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01

Hi, and welcome to issue nine of your dose of Battlefleet Gothic gaming goodness. A few changes this issue, as Chris takes a bit of a break. Instead, we actually have a feedback page. This will be an occassional feature of this publication, and we really want to hear your thoughts, suggestions, comments and general feedback. Please do drop us a line and let us know what you think.

Also this issue, I have put together a scenario for you to try out. This is the perfect example to fill our feedback page... be kind, but be honest. This goes for anything that you read here this issue, or in issues past. Warp Rift should sit at in the middle of the BFG community, and be used as a forum for players to share ideas and inspiration about the game.

This brings me onto another point. It seems that, with the shake up with the Specialist Games forums, the amount of BFG talk that is going on out there has dried up a little. This game is still in the hands of the players, but this requires a spark of ignition from us. It is often easy to moan about how difficult things are, and it is true that there have been better times, but there is still so many directions that this game can be taken in. So, become an active member of the community. Start discussions on any aspect of the game that interests you. Use the forums on the SG web site, the newly returned Port Maw (welcome back guys, good to have you and congratulations on the great site) and my own boards at EpiComms. Get out there and reclaim your game.

Good hunting, CyberShadow

Issue Nine - Contents:

Woo hoo! It had to happen, and it can no longer be denied. This august publication actually has readers. I know this, because I actually got five or six emails after issue eight. So, that is at least six people reading this, which makes my job a bit more worthy. I am never one to let an event of this magnitude go without note, and I am also not one to pass up the opportunity to get one more page of this magazine written with minimum effort. Therefore, we will celebrate this event with an (irregular) letters page... And here it is. Warp Echoes is the feedback page for Warp Rift, and will run whenever there is the feedback to warrant it. So, without further ado, I pronounce the first letters page officially open. Please feel free to drop me an email on pretty much any issue that you would like to sound off about. If you have an opinion on the articles presented here, you disagree with a specific rule or set of rules presented, you find irregularities in the fiction, want to ask a question about some of the models on display or want to point out a problem with a battle report or scenario, this is the place to do it. We welcome your feedback, so please do write in to: *warpechoes@epic40k.co.uk*

I have a gripe with Chris's article for Ork actions in solo games.... Where the 'ek is the option for Boarding?!?!?! What the 'ell is a self respecting Ork doing acting like a shooty git when 'e would much rather be smashing the face of some stinking 'ummie or pointy 'eaded git? There should be an escort vs captial ship caveat between steps 2 and 3, whereby a capital ship will attempt to board or an escort will attempt to ram before they go on to shoot. I think that a distinction should also be made between the roles of the various escort types... Brutes will always attempt to ram if at all possible, while more shooty-type escorts will only ram if the target aspect is favourable (ie, they will shoot from at a closing or retreating target, but ram if the enemy is showing a nice big broadside target...). Potentially, some [additional] randomness could be thrown in by giving the 'shooty' escorts a 50/50 D6 roll to see whether they ram or shoot... Would certainly make it less predictable (which is the idea in solo play).

Warmaster Goya

Chris: To answer the question posed: It is stated in Steps 3 and 6 that if an Ork can get into ramming/boarding range and vector, it may do so. I chose to not make distinctions between ships like the Brute and the rest of the fleet list, as doing so would have overcomplicated matters. (Besides, have you ever looked at the damage profile for a Brute's gun deck?) Basically, if an Ork ship can maneuver to ram or board, that's what it will do. Orks are stupid that way (and in many others, might I add).

03

The Thousand Sons: All Is Dust

By Ray Bell

The following rules are the final article of the 'main' Chaos Legions! It is quite likely that the other legions will have their rules presented as well but probably not in Warp Rift, more likely straight onto the website. Please keep in mind that the Silver towers and Gifts of Tzeentch are very experimental and we'd love to hear your opinions on them!

The Thousand Sons fled into the Eye after the Heresy to take residence on what was to become known as 'The Planet of Sorcerers': a twisted parody of their original home world of Prospero created by the Chaos God Tzeentch.

Shortly after accepting this gift from 'The Changer of Ways', uncontrollable mutation exploded throughout the ranks of the Thousand Sons. Fear and desperation drove the leading sorcerers to ever-riskier solutions to their terrible plight. For fear of being stopped, these sorcerers together cast a spell of undecided power: the Rubric of Ahriman, without the consent or knowledge of Magnus the Red, their cyclopean Primach.

In this moment the Thousand Sons fate had been sealed, all but the most powerful psykers escaped the living death sentence Ahriman had unwittingly cast. Becoming mindless automatons, the bulk of the legion had lost their intelligence and knowledgeable insights. Magnus was furious and banished Ahriman and his accomplices from the Planet of the Sorcerers.

Retreating into his mighty Obsidian Monolith, the Tower of the Cyclops, Magnus watched as the Silver Towers, once proud and beautiful spires on Prospero rise up from the planets surface to become space faring fortresses.

Now the Thousand Sons are split into war bands usually centred around one of the Silver Towers. In addition to these war bands Ahriman and his followers traverse the void in search of arcane secrets in order to attain him the ultimate power, ascention to God-hood.

The Thousand Sons have access to Ahriman, The Flames of Tchar (alternate Desolator Battleship 0-1), Inferno Class Heavy Cruiser (Hades variant), The Silver Towers (0-1), Gifts of Tzeentch (Tzeentch refits), as well as alternate Space Marine Crews (Automatons and Thrall Wizards), Warmasters and Lords.

Automatons and Thrall Wizards (replacing Chaos Space Marines): 40pts

Automatons are mindless puppets controlled by Thrall Wizards of The Thousand Sons. In many respects their combat effectiveness or ability to react to sudden changes during a battle has not changed, as the Thrall Wizards usually foresee such events.

Automatons and Thrall Wizards give all the normal benefits of Chaos Space Marines except they do not increase the leadership by +1 or increase the maximum leadership to 10.

When making any leadership check for a vessel with Automatons and Thrall Wizards roll an additional D6 and discard the highest D6 from the roll. (i.e. A ship with Ld 8 wants to reload, it rolls 3D6 with results 3, 5 and 6, the 6 is discarded as it is the highest D6 rolled and the command check is passed, just. However when a re-roll is used this rule ceases to apply.

Temple of Summoners

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

Ahriman

You may include Ahriman in a Thousand Sons Fleet if it is worth 1000pts or more. He must captain the most expensive capital ship. You may not have Silver Towers in the same fleet as Ahriman.

Ahriman (Ld 10, 1 re-roll per turn): 200pts

Special Rules: Ahriman uses Abaddon's 'you have failed me for the last time' special rule, which can be found on page 43 of Armada.

Ahriman also has the following upgrades: Mark of Tzeentch and Automatons and Thrall Wizards.

Ahriman also has all the Gifts of Tzeentch except 'Smited!'

0-1 Warmaster of Tzeentch (replacing Chaos Warmaster)

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

The Warmaster of Tzeeentch (+2 Ld, max of 10, one re-roll): 125pts

The Warmaster of Tzeentch has the Mark of Tzeentch and may have either a Temple of Summoners or the Automatons and Thrall Wizards upgrade.

The Warmaster of Tzeentch may be given an extra re-roll for +25pts and/or a Gift of Tzeentch for +25pts.

Lords of Tzeentch (replacing Chaos Lord)

Any capital ship, apart from that of a Warmaster of Tzeentch (or Ahriman), may be captained by a Lord of Tzeentch.

Lords of Tzeentch (+1 Ld, max of 10): 60pts

Lords of Tzeentch have the Mark of Tzeentch and may have either a Temple of Summoners or the Automatons and Thrall Wizards. A Lord of Tzeentch may be given a 'ship-wide' re-roll for +25pts (may only be used on the ship or squadron commanded by the Lord) or a Gift of Tzeentch for +25pts.

Experimental rules: Gifts of Tzeentch

Tzeentch is capricious and hard to predict, when he offers his help or blessing you are never sure what you're going to get. When a Gift of Tzeentch is bought you receive a random 'upgrade' by rolling a single D6 on the following table at the beginning of each game:

1. Smited!: You implore Tzeentch for his unholy gifts, but he smites you for your impudence. -1 re-roll! (this can be a Lords ship wide re-roll).

2. Prescience: You may automatically place the ship on any special order it may use in the first turn. You may also re-deploy the ship after both fleets are deployed.

3. Ward of Chaos: All enemy vessels firing at the ship suffer a right column shift on the Gunnery table.

4. Vortex of Tzeentch: All enemy ships within 15cm of the ship count as having one Blast Marker on their base. (Do not place an actual blast marker).

5. Daemonic Horde: A horde of Tzeenchian daemonic entities swirl about the ship and attack nearby vessels. A single enemy ship during your end phase within 15cm is attacked. Roll a D6 and then roll that many dice to hit vs. the enemy ship's weakest armour value. Shields do not count vs. any damage caused, and check for critical hits as normal.

6. Blessing of Tzeentch: You may re-roll any one dice that the Thousand Sons Player would roll directly involving the ship per turn (*one re-roll in both players turns). (This can be one dice as part of a leadership roll.)

0-1 Desolator Class Battleship, Flames of Tchar (Alternate stats)

At least five Desolator Class Battleships defected from the Imperium between the 31st and the 34th millennium. The majority have their ships systems largely unchanged since their defection. The Flames of Tchar is a different story: instead of relying on the impressive speed inherent to the Desolator Class, the Captain, a then loyal Imperial Fleet Admiral Mario Nette, managed to plunge his vessel into Space Dock for an entire year. A major refit designed to increase the firepower of the broadside lances was made successful by siphoning energy straight from the main power plants, this in turn decreasing the overall speed.

Shortly after the refit the captain and his ship turned renegade. Lured by false promises whispered in Mario Nette's malleable mind, the Flames of Tchar eventually found it's new home, in orbit of the Planet of Sorcerers! No sooner had he opened hailing frequencies had three Silver Towers and escorting vessels surrounded his vessel and begun to dock. Foolishly expecting a delegation of emissaries and attendants of Tzeentch, Mario Nette welcomed the visitors. Thousands of Tzeentchian Horrors flooded the ship, appearing out of the walls, vents and even members of crew! Mario Nette fell to his knees as his bridge crew were quickly replaced or possessed by Daemons of Tzeentch. A wave of mutation wracked through his body snapping his spine and reshaping him into a Tzeentchian Spawn.

It is unknown who now captains this Thousand Sons Battleship. It is quite possible that Tzeentch himself temporarily gifts the Flames of Tchar to any Thrall Wizard Lord or Warmaster who shows promise for his great design. What is known is that it is only ever seen in the Fleets of the Thousand Sons and has once been captained by Ahriman.

Chaos Desolator Class Battleship: Flames of Tchar				300 Points	
TYPE/HITS	SPEED	TURNS	SHIELDS	ARMOUR	TURRETS
Battleship/12	20cm	45°	4	5+	4
ARMAMENT		RANGE/SPEED		FIREPOWER	FIRE ARC
Prow Torpedoes		30cm		9	Front
Dorsal Weapon Battery		60cm		6	L/F/R
Port Lance Battery		60cm		5	Left
Starboard Lance Battery		60cm		5	Right
Notes: Can't use Come To New Heading.					

Inferno variant Hades Class Heavy Cruiser (Alternate stats)

There are seemingly innumerate Hades Class Heavy cruisers in the fleets of Chaos and with commonality comes slight to radical divergence. Some Hades have had their weapons batteries increased in range but weakened in strength and some visa versa examples of such are the Desolate Gaze and Spear of Darkness. Others have more mundane or obvious upgrades and/or refits.

The Inferno variant seems to be unique to the Thousand Sons War fleets. Well suited for engaging heavy armoured targets with its long-range lances, these vessels are favoured flagships during raids against any world protected loyal Space Marine vessels.

Chaos Inferno variant Hades Class Heavy Cruiser				200 Points	
TYPE/HITS	SPEED	TURNS	SHIELDS	ARMOUR	TURRETS
Cruiser/8	25cm	45°	2	5+	2
ARMAMENT		RANGE/SPEED		FIREPOWER	FIRE ARC
Prow Lance Battery		60cm		2	Front
Dorsal Lance Battery		60cm		2	L/F/R
Port Weapon Battery		45cm		4	Left
Starboard Weapon Battery		45cm		4	Right
Port Lance Battery		45cm		2	Left
Starboard Lance Battery		45cm		2	Right

Experimental rules: 0-1 Silver Towers (special)

Once proud and beautiful pyramids of fine clear glass and polished silver metals, the Silver Towers have changed dramatically in their transition through the warp: having been transfigured by the sorcerous might of the Thousand Sons into space-faring fortresses in which psyker lords set out from the Planet of the Sorcerers to traverse the cosmos, launching vengeful assaults upon the Imperium of Man.

You may have one Silver Tower in any thousand Sons fleet that is worth 1500pts or more. It may be captained by a Warmaster of Tzeeentch or Lord of Tzeeentch. It may also have a temple of summoners in addition to Automatons and Thrall Wizards. It may not have additional Gifts of Tzeentch.

The weapons batteries and lances aren't actual weapon systems as such, but in fact powerful warp spawned Tzeentchian magics. Which is also why the strengths of these weapons are random (roll each time they are fired). Critical hits can affect the Silver Tower as any other normal ship except that Engine Room Damaged and Thrusters Damaged reduces the number of D6cm travelled by one (or two when on All Ahead Full) if you have both criticals at once the silver tower is reduces the number of D6cm travelled by two.

Silver Tower					405 Points
TYPE/HITS	SPEED	TURNS	SHIELDS	ARMOUR	TURRETS
Defence/12	Special	Special	4	6+	4
ARMAMENT		RANGE/SPEED		FIREPOWER	FIRE ARC
Prow Lance Battery		60cm		D3	All
Dorsal Lance Battery		60cm		D3	All
Port Weapon Battery		60cm		2D6+1	All
Starboard Weapon Battery		60cm		2D6+1	All

Notes: Can't use Come To New Heading or Burn Retros.

      May move (teleport) up to 3D6cm away from it current location in the movement phase, when on All Ahead Full roll 6D6 instead of 3D6. (You may lock-on and move/teleport!)

      Has all the Gifts of Tzeentch except 'Smited!' It is unaffected by Blast Markers.

Imperial Deimos Torpedo Cruiser
By Ray Bell

Designed mere decades before Abaddon's 13th Black crusade, the Martian built Deimos Torpedo Cruisers were finally broken out of Mars Orbit to join the war efforts on the Cadian front. Only three of the then prototype cruisers were completed at this time of galactic war, and all three were sent chasing the tail of Battle Fleet Solar.

The cruisers themselves were test beds for the Meteor TDS (Torpedo Delivery System), which proved extremely successful. Eventually the Meteor TDS will be available to capital ships equipped with launch bays, but at this time there is no reliable way to store enough of the short-range torpedo racks for a prolonged conflict. It is unlikely that any Battle Cruiser, with their extreme crew requirements, could ever utilise the Meteor TDS.

The Meteor TDS is an innovative weapons system given that there are no known templates of similar design. The delivery system works by launching a torpedo rack out of each launch bay, which travels with the ship because of inertia. After a few moments the racks are directed using it's own thrusters and then the torpedoes are launched, along with any others the ship wishes to launch.

Over the course of the Black Crusade the three ships were separated into Battle Fleets Solar, Gothic and Agripnaa. You may have up to one Deimos Cruiser in any imperial fleet. You may have up to 3 in a Battle Fleet Solar fleet list.

Imperial Deimos Torpedo Cruiser					220 Points
TYPE/HITS	SPEED	TURNS	SHIELDS	ARMOUR	TURRETS
Cruiser/8	20cm	45°	2	6+/5+	3
ARMAMENT		RANGE/SPEED		FIREPOWER	FIRE ARC
Prow Torpedoes		30cm		6	Front
Port Meteor TDS		30cm		4	All
Starboard Meteor TDS		30cm		4	All
Notes: Auto loaders; +1 Leadership when reloading (this advantage is not passed on to other ships in the same squadron. Because of this it is possible for one cruiser in a squadron to pass the command check and another to not!). Advanced sensor array; +1 Leadership.					

Meteor TDS: Meteor TDS's do not use standard torpedoes, instead they use similar torpedoes to those used by torpedo bombers and will only be in play on the turn they are launched.

Torpedoes launched from Meteor TDS's may be joined into large salvoes with other torpedoes of the same speed in the way normal torpedoes can. Torpedoes from a Meteor TDS will always roll to hit before any others, then you roll separately for any others. It is possible to fire a Meteor torpedo salvo before any others to take out fighters or other torpedoes.

When turrets are fired at mixed salvoes remove the normal and Meteor torpedoes alternately, starting with Meteor torpedoes.

Demios Torpedo Cruiser and Experimental Torpedo markers:

This Torpedo cruiser is a pet project of mine, I've always enjoyed using the various torpedo cruisers that have been released on various BFG related websites through the years, although many are either too weak (tactically unsound) or too powerful. I've created these rules as a (hopefully) balanced version using special rules based on existing torpedo rules to try and avoid confusion.

It seems appropriate to also present these Experimental Torpedo markers. These markers are easy to make - just print them off then glue them onto card (from a cereal box is fine), then cut them out. On the marker you can see the arcs used to aid turning for torpedoes that can and a circle in the middle to place a dice to represent the torpedo strength (D12's and D20's can really help out here!). It is advisable to write a number in marker pen in the circle to represent the most common strength used in your gaming group, e.g 2 or 6. It was originally intended for the line across the middle to act as the edge of the marker but using the actual end of the marker is easier to use (you can't get it wrong). The advantage of these markers is you don't have to fiddle about with the current (multi-part) markers, you just have to change the number on the dice. Also these markers are a little longer making their direction very clear. There is nothing wrong with these markers only being '4' wide, just imagine the torpedo salvo being more 'dense', this also stops the crazy game mechanic of a strength 18+ torpedo salvo clipping the edge of a ship base to have all 18 roll to hit (even though, technically, some of those torpedoes would be massively out of range!), and helps reinforce the idea of any size of torpedo salve being taken out by one shot.
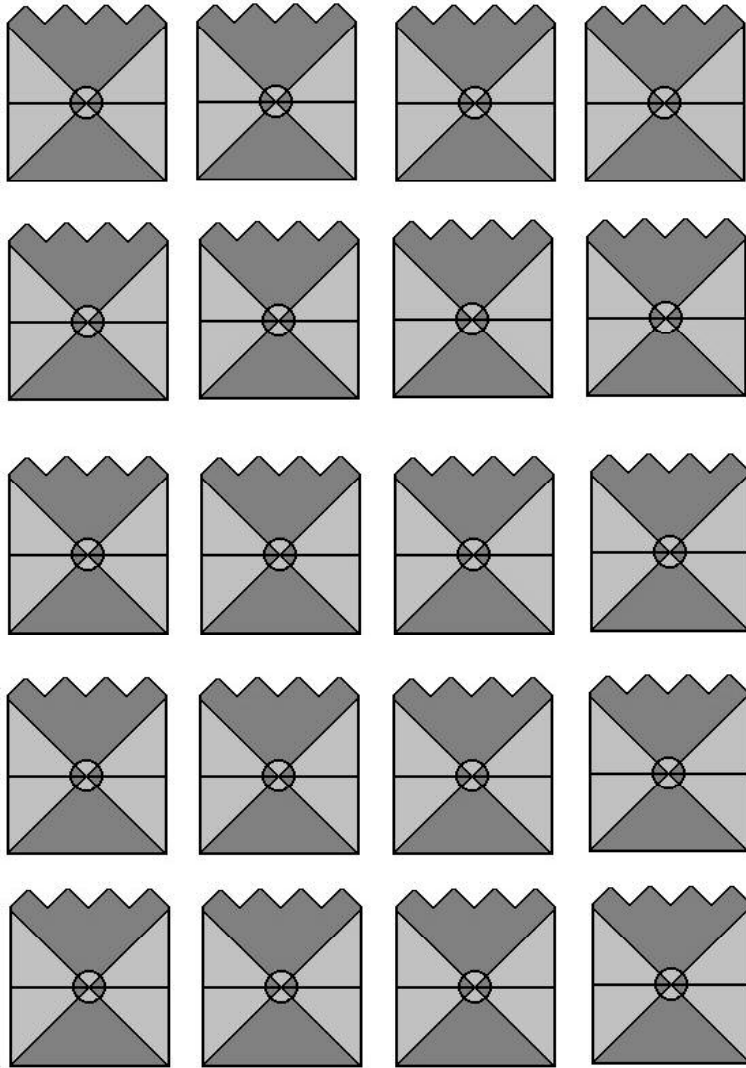
Nova Cannon (Experimental Rules)
By Jack Cassidy

The following experimental rules have been submitted by Jack Cassidy. Please try them out and tell us what you think (or just tell us what you think!).

A nova cannon is a huge weapon, normally mounted in the prow of a ship so that the recoil it generates can be compensated for by the vessels engines. It fires a projectile at incredible velocity, using graviometric impellers to accelerate it to close to light speed. The projectile implodes at a preset distance after firing, unleashing the force more potent than a dozen plasma bombs.

The actual cannon isn't a fixed structure and has a limited turning arc. But to compensate when the angle of the cannon and direction of momentum are unrelated numerous inertial and recoil dampeners are fitted at key structural points along the ship but mainly along and around the cannon and the related structure. Aligning and setting these devices takes time and precision, as such the nova cannon may not be in line with its target when the command to fire is given. Although the nova cannon may not be dead on, it is possible that it will still cause damage or even hurt a nearby enemy ship and so the cannon is nearly always fired. Quite often after firing, a nova cannon may swing in an unwanted direction due to the alignment of the dampeners and angle of the cannon when firing, but this is a necessary part of its function and is hard to avoid. It is a rare occasion that a Nova cannon won't be fired for fear of hitting a friendly ship, but sometimes the risk is too great!

When a vessel with a Nova Cannon is using the Lock-On special order the Nova cannon is much easier to align because the vessel is not making any significant turns also extra energy from the engines can be redirected towards the recoil and inertial dampeners.

Nova Cannon Rules

To fire a Nova cannon you must nominate an enemy target ship (or defence), within arc and range, and then place the nova cannon blast template over the vessel (this does not have to be directly over the ship's stem). Note that the target priority rules do not apply for nova cannons. Now roll a scatter dice and a number of D6 depending on range (see table below). There is an arrow on each side of the dice, including the two 'Hit' sides, indicating the direction the template will move the random distance determined by the D6(s) rolled.

Range	Distance to Scatter
30cm - 45cm	D6cm
45cm - 90cm	2D6cm
90cm - 150cm	3D6cm

If the central hole is over the base of any ship, friend or foe, that ship suffers D6 hits regardless of its Armour value. If the outer portion of the template touches the ship's base it suffers one automatic hit. If no ships were hit by the nova cannon place a single blast marker under the centre of the template.

For all intents and purposes nova cannons act as direct fire weapons.

Minimum range: Nova cannons, unlike most weapons, have a minimum range they can be fired. You cannot nominate a target within 30cm, as this is the minimum distance the projectile must cover before it can detonate. It is possible for the template to scatter backwards within 30cm, this is perfectly acceptable.

Targeting Ordnance: Nova Cannons can only target ordnance if the ship passes a leadership check to do so.
Note: Nova cannons do not have to be fire before all other weapons.

Special Orders

Lock-on: When on Lock-on special orders the result of a 'Hit' on a scatter dice means the template doesn't scatter and has hit the ship dead on!

All Ahead Full/Burn Retros/Come to New Headings/Brace for Impact:
The nova cannon may not be fired if the vessel is on any of these special orders.

Brace for Impact against Nova Cannons: If an enemy wishes to attempt to put a vessel on Brace for Impact against a nova cannon shot he must do so before the shot is fired, he may attempt this with any vessels that the template might hit (you may measure the distance between the target and other near by ships if you wish).

Special Circumstances

Terrain/Obstructions: If the template scatters to a location where the firing ship cannot draw line of sight, the template is placed with the centre in contact with the obstruction as if moved from the firing vessel (i.e where the firing ship can see). Note this could mean causing damage to a vessel on the edge of an asteroid field or causing D6 catastrophic rolls on a hulk, friend or foe!

Holofields and Nova Cannons: Holofields roll their holofield save once versus all hits caused by the Nova cannon. Note that defences with holofields DO have holofield saves against such attacks as they have greater stealth.

Vessels without shields: If an unshielded vessel (i.e. has holofields or had it's Shield Generators destroyed, not a vessel with it's shields knocked down) is hit by a Nova cannon, a blast marker is placed in contact with them as well as any damage caused.

Targeting Minefields: Minefields hit by a nova cannon template suffer blast markers equal to the number of hits caused (i.e. D6 blast markers if the hole is over the minefield, and one blast marker if only the outer portion template is over the minefield). Remember minefields block line of sight so the template won't travel through it.

Constructing a Gouga Light Kroozer

1:Take two Savage GunShips, cut the tails off and file one side of each ship flat so the can be glued together side by side.

2:Take a Brute RamShip, cut the front spikes off and glue underneath.

3: Attach a Pit Slave Arm - Rock Drill "Part Code: 9947059904404" to the prowl

4: Attach the Savage Gunship tails, one as a tail-fin and one as a dorsal-fin.

5: Two 40KBig Grabber Sluggas "Part Code: 9947040301906" andtwo 40K Big Grabber Blowtorchs "Part Code: 9947040301907" have been attached as engines

6: Fill the gaps between the two Savage GunShip hullz so they become one.

7: Attach two chainsaws "from the 40K Ork Boyz sprue" to either side.

8: Attach two Ork Slaver claws "Part Code: 99060403011" either side of the prowl.

Making a Hammer Klass Battle Kroozer

Not being a big fan of converted Imperial ships in Ork fleets I make my Hammer Klass BattleKroozers from Ork ships. BattleKroozers are simply Kroozers that have had so many refits and upgrades they have grown into a new deadlier class of Kroozer. So by upgrading a KillKroozer or TerrorShip keeps the vessel looking truely Orky.

I started out with a standard Kill Kroozer. Removing the upper most part of the tail fin enables the addition of larger engines. These are from a KroolBoy BattleShip. The lower prowl jaw and kannon were removed and replaced by the jaw from a KroolBoy BattleShip. This jaw depicts prowl mounted Torpedos whiles a SlamBlaster's jaw can be used to depict a prowl mounted Bombardment Kannon.

With the new jaw set in place I added the lower prowl jaw of a TerrorShip to make the whole thing look more solid. The lower section of the KillKroozer was swaped for that of a KroolBoy's and the booster engine was left off. This is important as you want your BattleKroozer to be somewat smaller than the more powerful BattleShips.

Next, the port and starboard gun batteries from the KroolBoy were added, after which the gaps where filled to blend the whole thing together. Finaly some small turrets were added here in there.

The Third Fallback
By Space Cadet

The HDMS Hammer of Light was running smoothly. Her repair crews over worked, but still working diligently on the other two cruisers which had taken significant damage in the running battles with the invading Ork fleet. Commodore Faraday knew that only hit and run tactics would work during this invasion, but escorting this convoy of freighters was vital. If these freighters went down, there would be no front since they were being used to resupply the fleet. Besides, it also gave him time to repair the other cruisers in his command.

The commodore reviewed the latest data: two load outs of guided torpedoes followed by three load outs of standard torpedoes then one more load out of guided torpedoes. 'Mmmm, yes that will do nicely.' The commodore turned to his First Officer and asked, 'How are the repairs on the Agincourt progressing?'

'They are progressing at a steady pace, but our damage control parties have been working for twelve hours straight and need a rest. We still have two DCP's on board and we can rotate the active parties to lessen the impact in the event the convoy is jumped and we are forced to fight another battle.'

'Good idea...make it so,' intoned the commodore. 'Also, what is the location of the Graf Orlock?'

'Last report had her three hours out drifting this direction at approximately three two zero degrees relative. Her communique stated that she had intermittent contact with two heavy cruisers, presumably Ork vessels.'

Aboard the Ork ship BrokunFang, 'My Warlord, my Warlord! The Weirdboy sayz mene shipz 're dis direkshun!' Warlord Brokunfang turned to the messenger, 'Which direkshun, scum?' 'Dat wun,' as the ork pointed and shrank back in fear, 'and he say da letul.' Brokunfang grinned as he studied the direction and information. He turned to another ork on the bridge. 'Git me KrukedFang and Bigun...NOW!'

'Got um, my Warlord!' came a feeble reply after just a few minutes from what must have been the communications station. It would have taken years to figure out the patchwork of cables

that made up this section of the bridge.

'We haf mene shipz in front uf us. We will burn hard und go for dem. Az we cloz, KrukedFang will turn dat a way and da BrokunFang and Bigun will turn dis a way. If da haf fightin' ships, daz will come afder wun uf us. Da udder ship goz afder da fightin' ship und chasez it down from da backside. We killz it and den goz afder the da loot! Got it?'

'Yez, my Warlord!' Both captains of the other ships had chimed in together. Little did either know that the entire conversation had been overheard by the Graf Orlock that was drifting in their baffles, silent and deadly.

'Long range contact, sir!', came a younger voice from the sensor console.

'What have you got, Mister?', asked First Officer Van Horn.

'It appears to be two cruisers and possibly an escort. The cogitators are working on it now, but the signal seems to match up with two kill kroozers...' about which time the machines surrounding the young lieutenants position started producing verification.

The First Officer took the print out and looked at it in detail. 'Very well done, Mr. Johnson. It is indeed two heavy cruisers and one escort, a Ravager Class. Very well done, indeed!' He proceeded to the holoviewer where the commodore was standing.

'Sir, long range sensors have detected three ork ships closing.' 'Range and bearing, Number One,' asked the commodore? 'Range 190 Kkm, bearing approximately three one six, relative, apparently with afterburners engaged,' replied Van Horn.

'So, they are in a hurry to die for the Emperor. Let us help them on their way, shall we?' The commodore turned towards the helmsman and he saw the half smile on the commodore's face. He knew they were in for a fight, and they were all glad of it. Fight, fallback. Fight, fall back. Fight, fall back. Enough was enough! Time to fight with no fall back! 'Helm, give me Z plus ten thousand. As soon as we have it, turn three one five relative to clear the convoy. When we have cleared the convoy, give me two seven zero relative to our current heading. Communications, inform the convoy to take new heading of zero four five relative, advise Agincourt and the Saint Bernard that we are going to cross over them and transport two of our DCP's back. We expect them to transport an additional two DCP's back.' The commodore turned toward his First Officer, 'This will

give us six in place of eight when we enter into battle, but it cannot be helped. Also, as soon as we reach Z plus ten thousand, go to battle stations. And personally notify the Commissar what is going on and that I expect him to lead any hit and run attacks that may be possible. He has the experience and knowledge that we need and he has my confidence.'

The First Officer saluted Commodore Faraday and immediately went to work issuing orders. Within minutes, alarms rung out, 'Battle stations! Battle stations! This is no drill!.'

'Ranj?', bellowed Brokunfang.

'Uh, we needz to split now!,' yelled an ork from the big table in the middle of the bridge. Brokunfang stared at the ork and said, 'Good! Do it now!' Immediately, the ship took a hard right and the escort following to it's port went with it. The other cruiser took a hard left.

As the Hammer of Light finished it's turn to port, Commodore Faraday asked, 'Range to closest cruiser?'

'150 Kkm,' came the reply.

'Mister Van Horn, please see to the torpedoes. We will concentrate forward fire and starboard fire on the single cruiser and engage at long range with port and dorsal weapons against the escort and other cruiser. Let's take the escort out immediately to keep it from making a run at the convoy while we are engaged against the two cruisers. Split fire, if necessary. Helm, give me Z nominal.'

Aye, aye, Sir!

Torpedoes streaked from their launch tubes. A technician on the bridge announced telemetry confirmed. The first shot of the battle went to the Hammer of Light.

'Reload ordnance, Mister Van Horn!'

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'Ah! Daz takin' da bait!' BrokunFang was pleased that his plan was working. 'We will work around dem und attack da kroozer from da back. Turn dat a way! WAAAAGH!

'Maintain target and launch the second wave of torpedoes.' The commodore was cool under fire. Almost too cool. It was if he had a calculating mind set for naval combat, and nothing else.

'Lock onto the escort and fie all port weapons, then fire port and dorsal lances. Blow it out of the Emperor's heaven.'

Red laser fire from the weapons batteries reached out and found their mark. The shields on the escort went down. The green lance fire streaked across the heavens and the escort became a vapor mist as the atmosphere drifted through space but for a few seconds before the promethium stores exploded and ripped the escort apart.

'Time to impact from first wave in five, four, three, two, one, impact! We have detonations. Analysis indicates two, I repeat, two hits. Signature unchanged, no critical damage.'

'Reload with standard torpedoes.'

'Has the convoy made it out of the combat zone,' asked the commodore?

'Yes, Sir!' snapped the First Officer!

'Egnor dem! Wez can cum bak fo dem! Git ready tooz shoot all gunz! Keep goin' dat a way! We haf to git on der arse!' Blood raced through the veins of BrokunFang...or whatever you call that green bile looking fluid. The KrukedFang closed on the Hammer of Light and gunz fired from the Ork ship. The Hammer of Light shook violently! Shields overloaded and circuit breakers kicked off. Explosions shattered armor and bulkheads alike. The Hammer of Light vented atmosphere while force fields attempted to activate.

'Yez, wez got em! When wez in ranj, shootz everyting!. BrokunFang was on the verge of blood lust.

'Damage report!' Commodore Faraday virtually bellowed.

'Shields coming back up, twenty five percent damage to the ship! It was those damned heavy guns!' First Officer Van Horn replied as he got up off the deck.

'Reduce speed to fifty percent, turn to port, come about! Reengage that ship!' Commodore Faraday did not like to loose a battle. He also did not like orks! He considered them the greatest menace in space. And they had to be the luckiest race anywhere!'

'No critical hits, Sir!' The first officer confirmed as he was still looking over the screens. "Commissar Ezra is in combat against a hit and run party. Looks like starboard weapons are going to be down for a while, sir. Dispatching damage control parties as we speak.'

Commodore Faraday made a mental note that his First Officer needy to be promoted to Captain. He would let him decide who was to become his First Officer.

'Sir, another ship just appeared on sensors, 30Kkm to starboard. Yes! IFF indicates the Graf Orlock!

'Wot u mean, anuthr ship? BrokunFang looked at the ork with a headset. The ork did not hear him but did continue giving information. 'Mmm, itz a Gothic class, torpedoes in da nose and lanzez all 'round. Reg'lar speed, tur'ets, armor, und stuff. Itz in front uv us and cum'n down dat side, unlez it movz dis way.'

'Cloz wit da dis ship den goz afdur dat wun!' BrokunFang wanted to fight something...anything...the fever was now in his blood!

'Fire!,' he bellowed, and the guns of the BrokunFang lit up the heavens.

'Shields down! No permanent damage. Orders, Sir?' First Officer was maintaining his calm and collected way, and Commodore Faraday took note.

'Continue the turn to port and engage that ship with everything that bears!'

"Sir! Helm, you heard the Commodore! Make it happen, NOW! Weapons, forward batteries then lances from port and dorsal! Fire as you bear!

'Sir, weapons have taken down both shields. Lances have impacted the interior. We will

have more information in a moment, sir.'

About that time, the cogitators completed their work and the print out came up. The first officer reached for it and immediately read the information. 'A critical hit, Sir! Shields completely gone!'

Warlord BrokunFang was busy shooting the weapons officer upon his flagship and appointing another one for the position. In the meantime, he growled, 'Lok On! Hit da nex ship wit ev'ryting!'

When the Graf Orlock came into range and arc, the BrokunFang let go with everything. The Graf Orlock's shields and armor were hammered in the attack, but the Captain had been expecting the attack. Crews had been standing by the entire time, and what would have been a massive volley of gun fore that would have delivered a crippling blow to the Graf Orlock merely damaged the hull of the ship. When the orks were done shooting, they knew the truth. It was payback time!

On board the Hammer of Light, Commodore Faraday opened a communications channel to the Graf Orlock. 'Good to see you, Blücher. Having fun, I see. Think we can take at least one of these scumbags out? Faraday over.'

'Affirmative, Commodore! Just watch my follow up to your first strike!,' responded a chipper Blücher.

The Hammer of Light continued its turn to port and engaged the BrokunFang with weapons then lances while launching a torpedo spread against the KrukedFang. The results were good. Weapons and lances put three hits into the BrokenFang. Torpedoes put two hits onto the KrukedFang. No critical hits were detected in either situation.

On board the Graf Orlock, Captain Blücher issued orders, 'Slow to half speed, lock weapons onto that green scum and blow him away. Torpedo room, launch torpedoes at the other scum in our forward arc! Destroy the KrukedFang!'

Torpedoes streaked through the heavens racing towards the KrukedFang while lances ripped into the hull of the BrokunFang. The BrokunFang was now gutted; it would be a long time before that ship could put back out to harass the shipping lanes, but it was still disengaging at a good rate of speed. The KrukedFang took two more hits and made for the border. Again, there were no critical hits, but the convoy was now safe, and the war would go on. As soon as they got these ships repaired…

Choir of a Thousand Voices
By CyberShadow

Chaos attempt to desecrate a vital Imperial shipment in this Battlefleet Gothic scenario.

The Black Ships are essentially Imperial cargo vessels, but instead of minerials, weapons or supplies, they carry thousands of psykers. These unfortunates have been discovered to possess minor psychic talents. While they are usually not strong enough to be able to master their gift to the benefit of humanity, they also represent a risk of Warp incursion and leaving open a gateway for daemons. When tracked down by the Inquisition, these latent psykers are hoarded on board vast vessels, destined for the Emperors table. The Emperor requires a constant supply, leeching their psychic life force to sustain his own. However, these Black Ships are also a temptation for the forces of Chaos. A vessel full of weak psychic individuals has the potential to unleash hordes of daemons, if only the proper rites can be performed.

Forces: This engagement takes place between the Imperial fleet, and Chaos raiders.

The Imperial player has an Inquisitorial Black Ship at the centre of his fleet. However, note that the normal rules for Black Ships (published on the Specialist Games web site and in BFG publications) are actually the vessels used for Inquisitorial flagships. For this scenario, the Black Ship is an Inquisition transporter, much lighter armed and designed to be escorted, and is represented by a single super heavy transporter vessel. See the 'Merchantmen' article, available for download on the Specialist Games web site, for rules for the Imperial Super Heavy Troop Transporter.

In addition, the Imperial player may select a supporting force of two Cruisers and a single squadron of five Escorts of his choice. However, a maximum of one Cruiser may have launch bays for attack craft, and only fighters are available to the Imperial player (bombers may not be launched).

The Chaos player simply has four Cruisers, but a maximum of one of these may be equipped with attack craft lauch bays.

<u>Battlezone:</u> The Chaos fleet catch up with the Imperial convoy en route, where Imperial support is unavailable. The engagement takes place either in the outer reaches of a system, or in deep space.

<u>Set-Up:</u> The game is played along the length of the table. The Imperial player sets up his Black Ship on one of the short board edges. He must then set up the rest of his fleet with 15cm of this vessel (at least one member of the Escort squadron must be within this distance). The Chaos player takes four of the hidden setup markers and assigns one vessel to each marker. These markers are then placed anywhere along either of the long table edges, but not within 45cm of any Imperial vessel.

<u>First Turn:</u> The Imperial player automatically gets the first turn.

<u>Special Rules:</u> In the Chaos players turn, he may either convert any number of hidden setup markers to the appropriate vessels, or he may move a marker up to 15cm (although the marker may perform no other action such as shooting or launching attack craft). Markers which are converted to vessels are done so before actions, and so the vessel may make normal movement, special orders, etc in the turn in which it appears.

While the Imperial player must set up his fleet with 15cm, vessels are not restricted to remain in this formation once the game has started.

The Chaos player is trying to board the Black Ship to perform the descration rites, dedicating the occupants to the realm of the daemons, damning them in the process and releasing the Warp spawn. All other escorting vessels are secondary to this mission. The Imperial player is trying to stop him, and to exit the board with the cargo intact.

For the Chaos player to achieve his aim, he must board the Black Ship (no other vessel counts for this purpose) using a hit and run attack within 15cm (boarding torpedoes or assault craft cannot carry out this mission as it requires the presence of prepared and high-ranking Chaos cultists). Each time a hit and run attack is carried out, the Chaos player must declare if he is attempting to desecrate the vessel. If he decides not to attempt this action, a normal hit and run attack is resolved. If he decides to attempt a desecration, he rolls as normal. However, no damage is caused. If successful, the Chaos player rolls a single dice. On the result of a 4+, the Black Ship is corrupted and as the Chaos forces desecrate the vessel, painting foul enchantments and making the

appropriate sacrifices. On a result of a 1-3, the Chaos player is interupted in his attempts, and there is no effect. He may attempt this action again, but another hit and run attack is required. Each Chaos vessel may attempt a single attack in this way each turn if they are able.

If the Chaos player successfully desecrates the Inquisition Black Ship, he unleashes hordes of daemons and spawn, which not only over-run the vessel but corrupt its very fabric. The Black Ship immediately becomes a Daemon Vessel, and from that moment on is under the control of the Chaos player. It may make a normal move, special order, etc this turn.

The Imperial Black Ship may only exit the table via the short table edges. Under Imperial control, the Black Ship may only exit the table via the short table edge opposite the one which it starts at. Under Chaos control, the Black Ship may only exit the table via the same short table edge that it begins the game at. Any other vessel may exit the board form any table edge, but once it has done so it may not then return to the table.

Game Length: The Imperial player begins the game at one short table edge. The game ends when the Inquisition Black Ship exits the table via one of the short table edges (see above), or is destroyed (reduced to a hulk, etc).

Victory Conditions: The game ends when one of four conditions are reached:

Imperial Major Victory - The Imperial player may claim a major victory if the Inquisition Black Ship exits the table via the opposite, short table edge.

Imperial Minor Victory - The Imperial player gains a minor victory if the Chaos player successfully manages to defile the Black Ship, but the Imperial player subsequently destroys the vessel.

Chaos Minor Victory - The Chaos player achieves a minor victory if he manages to destroy the Inquisition Black Ship.

Chaos Major Victory - The Chaos player may claim a major victory if he manages to successfully conduct a hit and run attack on the Black Ship, desecrate it to turn it to a Daemon vessel, and then escort it off the same short table edge which it began the game at.