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Warp Rift:
Volume One,
Number Five
Nov/Dec 2004

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Issue Five hits the internet, and following the now established tradition it is also a week late! In addition, there are a few changes to the format of the publication from this issue. Gone are the last few sections dealing with web links and events - since they were pretty much redundant anyway. The questions and answers page will remain an irregular feature. In its place, the secenario section has inherited the Void Stalker category name and expanded. The number of battle reports that were being submitted was not enough to keep the section going alone, and I have wanted space for scenarios and campaigns, so it makes sense to include them here.

So, the last issue of 2004 has an article from our own Chris French which pulls together some ideas bounced around the Gothic Group list, the first part of rules for fleet alliances and the Black Legion Chaos Marines, a showcase from Bob DeAngelis, a new story from Thomas Whitbread and two new scenarios, the first based on historical action from Gaunts Ghost and the second focussing on the new Blackstone rules. We hope that you enjoy this issue.

I would also like to remind everyone that we are always looking for new articles for this publication, in particular painting and modelling pictures. Also, I have grand plans for my web site, which hosts this publication. I will reveal more at a later date, but I do plan on moving the entire site to a new web address. So, all the best for 2005 and we wish all of our readers a fantastic Christmas period.

Good hunting,
CyberShadow

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Escort-Hull Carriers: Why, and Why Not?

by Chris French

Regular readers may have noticed that every so often, Your Obedient Servant comes up with some rather goofy ideas. Sometimes these can be blamed on my fertile imagination ("fertile imagination" being a code-phrase for "being completely full of s***"); however, in this case, I do have Actual Real-World Events from which to draw.

In this case, one must go back to the Dark Days of World War Two. The Allies, which at that stage consisted of America, Britain, and sod-all else, had a problem. They had finally figured out a lesson from World War The First - namely, that slow, heavily-loaded, not-at-all-armed transports traveling across an Atlantic Ocean so full of enemy submarines that a mariner could cross said ocean in much the same way the player-character in Activision's Pitfall crossed an alligator-filled pond, tended to die horribly when not placed in convoys. The convoy system had been re-established easily enough; that was not the problem. The problem was that those aforementioned enemy subs could still get within shooting range of the convoy undetected, even with escort ships around. The source of the problem was that a

ship is still at surface level; even if an observer was placed atop the tallest mast in the convoy, visual range was still not enough to keep the subs at bay.

There was a solution available to this lack of altitude - bring an airplane or several along. The airplane could fly at a sufficient height that subs could be spotted long before they got to shooting range; add to this the airplane's speed and range, and the subs had to be cursed fortunate to get a shot off before being given their walking papers - to Valhalla.

But, this wasn't a perfect solution. No - to be able to employ the airplane, one needed somewhere it could be stored until needed, launched from, and returned to afterward. And since land bases are not exactly exemplars of mobility, this meant one had to bring along an aircraft carrier.

This led to another problem - practicality. A fleet carrier was big, expensive, and hard to build; it would be wasted as a convoy escort. What was needed was a smaller, less-expensive, easier-to-build carrier; the question was "where do we go to find such?"

Up in the Pacific Northwestern United States, the shipyards at Bremerton, WA, and Portland, OR, were cranking out transports like so many hotcakes (at one point, they averaged one ship per day); they had to, as a typical transport did not survive its first crossing. One day, some genius noted that a transport was essentially a hull around which was wrapped a drive room, a steering room, a crew space, and a honking-great empty space. Said genius said to himself, "Self, I do believe we could take some of these transport hulls, and fill that-there empty space with hangars, fuel bunkers, spare parts, and some Naval Air types; then strap a deck on top, and use it as a miniature carrier." Well, Americans being Americans, he mentions it to his friend - the guy who's "good with tools" - one thing leads to another, and suddenly the US Navy is deploying "escort carriers" to the Atlantic. Needless to say, the enemy submarine crews were less than entirely thrilled about having to face

combat-capable aircraft whenever a convoy hove into view. (The aircraft crews provided a rather drastic solution to that, though.)

This is not to say the escort carriers were perfect. They were based on transport hulls, which meant they lacked niceties like armor, speed, or good handling. As well, due to size constraints, the escort carriers could only carry a single "composite" squadron ("composite" being a polite term for "we can't justify having two squadron commanders on board, so we'll just lump the fighters and bombers together and pray everyone plays nicely during the trip") of a mere 18 aircraft (usually 9 each of fighters and bombers - balance of terror, and all that). Later models were improved upon, such that serving on an escort carrier was not deemed worthy of desertion or self-inflicted wounding.

Escort carriers are not well-known these days, as they were naval

vessels fighting in what history teaches is mainly a land-based theatre of operations (Germans are not known for being great admirals - it says something that most of their WW1 ships were named for land commanders...); the escort carriers' best-known exploit is at Leyte Gulf, where they so terrified a Japanese admiral that he took his battleships and cruisers and ran for his life. However, they did play an important role in The Second Unpleasantness; just not one that allowed for the garnering of Renown Points.

Where does this tie into Battlefleet Gothic? Well, if one looks at published ships, one notices that there are no Escort-sized aircraft-carrying units. None. If one is running a convoy-escort scenario, and one wishes fighter cover, one has to drag along a usually-horrifyingly-overpriced Cruiser-sized carrier. The effect of this is that the convoy-escorting fleet learns why escort carriers were developed in the first place.

So, I was thinking on this a few months ago, and decided to see what BFG Escort Carriers might look like. Keeping in mind the limits of "real" escort carriers, I settled on allowing BFG Escort Carriers only one Launch Bay, total. I also envisioned a simple

means of replicating the rather limited facilities on-board (the "three strikes and you're out" optional rule listed below). I have left the point totals "blank", since I'm not entirely sure what the points differential is between Torpedoes and Aircraft (the ships below are all based on the race's respective torpedo-carrying escort[s]); I think +5 over the "original" is about right for all cases, as Aircraft can turn while Torpedoes can't. For the Imperials, another +5 points for adding Assault Boats (the "Space Marine Special") seems reasonable.

If readers wish to use these units, please let Warp Rift know how they work out. And remember - They Also Serve Who Only Stand And Watch The Trash-haulers.



BFG Escort Carrier Designs:

(Optional: Due to space limits, only a certain number of aircraft. may be carried. Keep track of whether an aircraft. counter is removed, or destroyed outright; if three counters are destroyed, the CVE may not launch aircraft, unless aircraft from another ship are transferred to it.)

Imperial Sparrow Class Escort Carrier					
TYPE/HITS	SPEED	URNS	SHIELDS	ARMOUR	TURRETS
Escort/1	30cm	90°	1	4+	1
ARMAMENT		RANGE/SPEED		FIREPOWER	FIRE ARC
Weapon Batteries Prow Launch Bay		30cm 30cm (Fury) 20cm (Starhawk)		2 1 Squadron	F/L/R -

A Cobra with the torpedo bays replaced by hangers.

Chaos Insane Class Raider Carrier					
TYPE/HITS	SPEED	URNS	SHIELDS	ARMOUR	TURRETS
Escort/1	30cm	90°	1	5+	1
ARMAMENT		RANGE/SPEED		FIREPOWER	FIRE ARC
Weapon Batteries Prow Launch Bay		30cm 30cm (Swiftdeath) 20cm (Dreadclaw)		2 1 Squadron	F/L/R -

An Infidel modified as the Cobra. Aptly named?

Eldar Wormwood Class Light Carrier					
TYPE/HITS	SPEED	URNS	SHIELDS	ARMOUR	TURRETS
Escort/1	15/20/30	Eldar	Holo	4+	0
ARMAMENT		RANGE/SPEED		FIREPOWER	FIRE ARC
Prow Weapon Batteries Prow Launch Bay		30cm 30cm (Darkstar) 20cm (Eagle)		2 1 Squadron	F -

Eldar Sumac Class Light Carrier					
TYPE/HITS	SPEED	TURNS	SHIELDS	ARMOUR	TURRETS
Escort/1	10/20/30	Eldar	Holo	4+	0
ARMAMENT		RANGE/SPEED		FIREPOWER	FIRE ARC
Prow Weapon Batteries		30cm		1	F
Prow Pulsar Lance		30cm		1	F
Prow Launch Bay		30cm (Darkstar) 20cm (Eagle)		1 Squadron	-
Nightshade and Hellebore respectively, modified. Do you know how hard it is to find names of hazardous foliage?					

Orc Bludgeon Attack Carrier					
TYPE/HITS	SPEED	TURNS	SHIELDS	ARMOUR	TURRETS
Escort/1	20cm	45°	1	6+ (Front) 4+ (R/L/Rear)	1
ARMAMENT		RANGE/SPEED		FIREPOWER	FIRE ARC
Gunz Battery		30cm		2	F
Launch Bay		25cm (Fighta-Bommas) 30cm (Assault Boats)		1 Squadron	-
The Orks join the parade with their modified Ravager, perhaps someone kept blowing his torpedo rolls?					

BFG Alliances - Part One

By Ray Bell

Whether it is radically different Xenos races, different sections or subspecies in a galaxy spanning empire, forces meet and form alliances. These may be stable century spanning alliances between the elite forces of the Space Marines and with Imperial Navy during a campaign of legend, or it may be a shaky short-term alliance between the elusive Eldar and the Tau in times of extreme desperation or optimism. There are also mercenary forces that will work for the right price, or agents of Chaos willing to join forces to defeat a common enemy only to then set upon each other after their foe is vanquished.

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.

Imperial Navy

The Imperial Navy has access to numerous allies when the circumstances require it or are nearing apocalyptic and almost any help is welcome.

Reserves (Chaos):

The Chaos fleet-list has a few ships, which would feasibly be part of an Imperial reserve fleet, either being common vessels Pre-Heresy, or stated as having numerous vessels stay loyal. The following vessels from the Chaos fleet list may be taken as allies (Heavy Cruisers and Grand Cruisers count as Battle Cruisers for terms of fleet composition. Boarding value is Imperial, no +1 Modifier. No Boarding Torpedoes. If playing a Campaign, reserve ships can only be repaired by 'withdrawing' them to the sector base, as explained in the rulebook on page 154 representing the need for greater knowledge and resources to repair these ancient vessels, this does not include the Reserve Escort.):

Repulsive Class Grand Cruiser	225pts
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The Repulsive can be seen in reserve fleets in the Segmentums Obscurus and Pacificus but may be seen in other parts of the Galaxy if mothballed over the border. The Repulsive is used as if it were a

standard Battle Cruiser only with more firepower if not at a shorter range than most Imperial Battle Cruisers. The Upgraded Dorsal Lances may not be taken.

0-1 Styx Class Heavy Cruiser 285pts
These vessels are equipped with numerous launch bays capable of launching assault boats making them sought after components in a fleet lacking an Emperor Class Battleship or carrier of similar size. Unfortunately these vessels are extremely rare whether they're loyal or traitor and so have a 0-1 limit in the fleet list.

Murder Class Cruiser 165pts
The Murder was the backbone of the Imperial fleet being fairly easy to maintain and to use. Many Murder Class Cruisers form the mainstay of reserve fleets, but they perform somewhat averagely at their role and have limited forward firepower compared to Imperial Prow Torpedoes or the Devastating Nova Cannon. But the Murder has been used to great effect when squadroned with the Dauntless Light Cruiser, sharing the same speed and type of armament while the Murder protects the Dauntless with its stronger shields. The Murder Variant (Plague Claw/Despicable Ecstasy) may not be taken.

Iconoclast Class Raider (Standard Reserve Escort) 30pts
The Iconoclast itself would not be found in any Imperial Battle Fleet but its basic design is similar to numerous escorts throughout the Imperium, either used as Arbite Patrol ships or even Planetary Governors Personal Yachts, and of course in reserve fleets. The Reserve Escort has been used to great effect when mixing them with Cobra Destroyers. Both vessels having the same speed and manoeuvrability with the Reserve Escort complimenting the Cobras weapons batteries giving them a more worthwhile weapons strength.

If you wish to field a 'pure' Reserve Fleet you may notice that you would have to use an awful lot of Murders as it is the only cruiser, but as the Imperium is vast it supplements its reserve fleets with its most common cruisers namely the Lunar, Gothic, Dominator, Dauntless and all types of Imperial escort (No variants are allowed). It would be fitting to have standard Imperial ships as Allies of a Reserve Fleet (i.e. up to 20% of the fleet).

The Reserve fleet list is a broadside-orientated fleet, with few carriers (Styx/Exorcist) and almost no Battle Cruisers (Styx).

Reserve Fleet list

Fleet Commander

0-1 Admiral (you may include 1 Admiral in your fleet, who must be assigned to a ship and improves its leadership to the value shown. If the fleet is worth over 750pts and Admiral must be included to lead it.)

Fleet-Admiral (Ld 8)	50pts
Admiral (Ld 9)	100pts

Admirals get one free commander re-roll included in their points cost. If you want more you'll have to pay for them.

One extra re-roll	25pts
Two extra re-rolls	75pts

Capital Ships

Grand Cruisers/Battle Cruisers/Heavy Cruisers (may include up to one Grand Cruiser/Battle Cruiser/Heavy Cruiser in your fleet for every two Cruisers).

Repulsive Class Grand Cruiser	225pts
0-1 Styx Class Heavy Cruiser	285pts
Vengeance Class Grand Cruiser	230pts
Avenger Class Grand Cruiser	220pts
Exorcist Class Grand Cruiser	230pts

0-12 Cruisers

Murder Class Cruiser	165pts
Dominator Class Cruiser	190pts
Lunar Class Cruiser	180pts
Gothic Class Cruiser	180pts
Dauntless Class Light Cruiser	110pts

Escorts

(You may include any number of escorts)

Iconoclast Class Raider (Standard Reserve Escort)	30pts
Firestorm Class Frigate	40pts
Sword Class Frigate	35pts
Cobra Class Destroyer	30pts

Eldar:

The Eldar on occasion allies themselves with other races if it's in their best interest, for example during the Gothic war Eldar pirates from the Graildark nebula formed a temporary 'understanding' with Lord Admiral Ravensburg to rid the Gothic sector of Abaddon's Warfleet ending the 12th Black Crusade.

Eldar ships used as allies will count as a separate fleet for fleet composition. All Eldar ship classes may be used 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. May not be used with Space Marines or Grey Knights.

Space Marines:

Space Marines are an Elite fighting force of the Imperium and will fight along side the Navy if the occasion calls for it.

Space Marine ships used as allies will count as a separate fleet for fleet composition. May use all Space Marine ship classes. There can be no more Battlebarges than standard Imperial Battleships in the fleet (keep in mind that if you did want to field a Battlebarge your fleet would have to be in excess of 4000pts!). Space Marine Commanders and special items may not be bought.

Greyknights:

Greyknights are Space Marines that possess probably the most advanced strike cruisers in the Imperium due to their proximity to Mars.

Greyknight Strike Cruisers that are used as allies will count as a separate fleet for fleet composition. May use Greyknight Strike Cruisers (The Rules for Grey Knight strike cruisers can be found in BFG Mag 16. A Greyknight fleet-list will be in a future issue of Warp Rift).

Tau:

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 others 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 Tau ships except Nicassar Dhows and Kroot Warspheres due to the Tau not wishing to disturb the Humans with more Xenos.

May not be used with Space Marines or Grey Knights. (These Tau Allies should be used when fighting Tyranids, Chaos or Orks in one-off games only).

Chaos Warfleets

The Forces of Chaos enslave, deceive or buy their allies, usually these alliances are temporary and quite volatile, and none last longer than the wars that fuel them.

Renegades (Imperial):

Vessels, armies and worlds fall from the grasp of the Imperium siding with evil of the warp or striving for personal gain. The Imperial Navy has taken many losses to cowards and traitors selling themselves to the Gods of Chaos sealing their fate of damnation and destruction. These vessels join the Warfleets of Chaos and eagerly destroy their enemies.

The following vessels from the Imperial fleet list may be taken as allies. These vessels are the most common in the Imperium and represent the most likely ships to turn traitor. (Boarding value is Chaos, +1 Boarding Modifier. Boarding Torpedoes are allowed):

Dominator Class Cruiser

195pts

The Dominator is widely used throughout the Imperium, in particular in the Segmentum Ultima where many have gone rogue near the Maelstrom. A few Dominators have been seen amongst the Fleets of the Red Corsairs as flagships, the most noted being the Immolator, commanding from the rear whilst numerous squadrons of raiders overwhelm system defences and pillage the target. May not use the Dominator variant (Hammer of Justice).

Lunar Class Cruiser

190pts

The Lunar is the mainstay of Battlefleet Obscuras and an uncounted number have disappeared in close proximity to the Eye of Terror latter to be fighting the Battlefleet they deserted. May replace its prow torpedoes with a Nova Cannon at 20pts.

Gothic Class Cruiser

190pts

The Gothic is another vessel used widely throughout the Imperium but is most common in actual Battlefleets rather than on patrol in smaller formations. When Gothics are foolishly utilized in smaller engagements they are usually overwhelmed and taken as trophies adorning the Warfleets of Chaos as a bullet shield for the more valuable vessels.

Dauntless Class Light Cruiser

115pts

Being a Light Cruiser and lacking meaningful turret strength, the Dauntless is an easy target to board even if undamaged. Being easy to crew and an excellent ship for raids the Dauntless is a much-hunted treasure in the Imperial Navy. May not use the Dauntless variants (Vigilant/Havock).

(Look out for Renegades of the Alpha Legion
in a future issue of Warp Rift.)

Dark Eldar:

Certain Dark Eldar have on occasion allied themselves with the forces of Chaos seeing themselves as using their primitive partners as puppets in what ever twisted game of brutality they are playing.

Dark Eldar ships used as allies will count as a separate fleet for fleet composition. All Dark Eldar ship classes may be used. Dark Eldar ships 'can' shoot on Dark Eldar ships or ordnance, but cannot use Fleet re-rolls. Eldar Leaders and re-rolls may not be bought. Dark Eldar follow the rules for Mercenaries: Mercenaries will not fight if crippled. Crippled ships will attempt to disengage every turn and run for the nearest point on the nearest table edge if they fail).

(Look forward to Alternate Rules for the Dark
Eldar fleet list in a future issue of Warp Rift.)

Chaos Space Marine Legions:

A Chaos fleet may be totally crewed by Chaos Space Marines or not include any at all. As such the Primary Legion of the fleet (the most points) will not count as an Ally. Any other Legions will count as Allies but keep in mind the Rivalry rules (see Chaos Warfleets from the Eye of Terror in this issue of Warp Rift).

Part 2 will be in the next issue of Warp Rift.

The Black Legion

By Ray Bell

The Black Legion is without doubt the most diverse Chaos Space Marine Legion. Making use of all Chaos Marks, having access to the Blackstone Fortresses, the dreaded Planet Killer, and not to mention Abaddon himself!

0-1 Chosen Lord of Abaddon

Abaddon the Despoiler doesn't trust easily and only a few of his most trusted or controlled commanders are allowed to wield his most powerful and destructive weapons such as the Planet Killer's Armageddon Gun. These select individuals are extremely capable commanders of the vast Warfleets of the Despoiler.

You may include one Chosen Lord of Abaddon in your fleet to command the most expensive capital ship. If Abaddon is commanding the fleet the Chosen Lord will command any other capital ship in the fleet.

Chosen Lord of Abaddon (Ld 9, one re-roll)

100pts

A Chosen Lord may have any one Mark of Chaos or a Temple of Summoners.

The Chosen Lord may be given an extra re-roll for +25pts.

If captaining the Planet Killer, the Armageddon gun may fire as normal.

0-1 Abaddon the Despoiler

For ten millennia Abaddon has continued to attack the Imperium with his Black Crusades, raining fire and destruction on the Imperium of Man.

You may include Abaddon the Despoiler in the Black Legion fleet if it is worth 1000pts or more. If there are any Battleships in the fleet he must captain one of them (it doesn't have to be the most expensive).

Abaddon the Despoiler (Ld 10, 1 re-roll per turn)

195pts

Abaddon has special rules which can be found in Armada, Warpstorm and on the Fanatic website.

0+ Chaos Lords

Any capital ship, apart from that of a Warmaster or Chosen Lord, may be captained by a Chaos Lord.

Chaos Lords

25pts

(+1 Ld, max of 9, unless ship has a Chaos Space Marine Crew changing the maximum to 10)

A Lord may have any one Mark of Chaos or a Temple of Summoners. A Lord may be given a 'ship-wide' re-roll for +25pts (may only be used on the ship or squadron commanded by the Lord).

If Captaining the Planet Killer the Armageddon Gun may not be fired (This reduces the cost of the Planet Killer to 405pts).

Capital Ships (In addition to the standard Chaos Fleet list in Armada)

0-1 Planet Killer

505pts

(405pts if commanded by a Chaos Lord or has Standard Leadership, in which case the Armageddon Gun may not fire).

Rules for the Planet killer can be found in Armada, Warpstorm and on the Fanatic website.

0-3 Despoiler Class Battleship, Fortress of Agony (Alternate stats)

There were three Despoiler Class Battleships created by the Imperium excluding the Terminus Est, all went renegade. Each Despoiler Battleship has different armaments; the Merciless Death has extensive Lance Batteries on its prow and the Fortress of Agony has numerous Torpedo Bays in the prow. The Fortress of Agony is a dedicated support vessel possessing a larger broadside than the other variants whilst sustaining the Despoilers launch capacity putting Launch Bays in the prow.

During the famed battle of Hell'krye the Fortress of Agony was squadroneered with the Desolator Class Battleship Flames of Tchar. This pair of Battleships was responsible for the destruction of over four capital ships in a single engagement. Combining their weapons batteries they pounded into the enemy fleet, finishing crippled cruisers off with their many lances, only to unleash a terrible amount of ordnance.

Chaos Despoiler Class Battleship					400 points
TYPE/HITS	SPEED	TURNS	SHIELDS	ARMOUR	TURRETS
Battleship/12	20cm	45°	4	5+	4
ARMAMENT		RANGE/SPEED		FIREPOWER	FIRE ARC
Prow Launch Bays		Varies		4 Squadrons	-
Dorsal Lance Battery		60cm		3	L/F/R
Port Weapons Battery		60cm		10	L
Starboard Weapons Battery		60cm		10	R
Port Launch Bays		Varies		2 Squadrons	-
Starboard Launch Bays		Varies		2 Squadrons	-
Note: Cannot use Come To New Heading Special Orders.					

0-2 Activated Blackstone Fortress

750pts

Rules for the Activated Blackstone Fortresses can be found in the rulebook.

Notes: Warp cannons are lances, which ignore shields and all equivalents (holofields, Necron saves etc.)

'Super-mega-death' shot: If both Blackstone Fortresses are in the fleet they can combine their firepower into the 'super-mega-death' shot. Neither Blackstones can be crippled to fire the 'super-mega-death' shot. Instead of firing strength 16 Warp cannons they will fire one super powerful energy wave.

Both Blackstones have to be in base contact. The wave is as wide as a Large Flying base (the distance between the Blackstones). Move the Large Flying base 75cm forward; directly between the Blackstones as in the diagram below, so positioning the Blackstones is important for the angle of the shot. Agree the angle of the shot with your opponent before you finish moving the Blackstones.

Damage of the super-mega-death shot: All ships friend or foe with their bases under the template will suffer 1 hit through shields (as with all the ships above, the Deathbane only suffers 1 hit through shields).

All ships directly under the Template (i.e. their stem is under the template) suffer D6 hits through shields (the Hammer of Light and the Sword of Voss are both directly under the template, the Hammer of Light suffers D6+1 Hits through shields as it is directly under the template and of course it's base is under the template).

All ships directly under the hole of the template (where the stem would go) suffer D6 hits through shields (the Sword of Voss is directly under the hole of the template and so suffers 2D6+1 hits through shields!).

If there are ships between the Blackstones (ships base is in between the stems of the blackstones) each ship will be hit by 3D6+1 hits through shields!

If a capital ship is destroyed by the Blackstones super-mega-death shot whilst in between them and explodes the model is removed without further effect, it has been vaporized and the super-mega-death shot will only hit these ships (and won't surge forward damaging other ships) (this is only if a ship explodes).

If an Orbital Defence is struck by the super-mega-death shot it will be affected in exactly the same way as a ship is. If the Ramilies Class Star Fort is directly under the template 'one and only one' of the quadrants suffers D6+1 hits, the others suffer 1 hit.

If the stem is under the hole of the template 'one and only one' of the quadrants suffers 2D6+1 hits, the others suffer D6+1 hits.

All hits for the super-mega-death shot go through shields and equivalents, and NO, Eldar cannot 'Ride the Wave'!

Ordnance is automatically destroyed if under the template at all.

Minefields that are hit by the super-mega-death shot have D6+1 blast markers placed in contact if the template touches the minefield, if the hole of the template is over the minefield it will suffer 2D6+1 blast markers.

All Power to Shields and Brace For Impact! The sheer power of the Blackstones super-mega-death shot will force any crew to Brace for Impact, even the mighty Battleships of the Imperium. If a ship is directly under the template (it's stem is under the template) it will Brace for Impact automatically, if you don't wish your ship to Brace for Impact you must pass a leadership check as if you were actually making a command check to Brace for Impact.

The Down Side: Now that the Blackstones have taken their super-mega-death shot they now suffer the consequences of using up so much of their power. During the next turn the Blackstones cannot move or shoot at all!

They are in base contact and so their shields can be taken down together. As they are stationary for a turn (and in base contact for two of the enemy turns) they may have blast markers build up on their bases, in each end phase remove D6 blast markers from the bases of the Blackstones similar to High Orbit Defences (note this is D6 in total not one D6 each).

Also note that they can't brace and the enemy has two turns to take them out (or at least cripple one) before they recharge and start moving (or firing the super-mega-death shot!).

Vengeance

By Thomas Whitbread

On the bridge of the Mars class battlecruiser Sword of Truth, Fleet Admiral Justinus Rueben sat back within his command throne and surveyed the bridge. Gigantic viewscreens, which provided an exceptional 360 degree view during battle, were now largely covered with scrolling columns of data. Around the bridge walls sat white uniformed ensigns and grey skinned servitors, which chattered meaningless binary conversations to each other as their tech-priest masters moved between them, bionic optic replacements glowing eerily. Fleet Admiral Rueben himself was seated at the top of the chamber's ziggurat like command tower, and the ship's captain, Garhaus, sat below him, engaged in a constant one way conversation with the vessels logic engines and human crew.

Not for the first time, Rueben wondered whether Garhaus had any ambition, any wish to rise beyond his current position. Probably not, he decided, the old fool was quite happy to stay where he was, among the machine-minds of the Sword of Truth.

Rueben was ambitious. He had worked his way up in the Gothic Sector Battlefleet from his

induction as a lowly ensign on his twenty-first birthday, to his command of a cruiser squadron by his sixtieth. His masterpiece had been the poisoning of the previous incumbent of his present position, Fleet Admiral Octavius Brenn, at the Sanguinalia celebrations at Cypra Mundi, twelve years ago. The old man had been far past it when he had promised Rueben, the fleet's brightest young officer, his own position when he died.

But Octavius had from then on shown no sign of dying, and had in fact gone on to be more decorated and more lauded than ever before. Eventually Rueben's patience had worn thin and amidst the merrymaking had slipped some powdered Arajah extract into one of Octavius' many drinks, and the recipient died later, in bed, at the ripe old age of 132, thanks to his regular dosage of "juvenat" drugs. The enquiry into his death had found that his ancient heart had given out through the consumption of excessive amounts of alcohol the night before, and Rueben was appointed in the old mans vacated position and gave an extremely emotional speech at his predecessors funeral. Surrounded by his supporters on board the Sword of Truth, twelve

years of success had all but erased the torturous guilt that had wracked him after his advancement. The old man, skilled and fair as he was, had had to go.

Rueben pulled his mind back to the present. His flotilla had eliminated the ragtag fleet of one of the sectors most hated pirates, and back at Cypra Mundi decorations and promotions were sure to await. He allowed himself a smile. Life was good.

For another individual on board the Sword of Truth, life was not good. This was largely because he was dead. Fleet Admiral Octavius Brenn had been furious when he found his soul looking down on his body, where it had been laid out in one of the fleet HQ's many chapels. He was surprised when he found he could see people's souls and what they contained as easily as looking at their faces. And when he saw what secret thoughts hid within the then 1st officer Justinus Rueben, he had dedicated himself to revenge. His body had been incarcerated, as was the tradition, on board his flagship the Sword of Truth. Since then, from the dimly lit chamber where he and his ridiculously ornamented sarcophagus resided, he had committed himself to learning all that he could about manipulating the physical world.

As a disembodied soul, it had been

gruelling, maddening work to even learn how to manipulate lightbeams, and almost impossible to move anything larger than a speck of dust. His initial plan, to use a weapon to kill his murderer, had to be discounted as impractical. But he had shortly afterwards realised how easy electricity was to work with. And so he ran his plan through what was technically his mind, until every detail was perfect. And today was the day when his scheme would be implemented!

His soul, a barely visible shimmer in the air, left his candle-lit accommodation and drifted through the warm, dry passageways of the command deck towards his enemy. He was annoyed by the way that the fluorescent tubes which illuminated the passages flickered at his approach, but the price to pay for learning how to control electricity was to be unable to stop doing so. On the way he passed a servo skull, trailing incense behind it, which detected his electrical field and found a pressing reason to float quickly away down a side passage. Octavius' route to the bridge was circuitous, as he wished to avoid the ship's psyker choirs who would detect his supernatural presence. After about a quarter of an hour, he entered the great bridge chamber.

"Sir!" croaked one of the servitors

seated nearest the chamber entrance to his overseeing tech-priest.

"What is it?" came the monotone reply.

"My viewscreen, sir. Its..." the slave-creature's eyes seemed to flicker "its..its.." the servitors optics ceased to glow and it slumped forward.

Techpriest Malachron opened his mouth to curse but suddenly felt his bionic arm stiffen and the logic engines within his brain flicker and die. His mechanical eyes went dark. He panicked, and began to shout. Others followed suit as servitors keeled over and servo skulls fell from the air and smashed on the deck. The smell of burning electronic components terrified him as much as the smell of burning flesh would. He began to run, not knowing where he was going, but knowing, in his unmodified brain, that he had to get away from whatever mysterious presence he had encountered.

Through the chaos Fleet-Admiral Octavius Brenn drifted, aiming only for his target, the fat man seated upon the command throne. The sight infuriated him and he spun behind the throne, focusing utterly on the electrical impulses from the man's brain which kept his heart beating. He applied himself to them, sensing their patterns and strength.

Then he began to speed them up.

Ensign Lyndsar was fighting to restrain Tech-priest Malachron, who was thrashing and babbling incoherently. Suddenly he heard a groan from above, a small noise in the cacophony on the bridge as a whole, but with an unpleasant edge that drew his gaze.

It was the Fleet Admiral. His face was scarlet, and his eyes bulged as though they would pop from their sockets. He suddenly clutched his chest, gave a gasping, bubbling scream and in one movement broke from the mind-connectors in the headrest of the throne and tumbled forward, sliding over the canopy above Captain Garhaus and thumping to the floor at Ensign Lyndsar's feet with a crack of bone. He stopped screaming.

In the silence that followed the deck equipment repowered as the Ensigns and tech-priests gathered around the twisted, blood spattered remains of Fleet-Admiral Rueben. Octavius looked on. Even as his soul began to break apart and whirl away into the warp, the anger and thirst for revenge that had held him together for the past twelve years satisfied, he left, just for a moment, his ghostly face, staring down at his vengeance with an expression of interest.

And then even that shredded, and was gone.

"Damn the torpedoes!
Full speed ahead!"
Forcing the Mobeel
Narrows, 147.M41

By Gaunts Ghost

In the war ravaged Gothic sector, Imperial forces are attempting to break into the Louisabama system famed for its massive weapons manufacturing output. The system's only major space port is in orbit around the planet of Mobeel. It is currently held for the forces of Abaddon by a rebel heretic sect calling themselves the Confederated States of Anarchy (CSA). The space port is protected by the planet's massive and dense asteroid field. The only way in or out of the space port is via a tiny gap blasted through the asteroids millennia ago called the "Mobeel narrows". The gap is protected by two space stations and a number orbital weapons systems held in geosynchronous orbit.

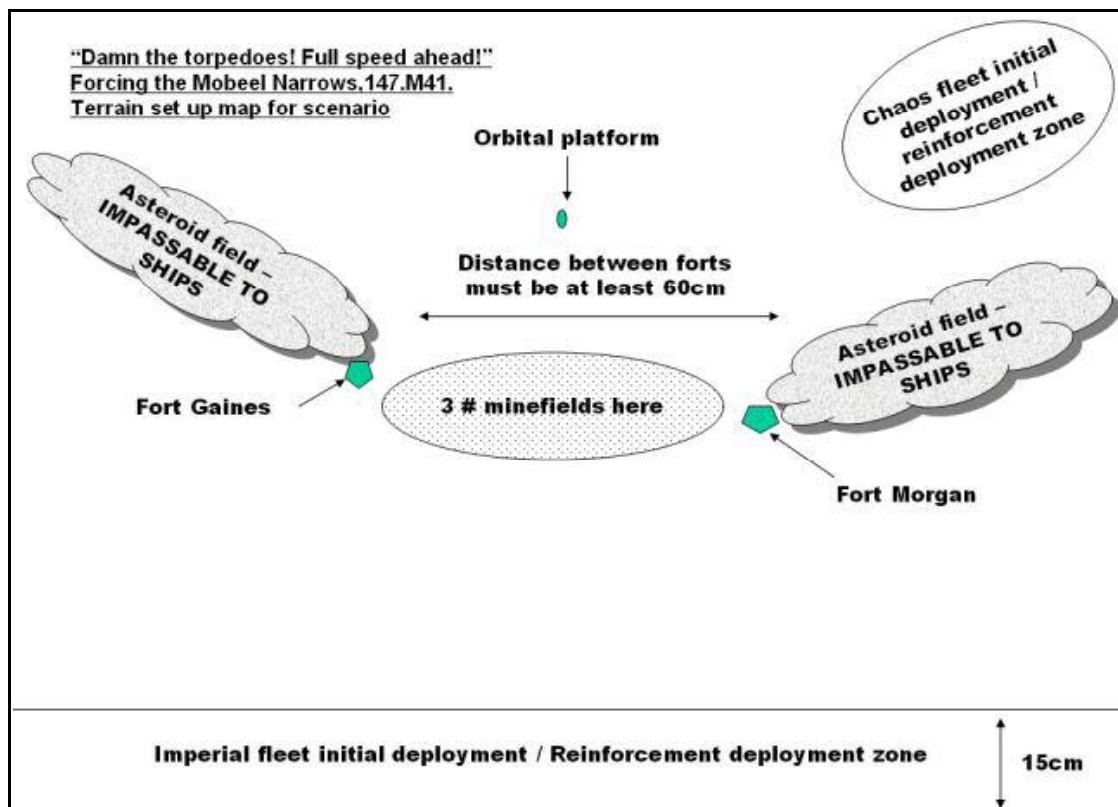
Abaddon, knowing that the narrows are the key to the spaceport and thus the entire system, (and with it the supply of weapons and ammunition to his forces besieging Port Maw), has despatched all he can spare from the siege of Port Maw; a small force of ships and at least one cruiser with an elite crew of traitor marines to protect Mobeel. The precise strength of this force is unknown to Gothic sector Imperial Naval Intelligence as the asteroid field makes systematic drone scrying and psy-auguries impossible. The force is believed to be under the command of the arch-flagellant of Virgensee, Slaughter Admiral Buchanicus.

Admiral Ravensburg is resolved to regain control of the system. The capture of Mobeel open up the whole Louisabama system to reconquest, help re-supply an Imperial fleet ever short of munitions aid the breaking of the siege of Port Maw. Therefore Ravensburg has ordered Admiral Farragutus to assemble a "Port Breaking" fleet to force the narrows and seize or destroy the Mobeel's defences in preparation for an Imperial Guard assault on the planet of Mobeel itself and the reconquest of the whole system. Most of the force is now assembled (4 cruisers, 4 light cruisers and a host of escorts) though some vessels were scattered during warp re-entry and are still making their way "in system".

Opposing Forces

Chaos Defence Squadron

- 1 Chaos Lord with mark of Tzeentch
(aboard the Desolator) Leadership +1, plus 1 Re-Roll.
- 1 Desolator class Battleship + Vortex Torpedoes Place in chaos set up zone, Space Marine Crew (Thousand Sons + Terminators) Leadership + 1.
- 4 Infidel Class Raiders + Vortex Torpedoes. Place in chaos set up zone (fight as a squadron).
- 2 Space Stations (Fort Morgan and Fort Gaines). Place as marked on map.
- 1 Orbital Torpedo Launcher + Vortex Torpedoes Place as marked on map.
- 3 Mine fields. Place as marked on map.



The Confederacy defended Mobile bay with a string of fortifications centred on two forts (Fort Gaines and Fort Morgan) located at the end of spits and islands on either side of the entrance to the bay. The main shipping channel into the bay was protected by sunken pilings and primitive mines, known at the time as "torpedoes", (These defences are represented in the game by the 2 forts, torpedo battery, minefield and asteroid field). In the bay itself lurked the powerful Confederate ironclad the CSS Tennessee (in this scenario represented by the Desolator) and 3 smaller steam vessels (The escorts in this scenario). This force, commanded by the Confederate Admiral, Franklin Buchanan, hoped to destroy any individual Union ships that made it through the mines, or force them to manoeuvre into the fire of the two forts.

The Union force commanded by Admiral David Farragut consisted of 4 ironclad monitors and 7 large and 7 smaller wooden steamships (In this scenario the ironclads are represented by the Cruisers and the wooden vessels by light cruisers and escorts). The Admiral intended to simply steam as fast as possible through the shipping channel and its defences. The ironclads were to go in first as these could neutralise the threat of any Confederate ironclad vessels and also bombard fortifications without being seriously damaged. The larger wooden vessels that followed (including the Farragut's flagship, Hartford) were lashed to the smaller ones to absorb gunfire and the effects of mines. Farragut seemed prepared to accept losses smashing through the defences gambling on the fact that his fleet, once inside the bay, could overwhelm enemy ships by weight of numbers and firepower before picking off the forts one by one.

At dawn on the 5th of August 1864, the Union fleet led by the ironclads steamed into the entrance of the bay. One of the ironclads, USS Tecumseh, hit a mine and sank within minutes and the Union fleet came under heavy fire from Fort Morgan. Stunned the fleet ground to a halt, Admiral Farragut following on the Hartford demanded to know why the fleet had ground to halt. On being told of the "torpedoes" he is said to have ordered "Damn the torpedoes!, Go ahead.....full speed!". This remark was shortened in later histories to "Damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead".

With that the Union fleet continued into the bay (fortunately the remaining mines had corroded in the salt water and failed to explode!). The smaller Confederate vessels were driven off but Admiral Buchanan in the CSS Tennessee attacked the Union fleet

single handed. The Tennessee attempted to ram the wooden Union vessels without success but succeeded in crippling two with gunfire. At one point the USS Hartford and the CSS Tennessee exchanged gunfire at point blank range, laying alongside each other. However the three surviving Union ironclads attacked with their heavy cannon. The CSS Tennessee had her steering gear shot away and her gun port shutters (which had to be closed during reloading) jammed shut. Six other Union ships surrounded her and eventually unable to manoeuvre or return fire and with Admiral Buchanan wounded, the Tennessee's crew struck her colours and surrendered. Fort Morgan and Fort Gaines were bombarded into submission (with the Union navy using the captured Tennessee as a gunboat) and surrendered along with the port of Mobile in the following weeks.

Notes on the scenario

In this scenario I have attempted to make the battle slightly more balanced by increasing the firepower of the Chaos defence force by giving them a battleship with a traitor marine crew and reducing the Imperial capital ships to cruisers rather than battleships. In the real battle the CSS Tennessee was of inferior quality to the Union ironclad monitors.

I have used a reinforcement system but also to add an element of chance to the game. This was not present in the real battle as once the Union fleet passed the Confederate defences the fate of the Confederate forces was virtually sealed. If however you feel this is inaccurate feel free to change the balance of the forces or alter the mission objectives.

Sources

Kostam, A., Confederate Ironclad 1861-65. Osprey publishing, London, 2001.

Tucker, S. C., A short history of the civil war at sea. Scholarly books. Wilmington, 2001.

Relevant website for information on the defences of Mobile Bay:
Andy_Bennett.home.mindspring.com/coastal.html

Siege of Fularis

By Ray Bell

This scenario replays the battle that first saw two of the Blackstones fire the super-mega-death shot, destroying all the High Orbit defences of Fularis II, stripping off the planet's atmosphere and scouring it's surface, leaving only a rocky plain. The remaining Blackstones have been used on numerous occasions since and are sure to be used again. This scenario is a character alternative to the Exterminatus! scenario in the Rulebook.

Forces

This scenario is suited for Chaos vs Imperial, although other races can be used instead of Imperial.

Both fleets are worth 1500pts each.

The Chaos player (attacker) receives two free Activated Blackstones making his fleet worth 3000pts.

The Imperial Player (defender) may spend an extra 3D6x10pts on High Orbit Defences and 'must' purchase at least one Orbital Defence Platform (Laser, Torpedo or Weapons).

Battlezone

The Battle is fought in the Primary or Inner Biosphere. Place a medium sized planet no more than '100cm' away from one short table edge. Generate other celestial phenomenon as usual.

Set-up

First the defender sets-up up to 2/3 of his fleet (1000pts) defending the planet. These ships can be deployed anywhere within 60cm of the planets template.

The planetary defences are deployed within the planet's gravity well with line of site of some or the entire attackers deployment zone.

The other part of the fleet is on patrol. The ships on patrol are worth up to 1/2 of the fleet (750pts).

Then the attacker sets up his entire fleet within 15cm of the table edge, which is furthest from the planet.

You do not need a low orbit table for this scenario.

First turn

Each player rolls a dice, the player with the highest score may choose to go first or second.

Special rules

The Blackstones must fire their super-mega-death shot at the planet (up to 75cm away!). But if the Blackstones are at long range, destruction of the planet is far from guaranteed. The closer the Blackstones are to the planet the more likely they will cause Exterminatus as shown in the table below.

Range of mega-death shot	<60cm - 75cm	<45cm - 60cm	<30cm - 45cm	<15cm - 30cm	<Contact 15cm	Contact
D6 Score needed to cause Exterminatus!	6+	5+	4+	3+	2+	Exterminatus

Keep in mind that if one of the Blackstones is crippled the super-mega-death shot cannot be fired.

The defending fleet 'may' roll for the arrival of its patrols at the start of each of the defenders turn if he wishes. Roll a D6 for each escort squadron and capital ship (or squadron), which you want to join the fight and are not in play, and compare it to the table below.

Ships speed	Up to 20cm	Up to 25cm	30cm or more
D6 Score needed to arrive	5+	4+	3+

If the roll equals or beats the number shown, the ship or squadron arrives on a randomly determined table edge: 1-2 = Top long table edge, 3-4 = Bottom long table edge, 5-6 = Short table edge furthest away from the planet (Chaos edge).

Game Length

The game ends when one fleet disengages or is destroyed, one of the Blackstones is crippled or the planet is successfully exterminated by the super-mega-death shot.

Victory Conditions

If one fleet disengages or is destroyed it loses. If one of the Blackstones is crippled the defender wins. If the planet is destroyed the attacker wins!

If you are using this scenario in a campaign and the planet is destroyed roll a D6 to determine what happens to the system on the subsector map: 1-2 the system is uninhabited, 3-4 another planet supports life, treat the system as an Agri world, 5-6 although devastating the Blackstones have opened up vast deposits of useful resources on the planets surface for the Chaos fleet to plunder, treat the system as a mining planet.

Designers notes

Other than creating a scenario to allow the super-mega-death shot to be used in a 'normal' sized game, this scenario makes a Blackstone a viable Exterminator. As in the Exterminatus scenario rules it would take at 14 turns to get the Blackstone in Low Orbit and able to fire! (Unless the set up of the planet was less bias against the attacker).

I would not recommend using this scenario in a campaign, as the defenders fleet is likely to be annihilated without mercy in an attempt to bring down a Blackstone. It would be interesting to use this scenario as the last battle in a campaign, however this could swing the balance of renown in the Chaos player favour very easily whilst being near impossible for the defender to reap positive renown even if he wins! So it maybe an idea to ignore victory points or negative renown caused by loosing capital ships and play +5 renown for the winner and -2 for the looser (no other renown can be lost or gained from this battle).