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Warp Rift

The Battlefleet Gothic netzine



Issue 14 - Gothicomp 2007 - Domination of Herculis - Cheap Orks - Wraithchoir - ...and more...

From the Nexus Publishing House

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Send your submissions to:

horizon@epic40k.co.uk

or

warprift@epic40k.co.uk

Warp Rift Publication Team

Roy (Horizon) Amkreutz	–	Void Stalker II
Iain (Cybershadow)	–	Watcher in the Dark
Ray Bell	–	Admiralty

Credits:

Cover Picture – Erwin Leufkens & Roy Amkreutz
Additional Graphics & Pictures – Fafrin, juddski, Stugmeister,
Roy Amkreutz, Erwin Leufkens, TonkaTruckDriver,

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+++ Red Ones go Faster +++

With this I'm already writing my fourth editorial for Warp Rift. Time certainly flies by when you're having a good time. And seeing all the great articles we have received and still receive for Warp Rift I am certain this good time can go on.

Speaking of good times I won the Battlefleet Gothic painting competition hosted at www.tacticalwargames.net! Thanks to all the people who voted on me! But to be honest I was quite surprised as the level of quality was very high this year.

In this issue you can find a lot of these entries plus accompanying words to the top five vessels. Check out the Gothicomp 2007 article.

For Gothicomp 2007 big thanks go to Iain and 'his' TacticalWargames.net' as well as online store sentrybox (www.sentrybox.org) for donating a prize to this competition.

On your way to the Gothicomp article you can first read some very well thought Nova Cannon rules. If you are into Eldar and their background you may like the Wraithchoir article; a detailed explanation about the Craftworld Eldar and their weapon variants. Can escort vessels have two hitpoints or not? Check out the High Admiralty section.

After the Gothicomp pictures the fanzine continues with an article on how to build a lot of Orks for very little money. That way everyone can get his Ork fleet! In this issue's story, the Hunt for Red Slaughter it is all about confusion.... The last section, the Void Stalker section, is filled with nice goodness. First a scenario with those cheap and sneaky Orks; followed by an extensive map-based campaign system.

All I can say is enjoy!

**Happy Gaming, Painting & Converting,
Roy**

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www.sentrybox.com

Encyclopaedia Gothica

Fleets of the Galaxy

Alternative Rules

Nova Cannon – ‘Fire and the Hole’

By Dex ‘Admiral D’Artagnan’ Sy

Imperial Navy players are disappointed with the way the Nova Cannon has been nerfed from it's original incarnation. First it was changed from the Guess convention to the Scatter Dice. This was an ideal change since it balanced out the playing field between the good guessers and the bad guessers. That was fine.

Then it was decided that the Eldar Holofield can save against the Nova Cannon shot. Fine, since Eldar have tissue paper armour but then it was further decided that the Eldar holofield also saves against the scattered Nova Cannon shot landing on another unfortunate Eldar ship. Why would a ship that had the scatter shot land on it be able to save against the explosion's effects? "Riding the explosion" was used as a reason but it's a poor excuse to justify an Eldar holofield working on a scatter shot since you don't really have an inkling if the scattered shot was headed your way in the first place.

Then with the latest Battlefleet Gothic Rules v. 1.5, they further neutered the Nova Cannon by giving the scatter three bands instead of the normal two. Now between 30 cm to 45 cm you roll 1D6 for scatter distance. Between 45 cm to 60 cm, you roll 2D6 for scatter distance. Then between 60 cm to 150 cm, one rolls 3D6 for scatter distance.

The idea for changing the band from two to three was that there was still a good chance for the Nova Cannon to do massive damage on the scatter and there was the problem with some power gamers going for a Massed Nova Cannon fleet. While the change reduces or eliminates the damage on the scattered shot by increasing the scatter distance, it just gave the massed Dominator players more fuel to bring said Massed Nova Cannon fleet into games. Because the Nova Cannon has become so unreliable, especially on the ranges beyond 60 cm, one needs to bring lots of Nova

Cannons in order to make the weapon worthwhile, to emphasize again most especially at long ranges and this means Dominator and/or Mars heavy fleets.

Since the new rules really made the Nova Cannon useless as a weapon by itself and only worthwhile en masse, the author decided to create a new set of rules which hopefully can address the problem of a very effective nova cannon on the scatter and the massed Nova Cannon fleet. The rules are presented below.



Proposed Nova Cannon Rules:

Nova Cannon follows the same convention before the updated rulebook v. 1.5 was released. From 30 cm to 60 cm: roll scatter dice with a scatter roll of D6. Beyond 60 cm to 150 cm: roll scatter dice with a scatter roll of 2D6.

Results of scatter roll as follows.

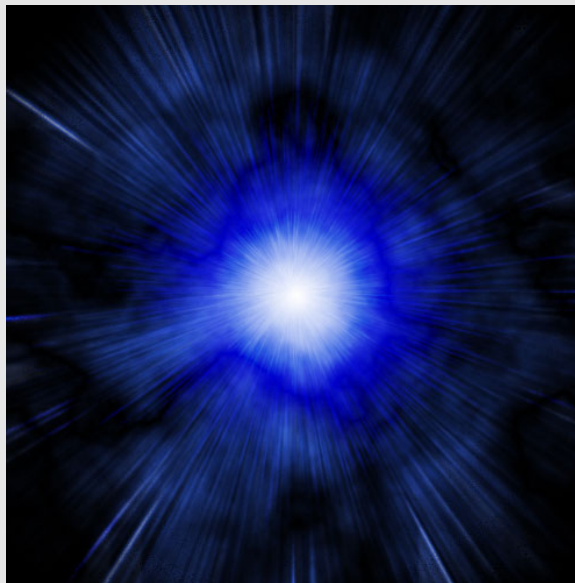
- a. If direct hit roll D6 for damage, regardless of the target's armour value.
- b. If scatter with centre hole landing on base, roll D3, regardless of the target's armour value.
- c. If scatter with template on base, 1 point of damage, regardless of the target's armor value.

The D3 damage of a scatter shot with centre hole landing on the base is an ideal way of reducing the effectivity of the said scatter shot which is a problem which concerned the High Admiralty ever since the switch was made from Guess convention to Scatter Dice rules. Capital ships now have a much better chance of surviving a scatter shot. Even Escorts have a chance at surviving a scatter shot.

As per rules, the Nova Cannon shot is affected by shields and if no ships were hit by a Nova Cannon shot, then place a Blast Marker under the centre of the template and the Nova Cannon is a Line of Sight weapon and cannot fire through obstacles or celestial phenomena that act as normal line of sight obstructions such as planets, moons, asteroid fields. etc.

Nova Cannon Ranges

The Nova Cannon minimum range and maximum range shall be changed to the following: to fire the Nova Cannon, place the template so that the centre hole is anywhere between 30 cm for minimum range to 150 cm for maximum range. If the shot scatters below 30 cm or beyond 150 cm, nothing happens and the players shall assume shot malfunctions. The outer template ruling in the rulebook is odd because in effect, it makes the actual minimum and maximum range at 33 cm and 147 cm respectively, reducing the effective range by that much aside from confusing the players with the wording.



Nova Cannon on Lock On Special Orders

Lock On Special Order available is now available to the NC. This is to make the Nova Cannon a more reliable weapon. On a scatter result, re-roll the scatter dice against races other than Eldar or Dark Eldar, with the second roll standing. See the rules on Nova Cannons vs Eldar Holofield/Dark Eldar Shadowfield below.

Other Special Orders and the Nova Cannon

Other than the change with the Lock On Special Order, the Nova Cannon follows the same restrictions with respect to other Special Orders as in the main rulebook: it cannot fire when on All Ahead Full, Brace for Impact, Burn Retros and Come to New Heading. It also cannot fire when the Nova Cannon armed ship is crippled.

Using Brace for Impact against the Nova Cannon

As per the rules on p. 23, you must declare Brace for Impact before the scatter dice is rolled.

Nova Cannon vs Ordnance

As in the rulebook, any ordnance touched by the template is automatically removed.

Nova Cannon-armed Ships Limit

Lastly, in line with the above changes, there shall be a 1 NC per 500 points limit. This way, the massed NC ships can be controlled and also aligns the weapon with the fluff saying the Nova Cannon is not a weapon commonly seen. This would still allow for two Nova Cannon armed ships in 1,000 point matches and three Nova Cannon armed ships in 1,500 point matches which is no small matter.

Nova Cannon vs. Eldar Holofields/Dark Eldar Shadowfields

Eldar holofields and Dark Eldar Shadowfields are the premier spoofing system in Battlefleet Gothic. As such, Nova Cannon shots will **always** scatter because of the holofields/shadowfields and this means a maximum damage of D3 for centre hole on the base and 1 point of damage for outer template on the base. That's the only save the holofields/shadowfields offer in these rules.

The only question is the scatter distance. Against Holofields, the Nova Cannon shooter rolls 2D6 dice for targets between 30 cm to 60 cm and 3D6 dice for targets beyond 60 cm to 150 cm in determining scatter distance, removing the lowest dice roll. This can be affected with the Lock On order.

Note: Every time a Direct Hit is rolled on the scatter dice, just follow the direction of

the small arrow for direction purposes. If you have no scatter dice, use a D6. 1 and 6 means direct hit and the rest are scatters. Put a dot on one corner of all the faces with a marker pen to signify the direction of the scatter.

Nova Cannon on Lock On vs. Holofields

For Nova Cannons on Lock On against Eldar, roll an extra D6 in determining distance and remove the highest dice roll (as well as lowest dice roll for the holofields). This means for Eldar between 30 cm and 60 cm, the scatter distance is acquired via 3D6 with the highest and lowest dice roll being removed. For Eldar beyond 60 cm up to 150 cm, the scatter distance roll is 4D6, again remove the highest and lowest dice roll.

Nova Cannon vs. Necron Reactive Armor

Necron Reactive Armour is effective against the Nova Cannon shot as it diminishes the effect of the Nova Cannon explosion since, by fluff, the armour is very resilient against damage caused by Solar Flares which would be a very good comparison. Therefore, NC shots will only roll D3 on a Direct Hit and only deal 1 point of damage if the shot scatters but the centre hole of the template still lands on base. Outer template on base deals no damage. The Imperial Navy Nova Cannon armed ship on Lock On Special Orders follow the regular Lock On rules above when targeting Necrons.

Summary

I hope that the above house rules can provide an alternative way to play use the Nova Cannon and to balance the two contending issues of the massed NC fleet and the worry of people of the potential to do damage by a scatter landing on the base. Of course, the 33% chance of getting a direct hit is still a 33% chance so all one can do is really pray for a scatter.

I also adjusted the min and max range to be better represented.

In the case of the holofields, I disliked the save vs. shot on a 2+. I think my rules still give the Eldar a favourable chance of escaping the shot and yet not make the NC too devastating for them damage wise though, of course, Eldar will always be fragile.

Against Necrons, it was weakened but D3 hits on a ship without shields is still effective especially with Lock On increasing the chances of a direct hit.

Against other races, the damaging effect of a scattered shot still landing on the base has been reduced although the chances for a direct hit have been increased with the adding of the Lock On rule. I feel this balances things out plus by inserting the limitation of the NC armed ships, the rules can minimize or prevent abuse and make for a more fun game.

+++

Background

The Ship Designs of the Eldar and the Wraithchoir

By Doug Newton-Walters aka hellebore

Ship Classes

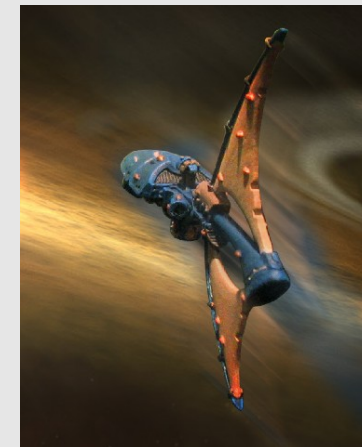
Unlike Imperial or other more conventional navies, the Eldar do not produce ships in distinct classes. Their mastery of technology means that a ships armament is not restricted to class or type, but merely to design. It is the design and its school of origin that dictates the eventual weapons fit of a single ship, and they can be varied indeed. Despite this there are certain design aspects that all Eldar ships possess, and some can be categorised according to the size and appearance of the ship itself. The most common of these hull designs are the Wraith and the Dragon, but there are other, rarer designs not often seen amongst the Eldar fleets. The Wraith as its name suggests is highly manoeuvrable like a light cruiser but packs the armament of a cruiser. This combination makes it quite deadly thus ideal as the mainstay of a Craftworld fleet. Unlike the Wraith, the Dragon sits in a position more akin to a heavy cruiser, or a grand cruiser. Its raw power is deceptive considering its size and construction. However the sheer power of the ship brings to mind the dragon of legend: Little can survive a one on one confrontation with a Dragon.

The Phoenix is perhaps the rarest of all the Eldar ship designs, and has a strong symbolic place amongst the fleet. Taking its name from the symbol of the Eldar God King, Asuryan's Phoenix represents the hope and rebirth of the Eldar race from the ashes of the Fall; their attempt to rekindle what was lost. The Phoenix is a potent symbol of this, as it is without doubt the most heavily armed ship encountered by Imperial Naval personnel (discounting the random Hulk constructs of the Orks). While the Phoenix design follows the same broad aesthetics utilised by the Wraith and Dragon ship designs, by sheer dint of size, it necessarily incorporates many more schools of form into its construction.

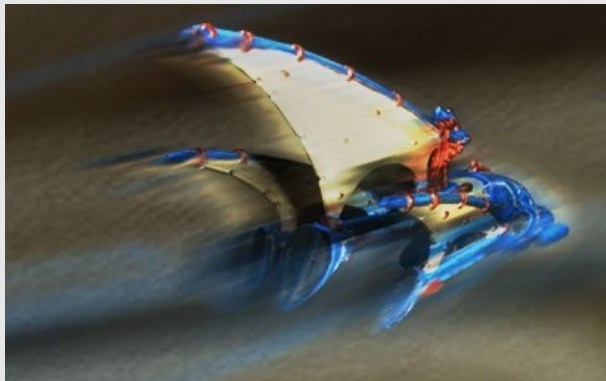
Due to their simple construction, Eldar escorts are built around very few core hull designs, instead focusing on the propulsion design. The two most commonly used are the Shadow and the Serpent. These basic hull constructions fulfil all the requirements of an Eldar escort, yet do so in completely different ways.

The main role of the Shadow is patrol and defence, and the power and engine systems of this design are necessarily short ranged. Despite this, Shadow manoeuvring

thrusters are the most efficient of all Eldar escorts, allowing them to effectively confront and engage enemy ordnance with an ease impossible for any other ship, including the Serpent. Where the Shadow emphasises dexterity and grace, the Serpent is simply built for speed. The hull design of the Serpent incorporates stellar sails twice as large as the Shadow's, allowing for bursts of speed that are simply breathtaking. Serpent construction revolves around very strong themes of the lightning strike and retreat, and the sinister application of death. This is reflected in the armament of the Serpent designs; weapons not used on other ships.



Each of these hull types is effectively a blank, a canvas used by the bonesingers to 'paint' an Eldar ship. Due to the huge size of even the smallest escort, multiple bonesingers are needed in this construction. This collective is known as the Wraithchoir, and consists of dozens of bonesingers, each a follower of a specific School of Design. The psychic resonance created by such a large number of bonesingers in harmony can be felt by most of the Craftworld, a joyous sound of creation. The psychic singing produced by the choir is benevolent as it is a song of creation and growth, a prelude to the birth of a new life. When that life is as large as a ship, the feeling of renewal and joy is all encompassing, and many an Eldar will spend time within the Domes of Creation to immerse themselves in the birth-joy formed by the Wraithchoir.



The Schools of Creation

Amongst the Bonesingers in the Domes of Creation many Circles of Thought and Schools of Design regarding aesthetic construction exist. Each of these design aesthetics follows a specific path, centred on a fundamental principle or concept viewed as the true ideal. Every Bonesinger follows one or even several of these design schools, incorporating the core tenants of the Design School into each of their creations. Despite this seeming disparity between design concepts, each Bonesinger understands that all concepts are necessary for creation; it is simply the proportion of each that is different. Thus when the Wraithchoir is formed to construct an Eldar ship, the Principal Craftmaster guides and weaves the disparate designs into a harmonious whole, while still possessing a central theme.

There are many of these Schools present on a Craftworld, with new concepts becoming popular, or older Circles rejuvenated. The bonesingers very rarely place a single School before others, instead putting one as first amongst equals. Amongst these Schools, there are four major styles common to all Craftworlds in ship design; these are the Schools of the Hunter, Stalker, Slayer, and Reaper.

Hunter

Those who follow the Design of the Hunter place great importance on accuracy and skill. It is the belief that a single shot is all that is needed and that proficiency and grace are more important than power and force. The Hunter is skilled in his art, and equipped with the best and most deadly weapons available. With intelligence his shield, and skill his weapon, the Hunter will slay all before him. Any ship built with this theme in mind is always heavily equipped with Pulsar Lances to delicately slice apart the enemy from a distance and evade retribution.

Stalker

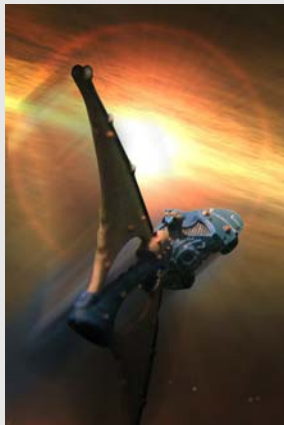
Attacking suddenly from afar, with no warning and no hope of escape is the maxim of the Stalker Philosophy. The Stalker shares many themes with the Hunter, but where the Hunter relies upon precision and finesse, the Stalker prefers camouflage and deception. With cold eyes the Stalker surveys his prey, readying his attack, ensuring it falls at the most vulnerable time. Unknowing the prey presents an opening, and death follows. From a distance the Stalker unleashes destruction, killing with no evidence of his passing, just the ruined remains of his enemies. Bonesingers who ascribe to this philosophy construct their ships around massive Launch Bays, allowing the ship to avoid a direct confrontation with the enemy while still administering destruction.

Slayer

The Design of the Slayer is one of absolute destruction, the raining of death and despair in an overwhelming torrent of devastation. Slayers lack the finesse of a Hunter or the cunning of a Stalker, instead using overpowering force to completely annihilate their foes. With strength and fortitude a Slayer will meet his foe face to face, and it is here he will crush them utterly. Not for him the slinking of weaklings or the ideas of fools, destruction and carnage are the only tools he needs. The Slayer Philosophy is one of directness, with little elegance or grace. Massed Weapons Batteries are favoured by this School, the better to deliver overwhelming fire power to the enemy.

Reaper

This is the most sinister of Philosophies, combining absolute destruction with the



ability to avoid all retribution. The Reaper does not simply kill his enemies; he destroys them utterly leaving nothing behind. He penetrates straight to their core severing their soul and obliterating all traces of their existence. He is aloof and uncaring, unsympathetic to the desperate pleas of his enemies. Absolute death is his gift, a death where not even memory recalls your existence. Inevitable and relentless, the Reaper always claims his prey, leaving terror and despair in his wake. This is the most uncommon School amongst the four, as its themes are disturbing and distressing to the bonesingers. When a ship following this design is formed, its birth song becomes a funeral dirge, filling the Craftworld with sorrow and despair. Reaper ships employ Torpedoes to scythe through the target, a methodical application of force applied to each foe.

These Philosophies are used to class Eldar ships, the name being dependent on the creation aesthetic, hull design and tactical designation. This designation comes from the ship's assigned duties, whether this is deep space patrol or roving scout and can change as the ship is reassigned. Thus a ship will nominally have three sections to its class designation, but can have more or less depending on circumstance. A Dragonship that was constructed from the School of the Stalker and was placed on deep space patrol would be called a

VoidDragon Stalker, or a VoidStalker Dragonship. A ship that also incorporated another design such as the Hunter design would be called a DragonStalker VoidHunter as the Stalker School took precedence in construction it takes precedence in the name. Some ships are given more designations the older they become, incorporating a previous famous Wayfarer's name into it. From this you can get a ship that is a CorionolDragonStalker VoidHunter. This however does not account for the name of the ship itself, which will be added after the Design name. So, by taking all of these elements the official name of a Dragonship once navigated by Corionol of the Stalker School and Hunter sub-School called Isha's Lament would be known as the CorionolDragonStalker VoidHunter Isha's Lament. This of course plays havoc with Imperial translators attempting to catalogue eldar ship classes, who instead resort to simply using the hull design as a simplified designation, hence Dragonship and Wraithship.

Perhaps the most notable attempt at translating an Eldar ship's class was a Phoenixship that bore the Ulthwe ambassador during the 13th Black Crusade. This venerable ship possessed a design and construction with more than one hundred and fifty components not including its own name (the only thing actually translatable) which was "Asuryan's Light in the Darkness Rekindled". Imperial servants latter dubbed the ship E.S. Unpronounceable (the E.S. representing 'Eldar Ship').

The Hollow Ships

When some bonesingers place a single philosophy above all others, they produce some of the most specialised ships available to the Eldar. A Wraithchoir focused on a specific ideal will produce ships of an unbalanced nature where the designs of creation are forsaken for a single ideal. This has many ramifications within the fleet, as these ships are seen as hollow, lacking the completeness of a true vessel. As such they are crewed by those on the path of the outcast rather than Craftworld residents as the disharmony created by such ships has little affect on those who no longer stay on the Eldar path.

In spite of the distrust placed in these ships, Eldar fleet admirals still appreciate the specialised roles they can play within a battle, and while distasteful, will incorporate such vessels into their fleets.

The construction of these vessels is done in isolation, and very few eldar will visit the Domes of Creation during their construction. Only those who feel the pull of the imbalance of the ships will come, and so at the birth of such a vessel it is greeted by the silent stares of its eldar counterparts, the Exarchs. In effect the Wraithchoir have trapped the ship on a single path, or philosophy, and prevent it from ever attaining any other function.

There are two hull designs that were created to bear this burden, each reflecting the unique design constraints inherent in the Creation School. The Harpy design was created to bear the Hunter and Slayer philosophies, while the Crone Design is adapted to the Forms of the Stalker and Reaper. Each of these hull designs reflects some of the aspects inherent to the imbalanced philosophy of construction, such that the Harpy has its energy systems rerouted to the prow for greater power to the Pulsars, while the Crone possesses an enlarged keel for ordnance storage.

HarpyHunters are heavily equipped with Pulsar Lances, more so than any other eldar ship bar the Phoenix, but at the expense of any other system leaving it suspended in a single role.

The CroneStalker is even worse, taking the concept of a carrier to new heights as it does not actually possess any other form of

attack, and must stay behind friendly lines to avoid destruction, an extreme example of the Stalker ethos.

HarpySlayers are phenomenal gunboats, but lack any other support systems, relying on their ability to utterly obliterate the foe to assure their own survival. The weapons batteries mounted on their prow and keel are larger than any other ship, and provide a stark contrast to the bare hulled Stalker.

CroneReapers possess a horrific amount of ordnance, filling the void with wave upon wave of torpedoes each capable of crippling an enemy ship in a single salvo. Like the Stalker this ship must rely entirely on its ordnance to protect itself, as all the space available has been converted to munitions storage and conveyance.

These ships are exceedingly rare in an eldar fleet, but when deployed in their specialised role, little will survive.



High Admiralty

Voices from the Warp

Escort vessels

2 Hits or not 2 Hits

By Ray Bell

Escorts have 1 hit, capital ships have more! It's that simple right? Well, kinda. But there is nothing in the rules that says so (Well I suppose there might be in an obscure paragraph somewhere!).

An escort with 2 hits doesn't complicate the rules in any meaningful way, you can just use markers or dice to show the lose of hits. The Escort will still be subject to all the current rules for escorts, so critical hits will still blow them up no questions asked however many hits they have, catastrophic damage will still just be a single blast marker! And it's not as if all escorts are going to suddenly gain an extra hit, most escorts are fine the way they are, it's only larger escorts that deserve it. The escorts I speak of are the Eldar Hellebore, Ork Grunt, Necron Jackal, Tyranid Kraken and the Tau Defender.



Hellebore

it has a massive model, has the most firepower of any escort (actually it has the firepower of two good escorts from the same list!) and it is rarely used because of its extreme price and lack of survivability. Giving it a second hit would slightly increase its survivability as it suffers a critical on a 4+, but as you roll to cause critical hits after causing damage it's possible to absorb more damage than would be polite!

Ork Grunt

it has no model but is described as carrying double the amount of crew for boarding, it has special rules for ramming and boarding both as if it had 2 hits. Having an extra hit would simplify this ship nicely and bring its value up to the 40pts comfort zone.

Tyranid Kraken

I'm speaking from a mixture of experimental rules and official rules, please bear with me. Having 2 hits at 5+ armour while keeping the 4+ save gives the Kraken double its original boarding value, better ramming (giving the massive claws a chance to shine!), more resilience from lances (the bane of most escorts, but in this case it was horrific!) and better represents the size and capability of this big escort. Also it makes the lack of cruisers in a vanguard fleet less keenly felt.

Necron Jackal

being Necron it has special armour and so has the same resilience as the much smaller Dirge, it is also quite expensive for a fragile (for Necrons) hull. Having the extra hit would obviously make the ship better, in fact it would effectively make its 6+ armour save the equivalent of a 5+ save, but still making it more resilient than the Dirge when braced.

Tau Defender

this almost has a parallel argument to the Hellebore, it has a big model, has a heck of a lot of firepower, is unfavoured etc. But I cheekily bring another reason to the fore, the Castellan! If the Defender had an extra hit it would be suitably different from the Castellan while having similar weaponry (and more sneakily, it'd feel more acceptable for the Castellan to have a Deflector and 'less' firepower but at longer range).

Heavy Escorts!

With all this talk of multiple hit escorts let me completely bridge the gap of capital ships and escorts with a new ship type: the Heavy Escort! The Heavy Escort will stream line the use of weak ships with multiple hits, like the Tau Merchant and Heavy Transports and give the option to develop super light cruisers!

To keep things simple lets take the capital ship rules as a base with the following changes or specifications:

Turn after 5cm. (The missing link of manoeuvrability!)
Suffer extra hits instead of critical hits. (Removes the unwanted book keeping for near meaningless critical hits! Who cares if a Merchant can't fire its broadside, it'll be dead in a minute anyway!)
Can squadron with cruisers, note that Transports can only ever squadron with themselves! (This allows the Merchant to squadron with other cruisers in its list, if wanted, while its increased manoeuvrability can give it the ability to keep up with a Hero (if they're turning or on the Come to New Heading special order).

The Necron Shroud could (should?) be Heavy Escort, it only has 4 hits has limited firepower (for Necrons) and could do with a little extra manoeuvrability.

I think Eldar are just a little bit too weird to have Heavy Escorts, and have enough offensive capability for critical hits to have a serious impact on the game!

Any race could have Heavy Escorts (to fill the gap if the gap needs filling!). I think only Orks and Tyranids would bother making new ships for the purpose though (both ships 'growing' from escorts!).

Hope that gives food for thought!

Cheers, RayB

Show case

Vessels of the Galaxy

GOTHICOMP 2007

Painting Competition Hosted by www.tacticalwargames.net

I have been asked to write a brief introduction to the third Battlefleet Gothic Painting Competition, GothiComp07. This type of article can easily become a bit of a cliché, and I am never a person to go against the trend. These things always start with a general introduction, then on to a glowing commentary on how good the entries were, then on to plans for next year, and finishing off with a final well done to all involved. So, first off, a general introduction...

The Battlefleet Gothic Painting Competition has now run for three years, as a partner to our popular Epic Painting Competition. The idea is generally to encourage people to get together and put together and paint something for the game - about sharing ideas more than winning. The competition is voted on by the members of the GothiComp forum (<http://www.tacticalwargames.net/cgi-bin/forum/ikonboard.cgi?act=SC;c=9>). In

addition, all entries are also automatically submitted to the conversion side of the competition, voted on by a couple of 'esteemed and respected' members (ha! They think!). This year, we had a total of thirty seven entries, and the general quality of entries was phenomenal. I know, I know, but I really do mean this. As an example of the overall quality, the three judges voted on a winner for the conversion prize, and with a single exception all judges nominated totally different submissions.

In the end, the winner of the painting side of the competition was won by our own blackhorizon/Roy, for his Tau Custodian, while the conversion prize was carried off by Canucks Fan for his Eldar Shadow Cruiser. I do want to thank everyone who participated in this competition. Whatever the future of Battlefleet Gothic is in official hands, it seems fairly safe in the hands of the community. With 37 submissions for GothiComp07, and over eleven and a half

thousand downloads of issue thirteen of Warp Rift for August alone (yes, you read that correctly), it is clear that the game has tremendous support, and more than that, its popularity is actually growing.

The galleries for this years GothiComp, and the previous years, can be found here:

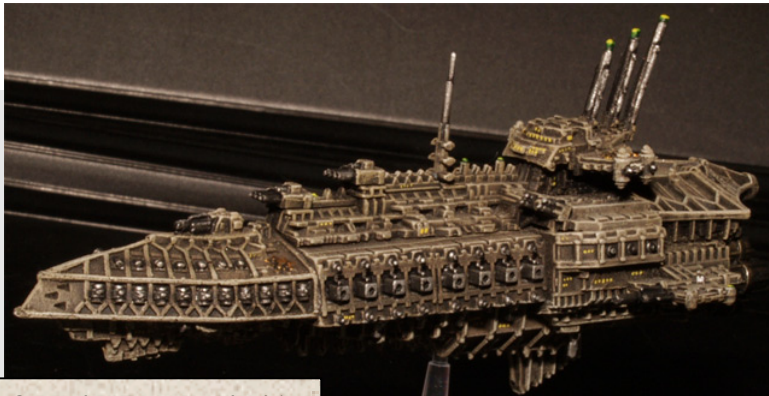
<http://www.epic40k.co.uk/pics/gothic01.html>

I sincerely hope that you will all consider getting involved in the 2008 Battlefleet Gothic Painting Competition. See you all next year!

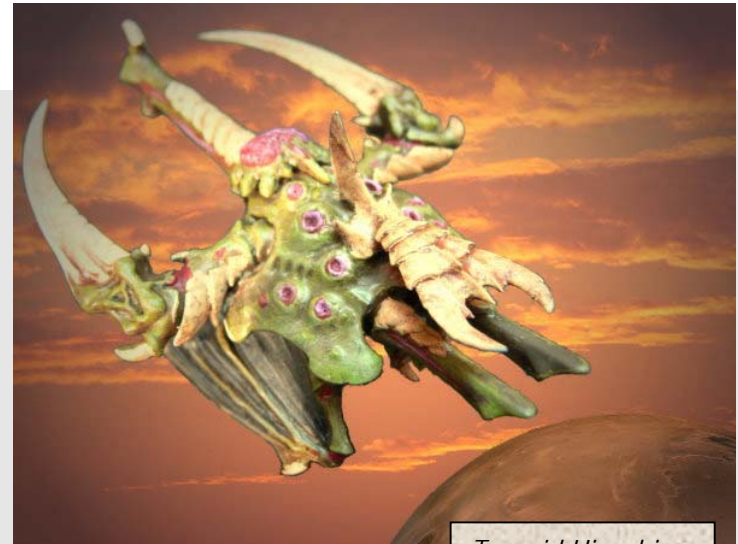
Good hunting, CyberShadow (Iain)

*Tactical
Command*

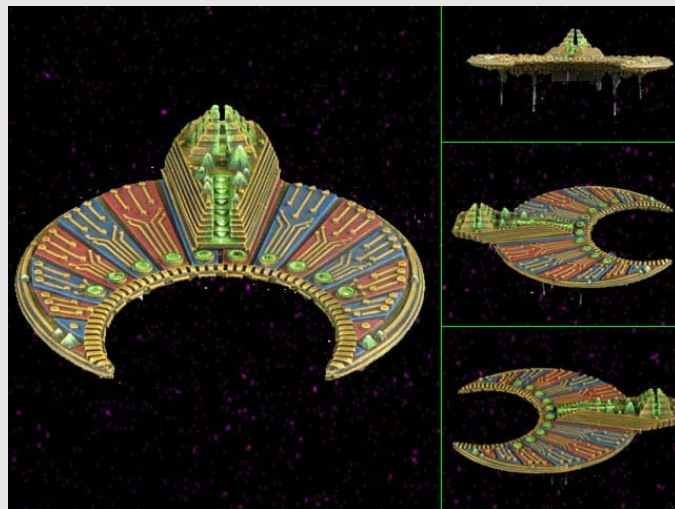
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Gauntlet Fast Battleship
Warmaster Nice



Tyranid Hiveship
Fex22763



Necron Cairn Tombship
Asmodean

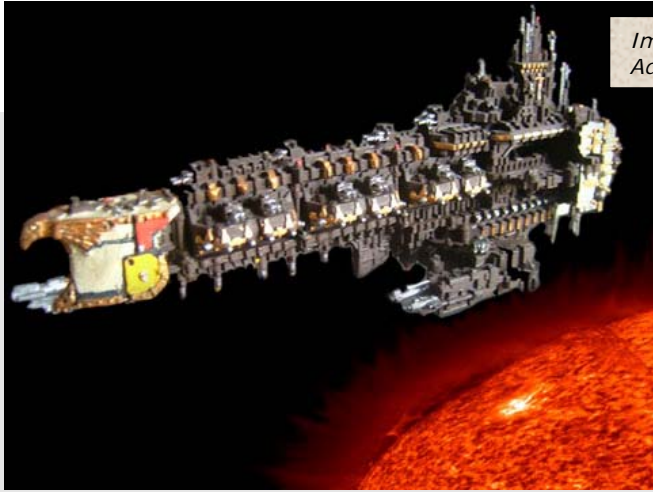


Tau Protector
el niszczi



Marine War Barge
IISAROR

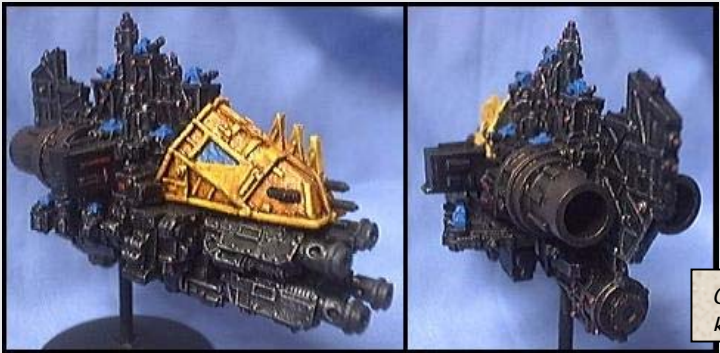
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Imperial Apocalypse
Admiral d'Artagnan



Imperial Oberon
USABOB



Ork MegaBlast
kr007a



Flame of Asuryan
blackhorizon



Eldar Eclipse
Charad

5th Place
Ramillies Starfort
Vanvlak



Forgeworld's Ramillies Star Fort is one of the largest models for the BFG game, and its characteristic shape and Gothic style make it an impressive centrepiece for any fleet and battle. When I got mine I was thrilled by the broken-down hull, which comes in four large segments with several other bits: this was yet another opportunity for conversion.

I decided to eliminate one of the four long, built-up arms of the hull and replace it with a vessel. I guess the inspiration came from my years working at a shipyard: the VERY old Emperor Capital Ship from Space Fleet days looks as if it's docked inside the Star Fort, and the added cranes contribute to this image. The metal ship has a width which fits perfectly between the segments on either side of it; it also looks a bit different from the current vessels in BFG, and this helped me with...

The model

The model presents a stage when integration of the ship to the Star Fort is nearly ready. The ship is still mostly black, although some rebuilt parts are painted in a brick-red primer. Two cranes, which come from model ships, are still in place – these would be removed once assembly is done. A good deal of rubble from the impact still needs to be cleaned away from the upper and lower surfaces of the Star Fort, to where it gravitated – priority was given to the integration process, cleaning up will come later!

The metal Capital Ship was simply glued in place between the sectors

with just a little filing required. The eight-drive engine is the casing of an 8-point plug from some old electrical circuit, and this goes below the hull of the ship. A couple of gun batteries from the plastic cruiser sprues add detail to this area. The rubble, in the form of sand glued on with PVA glue, was added to give an impression of damage and to help hide the gaps in the resin model of the Star Fort – this one needs an immense amount of cleaning, and I just didn't have the time! One final addition (other than the base) was a BFG Thunderhawk gunship in Angels of Fire colours – the only component which indicates ownership of the Fort by the Angels.

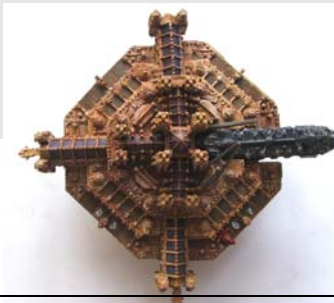
Putty and paint make the devil a saint

After touching up the odd crack with filler or with the sand and PVA glue mix, the model was spray-undercoated white and the paint-job started. The Black Ship was painted – well - black(!), with some red-brown detail for contrast, representing steel plates which have been replaced and which are still in primer colour. The Star Fort hull was given 2-3 coats of a sand colour which looks a lot like Maltese limestone (Malta being home, for me). What I think of as landing pads on the Star Fort were painted olive drab, whilst dark blue was used for the roofs of the three remaining building wings. The cranes were painted an industrial-looking jade green (yep, the cranes at the shipyard where that colour). Sounds very colourful, but the flat and drab colours used combined with an overall heavy flesh wash equalized the colour tones. For a spot of variety in the large sand-coloured areas, I had applied thin paint layers in some locations. This gives a variation in shade which, after the wash, reduces the monotone look of the large areas of the model. I added some yellow navigation lights and red ends to the gun barrels.

I applied Warhammer 40K Space Marine transfers (the shoulder pad numbers) to some of the landing bays, and finally added the Thunderhawk: red, with a yellow flame pattern over the wing trailing edges, and metal details – oh, and the usual flesh wash (I'm a big fan) all over. Finally – drybrushing over the whole thing with the sand colour used to paint the Star Fort followed by a lighter drybrush of white. Matt varnish for protection and it's done!

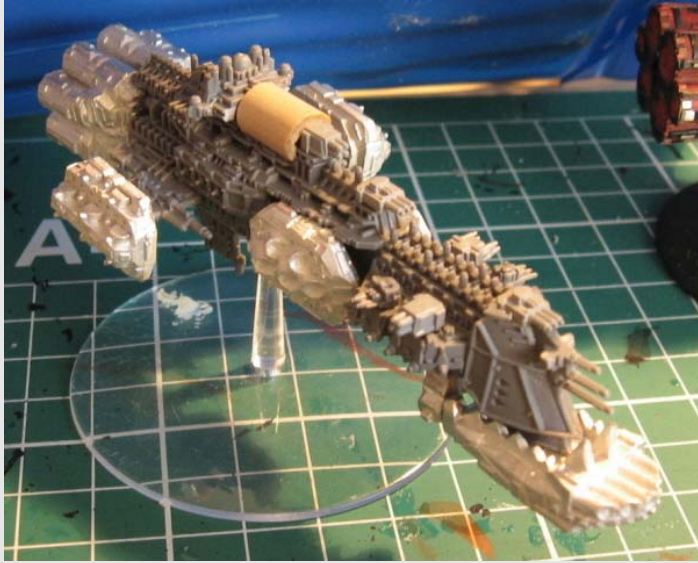
A fun build, that – and although I didn't win, I bet it's the heaviest entry of all - that must count for something!

by Vanvlak, a.k.a. John C. Betts



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I play my Ship, The Wasps Nest, using the rules for Gorbags Revenge. I really like the concept of sending out massive waves of Fighta-bommerz seems really orky to me so I wanted to add the big carrier. I already had Deathdeala and I don't think ork ships should look alike so I decided to convert a ship from an imperial cruiser like their often described to be in the ork fluff. Then I heard about Gothicomp 07 which was the big motivator I needed to get me going.

The ship is built around an imperial cruiser hull which I added some parts from the ork battleship set and several imperial/chaos gun. I also did the upper launchbay from a small piece of bamboo which I cut out to fit. I thought the front part of the ship looked a bit to thin for an ork ship so I added the to chaos plastic command bridges (cut down to fit). I also used a lot of green stuff of course.

Painting: Black spray undercoat. The metal parts are basecoated with bestial brown and then dry brushed with a mix of 50:50 boltgun metal and codex grey. Green areas are base coated catchan green and then painted with a mix of catachan and commando green. Then I do a few successive highlights each time adding more komando kahki.

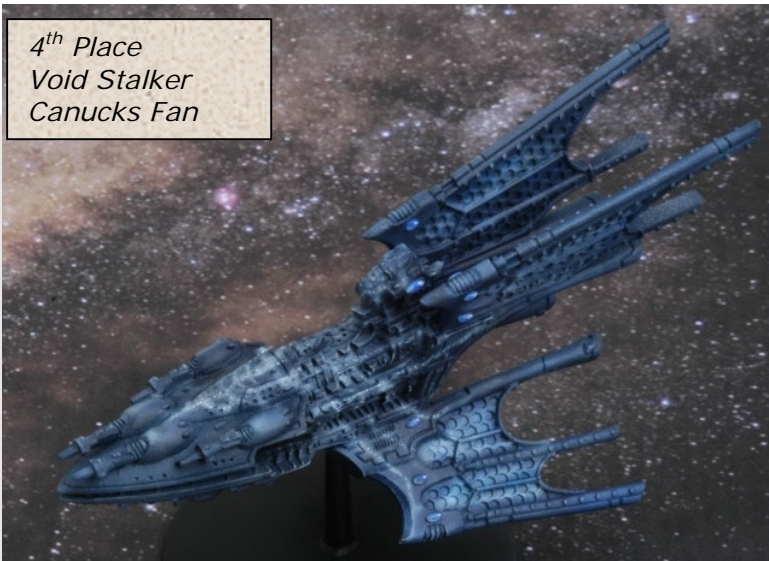
Red parts was base of dark flesh and then two more layers one a mix of dark flesh and blood red and then a highlight of pure blood red.



3rd Place
Ork Kroozer
Borka

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4th Place
Void Stalker
Canucks Fan



I've always wanted to paint eldar in BFG, but didn't have the chance until now. Luckily for me I got a bunch of ships in a trade just in time for Gothicomp 2007. I wanted to create a Giger-like feel for the ships, and also give them an organic quality. The Void Stalker (Spirit of the Night) was the first attempt. I was reasonably happy with this, but felt the abundance of raised texture limited the "freehand" designs. I decided to try a conversion, based on the Shadow cruiser. The main goal was to give the prow less detail on the dorsal surface, to allow for more freehand painting. The Song of Darkness features two rear wings, and a complete dorsal armament overhaul. The extra wing was cast from the original, then both wings joined to the hull with "green-stuff". All of the weapons batteries were removed with a drill, then the hull was drilled to allow room for the new guns. These guns (pulsars, cannons, whatever you want them to be!) were cast from the weapons on an epic vampire, and joined to the hull with green-stuff.

Painting the ships was a challenge. I used an airbrush for about 90% of the work, starting with a base coating of very dark blue. Then, successively lighter shades of blue were airbrushed to get the effects seen. The white tendril-like effects were created by airbrushing almost pure white, and then following up by hand with a fine brush.

Thanks to all who voted for these models, I hope you enjoyed them! A full fleet with some new conversions will be arriving soon!

- Canucks Fan

2nd Place
Shadow Cruiser
Canucks Fan



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1st Place
Tau Custodian
blackhorizon



When I decided on a painting scheme for my Tau fleet I wanted a real striking and coherent look for the entire fleet. The second given fact was that I could not paint the fleet in primary blue tones; since I already had two 'blue' fleets. So I decided on White.

Although it was easy to spray the Custodian white painting all details and other surfaces made white a rather difficult choice. This because touching white up is hard and tedious work.

After I sprayed the hull white I painted all the lines, bridge, exhausts, 'Warden' Disc and launch bay holes with black ink. After that I painted the light blue / grey-ish parts with Space Wolves grey and highlighted these parts with (heavily) watered down white.

All batteries, ion cannons & exhausts got painted with Shadow Grey and received an highlight of Codex Grey.

The Tau symbols base where painted Regal Blue and the symbol Enchanted Blue. Next I applied Mithril Silver on the symbol followed by a layer of heavily watered down Enchanted Blue.

With Red, Green, White & Blue I picked out lights.

After all that I started painting the white hull over with a couple of watered down layers of White.

To finish it all I gave the model a thick layer of Glossy Varnish.

- Roy 'blackhorizon' Amkreutz



Dry Dock

Vessels of the Galaxy

Orks

Cheap Orks: Hulks & Roks

By Fafrin

This is an easy and very !!! cheap way of creating an ork fleet that also has the benefit of creating great asteroids for those that don't use Orks.

The starting point is a pack of 'flying' bases and some polystyrene as used in packaging around breakable goods, the bases are blue tacked down and sprayed black [it is important to spray the bases on their own initially] ,break up the poly into various sized lumps including a large one for the hulk and press onto the stands [don't glue them at this point], see fig. One:



Figure One

Now spray the poly with black [I use car/auto primer] this attacks the structure of the poly and creates a more realistic surface finish, please note that it takes practice to get the amount of spray right and you are not trying to paint the poly black [trust me its impossible!] just using the paint as a modelling aid. [at this point those of you that didn't blue tack the stands down will need to pick them up of the floor!].Now use small dabs of super glue [it also attacks the poly] to fix the asteroids to the bases.

All it takes now to make asteroids is to base coat with brown or grey and then dry brush with lighter colours and finish with white, see fig. Two :



Figure Two

To make the hulk and roks it's simply a matter of raiding the bits box and gluing turrets, antenna masts etc left over from other ships onto the asteroids, see fig. Three :

Figure Three



Red Ones go faster!

Hulk and roks encounter an Imperial cruiser.



Finish of using any paint style you like and there you go, easy! [it is a good idea to paint an arrow on the rok base to show movement direction]

I've finished mine in red 'cos red uns go faster



Grand Ork fleet two Hulks and twenty five Roks 12E /25\$!
That's 3200 points without Warlords!

Officer's Mess

Lounge time

Short Story:

The Hunt for Red Slaughter

By Duncan Railton

The incessant rumble emanating from the massive engines echoed around the metal decks of the sword class Valiant as she came to her new heading. Captain Langsdorf stood stiffly at his post aware of the oppressive presence of the commissar behind him.

"Well done captain, we have the traitor cornered at last."

Langsdorff was surprised by the praise from Herman Kreuzer, it was the first he'd received from the usually acidic tongue of his ship's commissar since his arrival barely two weeks ago.

The captain bristled inside as he recollected the first moment Kreuzer had come aboard, determined to root out the apparent cowardice in the ship's senior staff. A charge levelled at him by the petty captain Voight of the Lurcher for his part in the recent disaster of convoy PX17.

There was nothing Langsdorf could have done, even the admiral agreed. By the time the *Valiant* had returned from her forward picket the five chaos raiders had already destroyed the transport vessels and the Lurcher was facing overwhelming odds. Langsdorf and the *Valiant* could not have helped and the captain found himself wishing

the other convoy escort had been destroyed rather than crippled. That way that bastard Voight would not have filed his complaint.

But it was too late now. Langsdorf and his crew of just over a thousand were stuck with the tall hawk featured commissar for the duration, until he decided the captain and crew were fit to serve on one of his emperor's vessels.

"Communication from the *Revenge* sir," said the Valiant's communications officer.

"Put it through mister Heinz."

The crackling hiss of static distorted the words of captain Maher, master of the escort squadron's other sword class frigate.

"Ah Langsdorf!" Maher's voice was full of enthusiasm as the realisation that the quarry had finally been brought to heel. "We have him now! I am on an intercept course and ready to follow Valiant's lead."

Langsdorf allowed himself to smile. The chase had been hard. For

seven days the Red Slaughter had led the two imperial ships a merry dance around the Castius system, but now the infidel raider had been cornered at last. Venting gases from her engines the traitor vessel could outrun imperial justice no longer and captain Langsdorf eagerly anticipated the battle which would surely clear his name.

"Indeed captain Maher, our time is at hand."

With a hearty chuckle the captain of the *Revenge* signed off. Several thousand kilometres off the *Valiant's* starboard bow the second frigate would now be straining hard to intercept the enemy vessel, an angry flashing icon picked out in blood red on the *Valiant's* tactical display. There would be no escape.

+++

Captain Lucius Maher, veteran ship's master for the past twenty years, shifted in his captain's chair, wondering for the thousandth time why the Navy didn't provide suitable seats for men of a more ample build. Adjusting his position he regarded his bridge crew with pride. The atmosphere was one of tense anticipation. Maher could not deny he was looking forward to the destruction of the Slaughter, a renegade raider that had been responsible for thousands of Imperial deaths, including his good friend captain Denham of the *Chrysalis*.

+++

"Captain," said first officer Krauss, leaning over his display lectern, "the traitor vessel has changed course."

"Then change ours to intercept," said Langsdorf curtly. He should not have to give an order twice.

"My apologies sir, but he is heading for the Castius belt."

Irritation rose in Langsdorf's mind and the captain fingered his short moustache and beard, now fully grey after thirty years in the

navy. Filled with plasma and dust the Castius belt spelled danger for any vessel traversing it. Void shields would be useless and targeting arrays would be confused by the belt's massive electromagnetic fields. Despite everything the captain of the *Valiant* had to admire his counterpart on the traitor vessel. He obviously knew what he was doing.

The bridge became quiet as the crew waited for the captain's next order, save for the continual hum of the engines and whirring of logic engines. Langsdorf could feel the gaze of the commissar behind him. Fingering his ornately braided collar, as he was wont to do when major decisions had to be made, Langsdorf considered his options. Wait it out or pursue at full speed? The former would certainly reek of over-cautiousness, not something Langsdorf needed right now, but the latter invited possible disaster to his ship and crew, Commissar Kreuzer cleared his throat.

"Presumably you aren't about to let the traitor escape?" He asked quietly.

The decision had all but been made for him, realised Langsdorf with considerable frustration.

"Of course not commissar," came the stiff reply, "helmsman, alter course to intercept."

First officer Krauss raised an eyebrow but knew better than to question the captain's orders. Thirty-three year old Krauss had served under Langsdorf for six years and knew the position the captain now found himself in.

The huge vessel heaved over onto its new course, gaining on its target with every minute, but the marker on the display marking the chaos ship shimmered and winked in and out of existence as the vessel entered the edges of the confused dust cloud of the Castius belt. Still, with the range down to a few thousand kilometres captain Langsdorf was confident the mission could still be achieved.

"Captain, incoming transmission."

It was Maher. Langsdorf signalled wordlessly for the communications officer to put it through.

"Langsdorf, are you sure we should follow him into the belt? We can wait him out. He can't stay in there forever."

"I'm sure captain Maher, if we don't follow the traitor could disengage and yet escape. I'm not prepared to let that happen."

There was a pause while Maher considered his reply. Langsdorf and he were the same rank, but it was Langsdorf who commanded the Sword squadron.

"As you wish captain, I will intercept in approximately twelve minutes. Maher out."

At least the commissar would not be able to level accusations of cowardice this time.

Time slowed for the men on the *Valiant's* bridge as the distance closed. Soon the enemy would be in weapons range and feel the wrath of the Sword's massive forward gun batteries. Combined with the firepower of the *Revenge*, the traitor vessel *Red Slaughter* stood no chance.

+++

Maher exchanged a look with his first officer. Following the chaos ship into the belt was a bad plan, and the old captain knew it. From the pacing of his number one Maher was aware his views were shared but it was Langsdorf's decision.

"Helmsman," said Maher, "time to belt at current speed?"

"Nine minutes captain", came the reply.

Maher exhaled heavily, his oversized navy uniform relaxing on the captain's bulky frame. He nodded and signalled to his first officer. Maher's number one approached the captain's chair.

"I don't want any foul ups in there number one." Said Maher quietly so no-one else on the *Revenge's* bridge could hear.

The first officer nodded.

"Its that damn commissar making Langsdorf do this captain."

Maher sighed. Imperial commissars had no place on a Navy ship in his opinion.

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"Master gunner, how long till maximum weapons range?" Asked Langsdorf.

"Nine minutes."

About the same time the quarry would enter the belt reasoned Langsdorf. Looking at the tactical display the blue icon of the *Revenge* was also closing fast and would soon be entering the mass of gas and dust. For a moment Langsdorf wondered whether having both imperial ships pursue the *Red Slaughter* into the confusion of the belt would be wise, but he knew that only together would they be sure of the kill. Minutes passed and the range reduced, but the enemy vessel was still out of range.

"Dammit can't we go any quicker." Said the captain, glancing with frustration at adept Lucius, master engineer and priest of the Adeptus Mechanicus.

Though rhetorical, adept Lucius chose to reply, his flat emotionless voice in stark contrast to the tension filling the *Valiant's* bridge.

"We are at maximum speed captain. The engines are working at their full capacity."

The reply did nothing to ease the captain's nerves and he wished
he

hadn't asked. Commissar Kreuzer sighed ever so slightly behind the captain's lectern, infuriating Langsdorf.

"Enemy vessel entering the belt captain," said the first officer.

Langsdorf watched the display as the icon representing the Red Slaughter flickered then winked out of existence. Leaning over the thick glass screen he clenched his fists and groaned. The sensors had failed as predicted. The only way to pick up the trail now was to follow the vessel in and get close. Too close for Langsdorf's liking.

"Thirty seconds to the belt."

Langsdorf acknowledged his first officer with a cursory wave without looking up from the display. The ships automated systems began to take over, lowering the adamantium blast shields over the forward viewing windows in preparation for entering the belt. The blackness of deep space shrank and was then shut out as the shields closed with a heavy metallic clang.

"Entering the Castius belt now sir," said Krauss.

Langsdorf watched with a feeling of dread as all the icons on the display vanished, leaving only the blue eagle in its centre representing the *Valiant* herself.

"Communications non functional captain."

"Void shields ineffective."

The reports came in from his senior staff with implacable predictability. This was bound to happen. His ship was now blind and defenceless. Why did he follow the chaos renegade in here? Minutes passed and Langsdorf's frustration grew.

"I think you've lost her captain," said commissar Kreuzer with a marked hint of disapproval.

Captain Langsdorf slowly turned to face his tormenter, the colour burning in his cheeks. Seeing the captain's pent up rage the commissar retreated a step. Langsdorf returned to the display. Where was the traitor vessel?

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Shimmering dust and gas shrouded the *Revenge* as the pitted armoured prow of the Sword class frigate pushed its way through the Castius Belt. On the bridge captain Maher and his first officer stood leaning over the main tactical lectern in the centre of the room, directly below the decorated vaulted ceiling. Both men were frowning.

"Bloody nothing. You see that?"

First officer Callum had to agree. The tactical display on the *Revenge* was indeed blank, but swearing and getting red-faced, as Maher was, wasn't going to change that. However after serving with the old man for ten years Callum was used to such outbursts.

"Throne of Earth! We're blind in here!"

Callum didn't reply, knowing the captain was relieving his frustration in his own unique way.

After a few more curse filled seconds the first officer's attention was drawn to a brief flash on the display. It wasn't there long but for a second a white icon had appeared of the stern of the ship.

"Captain, I think there is something else in here."

Maher stopped mid stride as he paced up and down the bridge. Returning to the display lectern he saw the same icon appear, briefly glowing white, indicating a vessel only a couple of hundred kilometres distant. Then, as the two naval officers watched, the icon appeared again, this time glowing blue. Without taking his eyes off the display Maher gave his orders.

"Comms, get me Langsdorf."

"Communications are being blocked by interference," came the immediate reply.

Maher's eyes locked with those of his first officer noting his look of concern was shared by his number one. The *Valiant* was directly behind *Revenge* and there was no way of knowing whether Langsdorf could see them.

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A flicker of light flashed into existence on the *Valiant's* tactical screen, glowing white just a few hundred kilometres off the ship's port bow. Krauss noticed first and shouted to his captain, his voice quavering with excitement.

"Vessel at 340 degrees captain! Range, three hundred kilometres. We have a firing solution."

"Wait," commanded Langsdorf, "We must await target verification."

Langsdorf willed the flickering white icon to glow red, identifying it as an enemy, but the change would not come. If he waited too long the target lock might be lost.

"Sir, range increasing to four hundred kilometres. It must be the Red Slaughter."

"We have to be sure."

Commissar Kreuzer strode forward impatiently, standing beside the captain, his face dark and insistent.

"Captain Langsdorf," he said, "must I remind you of your sacred duty to the emperor? You have the enemy in sight, you must open fire!"

"I am still in command of this ship," hissed the captain, "I will not fire on an unidentified vessel!"

All eyes were fixed on the confrontation in the centre of the *Valiant's* dimly lit bridge. Only the mindless servitors, wired into their posts, continued their duties. First officer Krauss looked nervously from Kreuzer to Langsdorf while the gunnery officer stood ready to unleash the devastating firepower of the frigate's forward batteries.

"Range five hundred kilometres, course 340," said Krauss, "captain, it's the Slaughter, it must be."

The commissar leaned over the captain's lectern, bringing his stern face inches from Langsdorf's, his whisper audible only to the captain.

"If you do not open fire, captain, your career in this navy will be over. I will have you court-martialled for cowardice!"

The words stung Langsdorf to his very core, but the commissar had left him no choice. He held the commissar's gaze for a few seconds before returning to the tactical display. The icon was still flashing white indicating an unidentified target. It had to be their quarry. From its course and speed there was no way it could be anything else could it? In any case Kreuzer had left him no choice. With an unsettling feeling in the pit of his stomach the captain gave the only order he could.

"Open fire."

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"Energy spike directly astern!"

Maher noted the edge in the young lieutenant's voice, indicating his fear.

"Comms?" Asked the captain desperately, looking over to the officer manning the communications console.

Taking the heavy headphones off his ears the lieutenant looked at his captain with a look which made Maher sick to his stomach. They couldn't raise the *Valiant*. Idiots! Couldn't they see the *Red Slaughter* must have disengaged?

"The *Valiant's* firing sir!"

Maher quickly returned to his chair, followed by his first officer.

"All hands brace for impact, helmsman take evasive action!"

The crew followed their captain's orders without question, activity breaking the atmosphere of fear and tension on the *Revenge's* bridge, but Maher knew it wouldn't do any good. They were too close and their shields were inoperative. Only a miracle would save his ship now.

"By the Emperor get me Langsdorf!"

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On the *Valiant* the tension of the bridge immediately evaporated in the frenetic activity that followed as the crew carried out their duty. Having given the order to engage the captain became an island of calm in a sea of barked orders and shouts. With a mighty shudder the *Valiant's* forward guns opened fire, rocking the ship and causing the lights to flicker. Again and again the batteries fired, sending thousands of high velocity projectiles slicing through the void. At this range they couldn't miss. The icon on the display screen flashed orange then grey, indicating a kill.

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As the first volley impacted with the unprotected stern of the *Revenge* the bridge rocked violently, sending anyone not seated sprawling to the cold mosaic-patterned floor.

"Damage report!" Barked Maher.

First officer Callum frowned as he struggled to take in the information flashing in red and yellow across his screen.

"We've lost engines and aspect control captain. Another shot like that and we're done for."

As if Captain Maher didn't know.

"*Valiant's* firing again captain!"

Maher waited in grim resignation as he imagined the massive projectiles slicing through the gas and dust, covering the distance between the two ships in mere seconds. There was nothing he could do now.

The second volley of fire from the *Valiant* hit the *Revenge* along the length of her port side, rupturing the ship's armour and spilling atmosphere out into the vacuum of space. Hundreds died in the initial impact but more suffered an agonising death as the breath was sucked from their lungs as the pressurised compartments vented into the void. Secondary explosions tore the ship apart, splitting the mighty vessel in two, sending the aft portion spinning away from the prow, plasma and gasses pouring from the wounds torn in the *Revenge's* hull.

The ship's bridge was a scene of total chaos. With the artificial gravity gone crewmen struggled to stay at their posts. Many were screaming but most were still trying to carry out their duty and wrestle some control over the convulsing ruins of their doomed vessel.

"Shut down the main reactor", screamed captain Maher over the deafening roar of explosions emanating from the heart of his ship, "We must disengage!"

"It's too late", roared the first officer, "We must abandon."

First officer Callum's words were sucked from his throat as a devastating explosion ripped through the command section, buckling the adamantium walls and blasting an ugly gaping hole in the side of the bridge. Many of the bridge crew were sucked, still alive, into space, their screams rendered silent in the vacuum of space.

Those who clung on suffered no better fate as superheated plasma escaping from the ruptured power core vaporised them in seconds. Less than a minute later all the bridge crew were dead. They were lucky. In the twisted wreckage of the *Revenge's* two drifting sections men still lived, doomed to a slow death as their oxygen ran out in the still sealed compartments of the forward weapons decks.

+++

The guns ceased firing and several of the bridge crew cheered the victory. They had gone in after the chaos renegade where the traitors had thought they wouldn't be followed. *Red Slaughter* had paid for that arrogance. Even commissar Kreuzer was smiling.

The one man not rejoicing was captain Langsdorf. For him the victory was hollow having been forced into the action by the unwanted intervention of the commissariat. The captain sighed and ordered the ship about to investigate the drifting wreck of the enemy vessel.

"Open blast shields, let's get a visual conformation of the kill."

The crew complied with their usual efficiency with which Langsdorf was highly satisfied. Slowly the vast metal sheets retracted revealing a scene of devastation set to a backdrop of shimmering orange and red, the colour of the Castius deeps. There was no question the guns of the *Valiant* had done their job. Floating in the void the hulk in front of them had been broken in two by the fury of the ship's fusillade. Wreckage floated listlessly in space as the ship's broken sections burned with internal fires, the armoured prow blackened and pitted by the impacts of the *Valiant's* weaponry.

Armoured prow? Horror gripped Langsdorf as he stared in disbelief at the wreck drifting across the prow of his ship. Gradually the triumphant cheering on the bridge was silenced as every man stared in shock at the scene of carnage. As the *Valiant* passed within ten kilometres of the devastation the nameplate of the vessel spun into view. It simple read: '*Revenge*'.

Sweating profusely with his eyes wide in disbelief, commissar Kreuzer turned to face the captain of the *Valiant*, his trembling hands brandishing a laspistol levelled at Langsdorf's head.

"Captain Langsdorf," said the commissar, struggling to stop his voice from cracking.

"You have failed in your duty to the emperor and destroyed on of the imperial navy's vessels."

Captain Langsdorf managed a smile. Of course it would turn out like this. In the heat of battle his fears of being labelled a coward had allowed him to act against his judgement. It didn't matter that the commissar practically ordered him to open fire on an unidentified vessel. Straightening his uniform and holding his head high Langsdorf accepted the inevitable.

"Long live the Imperium." He said before the shot rang out.

+++



Void Stalker

Scenarios & Campaigns

Scenario

Who Goes There?

WARNING IF YOU HAVE NO INTEREST IN PLAYING ORKS READ NO FURTHER - IT'S FOR YOUR BENEFIT!

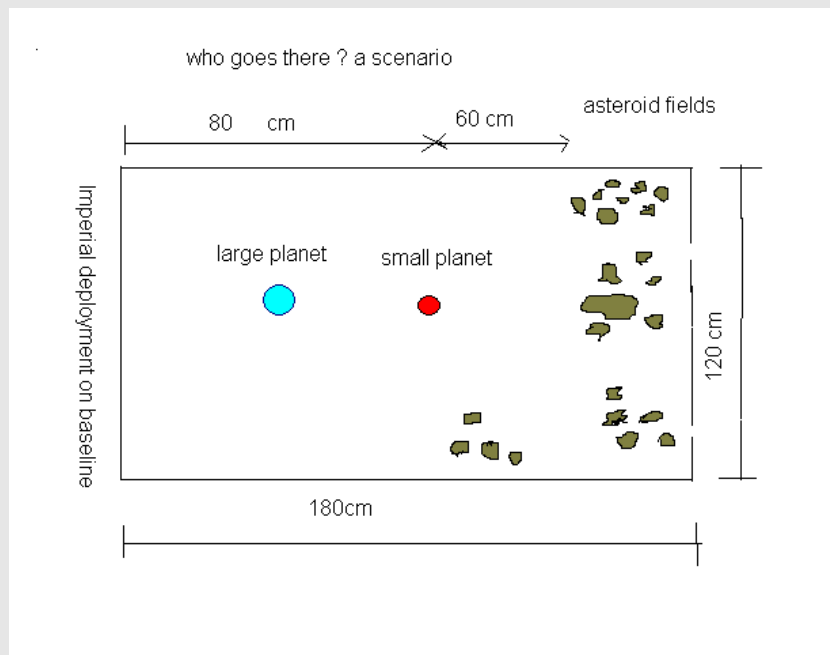
By Alun 'Fafrin' Lucas

THIS IS A FUN SCENARIO THAT WE HAVE PLAYED A NUMBER OF TIMES AND ENJOYED. I MAKE NO CLAIMS FOR BALANCE, SO IT SHOULDN'T BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY

A SCENARIO FOR HULKS AND ROKS

For those of you who have made or plan to make the hulk and roks, this is a great scenario to introduce other players to them. When I first played this, I didn't let the other players know what they would be facing. I took the Ork player aside and explained what would be happening (to his delight) but the two players who took the Imperials were kept in the dark until the Orks moved. Cue shock all round!

The scenario is played lengthways along a standard 6x4 (180cm x 120cm) table with terrain set out as in fig. 1.



The Imperial players start along the opposite base line and are advised to move their minimum move until enemy ships are discovered, when standard rules apply.

I suggest 1000 points for each force as this gives about 2-3 hours of game time.

The Imperial players are briefed as follows and told that, on each turn, each capital ship scans for enemies; each ship rolls a d6 with a 6 giving a 'ping' of discovery. The first 'ping' for each ship informs them that there is something located in one of the rearmost asteroid clusters [determine which cluster randomly 1-2 3-4 5-6]. The second 6 by the same ship confirms the presence of enemy ships in that cluster [but not what type of enemy!]. The Imperials should move forward slowly until they reach the orbit of the smaller planet, which is set at 60cm from the rear asteroid clusters. This activates the Ork ships which can then move and fight normally. [Note: up to this point the Ork ships are represented by asteroids]. Victory is achieved by the Imperials with the destruction of the Hulk.

Imperial briefing :

You have recently lost contact with one of your colonised worlds in the [Insert suitable region.] and have been dispatched to investigate. You should proceed with all caution, but the destruction of any foes is of paramount importance!



The Imperial fleet



The Search



Contact!

Void Stalker

Scenario's & Campaigns

Campaign

The Domination of Herculis

By Mitch

Introduction

This campaign is intended for 3 players, namely Imperial, Chaos and Eldar. The Herculis subsector contains 2 worlds of interest, one a human splinter colony (Auriga) that the Imperial forces are keen to liberate. Chaos forces are just as keen to enslave Auriga, but also have equal interest in the Eldar heritage world, Umbriel, which they know may give them access to Eldar secrets. The Eldar have little interest in the human splinter colony, and are concerned only with taking and holding their Heritage world.

A note on other races

This campaign can easily be adapted to include more players, and/or different races with very little work. The two 'objective' systems can be considered simply as a Splinter Colony (any race) and an Artefact World (any race). The overall objective is to capture 6 of the subsector's systems, one of which must be an objective system. Suitable races interested in the splinter colony (aside from Imperium/ Space Marines/ Ad-Mech) might be Tau or Eldar, while almost any other race would be interested in an artefacts world.

A note on Tyranids

When I originally ran this campaign, a friend with a Tyranid fleet joined in later, with different objectives suited to the motivations of the hive mind. Instead of taking and holding 6 systems, it was decided he had to simply 'devour' all 10 systems, by capturing them. Once the systems had been held for a turn, it was deemed the hive fleet had stripped any natural resources for conversion into biomass, giving it the maximum repair points possible for the system, but as a one off (Tyranids have no concept of sustainable living!). Note that devoured systems can still be held by other races. While they will generate no repair points, they will still have a tactical purpose.

Campaign rules

Except where stated below, campaign rules are the same as stated in the BFG rulebook.

The Campaign turn

1. Determine Initiative & decide order of play
2. Move any forces which players wish to move
3. Reveal location of forces (if required to) & fight any battles occurring
4. Move any retreating forces on compulsory moves
5. Roll for appeals, make repairs, receive reinforcements, etc.

Notes

1. **Determine Initiative** – Players roll a D6 at the start of each campaign turn, the winner decides whether to move all his forces first or last.
2. **Move forces** – Players move all of their forces in the order agreed as above. They do not have to move forces if they do not wish to, but all forces wishing to move must do so simultaneously. Forces may make a single warp jump with each move, which will take them from one star to the next closest.
3. **Reveal forces & fight battles** – Once all players have made their moves for that turn, each player announces the location of their ships if they moved to a system they have previously never been to and/ or it is enemy held. This is done in order of initiative, and must be recorded in the ship's log. If moving

between two of their own occupied systems, they do not have to declare the move, but **must** record it on the ship's log, to avoid any disputes. Once all moves have been made and fleets have been revealed, any battles arising are fought out. The defenders (whoever has a permanent presence in the system ie: defences, or gets there first) get to choose which Battlezone the encounter will be fought in, if they are mobile (ie: ships only). Otherwise they must make a stand at their outermost defences in the system if they have any. Attackers (ie: ships arriving in the system) must go with the defender's decision, but get the first turn if a battle is fought, which gives them a chance to flee by disengaging if they wish. Players may make a mutual decision not to fight if they wish to.

4. **Move retreating forces** – Once the outcome of any battles have been resolved, any surviving ships which disengaged may make a single warp jump to the nearest friendly system, or back in the direction they came from if no friendly systems are nearby. Retreating forces will always go to a friendly system if there is a choice.
5. **Appeals, Repairs, Reinforcements** – These are all done as described in the BFG rulebook.

Victory conditions

For Imperial, Chaos and Eldar forces, the overall objective is to control 6 systems, in order to dominate the Sub-sector and win the campaign. Each race has a specific system that they must include among the 6 needed in order to win, as follows:

- **Imperial** – Six systems including Auriga
- **Chaos** – Six systems including either Umbriel or Auriga.
- **Eldar** – Six systems including Umbriel.



The Herculis Sub-sector

The Sub-sector is made up of ten systems, as shown on the map. The six Outer systems are the entry points for forces entering the region, and must be passed through in order to reach the four Core systems in the centre.

Outer systems

These systems are all Uninhabited, and generate the same number of repair points as described in the BFG rules (1, regardless of Reknown, although orbitals will increase this by +1). They are: Arich, Ophiucus, Albireo, Porrima, Fornax & Chiron.



Core systems

Auriga – A Civilised world supporting a human splinter colony, they have comparable technology to 20th Century Earth. If controlled by Imperial forces or enslaved by Chaos, this system generates +2 repair points. Eldar do not get this bonus.

Umbriel – An ancient Eldar Heritage world with many powerful artefacts buried beneath its surface. If Eldar control this system it counts as a Pirate base for the purposes of generating repair points. To Imperial & Chaos and forces Umbriel counts as an Agri-world, although Chaos can gain limited access to some of the artefacts so gain a +1 bonus to repair points generated if they control the system.

Majoris – Is an Uninhabited system, although it was once inhabited by an

unknown alien race, now long dead. All that remains is an automated mining and repair facility in orbit around the system's sole planet. The facility has a benign artificial intellect, and will consent to repair the ships of whoever controls the system using fleets of robot miners to extract resources from the planet below. As a result Majoris generates the same repair points as a Mining system.

Oberon – Also an Uninhabited system, Oberon is an ancient battle site, where whole armadas of ships have destroyed each other and several of the planets which once existed here. Any forces controlling the system may scavenge the debris fields for refits, and gain a free refit roll each campaign turn, in addition to any other appeal rolls they are entitled to. In addition, any orbitals in the system will generate +2 repair points instead of the usual +1, since they have access to greater resources when making repairs.

General Campaign rules

Starting Forces – Each player starts with a 1500 point force, and has a single commander with Ld8 and 1 reroll (or zero Ld bonus if Eldar), plus a single point of Reknown.

Reserves/ Reinforcements – Each player has a pool of 1000 points of reinforcements from which they may draw any new ships, chaos lords etc, which they request. The cost of defences and other orbitals (like space stations, spires and orbital docks) are not deducted from the 1000pts pool, and are effectively unlimited, though appeal rolls are still used up to requisition them. Once the 1000pts is gone, that's it, no more reinforcements in the form of ships are available, though the player may continue to appeal for defences.

Defences & occupying systems – Players must occupy systems in order to gain the repair points they generate, there are two ways to do this. Either a ship (at least 1 escort, no maximum limit) must be left in the system to guard it, or a defence of some kind may be bought with an appeal and stationed in the system as a permanent presence. There is no upper limit to the number of defences a system may have. In addition, if a system has at least one space station, spire or orbital dock present, it generates +1 repair points, however this bonus is not cumulative with multiple space stations being present.



Appeals/ Reinforcements – Players receive reinforcements as normal by using appeal rolls, and may select either a single capital ship or an escort squadron of up to the specified number (see BFG rules). Alternatively, players may select defences instead, and may select a single space station (orbital dock or spire), or a squadron of up to 5 defence platforms for each appeal roll. Imperial and Chaos players also gain access to additional defences and system ships, as detailed in their fleet lists.

Placement of defences – Defence platforms and space stations are usually found orbiting planets or moons, but may equally orbit the star itself, in interplanetary space. Therefore, defences may be placed in any battlezone in a system, not just ones where a planet exists.

Repair points – Repair points generated by systems can only be used by damaged ships which are actually stationed or have arrived in the systems generating the repair points. This is different to how the repairs work in the BFG rulebook, but more realistic since it means players do not have a pool of RP's they can dip into regardless of where they are. So for example, Imperial ships stationed at one of the uninhabited systems which has orbital facilities could draw on up to 2RP's (normally 1RP) each turn spent at the system to repair damage with.

Imperial Navy

Rogue Trader reports of a recently discovered human splinter colony in the Herculis Sub-sector, have recently been brought to the attention of the Hyperion Battlegroup's High Command. Prospector scans have revealed the Auriga system contains high levels of transition elements and other useful minerals, and supports an uncorrupted human population of around four billion, so would make a valuable addition to the Imperium if it could be reintegrated. Possessing only limited 20th Century-level technology, the inhabitants could easily be brought under the auspices of the Imperial faith and would likely respond favourably to first contact.

Based on these reports, the Hyperion High Command has decreed that an Expeditionary force be dispatched to Herculis to secure the Sub-sector and prepare Auriga for reintegration into the Imperium. There is no time to lose however, since ancient records have indicated sporadic Eldar activity in the Sub-sector, so the aliens may still have an interest in the region. The fact that the population is untainted by Chaos is also significant, and a major incentive to reach the system before it comes to the attention of the Ruinous Powers.

Victory conditions

Gain control of the Sub-sector by holding six systems, one of which must be Auriga.

Chaos/ Tzeentch

As one of Ahriman's most favoured Champions, you have been given a great opportunity to win Tzeentch's favour by embarking on a mission to a region called Herculis. Your master has commanded you to lead an invasion fleet into the Sub-sector and seize control of it and at least one of its prime systems, the Human splinter colony at Auriga, or the Eldar Heritage world at Umbriel, in order to prove your strength and guile.

The human colony at Auriga is primitive and would be easily conquered and enslaved, and would provide a useful workforce for the repair of your ships. In addition, the system is rich in resources, so would further enhance the efforts of the population in the name of Tzeentch. Your master warns you however, that the hated Imperium may soon develop an interest in the system, so your strength may be tested here.

The Eldar planet at Umbriel on the other hand, has secrets to reveal, hidden in the crystal forests on its surface. Inhabited by the souls of ancient Farseers, if you could gain control of the Heritage world your sorcerers could tear the knowledge of the planet's artefacts from their minds, and use it to maintain your fleet. However, ancient records reveal the Eldar have visited the system on a number of occasions over the millennia, so you must assume that they will try to prevent you taking Umbriel, and be ready.

Victory conditions

Gain control of the Sub-sector by holding six systems, one of which must be either Auriga or Umbriel.

Eldar pirates

Your captain is contacted by an outcast Farseer from the Ulthwe Craftworld with a revelation, and a portent of disaster that will befall the Eldar race, unless you and your Adventurers can intervene to change the path of the future. It seems that doom is coming to ancient Umbriel, one of the original colony worlds from the halcyon age, before the time of the fall. Uninhabited now, except the spirits of ancient Farseers dwelling in the crystal forests, the Heritage world is visited only occasionally by Farseers seeking wisdom, and by the Rangers entrusted watch over the planet. The ruins of the old cities can still be found, and contain many artefacts, some of which still work, so it is important to ensure these do not fall into the hands of the Monkei or the forces of Chaos.

The Farseer has foreseen many paths, several leading to Umbriel's destruction at the hands of Ahriman who, it seems, has discovered the location of Umbriel and even now may be sending forces to seize it. Worse yet, the Rangers have sent you disturbing reports that there may be a Tyranid splinter fleet approaching the region, so there is no time to lose. The savage investigations of the corrupted ones would be sacrilege enough, but if the Great Devourer were to find Umbriel, it would be utterly destroyed. Therefore, you must gain control of the L'laith Sub-sector (known to the Monkei as Herculis) as quickly as possible, and protect Umbriel at all costs.

Victory conditions – Gain control of the Sub-sector by holding six systems, one of which must be Umbriel.

Name: Arich	System type: Uninhabited
Star type: G-type nascent	Repair pts: 1 (+1 for orbitals)
Battlezones & Celestial phenomena:	
Zone	Phenomena
Flare	Solar flares, Gas giant, D3 gas clouds, D3 plasma clouds
Mercurial	
Inner Biosphere	
Prime Biosphere	
Outer Reaches	Small planet (dead), 2D3 asteroid fields, D3 dust clouds
Deep Space	D3+1 asteroid fields
Notes: None	

Name: Fornax	System type: Uninhabited
Star type: O-type ancient	Repair pts: 1 (+1 for orbitals)
Battlezones & Celestial phenomena:	
Zone	Phenomena
Flare	Solar flares, radiation bursts
Mercurial	Radiation bursts
Inner Biosphere	Small planet (dead), radiation bursts
Prime Biosphere	
Outer Reaches	Gas giant +1 moon
Deep Space	Gas giant, D3 asteroid fields
Notes: None	

Name: Ophiucus	System type: Uninhabited
Star type: A-type giant/ White dwarf binary	Repair pts: 1 (+1 for orbitals)
Battlezones & Celestial phenomena:	
Zone	Phenomena
Flare	Solar flares, Gas giant
Mercurial	Solar flares, D3+1 asteroid fields, D3 dust clouds
Inner Biosphere	Small planet (dead), D3+1 asteroid fields, D3 dust clouds
Prime Biosphere	
Outer Reaches	
Deep Space	White dwarf (binary star)
Notes: Sunward edge unaffected by alignment of binary	

Name: Chiron	System type: Uninhabited
Star type: Red dwarf	Repair pts: 1 (+1 for orbitals)
Battlezones & Celestial phenomena:	
Zone	Phenomena
Flare	Solar flares
Mercurial	Small planet (dead)
Inner Biosphere	
Prime Biosphere	Gas giant +1 moon
Outer Reaches	D3+1 asteroid fields
Deep Space	
Notes: None	

Name: Albireo	System type: Uninhabited
Star type: Red dwarf	Repair pts: 1 (+1 for orbitals)
Battlezones & Celestial phenomena:	
Zone	Phenomena
Flare	Solar flares, small planet (dead)
Mercurial	D3 dust clouds
Inner Biosphere	Small planet (dead)
Prime Biosphere	Asteroid belt, D3 dust clouds
Outer Reaches	Gas giant +1 moon, D3+1 dust clouds
Deep Space	
Notes: None	

Name: Porrima	System type: Uninhabited
Star type: G-type nascent/ Red dwarf binary	Repair pts: 1 (+1 for orbitals)
Battlezones & Celestial phenomena:	
Zone	Phenomena
Flare	Solar flares, radiation bursts
Mercurial	Dust belt, D3+1 asteroid fields
Inner Biosphere	Small planet (dead), dust belt, D3 asteroid fields
Prime Biosphere	Small planet (dead), D3+1 dust clouds
Outer Reaches	Gas giant +2 moons, D3 asteroid fields
Deep Space	D3 asteroid fields, D3 dust clouds
Notes: Binary star, roll twice to determine sunward edge	

VOID STALKER

Name: Majoris	System type: Uninhabited
Star type: Red dwarf	Repair pts: 2-4 (+1 for orbitals)
Battlezones & Celestial phenomena:	
Zone	Phenomena
Flare	Solar flares, D3+1 asteroid fields
Mercurial	
Inner Biosphere	Small planet* (dead)
Prime Biosphere	Asteroid belt
Outer Reaches	Gas giant, D3 dust clouds
Deep Space	
Notes: Alien robotic repair facility. Orbits inner planet*, system generates repair pts as a mining system.	

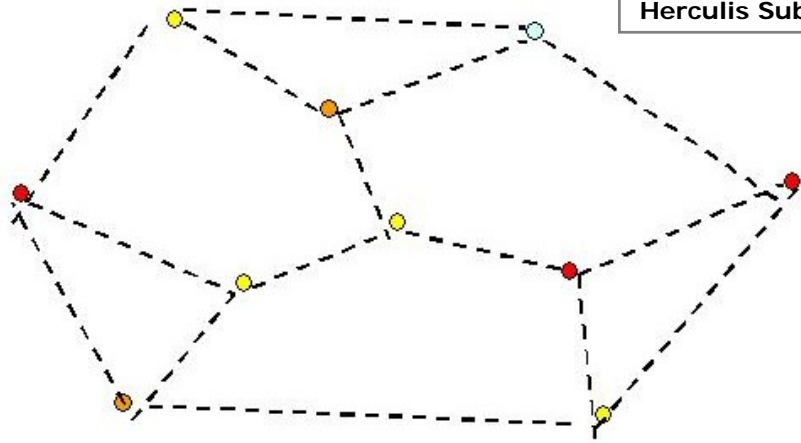
Name: Auriga	System type: Civilised
Star type: G-type stable	Repair pts: 1-6 (+1 for orbitals)
Battlezones & Celestial phenomena:	
Zone	Phenomena
Flare	Solar flares
Mercurial	
Inner Biosphere	Small planet (dead)
Prime Biosphere	Small planet (living)
Outer Reaches	Gas giant +2 moons
Deep Space	D3 Asteroid fields, D3 dust clouds
Notes: Human splinter colony. Imperial/Chaos forces gain +2 repair pts if they control Auriga	

Name: Oberon	System type: Uninhabited
Star type: G-type stable	Repair pts: 1 (+2 for orbitals)
Battlezones & Celestial phenomena:	
Zone	Phenomena
Flare	Solar flares, D3+1 plasma clouds
Mercurial	
Inner Biosphere	Asteroid belt, debris field, D3+1 dust clouds
Prime Biosphere	Asteroid belt, debris field, 2D3 dust clouds
Outer Reaches	Gas giant, D3+1 asteroid fields
Deep Space	Gas giant, D3 dust clouds
Notes: Ancient battlefield (see special phenomena rules). Generates a free refit roll (4+) each turn to whoever controls system.	

Name: Umbriel	System type: Agri-world
Star type: O-type stable	Repair pts: 1-3 (3-12) (+1 for orbitals)
Battlezones & Celestial phenomena:	
Zone	Phenomena
Flare	Solar flares, radiation bursts
Mercurial	Gas giant, radiation bursts, D3 dust clouds
Inner Biosphere	
Prime Biosphere	Small planet +1 moon(living)
Outer Reaches	Small planet (dead), D3 asteroid fields
Deep Space	
Notes: Eldar heritage world. To Eldar, generates repair pts as a pirate base (3-12), Tzeentch gains +1 repair pts.	



Herculis Sub-sector



Notes

Dotted lines indicate warp routes ie: legitimate routes of travel. Numbers indicate number of turns required to travel distance. The 6 outer systems (arranged in a hexagon) are 2 turns warp travel from the 4 core systems, but only 1 turn's travel from each other. The inner core systems are 1 jump from each other.

Core systems

Auriga – Yellow star in centre
 Umbriel – Orange star 11 o'clock from Auriga
 Oberon – Yellow star 8 o'clock from Auriga
 Majoris – Red star 4 o'clock from Auriga

Outer systems

Ophiucus – Blue star (top right)
 Albireo – Red star clockwise from Ophiucus (right)
 Arich – Yellow star counter-clockwise from Ophiucus (top left)
 Porrima – Yellow star clockwise from Albireo (bottom right)
 Fornax – Orange star clockwise from Albireo (bottom left)
 Chiron – Red star clockwise from Fornax (left)

