about really ancient tactics, like sword-and-sandal era. Roman era, to be exact. (Those Latin names and aquilae on the Imperial ships apparently are much less than simply goofy decorations. Gawrsh.)

So, how do the Basic Set fleets translate? Follow. And pay no attention to the men in togas behind the pillars….

Imperial Fleet: Roman Cohortal Legion

"Well, DUH!", one might say. But look more closely. The Imperial fleet has its main shield (armor) facing forward. Behind this is its pila (torpedoes), ready to be lobbed en masse against an opponent. Its only other weapon is short-ranged, but effective (Imperials: 30cm weapons; Romans, gladius). The fleet's speed is slow, much like the legion (Italy was poor horse country, so what cavalry the legions used were auxiliaries).

So, an Imperial commander could use the standard Imperial legion tactics. Start by forming a broad front, remembering to keep one's ships in mutual supporting range.
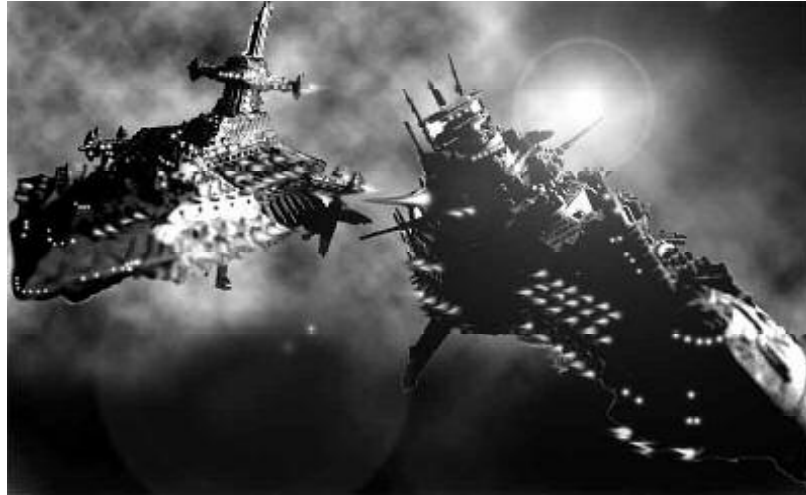
Keep the prow armor "shield wall" pointed toward the foe as long as possible. While doing so, throw as many torps as possible downrange (for the NC pimps, same deal) for as long as possible - at best, you'll kill someone; at worst, he'll be too busy dodging to pay attention to his own force. Move forward slowly but steadily. When the enemy reaches 30cm, draw swords (literally, in some cases) and start swinging.

Under no circumstances allow your force to be spread out - yes, you risk losing an entire fleet to a bad critical-hit roll, but you don't have the range or the speed to control the engagement. If you spread out, you will be defeated in detail. The last thing you want is for your name to be connected to the phrase "give me back my legions".

Chaos: Late-Roman-Era Germanic Tribes

Most folks think of the "barbarians" who overran Rome as poorly-trained, worse-led, unorganized masses who trampled over a society that had rotted from within. Close, but not quite. The folks who finally did off the Empire were, in some cases, quite well-organized, excellently led (in some cases, by people trained by Rome itself - "how sharper than a serpent's tooth…"), and quite organized; the "barbarian" epithet was delivered from the Roman point-of-view (which leads one to wonder just how "evil" Chaos actually is…). The later German tribes had militaries which employed many of the tactics the Romans had used, with the usual "local accent". In much the same vein, Chaos lends itself to tactics different from the Imperial ones described above.

As a Chaotic, you'll not have access to as many torpedoes; this is countered by the generally longer range of your gun decks. In the same vein, you'll be less well-protected, but faster. This lends itself to the tactics of the barbarian: Sweep in quickly, hit as hard as possible, and get

thyself hence. Repeat as necessary until the opponent either becomes frustrated and charges, thus opening himself to a defeat in detail; or enters a defensive formation, where he can't maneuver without tripping over himself; or flees the field altogether. Remember, you're Chaotic - your enemy is Civilization Itself, and you need to show him that "civilization" is synonymous with "weakness".

Eldar: Parthian Cavalry

The Parthian military is best known for its work at Carrhae, where it performed the amazing magic trick of making 26,000 Roman soldiers disappear - permanently. (Seriously, folks - it's been 2,000 years, and to this day, no one knows for sure where the troops the Parthians captured ended up!) This was accomplished through a combination of high speed, rapid fire (from bows), and never letting the enemy get a good shot in. Now if that isn't a description of an Eldar force, I don't know what is.

In an earlier issue of Warp Rift, it was suggested that the Eldar player who wanted to win should use his speed and handling as much as possible. Oh, yeah. The Eldar player is hard enough to hit (Holofields cause WBs to lose 25% of their strength via a column shift, and cause every other weapon to be ineffective 5/6 of the time), but that 4+ armor means that the attack dice that do come your way are going to do something unpleasant half the time. The Eldar commander should be looking to get into his opponent's rear arcs soonest. Once there, he can use his ships' ability to move as little as possible to stay back there indefinitely, pounding his foe's rear like… umm, err, OK, maybe that's not the best way to phrase that (especially considering the bishonen appearance of the typical Eldar)….

(Side note: If facing Eldar, take a page from the Napoleonic Wars handbook - "form square", or in this case "form circle" such that each ship's rear arc is in the broadside arc of another ship. The Eldar look for open targets - do not provide same.)

Orks: Early-Roman-Era Germanic Tribes

The tribes that Rome ran over in its early days were pretty pathetic - minimal leadership, less organization, totally ineffective versus even a moderately-organized foe, and too stupid to really notice or care.

In a nutshell: Orks.

There's really not much in the way of tactics for either the barbarians or the Orks; it's purely "drive directly towards the foe, wade into him, kill until either he kills me or he flees the field". Anything more complicated is best left to a fleet that won't be failing half its Ld rolls every game (discounting the AAF "free pass").

(For those who have them, the rules for Tyranid Instinctive Behavior provide a useful guide for Ork "tactics" - replace #2 with "Attempt Ram", however.)

So there you have it. The more things change, the more we have to spend on supplements in order to find out what the new "big thing" is.

+++ Marauding Chaos Fleet transits past +++
+++ Imperial remote sensor post #70.x29Lz near +++
+++ Quinrox Sound, Gothic Sector +++

Ork Clan Fleets in BFG

By Ray Bell

The Following rules are not intended for use with the 'new experimental' Ork rules in Fanatic Mag 5, but if you are fond of them (like me) and wish to use these rules as well, simply ignore the Ork Clanz upgrades at the end of that article. Keep in mind the Warlords of the Ork Clanz are not free as in the experimental fleet list. These are rules for entire fleets based on the Waaagh! fleet list in Armada and are not independent special ships or rules. Different Ork Clanz can be used in a single fleet as described in Part 3 of BFG Alliances also in this issue of Warp Rift.

Bad Moons

The Bad Moons are what passes as a merchant class in Ork society, continually buying, selling, swapping and conning to get even more teeth, the Ork currency. The Bad Moons have the largest and most valued teeth of all the Orks making them the richest of all the Clans. Bad Moons like to display their wealth with expensive technical and highly decorated wargear.

Kaptains, Bosses and Warlords command highly refitted Ork Kroozers. The more refits or upgrades the higher the status of the Ork Boss. This is in addition, and sometimes superseding, the requirement to be the biggest and the baddest Ork onboard.

For some unexplainable reason the Bad Moons have an unbelievable ratio of Weird Boyz to normal Orks. This high number of Ork Psykers does come with unparalleled advantages, but also with an unstable destructive force that most Bosses would like to keep away from their highly prized Kroozers and wargear, especially when traversing the warp!

Almost instinctually the Bad Moons banish most Weird Boyz, onto Ork Roks equipped with numerous Weird Boy towers. This is usually only during Warp travel and space engagements, it is a rare sight indeed to see a Weird Boy Rok in a small pirate band.

These Rok-colonies attract Mad Boyz by droves creating a rather unique Ork community. Bad Moons not letting this go to waste send many unwilling Gretchin and a few Mekboyz to keep things working and

make sure orders are followed, or at least received. When a true Waagh spills across space these peculiar Rok-colonies disperse amongst the Bad Moons heavily refitted fleet, compensating for their lack of normal Roks as they are seen as a poor Orks choice.

Bad Moon Warlord………40pts (Up to 1 per 500pts)
Double Boarding value, one re-roll.
May purchase up to 2 extra re-rolls for 20pts each.
Must purchase one upgrade: Maniac Gunners 30pts, Mad Meks +20pts, Extra Power Fields +20pts, Mega Armoured Boarding Party +10pts, Looted Torpedoes +15pts, Weird Boy Tower +10pts (Strength 1 Lances, 15cm, All).

Kroozers may have one upgrade from the list above. This is in addition to upgrades purchased by Warlords, you may not have duplicate upgrades on the same ship.

You may not use 'normal' Roks in a Bad Moon fleet.

Weird Boy Roks

With so many Weirdboyz and Warp Heads able to wreak havoc aboard the valued Ork Kroozers and escorts, the Bad Moons house these individuals in Rok-colonies far away from anything breakable or explosive!

You may have a Weirdboy Rok in a Bad Moon fleet for every Kroozer or Escort squadron. The Weirdboy Rok leadership is determined by rolling 2 single D6 in the normal manner and taking the lowest result (i.e. rolled a 2 and a 5, 2 is the lowest so the Rok has leadership 6). Weirdboy Tower strength isn't affected by any special orders!

Ork Weirdboy Rok					80 Points
TYPE/HITS	SPEED	TURNS	SHIELDS	ARMOUR	TURRETS
Defence/8	10cm	Special	1	5+	2
ARMAMENT		RANGE/SPEED		FIREPOWER	FIRE ARC
Gunz Battery		45cm		2D6	All
Weirdboyz Towers (Lances)		15cm		6	All

Notes: Movement is always 10cm in a straight line (no more or less, and is unaffected by blast markers). While in the gravity well the Rok has the same rules as any normal ship.

The Rok may not use Come To New Heading or Burn Retros special orders (but may still use All Ahead Full).

The Rok may only change heading on All Ahead Full orders, where it may move its extra 2D6cm in any direction, even backwards, if the extra distance travelled is 10cm or more then the Rok will continue in that direction.

Roks don't suffer criticals hits, instead loosing another point of damage.

Catastrophic damage: Replace the Rok with 4 BM's. Each ship within 3D6cm suffers D6 hits! (Due to psychic build up).

When repairing a Rok, repair D3 hits for every repair point used until its starting damage is reached.

May not be Kaptained by a Warlord!

Death Skulls

Death Skulls are renowned plunderers of the battlefield, searching the wreckage after every battle, salvaging weapons, equipment, clothes and anything else they find. Most other Orks keep a wary eye on any Death Skull Boyz, as they are considered thieving gitz and never seem to leave an Ork settlement empty handed.

Death Skull Warlord……….40pts (up to 1 per 500pts)
Double Boarding value, one re-roll.
May purchase up to 2 extra re-rolls for 20pts each.
May purchase one upgrade: Maniac Gunners 35pts, Mad Meks +25pts, Extra Power Fields +25pts, Mega Armoured Boarding Party +15pts.

All Kroozers with Torpedoes come with 'Looted Torpedoes' as standard, but must pass a leadership test to launch torpedoes. This represents the Death Skull trait of never wanting to throw something away.

Enemy Hulks captured by Death skulls or their enemies count as double victory points.

May purchase a ship-wide re-roll for any ship or squadron of escorts for 15 points. (The ship or squadron must be paint Blue!).

Snake Bites

For all intents and purposes Snake Bites are an advanced form of Feral Orks. The majority of their fleet consisting of Roks and Space Hulks they dislike the use of any advanced technology. The Snake Bites are a nomadic Clan, moving from planet to planet never settling down to infest, only grabbing the resources needed to 'construct' more Roks and Hulks to house their ever growing population.

Snake Bite Warlord……….40pts (up to 1 per 500pts)
Double Boarding value, one re-roll.
May purchase up to 2 extra re-rolls for 20pts each.
May not purchase any upgrades!

There are no Kroozers (Capital ships) in the Snake Bite fleet.

May have up to three escorts per Rok. Due to their reliance on Roks for their fleet, Snake Bites have 'developed' simple but effective variations of the standard Rok:

The War-Rok, in a strange way, is the closest thing Snake Bites have to a Battleship or Flagship. Being larger, sturdier and generally more shooty, this is a Rok fit for any Snake Bite Warlord.

Ork War-Rok					110 Points
TYPE/HITS	SPEED	TURNS	SHIELDS	ARMOUR	TURRETS
Defence/10	10cm	Special	2	5+	2
ARMAMENT		RANGE/SPEED		FIREPOWER	FIRE ARC
Gunz Battery		45cm		D6+ 6	All
Heavy Gunz Battery		15cm		8	All
Torpedoes		30cm		D6	All

Notes: Movement is always 10cm in a straight line (no more or less, and is unaffected by blast markers).

While in the gravity well the Rok has the same rules as any normal ship.

The Rok may not use Come To New Heading or Burn Retros special orders (but may still use All Ahead Full).

The Rok may only change heading on All Ahead Full where it may move its extra **3D6cm** in any direction, even backwards. If the extra distance travelled is 10cm or more then the Rok will continue in that direction.

Roks don't suffer critical hits, instead loosing another point of damage.

Catastrophic damage: Replace the Rok with **5 blast markers**.

Hits are rolled for before the start of the game (during a campaign this is its starting damage), this number of starting damage applies to this game only.

When repairing a Rok, repair D3 hits for every repair point used until its starting damage is reached.

Must have a Warlord to Kaptain the War-Rok.

Often crewed solely by Madboyz M.A.D. Roks are an example of Ork ingenuity, not only causing extreme damage to the enemy fleet but also ridding the Clan of the Ork equivalent of the clinically insane. M.A.D Roks are asteroids usually containing highly unstable nuclear material and are detonated when in a choice location amongst the enemy fleet. You can have a maximum of 1 M.A.D. Rok for every 500pts of other ships.

Ork M.A.D. Rok					30 Points
TYPE/HITS	SPEED	TURNS	SHIELDS	ARMOUR	TURRETS
Defence/6	10cm	Special	1	4+	1
ARMAMENT		RANGE/SPEED		FIREPOWER	FIRE ARC
Unstable Element		All ships within 3D6cm		D3 Fire criticals	All

Notes: Movement: is always 10cm in a straight line (no more or less, and is unaffected by blast markers).

While in the gravity well the Rok has the same rules as any normal ship.

The Rok may not use Come To New Heading or Burn Retros special orders (but may still use All Ahead Full).

The Rok may only change heading on All Ahead Full orders, where it may move its extra 2D6cm in any direction, even backwards. If the extra distance travelled is 10cm or more then the Rok will continue in that direction.

M.A.D Roks are in effect fire ships and can be detonated in exactly the same way as normal fire ships.

M.A.D Roks don't suffer critical hits, instead they detonate!

Catastrophic damage: Replace the Rok with 6 blast markers. The Unstable Element is 'fired'. All ships within 3D6cm suffer D3 Fire criticals.

M.A.D. Roks have a standard leadership of 5.

When 'replacing' a M.A.D Rok in a campaign; only use one repair point and then roll a D6 on a roll of a 2+ the M.A.D. Rok is replaced, on a roll of a 1 the replacement M.A.D. Rok was involved in a tragic accident.

May not be Kaptained by a Warlord!

Covered in thrusters and made of unspoiled 'hard' metal asteroids, Ram-Roks crash into enemy ships with surprising accuracy. Considered to be the Snake Bites technological limit, the use of extremely powerful tractor beams pulls the Ram-Roks into enemy vessels, and on occasion the other way around.

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Ork Ram-Rok					80 Points
TYPE/HITS	SPEED	TURNS	SHIELDS	ARMOUR	TURRETS
Defence/8	10cm	Special	1	6+	1
ARMAMENT		RANGE/SPEED		FIREPOWER	FIRE ARC
Gunz Battery		30cm		2D6	All
Heavy Gunz Battery		15cm		4	All

Notes: Movement is always 10cm in a straight line (no more or less, but is unaffected by blast markers).

While in the gravity well the Rok has the same rules as any normal ship.

The Rok may not use Come To New Heading or Burn Retros special orders (but may still use All Ahead Full).

The Rok may only change heading on All Ahead Full, where it may move its extra **4D6cm** in any direction, even backwards. If the extra distance travelled is 10cm or more then the Rok will continue in that direction.

Roks don't suffer critical hits, instead loosing another point of damage.

Catastrophic damage: Replace the Rok with 4 blast markers.

When attempting to Ram only roll 2D6 against its leadership, no matter the size of the target.

When repairing a Rok, repair D3 hits for every repair point used until its starting damage is reached.

TerRoks are quite simply Roks with Launch bays, a necessity in a fleet without capital ships.

Ork TerRok					100 Points
TYPE/HITS	SPEED	TURNS	SHIELDS	ARMOUR	TURRETS
Defence/8	10cm	Special	1	5+	1
ARMAMENT		RANGE/SPEED		FIREPOWER	FIRE ARC
Gunz Battery		45cm		D6+ 6	All
Torpedoes		30cm		D6	All
Launch Bays		Varies		2	-

Notes: Movement is always 10cm in a straight line (no more or less, but is unaffected by blast markers).

While in the gravity well the Rok has the same rules as any normal ship.

The Rok may not use Come To New Heading or Burn Retros special orders (but may still use All Ahead Full).

The Rok may only change heading on All Ahead Full orders, where it may move its extra 2D6cm in any direction, even backwards. If the extra distance travelled is 10cm or more then the Rok will continue in that direction.

Roks don't suffer critical hits, instead loosing another point of damage.

Catastrophic damage: Replace the Rok with 4 blast markers.

When repairing a Rok, repair D3 hits for every repair point used until its starting damage is reached.

Blood Axes

The Blood Axes were the first Ork Clan to make contact with the Imperium and unlike other Orks openly trade with humans. Blood Axes have gained a better understanding of grand strategy, and will even retreat if they are loosing rather than fighting to the bitter end like other Ork Clanz. This has earned the Blood Axes a cowardly reputation amongst other Clanz who fail to notice that the Blood Axes generally come back later with more Boyz and are better prepared than they were before.

It must be noted that when the Blood Axes salvage an Imperial or Chaos cruiser they are inclined to leave the weapons configurations in roughly the same manner as they were found. Although, a couple of months worth of Ork 'improvements' will find the cruisers sporting extra armour with a higher overall mass and finding the weapons to be of a slightly more Orky manner. The extra armour does give the 'Kroozers' more durability in a sense, but weakens the shield integrity and more often than not covers up numerous defence turrets. It is quite often that Lance turrets are converted into Heavy Gunz batteries, and Weapons Batteries given an extra punch, usually.

Blood Axes Warlord……..60pts (up to 1 per 500pts)
Double Boarding value, two re-rolls.
May purchase up to 2 extra re-rolls for 20pts each.
May purchase one upgrade: Maniac Gunners 35pts, Mad Meks +25pts, Extra Power Fields +25pts, Mega Armoured Boarding Party +15pts, Looted Torpedoes +20pts.

'Imperial' Ork Terror Ship					200 Points
TYPE/HITS	SPEED	TURNS	SHIELDS	ARMOUR	TURRETS
Cruiser/10	20cm	45°	1	6+ / 5+	1
ARMAMENT		RANGE/SPEED		FIREPOWER	FIRE ARC
Prow Torpedoes		30cm		D6+ 2	Front
Port Gunz		30cm		2D6	Left
Starboard Gunz		30cm		2D6	Right
Port Launch Bays		Varies		2	-
Starboard Launch Bays		Varies		2	-
Notes: Use the Dictator model					

'Imperial' Ork Kill Krooza					170 Points
TYPE/HITS	SPEED	TURNS	SHIELDS	ARMOUR	TURRETS
Cruiser/10	20cm	45°	1	6+ / 5+	1
ARMAMENT		RANGE/SPEED		FIREPOWER	FIRE ARC
Prow Torpedoes		30cm		D6+2	Front
Port Gunz		30cm		2D6	Left
Starboard Gunz		30cm		2D6	Right
Port Heavy Gunz		15cm		4	Left
Starboard Heavy Gunz		15cm		4	Right
Notes: Use the Lunar model.					

Space Camouflage would be fitting for a Blood Axes paint scheme. Simply spray the ships black and then flick on white stars with an old toothbrush (you could vary the colours of the stars or even paint them on individually). May use plastic Imperial and Chaos cruisers as Kroozers (Models must be 'Orkified').

'Chaos' Ork Terror Ship					195 Points
TYPE/HITS	SPEED	TURNS	SHIELDS	ARMOUR	TURRETS
Cruiser/10	20cm	45°	1	6+ / 5+ / 4+	1
ARMAMENT		RANGE/SPEED		FIREPOWER	FIRE ARC
Prow Gunz		45cm		2D6	Front
Port Gunz		30cm		2D6	Left
Starbaord Gunz		30cm		2D6	Right
Port Launch Bays		Varies		2	-
Starboard Launch Bays		Varies		2	-
Notes: 4D6 on All Ahead Full. Use the Devastation Model with Weapons batteries instead of Lances.					

'Chaos' Ork Kill Krooza					165 Points
TYPE/HITS	SPEED	TURNS	SHIELDS	ARMOUR	TURRETS
Cruiser/10	20cm	45°	1	6+ / 5+ / 4+	1
ARMAMENT		RANGE/SPEED		FIREPOWER	FIRE ARC
Prow Gunz		45cm		2D6	Front
Port Gunz		30cm		2D6	Left
Starboard Gunz		30cm		2D6	Right
Port Heavy Gunz		15cm		4	Left
Starboard Heavy Gunz		15cm		4	Right
Notes: 4D6 on All Ahead Full. Use the Slaughter Model or Murder variant (Weapon batteries and lances).					

Goffs

Goffs are the biggest, ugliest, meanest and most ferocious of the Orks. Goffs far prefer the thrill of hand-to-hand combat than the use of any long-range weaponry and their Kroozers share this philosophy. Cutting the range of their Prow Gunz to make way for boarding corridors, assault pods, boarding torpedoes, tellyportas, traktor fields and an assortment of other boarding equipment, Goffs are defiantly prepared for brutal boarding actions.

Goffs Warlord………40pts (up to 1 per 500pts)
One re-roll, Mega Armoured Boarding Party, Extra Tellyportas (+1 teleport attack).
May purchase up to 2 extra re-rolls for 20pts each.
May purchase one upgrade: Maniac Gunners 35pts, Mad Meks +25pts, Extra Power Fields +25pts, Mega Armoured Boarding Party +15pts, Looted Torpedoes +20pts.

All Kroozers with Torpedoes only have Boarding torpedoes at no extra cost.

All Kroozers Double their Boarding value but reduce the range of their prow Gunz to 30cm.

All capital ships use Large Bases representing their Traktor fields.

Launch bays only launch Assault boats (+1 to Hit and Run attacks).

Goffs ships must be painted Black, and may have a check pattern of Black and White somewhere (usually the aft section). As pure Black is quite a boring paint scheme it is acceptable to highlight with Grey.

Evil Suns

Evil Suns are obsessed with speed, endlessly tinkering with the engines of all of their vehicles and ships, trying to get as much speed out of them as possible. Not surprisingly the Evil Suns have the most Mekanaiks of all the Ork Clanz, in fact there are so many it's hard to find a ship without an abundant supply. All of the Evil Suns vessels are painted Red displaying the Orks belief that 'red wunz go faster'.

Evil Suns Warlord………..40pts (up to 1 per 500pts)
Double Boarding value, one re-roll.
May purchase up to 2 extra re-rolls for 20pts each.
May purchase one upgrade: Maniac Gunners 35pts, Mad Meks +25pts, Extra Power Fields +25pts, Mega Armoured Boarding Party +15pts, Looted Torpedoes +20pts, Painted Red +15pts (+5 cm speed).

No Roks or Hulks are allowed in an Evil Suns fleet.

All Evil Suns vessels move 4D6 All Ahead Full. Evil Suns are always on All Ahead Full special orders! You must pass a Leadership test 'not' to All Ahead Full at the beginning of each Ork Movement Phase!

The Mad Meks upgrade can be bought for every Kroozer. In addition to the normal Mad Mek rules Evil Suns gain a re-roll to 'not' All Ahead Full. Can be bought for escort squadrons (only one upgrade needed per squadron of escorts).

Emperors Children
By Ray Bell

Once a Legion dedicated to perfection in all its pursuits, the Emperor's Children's dedication was perverted to an obsession with excess. Making war into an art form; a riot of sounds, sight and sensations, the Emperor's Children will stop at nothing to fulfil their basest desires.

The Emperor's Children have access to the Enticer Light Cruiser and Lucius the Eternal as well as alternate Space Marine Crews (Noise Marines), Warmasters and Lords.

Noise Marines

Noise Marines (replacing Chaos Space Marines)   *30pts*

Noise Marines are warriors who crave all manner of visceral sensation. Using a range of sonic weapons to subdue or literally blow apart the enemy, Noise Marines are a much-feared opponent in a boarding action. All Emperor's Children are Noise Marines!

Noise Marines give a +2 Boarding Modifier (in actuality this is a normal +1 modifier, and then a -1 modifier to the enemy), +1 to the results of Hit and Run attacks (including ordnance), enemy conducting Hit and Run attacks against the ship suffer a -1 to the result, scores two Assault points every turn in Planetary assault instead of one.

The Emperor's Children are truly elite warriors so their leadership is rolled for as follows (D6): 1-2 = Ld 8, 3-4 = Ld 9, 5-6 = Ld 10.

Even though the warships of the Emperor's Children have excellent crews, they experience the constant distraction of their pleasure palaces and proudly display their renowned arrogance, and so suffer from the following Leadership Modifiers:
    No +1 for enemy being on special orders.
    Brace for Impact, Disengaging = -2 Leadership, may not use
        re-rolls to perform these orders.
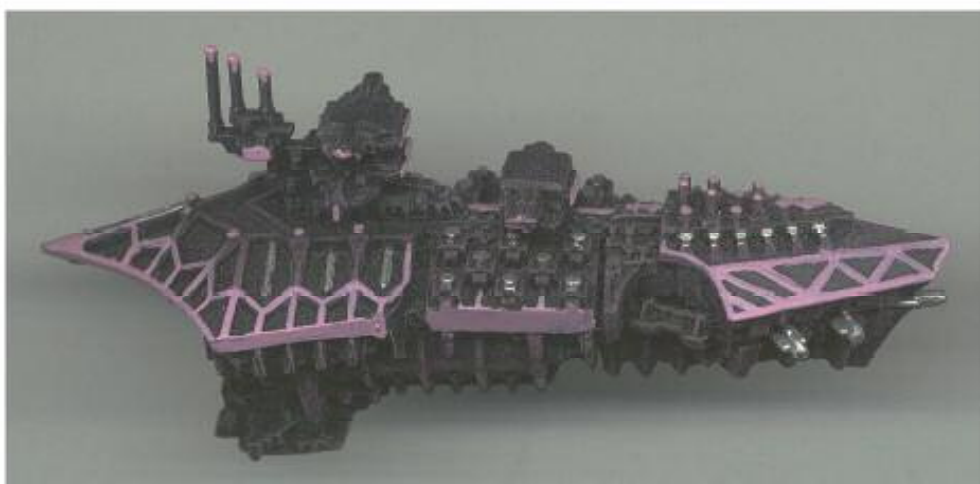
Temple of Summoners

A Temple of Summoners allows you to use a Daemonship in your fleet (using the rules in Warp Rift 2), the Daemonship must have a mark of Slaanesh.

Lucius the Eternal

You may include Lucius the Eternal in an Emperor's Children Fleet if it is worth 1000pts or more. If there are any Battleships in the fleet he must captain the fastest.

Lucius the Eternal (Ld 10, 2 re-rolls)   *200pts*

Special rules:
> +1 Boarding Modifier representing Lucius' 'art of combat'.

Victory points:
> If the vessel that Lucius is commanding is destroyed the enemy do not receive victory points for 'his' value (i.e. if he were commanding a Desolator Class Battleship and it were destroyed then enemy would only receive 300Vps not 500Vps (300+200).

Campaign:
> Take note of which squadron (including squadrons of 1) that 'kills' Lucius. This squadron suffers -D3 Leadership at the end of the game (If it was a squadron of Capital ships, it is the ship with the highest leadership that suffers), this represents the havoc of the enemy Captain gradually turning into Lucius and eventually escaping.

Lucius also has the following upgrades:
    Mark of Slaanesh and Noise Marines.

0-1   Warmaster of Slaanesh (replacing Chaos Warmaster)

You may include one Warmaster of Slaanesh in your fleet to command the most expensive capital ship. If Lucius is commanding the fleet you may not have a Warmaster of Slaanesh.

The Warmaster of Slaanesh (Ld 10, one re-roll)125pts
The Warmaster of Slaanesh has the Mark of Slaanesh and may have
    either a Temple of Summoners or the Noise Marine upgrade.

The Warmaster of Slaanesh may be given an extra re-roll for +25pts.

Lords of Slaanesh (replacing Chaos Lord)

Any capital ship, apart from that of a Warmasterof Slaanesh (or Lucius), may be captained by a Lord of Slaanesh.

Unlike normal Chaos Lords, Lords of Slaanesh do not 'improve' the vessels leadership, but give a 'ship-wide' re-roll (may only be used on the ship or squadron commanded by the Lord).

Lords of Slaanesh ('ship-wide' re-roll)   *50pts*

Lords of Slaanesh have the Mark of Slaanesh and may have either a Temple of Summoners or the Noise Marines upgrade.

Enticer Class Light Cruiser

Light scouting cruisers have always been apart of Imperial fleets throughout Imperial history; as such light cruisers did join the fleets of Chaos during the Horus Heresy. But, light cruisers by nature are lightly armoured and shielded, thus extremely rare to have survived ten thousand years of conflict. But having said this, new ships of varied designs are constructed within the 'Eye' with ever-greater frequency. Amongst the shipyards controlled by the forces of Slaanesh, specifically the Emperor's Children, light cruisers known as the Enticer class are being built.

Based on ancient post Heresy designs, the Enticer's advantages are clear to see. Unlike most capital ships the Enticer uses far less resources

to build and to maintain and like most light cruisers has the design philosophy of a raider, perfect for the pirate fleets of the 'Prince of Excess'.

Enticers have been encountered numerous times in seemingly unrelated engagements across the entirety of the Imperium. Always attacking isolated targets such as space stations, convoys and Navy patrols revelling in the chaos they are causing. But engagements involving Enticers closer to the 'Eye' lack this perfect raider state and are instead full blown fleet engagements where Enticers support the fleet, either fighting alongside Escort squadrons or being a cruiser squadron leader (If this seems strange, it is often that the Enticer is the furthest target and thus the most survivable).

Enticer Class Light Cruiser					140 Points
TYPE/HITS	SPEED	TURNS	SHIELDS	ARMOUR	TURRETS
Cruiser/6	30cm	90°	1	5+	2
ARMAMENT		RANGE/SPEED		FIREPOWER	FIRE ARC
Prow Weapons Battery		45cm		8	Front/Left/Right
Port Weapons Battery		30cm		4	Left
Starboard Weapons Battery		30cm		4	Right
Notes: 5D6 on All Ahead Full.					

BFG Alliances - Part Three
By Ray Bell

Issue Six of Warp Rift saw a small error on page eleven, when part two of this articles was cut off just before the end. I apologise for this oversight. The last line of the article should read:

'*Imperial Navy ships may not be squadroned with Space Marine ships.'*

In the final part of BFG Alliances we learn the allies of Orks (to coincide with the rules for the Ork Clanz) and Tau. We also look at Mercenaries and the 'friends to no one', Necrons and Tyranids.

Fleets in the 40K universe are sometimes accompanied by various allies, depending on the primary Fleet list. Each fleet below may spend up to 20% of its points on allies as described for each fleet.

Orks

In this issue of Warp Rift you will find rules for the six main Ork Clanz. The following rules characterize the relations of the various Clanz. You can have Ork Warlords from different Clanz in the same fleet list, but you must first have the 500pts worth of that fleet (so only for a game of roughly 2600pts or bigger, unless it's a Bad Moons fleet in which case it would be roughly 1300pts or bigger).

Bad Moons

Bad Moons are extremely rich and so can buy loads of extra boyz. Up to 40% of the Bad Moons fleet can be from allied Clanz (*May only take up to 10% of the fleet as Snake Bites, as their 'ships' are considered to be of poor construction). Bad Moons don't mind working with other Clanz and count as normal Allies to all Clanz.

Death Skulls

Death Skulls are not to be trusted, doesn't mean they can't fight though! Death Skulls are more than happy for any other Ork Clan to join them in a battle, as most Orks leave the broken treasure for the Death Skulls.

Due to the Death skulls bad reputation as thieving gitz other Ork Clanz can only have a maximum of 10% of their fleet as Death Skulls (the other 10% of the usual 20% can be spent on allies as normal).

Snake Bites

Snake Bites have fleets of Roks and Space Hulks, not the usual reinforcements wanted by other Clanz, but numbers is numbers. Snake Bites may reinforce their fleet with up to 20% of Bad Moons, Death Skulls and Goffs only, as Blood Axes aren't Orky enough and Evil Sunz couldn't stand being in a fleet of slow moving Roks!
Snake Bites count as a normal Ally to other Clanz.
Snake Bites will never fight along side Blood Axes as they consider them too Un-Orky!

Blood Axes

Blood Axes will make use of Allies whenever it makes sense (up to 20% as allies). Other Ork Clanz are wary at the best of times to acquire the help of the Blood Axes and so other Ork Clanz can only have a maximum of 10% of their fleet as Blood Axes (the other 10% of the usual 20% can be spent on allies as normal).

Goffs

Goffs don't care who they fight with as long as they are fighting! Goffs may have 20% of their fleet as allies and act as normal allies to all other Clanz.

Evil Sunz

Evil Sunz will fight along side any Ork as long as he's fast enough! Evil Sunz will never have Roks or Hulks in their fleet and so will never have Snake Bites as an ally. Evil Sunz can have all Ork Clanz, except Snake Bites, as normal Allies.
Evil Sunz will fight as an Ally with any Ork Clan except Snake Bites (But they may be allies of a fleet that uses Snake Bites).
Evil Sunz will not be apart of a fleet that has more Roks than Kroozers or escort squadrons.

Tau

The Tau Empire is noted as having numerous allies and dealings with many space faring races. Most of these allies are included in their fleet lists, such as Nicassar, Demiurg and Kroot. Rogue traders and standard Imperial vessels have been part of Tau fleet operations, although the later is far less common. Even the Eldar given the right circumstances will ally with the Tau.

Imperial: There has only been one joint operation between Tau and the Imperium, and that was against a Tyranid Hive fleet encroaching on both Tau and Imperial space. It would be a fool to say that such a thing could happen under different circumstances. The short-lived alliance taught both sides a great deal about each other's capabilities and resolve. Shortly afterwards the 13th Black Crusade erupted across the Imperium, pulling valuable resources away from the Tau border, inviting the Tau to seize numerous worlds to expand their empire at an unforeseen rate.
May use all Imperial ship classes. Imperial ships will not shoot on Imperial, Space Marine or Grey Knight ships or ordnance, and cannot use Fleet re-rolls. Imperial Leaders and re-rolls may not be bought. Imperial ships counts as a separate fleet for purposes of fleet composition.

Eldar: Unknown to the Tau, the Eldar have protected the Tau Empire during its infancy, destroying an entire Ork Waaagh! And closer to the present have intercepted Tyranid Vanguard fleets before they could betray the presence of Tau Colonies to the Hive Mind. Whatever the intentions of the Eldar it is apparent that they consider the Tau important to their own future and will safe guard them wherever possible. But as of yet there has not been confirmed 'friendly' contact with the Tau, not to say this couldn't happen in the near future.

May use all Eldar ship classes except Battleships. Eldar ships will not shoot on Eldar ships or ordnance, and cannot use Fleet re-rolls. Eldar Leaders and re-rolls may not be bought. Eldar ships counts as a separate fleet for purposes of fleet composition.

Mercenaries

Mercenaries can be found in the furthest depths of the Galactic rim and in the rarely travelled sectors of the Imperium. Most Mercenaries will work for any employer but it must be remembered that not every race wants to hire Mercenaries, especially Tyranids and Necrons.

Mercenaries count as allies and as such take up a portion of the usual 20% ally allowance. In all 3 parts of 'BFG Alliances' mercenaries haven't been included in each races list of allies as they are every races allies, unless noted otherwise in the Mercenaries rules (E.g. Demiurg won't work for Orks, Tyranids or Necrons).

All mercenaries follow a set of rules that are designed to keep them alive rather than fighting to the last. After all it's better to disengage to fight another day.
Crippled Mercenary ships will attempt to disengage at the beginning of each turn and run for the nearest table edge if they fail.

Some Mercenaries, which are paid a substantial amount or that have a vendetta with the enemy they are fighting usually keep on fighting until they only have 1 or 2 hits remaining but this will be noted in their specific rules.

Mercenaries include Demiurg, Rogue Traders (to a certain degree), Kroot Mercenaries (expect to see rules for Kroot Mercenaries in a future issue of Warp Rift) and Farsight Enclaves (expect to see rules for a Farsight fleet list in a future issue of Warp Rift).

There may be other Mercenaries to be invented for the game in the unforeseeable future, and if you have any ideas in the mean time we'd love to hear them!

Tyranids

It is very hard to think of any allies for Tyranids. Possible allies would be Genestealer crews for Imperial cruisers and Space Hulks, if anyone has any ideas of how this could work please write in!

Necrons

Unlike Tyranids, Necrons have one thing going for them, the Deceiver! The Deceiver has infiltrated the Adeptus Mechanicus and is highly effective at manipulating the forces of Chaos, and almost any other race for that matter. So it could be noted that Adeptus Mechanicus Fleets can be an ally to a Necron Fleet led by the Deceiver (20% of the Necron fleet can be Adeptus Mechanicus and visa versa).

Look out for a trial version of 'Battle Fleet Mechanicus' on the Warp Rift website, please let us know how it plays and have fun!

Warlord Griblotz sat back in his 'Kommand Chair'. He grinned broadly to himself, contemplating his position. He was in charge of 'Da Krusha', a Savage Ork Gunship in a squadron of five vessels.

His squadron were part of an expansion fleet who had got word of an Imperial convoy of supplies and weaponry for the local sector. Suddenly, the lights dimmed and shifted to red, while a siren blared right behind Griblotz, making him wince.

"TURN DAT OFF!"

He really couldnt think with the lights and siren going like that. There was a frantic scramble as a few of the 'officers' attempted to knock out the Squig which was the cause of the racket. The bridge was then suddenly thrust into darkness.

"Sorry, boss." A voice meekly sounded out of the gloom. "I stopped the red light..." Griblotz sighed, painfully.

"Wots going on?" He enquired, glancing around. The various greensjins at their stations attempted to look busy, stare intently at their displays or re-arrange the various bits of papers with crude diagrams in an attempt to appear busy.

"OK. Who can tell me wot dat is?" He stabbed a finger at the main display to illustrate his point, picking out an unidentified vessel on the screen. The bridge of Da Krusha had never been so quiet.

"OK. Shoot it den!"

There was frantic activity as Orks rushed around, thankful to be doing something they knew and able to destroy something.

"But Boss, Da Smasha iz in da way."

Griblotz galred at the young Ork.

"If he iz in da way, dat is not my fault. HIT DA ZOGGIN BUTTON!"

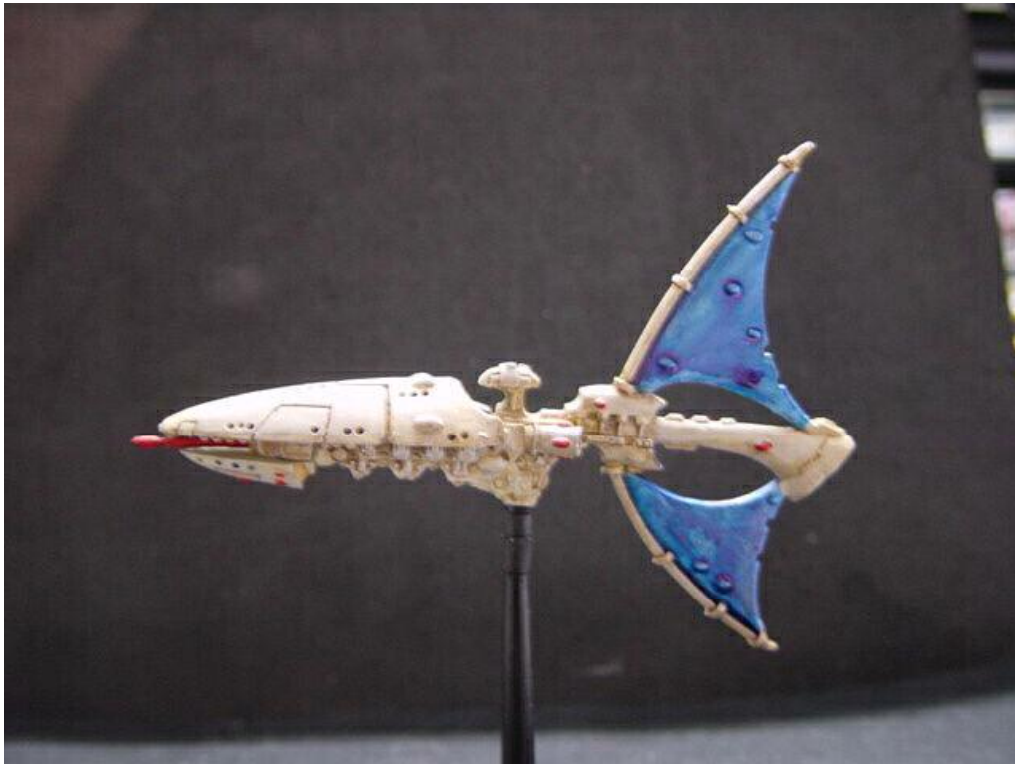Da Krusha unleashed a devastating volley, some of which actually didnt hit Ork the vessel in front of it.

GothiComp 2005
A Selection of the Submissions for the 2005 Battlefleet Gothic Painting Competition... So Far

Above: Devastation class cruiser, by Kassad
Below: Frater Sanguinius, by Cacciucco

Above: Wraithship, by Trent Bartlem
                    Below: Ares Invictus Asteroid Base, by Kassad

The Bait - Part Two

By Space Cadet

Captain Warris looked over his ship, from the main bridge. He knew that the main bridge was extremely exposed in case of combat, but the view was exemplary. He could see the lines of his ship, the tops of his cargo bays, and the nearby ships. If he walked the few dozen meters to the aft of the bridge, he could see the plasma engines that would drive the ship at a steady pace through space. The signature corona around each engine could tell him how they were holding up, even before any reports would reach him on the bridge through the ship's internal vox. The same was true for the cargo bays, as each tower on top had a single servitor there, holding up a green scroll. If anything went wrong, it would hold up a red scroll, and he could get personnel assigned to the proper locations quickly.

For now though, it was time to get underway. Around the bridge, tech-priests were going around, blessing the screens, and applying the proper benedictions and sacred oils, to ensure that the Omnissiah's blessing would be on the voyage. Tech Magos Vilhare was leading the activation prayers in the central techthedral, bringing the Machine Spirit of the Fat Belly to full awareness, so it would do its job. Tech-Magos Gandrel was in the generarium chambers, making sure that the sacred engines were ready to perform. They had received a full supply of the necessary oils, applications, and metals needed to fabricate anything from the local Tech-Hieros, so they were ready in case anything failed in its duty to the Emperor on the voyage.

Commissar Gadelkin was checking on the crew as well. His quiet smile was helping people to relax, but the mind behind the eyes was watching carefully, measuring the new personnel, identifying potential troublemakers, and those who would simply become cowards, and need to be shot. There was no need to shoot anyone now, but he had his boltpistol with him, just in case, and a chainsword over his back. If any trouble happened, he would be far more dangerous.

Master of Ordnance Falkstein looked over the ammunition stores. His gun crews were going over the weapons themselves, making the necessary prayers over them, to ensure their loyalty when they were needed. There had been one incident where one gun crew had not done proper

prayers over their weapons, and the gun had exploded during combat, allowing the Dark Eldar Raiders to get on board. That would not happen this time, and the gun crews went over their weapons, doing their tasks out of routine, and fear of what Master of Ordnance told them about the Dark Eldar attack. Several would have nightmares when they went to sleep tonight, but Falkstein judged nightmares in your sleep to be better than nightmares while you were awake.

Captain Warris looked back at Chaplain Adressin, and motioned to the shipwide voxcaster, "Chaplain, if you would give us the Emperor's blessing?"

Chaplain looked at the Captain, and nodded. Walking over to the vox, he said, "Attention all. I will now read from the book of the Emperor's duty, that we may remember our duties in the months to come."

"For the Emperor was a wise man, knowing the horrors that mankind would face, and dutiful man, knowing the costs that would need to be paid."

"The aliens uncountable, the mutants terrible, and the heretics abominable. He knew the foes that mankind would have to face, and the horrors they would bring with them."

"But he never paused, he never doubted. He knew that mankind would have the strength to overcome all obstacles, if they never wavered, if they never doubted. For doubt would let in the seed of destruction, and that seed would grow and humanity would cease."

"So he charged all those who serve him, to be never wavering in their resolve, never doubting in their abilities. Those few who had the seed of doubt in their hearts looked upon their Emperor, and the seed withered and was gone."

"For those who gazed upon the Emperor's face could not hide their true selves from Him. He could see the truth in their eyes, and those who cast that seed from them, he called to his side to fight, but those who could not remove the seed of doubt, he had baptized with purifying flame, that their souls might be at peace."

"Even now, the Emperor looks upon you. Even now, the Emperor watches you, and watches over you. In your thoughts, cast your gaze upon the Emperor, and know that doubt can never touch you. If you feel it touching you, pray to the Emperor for its removal, that you may be cleansed, as the Emperor is also merciful."

"In your actions know the Emperor is with you, and you are here to do his will, that you might

smite the mutant, the alien, and the heretic."

"Amen." Chaplain Adressin stepped away from the vox, his words ringing through the bridge. Several people who had been casually looking at their consoles were now paying full attention, and the guards at the doors were looking out with renewed attention, making sure nothing happened upon the bridge that the captain did not order.

Captain Warris knew the same was happening all over the ship. The crew had been getting annoyed over not getting any shore leave the past few days, and several discipline problems had sprung up. Commissar Gadelkin had dealt with the worse ones, and Chaplain Adressin, and his staff, had helped with the minor issues, helping the crew get past their grievances, to get back to their duties. The new crew had been worse, and almost a hundred had been executed for various offences. But now, with the Word of the Emperor over the vox, he could feel the crew coming together, uniting in their purpose. It might only be a cargo run from one system to another, but it was the Emperor's cargo run, by the warp!

With that, it was time to cast off. "Alert the station, we are preparing to cast off."

"Station confirms alert, advises heading 138 by 24, to clear local traffic."

"Confirmed. Helm, come to 138 by 24, maneuvering thrusters only. Generarium, prepare for quarter thrust"

In the generarium, the plasma reactors slowly came to quarter power, and fusion feeds were routed to the maneuvering thrusters. Swinging a three kilometer ship to a new heading was more a matter of patience than force, and the engines responded with their thrust. The time needed for a transport's engines to come to their proper power was measured in minutes, thus the need for warning the generarium before actually receiving any of that thrust.

The ship took eight minutes to come to the new heading, and Captain Warris called out, "Sensors, confirm no vessels in our exhaust cone."

The servitors working the ship's sensors, selected runes, and fed the appropriate screens to the Lieutenant operating the sensors. "We confirm no Imperial vessels in the exhaust cone."

"Engines, quarter ahead." The lookouts on the rear of the bridge were treated to a sight, as the coronas surrounding each engine began to glow, as the engines began pouring the plasma out the openings. The Fat belly slowly

accelerate away from the planet, to wards the warp point.

"Captain, we are clearing the planet. Station confirms time to the warp point is fifteen hours, forty minutes at our current acceleration."

"Good. Wait fifteen minutes, then secure from Launch stations. Well done gentlemen."

The cruise towards the warp point was rather boring. Most of space was rather empty, unfortunately, thought the Fat Belly only had a few windows, and the ability to see into space was guarded jealously. The ship's crew trained the newcomers that wished to learn, while those that would not or could not adjust were shuffled off to the slave holds, to be used whenever there was a need for raw muscle, and expendable lives.

The Tech-priests monitored the generariums, their chants echoing through the chambers, and hints of incense combined with that of grease, sweat, and blood, producing a combination that was pleasing to the Machine spirits within the ship. Navigator Bannera looked over the charts, hoping to find a way around the shear, even though her previous fifty searches had yielded the same results. Chief Petty Officer Baraxus drilled the new defense teams, seeing who had the potential to survive, and who should be used as a meat shield for

when they were attacked.

Captain Warris was getting some sleep, as during important events the Captain was required to be on the bridge, so he took his rest at other times. They had thirteen hours until they reached the warp point, and the captain had decided to spend most of it sleeping. His room was only a few seconds from the bridge, and there were viewscreens in his room so the Captain could see how his ship was doing at any time.

Executive Officer Lieutenant Gadelphus was on the cargo deck, checking the gold blocks, and making sure that the place was being kept clean. It was his job to make sure the ship was running properly, and every day he would check a section of the ship to make certain it was. The ship was too big for him to check himself every day, and still stay current with his duties, so every day he picked a different area, and went over it in detail. As no area knew if they were next or not, all had to be clean and ready. A clean ship made morale better, and the light reflecting off the tons of gold made everyone's smile a little brighter.

Elsewhere, a meeting of various sorts was occurring. The Tzan'keth race had been attacked by the Imperium out of procedure several centuries ago, before the Imperial ships had left. The race also had long memories when it suited them, so they still

remembered the slayers from the stars. When Blood-captain Koresh had come by with a hold full of Imperial goods, willing to sell in exchange for basing rights, they were more than happy to agree. As a result, Blood-captain Koresh had become Blood-Commodore Koresh, with over a dozen escorts under his command. Ranging from Iconoclast escorts, to even a pair of captured Imperial Sword Frigates, the small vessels were well suited to chasing down and capturing shipping.

Even better, he watched as the local Tzan'keth were slowly putting together a second shipyard of their own, and the first was busy assembling their own escorts as well. They were merely basic Iconoclasts, but the shipyard could easily build them, and the Tzan'keth were deploying their own space navy. They would not last long against a true Imperial assault, with cruisers leading squadrons of escorts, but Blood-Commodore Koresh remembered his orders, 'Get the xenos in this sector built up, and raid Imperial shipping. We will deal with them later.'

He was doing just that. By finding local races that had a grudge against the Imperium, a very easy task, he would approach them, and offer to buy basing rights on their planet. He just happened to buy the necessary materials from the local government, and the

security around his bases was designed to be loose. That allowed the local governments to get copies of the plans, and build their own prototypes. His own spies were far more effective, and those spies would guide the locals into designing proper weapons and power plants, so their ships would be useful.

Such as now. The locals had no idea they were merely copying the plans for escort vessels, and a proper assault fleet would use them for target practice, but they were fielding their own Navy, and the Tzan'keth were rejoicing. The government that had agreed to trade the basing rights in exchange for technology had already conquered half the planet, and the other kingdoms were signing over rulership. A few minutes orbital bombardment from a single Iconoclast had removed critical military control centers, and their armies had fallen. The power shown in that bombardment had convinced the remainder that open revolt was useless.

Blood-Commodore's troops and assassins had managed to deal with any rebellious fragments, and the few rebellious areas were rebelling only in spirit, as their economies were useless, and their people knew that any actual force would result in another orbital bombardment. With the Tzan'keth world organized, and building

their own ships, it was almost time for him to move on to the next world. Already his agents, in an Idolator escort, had contacted their government leaders and were offering to purchase basing rights. His fleet would move to there, snapping up any transports they met along the way. The Tzan'keth would take over harassment operations in this area, until either the Imperium sent a cruiser force in to sterilize their planet, or the cults he had started took over the government.

Still, there were rumors in the warp about a treasure fleet about to leave a nearby system, and the gold within would make him a very wealthy Commodore. He briefly indulged himself in the thoughts of getting the resources to build a cruiser, and the destruction he could deal with it, but put those images out. He had a fleet to organize.

At the warp point, the Fat belly approached the interface, and Captain Warris went over the slate, which had the checklist printed upon it. The slate had been passed on from an older ship, and the weight of time was heavy in his hands.

"Geller field?"
"At 100% Captain."
"Guns?"
"Guns ready Captain."
"Ship patrols?"
"Patrols armed and ready Captain." The shipboard patrols were equipped with shotcannons, in case anything from the warp got loose, or any of the crew went berserk. If either happened, they would shoot the offender, and keep on patrolling. The patrols would run the entire time they were in the warp, and in realspace until the Captain relieved them.
"Generarium?"
"Generarium ready Captain."
"Navigator?"
"I am ready Captain."
"XO?"
"The ship is ready Captain."
"Very well then Navigator, the ship is yours."

At this point, the Captain became a passenger on his ship. The Navigator was the only one who could steer the ship while in the warp, so she would have overall control of the Fat Belly. She would guide the ship past the whirlpools, avoid the dead zones, and align the ship with the currents of the Immaterium, to reach their next transit point. With a Navigator, travel across the Imperium was only a matter of decades. Without Navigators, or the Astronomicon they relied upon, it would jump to centuries.

Bannera reached out her hand, and grasped the skull tipped lever. That lever alone controlled the ship's descent into the Immaterium, and it was her hand that controlled the lever. Pulling the wrap off her third eye, she saw the warp, ad the flows scratching at the Geller field, trying to get in.

"Fear is a crude way of obtaining obdience, but it is cheap, plentiful and efficient."

- Admiral Lucian Kore
Battlefleet Ar'Kanis

The field was strong though, and they could not enter. Pulling down on the lever, the ship seemed to stretch and compress, then vanished.

Below decks, the crew could feel the change. There was no change in the ship's engines, but everyone could feel in the dark corner of their minds that they were no longer in normal space, and over half the new people fell to their knees, pouring out their souls to the emperor. Petty officers, who had been through it before, listened carefully, making sure there was no sign of corruption among them, to ensure the ship had a safe transition. A few of the new personnel panicked, and the barks of shotcannons rung out, ensuring that their souls would not be tainted.

After the initial wave passed, overseers with whips walked through the slave holds, whipping the personnel back into movement. "All right, you've had your break, now get back to cleaning. We've got to get this room clean for the XO's inspection. If we fail, you'll do it twice over to make sure it passes. If it fails after that, well, we've got the rack for that."

Time passed in the Immaterium, but at a different rate than in normal space. That rate was not constant either, so two ships could be in the Immaterium for what felt like two days, but they would arrive weeks, or even months apart. There had even been a few stories about ships that arrived before they even left, but those were considered space stories, and usually began with the phrase, "This is no Grox shit, I really saw this . . ."

Most people listening to those

stories usually fell asleep as they had heard them before, or for the new people, would eventually wonder how much was real, and how much was made up. The best taletellers could last for hours, before admitting the whole thing was a lie. Those taletellers were also very good at running, to avoid the angry mobs that usually resulted.

The tech-priests were always busy though. Always going back and forth, adjusting a setting, performing the required two taps on the gauges, one for the Omnissiah, and one for their Machine spirit, that the gauge might read true. Even the Machine spirits were busy, keeping the viewscreens free of warp images by use of the screen savior, which ran purifying images of the Emperor through them, to avoid false thoughts from corrupting the Machine spirit.

Blood Commodore Koresh listened to his advisor. There was apparently a transport making its way through the Immaterium near them. His agent at the Baltrothian planet was apparently needing some form of bribe to deal with even the nicest of the locals, and a transport filled with Imperial goods would do just fine. Detaching a pair of Iconoclast escorts, he told them to capture the transport, and bring it to the Baltrothian world. The senior crew on board would be replaced of course, and Khorne would get his

blessing of blood and skulls.

He also had a few daemon-bound in his hold, and they had been getting impatient for souls recently. The Tzan'keth he had kept on board had been used to feed them, but the Tzan'keth were starting to run low. A transport, with hundreds on board, would keep them content.

Navigator Bannera woke from her sleep. She was not the only Navigator on board, there were several apprentices, but she was the senior. Before she went to sleep each day, she would chart out the route through warp space for them to follow, and they would hold the ship to that route. Several times, what appeared to be faster flows would pop up nearby, but the apprentices held true to their mistress' chart, avoiding the temptations of a faster flow, for the reliable current they were in. Now that she was awake, she checked their position via the Astronomicon, and smiled. Her apprentices had learned well, and the Fat belly was on course.

A glimmer of darkness caught her eye, and she turned to face it. Her sight brought the glimmers into sharper focus, and she tensed. Feeling the corrupting whispers from the vessels, she slammed her mind to them, and kept the image of the Emperor in her mind. The tendrils withdrew their approach, and the glimmers altered course, the prey they had

come to search for had been revealed, and they were ready to strike.

Getting into her chair, she punched up a vox line to the Captain's quarters. A servant placed the rag over her third eye, and the captain answered the screen immediately. "Captain, this is your Navigator. Two Iconoclast destroyers in intercept course, estimate five hours until they range us in Immaterium. Recommend crash drop, and find something to hide near."

Captain Warris' sleep clouded brain cleared instantly. "Granted." Turning to another control, he found the lieutenant on watch, and said, "Lieutenant Handlin, prepare for crash translation to realspace. Sound Alert." The lieutenant paled for a moment, but merely confirmed the captain's orders.

Captain Warris' mind whirred. His freighter was as large as most cruisers, but it was not a warship. If the destroyers got a good look at him, they would know what they faced, and likely call up reinforcements to ensure victory. He had to find somewhere to hide, so he could ambush them. He, in the three kilometer long clumsy transport, would have to ambush a pair of one kilometer long warships, with better sensors than anything a civilian could hope to use.

Still, it was either that, or die. Hurrying to the bridge, he felt the translation in his stomach, and arrived as they were finishing. His steward had followed, making sure his uniform was in proper shape before arriving, as it would not look good for the Captain to arrive on his bridge while looking shabby.

"Report."
"Captain, there is a dead planet two hours away. No other contacts on sensors. Ship is at Alert status." Alert status meant that the roving patrols had all checked in and confirmed their full loads of ammunition. It also meant that the maintenance and prayers over the weapons had been completed, and no more were starting. Finally, the Void shield generators were prepared, and the prayers of readiness had been said.

"Helm, head for the dead planet, and enter low orbit around it."
"Aye Aye Captain."
Lieutenant Gadelphus walked over to his Captain, and quietly said, "We'll just wait here until they leave?"
"We can afford to wait Lieutenant, a few days won't mean much to our schedule. Besides, if they find nothing here, they may assume we went somewhere else. Its the only piece of cover around, and I don't plan on getting caught with a pair of enemy warships in open space."
"I'll get to the backup center, just in case."

"Do it."

The backup center was a jury-rigged control center that copied almost everything the main bridge did, essentially providing viewscreens of what was going on, but was far more central to the ship. Still, if those warships got in range, that would only delay their deaths by a few minutes.

It was also located close to Damage Control, and boarding control, allowing the personnel there to coordinate better with the other centers.

In space, a transport is an ugly, squat vessel designed with a large hold, and high-efficiency engines in the rear. Near a planet, those engines have to be planned several minutes in advance, to avoid slamming into the planet, or slingshotting past.

A few minutes later though, two more warp flares occur, and a pair of lethal Iconoclast vessels dropped out of the warp, to go hunting for the transport that was nearby. A dead world was nearby, and nothing else, and their Captains laughed at the obviousness of the hiding place. Powering up their engines, they slid towards the planet at a speed twice that the Fat Belly could reach.

Their weapons were armed, their sensors primed, and their crews ready. They wanted their prey.

Captain Warris watched the two ships close on him, and said, "Set General Quarters. Don't start emitting yet, but be ready for full thrust, and all guns stand by. We have a chance."