

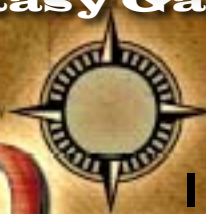
THE Ancible

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Your portal to Sci-Fi and Fantasy Gaming

THE UNCHARTED SEAS

Rules for Fantasy Naval Combat



ISSUE 13



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Uncharted Seas
Battle Report

ISSN 2042-7727

THE Ancible

View from the Command Deck

It's 2012 and the start of another exciting year in war gaming. So how is this year going to be any different to the last two for The Ancible. The good news is that we are still going to keep introducing you to new games and I am planning how to take the magazine out there to even more people. I feel that 2012 may be the year of the road trip and the guys were just discussing what shows we are going to be attending this year. The big change this year is that I am planning to go to Gencon and sample the experience that is "The best 4 days of gaming" so watch out for a tall scottish person wearing an Ancible t-Shirt. It should be loads of fun but will take a bit of planning. However the excitement doesn't stop there. How about a road trip to Essen. Yes there is a good chance that a few of us may get in a car and drive to that event.

The observant amongst you will have noticed that we are doing a big piece on Spartan Games over the next couple of issues. I am really excited about it as I feel it has been a long time coming and it was only on a recent trip to Spartan Games that I came up with the cunning plan and got the support of guys there. So Uncharted Seas this month and Distopian Wars Next issue. The guys tell me they are well into their painting tasks so we should have lots of painted miniatures and may even try and organise a 4 way battle report.

So on we go with new year and fresh batch of enthusiasm. I think sometimes you guys forget to get in touch as the mailbag has been a bit sparse of late. We are open to suggestions and are always looking for new writing, sculpting and painting talent. On you go, drop us a line.

Our aim is to introduce **YOU** to the games you don't yet know

Kenny R



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Reviews

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Review by Kenny Robb

It has been a number of years since I first met Neil Fawcett, the man behind Spartan Games, and over the years I would like to think that we have become friends. We meet up when our schedules allow, to put the world to rights and basically to talk gaming (actually we talk rubbish and generally have a good laugh, but that didn't sound as profound). If the truth be known, it was at one of these important meetings that I said "I think the industry needs an independent magazine," to which Neil replied "Great idea, why don't you do it?"...and the rest, as they say, is history. Why do you need to know all this? I just thought I would tell you before I wrote a review of the second edition of "Uncharted Seas" by Spartan Games.

I was recently down seeing Neil in his new offices and we were again discussing important stuff when I realised that we had never done a review of

Uncharted Seas, even though the guys in the Ancible Office have been playing it for the last three years. It is time to remedy that.

Uncharted Seas, in Neil's own words, was designed as a beer and pretzels type of game, meaning that it doesn't take a lot of setup and can be played reasonably quickly over a beer and some snacks, and does not need to be taken too seriously. Having seen the original rules that Neil wrote many years ago, Uncharted Seas as it was originally published, was about 1/10 of the total rules and in a lot of cases these rules were streamlined in order to accelerate play. The second edition of the rules is a tidy up, redesign graphically and addition of rules that relate to flying and underwater activities that were not included in the first edition.



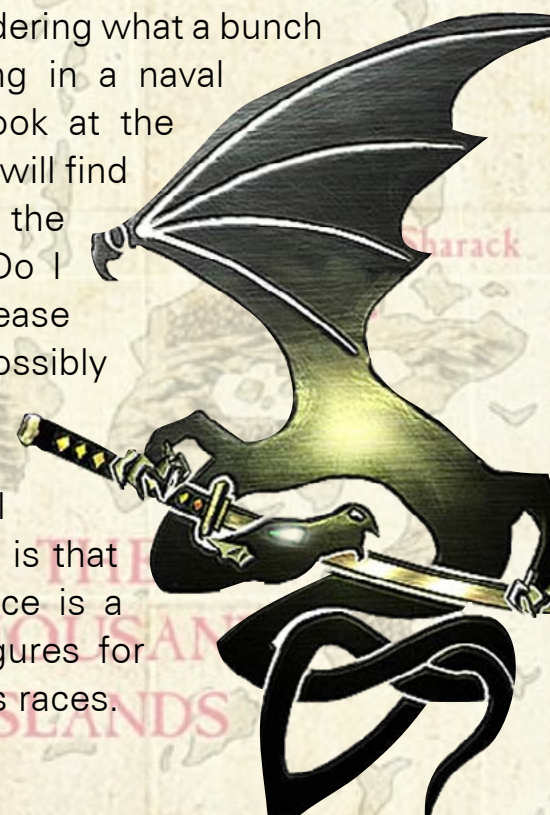


The rule book itself is a soft cover, 108 page full-colour publication with a redesigned cover. Soft cover rule books are a love it or hate it sort of thing. In this case I think that it is totally appropriate and hence if buying the rule book it has a cost that reflects the fact it is soft cover. The construction is solid and since my original rule book has stood the test of time well, I see no reason the second edition would not do the same. I was going to give the rule book to Cookie and see if he could cause it to self-combust on contact with his grubby fingers, but on second thought that is maybe a step too far.



When comparing the old with the new, I would say that the second edition is much better laid out and for us older gamers, with failing sight, the text is clear and readable even under limited light. This is important as not everyone has the 20x20 vision required to read some rule books.

In addition to the core rules, you also get some background in to each of the races and a lot of the concept artwork. Many of the photographs from the first edition rules book are back, and I feel that some of these photographs are technically the best photographs I have seen. For the photographers out there take a look at them and tell me how you get that sort of depth of field on something that close in. (I know how it is done but it is the fact that Spartan took the time to do it for a rule book) For the more observant you may be wondering what a bunch of 28mm figures are doing in a naval combat rule book. Well look at the models and I think that you will find that they are the races in the book sculpted in 28mm. Do I sense another Spartan Release on the horizon? I couldn't possibly comment. No seriously I couldn't comment because Neil wouldn't tell me, but what I can tell you is that in the Spartan Games office is a complete set of 28mm figures for each of the Uncharted Seas races.




Diagrams are always a good way to explain the game, and those in the rule book are some of the best I have seen. I know a lot of thought has gone into them because I have watched the guys at Spartan wrestle with the best way to illustrate a rule point. The fact is that the diagrams included in the book have gone through rigorous scrutiny (I helped do some of ones in the original book) and there are plenty of examples of how each game mechanic works from moving to shooting (open fire, all weapons) and ramming (standby to repel boarders)

The basic game mechanics (for those who have never seen or played Uncharted Seas) are deceptively simple:

1. Play cards (We will go into that later as it is an option)
2. Determine Initiative
3. Move
4. Combat
5. End Phase

OK so you all got that? Right I will move on.

Each ship has a set of stats.

 DRAGON LORDS ARCANE CLASS CRUISER						Range Band	Starboard	Port	Fore	Aft	Turrets
DR	CR	MOVE	HULL	CREW	RAM	1	6	6	-	-	-
4	6	9"	4	6	4	2	5	5	-	-	-
A Medium Capital Class Special Single Attachment ship Uses the Medium template for moving and firing Magical Sails mean the ship IGNORES the wind direction Deployed in squadrons of 2 to 4 Models You can attach 1 model to a Cruiser Squadron and it DOES count against the Squadron size Special Rules: Arcane Blast, Arcane Amplifier						3	4	4	-	-	-
						4	1	1	-	-	-
						Points Cost: 70					

Check www.spartangames.co.uk for the most up to date rules for this fleet.

DR – Damage Rating

CR - Critical Rating

Move – This is how far the unit can move per turn

Hull – The number of hit points each unit has before the unit is destroyed

Crew – pretty self-explanatory. Some offensive action may kill crew rather than do damage so you have to watch out. No Crew and the unit are useless.

Ram – This is the number of dice you roll when

ramming another unit.

Table detailing the types of guns, which way they face and how many dice you get at each of the range bands

Points Cost – use this when playing a certain number of points against you opponent so you have a balanced game.

Any other special things that the ship or crew can do, and in the situation you are allowed to use them, are included on the card as well. All the cards have been included in the back of the rule book so you can see what your opponent has in store for you.

So you have your ships, you have your crew and you have an opponent... let the carnage begin. (oops forgot to get the beer and snacks. Will be right back.....right drinks and food on board)

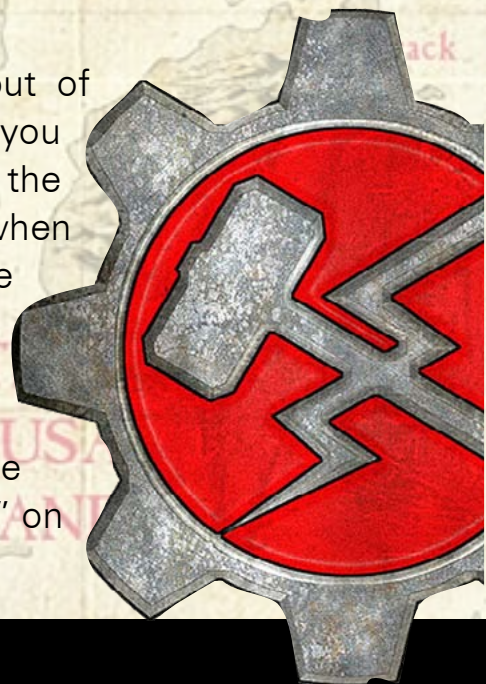
I mentioned the cards earlier so now, before we begin, would be a good time to go into what they are and what they do because if you are using them then there is the potential that you will use them at the beginning of the turn.



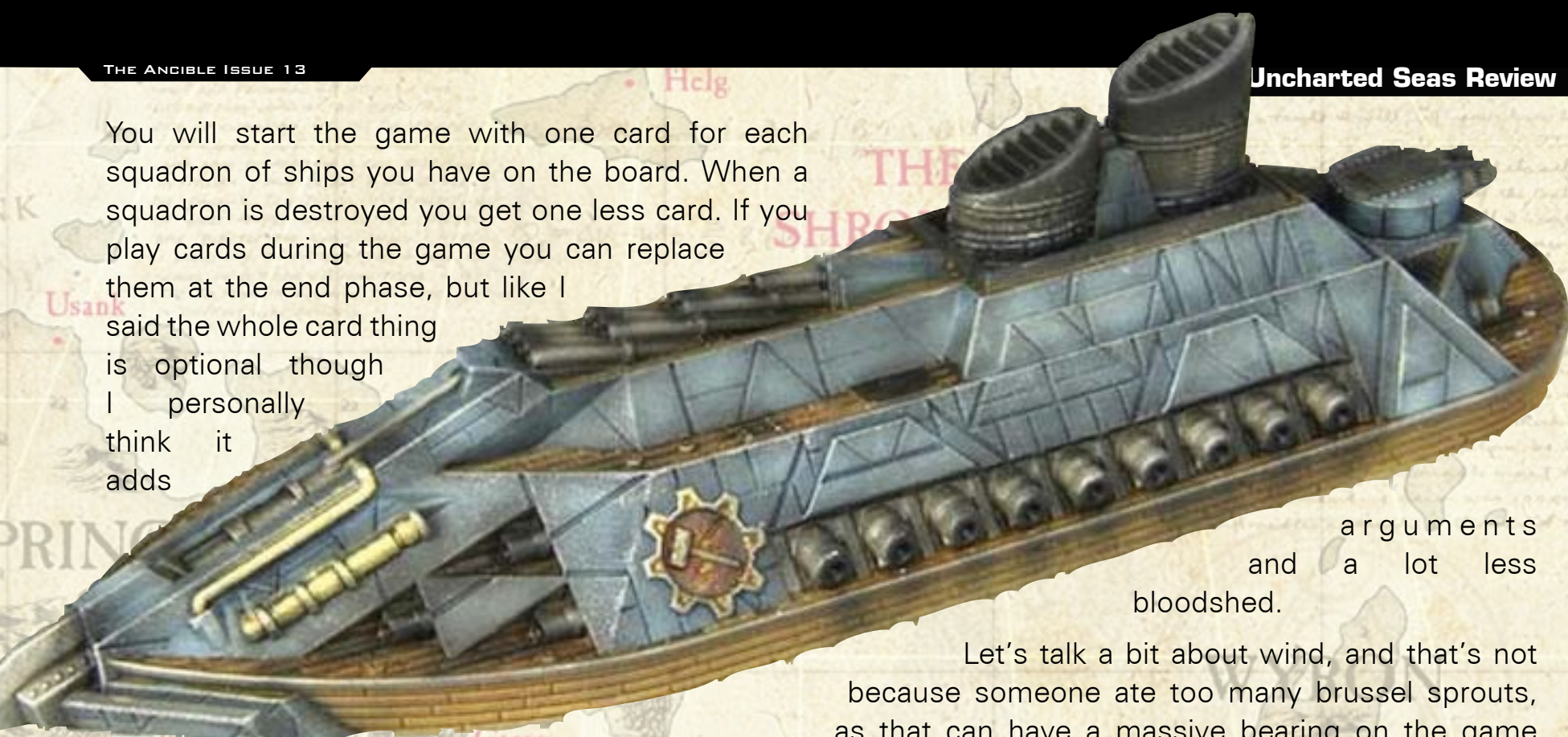
This is optional and you will need a deck of cards for your fleet. There are 26 cards in each deck and they are specific to your fleet with 13 generic cards and 13 fleet specific cards. For

example, the Iron Dwarfs are exceptional gunners and engineers therefore most of their specific cards allow for better shooting actions, which is horrible if you are on the receiving end of it.

Without copying the pages out of the book, these cards allow you to gain advantage or counter the advantage of your opponent when played. Depending on the type of card, it can be played at certain times of the game, meaning only certain cards can be played at the start of the turn. These normally have a "T" on them.



You will start the game with one card for each squadron of ships you have on the board. When a squadron is destroyed you get one less card. If you play cards during the game you can replace them at the end phase, but like I said the whole card thing is optional though I personally think it adds



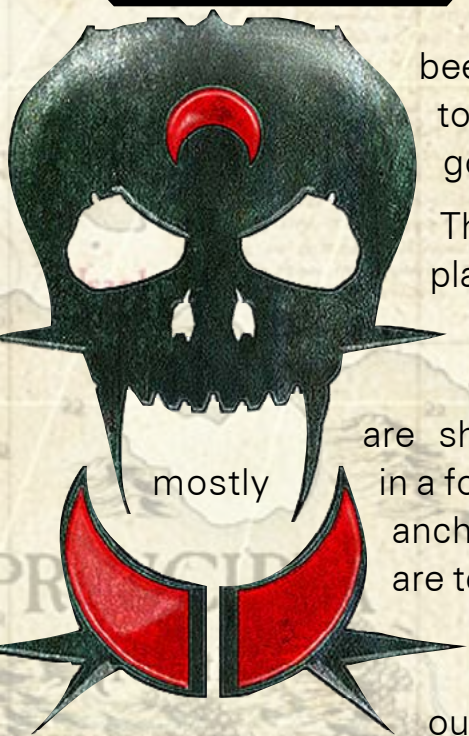
arguments and a lot less bloodshed.

a lot and can turn the tide of a battle with a couple of well-placed cards.

Initiative can be sorted in a number of ways. Marquis of Queensbury rules, who can run the fastest, whose house you are paying the game in, whose birthday it is, etc. I find it best to use a D6. It causes far less

Let's talk a bit about wind, and that's not because someone ate too many brussel sprouts, as that can have a massive bearing on the game especially if your fleet is reliant on wind for movement. One of the great cards is a change of wind direction which if played at the right point in the game can be a game winner. Some fleets don't rely on the wind and therefore can use these cards to their advantage, or like most of the rules you could choose to ignore the wind. That is the beauty of the way the rules have





been put together. If you are going to use wind then now would be a good time to do it.

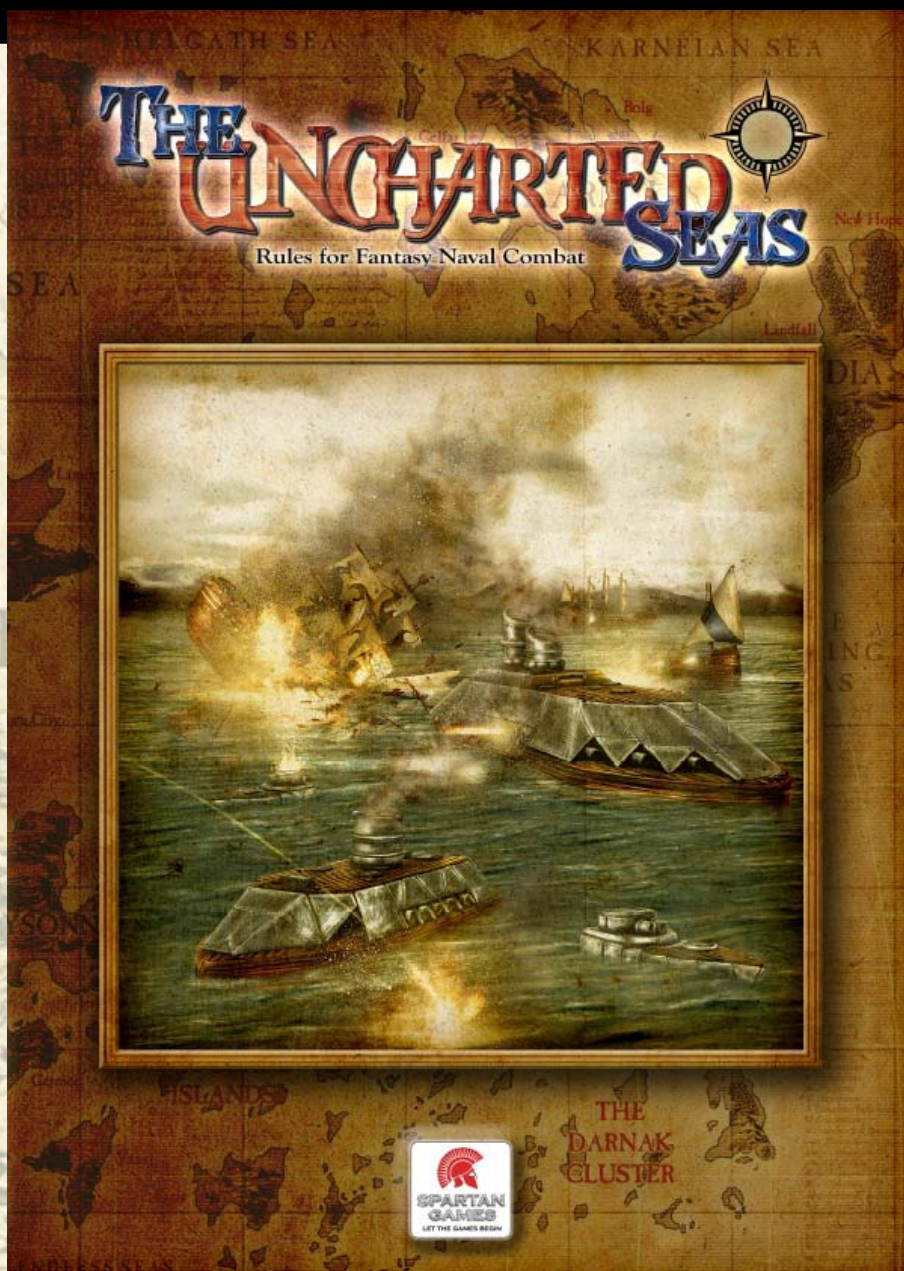
The scene is set, cards have been played and initiative has been decided. Let's have at it!

On the movement front, these are ships and therefore they move mostly in a forward direction, though you can anchor them if you so desire. There are templates included in the back of the rule book that show how turning the ships are worked out. This gets interesting when you get into the heat of battle because if you make a wrong turn you could end up crashing into islands, ships or other obstacles. The rules do have a place for deliberate ramming and that is worked out using the RAM rating. There are also rules for the accidental hitting of large obstacles like islands, though be prepared for a lot of ribbing from your friends for hitting an island. Not like they are not large and visible.

To resolve any offensive actions (shooting, ramming, etc.) you roll a number of d6 detailed on the stat card. For example: If you were firing a port broadside with a Dwarf Battleship at Range band 1 (8 inches) you would roll 16 dice. You require 4, 5 and 6 to hit your target and every 6 you roll counts as 2 hits and you get another dice to roll. I have seen those 16 dice turn into 24 hits.

You then use the DR and CR numbers to determine the damage you do. If you beat the DR then the ship take 1 point of damage if you beat the CR then the ship takes 2 points of damage and you get to roll on the Critical hit table where bad things happen. In past games I have seen an entire fleet go up in smoke because a large ship went boom, and took the rest of the fleet with it!

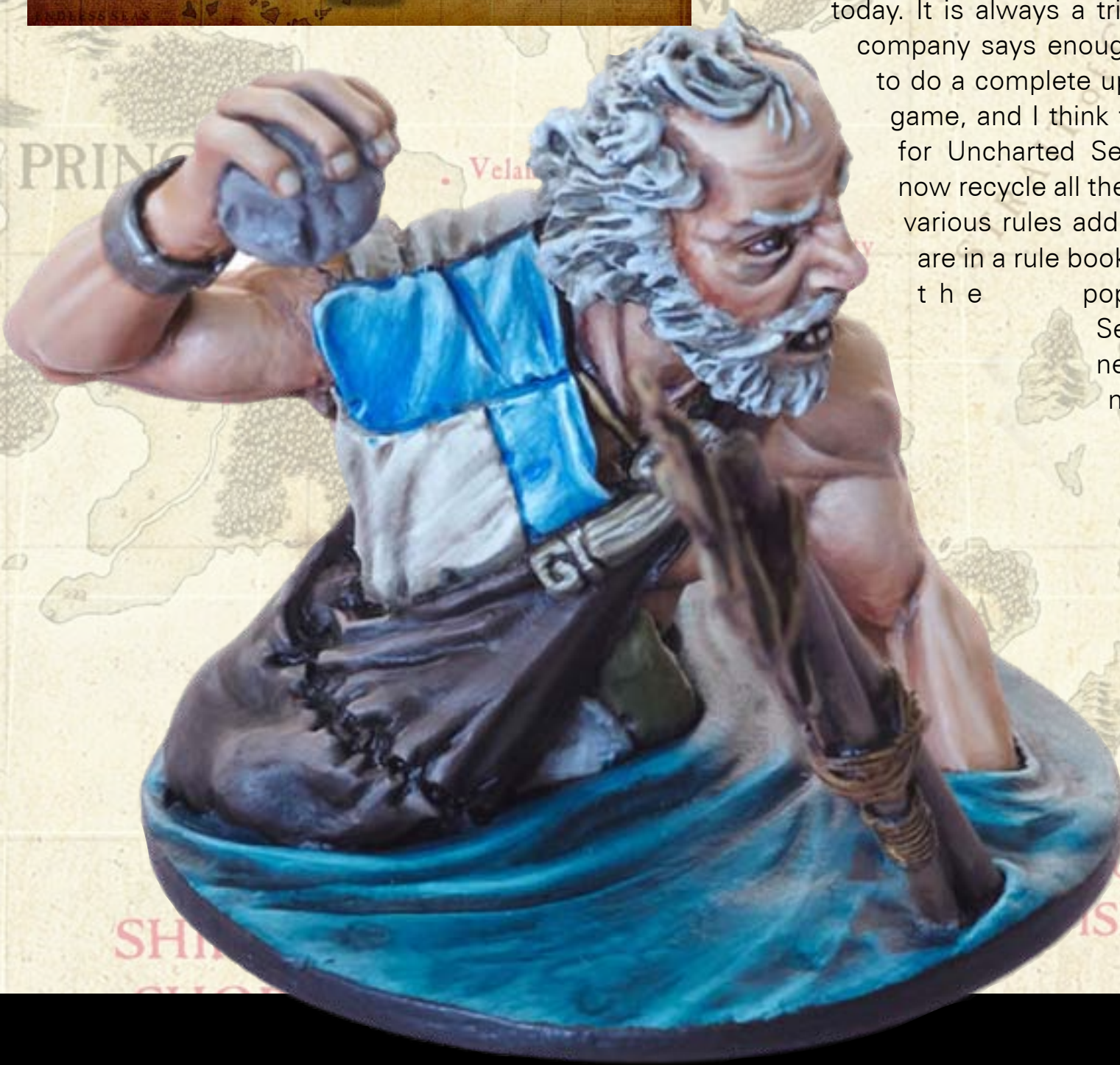




When ships get damaged the amount of damage has an effect on all the stats, so the overall dice that are rolled are adjusted based on the amount of damage taken. If you are unlucky enough to have crew killed then you may end up with a battleship that is floating along and is useless. We regularly ignore the crew rules because we can, and it does not lessen our enjoyment of the game or change the overall game experience.

We have talked a lot about ships but I haven't really talked about some of the other things that exist in the world of Uncharted Seas like dragons, monsters and airships. The thing to remember is that the stats cards are in the same format and any deviation to the rules are covered in a section specifically for that unit type. I think that one of the main things that make Uncharted Seas so easy to pick up is that the rules for these non-ship models just slot into the mechanic and work. There is no extra thought required. The mechanic is the same, just the stats are different.

In conclusion, the second edition of Uncharted Seas brings together all the rules additions and tweaks that have helped the game evolve into what it is today. It is always a tricky call as to when a company says enough is enough we need to do a complete update to the rules of a game, and I think that it was about time for Uncharted Seas to get one. I can now recycle all the bits of paper with the various rules additions cause now they are in a rule book. There is no doubting the popularity of Uncharted Seas, and if you have never played it then why not give it a go. If you love naval combat games it is simple, fast, fun and supported.



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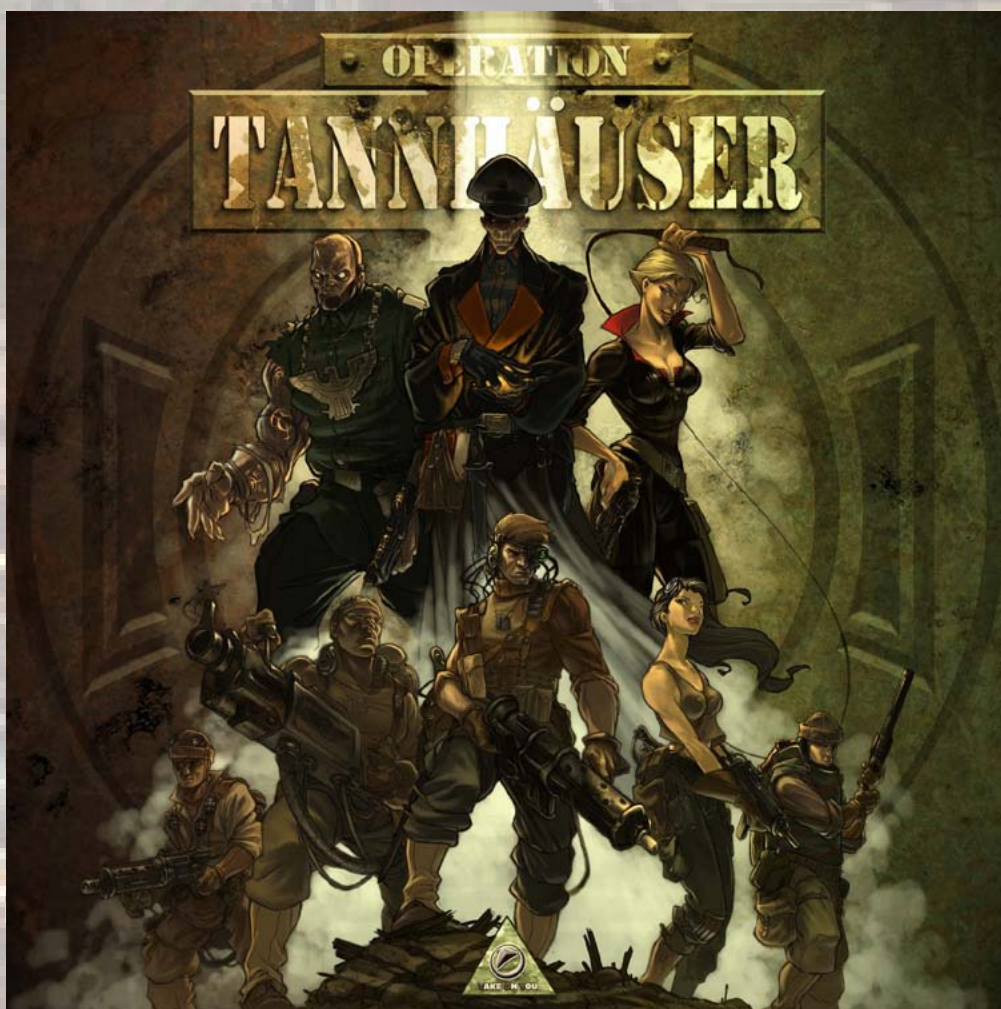
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TANNHÄUSER

BY JEZ "WWW" FAIRCLOUGH



popularity increase due to the fact that it has added not just extra board elements to the game, but also extra characters. This ensures that the game doesn't tire and the choices you made in the last game could change with the purchase of something new. It also has a rich fan base and support on the Fantasy Flight Games website (<http://www.fantasyflightgames.com>). Last year it updated the main rules and if you're still playing with the old ones I'd advise getting your hands on the new set. The changes while small do make some elements easier to understand.

So what's in the box?

Lots, though that's not really the answer you're after, is it?

1 double sided board.

10 Pre Painted Miniatures plus game cards.

170 Tokens which cover everything you need.

10, 10 sided dice.

"Tannhauser" isn't the first Weird World War board game we have looked at. In past issues we reviewed Secrets of the Third Reich spin off "Incursion", and its add-on "Snafu". Where they were based in the time line of a Second World War that hasn't stopped, Tannhauser is set in a world where the First World War is still on going. The game year is 1949 which means that the sides have been fighting for over 35 years. The earth is a mess as the Union (made up predominantly of Britain and America) fights against the forces of the Reich (Germany).

Much like Incursion, Tannhauser brings in the much needed advanced technology and occult element to the game, but is yet to go to the lengths that Incursion did. We don't have to worry about the Reich player running around with Zombies, Werewolves and Vampires. Well at least not as yet... The Reich player still has a good selection of occult characters including some possessed by Demons, so all is not lost if you enjoy that style of play.

As a game, Tannhauser isn't new to the market. It's been around for about five years, and has seen its





Similar to when we reviewed Claustrophobia, you're going to know you have Tannhauser. The board and all its contents are printed on 3mm good quality card stock, which should last a sensible person a long time.

The board, game cards and all the tokens are very well done and are also double sided. Some have faction symbols on them to make working out who has what easier. The tokens cover everything from Health indicators, to Objectives, Command points

and crates. I'd suggest using a pile of small clear bags to make storing and future identification easier. Okay, so pre-painted miniatures, but don't go picking any game on this alone. While it does mean you don't have to paint them to play, not that you do anyway, in many games, Monopoly for one, it does make it all look better. The standard is about as good as most I've seen on the market and if you have the time, a few gentle washes and some highlighting wouldn't go amiss on most of them either.



As already mentioned, there are more box sets like Novgorod which introduces the Matriarchy (Soviets) to the Tannhauser game and these come with additional models and tokens. Even the single model packs like Wolf or Ramirez have a pre-painted model, plus game card and any tokens required. If you find yourself really getting into the game then I'd advise you to buy the equipment pack which has a lot of stuff on cards. It makes searching for some elements a lot quicker and also brings in information from various sources into a single location. That alone in any game has to be very helpful to new and old players alike.

The Rules

Most games out there can be defined by what makes them different from the hundred other games on the market, and trying to find that element for any company can be very hard. In Tannhauser, the unique element that hasn't been done in any other game system is the pathfinder system. This deals with Line of Site, so where in some games you can find a question on whether you can see someone who's just partially around the corner, pathfinder solves this. All over the board are coloured circles; some are a single colour some might be made up of multiple colours. What these colours signify is who can see who and in

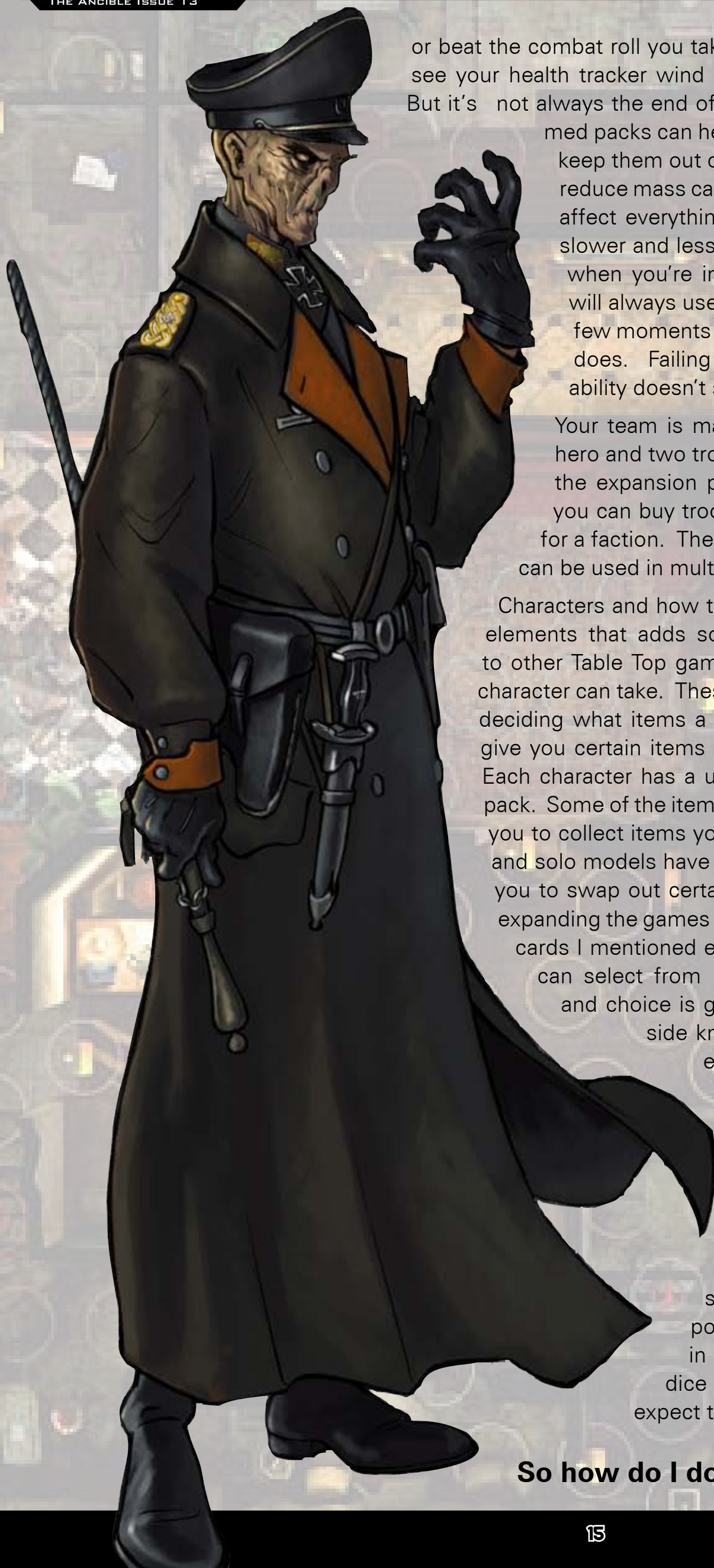
turn attack or interact with whom. If you want to shoot an enemy and you both share the same circle colour either fully or partially, then you can. Factors like range only matter with grenades and a few other items.

Pathfinder works and it does make it easy to work things out. The only thing that can make it hard is the mood of the maps. Done in a dark forbidding way the maps look great, but it can mean that the colours on the circles don't stand out and you need to use the tactical maps in the rule book to make sure what you think is a pale green is exactly that colour. I know it's a small thing, and with game time you know anyway, but it's something to think on.

So Line of Sight is sorted, and a small annoyance in every game is resolved, but what about the rest of the rules? Well to be honest, they are kept pretty simple as well. The target number for everything is ten minus the current value of the stat you're using. So if you have a Combat (used for shooting/unarmed) of five which means you need five or more to hit the target. The amount of dice your rolling as with most games is defined by the piece of equipment you're using plus or minus and bonuses you might gain from other equipment, board effects or rules.

When shot at you get to save any wounds using the models stamina stat, the roll needed is the same as combat and each success directly removes any successes made on the combat roll. If you equal





or beat the combat roll you take no damage; if you don't, any left will see your health tracker wind downwards and your stats get worse. But it's not always the end of the character. Crates and models with med packs can help you heal as long as you find a way to keep them out of harms way (avoid grouping models to reduce mass carnage by Grenades). Getting injured can affect everything you do in the game as you become slower and less able to shot people and also shake off when you're injured as well. Some abilities though, will always use your best stat so it's worth spending a few moments to make sure you know what everything does. Failing to do so can mean that all important ability doesn't save you when you thought it would.

Your team is made up of a max of five models, three hero and two troops, although the box has just enough, the expansion packs give you more hero options and you can buy troop boxes to give you one of each troop for a faction. There are also mercenaries and heroes that can be used in multiple factions.

Characters and how they work in the game is another of the elements that adds some uniqueness to the rules. Similar to other Table Top games, you can decide what equipment a character can take. These are broken into packs with each pack deciding what items a person carry, so a command pack will give you certain items that you might not get in another one. Each character has a unique item that he/she/it gets in every pack. Some of the items are also one-use wonders which allow you to collect items you might find later. Future supplements and solo models have brought in additional options that allow you to swap out certain items of a pack for new ideas, thus expanding the games playability. This is where the equipment cards I mentioned earlier come in very handy. Each model can select from 1 of the 4 pack options, so selection and choice is good. This is also done blind so neither side knows what packs have been picked for each model. For me, that's just how it needs to be or you find people really try to counter one thing they think is a game winner rather than just playing the game.

The game mechanics aside, the actual playing of it is very easy. Models move in a one model per side system until all have moved. Command points gained in each turn, or if you're lucky in crates, allow you to boost stats, re-roll dice and other things you would normally expect to see.

So how do I do to win?

Tannhauser has various ways of playing the game, and they really all decide on how quick or complex you want to get. For instance, Deathmatch mode is a simple mode with the last man/women/thing standing claiming victory for his side. Capture the Flag requires each side to try and stay alive to capture the enemy flag tokens, the winner being the one who captures two of his enemies before it happens to him. The most complicated and one of the best is Objective mode. Each character has certain skills and each objective needs people with the right skill to unlock them. So you have to play carefully. You can't just throw a model away because it helps for that round as you may need them later on to unlock an objective which can win you the game. The game also allows you to complete the enemy's objectives and in doing so, steal their glory.

The game can be played a lot of different ways if you expand and use more than just the box set you increase your options adding new models to help play the game in a different way. It means the game isn't the same as last time as you don't know what kit the other side is bringing and you don't always know how that's going to effect what your doing as well.

The website, rules and expansion also add scenarios. These short stories have certain objectives and can

dictate exactly what you can bring to the game. But like any decent game, lots of choice keeps you interested and keeps the game fresh.

Playability?

More than once in this review I've mentioned that Tannhauser has a lot of add ons, and that alone means that the game isn't static and can be played beyond what's in the main box. The recent addition of a Japanese faction shows that FFG haven't stopped the games expansion either, and for any gamer - table top or the ever expanding warboarder (new term to use and say I used it firstJ) - will harken to this. While buying everything for the game will set you back a fair amount, being able to add in bite size chunks means certain elements are good suggestions for birthdays and anniversaries, etc.

I mentioned that the FFG forum has an area dedicated to Tannhauser, and you can find quite a few fan-created scenarios and rules. Some come with some amazingly well done coloured maps and will give the avid player more to play with.

If you're into Weird War, you couldn't do yourself any harm by picking up Tannhauser and seeing what it has to offer.





- Stat cards for the ship sin the box
- Turning templates
- Various counters for tracking hits and crew losses as well as some of the more specialised counters
- An A5 booklet all about one of the races (obviously this will be about the one you bought in the box)
- A quick start rule book

All the cards, templates and tokens are printed on a semi laminated card for extra durability and the booklets are 16 page A5 paper cover publications in full colour. These are very good as they not only give you background into your chosen race but they also allow you to play a version of the game straight away. This is a big bonus for gamers as it allows them to get a taste of the game without having to buy a full rule book.

If you have all been paying attention they you will have already red the Uncharted Seas review. So the next questions that I can hear you all asking yourselves is "So what are the models like and what do I get in a starter set box?" (in this case the Dragon Lords)

Spartan Games have just re-released the starter sets for Uncharted Seas and wouldn't it be nice to know what they have put in the new box sets. As I remember the first starter sets had just the models and then everything else was either in the back of the rule book or could be downloaded from the web site.

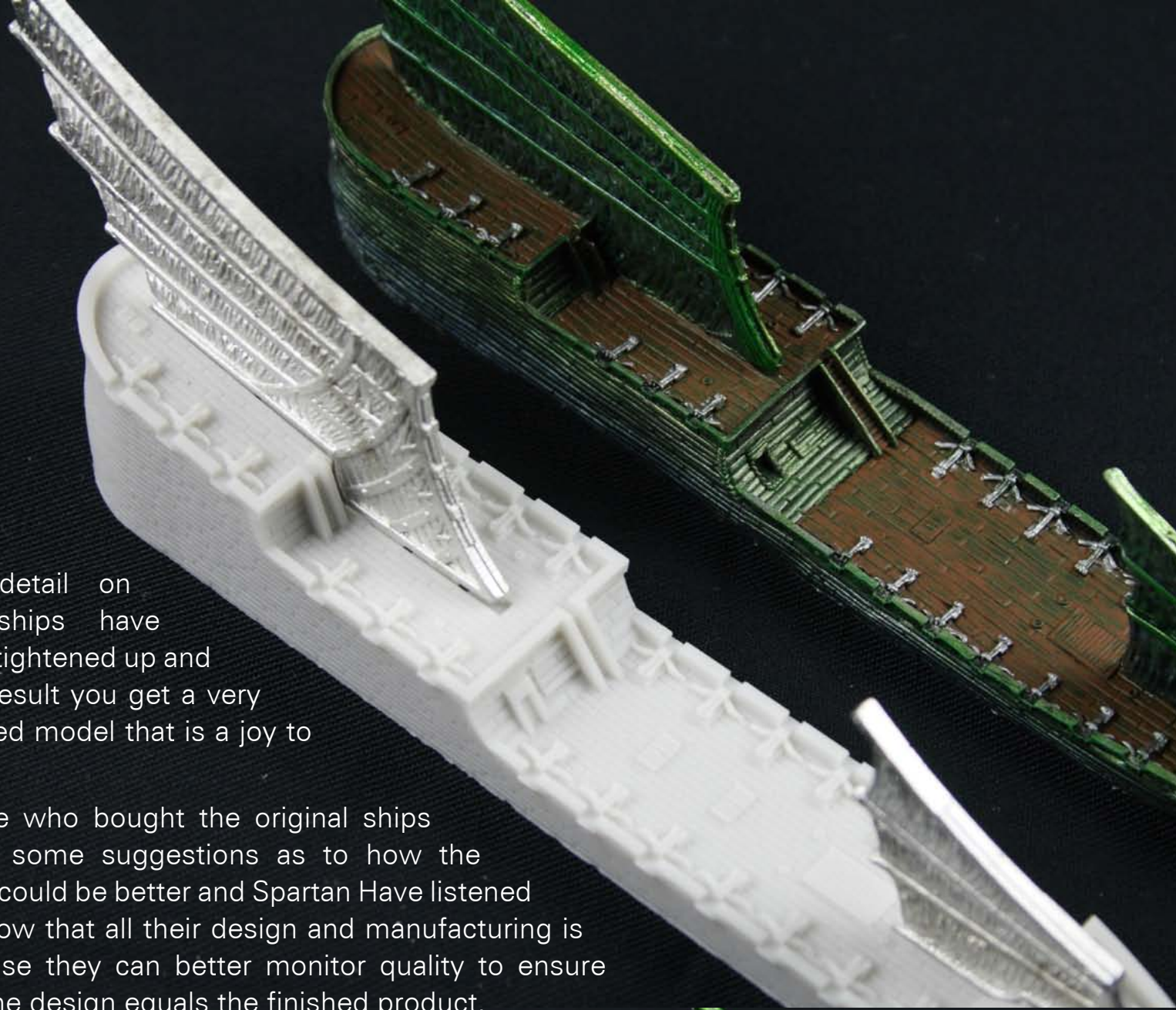
The guys at Spartan obviously listened to the suggestions and as well as getting the ship models you also get

The ships that come in the Dragon Lords Starter Set are 1 Battleship, 3 Cruisers and 6 Frigates. This is pretty much the standard configuration of a starter set and will get you up and running with a legal and usable fleet that can be played against any of the other starter Fleets.

The models are made from resin with metal sails and this combination can be found throughout the range of ships. When I compare the new models to the original models there have been some changes made and this is probably down to the design and manufacturing techniques that Spartan have employed. The basic design has remained the same though the ships have been shaped and tidied up, not that the originals were bad, and there is now a lot more consistency in the moulding. Some of my original ships have somewhat less than straight lines on the hull. I for one think it adds character but it was something that was introduced at manufacturing and was never meant to be there.

The sails have also been re-designed to fit with the new ship designs. They are slightly larger and slightly thicker with some extra detail added.





The detail on the ships have been tightened up and as a result you get a very detailed model that is a joy to paint.

People who bought the original ships made some suggestions as to how the ships could be better and Spartan Have listened and now that all their design and manufacturing is in-house they can better monitor quality to ensure that the design equals the finished product.

I like to think of the original models as being battle worn but maybe that's just me. These new ships hopefully put all the original production daemons to rest and what you get are a fleet of highly detailed well thought out ships that even unpainted look great setting sail on the Tabletop sea in search of adventure and glory.





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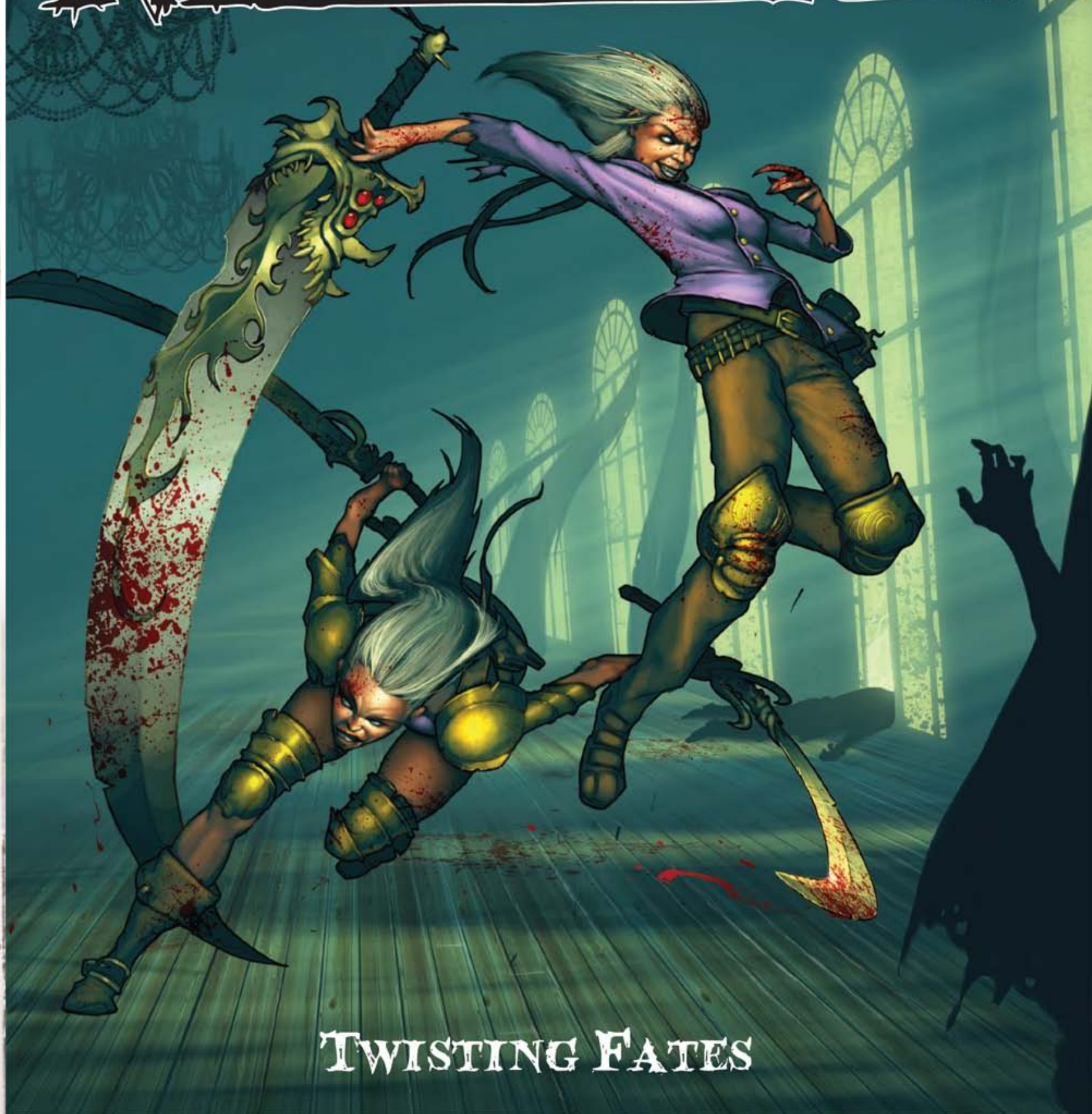
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WYRD MINIATURES

MALIFAU



TWISTING FATES

REVIEW BY TIMOTHY COLONNA

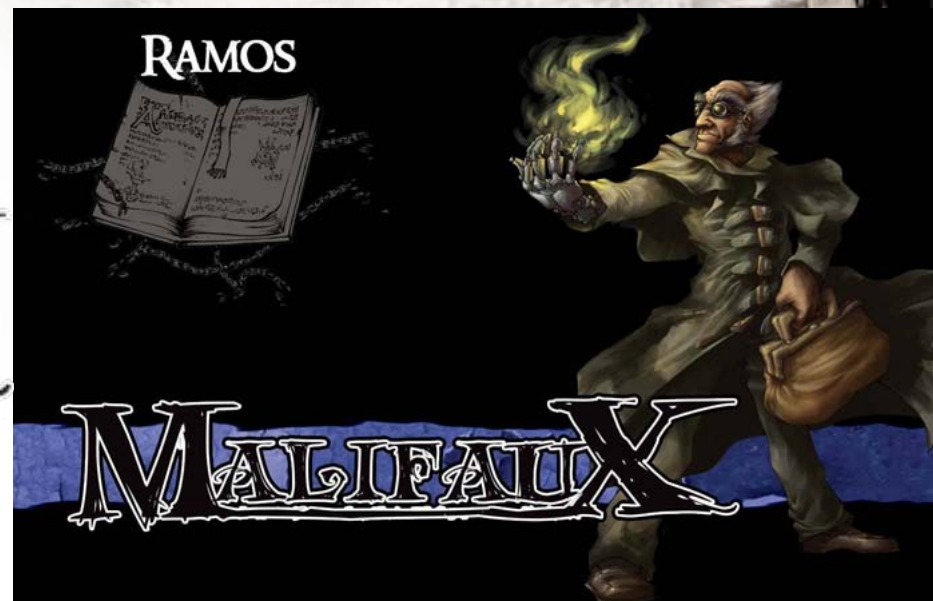
hunted by the guild, but feared for their awesome powers.



Malifaux is a Steampunk 28mm miniatures game that was released in 2009. The game has garnered quite a bit of popularity over the years and the latest expansion has been well received by the player community. Based in an alternate reality/universe, Malifaux tells the tales of factions vying for control of the City of Malifaux. Malifaux draws from the old west, horror, Steampunk, and fantasy to create a world quite unlike others seen in the more mainstream gaming circles. One of the most interesting features of the game is that it is played with a deck of cards instead of dice.

Malifaux features five factions that fight in the streets for control.

The Guild is the controlling human faction of Malifaux. They control the city through fear and a heavy handed approach to law. Their highest priority is with maintaining control of the soulstone production. Soulstone is a supernatural substance that allows the wielder to perform incredible feats.



Dead and decay are the playthings of the Resurrectionists. Where other factions vie for control of soulstones, these individuals seek ancient rituals and secrets that allow for control over the indeed they raise.



Born of nightmares, the Neverborn are truly the monsters from our dreams. The original inhabitants of Malifaux, these creatures live for nothing but havoc and mayhem, and to torment the new immigrants of the land whenever the opportunity arises.



The Arcanists would be considered the witches and warlocks of Malifaux. These human underground practitioners of magic are





Wyrd
MINIATURES



Lith

The Outcasts are a collection of all those that don't fit into the other factions. Mercenaries, Goblins, and other vagrants and miscreants make up this faction. Don't take them for granted though as they are just as deadly in a fight as any guild or Neverborn crew.

SOM'ER TEETH JONES



September saw the release of the latest book for Malifaux. Amid the usual addition of models to your existing crews, they added the avatar system. This system is one of the most unique and robust additions to the game since its launch. It adds character and depth without being overpowered in a gaming environment.

The avatar system is a new mechanic that for a few soulstone points lets you transform your master into a new more powerful version of them. The mechanics to get each avatar out are different. So depending on your master it may be easy or hard to bring your avatar onto the table. Coupled with fantastic new models, they make for a great addition to the game.

Each avatar has two unique manifestation requirements that may be achieved to bring the avatar onto the table faster. Regardless of these steps, an avatar will always hit the table at some point in the game as long as your master is still alive. These requirements may include slaying a model or casting certain spells, but most are easily achievable for the masters for whom they are tied. Once you achieve manifestation several things occur. First you remove all totems from the master. You then replace the model with the appropriate avatar model and may discard a soulstone to immediately make a healing flip. You replace their stat card with the new

stat card for the remainder of the game and then continue the models activation, as the manifestation occurs immediately when the requirements are met so you could manifest right in the middle of combat! Each avatar includes its own stat card that modifies, enhances and changes many of the master's already powerful abilities. Some masters, like the dreamer, add new and interesting effects to the table. When he comes into play you pick a mark of imagination that will affect the rest of the game. Cops and Robbers, for example gives all friendly nightmares hunter and all enemy models scout. Hide and seek gives all ranged attacks against your nightmares – ranged flips, but positive melee flips. As you can see this can lead to very interesting gameplay.

The models for the new avatars are over the top fantastic. Each model is virtually a diorama in its own right. Zoria conjures up a look at her earlier self in the bayou. Kirai takes her ultimate place as a spirit herself. Pandora unleashes the unbridled power of her box.

Along with the avatars the book includes many new minions for your existing crews. Of note each faction gains a new effigy minion which also has the doll special forces keyword. I suspect that there will be future uses of this keyword. It also bolsters the Collodi and Zoraida who can use the doll keyword in their crews.

All in all I think the book is a great addition to the game, filling in some holes in the minion sphere and adding the very interesting Avatar system. Not to mention the fact that this book is packed chock full of stories and fluff that showcase the rich lore that is the backbone of the Malifaux universe. MSRP on the book is \$35.00 USD.



Watching Paint Dry

By Andy Walker



Ahoy there, hello and Happy New Year!

We're on the high seas for this issue's "Watching Paint Dry", specifically a fleet of ships for Spartan Games "Uncharted Seas". I've not painted sea ships before, so when our glorious leader asked what fleet I'd like to paint, I went for one of the most ornate fleets with large sails and plenty of cannons.

Yes, I do like a challenge.

So with a barrel of rum on standby and some sea shanties playing in the background it was time to open the box and plan how I was going to paint my fleet.

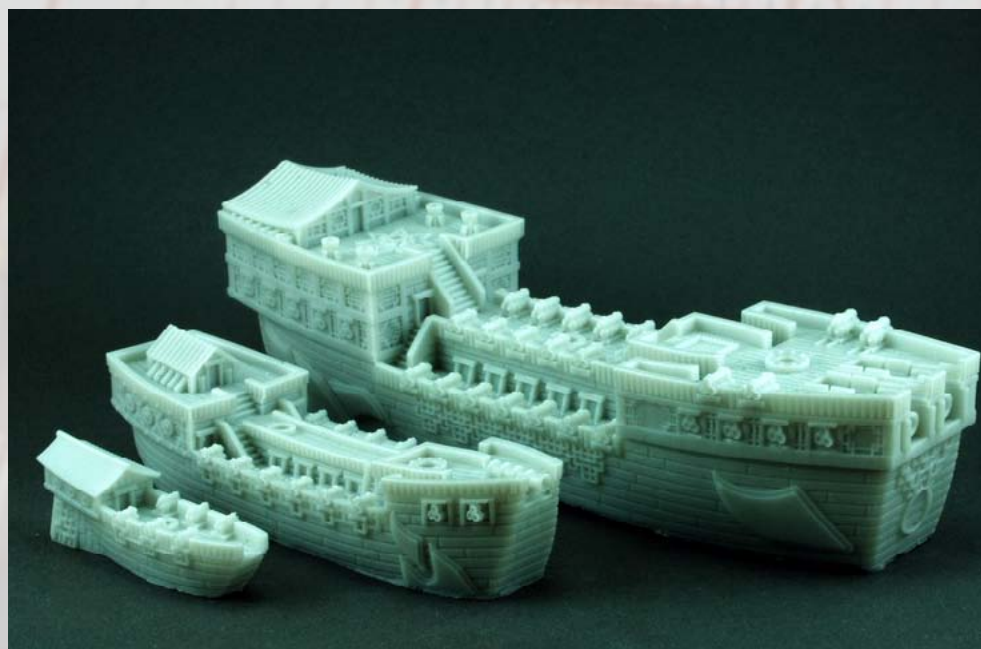
Disclaimer: The Anatomy of a Ship

I'm no expert when it comes to sailing ships, so I had to do a little research on the internet as to what certain parts of the ships are called. I knew the basics, but I didn't know the names for the different masts on the ships, or lots of other "technical" stuff. Sailors and Naval people, please don't judge me...

Port is the right side of the ship, yes?

- 1 x Vantak Battleship
- 3 x Kalor Cruisers
- 6 x Hantak Frigates
- Stat cards for all the vessels
- Templates
- 16 page quick start rulebook
- 16 page fleet guide

The only thing extra you'll need to play is an opponent with a fleet and some dice!



The ships themselves are quite a bit bigger than I expected them to be (according to the box they are 1/600th scale), and the battleship seems huge. The ships are all multi-piece, with resin hulls, and mainly metal sails, the only exception being the mainsail of the battleship which is resin (on account of its size I'm assuming). The hulls are good solid pieces of resin, well cast with minimal flash, which only required a little scraping with a hobby knife or some light sanding with a file or paper to rectify. The detail

Treasure Chest: Whats in the Box

Box Contents

The starter box sets for Uncharted Seas have everything you need to get started with your fleet:

is excellent, especially on the battleship and the cruisers, with their batteries of curious 3 barrelled cannon and the fine metalwork decoration on the forecastle and stern. There were a few flaws, but nothing that couldn't be fixed with some remedial sculpting, or in most cases, careful painting.

The resin sail had a lot more flash than the hulls, but again this was easily cleaned up. The metal sails had much more visible mold lines that had to be sanded down, but again this was not too serious and certainly matches up well against the majority of miniature manufacturers currently. Cleaning up the sails certainly made me appreciate the rounded metalwork file I have, which allowed me to match the curvature of the sculpting when filing off the mould lines. If you don't have an electric rotary hobby tool such as a Dremel (and to be honest, even if you are lucky enough to have one), I would definitely recommend getting a set of small files for this sort of task - your local hobby store should have a selection of them in the tools section.

WARNING: As many of the parts in the fleet are resin it's important to take precautions when working with it. If possible try to work outside when sanding, and wear a facemask - these aren't expensive and are readily obtainable from all Do-It-Yourself/Home Improvement stores

The Ralgard: "Keepers of the Blood Oath"

Before getting started on the painting, I did a little research to understand what I was painting. A read through of the Ralgard fleet book that comes with the box set showed them to be a savage warlike race, delighting in bloodshed - definitely not the sort to be singing jolly sea shanties in taverns! For all my Ancible articles so far I've painted the "good guys", so it was nice to indulge the Dark Side for a change, and paint something nasty and evil.

Red: With the (not so subtle) subtitle "Keepers of the Blood Oath", this fleet had to have some red on it somewhere. Flicking through the fleet book, I imagined how the sight of blood red sails on the horizon would strike fear into ships' crews and seaside communities - therefore dark red sails were a must. I wanted to avoid the red dominating the colour scheme though, the "evil + blood = dominant

red colour" scheme has been done to death across fantasy and science fiction wargaming, so the red was limited to the sails.

Gold: Here I did keep with "fantasy convention" and used gold for a lot of the metallic decoration. Gold and red work so well together, and there is a lot of ornate metalwork on the ships, so the combination looks good.

Black: One thing I did keep from the Spartan Games studio colour scheme was the black hulls of the ships. This wasn't too difficult a choice really, a natural wood colour would have looked a little drab and dull, a bright colour just wouldn't have worked as part of an "evil" colour scheme, and a dark green (an earlier idea I had) would have resulted in a "Christmas" theme to the ships - definitely not appropriate!

Ivory: Looking at the amount of trim and decoration on the ships, I was concerned that there could be too much gold, so I wanted to use a second colour that would compliment all the other colours. I settled on an ivory colour - I figured that as the Ralgard are a pretty unpleasant bunch, who glorify bloodshed and killing, they might use the bones of slain animals (or enemies) to decorate their ships.

So with a colour scheme fixed in my head, I set out to paint my fleet...

Painting the Fleet

Before I started working on the ships, I made the decision to paint the hull and sails separately. While gluing everything together and then painting the whole ship would have made painting the sails simpler and quicker, having the sails in the way would make painting the details on the decks much more difficult. In my opinion the details on the decks are some of the most interesting parts of the ships, so I wanted as much access to those areas as possible. This slowed the whole process down a bit, but it was worth it - if a miniature has interesting bits to paint, you want to give yourself as much opportunity as possible to enjoy painting them, and do a good job.

One important note though - if you paint miniatures in this way, you need to ensure that the bits fit together before you paint them; you really do not want to have to be filing down parts that you've just spent time and effort on making look good. All it takes is one slip of the file (or hobby knife)...

Also when painting individual pieces, make sure you

have the orientation of the piece correct when you paint it, so you get the shadows and highlights in the right place. You may also need to think about shadows cast on one piece by another. A dry run of construction before you start painting (use blu-tac to hold the pieces together) can help you visualise this.

With the colour scheme of the fleet being reasonably dark, I sprayed on a black undercoat. As per usual with a spray undercoat by yours truly, I missed a couple of bits, and this was touched up with brush applied black paint.

Keel-hauled: Painting the Hull



With the base coat already done via the black undercoat, painting the main part of the hulls was reasonably straightforward:



- First highlight: A strong dry-brush of Vallejo German Grey, with the largest of the dry-brushes. This leaves only the very recessed parts of the wooden hull black, and brings the rest up to a dark grey.



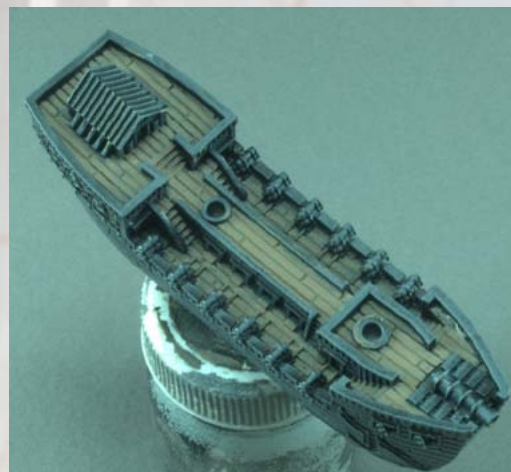
- Second highlight: A lighter dry-brush of GW Codex Grey - making sure to only dry-brush from the top of the hull downwards, this caught the top edges of the wooden planking. This does leave the black areas of the hull a little too light and chalky looking, but this is fixed by the final stage



- Wash: Washing GW Badab Black over the hull tones down the highlights, and returns the hull to a more appropriate black.

All Hands on Deck: Painting the Decking

I decided to do the decking next as most of the other elements sat on top of it. I didn't want to use black here as it would have been hard to distinguish the deck from the sides. I also didn't want to deviate too much from the general colour scheme, so compliment the gold and ivory, I went for a khaki colour:



- Base coat: Thinned GW Khemri Brown was applied in a couple of coats - even a foundation paint needs a couple of layers to go over a black undercoat.



- Shade: Unsurprisingly I used GW Devlan Mud to shade the deck.



- First highlight: A fairly heavy dry-brush of Khemri Brown was laid on - here I ensured that I dry-brushed in all directions, away from the sides and details, so that I caught all the edges of the deck planks.



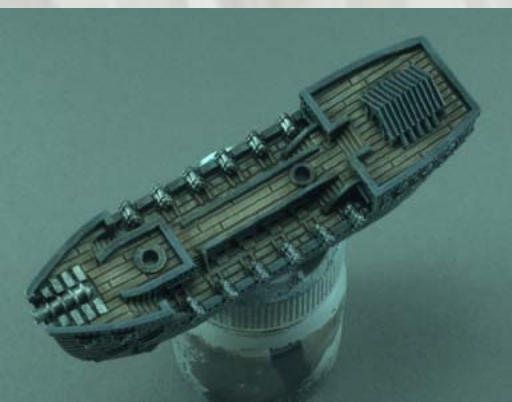
- Second highlight: A lighter dry-brush of GW Dhenab Stone was applied in the same way, concentrating on the more open areas of the decking.

When to dry-brush?

You'll have noticed already that I've used dry-brushing quite a lot - on the hulls of the ships there are very few smooth surfaces, and the planking on much of the ship is densely sculpted, so painting the highlights with a fine detail brush would be a laborious task. So careful dry-brushing is a sensible option.

Broadside: Painting the Cannon

With the major part of the hull done it was on to the metallics. First up were the cannon, which I wanted to keep these reasonably muted. In the real world the cannon would be black, but that doesn't look particularly good on a small scale fantasy model ship, so I went for a darker metallic look.



- Base coat: Thinned GW Boltgun Metal was applied in a single coat. I cheated a little here, when painting the black hull I made sure to dry-brush the cannon too - this meant there was already a dark grey(ish) basecoat for them, making it only necessary for one coat of the metallic paint.

- Shade: Badab Black was applied heavily to really darken the metal.

- First highlight: Boltgun Metal was carefully applied to the top surfaces and edges of the cannon with a fine detail brush.

- Final highlight: GW Chainmail was very lightly dry-brushed, using the smallest dry-brush, on to the mouths of the cannon.

Not-so-Buried-Treasure: Painting Gold

I wanted to avoid a particularly orange or yellow gold for these ships, firstly to avoid a "Christmassy" look, and secondly to do something a little different to the standard fantasy red and gold scheme. Lastly, as the Ralgard are not human, I wanted the gold colour to be a little more alien/mystical, as if it had come from somewhere mysterious.



- Base coat: Thinned P3 Blighted Gold was applied in a couple of coats. I like Blighted Gold as it's a green gold colour (very similar to the very old and out-of-production GW Shining Gold), and it achieves that alien/mystical quality I talked about above.

- Shade: The old faithful GW Devlan Mud is liberally applied.



- First highlight: The Blighted Gold was reapplied to the top faces and edges, either by painting with a fine details brush - as in

the decorative plates closer to the waterline, or dry-brushed - as in the fine metalwork on the forecastle and stern. Again I made sure that all the dry-brushing was done from the top of the hull downwards to pick out the top edges.



- Second highlight: As with the first highlight I used both methods to add a lighter highlight of a 1:1 mix of Blighted

Gold and GW Mithril Silver.

I'm really pleased with the results of this - it's not so in your face as a yellow/orange gold would have been and it works well against the khaki decking and stands out well against the black hull, without being gaudy.

Skulls and Crossbones: Painting Ivory

With the major elements of the hull done now came the fun part.

OK, maybe not. As you can see from the pictures the trim strips that I painted bone comprise a top line and lots and lots of little downward pointing "teeth". There was no way I was going to be able to paint these individually and retain what little I have left of my sanity, so I *kind of dry-brushed* it.

- I thinned Dheneb Stone only a little, so that it was much thicker than I would usually use, but thin enough to flow properly.
- I took the GW large brush, and flattened the brush a little.
- Without too much paint on the brush, I drew it horizontally across the teeth, making sure that the brush is flat against the teeth, and applying the paint with the side of the bristles, rather than the tip.



The indentations between the teeth are deep enough that the paint won't go in, and as the Dheneb Stone is a little thicker, it covers the individual teeth well enough that it doesn't require another coat. With the base coat completed, the next steps were straightforward.

- Shade: GW Gryphon Sepia was carefully applied to all the ivory areas, being careful to not let it spread to other parts of the model.



- First highlight: Dheneb Stone was dry-brushed across all the ivory elements, making sure to catch all of the top and vertical edges and avoid getting the paint on anything else - a Dheneb Stone highlight is very obvious if you get it on something else.

- Final highlight: Pure white is the lightly dry-brushed over the top edges and faces to pick them out against the deck and the gold.

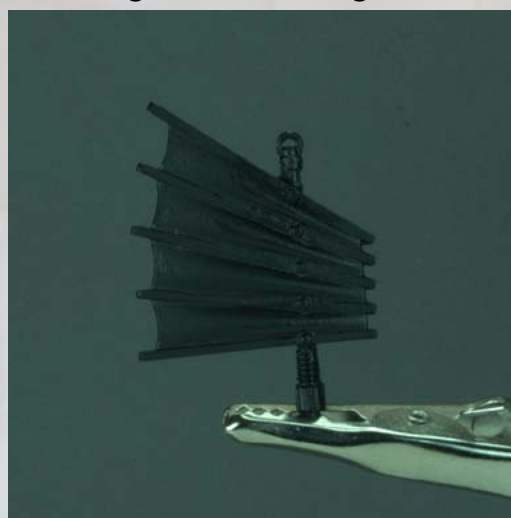
There are a number of different ways to paint a bone/ivory colour, and it's just a matter of preference. As this is ornamentation on a ship, it's likely to be polished and clean, so the method I used works well. If I was to paint a recently raised skeleton warrior, then the bone colour would be darker and dirtier, perhaps using Khemri Brown as a base coat and a Devlan Mud wash, then not using a pure white final highlight.

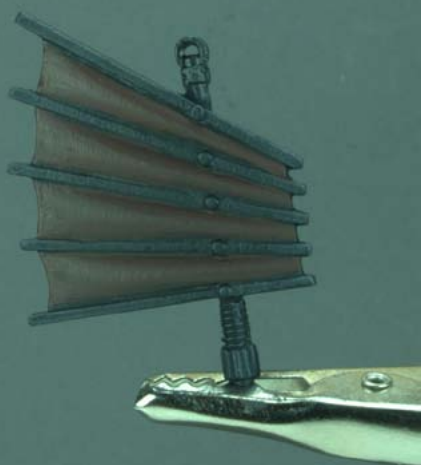
But that's for another article...

Hoist the Sails: Painting the...errr...sails

The black yard arms and masts, and gold decoration were painted in the same way as I had on the hull, so I won't go over that again. The next bits to paint were

the sails themselves - as I'd mentioned at the start, I wanted them to be a blood red (better to scare the enemy with), so the red had to have more of a dark brownish hue than a bright orange one.





- **Base coat:** A number of thinned GW Scorched Brown coats were applied - as Scorched Brown isn't a foundation paint, it needed 3 or 4 thin coats to provide a good solid base.



- **Shade:** A careful and not too heavy wash of Devlan Mud.



- **First highlight:** A 1:1 mix of Scorched Brown and GW Scab Red (appropriately named) was blended in to the top parts of the sails. The sails are sculpted to look like they're billowing out due to them being filled - so on the front of the sails, the highlights worked from the top of each sail segment downwards, and on the back, the highlights worked from the bottom of each segment into the billow, around halfway up.



- **Second highlight:** Pure Scab Red was blended in, following the same pattern as above.



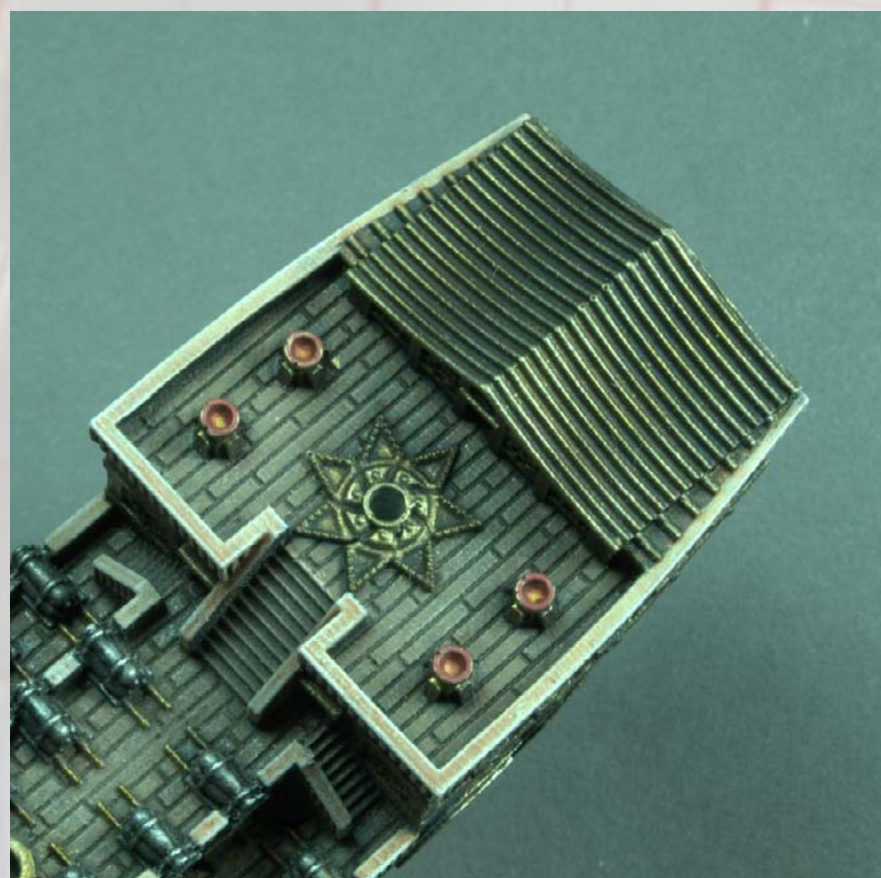
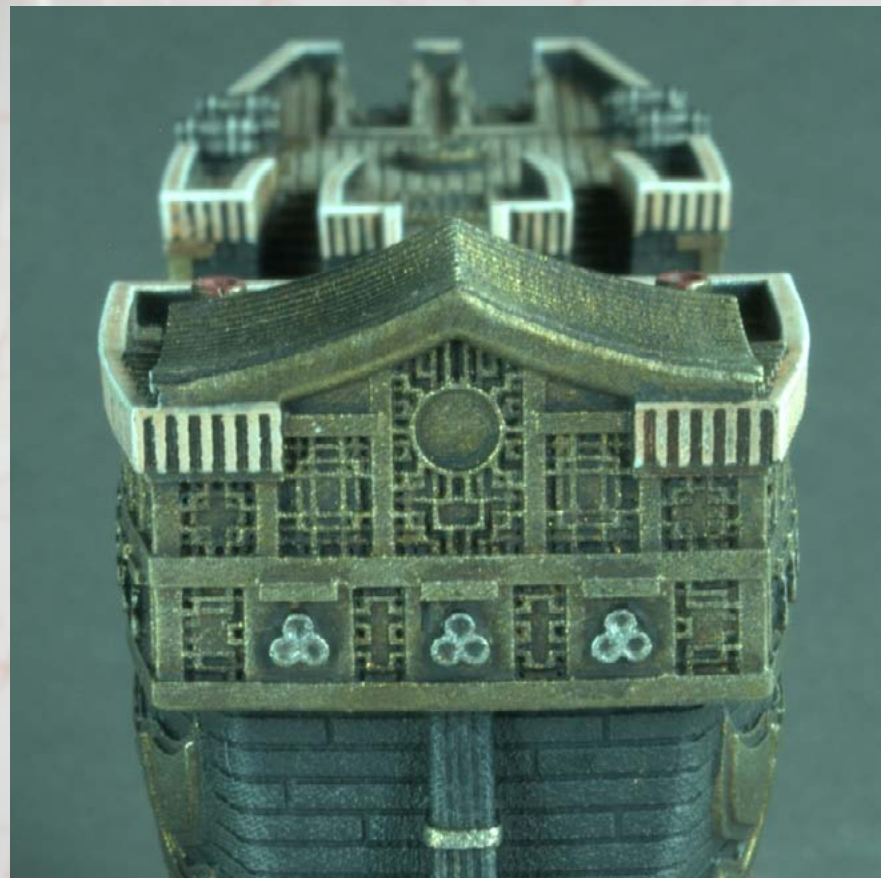
- **Final highlight:** A 1:1 mix of Scab Red and GW Snakebite Leather was blended in at the extremes of each side of the sail.

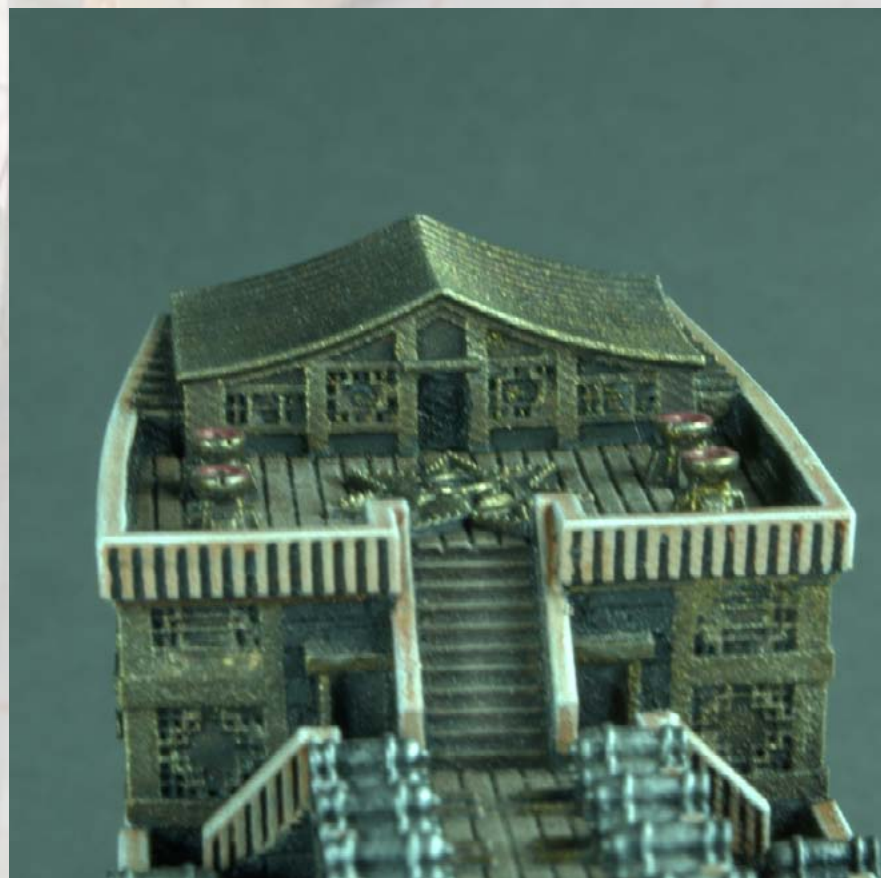
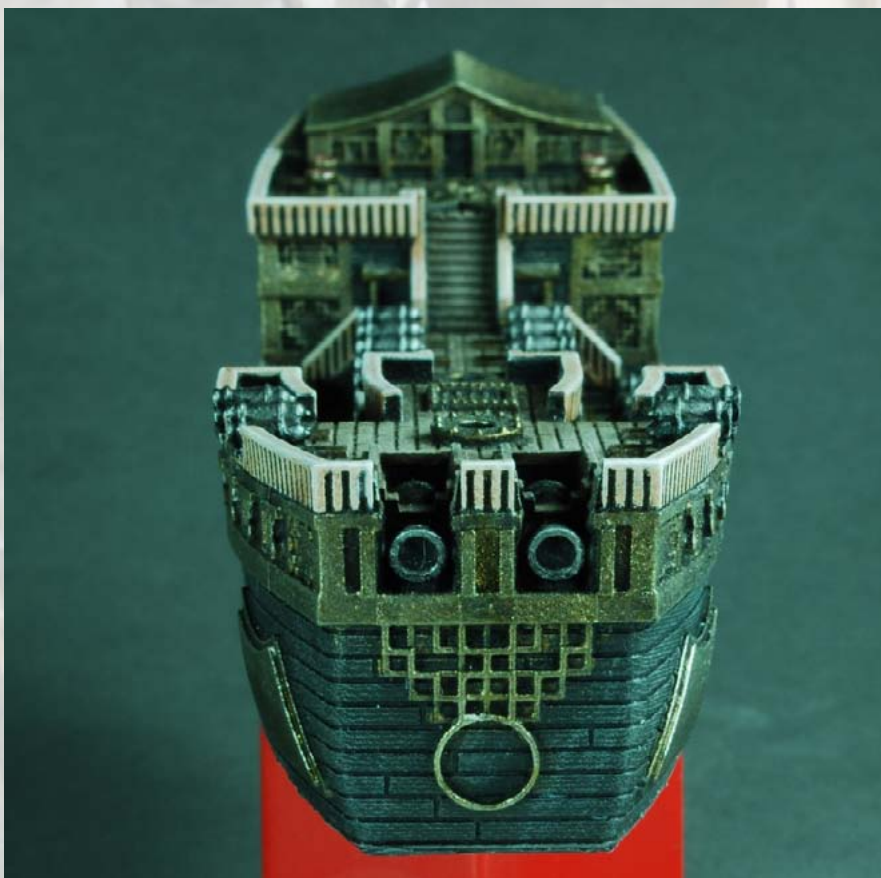
- **Glaze:** Where appropriate, I gave the sail a glaze of very thinned GW Baal Red.

The only thing left to do on the sails was the rigging, which I painted the same colours as for the decking, but painting on the highlights with a fine details brush, rather than dry-brushing.

Ruling the Waves: Making the Battleship stand out

The battleship is huge in comparison to the rest of the fleet, so it stands out anyway, but I wanted to paint things a little differently so it would look more like the ship of an important character. I didn't do too





much, and as you can see from the pictures I replaced some of the bone trim with the gold and painted fires in what look like braziers on the quarterdeck. There's mention in the fleet guide about a type of magic associated with their joy of bloodletting, so I imagine the braziers fit into that. With that in mind I painted the whole of the building at the back of the Quarterdeck gold, and picked out the decorative base for the mizzen mast.



Preparing to Sail: Assembly and Varnishing

So all that was left to do was glue the sails to the hulls - easy! Well, not quite. I glued the sail to the frigate first and came across a small problem. I instinctively tried to position the sail at 45 degrees in relation to the hull, but as the sail (being metal) is heavier than the hull (being resin), it is top heavy and prone to falling over, so the angle has to be narrowed to be more in line with the hull - it certainly doesn't look bad straighter, but I would have preferred the sails at a bigger angle.

All three types of ship were then varnished with Acrylic Matt Spray Varnish and were ready for the final photo shoot.

A Shipwrights Tools: Helpful Equipment I used on the Project

I just thought I'd say a few things about some of the tools I've used on this project. It seems that with every new project, I find a new way of doing things.

Dry-brushes

Dry-brushing is hard on brushes, so it's worth investing on some especially made for the purpose - in the picture below you can see the three I use - all GW, purely because they have a store in my home town, so they're easy to obtain. They really do the trick and are easy to care for, but despite their hardness, as



with all brushes, they do need to be cleaned!

The largest brush is really only for large models and terrain - it also doubles as a handy dust removal device, as the bristles are stiff, but do bend a little. I use the smallest the most, purely because I have better precision with it.

The Helping Hand with 60mm Magnifying Glass

I've had this for a little while, and it's manufactured by a number of companies, so it should be easy to get hold of. I don't use it as lot, but it was a god-send when painting the sails of the ships. It's definitely useful when you have a part that you want to paint separate from the model. Just be wary that the crocodile clips are quite strong and will damage parts if you're not careful.



I've had limited success with the magnifier. I'll need to practice with it more as I've found it difficult to gauge distance while looking through it.

The Thingamabob/Doohickey



I'll be honest, I'm not entirely sure what this is, as a friend donated it to me with some miniatures, and I've never got round to asking him if he remembers what it is. Essentially, it's a double ended pin vice, but with a wide aperture, which allowed me to grip the spigot of the resin mainsail of the battleship. It came with a number of odd looking drill bits, one of which you'll see attached, which is ideal for widening holes.

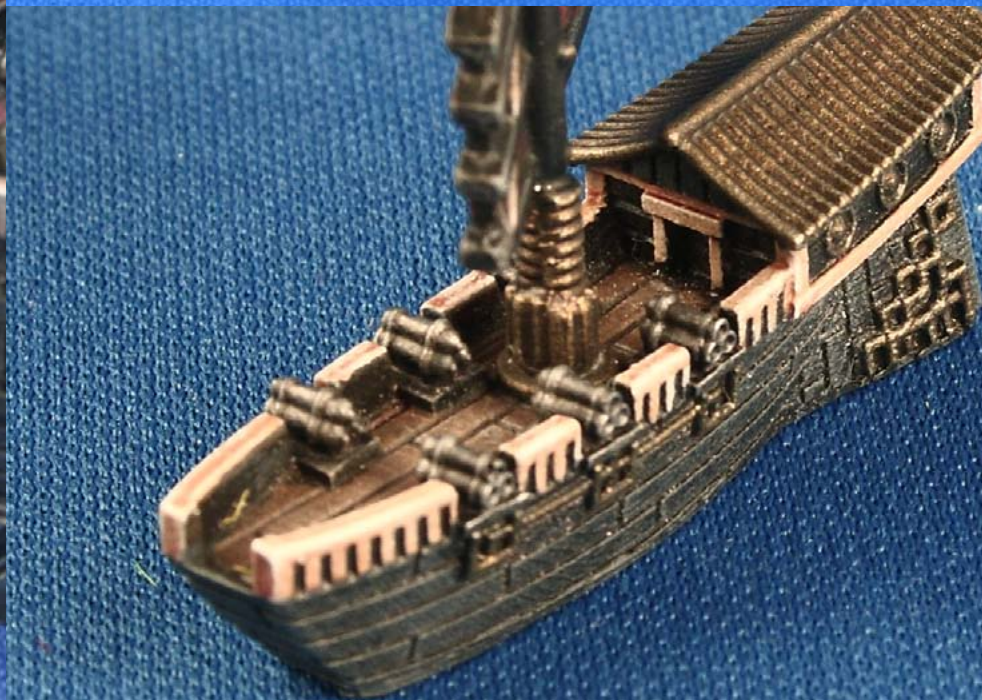
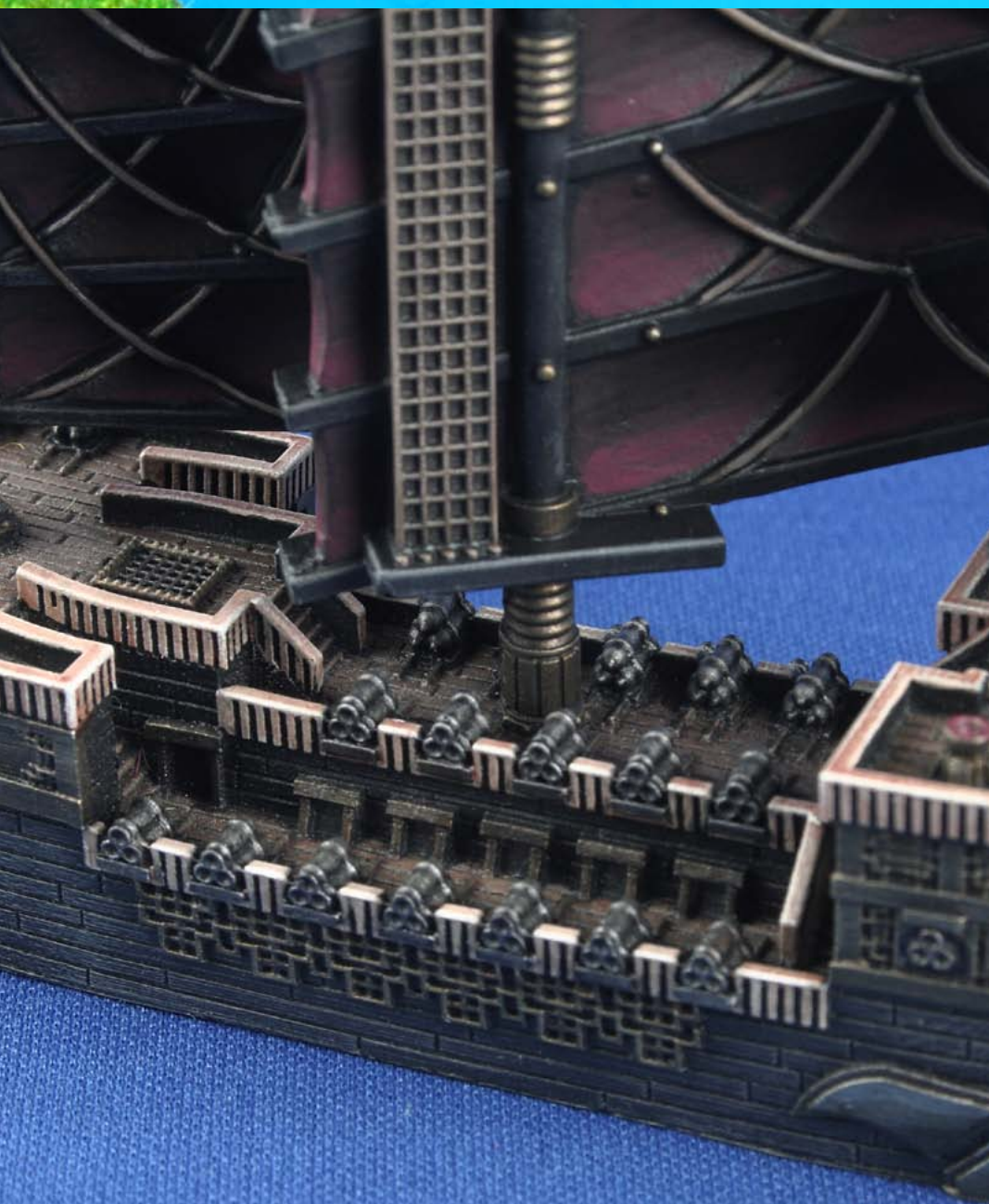
I *think* it's a manual dentist drill, but it could be an instrument of torture - feel free to shudder at the thought of it...

Anchors away: Conclusion

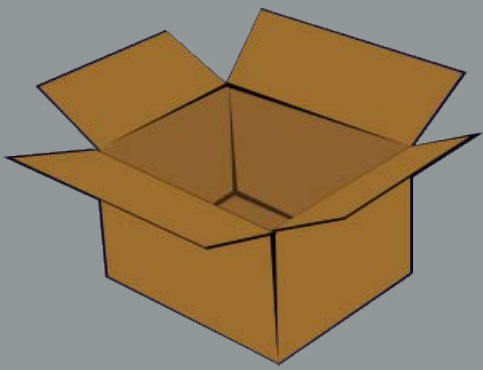
All in all these are fun ships to paint. They're well detailed and a decent size - one small thing I did notice is that they're a little too clean on the decks. As the ships are of a good size, it would have been nice to see some nautical paraphernalia on the decks or even some representation of crew members. I can't imagine that this would be easy to sculpt at this scale, so I can understand why they were left off.

The quality of the sculpting is very good, with very little clean up work, and everything fits together well, and most importantly, the ships look very good painted up and assembled. The ships give you the opportunity to use a variety of techniques, and you've got plenty of options for colour schemes, while still remaining with the "Ralgard Theme".

Until the next time!

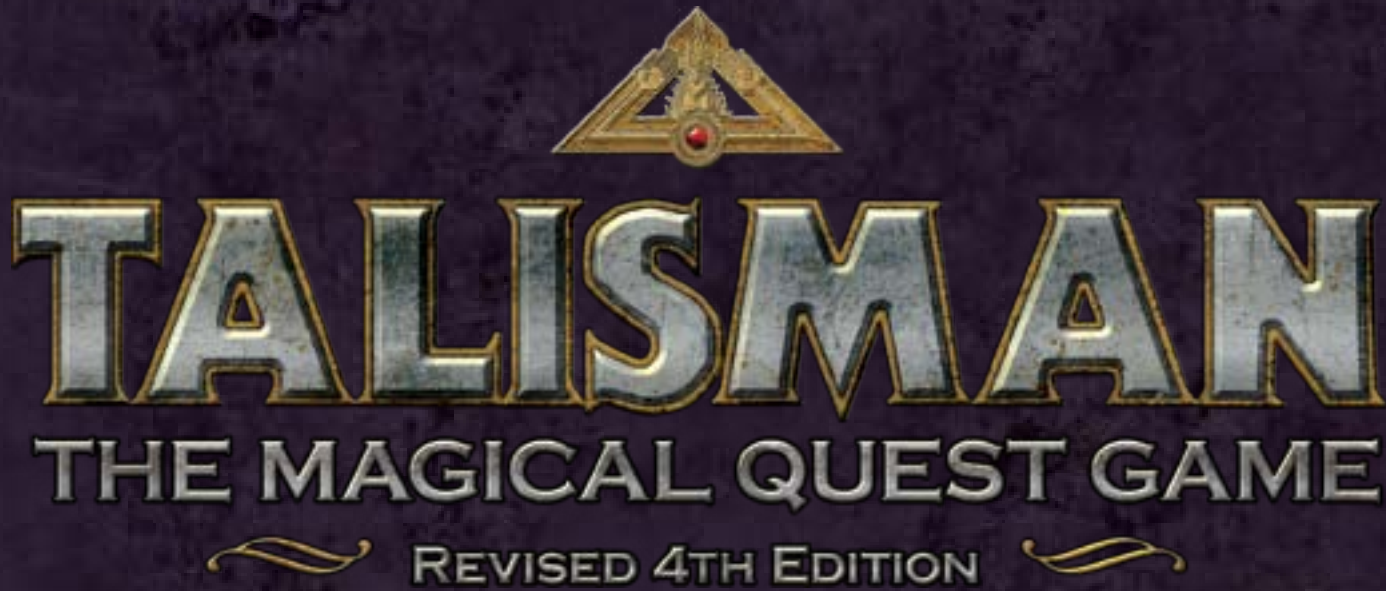






IN THE BOX

with Dev Sodagar

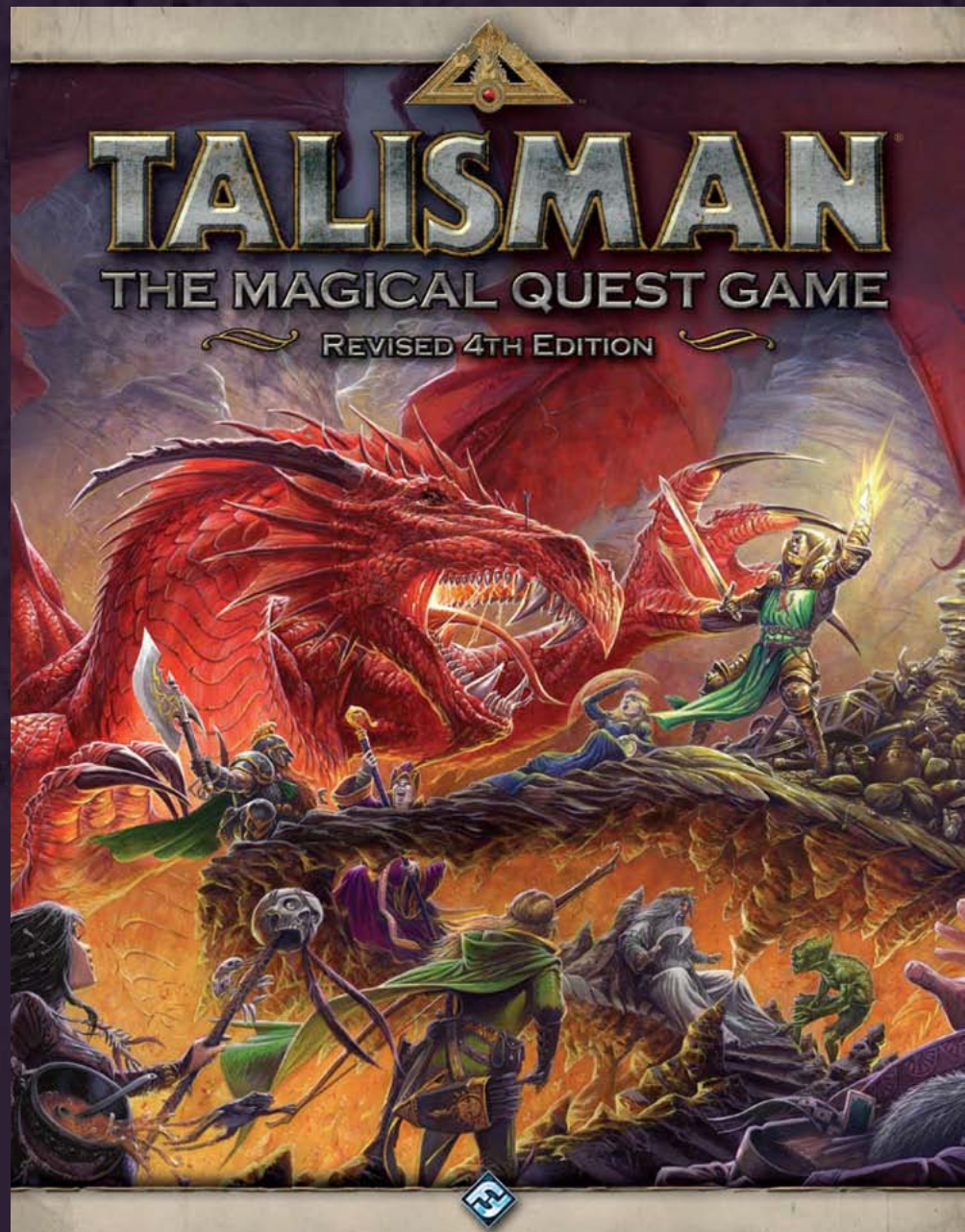


Welcome to another All in the Box, looking at the remake of an old games workshop classic: Talisman. For those of you not familiar with Talisman, this is a game that pits players against one another in a race to get to the center of the board to secure the Crown of Command and eliminate the other players. This version is the 4th to hit the shelves and the revised version that Fantasy Flight published after Black Industries (a branch of Games Workshop) closed and the property was sold to Fantasy Flight Games.

What's in the Box?

Everything in this game is the highest quality, the coins are molded plastic, and the characters are cast in the same soft plastic that can be found in all the Fantasy Flight games. The counters are also cast in plastic, and are really a nice feature as it just feels so much nicer to be playing with than card tokens. All the cards are also of the highest quality. Even by Fantasy Flight's normal standards this game is well produced, the only thing that lets the game down is the fate tokens that are plastic.

Everything is contained in a standard medium size box that Fantasy Flight uses for most of their board games. The artwork on the box is copied from the Black industries version and is up to the typical high standards of Games Workshop artwork, as is the artwork for the cards and game board. It is hard to describe this game in terms of a purely Fantasy Flight



or purely Games Workshop product as there are so many of the elements of each.

The Rules

The aim of the game is to eliminate all other players. This is a cut throat game, although the dynamics change a lot as the game progresses. At the outset of the game, players are too concerned with improving their own strength to try and take out the opposition, however as players improve their power, priorities change and the players start to turn on each other. The main way that players win the game is through seizing control of the Crown of Command, however this is no easy feat!

Talisman's game board is comprised of an inner, middle and outer circuit that are progressively harder to survive in, and each have a specific access point to get to the next stage. The reason for progressing through increasingly challenging circuits rather than sticking to the easy, outside circuit, is to progress to the center of the board where you can take control of the Crown of Command. The game has a basic roll and move mechanic, however having rolled the d6, you can choose whether to move left or right to whichever space is preferable.

Combat is a very simple mechanic that uses opposed dice rolls that have the respective modifiers added to them (the characters' attribute and any item or other modifiers). The limit of the d6 means that there is relatively little uncertainty in combats unless the characters are closely matched, in which case it is a simple case of totaling the numbers and seeing which side has one.

Playing the Game

This is not a quick game to play, even when players are very familiar with it, the game will often last 3hrs (the 90min that the box suggests is absurdly optimistic). The mechanics are simple, the cards and board spaces are clear and concise. The addition of fate counters (something not present in the Black Industries version) allows players a little more control over the random events they can be exposed to, making the game feel less of a luck fest.

The ramp up to get players into a position where they think of taking each other on can be a little slow, especially when (like me) you are not the kind of

gamer that likes such direct conflict in board games of this nature. However the end game, when it finally comes, is often a dramatic showdown that the game implies. This isn't however always the case, there is still a large element of luck in the game and players can be stuck lagging behind or even eliminated from a very early stage in the game.

Conclusion

This is a good game, that has missed it's time. When the original Talisman was released it provided something exciting and new to players looking for a game more involved than the standard roll and move games of the time, but not as long winded or heavy as the RPGs and Wargames that were around. That version filled the spot, but since then a lot of other games have built on this and created games with similar mechanics and objectives, but further refined and developed to games that feel much more involved without being significantly more complicated. One of the best examples of this is Runebound, another game by Fantasy Flight that really doesn't do anything significantly different to Talisman, but feels much more fun and polished. The use of card fate counters is another disappointment given the feeling of quality present in the rest of the game. Overall, this is a fun game and would be a must buy for fans of the fantasy genre, if it weren't for the fact that there are so many other and better options on the market. If you read the review and were thinking of picking this up, by all means give it a look, but also make sure to check out Runebound (review in the next issue), Return of Heroes and Dungeonquest for games that do much the same, but much better.

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gladiators.wordpress.com
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PO21 5EU
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mrfrankhill@yahoo.com

Brighton Warlords

King and Queen Pub, 13-17 Marlborough Place,
Brighton, East Sussex, BN1 1UB
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peter.cooke423@ntlworld.com

Chelmsford Bunker

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nktknights@gmail.com

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East Sussex, BN25 3JF
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outpost47.phpbb3now.com
mark@froglenut.co.uk

Phoenix Gaming Club

The Scout Centre, Skinners Hill, Wellingborough
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phoenixgaming.wordpress.com
Darrell.lee1@hotmail.co.uk

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walbertonwargamers@yahoo.co.uk

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www.twws.org.uk
secretary@twws.org.uk

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chair@bfgclub.org.uk

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royemunson@hotmail.com

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Neave Room, Abingdon Conservative Club, OX14 5AG

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Armageddon Inc

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james.adams@hotmail.co.uk

Sad Muppet Society, The

Glebe Hall, Church Square, Basingstoke, RG21 7QW

Tuesday 7pm-10pm

www.sadmuppets.org

DaveR@sadmuppets.org

Spiky Club

RPOSSC, 6 Richfield Avenue, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 8EQ

Thursday 7pm-11pm

www.spikyclub.com

spikydavid@gmail.com

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benjaminlee422@gmail.com

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s6.zetaboards.com/Beasts_and_Bionics

Hendybadger@aol.com

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Church House, 30 Church Street, Calne SN11 0HU

Monthly - see website

www.calnegamingclub.com

themonthlygrunt@hotmail.co.uk

Dice and Dagger Gaming Club, The

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www.diceanddagger.110mb.com

celtofknow@aol.com

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Fountain Room, St. Sidwell's Centre, Sidwell Street, Exeter, Devon, EX4 6NN

Tuesday 6pm-10pm

exeter-inquisition.org

via website

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www.rygasroughnecks.com

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warren@gleesonclan.co.uk

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Thursday 7pm-10pm

www.wcgc.webs.com

neilasharp@aol.com

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1st Company Veterans

Warhammer World, Nottingham, NG7 2WS

Thursday 6pm-10pm

www.1stcompanyveterans.net

matt_rs2003@hotmail.co.uk

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alysaudoe1@hotmail.com

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awb1@btinternet.com

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Warhammer World, Nottingham, NG7 2WS

Wednesday 6pm-10pm

hancockoliver@hotmail.com

KIA Games Club

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Kirkby-in-Ashfield, Nottinghamshire, NG17 7BQ

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www.kiagamingclub.net

kiagamingclub@hotmail.com

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www.nuneatongamesclub.co.uk

b.mccormack@hotmail.co.uk

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Oaks, B74 4TR

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<http://z7.invisionfree.com/SuttonImmortals/>

dabarker_382@hotmail.com

Tamworth Games Club

Central Methodist Church, 18 Glyndebourne,

Tamworth, B79 7UD

Wednesday 6pm-9pm

philhannigan2002@yahoo.co.uk

Warlords of Walsall

Hatherton United Reform Church, Hatherton

Road, Walsall, WS1 1XS

Friday 6pm-10pm

www.freewebs.com/warlords-of-walsall

warlords_of_walsall@hotmail.com

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Allenton, DE24 9AF

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derbywargamessociety.com

bencurry@derbywargamessociety.co.uk

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judith.hawcroft@derbyshire.gov.uk

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Leicester, LE8 5WG

2nd & 4th Wed 6.30pm-9.30pm

www.lwwwc.co.uk

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sixthkraven@hotmail.co.uk

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james.borders@live.co.uk

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hulls-angels.co.uk

ross@hulls-angels.co.uk

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www.leedsgamesclub.co.uk

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ian.widdowson1@ntlworld.com

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www.gatekeepers.me.uk

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Alternate Sundays 12pm-4.30pm
www.freewebs.com/telford_stags
qkg@btconnect.com

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www.freewebs.com/thegamesclub
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www.thegamingkingdom.org.uk
krissherriff@hotmail.com

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The Old Enemy

An Uncharted Seas Battle Report

by Jez "Shorty" Fairclough
and Si "Blood Lust" Parkinson

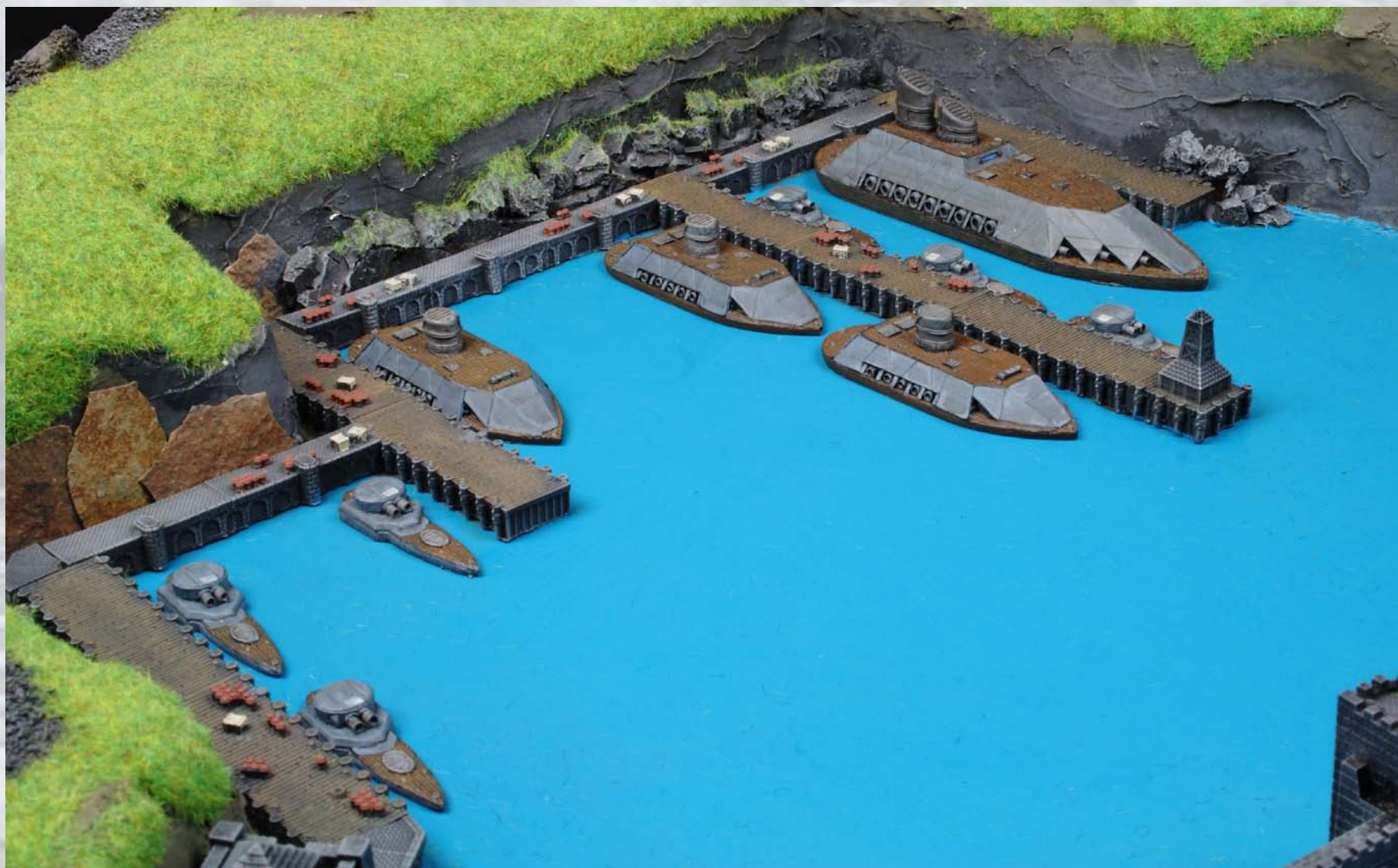
As usual, this issue's Battle Report is brought to you by Si and me (Jez). In this issue, we're dusting off an old favourite, Spartan Games' "Uncharted Seas" (<http://www.spartangames.co.uk>). When the game first came out we got involved with it from the get go, and it's still something we like to have a go at.

The game, for those who haven't played it, or read Kenny's review, is a small fleet level fantasy wargame. You can pretty much decide within the rules of fleet building how big a game you want to play and for this Battle Report we kept it to the starter set. The miniatures have been redone since we first bought them and those coming out now are so much better. The detail and size of some of the ships have changed and the rules have some extra bits added,

but if you've played the first edition then the second edition isn't going to be hard to pick up. All the new rules you need can be downloaded from the Spartan website as well.

Jez: I'm a big fan of Dwarves and when we were looking at who was doing what, I decided to stick with what I know. Dwarf tactics tend to be "keep people at range and hope the mass guns can pound away". With decent DR/CR I can soak up some hefty damage.

The starter box comes with a Submersable that we decided not to use as it would imbalance the choice (something I may rule later on). This gave me 480pts to game with.





Si: As I have played before, I decided to go for Orc's Starter Set. They suit my style of play which is all or nothing, hell for leather or tactically inept as others would say.

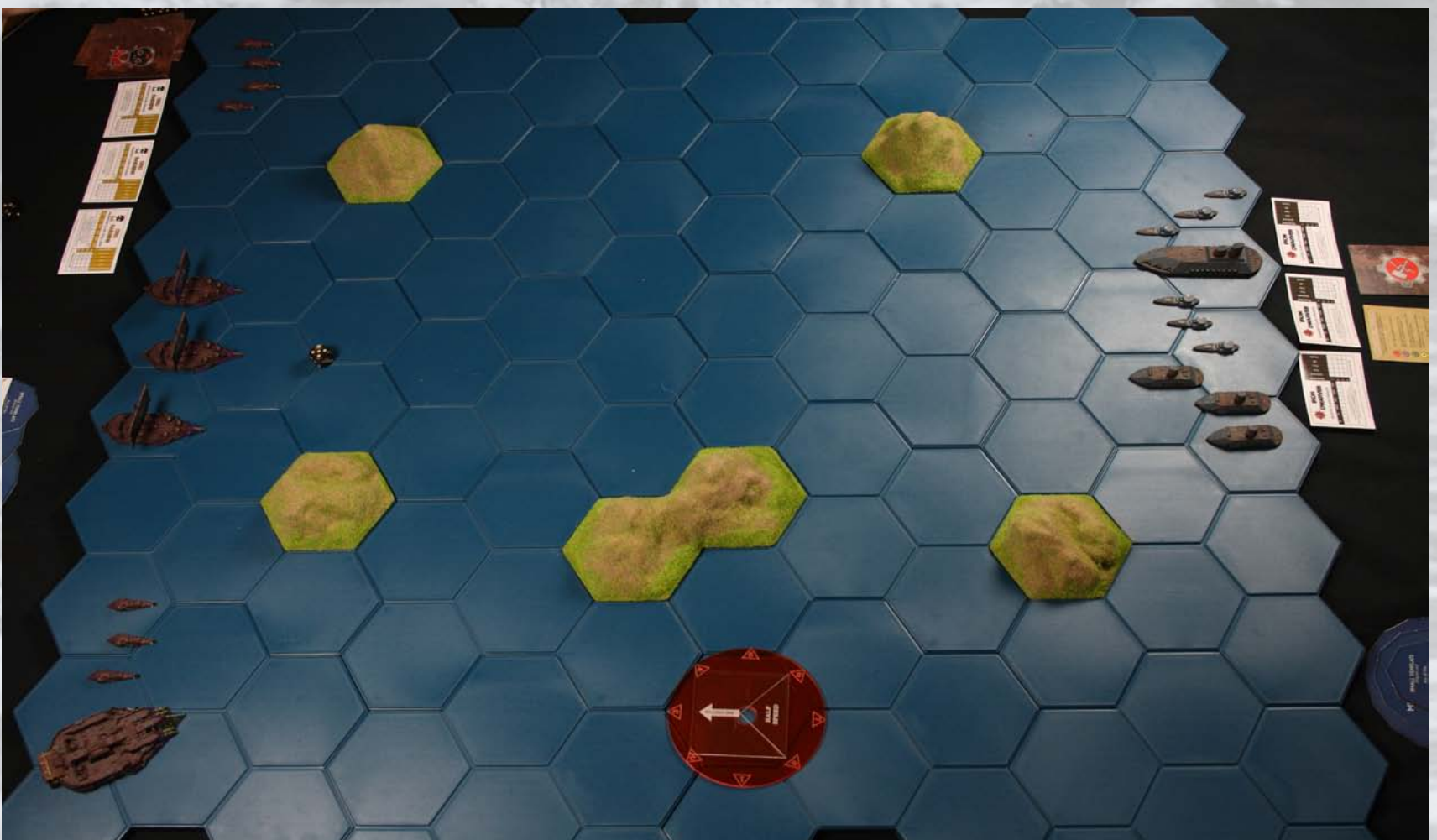
The new box set has a 490 pts fleet contained within and they are of a much better standard than previous incarnations. It seems well balanced, not I'm sure about the Battleship, so let's play a game and see how it all pans out.

The Game

The game moves are played squadron by squadron, so the report does jump between the players.

Setup/Initiative

We rolled to see who had the Initiative...Jez rolled a 4 and Si rolled a 1. Jez decided to go first and squadrons were placed on the sea of battle alternatively until both of us had deployed our fleets. We rolled for wind and much to Si's disgust the wind was in his face.



Turn 1**Initiative Roll**

Jez: 6

Si: 3

No wind change

Turn Cards: Si plays the card 'Wind Change' and moves the direction of the wind 2 points clockwise and brings the wind in from the side, ensuring that the Orc cruisers get to use their maximum speed.

Jez: Cruisers move straight ahead 6". My plan being to get them into a good position to open fire at the longest range band, and hope to weaken the enemy before he gets in close.

Si: War Crocs Frigates (3) move the full 10" towards the enemy

Jez: Battleship forward 4". The only issue with Battleships is they are so long and take an ocean to turn, so you need to be thinking two or three turns

ahead.

Si: War Crocs Frigates (4) move the full 10" towards the enemy

Jez: Frigates (R) Forward 8"

Si: Troll Battleship ambles forward 6", not really sure what I am going to do with this yet

Jez: Frigates (F) Forward 6"

Si: Cruisers move forward 7" and open fire on the lead Dwarf cruiser.

Using linked fire the 3 cruisers get 5AD. Scoring 1x6, 2 hits and 2 misses. The 6 is re-rolled scoring another 6. Subsequent re-roll fails to score.

The total is 6 hits which is 1 point of damage.

End Phase:

Jez: Throws 2 cards and draws 2

Si: Throws 1 card and draws 2





Turn 2

Initiative Roll

Jez: 2

Si: 5

No wind change

Turn Cards: None played

Si: War Crocs (3) move forward 4" using the terrain ready for their strike.

Jez: Cruisers move 2" forward and using linked fire open up on the middle Orc Cruiser. A total of 9AD were rolled with only 2 hits. Not enough to cause any damage.

Si: Cruisers move into range band 1 and open fire on lead Dwarf cruiser again.

Using linked fire 2 cruiser get 9AD. Scoring 6x6, 2 hits and 1 miss. The 6s were re-rolled and 2 further hits were scored.

The total is 16 hits, double critical!

Cruiser suffers Hard Pounding and Port/Starboard Battery hit, this damage sinks the cruiser, +4 points of damage

Jez: Move forward and then open fire on the Orc Croc (4) Squadron. 5AD using linked and nothing hits. I can really see where this game is going already.

Si: Troll ship moves forward to attack the Dwarf cruisers but is out of range

Jez: Moves and starts to turn. Fires on Orc Croc (4) Squadron, but due to my own fleet being in the way I only get 4AD. 2 hits for no damage.

Si: War Crocs (4) move into a firing position.

Each War croc fires 5AD each at the Dwarf frigates scoring 1 point of damage to each. Not the best result but it's a start.

Jez: Frigates (R) move and open fire on middle of the Orc Cruisers. Linking fire for 5AD I get a 2x6, plus 3 more hits and one of my rerolls gives me another hit for a total of 8. Nice little critical for once. Starboard battery losses 2 AD; 2 points of Damage to the ship, and 1 crew loss. To be honest, as most of the Orc guns are in the front, hits to Port/Starboard are a waste but as it's also the first thing I've hit I'll shut up.

End Phase:

Jez: Throws 1 cards and draws 1

Si: Keeps cards

Turn 3**Initiative Roll**

Jez: 6

Si: 3

No wind change

Turn Cards: Jez plays the card 'Master Shipwright' and repairs the 3 frigates damaged in turn 2 as I was loosing stuff quickly though best to try and keep what I had alive. Damage also effects AD so it's worth getting rid of when you can.

Jez: Frigates (R) decide to fire one against one on the War Croc (4). I managed to get 2 hits with each one but as I need 3 no damage was scored. This turn is carrying on as before by the looks.

Si: Plays 'Ramming Speed' on one of the 4 War Crocs (4), all Crocs ram Dwarf frigates from turn 2.

In a complete fluke the Crocs sustain no damage but all Dwarf frigates are sunk.

Jez: Cruisers open fire. Crusier 2 7AD Broadside against War Croc (4). 1x6 + 2 hits ends up in 1 point of damage. 6AD against Troll Battleship 1x6 + 1 hit, reroll is a 6 and then no hit. 5 Hits total no damage scored.

Cruiser 3 7AD broadside against War Croc (4) 2 hits no damage.

Si: Cruisers declare ramming, Orc cruiser 1 fails to contact Dwarf cruiser, Orc cruiser 2 collides with Dwarf cruiser 3 and Orc cruiser 3 rams Dwarf frigate.

Orc cruiser 2 and Dwarf cruiser both cause 1 point of damage on initial impact.

Boarding action: Jez's crew sustain 7 deaths out of 5 crew members

Si's crew sustain 5 deaths out of 7 crew members

Dwarf cruiser is captured as a prize.

Orc cruiser 3 sinks Dwarf frigate sustaining no return damage.

Jez: Battleship inches forward. Playing full broadside I gain 4 dice at range bands 1-2.

Fore Shot at War Croc (4) 1x6 nothing on reroll so no damage.

Split Broadside

Cruiser 1 10AD 4x6 + 3 hits, reroll of 6's give another 6 so total of 15 hits and a double critical.

The Cruiser suffers Hard Pounding, Port/Starboard Battery Damage which sinks it taking all hands to the loving care of Davey Jones.

Cruiser 2 10AD 2x6 + 2hts, rerolls of 6's give 2 more hits so total of 8 hits which is a single critical.

The Cruiser suffers Helm Steering Damage +2pts of damage.

About time the Battleship started earning his keep. Though to be honest it's not looking good.

Si: War Crocs (3) pounce from around the island.

Only Croc 1 is in arc so let's slip the hounds of hell on the final Dwarf cruiser, 5AD causing 1 point of damage

As Jez has no squadrons left to activate, the Troll Battleship moves in for the kill, Si Plays 'Full Broadside' giving the Troll ship 12AD at band 1. Scoring 3x6 and 1 hit. The 6s were re-rolled and 1 further hit scored

The total is 8 hits, 1 critical hit!

The cruiser suffers 'Rudder Smashed' +2 points of damage

Sensing victory the trolls throw some large pieces of masonry at the Dwarf cruiser, out of 2 separate rolls of 6AD each (You cannot link fire trolls) only the second roll manages to score 4 hits, 1 point of damage.

The dwarf cruiser sinks under the weight of the masonry.

End Phase:

Jez: Throws 1 card and draws 2

Si: Draws 2 cards

Turn 4**Initiative Roll**

Jez: 6

Si: 1

No wind change

Turn Cards: None Played.

Jez: With not much left, for me it was all about trying to take loads with me before the final dice was cast. Deciding to go with my Battleship I played Dwarven Gunnery which allowed me to shoot before I moved.

Fore Battery 4AD at War Croc (4) 4. $1 \times 6 + 2\text{pts}$ plus hit on reroll means it's a critical and it sinks.

Split Broadside.

8AD at Cruiser 2. $1 \times 6 + 3\text{hits}$ for a total of 5hits means a point of damage on the cruiser.

Si plays 'Tougher Than It Looks' card, which reduces hits by 2 so no damage caused.

8AD at War Croc (3) 1. 1 Hit no damage.

During movement I was forced to collide with Croc (4) 3. $2 \times 6 + 3\text{ hits}$ from this meant the War Croc was sunk.

Not an amazing turn but less to shoot at me now.

Si: What's left of War Croc (4) make unprecedented manoeuvres to attempt to ram what's left of the Dwarf frigates resulting in 1 collision and a full ram.

Ram Croc vs. Dwarf frigate: Both sides manage 3 hits each, 1 point of damage. Unfortunately for the Dwarfs the Orc's have a red ram rating and any DR causes 2 points of damage, this sinks the Dwarfs.

Collision Croc vs. Dwarf frigate: The Croc bounces off the Dwarf frigate causing no damage but sustaining 1 point of damage.

Boarding action: In a bizarre turn of events both crews kill each other in total leaving both ships adrift.

Si: War Crocs (3) move into a firing position each



War croc fires 5AD.

Croc 1 scores no hits

Croc 2 scores 2×6 , +2 hits, re-rolls score nothing additional, total 6 hits resulting in 1 point of damage.

Croc 3 scores 2×6 , +1 hit, re-rolls $1 \times 6 + 1\text{ hit}$, total 8 hits resulting in 1 point of damage.

Si: The heavily damaged cruiser remains in formation but decides desecration is the better part of valour at this point and happily keeps out of the way of the Dwarf battleship complete with its prize. The undamaged cruiser wanting some glory moves into a firing position.

Playing 'Double Shot' and adding +4 AD to the 7AD it already has, the cruiser lets it rip.....scoring a pants 7 hits resulting in 1 point of damage.

Si: The Troll Battleship is slightly out of position but in range for troll throwers.

The two Trolls throw impressively large pieces of masonry at the Dwarf Battleship, unfortunately it is made of sterner stuff and no damage is caused.

End Phase:

Jez: Draws 1 card

Si: Throws 1 card and draws 3.

Turn 5**Initiative Roll**

Jez: 5

Si: 3

No wind change

Turn Cards: None Played.

Adrift Ships move 2 inches forward.

Jez: Okay, so I just have a Battleship left and Si has most of his fleet. Hmmmm can we say last man standing and all that. The best I can hope for is to just kill a few more things to make it look better.

4AD Fore Cannons at adrift War Croc 1x6, reroll is a 6 as well. 4 Hits and the War Croc sinks.

Port Broadside 13AD on Cruiser 6 hits cause a critical, 'Gun Decks hit' 2 points of damage.

Si: War Croc (3) move forward for more volleys again each War croc fires 5AD.

Croc 1 scores 2x6, + 3, re-rolls miss, total 5 hits no damage

Croc 2 Plays 'Iron Shards' scores 2x6 resulting in the loss of 2 crew points from the Dwarf Battleship

Croc 3 no hits, no damage

Si: War Croc (4) spins around to face the Dwarf face to face and fires 5AD

Playing 'Lucky Shot' the Croc fails to hit and causes no damage, so not very lucky really.

Si: Damaged cruiser circles round to keep an eye on the battle and maintain formation. The other cruiser rams the Dwarf Battleship.

Cruiser vs. Dwarf Battleship the cruiser bounces off the plating of the Battleship causing no damage, unfortunately the cruisers bow is smashed by 8 hit causing a critical hit and sinks.

Si: In a last ditch effort to rout the enemy, the Troll Battleship rams the Dwarf Battleship.

Troll Battleship vs. Dwarf Battleship, both ships bounce off each other causing no damage.

Boarding action: I play 'Lust for Blood'

Jez's crew sustain 7 deaths out of 5 crew members

Si's crew sustain 3 deaths out of 9 crew members

Dwarf Battleship is captured as a prize.



Dwarven Conclusion

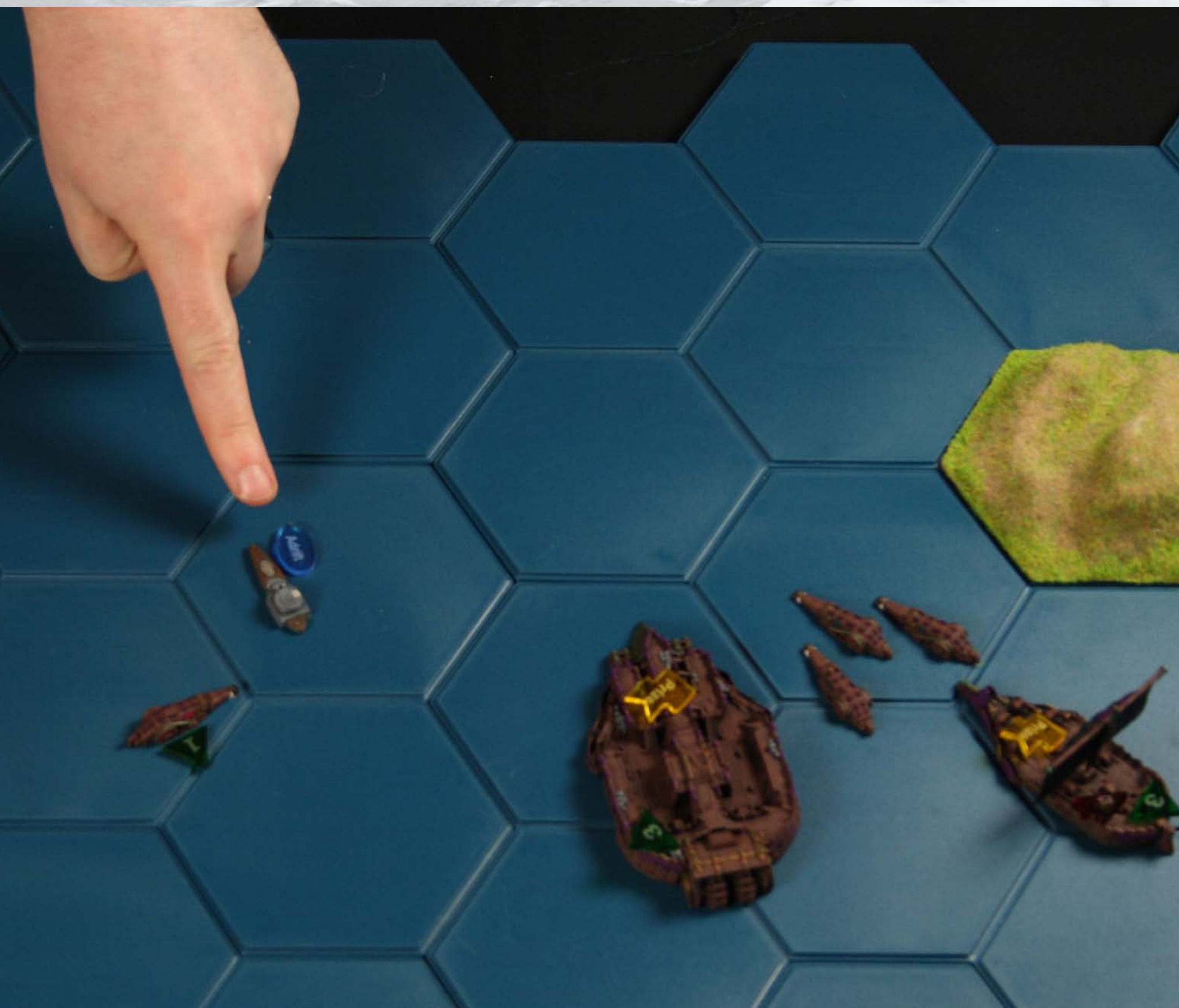
Well to be honest, it didn't go well for me at all. By the end all I had left was one of my frigates and he was derelict so I don't think that counts.

I didn't have anytime where my dice were on my side, and in any wargame that is the factor that can stuff up the best laid plans of an Admiral. Keeping my fleet close together worked in the fact that mass gunfire should have been sinking ships. Though if you use this tactic, you need to make sure that you don't block the Battleship or else it becomes useless. It will be interesting to see what sort of effect adding in the Kraken Sub or some Piston/Anvil Cruisers, which would make me capable of ramming, would do to change the dynamic of the game and how I use my dwarves.

Orc Conclusion

I think that went quite well really. Always a worry those Dwarves and their broadside ability.

Not wanting to gloat, but I didn't lose one entire squadron, more luck than judgment to be fair. That and the dire rolls from Jez, thanks mate. I knew I needed to ram and board and it worked, but I did get some beautiful shots off as well. I did take a chance with my deployment and with leaving the troll ship out of the main fray, but it all paid off in the end.



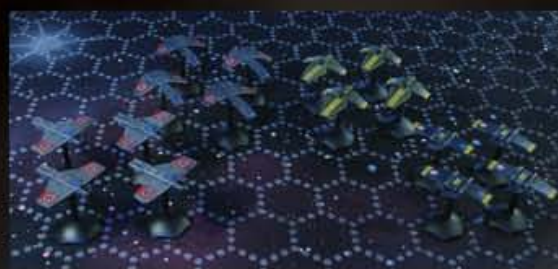
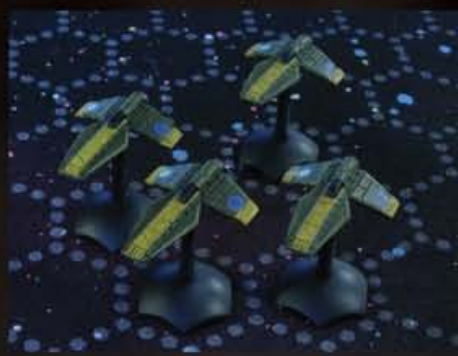
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We caught up with David Freeman of Cipher Studios at their secret lair and in typical Ancible fashion got the answers to the questions you the readers want to know. We also added in a few just for fun.

What is your Job at Cipher Studios?

My position at Cipher Studios is Chief Operations Officer, or COO. In most companies the COO is in charge of operations, which means logistics, product development, kind of the getting things done part of the company. Since Cipher Studios is a fairly small operation we tend to split work up based on our areas of expertise and talk about how all of the projects are going with each other regularly to keep everyone on the same page and motivated about getting their work done. I spend the majority of my time on scheduling, product development, and communication with the freelance sculptors and artists we work with. So mostly I do project management, though I have been known to pack up product when we really need more hands in that area.

How did you get introduced to wargaming?

I saw a copy of Adeptus Titanicus while perusing the D&D books in a book/game store in a mall in Portland OR while Christmas shopping with my parents in what must have been 1988 or 1989, I was 10 or 11. The art on the box immediately sold me and I steered my parents back to the store so I could show them it and ask them for it. Despite my pleas my parents were unmoved and (sensibly on their part) wouldn't get it for me. I held out hope that it would appear as a



Christmas present that year but alas I received many other wonderful and thoughtful gifts instead. While my plans for conquering worlds from the bridge of a giant robot/ship where stymied, I was still intrigued by the world that I had seen in the art on the cover of the box. So when I saw the Rogue Trader rulebook at the same game/book store a few months after Christmas I was pretty excited when I was able to talk my parents into letting me get that. Honestly I thought it was some kind of role playing game that used lots of miniatures. After I read that book and started to understand what a war game even was, I started collecting miniatures, looking for opponents, and painting figures badly.



How long have you been wargaming?

About 23 years. There have been some short breaks due to life related time issues, but it has been enjoyable and entertaining for a long time for me.

What was the first game you ever bought?

The first game, other than board games like Sorry, Candy Land, and Risk, that I got into was the D&D Red Box when I was in 3rd grade.

If you had to choose one thing from your wargaming collection to keep then what would it be?

You'll have to pry my collection out of my cold dead fingers lol. But seriously, there is so much invested in an army or groups of figures that I am having a really hard time narrowing it down to just one thing I would keep. I would like to keep my whole collection.

What were you doing before you worked for Cipher?

I spent about 6-8 months working in QA at Wizards of the Coast digital, his was mostly on Magic the Gathering Online. This was a contract position and the questions that a temp agency asks when they are trying to find people who have specialized knowledge about Magic are especially hilarious let me tell you. Prior to that I worked for Sabertooth Games for about 5 years as a game developer and organized play manager. While there I worked on all of the games produced by Sabertooth with the majority of my time spent on the LOTR tradable miniatures game and the Ultimate Fighting System. Sabertooth was a subsidiary of Games Workshop and for most of the time I worked there our offices were in the GW North America offices in Memphis TN.

What make the games (Anima Tactics and Hell Dorado) so unique and why should people go out and buy them?

Both Anima Tactics and Hell Dorado are games with a low barrier to entry that have some of the most awesome miniatures on the planet produced for them. They are quick to play and relatively easy on your wallet. Each has its own compelling and exciting background to get lost in as well. If you are looking for a game that takes about an hour and a half to play and will only cost you somewhere around \$60-80 to get into then I encourage you to look into both Anima Tactics and Hell Dorado.

Whenever you are not working on gaming related things what else do you get up to?

I play Trombone, DJ, enjoy winter sports like snowboarding and snowshoeing, workout, go to the movies, and spend time with family and friends.

Where and when would people be able to get a demo?

Most stores that carry Anima Tactics or Hell Dorado will be happy to give you a quick run through to get you familiar with the game. If there is a Free Agent (a member of our volunteer program) in your area, they will be able to teach you how to play at least one of our games. Additionally there is lots of information about both games all over the internet. You might start at places like youtube and the many well-known gaming news sites. Also you can download the starter rules sheets for both Anima tactics and hell Dorado at <http://cipher-studios.com/downloads/>.



When you decide to bring a new model into the game how do you go about doing it?

First you have to have some idea of who the figure is in the world. So I write a short paragraph description. Then send that description to a concept artist. While the concept artist is working we write any background text and rules text required. Once we approve a concept sketch we get it turned into finished color art and send the finished color reference on to a sculptor.

How do you make sure that the new models fit in and aren't too powerful?

We write a profile and then play games with it, share the profile with external play testers who play lots of games with it. Go through revisions until the feedback from play testers and our own games start showing that it is in a good place power wise. I think it's also worth noting that having things be not powerful enough is also a problem in much the same way that things are too powerful are.

How do you see the games evolving?

We plan to keep releasing new figures and expansion books as fast as we possibly can. We have seen steadily growing demand for our product lines and we will continue bringing our fans the high level of quality they have come to expect from us.

What is the most expensive wargaming item you have ever bought?

A Hierophant Bio Titan from Forgeworld is easily the single most expensive piece I own.

What do your friends think about what you are doing?

The people I have talked to about it lately think it is pretty awesome.

What is the oddest request you have had from a fan of the games?

Most of the requests and feedback I hear are for more new stuff faster which doesn't normally seem very odd to me. Now and then people ask me for my autograph which I find surreal pretty much every time. I am more than happy to sign whatever people might want me too.

What other games do you play?

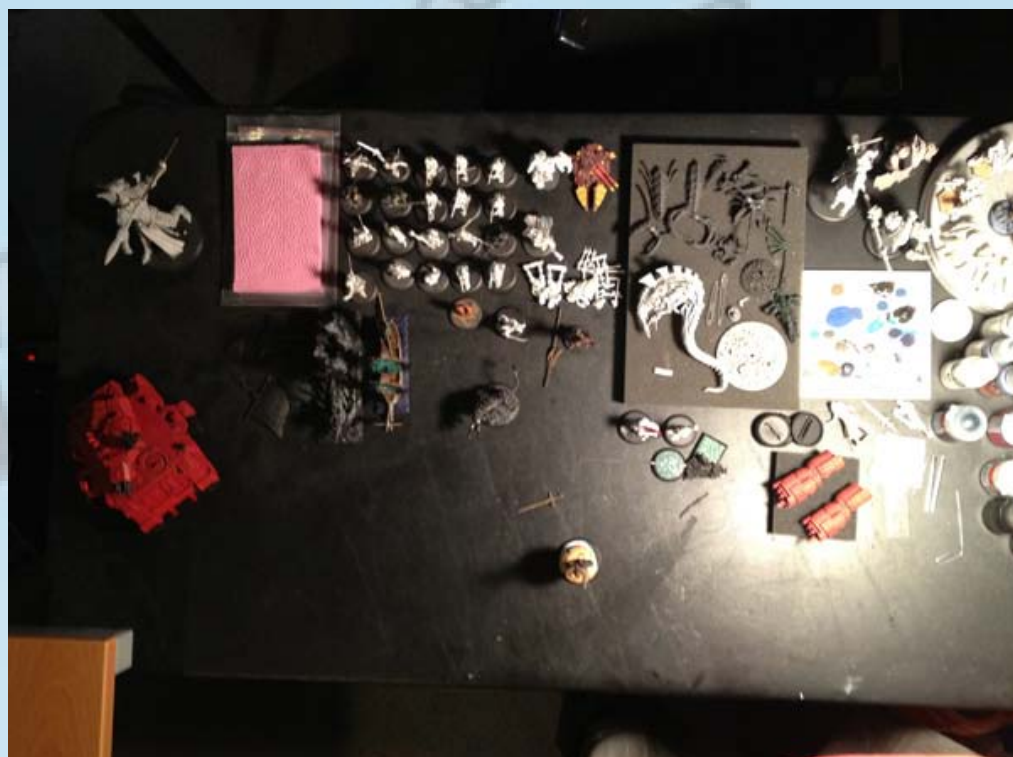
I still play Warhammer 40k. I also enjoy games of Dreadfleet, Spacehulk, Epic Armageddon, Net Runner, Magic the Gathering, Miskatonic School for Girls, Dominion, Settlers of Catan, Twilight Imperium, Acquire, and Axis and Allies.

Other than your home, what is the most expensive thing you have ever bought?

My car is the most expensive thing I own, with various computer/professional equipment coming in second.

Do you have any models on your desk at work?

I have a table next to my desk that I use to build and paint models. Here's a picture of it ...



How challenging has the pick-up of Hell Dorado been for Cipher?

It has been a big job and we are doing our best to get everything done ASAP.

For fans of the original incarnation what do they have to look forward to?

We are currently working on a new expansion book and will share more info on it as soon as we can.

What do you think of the state of the games industry today?

From what I can see Hobby Gaming continues to grow and is bigger than it has ever been. We face competition on many fronts and continue to be a niche product that caters to the specialized needs of a relatively small audience but from what I can see Hobby Gaming continues to grow and is bigger than it has ever been. We face competition on many fronts and continue to be a niche product that caters to the specialized needs of a relatively small audience but I wouldn't have it any other way!"

Any new games in the pipeline?

We are currently working on a few different new games, but none of them are close enough to being done to share any specific info on them.

What was the last book you read?

Currently I am reading a book of the collected Conan stories by Robert E. Howard and the book I read before that was Halting State by Charles Stross.

What's on your iPod?

Skrillex, Pendulum, In Flames, Outkast, and Depeche Mode.

What's your favorite movie of all time?

The Big Lebowski, the Original Star Wars Trilogy, and both Tron's are my favorite movies.

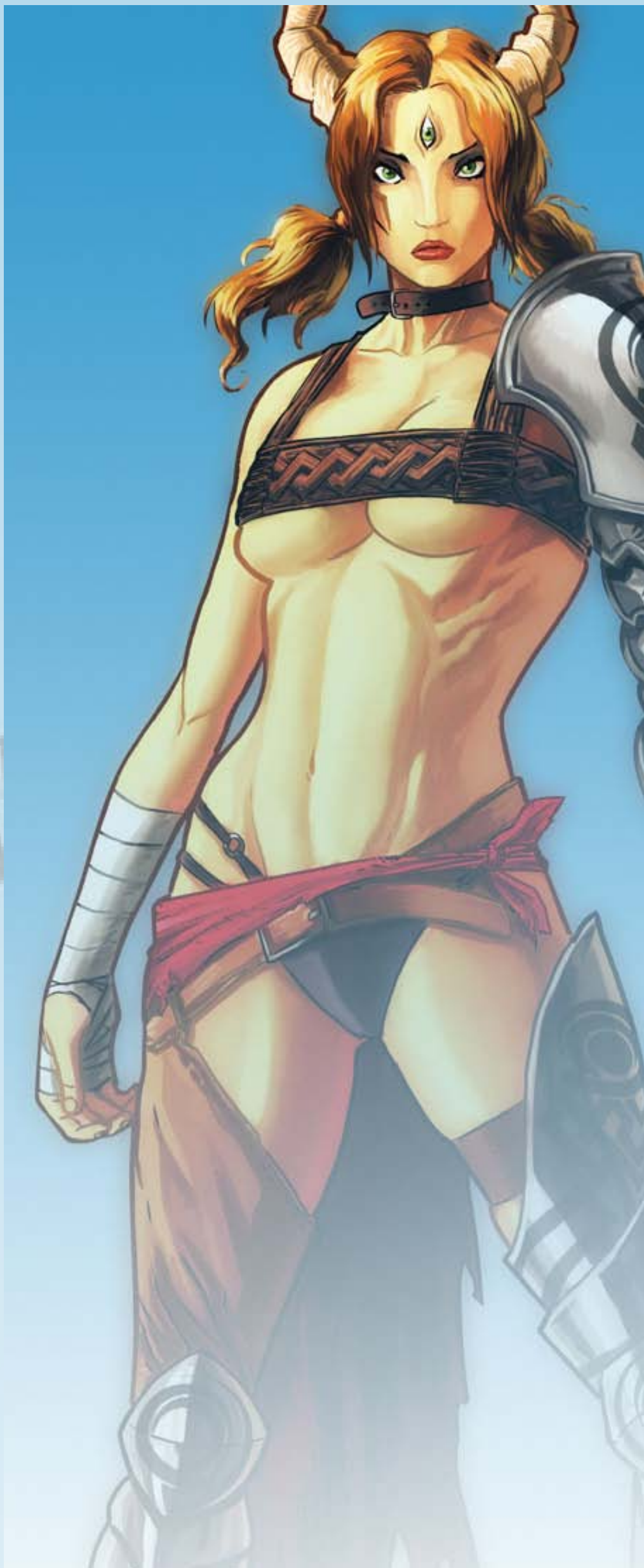
What other games designers do you admire?

Sid Sackson, Christian Peterson, Eric Lang, Reiner Knizia, George S. Parker, Rick Priestley, Jerivs Johnson, Andy Chambers, Ryan Miller, Luke Peterschmidt, Erik Yapple, Gary Gygax, and Kevin Siembieda to name just a few of the many.

Do you have a gaming room at home?

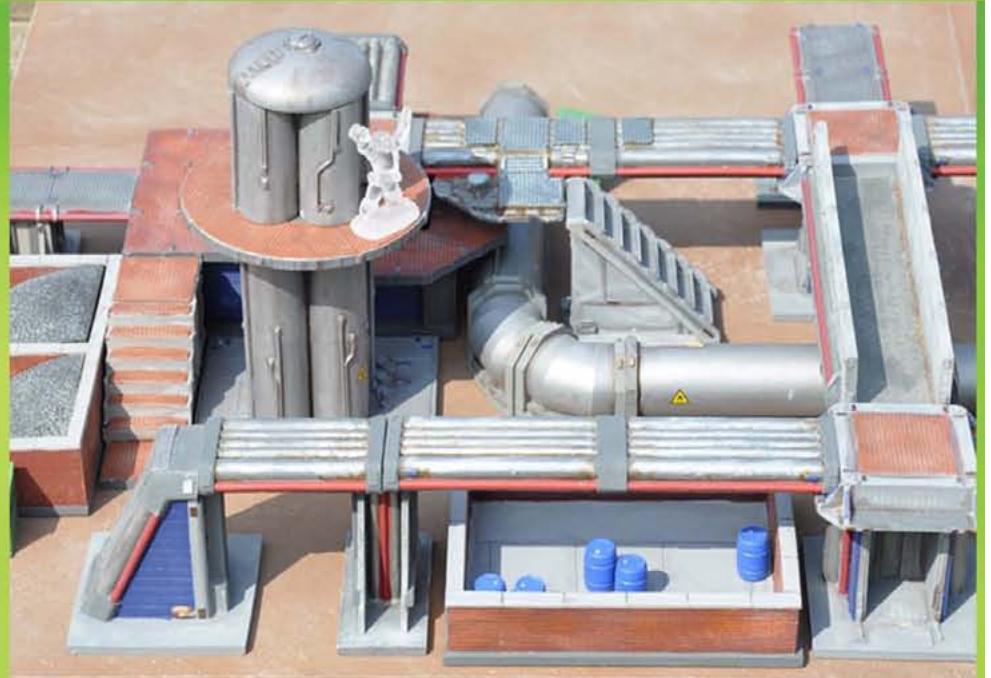
Currently I live in a 1 bedroom apartment, so I would have to give over my living room to nothing but gaming if I wanted to have a dedicated room for games. My office is pretty much my gaming room as it is where most of the gaming action takes place!

Thank you for your interest in me and my work and I hope you guys have as much fun reading this as I had getting it together for you!



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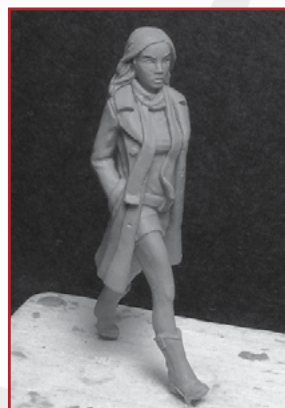


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THE LAST WORD

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Demonstration or Participation?

It has been claimed that I am a little grumpy at times, a little hard to please, and a little opinionated. I'd call it high standards with an uncompromising attitude to life. Who knows? Well me actually. Ok, I can be a little grumpy at times, but this time I feel it's more than justified.

After bowing down to peer pressure from the young pups at Ancible tower's to get down with it, not sure what 'it' is, but that's kids for you, I decided to head out into the world and play some Sci-Fi and Fantasy games. Here is where I came across my latest gripe.

Over the years I have attended some of the finest gaming shows in the UK. I have gladly handed over my entrance fee and then spent many happy hours perusing stalls and playing demo games to my heart's content, even a few historical games, just don't tell Kenny. I love them all, especially the games where the game owners have created something themselves, these are the games I seek out. I consider them the life blood of our hobbies future. I don't mean to disrespect the people who demo the new games. Their enthusiasm can mean the difference between a game taking off and it ending up in the toilet...to these guys I salute you as well.

But, and it's a big but, over the last few years I have noticed a very worrying trend, at least it may be a trend, that a lot of very annoying people seem to have found an enormous loophole. Let me explain what I mean. The only way to see a show today is to put hand into pocket, right...or is it? No ladies and gentleman it is not. I give you the "demonstration game". Not the one where someone has created something new and wants the world to share in their joy, to have a glimpse of the new piece of magic to maybe take up shelf space in our local store one day, or where one can touch the figures, and even hold a conversation with the people running the games.

The demonstration game is just that, a game to be demoed. My issue is with the growing number of individuals who bring along their favourite game to "demo", and these people are taking up more and more room every year. What this really means is that for them, it becomes a weekend away with

the lads with free entry into the games show and a big space to put out some miniatures. These people are not interested in interacting and demonstrating their game to us, the paying public, and in fact go out of their way to be both aloof and rude...if they are actually at their table. This may well be their way of getting together with their mates, which I do not mind, but I do start to get a bit miffed when I go to three or four shows and out of the 30 tables of games being played I can only "participate" in five. Would someone like to tell me what this is all about and where to lay the blame? Me, I blame the organisers. How about a show with only participation games? It's all very well filling the table space, but surely the paying members come along to find out what the next big thing might be and to TRY it out.

The games they are playing all look very interesting, yes Kenny, even the Sci-Fi and Fantasy ones, but I want to get in there and roll dice, move troops, talk to the guys and understand the game. Maybe it's the people running the game...they don't play well with others and get scared by talking to people who may actually know more than they do.

I put out a call to all club members and show organisers, "demonstration" games have their place and are fine in small numbers. "Participation" games are what get new people playing your beloved game and that is surely not a bad thing. If you are organising a games show then can we try and redress the balance and have five Demonstration games and 25 Participation games, it will be so much more fun for us PAYING customers.

As always you are free to disagree and as always you will be wrong.

If you have any comments you would like to make or if you have a subject that you feel Uncle Bomber should tackle then please send your emails to unclebomber@the-ancible.com

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