



ISSUE 6 / AUTUMN 2010

irregular



STAGE MAGICIAN
PRESTIGE CLASS

PAINTING TUTORIAL
DAVID HEATHFIELD

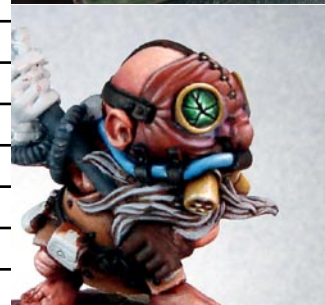
INTERVIEW
NICK KYME

magic

SHORT STORIES | SHOW REPORTS | A CHANCE TO WIN A COPY OF WARHAMMER ANCIENT BATTLES

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Editorial

Editors

Jason Hubbard
Nick Johnson

Layout

Jason Hubbard

Proof Reader

Nick Johnson

Social Media Manager

Rebecca Hubbard

Cover Illustration

Will Kirkby

Cover Layout

Matthew Mella

Comic Artwork

Will Kirkby

Contributors

Peter Allison
Diego de Almeida
David Barker
Mike Dodds
William Ford
William Ford jnr
Jim Freeman
David Heathfield
Jason Hubbard
Rebecca Hubbard
Brett Johnson
Nick Johnson
David Kay
Nick Kyme
Dan Lee
Shane McElligott
Andy Mon
Guy Oxley
Nick Palfrey
Scott Radom
Peter Scholey
Mike Schaeffer
Nick Slonskyj

Artwork

Diego De Almedia
Juan Diego Dianderas
Ricardo Guimaraes
David North
Michael Sutherland

Jason: Well folks, it seems it's that time again - another issue of Irregular Magazine is on the virtual shelf, and what a jam-packed issue we have for you all. We have another another supplement, though I let Nick discuss that particular goody, as he was involved in the writing of it. What else do we have this issue? Another great painting tutorial by David Heathfield, a new prestige class for Pathfinder and another short story from Taylor, plus a plethora of other goodies including an interview with Nick Kyme.

So, what have been up to since the last issue? Well I attended a few shows which included IMP 2010, Euro Militaire and UK Games Day, all of which have articles in this issue, though not all are written by little ole me. I've also started a 12 month mini buying ban.

No, I haven't gone bonkers - I just realized that my grey army was getting too big and so decided on a major challenge for myself. I hit the 40 year mark next October and decided on a couple of challenges. The first is getting fit - yep I did say fit - don't go into cardiac arrest folks, just because I mentioned being fit. The other was to paint as much of my grey army, which can be viewed here, and not buy any new models during the following 12 months. I'll keep you all up-to-date on my progress during the year, or my lack of it, though hopefully there won't be a lacking.

What else has been happening? Well, we had our first printed issue through Lulu.com last issue, and few of you bought a copy, which was great. We'll continue experimenting with this for the time being, as well as continuing with the free PDF.

Next issue we'll have a Zulu war special in the wargaming section, which will include an excellent range of articles, tutorials and historical background on the campaign. The overall theme for issue 7 will be Frontiers, so any potential contributors should consider that as a guide. Space, fantasy and historical are all potential possibilities. So get the old thinking caps on, and all contributions should be emailed to irregularmagazine@gmail.com.

Well, that's all folks, see you next time and enjoy the issue.

Nick: That was a busy few months. For a quick overview, I took part in the Warmachine European Team Challenge at Maelstrom Games, and helped run the second Irregular Miniature Paintfest at the end of July - reports on both events are in this issue of the magazine. Outside of these events, I've been working hard on converting the material my group came up with when we played the Dresden Files into a supplement - while it is still a work in progress, I hope to make it available during November. On top of that, there's been the usual painting and proof-reading going on, so I'm not sure where the time has gone!

One thing that has been occupying me recently, though, is setting up my new blog - The Renaissance Gamer. I only launched this last week, but I'll be adding content as we head towards the end of the year. If nothing else, you can see how long I manage to stick with my rationing programme.....

Next issue is going to be themed around Frontiers, and I'm going to be taking a trip into the final frontier as I look at some of the games that have arisen from the Star Trek franchise. I'll also be doing a review of the 4th edition of the Legend of the Five Rings roleplaying game, looking at the core rulebook and the Enemies of the Empire supplement.

I'll see you all in the new year.....

Skirmish Painting Competition Results

Back in July we announced our summer painting competition and it's sponsor, Dragon Forge Design. The Skirmish theme inspired action packed poses, dynamic duels and some classic heroes.

We had some fantastic entries, from a wide range of painters and the judges this time around, Nick and Jason had a tough time calling it on the winner. Each judge scored each entry out of a possible 10 points, so there was a maximum of 20. It was really close...but you don't want to be kept in suspense any longer, so here are the details of the winners.

In 1st place, and winning \$50 worth of Dragon Forge Design goodies is Andy Mon with his striking Oni Warau.



Here's what the judges had to say about it:

Jason: 9/10 This is a really nice piece, its well painted. The base is superb, love the tentacle coming out of the water. A really nice miniature that jumps out at you, great work.

Nick: 9/10 - Nice use of blood effects from the sword. The base is a little busy for my liking, but the piece is certainly effective.

Total 18/20

Coming in a very close 2nd place, and winning \$30 of Dragon Forge Design goodies is Kyle Hutcheson with his Bad Moonz Ork Nob.



Jason: 8/10 - Very nicely done, love the work on the plinth. This is really nicely presented

Nick: 9/10 - Very nice work on both the skin and the yellow sections - effective without being garish. Great detail work on the plinth, too.

Total 17/20

In 3rd place winning \$20 of Dragon Forge Design goodies is Stephane with Convict Gunslinger.



Jason: 8/10 - An interesting piece, nice flesh on the mini.

Nick: 8/10 - Excellent attention to detail, though the proof-reader in me is confused as to why ASH is capitalised when Wastes isn't. Lovely tones on the skin and trousers. Good detail work on the base.
Total 16/20

I hope you'll agree this was a tightly fought contest; congratulations to the winners and commiserations to those who missed out this time around - I do hope you'll enter another of our competitions to try your hand again.

Here are some of the fantastic runners up.



Painting Competition

Like your historical miniatures? We have just the competition for you!

This issue Irregular Magazine is offering one lucky winner a copy of Warhammer Ancient Battles 2nd Edition, which Jason has been using as the basis of his Dark Age campaign (started in issue 5).

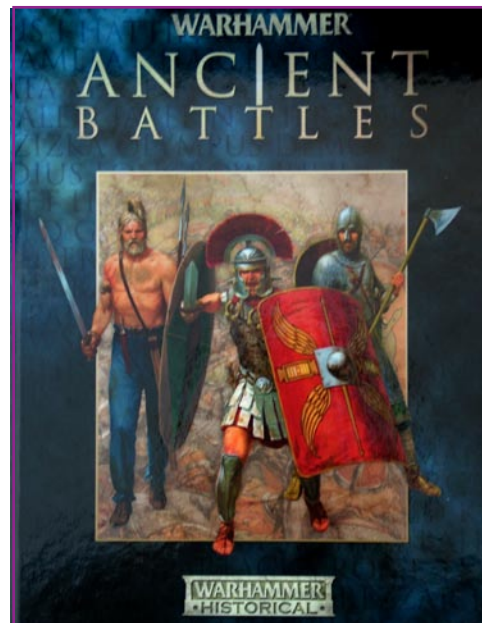
We know lots of our readers enjoy painting historical figures, so we'd like to see what you can produce. Here are the rules:

- Scale: 15mm - 40mm (Nothing smaller, nothing larger).
- Single figure - unmounted only (No units, vehicles or busts).
- Any manufacturer.
- Any period of history up to and including War War II.
- Must be your own work (No borrowing other people's work, or teaming up with a friend).
- One entry per person only.

Closing date for entries is: December 5th 2010.

Entries will be judged by Dave Barker and Jason Hubbard and the winner will receive their copy through the post.

Check out the competition page of our website for details of how to photograph and submit your entries.





R.P.G.

Stage Magician

Words: Dave Barker
Illustrations: Jason Hubbard

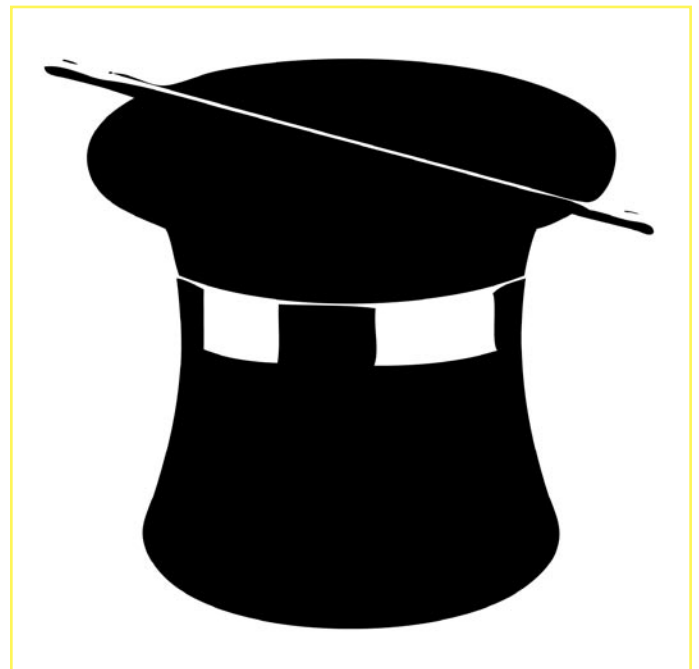
Prestige Class (Pathfinder)

There are many different types of magicians that appear in fantasy works that are reflected in our RPGs. Whether it is the wise old Elminster, the Chancellor of the Unseen University or some of the many teenage apprentice wizards of our own creations, or something in between - these magicians are almost numberless, but they all share the archetype of being robed or caped magic users, often in silly hats and always with a stock of (sometimes inappropriate) spells ready to go.

But I feel that there is one type of magician that is often overlooked and a little more difficult to represent easily using the standard rules. This missing mage is the one with a waxed moustache and goatee beard, both of which are usually black. The magicians whose clothes are usually cut rather tighter than a robe; that may even be seen in trousers and a waistcoat and perhaps even have a touch of velvet in his couture. But who most certainly has a penchant for sawing young ladies in half!

Yes, the Stage Magician is certainly under-represented in the role playing games that I have played and I would like to begin to rectify this oversight with the prestige class for the Pathfinder system that I outline in this article. Admittedly, the Stage Magician may make a better villain than a PC prestige class, but however you use this prestige class, I hope you have fun in your Pathfinder games!

As soon as I've finished typing this up, I shall be off to create an evil Stage Magician with a passing resemblance to The Master from Dr Who – the Robert Delgado or Anthony Ainley incarnations, not the John Simm Master, obviously!



Stage Magician

There are few that can understand the motivations and purposes of the Stage Magician. Many of their magical peers see them as confused sell-outs, trading their hard-won magical skills for a small amount of coin in the back rooms of seedy taverns, or as hustlers with a few magic skills pretending to be more than they really are. Other more kindly views of them are that they're engaging with the masses to make the mundane, common folk more comfortable with seeing magic performed, or that they're some kind of entrepreneur, not really suited to real magic,



Hit Die: d6

Requirements

To qualify to become a Stage Magician a character must fulfil all of the following criteria:

Skills: Bluff 4 ranks, Perform 2 ranks, Sleight of Hand 4 ranks, Spellcraft 4 ranks

Spells: Ability to cast arcane spells of 3rd level or higher.

Class Skills

The Stage Magician's class skills are: Acrobatics (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disguise (Cha), Escape Artist (Dex), Perception (Wis), Perform (Cha), Profession (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Spellcraft (Int), Use Magic Device (Cha)

Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int modifier

but they have at least found a role in life that pays their way. And indeed, all of these and more have been true for different Stage Magicians.

But whatever their motivation, Stage Magicians are most often to be found in or near the entertainment places of larger cities, plying their trade on stages or otherwise in front of crowds, confounding the people, and even many other magicians with their skills and feats of small scale manipulation and even grand illusion.

Role: Although a Stage Magicians' skills are perhaps not entirely suited to dungeoneering, they most certainly come into their own in urban environments, with their dexterous skills, their abilities with people and their unmagic skills many urban situations are aided by the presence of a Stage Magician in the party.

Often, Stage Magicians arrive at their craft through being Bards, though Rogues who have also acquired some arcane spellcasting, or arcane spellcasters who have gained the necessary stage skills can also become Stage Magicians.

Alignment: Stage Magicians are rarely Lawful and due to the slightly underhand nature of the entertainment that they practice. There are also very few Chaotic Evil Stage Magicians, with performing and stagecraft not really being a route to the kind of personal power that Chaotic Evil individuals tend to seek. However, there are no alignment restrictions on becoming a Stage Magician.





Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Stage Magician class.

Level	Base attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per day
1st	+0	+0	+1	+1	Unmagic 1	+1 level of existing class
2nd	+1	+1	+1	+1	Hand Unmagic, Stage Spells 4/day	+1 level of existing class
3rd	+1	+1	+2	+2	Unmagic 2	+1 level of existing class
4th	+2	+1	+2	+2	Penetrating Unmagic	+1 level of existing class
5th	+2	+2	+3	+3	Stage Spells 6/day	+1 level of existing class
6th	+3	+2	+3	+3	Unmagic 3	+1 level of existing class
7th	+3	+2	+4	+4	Invisible Unmagic	+1 level of existing class
8th	+4	+3	+4	+4	Stage Spells 8/day	+1 level of existing class
9th	+4	+3	+5	+5	Grand Unmagic	+1 level of existing class
10th	+5	+3	+5	+5	Unmagic 4	+1 level of existing class

Weapon and Armour Proficiency: Stage Magicians gain no proficiency with weapons or armour.

Spells per Day: When a new Stage Magician level is gained, the character gains spells per days as if gaining a level in a spellcasting class that they belonged to before becoming a Stage Magician. The Stage Magician does not, however, gain other benefits a character of that class would have gained except for: additional spells per day, spells known (if they are a spontaneous spellcaster) and an increased effective level of spellcasting. If the Stage Magician had more than one spellcasting class before becoming a Stage Magician, they must decide to which one of these classes the new level is added for the purposes of determining spells per day.

Unmagic: Starting at 1st level, a Stage magician can cast spells that behave perfectly normally, but that cannot be detected as magic, even using the Detect Magic spell. At 1st level, the Stage Magician gains the ability to use unmagic to hide 1st level spells and below; at 3rd level, the Stage Magician can unmagic 2nd level spells and below; at 6th level, the Stage Magician can unmagic 3rd level spells and below and at 10th level the Stage Magician can unmagic 4th level spells and below.

Part of the reason for this is possible is that the Stage Magician learns ways of performing spell-like abilities that do not actually rely on magic itself to take effect, such as bluffing, distraction and sleight of hand techniques, as well as chemical and physical effect, amongst other techniques. In addition, the Stage Magician is also becomes privy to certain secret magics that allow them to disguise the presence or use of magic itself. However, no spell higher than 4th level can ever be hidden in this manner.

Stage Spells (Su): Starting at 2nd level, a Stage Magician can cast spells without their material component, provided that this is replaced by either a greatly exaggerated somatic component or an extended verbal component (preferably in a way that puts on a good show!) as if using the Eschew Materials feat, although with Stage Spells, material components up to 25gp in value can be eschewed. Spells cast using this ability do not increase in spell level or casting time, although they are more likely than usual to attract attention. The Stage Magician can use this ability 4 times per day at 2nd level, and two additional times per day every three levels thereafter, up to a maximum of 8 times per day at 8th level. The Stage Magician decides to use this ability at the time of casting.

Stage Effect Unmagic: This class feature is not explicitly listed on the table above, but it contains each of the four specific types of unmagic available to a Stage Magician, as opposed to the more general type of Unmagic, described above. But just like general Unmagic, none of the effects chosen by the character will be detectable as being magic. All of the Stage Effect Unmagic effects chosen by the Stage magician can be performed at will once learned, provided suitable materials are to hand.

Once the character has learned a specific Stage Effect Unmagic (Hand, Penetrating, Invisible or Grand) then at every level gained by a character after this, they can learn a specific effect or illusion that falls within one of the Stage Effect Unmagics that they know, whether the character takes the level in Stage Magician or some other class entirely.

At 2nd, 4th, 7th and 9th levels of Stage Magician, the character must learn effects in the new type of Stage Effect Unmagic that is available to them as described in detail below.

For example, a Stage Magician who has taken three levels of Stage Magician has learned three Hand Unmagic effects. If they take the next two levels in Wizard, they can learn two more Hand Unmagic Effects, but cannot start taking Penetrating Unmagic effects until they take a fourth level in Stage Magician, when they must learn one Penetrating Unmagic effect.

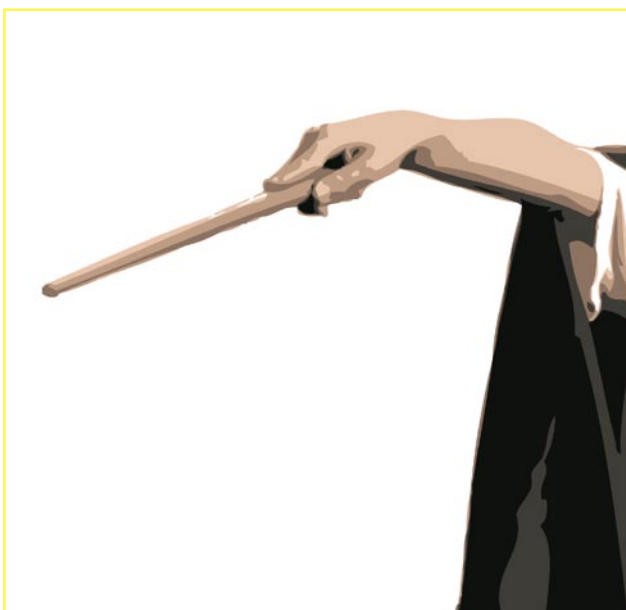
Stage Effects can be combined, for example, above 4th level Stage Magician, once Hand Unmagic and Penetrating Unmagic are both known, a chosen effect could be to cause a very long chain of pennants to emerge from an assistant's mouth.

Hand Unmagic: Beginning at 2nd level, the Stage Magician begins to practice and learn effects centred on manipulating small objects that can be incorporated into their. Two such items of Hand Unmagic are learned at 2nd level.

Details of exactly what effect or illusions are learned are left up to a discussion between the player and the GM, but examples might include: ball and cups trick; producing an egg from behind someone's ear; finding a card in a deck of cards; magically mending a cut rope; reforming a torn playing card; magically mending a smashed watch; etc.

Penetrating Unmagic: At 4th level, a Stage Magician begins to practice effects that centre around two objects interpenetrating one another, or being in spaces together where they should not be. One such item of Penetrating Unmagic is learned at 4th level.

Details of exactly what effect or illusions are learned are left up to a discussion between the player and



the GM, but examples might include: pulling a rabbit out of a hat; passing a blade (or lighted candle, or other such item) through one's arm; guillotining an audience member's hand without it being damaged or cut off; causing large items to be stored in a space too small for them (i.e., putting a ladder into a sack); levitating an assistant on the point of a sword; etc.

Invisible Unmagic: At 7th level, a Stage Magician begins to practice effects that centre on invisibility. One such item of Invisibility Unmagic is learned at 7th level.

Details of exactly what effect or illusions are learned are left up to a discussion between the player and the GM, but examples might include: making all (or part) of an assistant or audience member disappear (and reappear again, one hopes!); making fruit or other items appear out of nowhere; disappearing in a puff of smoke; causing items in a box to mysteriously appear and disappear from nowhere; etc.

Note: items (and people) that are made to re-appear should not be allowed to simply be created on a whim by the player. Anything re-appearing should have earlier been made to disappear by the character so as to avoid abuse by over-keen players.

Grand Unmagic: At 9th level, a Stage Magician begins to practice effects that are simply larger than life. One such item of Grand Unmagic is learned at 9th level.

Details of exactly what effect or illusions are learned are left up to a discussion between the player and the GM, but examples might include: sawing a lady in half; causing the fountain in the main square to vanish for a short period of time; transforming an assistant into a lumber hulk, small dragon or other monstrous creature for a short period; stretching an assistant's hands and feet unnaturally far away from their head; etc.









Iron, Steam & Really Short People Part 2

In part 1, available in issue 5 of this very magazine, we saw how I progressed through the first three months of lead time before the European Team Challenge (ETC). With just one month to go before the event, I'd settled on a contract and a warcaster, but that was about it for progress. I'd gotten some warjacks painted, but I was still woefully lacking when it came to completed infantry.

Time to knuckle down, then - if I didn't, there'd be no point turning up on the day.

June 2010

The submission deadline for army lists was June 18th, and if my list wasn't in by 5pm my team would be facing a hefty points fine. I'd been kicking around the idea of exploiting Durgen's area of effect (AoE) manipulating feat with an army designed to blot out the landscape with a hail of blast templates. While this would be dangerous on most turns, it would be devastating on the turn that Durgen used his feat, Bombs Away, thanks to the boosted to-hit rolls and the extra die on Blast damage rolls.

The Saturday before the submission deadline, I arranged to play a 50 point game against Simon, using one of the scenarios from the tournament pack provided by Maelstrom. This would allow me to test the build I'd been thinking about, and both Simon and myself would be able to assess how effective we thought it would be. The list I ended up taking is below:

Words & Photography: Nick Johnson

Durgen Madhammer - 6 Warjack points
 - Ghordson Basher - 7 points
 - Ghordson Basher - 7 points
 - Grundback Gunner - 3 points
 Reinholdt, Gobber Speculator - 1 point
 Master Gunner Dougal Macnaile - 2 points
 Thor Steinhammer - 2 points
 - Ghordson Avalancher - 9 points
 Horgenhold Artillery Corps - 3 points
 Horgenhold Forge Guard (6) - 5 points
 Herne & Jonne - 3 points
 Hammerfall High Shield Gun Corps (10) - 8 points
 + Hammerfall High Shield Gun Corps Officer and Standard Bearer - 3 points
 Eiyrrs, Mage Hunter of los - 3 points
 Total - 50 points

This list would let me drop 9 AoE attacks without any concerns, ten if I used Dougal's grenade rather than his Artillerist ability, and even more if I used Durgen's Explosivo spell. The two Bashers would also benefit from Durgen's feat if I used their Flak Field ability, as the Flak Field does Blast damage rolls.

We rolled off, and ended up playing the Convergence scenario, where the objective is to take and hold a 12 inch circle in the centre of the board, scoring control points if there are no enemy models within this area at the end of each turn. I won the roll to determine who would deploy and go first, and set up so as to



provide as much of a crossfire as possible on the central objective, with the Forge Guard on my left and Thor, with his pet Avalancher, on my right.

Simon went for a layered deployment, facing Thor's Avalancher with a Machine Wraith and hiding Venethrax on his right flank, away from his arc nodes. The middle ground was covered by ranks of Bane Thralls and Bile Thralls, with a counter-charge unit of Bane Knights on his left.

Eirss was the only model I had with Advance Deployment (AD), and she set up to try to disrupt Venethrax or his jacks on my left flank. Simon hadn't fetched any AD troops, which meant I didn't have to worry about him deploying to counter Eirss.

I went first, and tried to get my troops in position for ranging shots, as well as to provide a strong position to advance into the control zone in my second turn. Unfortunately, all my guns were out of range, even with deviation. Simon countered by using an arc node to kill off Eirss, and sending his Machine Wraith to play "Chase the Avalancher," with a general advance towards the middle of the table. In my second turn I continued to advance, ending up with both Basher's contesting the objective - due to the scenario, I couldn't claim any control points until the end of Simon's second turn, and he would easily be contesting the zone. As with my first turn, my fire was largely ineffectual, and Thor and my Avalancher manoeuvred behind a building to redeploy away from the Wraith - the warjack was too far away from Durgen to benefit from Explosivo, meaning I couldn't stop it advancing at him. The only real damage I caused was with my Gunner, putting several wounds on Gerlak Slaughterborn.

Simon advanced his Bane Thralls into the control point in his turn, but didn't really commit his forces - the main aggressive action he took was to arc a spell onto my Forge Guard, ensuring that four of them died. Fortunately for me, the unit passed its command check, so it didn't flee. Simon's Reaper harpooned my Gunner, dragging it into melee, where it was scrapped in short order. In my third turn I was able to use

Durgen to drop accurate AoEs on to the Bane Thrall unit, wiping them out and allowing me to claim a control point. One of my Basher's slammed Gerlak, neutralising the threat and following up to tie up the Reaper as well. The remaining Forge Guard charged the arc node, but failed to hit it. A lucky scatter shot from Arquebus Jonne managed to kill off Gorman di Wulfe, robbing Venethrax of his smoke screen.

Needing to stop me controlling the objective, Simon committed his infantry, with Bile Thralls and Bane Knights advancing into the objective. My sacrificial Basher was butchered by the Reaper and Venethrax, but strangely none of Simon's tougher troops advanced into the control point. The Bane Knights killed off a couple of Gun Corps, but not enough to worry the unit - though the front couple of Dwarves were engaged.

With Dougal and Reinholdt close by, my fourth turn was instructive for both Simon and myself - with their enhancements and his feat, Durgen was able to start clearing house. The remaining Basher cleared the Bane Knights tying up my Gun Corps out of the way, and a hail of shot and shells managed to wipe out every enemy model in the control area in short order - the final shot coming from my Avalancher, which had finally gotten away from the Machine Wraith. I'd managed to snatch victory from a game I didn't think I had much chance in, which was a nice achievement. With the list settled, it was time for me to concentrate on my painting. By this point, I'd left myself quite an uphill struggle. While I'd finished Thor prior to my game against Simon, that still left me with two heavy warjacks, a solo, and four units which needed painting - quite a stretch. The two warjacks were fairly straightforward, though I didn't get to painting freehand runes on the second Basher. I eventually broke the back of the Gun Corps, including unit attachment, within the final week. The Forge Guard, Artillery Corps, Dougal and Herne & Jonne were still being worked on when Simon turned up to collect me on the Friday evening - they were at a point that they were usable in a game, but not at a stage where I was happy with them. At 9pm I put the paints away, packed my figures, and travelled off to Whitwell, ready for the tournament the following day - I just hoped my painting would be up to scratch....

Saturday 3rd July - ETC Day 1

Simon and I arrived at the venue in plenty of time on the Saturday - this wasn't my first trip to the Eye of the Storm, but it was my first visit with the new gaming hall open.



We met up with Sam and Andres - the Guts 'n' Gears guys - in the bar area, and had a chat, getting to know each other a bit before acting as comrades in arms. After about half an hour, as the bar filled with gamers from all areas of the country - and even from overseas - we were allowed to go into the gaming hall and find our tables for our first game.

ETC - Round 1

My first game took place on table 25 - I was initially scheduled to face Rob Lane's Gorten army, but he had made a gentleman's agreement with Simon the previous day to use his team feat to avoid mirror matches in round 1. So, instead of facing another Rhulic army, I ended up facing Tim Fisher's rather nice Cryx army, led by Lich Lord Venethrax - his list was:

Lich Lord Venethrax

- Stalker
- Corrupter
- Cankerworm
- Deathjack
- 10 Bile Thralls
- 6 Bane Thralls
- 6 Bane Knights
- Pistol Wraith
- Pistol Wraith
- Warwitch Siren

We were playing the same Convergence scenario that I'd played against Simon a couple of weeks previously, so I was reasonably confident about my chances, especially given the amount of infantry in the list. While some of the infantry was very powerful if it got into range, I was certain I'd be able to destroy most of it before it became a threat.

Fortunately, my game plan of "get a toehold in the circle, and shell anything else that moves" paid off - one of my Bashers was able to slam Deathjack over

Venethrax, slowing him down for a turn before it died, while the other held up his Corrupter and Stalker, eventually disabling both of them with its Flak Field, ram attacks, and a cheeky free strike on the Stalker. My artillery dealt with his infantry and solos, and Venethrax eventually perished under a hail of fire, after Tim's second failed attempt to kill Durgen - getting my caster onto a hill saved his life, as Venethrax's Hellfire attack only narrowly missed.

The victory settled me down a bit, as I had been nervous, and I set my army out ready for the painting judging. Having popped down to the shop to have a flick through the new Forces of Warmachine: Mercenaries book, I returned to the gaming floor to find that all of the Inglorius B'Stards had managed a win in round 1 - three by caster kill, and one by actually completing the scenario's requirements.



ETC - Round 2

After the lunch break, where we recorded the first of many segments for the Guts 'n' Gears podcast, I found myself on the heady heights of table 1, facing off against Wout Maerschalk of Team Sprocket, one of the two Belgian teams at the European Team Challenge. Wout was using a Khador army, led by Epic Sorscha - I'd faced the original version of Sorscha many times during Mk1, but this would be my first time facing the Epic variety. Wout's list contained the following:

Forward Kommander Kratikoff
 - Beast 09
 Wardog
 Great Bears of Gallowswood
 3 Iron Fang Uhlans
 Kovnik Markov
 Fenris
 10 Winter Guard
 + Winter Guard Officer & Standard Bearer
 + 3 Winter Guard Rocketeers
 Kovnik Grigorovich
 4 Widowmakers
 Kell Bailloch
 Lady Aiyana & Master Holt

The scenario we were playing, Outflank, was essentially the same as the first game, but with two smaller control points towards the flanks, rather than one larger one in the middle of the board. Wout won the roll to decide who was going first, which meant he also got to choose his table edge - this unfortunately left me with a large wood directly between my deployment zone and the left-hand control point. With no troops with the Pathfinder ability, this was going to be problematic.

Wout, on the other hand, had a lot of manoeuvrability with his cavalry, and some very resilient infantry in his Winter Guard - the amount of enhancements they could pick up from Sorscha and Jozef Grigorovich would make them a nightmare to deal with.

Unsurprisingly, this formation is sometimes called the Winter Guard Death Star.

As I feared, everything that could go wrong did go wrong. Wout had his infantry well spread out, so my AoE attacks weren't as effective as normal. My infantry lacked the speed to threaten the control points effectively, and I even managed to forget to activate Eiyrrs in my first turn, leading to her death - in my defence, an Elf in some woods is easy enough to miss.

The highlight for me was being able to wipe out his Uhlan unit in one turn of firing, aided by a Redline'd Basher slamming one of them. While this did net me a Control Point, Wout used his warcaster's feat the following turn, and was able to eliminate all four of my warjacks in a turn - two of them thanks to Fenris alone.

None of the rest of the Inglorius B'Stards fared particularly well, with only Sam managing a win in Round 2, thanks to a sneaky assassination of his opponent's caster. All of our opponents were good players and good sportsmen, so we didn't mind too much - if nothing else, it allowed us to return to our natural mid-table habitat.

ETC - Round 3

After the bout of vertigo that had struck on the top tables, I found myself playing Paul Watson on table 18 in Round 3. Paul, captain of Team Avalanche, was running Epic Feora at the head of his Menoth army. I'm not normally a fan of facing Menoth, due to the amount of denial they can produce - I don't mind things being difficult to do, but out-and-out saying "Thou shalt not!" is just downright rude.



Paul's list did feature a number of the "Just say no!" elements, in particular the Choir and Covenant:

Feora, Protector of the Flame

- Vanquisher
- Castigator
- Redeemer (bonded)

Avatar of Menoth

2 x Vassal of Menoth

Vassal Mechanik

Covenant of Menoth

4 Choir of Menoth

10 Temple Flameguard

+ Temple Flameguard Officer & Standard Bearer

6 Holy Zealots

+ Monolith Bearer

Unsurprisingly, Paul's Choir was singing their song of "Thou shalt not shoot" to protect his warjacks for the first two turns, meaning I was unable to put early damage on them. Given the sort of damage that Thor's Avalancher was capable of inflicting, that meant I was missing out on some severe softening up. His Avatar ran around his right flank, getting into a position to snare my troops with it's Gaze of Menoth.

I advanced towards the rectangular control point in the middle of the board, only for my Gunner and some of my Gun Corps to become ensnared by the Avatar's Gaze ability. His Redeemer began to shell my right flank, whilst Durgen returned the favour into Paul's Flameguard. In my second turn I launched a Redline'd Basher into the Vanquisher, slamming it backwards and ensuring I was at least contesting the control point. Unfortunately, this didn't do sufficient damage to cripple it, and it died to return attacks in Paul's third turn.

I somehow managed to forget to activate my Forge Guard unit on my second turn - they were going to run up and engage the Greater Destiny'd Zealots so they couldn't throw bombs at me in Paul's third turn, but it slipped my mind - I suspect the heat and volume in the gaming room at the time may have had something to do with this. Paul made a similar error at the start of his third turn, forgetting to allocate his focus. When I realised my error, mentioning it caused Paul to forget to do his Zealot's attacks, having moved them - despite the fact I knew I was going to lose some key figures to this, I allowed him to go back





and take the attacks, which resulted in Eiyrrs and two Forge Guard dying to fire bombs.

Having few figures that would be able to get into the control point and survive, I decided to go for battle points in my third turn, popping Durgen's feat and opening up on the Covenant of Menoth - if I was going to lose, I was going to take that tome with me. Epic Feora happened to be stood in base to base contact with the book at this point, having advanced to help destroy my Basher, so I took the opportunity to boost damage whenever a blast would catch her - by the end of Durgen's activation, she was down to 9 health. Scenting a chance to yank victory from the jaws of defeat, I used Thor to move my Avalancher with his Drive: Pronto ability, then advanced further to get line of sight to the warcaster. A short from the cannon left her on two health, but killed off the book - without the obstruction, my Horgenhold Artillery Corps were able to land a shell on her head and finish her off.

We were both somewhat stunned by the result, as I'd all but conceded going into turn 3 - it just goes to show how quickly a game of Warmachine can turn round. Had I been thinking about it, I'd've made some other non-vital activations before finishing Feora off, to try to fetch the Flameguard down below half strength, but I wasn't thinking clearly at the time.

The rest of the Inglorius B'stards performed well, with three of us managing caster kills and Sam pulling a scenario win out of the bag, having killed off everything apart from the enemy's warcaster in his game.

ETC - End of Day 1

At the end of day 1, the Inglorius B'Stards were

extremely happy with our performance, somehow managing to win 9 out of 12 games. We'd started the day intending only to avoid the wooden spoon, and instead were wondering whether we'd be able to threaten the top tables during day 2 - for a team of non-tournament gamers who'd only met each other on the day, that would be a real achievement.

Immediately following round 3, Andres and Sam popped back to their hotel for something to eat and a break, while Simon and I stayed to enjoy the barbecue that was being put on - and, in my case, put up with the World Cup game that was on in the bar. Downstairs one of the Maelstrom staff was dressed up in cardboard armour and doing battle with Martyn Jenkins in his fairy outfit, which kept the crowd entertained.

Once the football was out of the way, people went back into the gaming room, either for friendly games of Warmachine, or to play board games. When Sam and Andres re-appeared, we recorded an end-of-day-1 segment for the podcast, then started a round table discussion, which was pretty cool - Sam wandered around to rope people in, until we ended up with ten or fifteen people sat around the microphone, chatting away about the game. Some of what was said was really enlightening, and I was glad to be part of it.



ETC - Day 2

Sunday dawned with a beautiful clear sky, and Simon and I arrived at Maelstrom in good spirits - after our performance on the Saturday, I think we'd earned that mood. We joined in an early recording for the podcast with Gary Moore, one of the guys running the event. Once all the players had turned up, round 4 was published and the games began.

ETC - Round 4

My original pairing for round 4 was against Martyn Jenkins of the Firestorm Fairies, with his Kara Sloan-led Cygnar force. However, our skipper decided this would be a good time to use our team feat, meaning I faced Rob West with his Cryx, led by Lich Lord Terminus. Looking back over the two days, this feat meant I narrowly avoided a run of facing 4 team captains in the last four rounds. Rob's Cryx force comprised of:

Lich Lord Terminus

- Deathjack

- Reaper

- Deathripper

Bane Lord Tartarus

6 Bane Knights

10 Bane Thralls

+ Bane Thrall Officer & Standard Bearer

10 Mechanithralls

+ 2 Brute Thralls

Necrosurgeon + 3 Stitch Thralls

There was a plan involved when we decided to change my opponent - given the ease which I'd destroyed the infantry of the Venethrax army on day 1, and Simon's infantry-heavy Cryx army in the warm-up to the tournament, it was felt that I'd be able to deal with a Terminus list. What Simon & I both forgot was one of Terminus' key rules - all friendly infantry within

his control area become Tough, granting them a 5+ save if they're killed. This, combined with the Necrosurgeon's ability to resurrect Mechanithralls, meant that wiping out the unit shielding Terminus would be very difficult.

As with game 2 - and, in all fairness, game 3 - my army was not really suited to the scenario - I needed to get to objectives on the centre line, and hold them for control points. While I was able to get up-field, wasn't able to control the objectives in strength.

Trying to deal with threats in priority order, I used the Gun Corps mini-feat on my turn 2 to put a lot of damage on the Deathjack - combined with an Avalancher shot, he was down to 4 boxes. Unfortunately, a Redline'd Basher proved to be less than a eighth of an inch out of range for a slam which would've finished the monster off. The Flak Field, however, did manage to nearly deal with Tartarus, leaving him on 1 health thanks to Durgen's feat.

In retaliation, Terminus, Tartarus and the Bane Knights counter-charged my Gun Corps, killing all bar the Officer in one very messy turn of combat. Realising that with the number of soul tokens on Terminus at this point I'd lose my warcaster next turn, I concentrated on killing other elements of Rob's army to try to maximise my battle points. Unfortunately, a lucky string of tough rolls meant that I wasn't able to finish off the Bane Knights, though Tartarus did eventually die, to a pistol shot from Herne of all things. Surprisingly, Eiyrrs managed to survive the game, for the only time this tournament.

As predicted, Durgen died the following turn, leaving me on a 2-2 record. My fellow B'Stards fared no better, and our round ended as 0-4, knocking us further into the mid-tables. On the other hand, the Fairies were going on to the top tables to face off with Team Sprocket, the guys who'd hammered us in round 2.





ETC Round 5

After the defeat that we had received in round 4, the Inglorius B'Stards retired to the bar to regroup and recharge in preparation for the final round. Suitably refreshed, we returned to the gaming hall for our final game, fighting for pride. I found myself facing the Cygnar army of Chris Roberts, on the table next to the one I'd played my first game on the day previously. Chris' list was:

Lord Commander Stryker
 - Ol' Rowdy
 - Stormclad
 - Lancer
 Squire
 Journeyman Warcaster
 Rhupert Carvolo, Piper of Ord
 Stormsmith Stormcaller
 Arcane Tempest Gun Mages
 10 Sword Knights
 6 Stormguard
 6 Stormblades

With the scenario being Killbox, I didn't have to advance too far to ensure I wasn't going to lose by accident, which made a refreshing change after the three preceding scenarios. Looking at Chris' army, I knew my AoE's could do some severe damage - or I did, until Chris started spreading the defensive buffs around. The combination of Arcane Shield, Deflection and Rhupert's Heroic Call made it very tricky to take down Chris's troops, and when the smoke cleared from my first proper firing phase, I'd downed five Stormguard, a couple of Gun Mages and a Sword Knight.

Or I had, until Arquebus Jonne opened fire.

Trying to take down more of the lightly armoured Gun Mages, Jonne's shots had fell short by a couple of inches. The first scatter roll went parallel to the table edge for a full six inches, landing in the middle of nowhere. Jonne's second template also scattered away

from the intended target, mildly annoying the last Stormguard. The third template, however, scattered towards Chris's somewhat confused Stormsmith, catching him in it's blast and taking him out. Guns with a 12" range shouldn't be killing solos roughly 21" away.....

Once we'd both stopped laughing, Chris started his turn - he was somewhat intimidated by the damage I'd managed to get through despite the defensive spells, and apparently decided to close the gap - most of his force ran to engage me, and he used Stryker's feat, Rolling Thunder, to tie up as much of my front line as possible, killing off a couple of Forge Guard and just under half of the Gun Corps unit. Strangely, with Stryker not ending the turn in combat, Chris chose to change his Arcane Shield target to Ol' Rowdy rather than his warcaster.

In my turn, things looked somewhat grim - however, if I could avoid a free strike from the Lancer, I was in a position to potentially eliminate Chris' warcaster. One Basher stood up to close the gap, using it's Flak field to feed Durgen a focus point. With my warcaster free, I was able to go on the offensive, using Reinholdt and Dougal to enhance his offensive potential. Two boosted shots later, and Stryker was looking the worse for wear - and the last Stormguard had been eliminated. A follow-up shot from the Artillery Corps wasn't quite so fortunate, as it managed to scatter back on to my Gun Corps, and kill off just enough of them to give Chris some battle points for the unit.

For once, however, the Avalancher didn't let me down - from it's hilltop perch, it managed to land a shot directly on Ol' Rowdy's head, and the blast damage was enough to annihilate the Lord Commander. Had I been thinking, rather than succumbing to a rush of blood to the head, I'd've made my attacks with the Forge Guard and Gun Corps first, in the hope of bringing one of his other units below half strength - unfortunately, killing the warcaster took priority. Chris remarked that he thought Stryker was safe at the end of his turn, which he realised now was a mistake.

When the round came to an end, Simon had managed a win, while Sam lost his game. Andres managed one of the few draws of the weekend, leaving the Inglorius B'Stards on a record of 11 wins, 1 draw and 8 losses - not as good as we'd been hoping when day 2 dawned, but certainly respectable.



Conclusions

Team Pos	Team/Player Name	Total Score	Game Pts	Sports Pts	Painting
13	Inglorious B'Stards	79540	47340	16600	15600
	Simon Robinson		11160	4000	4000
	Nicholas Johnson		12560	4000	4000
	Sam Sedghi		12760	4400	4000
	Andres Olivares		10860	4200	3600

Put simply, it was an amazing weekend. I had some awesome games, met some great people, and learned a lot about the army I took to the event. I've quoted our figures just above - as you can see, we managed to place 13th out of 26 teams, which was a great result for us. It is especially good when you consider how little preparation I'd managed prior to the event - I think 6 practise games is a new record low for me. When the results were announced, it turned out that Team Sprocket, who we'd played in round 2, were the overall winners, while the Firestorm Fairies - our round 4 opponents - managed to take second place. With this information, being defeated 1-3 and 0-4 by them didn't seem quite so bad. Even more importantly, we'd managed to place just above the Dragon Slayers team, proving that in a format like this even casual gamers can be a threat. The one thing that surprised me was that, over the course of 5 games I didn't play against a single Hordes player - with the Mk2 version of the Hordes core rulebook and cards not

having been released by the tournament, however, I shouldn't have been that surprised.

So, what's next for me? Well, by the time you read this I should have finished painting the last dozen figures that I wasn't quite happy with. I've received a couple of new pieces to work on - Harlan Versh and a second Mule, amongst others, so I'll be continuing to paint Mercenaries. I intend to attend the Benelux Masters in October, money and government bureaucracy notwithstanding. I sincerely recommend that, if you get chance, that you give Warmachine Mk2 a try - I'm sure you'll enjoy it.

Meet the Mages of Middle Earth

Words: David Kay

Photography: William Ford & Brett Johnson



Wizards in War of the Ring come in many forms. As well as more recognisable figures such as Gandalf or the Nazgûl, there are lesser known spellcasters available. Are Moria Goblin shamans worth it? Just what is an Elven Stormcaller? All is answered here.

The Forces of Evil

Evil armies are rightly considered to have a magical advantage in War of the Ring. With spellcasters spread across every list, there is always a native option to go with. Evil's lore access is focused around Ruin, Dismay and Darkness, all lores geared towards making your opponent's day miserable. What's not to love?

The Nazgûl are rightly feared as the most efficient and deadly spellcasters on offer to evil armies. Each Nazgûl is a level 3 caster, has access to both Darkness and Dismay, and comes with a powerful secondary ability all of its own. There are no bad Nazgûl abilities, only good and really good. For this reason your primary (and possibly only) spellcasters will be Nazgûl.

After the Nazgûl, there are some level 2 casters such as The Mouth of Sauron, and Kardush Firecaller, who can give your army a further magical boost. While not as powerful as a Nazgûl, they are still useful additions to your list.

Each evil army has native shamans, all level 1 casters, which can often be overlooked for the flashier Epics. The shamans and Easterling War Priests for Fallen Realms shouldn't be totally overlooked, as they can be an important back up. In Mordor, the shamans access Darkness. Misty Mountains and Isengard make use

of Ruin. In Angmar, Dismay is the weapon of choice, while the War Priests of the Fallen Realms use Darkness.

These differences mean that the armies all get the chance to load up on multiples of different spells. A Misty Mountains army with three shamans all wanting to cast Bolt of Fire will play differently from a Fallen Realms army where each War Priest will be casting Pall of Night. There's no need to worry about focus roles with the level 1 casters, just pick your best spell and cast.

For those who like their magic as big and splashy as possible there are large and legendary options. The Necromancer, The Nine Are Abroad - why choose one Nazgûl when you can have them all? - and Sauron are all powerful casters. The Balrog and Dragon are also strong spellcasters, through this is generally considered secondary to their even stronger fighting abilities.

The Forces of Good

What does Good have to combat all this? Only the Elves have spellcasters native to their list, all other armies must rely on allies from the Forgotten Kingdoms, or the Elves. Allied spellcasters are worth their points, for their ability to help your own army, or to actively fight back against your opponent's magical attacks. In Middle Earth, there's nothing odd about





Gandalf or Radagast popping up to help a Dwarf army, and such help is often needed.

Elven Stormcallers are the only non-epic, non-legendary caster the good armies have, and these are restricted to Galadhrim regiments only. These level 1 casters use Wilderness, a useful lore to have. In practice, unless you are running a themed Galadhrim force, you are unlikely to call on a Stormcaller. Elven epics offer more flexibility in casting, and Galadriel, Arwen, or Thranduil are all worth the price of their inclusion in your force.

In the Forgotten Kingdoms list the Istari dwell. Like the Nazgûl for Evil, the Istari are notable for their abilities as much as for their spellcasting. Gandalf has his own special spell, Saruman his voice, and Radagast boasts unlimited spell range and his special 'you can't



charge this' ability. Unlike the Nazgûl, each of the Istari comes with a different spell lore or lores, and cover Ruin, Command, Dismay and Wilderness between them.

Wilderness and Command predominate among Good spellcasters, much as Darkness and Ruin do with Evil. Wilderness has a special importance for Good armies, in that it acts as a counter-spell for the dreaded Pall of Night spell. Let your opponent cast away, then simply blow away the pall with your own Call Wind spell and be free to charge and shoot. Call Wind alone is often considered reason enough to take a Wilderness caster.

Along with the individual Epic Heroes, the Forgotten Kingdoms list offers Legendary formations of casters. Since they will only ever be allies, they are reserved for the largest games, where they won't take up too much of your army. The five Istari together will take up all your allies allowance at 2,000 points and are probably best left for games which are larger still. The main advantage that the Good Legendary formations have over their evil counterparts is their access to Command spells. This means that the formations can heal themselves after they take casualties (as long as there is someone left to cast the spell!), and operate longer on the battlefield.

Magic – don't go to war without it

In War of the Ring, magic can offer you a critical edge – or critical defence against your opponent's army at key moments in the game. While there's no need to overload yourself with spellcasters, one or two per thousand points will strengthen the rest of your army. The key consideration should always be to choose casters using a lore that will be most useful to your army's strategy and role on the table.



SHORT STORY

The Death of Magic

Words: Richard Tinsley

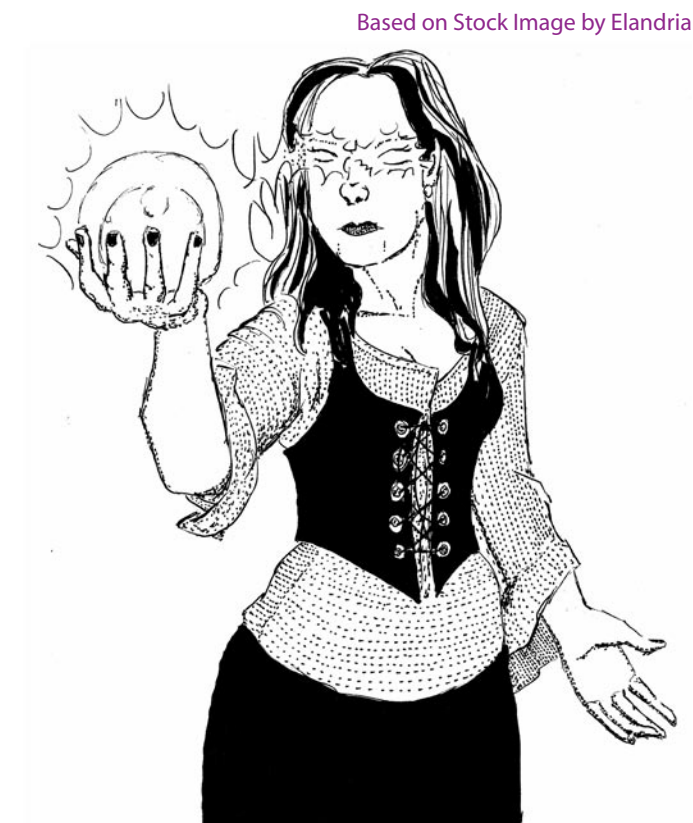
B/W Illustration: Michael Sutherland

We are the strong, we survive. Here in the Wyrd Wood we thrive, for we know the hidden paths and fear no one. We keep watch for the return of The Troglodyte and the return of the old magic's. We are the last who remember the truth – how the false god did fall and the world knew war and devastation unlike anything it had known before, even during the holocaust.

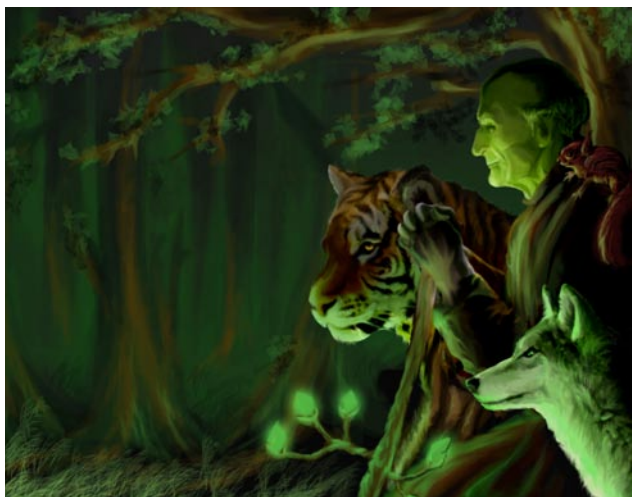
To tell the story of the death of magic you must go back many millennia, to when the world was still a wild and untamed place and the cities of Man, Elf and Dwarf were still in their infancy. The world belonged to the beasts and the monsters; Dragons fed and scorched the land as they saw fit, great nations yet to be were mere fiefdoms and the Orc and Goblin roved the land in vast numbers, afraid of no one.

In the midst of this turmoil a priest emerged, preaching of a new god – a benevolent deity of nature and rebirth whose totem was a giant rat. The true name of this priest is lost to time but he would become known to all the peoples of Porth as Ratrimack, the high priest of Ruvos. For countless years Ratrimack fought against the humanoids and their masters, most notably his arch-enemy the immortal, crippled wizard Madrack. Ironically it would be the rivalry between these two great powers that would lead to the death of magic.

Eventually the lands of the Eastern Reaches would become home to great nations and peaceful villages as the tide of evil abated in what became known as the Monster Wars. The history of the Monster Wars has been told elsewhere and does not truly affect our story, however.



Ratrimack founded a land based on the worship of his god; Ruvos. The faithful would slowly go through a metamorphosis into some form of Rat-men and join the higher echelons of the church. Rat-men missionaries and temples to Ruvos could be found all over Porth from Selibon to Terrana and Val Harkas. Over the centuries it became recognised as a great force for good in the world. However, even



then there were rumours of misdeeds and strange disappearances, of villages destroyed and massacred while the faithful of Ruvos survived.

But Madrack still lived and felt that he had seen the true face of Ratrimack and set about showing the entire world the truth behind the facade. What he in fact discovered was something that even he could not possibly have imagined! Ratrimack was well known as a cleric of great power – as the head of the church of Ruvos, and having become immortal during his years of adventuring, there was no more powerful a priest on all Porth. What most did not know was that Ratrimack was also a skilled mentalist able to use his mind to dominate others and transport himself anywhere with a thought. He used this power to weave an incredibly powerful glamour which masked the true nature and purpose of the beings under his influence. The most shocking part of the whole thing was the revelation that Ruvos did not and had never existed and the power Ratrimack wielded came from an unknown source.

It was widely known that Ratrimack was subject to rages and had exhibited periods of mental instability due to the nature of his immortality. With his great lie revealed he seemed to have lost any semblance of control whatsoever. His Rat-men missionaries were unleashed all across the world in acts of terrorism and assassination taking out prime targets and individuals.

Ratrimack then transported to the South where he had erected a great magical barrier to prevent the undead created during the Monster Wars from plaguing the lands and keep them contained. He brought down the barrier and freed the undead, taking command of these fearsome forces.

Ratrimack then began the systematic annihilation of all living things not allied to him across the lands of the Eastern Reaches. Many fled rather than face the might of Ratrimack's army, seeking refuge in the

many other countries outside of the Eastern Reaches in the belief that once he had killed everything there he would stop his wanton slaughter. As men and their allies died Ratrimack raised even more undead minions to do his bidding and continue the fight. Eventually all of the nations of the Eastern Reaches had fallen except for Sandria; whose natural borders had prevented a successful invasion. Then Ratrimack turned his attention to the continent of Thane.

As a former Champion of Porth many of the world's most powerful individuals had been allies of Ratrimack and refused to raise their hands against him. When it appeared that his lust for death would encompass the whole planet The Troglodyte and his comrades hatched a daring plan. Ratrimack's immortality was as much a curse as a gift; if you killed him in some way he would appear to die, but his soul would inhabit the nearest available body, often the body of the one that killed him. Over time the body would transform into the appearance and physique of Ratrimack which meant that you didn't actually dare to kill him! There was a time when Ratrimack was killed and didn't come back by the Ranger Erinmore. It appears that Erinmore had a sword which had been given to his parents by a mysterious stranger when he was still a babe. The sword was called Soulforged and it had the unique ability to devour the soul of somebody killed by it.

The knowledge to create such a sword had been lost, but The Troglodyte took his band back in time to a point in history before Erinmore received the sword and was able to copy and enhance it so that Ratrimack could not escape the blade as he had before. It was then The Troglodyte which gave the sword to Erinmore as told in the history books.

The Troglodyte then returned to the correct time and prepared to face the forces of Ratrimack in what became the greatest and most deadly battle in the history of Porth. The Troglodyte, Alasander Cortalis, Goldmoor the Dwarf and their Elven allies along with a battalion of Knights of Justicia had the sole job of



killing Ratrimack with the sword. Ratrimack was not alone, as well as his hordes of undead he had a number of Dragons at his command, Giants from the northern mountains, Orcs, Beholders, Goblins and other spawn of evil. The battle raged for hours, with much blood spilt on both sides. The valiant Knights of Justicia rode into combat against the dragons to be met by their fearsome breath of fire, lightning, ice, acid and poisonous gas. The marching of feet and the sheer volume of blood turned the ground where they fought into a quagmire. Finally Alasander and Ratrimack faced each other in combat and Alasander managed to kill Ratrimack with the blade created by The Troglodyte and based on the Soulforge.

No one could have predicted what the final end to Ratrimack's evil would bring however. There was a howling as if the very soul of the planet had been destroyed and the magic weave which gave all wizards and their ilk power shattered into a billion shards of light, to be extinguished forever. The final death of Ratrimack was also the death of magic on Porth, seemingly forever.

The world was sent into utter turmoil; when you can rely on magic and magicians for the simplest of things, to have that taken away is a fatal blow to society. The Sun Empire in the West had long used technology instead of magic and with it's now far superior military might it would rule the lands of Porth for four



thousand years until magic once again bloomed in the world.

As for the Troglodyte, Alasander, Goldmoor and the sword they vanished at the end of the battle and have not been seen since. More than ten thousand years have passed since the death of magic and the world no longer remembers that these events ever happened. The magic that now infuses all things on Porth is a pale comparison of that which was once in mortal and immortal hands. All is forgotten and lost, except by us. We are the strong, we survive. Here in the Wyrd Wood we thrive for we know the truth of things, and we wait...



Homecoming

Words: Taylor Holloway

Illustrations: David North, Juan Diego Dianderas

For my Father.

"Carry on my wayward son,
There'll be peace when you are done.
Lay your weary head to rest,
Don't you cry no more."

- Kansas, Carry on my Wayward Son.

1.

Mere words could not describe the squalor of Khen-moor's infamous beggar district. Cold, wet, tired are three that come to mind, and yet they still didn't do it justice. The air reeked of crisp ice and rotten dog. The rain, thought of as cleansing, seemed only to make the dirt run and pool faster.

It splattered against the pavement, the puddles reflecting flashes of lightning bursting across the bruised and battered sky. The sound of splashing echoed along the stone-wrought alleyways - a young man of fourteen years ran through the warren, unarmed and tired.

He came to a stop and placed his right hand to his chest, as if measuring his heart beat. He tried not to gasp for air, but the cold made it difficult as steam poured from his nostrils and off his skin. The young dark-haired man then placed his hands on his knees to recover, albeit slowly.

There was a tell-tale jingle when he moved, and anyone experienced in dealing with coin could tell that the clink from his belt-pouch wasn't from just a few silver clanking together. He reached down and grabbed them, feeling their reassuring weight before moving on.

He jogged down a few more alleys and ended up face to face with three young men. Their dingy pants were stained with mud and oily rain water, and their leather jackets all bore the heraldry of a closed black iron gauntlet.

"Nice try, Petyr, but the jig is up," started the biggest one - a blond haired brute with a cauliflower ear.

The dark-haired boy, Petyr, smirked. "The jig is up? Are you a fisherman, or a Black Hand?"

The smallest one piped up, taking a step forward as well and drawing a knife. It was a cruel looking blade, looking like it may have been a spear-head at one point, shoved into a stick and bound with leather string. "More of a Black Hand than you'll be after we

gut you and leave you for the watch."

Petyr took a step back, "Is that what you held to your sister's throat when you deflowered her?"

No one laughed.

The small boy held out the weapon menacingly, "No. It's the second thing that I stuck into your mother. I think she liked the first thing I stuck her with better."

Petyr had heard enough. If tonight was his night to make good on all the larceny and suffering he inflicted over the past years, so be it.

He charged.

The boy with the knife was the first he hit, bringing his fist down in a solid jab into the small part beneath the nose and above the lip. The boy dropped the knife, and Petyr took the opportunity to kick it aside. Now the fight was almost fair.

Something hard connected with the small of his back. Petyr responded with a twist of his ankle, and flailed with the back of his fist. It connected with something warm and soft, and he heard steel crash to the ground. Hoping it wasn't an axe, he followed up the vicious attack with a left-handed hook to the knife-boy's nose. There was a satisfying crunch and a shriek.

"My nobe! You bwoke my fukbin' nobe!" The boy shouted as he went to his knees.

There was no time to check his back as the third of the boys, a lumbering brute Petyr knew as 'Ox', moved into the fray. The kid was slow, Petyr knew, but had more experience fighting than he did. Keeping his cool, he kept an eye on the blond boy with the cauliflower ear while stepping to the side and kicking a metal pipe laying in a gutter. The bar connected lengthwise across Ox's shins, sending him to the ground and into a haphazard screaming roll. With Ox down, Petyr turned to face the blond boy.

He was gone.

The shock of his mistake, and a slash from the crude knife, sent a cold shiver through his stomach. Cursing, he reached out at the blond boy, only to have his hand slashed from thumb to wrist, his blood decorating the street. Gasping, Petyr fell to his knees, clutching the gaping wound in his stomach, and hugging his wounded hand to his chest.

Stars danced across his vision while he struggled to remain conscious, but it was a losing fight. Falling



face down in the pavement, he could hear Ox laughing and feel the blond boy going through his pouch. Petyr thought he heard the kid with the broken nose holler out to somebody, and there was a shout - and then there was nothing.

2.

"Wake up, boy."

Petyr slowly opened his eyes. Above him was a thatched roof and wooden beams, and to his surprise, they looked strikingly familiar. He looked around, and saw the anvil, the furnace and a collection of swords, armours and horseshoes and it hit him like no blow ever had.

The Smithy!

Sitting up quickly was a bad idea, Petyr quickly found out, as he felt stitches tear in his stomach. Warm fluid rushed down his hips and thigh. He lay back down, tears stinging his eyes in pain.

"Whoa! I just put your guts back in there. It would be awful rude to be pulling them out again." The speaker was a short, but striking man Petyr estimated to have seen at least his fiftieth year. It didn't take him long to figure out by the size of his arms, that this man was the owner of this fine and recently robbed establishment.

"Y-You," sputtered Petyr though blood-flecked lips, "You helped me?"

The smith nodded, "You were outnumbered three to one, and you were unarmed. I'm surprised you put as much hurt on them as you did."

"They were going to kill me."

The smith nodded again. "They were until I got to it, but I wanted to see how well you did first. Not to mention, you deserved the beating they gave you up until you got stabbed in the guts."

Petyr looked away, ashamed. "I'm sorry..."

"Not as sorry as you're going to be if you keep on fighting like that. You fight like a man looking for death - you didn't close your eyes once, except when you saw the big 'un go down."

"I'm sorry I broke into your shop. I don't know how I can repay you for saving my life... They probably would have cut my throat."

The smith nodded. "Keep your money - you earned it."

"Earned it? I stole it from your safe!"

"You did, and it's a damned expensive safe. You also taught me not to buy from that crooked locksmith across town," the smith scratched his head and his voice softened. "And as for repaying me for saving

your life, you're going to earn some more money learning how to make an honest living."

Petyr was shocked, "You're going to teach me how to be a blacksmith?"

"Aye. And how to fight. I used to be a mercenary once, and since I have no one to pass on this knowledge to, I suppose a sorry street-urchin will do."

"Thank you. I - I don't know what to say..."

"Don't say anything, boy. Go to bed. We'll talk about this more when you're able to walk again."

Petyr leaned back, and closed his eyes. "What's your name?"

He didn't stay awake long enough to remember a response.

3.

Four year passed, and much changed.

Skirmishes between Cicerelle and Elysia became common-place, and soon enough, war was on the horizon. Lords called upon their knights, and knights called upon commoners to join the fray. Soon enough, everyone had seemed to move closer to the border of Cicerelle, and Northern Elysia was an empty place.

None know exactly how it happened, but the first blow had been struck by Elysia, who blamed the people of Cicerelle for bringing the Yellow Sickness to the border. Cicerelle struck back, and struck hard. Before everyone knew exactly what was happening, Elysian militants were rounding up Cicerellians within the Kingdom, and sending them to work camps. Elysians who refused to fight were also put in these camps, and those who fled the conscription were considered worse than Cicerellians, worse than Galdurfolk, and worse than the waste that pumped through Khenmoor's sewers.

During this time, Petyr and Bowen (for that was the smith's name - Bowen Smith) moved their home to start a new life near Galdur, hopefully selling the barbarians their goods. It wasn't as profitable as living in the big city, but it was a living, which is more than they could say should they have stayed within the city's limits.

The days were long. Bowen taught Petyr how to forge his own tongs, and then how to heat and cool the steel to create a sharp, yet strong blade. Acting as Bowen's apprentice, he quickly picked up the trade and was making swords, armour and other useful

metal items to sell and trade to the Galdurfolk for supplies. During the evening, Bowen took Petyr from his metal-working and taught him the art of war. It was during one of these sessions that they came, bringing Petyr's new and happy life to a tragic end.

The evening was cold for late summer, and a cool northern wind cut through their woolen clothing. The clash of steel rattled through the trees, and echoed back to them joylessly. Bowen threw a broad slash at Petyr's mid-section. Petyr raised his arms in the air and deftly stepped away from the blade, feeling the force of the blow drag his shirt with the blade. His legs betrayed him, though, and he stumbled backwards, leaving the young man on his back. The broad smith stood over his apprentice, sword to his chin.

"Yield?"

Petyr slapped the blade away. "Aye. Don't I alwa-..." He trailed off as he watched a young woman stumble, swaddled in rags, from the woods.

Bowen's eyes followed Petyr's, only to spy the same. He stiffened, and sheathed his blunted tourney-sword.

"You there, woman - are you well?" He approached the collapsed figure, his hand outstretched. A cold feeling suddenly swept over Petyr, chilling him to the bone.

Something was wrong. The young warrior was on his feet in a flash, his tourney-sword in hand.

"Bowen, no!"

It was too late. Bending over the woman, Bowen whispered something to her. She then was on him, and though she couldn't have weighed more than eight stone, the smith was on his back with his feet thrashing. Petyr threw all his weight into the blow. The sword was blunted, but there was a sickly crunch as the back of her skull caved. A strike that would kill a grown man was shrugged off as the creature pulled itself to its feet. Like a vile puppet, it shuddered and moved awkwardly, with its feet stepping forward well before the rest of its body. As Petyr's eyes trailed to her face, it was apparent this woman was no longer alive. One of her eyes bulged horribly in the wrong direction, her throat had a gaping hole from her chin to her collar bone, and one of her breasts looked as though it had been gnawed off.

Horried, Petyr backed off, his sword tight in his grip. Slowly, her hand reached to her throat and squeezed. A horrible rattling voice warbled and shook as it left her lips.

"Cold."



She took another shaky step forward.

"Cold!"

She lashed out at him with lightning speed. Her fingers were sharp extensions of bone, and Petyr could only guess what had happened to the skin that used to sheath them. He side-stepped and was turning to flee when he saw Bowen's broken body.

Turning and facing the creature, Petyr's fear melted like heated ice.

Only duty remained.

Hefting his blade, he took it in two-hands and lashed out. The blade did not falter as it struck the wight in the tattered remains of her neck. The creature fell backwards, her body hitting the ground followed quickly by her rolling head.

Gasping for breath, Petyr walked over to where

Bowen lay and inspected the damage. Half of his throat was torn out, and he was lying in a pool of



quickly spreading blood. Cursing, he knelt down. A hand squeezed his arm. Too tired to recoil, he stared dumbly as Bowen opened his eyes and said one word, spattered in blood and spittle.

"Silver."

That was the word that Bowen Smith ended his life with. Not knowing what else to do, Petyr wept. The rain started shortly afterwards.

4.

Petyr had buried him beneath an oak tree near a pond where they had gone fishing once. He had caught a river pike, and they had eaten it with spicy jelly they had traded for a few arrow heads and a dagger. That pond was now a dangerous mire rather than the glistening joy of that summer afternoon.

Two days later, Miko came to trade some venison for some arrow heads. The hunter had long been a friend, and his arrival wasn't all together unexpected. He was surprised to find that Bowen was no longer alive, and he consoled Petyr when he cried on his shoulder.

"My friend, you need to prepare for his homecoming."

Petyr wiped the tears from his cheeks. "His homecoming?"

"Yes. When a jättiläinen kills another, that one who died will become a jättiläinen himself."

"Y-You mean that Bowen will become one of those things?"

The pale Galdurfolk was solemn. "You must forge a weapon made of kaunopuheinen, and wait for him; otherwise he will kill you in your sleep."

Petyr remembered Bowen's last words. "Silver. You mean silver?"

"Yes. Silver."

The two ate the venison, and Petyr gave Miko as many arrowheads as he could carry. When Miko left, Petyr scrounged the hovel for all of the silver coins he could find, and smelted them down, combining the melt with a liberal amount of iron. Combining the two wasn't nearly as difficult as he had imagined. When it cooled, he began to hammer the rod into shape, smashing his hammer into the rod until he felt blisters form on his palms, and still he beat the metal into submission.

Morning came, and as the first birds began to sing, Petyr was quenching the blade into fresh snow. It was much larger than he was used to, with the blade and tang standing as tall as himself. He gave the steel a rest, and began to work on the hilt and grip. It was

late afternoon before it was finished and ready to be sharpened.

Denying himself sleep, Petyr set to finishing the weapon, sharpening the blade in a downward fashion. By the time the blade was at its sharpest, the crickets were signaling the coming of night. Before he could consciously decide to stay awake, sleep took him into its grasp.

5.

A fortnight later, Bowen returned home.

Evening was falling, and so were the leaves. Autumn had finally made an appearance in the far north, and the crisp smell of snow was in the air. Petyr was in the yard, practicing with his new blade. If asked, Petyr could not tell you what forced him to turn his gaze to the old oak and the pond where he had buried Bowen, but he did only to see his former mentor shambling towards him, rotting. As with the last creature of this sort, Bowen now moved as though he was some sort of broken marionette. Long, striding and shaky steps drew him forward.

"Cold." He croaked desperately, "Cold!"

Petyr opened his mouth to speak, but no sound came out. Frozen, he waited for the jättiläinen to finish him.

"Soooo cold."

It was an arm's length away now, shuddering as it moved towards him. White, dead eyes met his and hardened his resolve.

"Cooooold..."

Petyr leveled the blade, and felt tears sting his eyes as he brought it down. Unlike the creature he had recently dispatched, Bowen darted away from the blade and hissed at his former apprentice. It was then the dance began.

They circled each other for what seemed hours, each weaving and dodging – Bowen moving away from the gleaming blade and Petyr parrying off savage slashes from grave-stiffened claws. Bowen drove him back, each claw getting closer and closer to connecting with soft flesh.

It was then that Bowen swung at Petyr's mid-section, forcing him to step backwards. Petyr raised his arms in the air and deftly stepped away from the claws, feeling the force of the blow drag his shirt. His legs betrayed him, and he fell backwards.

Bowen stood over top of Petyr dumbly, staring down

at him as if remembering some fragment of his shattered memory.

"Yield?" It asked, as if with no comprehension of the word. The concept of mercy was lost on this creature as was love and hope. The dead thing salivated and waited.

"I'm sorry."

Somehow, Petyr had managed to maintain a solid grip on his sword. Raising it in a savage arc, it hacked into Bowen's broken face. Petyr let go of the blade and scrambled to his feet. The body of what used to be Bowen tumbled backwards, before finally being at rest. The sword stood absurdly erect moments before finally crashing into the ground.

Silence.

Petyr walked over to the body and picked up his weapon. The jättiläinen lay still. He reached down and dragged the body back to the forge. Apologizing to Bowen again, he began to grab whatever was important to him. Clothing, blankets, his tools - his backpack was beginning to feel heavier than when he first came to this place four years ago. Once he had everything, he pulled all of the useful goods from the shop and placed them in barrels and crates outside.

Miko would come tomorrow, and he was welcome to it.

Once everything of value was clear, he stuck a torch into the forge and then threw it onto the bed. He considered for a moment taking Bowen's tools with him, and then quickly decided against it.

This was his pyre.

The world seemed to light up around him as he picked up his backpack and walked away. The night was cold, and a single snowflake fell, followed by a few more. Before he knew it, the ground was blanketed in white, and the heat at his back faded. It was then that he heard a voice, though this was a very different voice than the hisses and snarls he had heard when he was fighting. Where the voice of the undead monster he had dispatched was cold and emotionless, this was soulful, deep and resonated with love.

Thank you, Son.

Wiping away his tears, Petyr Smith walked silently down the king's road.

Community

Didn't We Have a Lovely Time the Day We Went to Sheffield An account of our day at IMP2

Words: William Ford
Photography: Jason Hubbard

To start with I must say that, having never visited Sheffield before, how easy it was to get to where we needed to be and to find the car park recommended by the organisers. We were a little nervous about the event being split over two venues but as soon as we arrived we realized that we needn't have worried as they were only a little way apart on the same street.

First things first, we popped into La Perle to register our miniatures for the painting competition. We were also able to catch up with a couple of friends whilst we examined some of the models already on show, including some excellent pieces on the display table.

Having booked our dinner for later in the day we popped over to Patriot Games to check out the activities on offer. The staff at Patriot Games were really warm and welcoming - but not in the overbearing way of some games shops - and we spent an enjoyable, and nostalgic, time looking through their vast selection of games & supplements, from RPG's to board games, and from fantasy to sci-fi to historical with everything in between.

A little lighter in the wallet we were welcomed by the IMP organisers who let us know what was happening in the different areas and when it would take place. We also received our 'goody bags' which included some nice figures, as well as a couple of snacks for later on.

Immediately on arrival my son got stuck into an English Civil War demonstration game, organised by James, and enjoyed his first taste of historical wargaming



tremendously. This was one of several display/participation games available including a WW1 air warfare battle and a couple of skirmish games. All the people putting these on were more than willing to discuss their games and answer questions from newcomers and experienced generals alike, and to discuss gaming as well as other gaming systems.

In the basement my daughter and I got involved in some of the tutorials on offer. Unfortunately we had missed the realistic rock painting workshop but we had a great deal of fun with the blood & gore and foliage basing workshops. Not only were these of use and interest to me as a miniature painter, but they were very enjoyable for my 10 year old daughter and kept her occupied for most of our time at Patriot Games.



My wife, who is neither a painter nor a gamer, enjoyed looking round Patriot Games and viewing the models on show but having the city centre so close meant she was never at a loose end, and she always had the option of returning to La Perle for a relaxing cuppa and a very reasonably priced cake. What's more we found a book shop next to La Perle that specialises in sci-fi & fantasy novels and comics, as well as associated memorabilia (*Ed – that would be the Sheffield Space Center*).



Due to my poor eyesight I felt it best not to enter the Iron Painter speed painting competition and instead we sampled some of the cakes on offer at La Perle. Having cast our votes for the public choice category - using the IMP pens usefully provided in our goody bags - we finally settled down and were joined by the other participants for the judges to announce the winners in the various categories of the painting

competition. The standard of entries was very high in all the categories with some truly amazing miniatures, and praise must go to the worthy winners, particularly Dave Cawthorne. To cap a great day my son and daughter took first and second, respectively, in the under 16's, or Implings, category.

For me the highlights of the day were: firstly chatting about painting and gaming with some wonderful and like-minded people as well as meeting friends from the online community and secondly spending the day, as a family, at a painting & gaming event where we all enjoyed our time regardless of age or interests.

On a personal note I would like to thank the staff at Patriot Games and La Perle, for providing the venues, as well as all the participants for helping make a great event. Most of all I would like to thank the organisers and helpers for their hard work, warm welcome and for making the event so enjoyable, not only for myself but for all the members of my family.

The whole event had a wonderfully, friendly atmosphere and I would recommend anyone in the area, or from further afield, to attend. Would we attend IMP again? – You bet



A Drink with Nick Kyme

Words: Peter Allison
Photography: Antonia Andrew



Through hard work and determination - and refusing to take "no" for an answer - Nick Kyme got a job working for Games Workshop as a staff writer on *White Dwarf*, before later becoming the senior range editor for *Black Library*. Through *Black Library*, but prior to joining the team, Nick released his first novel "Back from the Dead" in 2006 to great reviews, and has since written "Grimblades", "Oathbreaker", "Honourkeeper" and "Salamander", the latter being the first in a trilogy. Characterized by a focus on people rather than the situation, Nick's writing refreshingly explores the human reaction, rather than having an emotionless plot.

Being a film connoisseur, Nick owns a gargantuan DVD collection that vies for territory with his books and graphic novels. Nick can often be found pounding away on the keyboard to the latest indie bands or film soundtracks. I was surprised to learn that when not writing or gaming, Nick is also a keen runner.

In April I was fortunate to have a drink with Nick Kyme at Con-Quest gaming convention in Derby. Games Workshop had been a key part of my introduction to gaming over twenty years ago. I was keen to find out more about Nick's role in Games Workshop, writing, and his thoughts on gaming.

Pete: Firstly, can you tell me what first brought you into gaming?

Nick: I am originally from a little village called Hum-berston, which is quite near to Grimsby. It's a bit like Mordheim minus several comets, but with mutants still roaming the streets (he says in jest...). There was a tiny little hobby shop in Grimsby called D Hewings that my brother used to go to, and one afternoon he brought home a copy of *Middle Earth Role Play*. I became intrigued by all the dice and rulebooks and wondered what it was all about. So, I started doing a bit of *Middle Earth Role-playing* and the Games Workshop stuff evolved from there.

A little later on, my brother also bought a copy of *Rogue Trader*, and once they'd figured out the rules, he and his mates would have a game. I remember elaborately appointed gaming tables (the downstairs dining table, to be precise) literally full of improvised scenery taken from home-ware stores and pet shops. Let's just say there were A LOT of aquarium plants and other assorted mad stuff.

Having been exposed to this gaming phenomenon, it didn't take me long to start making up my own game rules. Mine, however, were based on the old *Citadel Combat Cards* - essentially fantasy miniature *Top Trumps* - which I used for statistics, and then built a game system around them with the miniatures I had collected.

My first blister pack was a set of warrior knights, which cost £2.00 for five knights, and were multi-part models with separate limbs and separate bodies - they were fantastic. From that point I was buying all sorts of random stuff, such as giant scorpions, dwarfs, or a griffon. I suspect that a lot of my miniature choices were dictated by what I had on my *Combat Cards* too. It wasn't until later on that I really got into collecting *Dwarfs*, as they are my favourite *Warhammer* army. I bought some *Hammerers* and *Longbeards*, which were five in a pack again, and it was because I liked these miniatures that I decided to build an army. It wasn't until the first *Warhammer Box* came out - the one with the *Elves* and the *Goblins* - that I started to build proper armies and play proper games.

Pete: Have your tastes changed since you first got into gaming?

Nick: I don't get to game as much as I used to. The last game I played was the new *Space Hulk*, which was brilliant, as it was just like the old *Space Hulk* but with new miniatures. I like the adventure stuff too, and after role-playing I got into *Heroquest* and *Space Crusade*, and later *Advanced Heroquest*, so I suppose they were my apprenticeship. I was always a fan of

dungeon-bashing, because they had a story and you had characters which you could develop, and the characters could go on these quests. These games are an ongoing narrative, and the game doesn't end when the mission ends, as you go onto the next quest, which is probably why online role-playing is as popular as it is.

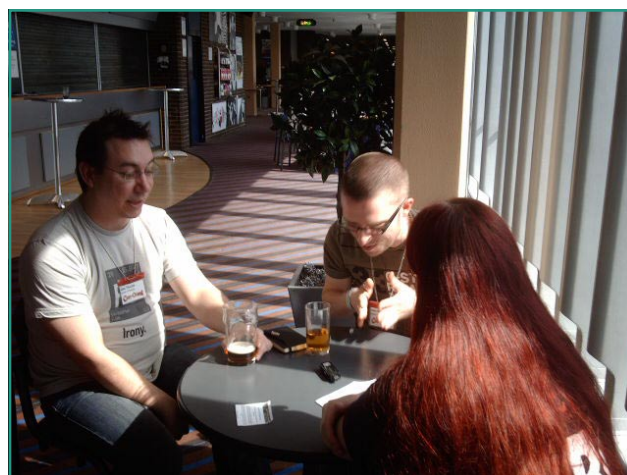
Pete: What spurred you to find a career within the Gaming industry?

Nick: I had aspirations to be an illustrator, but realised very quickly that I wasn't good enough as I had a GCSE 'B' in Art, and even that was generous. I was never sure what I was going to do, except maybe teaching or write. Ever since I was eleven I wanted to write.



Pete: How did you begin working for Games Workshop?

Nick: I was due to start my degree at university, when Andy Jones, Legal and Licensing Head for Games Workshop, phoned me up and offered a job, as my name had come up. I turned his offer down and explained I was very flattered, but wanted to have a degree so I had something to fall back on. I still worked in the Games Workshop stores during my degree, but three months after my degree had finished I had a job as a layout designer. I didn't want to do that, but at least it was a foot in the door. I do not think that being a part-timer at Games Workshop: Grimsby necessarily paved the way for me to join White Dwarf.



The only reason I applied was Paul Sawyer, White Dwarf editor between 1997 and 2005, asked me to. As Paul explained, he knew I had no layout design skills, but felt I had the right mentality for Games Workshop. If you have the right attitude and are the right person for Games Workshop, they will find you a role where your talents are best employed, which is what happened with me.

Pete: What did you do on White Dwarf?

Nick: I did loads of things while I was with White Dwarf, which is a great primer as you meet a lot of people and mix with a lot of different departments.

Pete: What have been your highlights working for Games Workshop?

Nick: I don't really have a defining moment at Games Workshop. I have fond memories, such as my first Necromunda novel which was great. My first published article in Citadel Journal, before I worked for Games Workshop, was a piece for Warhammer Quest called "Escape from Hag Graef", which was a scenario based on a short story by Chris Pramas called "Mormacar's Lament". I even received a certificate for that – ha, ha. Becoming involved in Mordheim at the early stage of its development was really cool. The experience of working on White Dwarf with the writing staff as the creative dynamic was amazing. I have a lot to be thankful to Paul Sawyer for giving me a job in the first place and believing in me, as cheesy as that may sound. I will always appreciate Paul for what he did. In fact my time with White Dwarf was during a period where Games Workshop was going through a silver age and that was fantastic. The first time I interviewed Dan Abnett has got to be one of my highlights as this man was, and still is, a legend to me.

Pete: How did you meet Dan Abnett?

Nick: Guy Haley, then the editor of White Dwarf, explained they were having Dan Abnett visit for a milestone issue which would involve a feature on



him, and that I would be the one to interview him. At the time I had a digital Dictaphone, and kept the interview on my Dictaphone for years afterwards.

Pete: You now work for Black Library don't you?

Nick: Working with the Black Library is great, and is probably the best time I have ever experienced at Games Workshop. I genuinely do love working for Black Library, especially now that I'm working with the authors and being an author myself. It's great when you have that feeling at the start of a project and are both excited and have that mutual creative spark.

Pete: Has Games Workshop changed over time since you've been there?

Nick: Black Library has changed a lot since I started working there. We used to do everything and it is only quite recently that we decided that Black Library is about publishing stories and not making swords, belt buckles, cards, or role-playing games. Black Library is about novels and telling stories in different mediums. This is why Black Library is not just novels, but audio books too. I think Games Workshop has become more business minded, and perhaps in the past four years it has even returned to its original values. This is a niche business, focused on steady growth for sustained longevity.

Pete: Has this focus on story-telling seen a growth in Black Library?

Nick: I believe the popularity of the Horus Heresy

series has seen us break new ground and slip into the mainstream. The core readership of Black Library has always been a large Games Workshop fan base, but we have met a lot of folks who just read our books; they don't game or paint, but are still involved in the universe through our books. Despite breaking this new ground Black Library is still focussed on Games Workshop, and there is a lot of strength in the purity of that.

Pete: Where does your inspiration come from?

Nick: Inspiration comes from everywhere and everything you're exposed to. You definitely need to have a commercial head upon your shoulders whenever you are writing, there is always going to be that commercial consideration. What you have to do is to discover in your remit what you have a passion for; otherwise whatever you write is going to suffer because of that.

Pete: Last question, what do you see in the future for both yourselves and for gaming?

Nick: I'm quite happy doing what I am at the moment, so it will be more of the same in working for Black Library and developing new authors. I'll do a bit more writing as well, although not as many as four books a year, and seeing where the trilogy that began with Salamander takes me.

Pete: Nick Kyme, thank you very much.



Artist Showcase: Diego de Almeida



My name is Diego de Almeida, and I'm 25 years old. I'm a painter, designer and illustrator and I live in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. I received my Bachelor's Degree in Traditional Painting at School of Fine Arts. Nowadays I'm a master's student at Federal University of Rio de Janeiro where I'm developing a piece of research about the use of visual arts, to propagation of science teaching.

How did you get interested in art?

I was always interested in art and I have drawing since my childhood. However, during my teenage years I couldn't imagine working with it professionally. It was during the selection for university I met graduation in Painting from the School of Fine Art. I entered in the university and since then I have devoted myself wholly to the study and production of visual arts, especially painting.

What methods do you use in your work?

First start with a short study of the abstract areas of grays. Then I work on linear drawing (I prefer to do in traditional material, usually in my sketchbook). When I paint, my thinking is essentially tonal, as in a charcoal drawing. I organize the colors within families of grays that they represent, in the tonal range. Usually I divided into two main areas - light and shadow - and I remap the abstract design of these areas and then unfolding the number of grays.

What are the most important parts of any image?

When you're working with image creation, the artist is faced with a series of formal questions to be resolved. Given the complexity of these problems they are divided into parts to be treated individually.

Each artist has a personal process work. Some get organized colors, some with spots abstract organizing the chiaroscuro of the field, but currently I start by the linear drawing, watching carefully and accentuating the dynamics of it. But I believe that is not a matter of importance but of choice. Anyway the other problems should also be addressed carefully.

Please tell us about your research

During my bachelors' degree, my research was focused in the study of painting process developed in Brazil at the turn of the nineteenth to the twentieth century. To complement these research, I dedicated many hours in the study of live model during all the course as well the study by copy of the Brazilian Masters of nineteenth century in the academic museum D. Joao VI. In the end of the course I presented my final project titled "Investigation of the compositional features in the painting".

Currently my research has been devoted to the artistic production in digital media, which has contributed effectively to my master's project.



What size/scale do you prefer to work at?

I feel comfortable working in large formats, but this causes great inconvenience at the time of transport. My works by charcoal are in media 50x70 cm. My digital paintings I always start in my sketchbook that is slightly smaller than an A4.

Tell us about the character on the cover of issue 5, The Faceless Warrior?

When I paint, I usually don't imagine a closed story to characters or to scenarios. Of course I have a north, but I think it's important allow the viewer's imagination actively participate in the construction of the work, making him thus co-author (while watching) of the piece

Who and what influences you and your work?

Many are my influences, during the graduation I had the opportunity of studying with a live model professor who preached the study of art, by the great masters of the past. Thus at first moment I was influenced by the Baroque masters such as Rembrandt, Velasquez and Caravaggio and masters of the French academy as William Bouguereau. I couldn't leave to quote the great Brazilian masters of the end of 19th century and beginning of 20th century, which directly influenced my work both traditional and digital: Victor Meirelles, Rodolfo Amoedo, Henrique Bernardelli, Eliseu Visconti and Marques Jr.





Do you have a preferred genre - fantasy/historical etc?

Fantasy, fantasy always !!!

Are you a gamer?

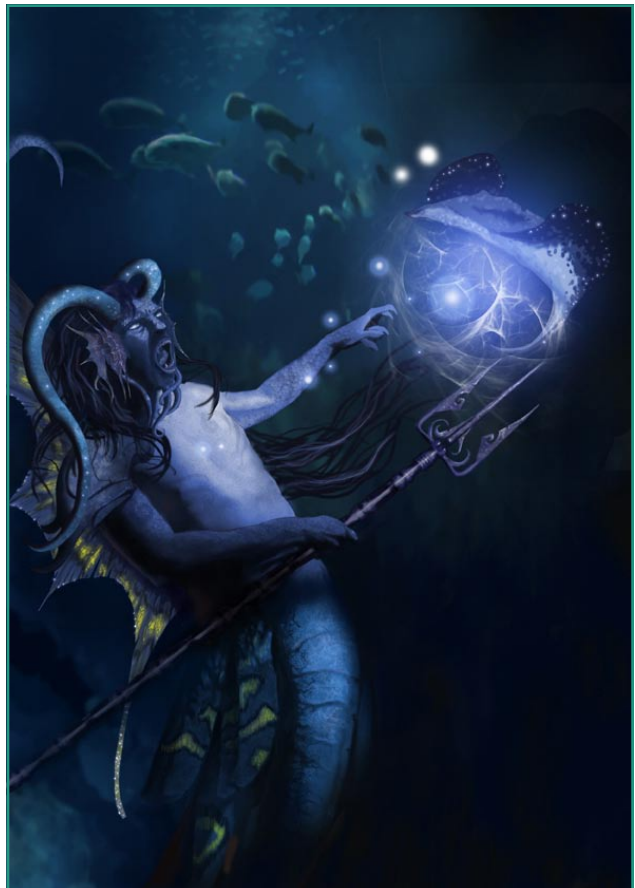
For a long time I played RPG and it influenced directly my work, but currently I haven't time for anything besides studying. I have slept little to keep my daily hours of study's practice of painting and keep my master's research.

Is there anyone you would like to work with/for in the future?

I really would like to work with concept art for film and game industry in general.

Which artists do you find exciting at the moment?

Nowadays there are many talented artists and I appreciate the work of many, among them Tony DiTerlizzi, Kekai Kotaki and Bobby Chiu and Justin Sweet.





Euro Militaire 2010

Words: Jason Hubbard
Photography: Jason Hubbard

Euro Militaire is a two day show aimed at modelers, and hosts one of the largest miniature painting contests in the country which attracts entrants from all over the UK and Europe. This year saw a jaw dropping 1000+ entrants to the competition.



This year was the first time I visited Euro Militaire and so I was quite excited about the prospect of attending. I even went as far as to paint a 54mm figure for the painting competition. As I live in Sheffield it was quite a long journey down, which was uneventful, though there were the usual delays on the M25 etc. So we finally arrived in Folkestone and at the show, having found a parking space we headed over to the show and handed in our entries.

The show wasn't as big as I expected, -for some reason I assumed that this would be as big as Salute. There were quite a few traders, but to be honest no more than at a local show. Having said that, the traders that attended Euro don't generally attend other shows in the UK. The likes of Pegaso and Andrea just don't come over to the UK for any old show, which is a big bonus for attending if the miniatures produced by these guys float your boat. For me they just don't - don't get me wrong, they're exceptionally nice figures, but at 54mm scale they have no use, I can't game with them. I do purchase the odd 54mm figure, but not very often and I'd already picked up a couple of 54mm's earlier in the year to paint over the winter.

So the trade side of the show had little attraction for me, and this showed in the amount I spent there, which was under £30, which included two Osprey books on the Late Roman Army. Most of the books on sale at the show, were either WW2 or the subject covered tanks, planes or some other wheeled vehicle. The highlight of the show is the painting competition,



as the standard on display is breath-taking, and with over 1000 entries this year there was plenty of eye candy to look at. I was drawn to the historical section, and in particular the armoured vehicles - there were some impressive pieces, which has prompted me to paint some armour over the next few months.

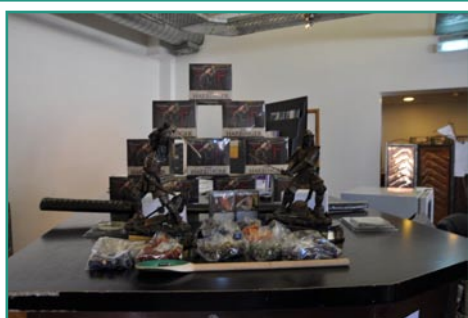
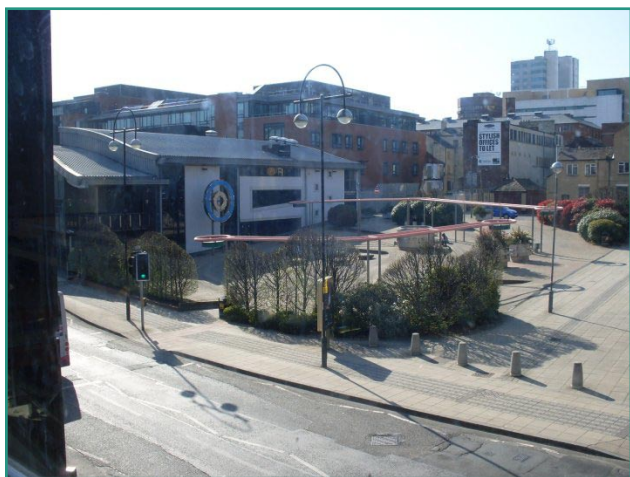
Overall I would say that this isn't the type of show I'd go to normally, and probably wouldn't go out of my way to attend again. It just wasn't worth the cost of

the ticket, travel and accommodation costs either. Personally I prefer to attend the South Cheshire Militaire Show, which is a lot closer to home. The painting competition is the only redeeming feature of this show, and is well worth a one day visit to view the inspiring work on display, but two days is just one day too much for me.



Sheffield Kotei 2010: The Organiser's Report

Words: Jim Freeman



Set in the Empire of Rokugan, Legend of the Five Rings (L5R) is a world of heroic samurai, elemental priests, and sharp-minded courtiers. The world has two games based in it – a Collectible Card Game (CCG), and a role-playing game.

Sworn to one of nine Clans, each with its own unique philosophy on warfare, players pit their wits against their rivals for the glory of their daimyo and the honour of their Clan. With an interactive storyline that advances each week, every player can have an effect on the shape of the game that they love. The decks they build and the tournaments they win can change the fortunes of their Clan, even the Empire itself.

Collectible Card Games breed competitive players, but more than that, they breed passionate players. For that reason every successful CCG has an organised play program (OP), and every successful OP program has a national tournament. So for a game that allows its players to shape both the world that the game is set in and the cards within the game, the national tournament has massive significance, kudos, honour and a voice in what happens next, not to mention a tonne of prizes and two whole days of card playing and good times.

An OP program is directed from the manufacturer but is delivered by a Tournament Organiser (T.O.) and that is where I come in. It is my job to add the flesh to the skeleton that the manufacturer provides, and to turn

the program into a living experience for the players. This, as you can imagine, can take a lot of effort and planning.

The Sheffield Kotei took place on the weekend of Saturday 17th and Sunday 18th April 2010, but the T.O.'s part began nine months earlier when AEG - the creators and manufacturer's of L5R - announced that the application window for Kotei was open. As this was the 15th Anniversary of the game, the applications should reflect the significance of this landmark and offer the players something special and memorable - so no pressure there!

A great deal of time and effort went into the application and into finding the right venue. In previous years when we had run the Kotei we had used a great venue, but feedback had shown that players from outside of Sheffield found it hard to find and players without transport found it hard to get to as it was out of the city center.

Ultimately our team was finalised and a venue found, and a successful application was put in. The following months were filled with anticipation, marketing, preparation and lots of advertising. Nine months can pass amazingly quickly when you are preparing for an event like this, and before we knew it the day was upon us - so, here's a report on the Sheffield Kotei from the TO's point of view...

April 17th 2010,
07:00

Alarm, snooze, alarm, realisation, leap out of bed

08:00

Arrive at the venue, tired but full of nervous tension and excitement. The venue is all but set up, due to having spent a few hours the night before bringing stock, table numbers, printer, paper, etc from the shop to the venue and advising the venue staff on how and where to set out the tables and chairs.

The venue, by the way, was the Workstation on Paternoster Row in Sheffield city centre. It is part of the Showroom Cinema complex, and is a fantastic choice of venue, as not only is it light and roomy, but it has a front wall that raises up, allowing lots of air in, and gamer-related smells out. The venue had also allowed every participant in the event to see any film over the weekend at concessionary rates.

A quick check that everything required is present and correct, and we start to let the early arrivals - and the late staff - in.



09:30

Things are starting to get going, lots of people are arriving and the numbers look good. 81 people are required to make the event a top 16 cut, but for a very long time it seems like we will have only 80 players, which is disappointing as it means a top 8 cut rather than the preferred top 16 – fortunately, a few phone calls to local players and some cajoling and bargaining gets us past the 81 mark in time to start. This gives us the event that the players are looking for and equally importantly it covers the costs of the event and the large amount of prize support.

Most events like this use what is called the Swiss system, which is derived from chess tournaments of old. Principally, every player plays a pre-determined number of rounds without being knocked out, each round after the first, they are paired against an opponent who has the same – or as near as is possible – record as they do, and then after all of the rounds have been played the top x players are put into a straight knockout to determine the overall winner. The x is determined by the floor rules, as is the number of rounds in the Swiss section.

Notably the event had the largest attendance of any in the UK for some time, a nice tribute to the 15th anniversary.

10:30

Cue the opening ceremony and speeches.....

Traditionally - if a tradition can be made over two previous years - we have had a member of the L5R design team as a guest and it would be he that gave the opening speeches, but this year we were without special guests and the job of public speaking was mine. Fortunately, having run events for a little over 8 years now, the prospect was less daunting that it might otherwise be.

A longer held tradition in L5R is the "Utz – Banzai" which is where the T.O shouts "Utz" and all the players shout "Banzai" at the top of their lungs, this is repeated three times and signals the end of the opening

ceremony and the start of the event.

Of course, doing this with the entire front wall of the venue raised is a good way to frighten the natives.....

11.00

Round 1

We had allowed an hour for each round, which was 45 minutes for the round proper, plus a 10 min discussion phase. Essentially it is possible for the round to end and no winner to have been determined, so the purpose of the 10 minutes is for the players to come to an agreement of who will claim the win. Generally players will attempt to carry on playing - especially if they think that it is to their advantage to do so - but that is against the rules, and it is the Judge and the T.O's job to stop that from happening.

As is normal, round one goes off without incident and at time, as predicted, many players have to be reminded that they are to stop playing and come to a decision. The round ends on time and everyone is happy. Well, except for those that lost, obviously.

The difficult part of this day (from my perspective) was over once the second round was under way, and the rest of the rounds passed without notable event.

[Ok, so a round by round account would be really dull, so in the interest of future readership I'm not going to inflict that on you. We shall now fast forward to the last round of the day]

End of round seven

At the close of play on the first day a number of things occur - firstly the top x players are announced and their decks, or card lists of their decks, are collected in to make sure no alterations are made over night. Secondly there is the Clan Council - the top scoring player, in terms of most wins, representing each clan is given a box of 48 booster packs of L5R and it is his job to distribute the packs amongst the other representatives of his clan in the way that he decides to be most fitting.





20:30

Close of Day.

It is over twelve hours since I arrived at the venue, and it is just about time to go home. First we make sure everything is secured and all of the players are sorted out with everything they need for the evening and something to do. Then I head off home, not to rest and relax, but to read through the story deck - or Honour Event - entries.

The interactive story part of L5R has determined that just being good at playing the card game is not all it takes to have an impact on the world of L5R, there are other ways to have your say, and at Kotei the main alternative to winning the event is to win the Honour event. This year's event revolved around submitting a theme deck and playing that deck in the main event. This can be as simple as choice of cards and as elaborate as a players imagination can create.



There were five entries, one of which was ten pages long! So I had a few hours of reading and deliberating ahead of me.

Day Two

Sunday 18th April

07:30

Alarm, groan, snooze, alarm, groan.

08:30

Arrive at the venue, very tired and let in the early and eager top 16 players.

The top 16 are to start at 09:30 and play the best of three games in each round of a straight knockout. We use best of three to illuminate players going through on pure luck - after all, having reached this point it would be unfortunate to be eliminated because the Fortune of Luck frowned upon you for a game.

Today is a slightly harder part of the T.O's job because at 10:30 we start a second event which will run simultaneously with the main event. If that wasn't enough to be concentrating on we are also running Draft* events for players that drop out of the secondary event, known as the Steel Championships**, and for those knocked out of the main event. Further to that is the ongoing 15th anniversary event that allows the players to use every stronghold*** ever printed all joined together!

On top of this I needed to organise a charity raffle, and sort out and label the entirety of the prize support so that the prize giving is smooth and as short as it can be - because by then everyone is really very tired.

[NICK - J, not sure how you want to handle these footnotes - I leave it for you to decide

*Draft is a format where players use cards from a limited card pool, generally three booster packs each.

**The Steel Championships named for the Steel City and is a fairly prestigious event in its own right

***Strongholds are an integral part of the game; each

clan has a limited number of strongholds that they can use in a tournament legal environment. Each has the vital statistics for the clan's economy, starting honour level and military resilience as well as a clan specific ability that distinguishes it from any and every other stronghold]

So not too much to do...

Like a well oiled machine the Kotei team take the tricky second day to conclusion without a single error or mishap, keeping all of the players and the T.O very happy.

Around 17:30

The prize giving ceremony begins



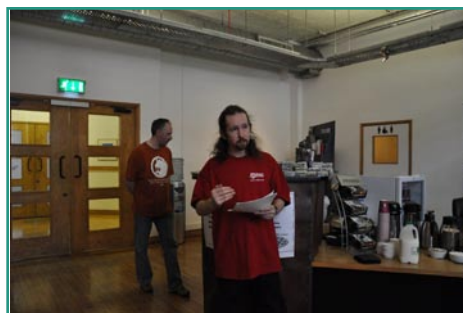
There are prizes not only for the winner and those that came close but for many varied reasons:

- Furthest from home
- Best costume
- Most Honourable Player
- Darwin Award for Most Stupid Mistake
- Bubble - the player that finished 17th with the cut to top x being 16. This is termed being on the bubble
- And a special prize for most unbelievable activity, which was won by a player who left at the end of round six, having won 6 games, taking the gamble that he would make top 16 with that record and then travelling to London for a night out at a club with his Girl and then travelling all the way back for a 09:30 start the next day!!
- Honour Prize - for best story/theme deck
- Top of Clan - a prize for each player that finished as the highest representative of their clan at the end of the tournament
- Bottom of Clan - plastic katana for symbolic seppuku for failing the clan
- Placing - for finishing in x place all the way down to 24th

And, of course, the Trophy and a metric tonne of stuff for

- The Winner

Once we'd done that for the main event, we had to repeat it for the Steel Championship.



18:00

The Get Out

Once all the prizes were given - 1440 booster packs, 2 trophies, 9 plastic katana, 1 plastic tetsubo, 1 plastic cutlass, two gift certificates (one for \$100 and one for \$50 on AEG's store), 8 complete sets of rare cards, 8 special honour counter tops, 1 playmat, 1 exclusive honour counter of fu leng, 90 custom L5R ten-sided dice, and a few other miscellaneous bits and bobs - it was left for us to tidy everything up, and get everything back to the shop.

18:30

Out

18:40

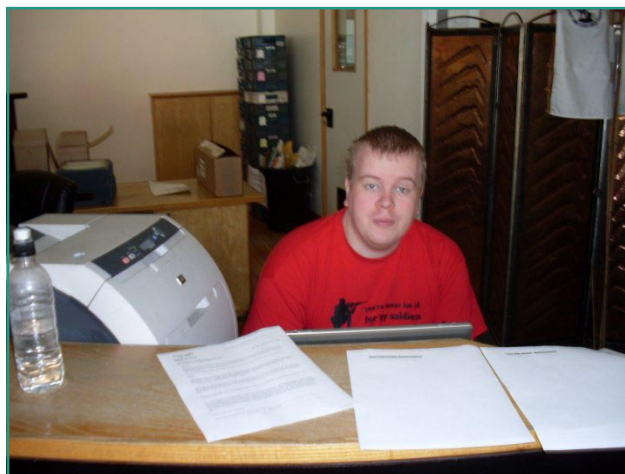
Unload the car at the shop, leaving everything in a relatively tidy pile on the shop floor to tidy in the morning.

19:00

Go Home and collapse!!

And that's all there is to it.

Simple, really.



A Gaming Group's Adventure at Games Day USA 2010

Words & Photography: Mike Schaeffer

Games Workshop held their Games Day in only one city in North America this year, and I am lucky enough to live only an hour away from the convention location in Baltimore. So I whipped up some enthusiasm in my game group, and five of us headed up there for the spectacle.

Right away, we jumped into the spirit of the event and posed for photos with the stern but accommodating Space Marine who was guarding the door.

From there we wandered around to get our



bearings and soak up the general atmosphere and vibe. This was the fourth Games Day I've attended, and Games Workshop always does a good job building an energetic carnival atmosphere. The convention hall is decorated with banners; there are booths showing props and displays; the crowd is peppered with space marines, dark elves, and other-worldly characters promoting themselves for the costume

competition; pockets of the crowd roar a mighty "Waaaagghh!" during an organized event; and so on. There is just constant stimulus, all celebrating the Games Workshop game settings and hobby.

This year was the first time I've seen a display showing life-size props in an "alien artifact" display case.



Within 10 minutes, our gaming group already began to splinter off, each person uncontrollably drawn to an area of personal interest. I, for one, noticed a display case full of beautiful miniatures, so I made a beeline for that. Knowing that the Golden Demon was on another floor, I relished the possibility that I could closely examine miniatures without having to compete for time in front of the display. One of the lead sculptors for Games Workshop was there at the station, presenting, along with his previous work, the new models for the (then) forthcoming Island of Blood set for Warhammer Fantasy. I had a chance to chat with the sculptor - unfortunately, I forgot his name - and he informed me that he leads a team of 22 full-time sculptors! He explained to me that Games Workshop hires about 2 sculptors a year, and each one must undergo a 2-year training program. I was shocked that they maintain such a large team of full-time sculptors.

I have to admit, seeing the Griffon in person secured for Games Workshop at least one more sale of the Island of Blood set from me. Both the sculpt and the paint job for the Griffon are gorgeous. I took detailed photos so that I could duplicate the paint scheme.



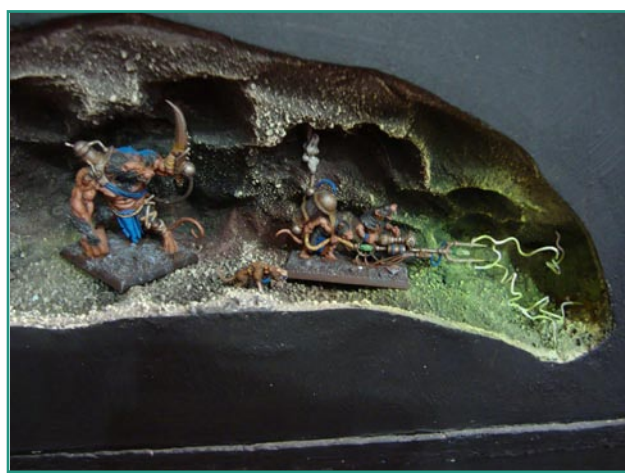
At another display case, I ogled models featuring some inspiring examples of weathering techniques:



Continuing my tour around the area, I found the section where the clubs from the local area set up their tables. That's something interesting to me about Games Day. While the Games Day tour is essentially worldwide, providing a common experience for people all over the globe, the club tables differentiate each Games Day event with something that is unique to each locale. Photographing all of the tables is one of the activities I always look forward to.



Of course, Games Workshop brings many of their own tables, some to play on and some only for display. This last one features underground tunnels!



From the game tables, I made my way over to the shopping area. Having followed the forums and podcasts regarding the new direction that 8th Edition Warhammer Fantasy was going, I was feeling the itch to try it out. I never cared for the Warhammer rule systems before, but I always loved the models, the game settings, and the community enthusiasm. So I hesitantly plunked down cash for some army books and some new models.

Turns out that when I read through my Dark Elf army book later in the week, I discovered that they sold me the obsolete version of the book! Luckily, a Games Workshop store is fairly accessible to me, and a "red-shirt" there was kind enough to exchange the book for the current one. While that was good service on his part, I was shocked that Games Workshop had the gumption to sell backlog inventory at the Games Day store!

But back to Games Day itself - Games Workshop offers a variety of ways to spend your day there, ensuring that you're never bored. Some of the paint-and-take activities are good deals, where you can build a terrain piece or paint a miniature that you can

keep. Then there are the painting competitions. There are two speed-painting competitions. One is a light-hearted affair, where the organizers impose random obstacles on the contestants, like painting while standing up or painting while wearing massive mittens. The other contest is more serious. However, there are still obstacles to overcome, like using dried up paint, gunky brushes, and dim light!

Here is my result for the more serious speed-painting contest. Everyone has one hour to paint a randomly provided miniature. I'm pretty pleased with my attempt, given the conditions. Unfortunately, I didn't place in the round. I requested feedback from the judge, and he said that the shading and midtones were right-on, but the miniature needed more high-lighting.



With the excitement of a painting session under my belt, I made my way to the Golden Demon Lounge elsewhere in the Convention Center.

Here are a few of the entries that caught my eye. I'm a big fan of the Kroot family of models, so I was happy to see a lot of attention given to them this year for some reason. I think there were about three separate entries featuring the Gnarlloc, the beast of burden or beast of war, produced by Forge World.

I was admiring one of the models that had won a Gold Medal, when, overhearing a side conversation, I realized that the painter was standing right beside me. So I took advantage of the opportunity to ask him how he achieved his weather effects on the custom base, to which he kindly explained his use of a sponge as well as his rationale to go in a certain direction of the color wheel. As it turned out, about an hour later, this same gentleman was on the awards stage lofting the Slayer Sword above his head! So in this way, I learned that I had the good fortune to obtain some personal instruction from Todd Swanson.



In another story of minor celebrity, one of my buddies pointed Miggedy Mack Martin out to me at the Fantasy Flight Games booth. I recognized Mack as the founder of the Dice Like Thunder podcast. I had stopped listening to that podcast when Mack left the show, so I didn't realize that Fantasy Flight hired Mack as a games designer, and that he was responsible for the Dark Heresy RPG!

Mack personifies the life arc that we all fantasize about. As a kid, spend all your homework time playing Warhammer 40K, illustrating Warhammer 40K, and reading Warhammer 40K novels. Continue the same in college, while studying game design. Launch a podcast sharing all your Warhammer 40K knowledge with the world. Bring all that experience to a job interview where all of that "focus" actually wins you a job, and be hired by a game company to be a game designer. Score.

Here's a picture of Mack and I cramping the style of a Sister of Battle.



Time for an amusing aside about Mack and the Ultramarine movie. At the end of the convention, the Fantasy Flight guys were catching up with

Alan Merrett, Games Workshop greybeard and the IP Lead to whom they report. Mack was waxing cool, suggesting to Alan that the true sign of success for the Ultramarine movie is when they release the RiffTrax for it, and, oh boy, is that going to rock! Alan responds with an impassive, emotionless expression. Hmm. Mack, perhaps a little flustered (but hiding it very well) continues to explain that RiffTrax overdubs movies with hilarious commentary, a la Mystery Science Theater 3000. Alan responds with an impassive, emotionless expression. Mack decides to change the subject.

If all of that celebrity hobnobbing and general gaming/painting goodness wasn't enough, the highlight of the entire trip was when our gaming group invited the team from Fantasy Flight Games (FFG) to go to dinner with us at Phillips Seafood at the Inner Harbor. Which they accepted to our delight!

So we enjoyed conversing with Ross Watson, Sam Stewart, Mack Martin, and Tim and Ron, whose last names I can't recall. I spent most of my time talking with Ross. I learned a little bit of his background and career trajectory that led him to FFG, and we reminisced about old games from the 80's. We debated the potential value of a skirmish game for Games Workshop, and we talked about the product development lifecycle process at FFG. One of my gaming

buddies had the pleasure to describe his Dark Heresy and Rogue Trader campaigns to one of the actual key designers of the games, Sam Stewart!

These guys were so great to talk to. It was all we could do to avoid coming across as google-eyed fanboys/fangirls - I don't know if we succeeded! What a tremendous way to cap our day at Games Day!



Games Day UK 2010

Words : Jason Hubbard
Photography: Shane McElligott

Well, it was that time of the year again - Games Day UK was upon us. I had finished my entry for Golden Demon, I'd decided this year to only enter one category, which was Lord of the Rings. I had painted Sam and Bill the pony. The trip down was in the pimp mobile, and for those who haven't seen Ky's mini bus, then check out the website. This year he had some new interior lighting, a disco type light, which he switched on to show us all, and amused we were.

So we arrived well in time around 8 o'clock, and started the day in the Golden Demon queue. This year the queue seemed a lot smaller, with far fewer people entering Golden Demon. Once inside I did notice that a lot of people hadn't bothered to collect Golden Demon entry tickets and seemed to use the queue to get in early.

This had an affect on the number of entrants into the competition, with a significant reduction in models in the cases. In fact, as I wandered around the show it seemed there were far fewer people attending this year then at previous Games Days.

My first stop of the day were to speak to a few members of the Design Studio that I know and have a good chat and catch up, as we no longer live near each other. The studio team, along with the painting competition filled one hall. The 'Eavy Metal team spent the day giving tips and painting advice to the people who had brought their work in to show them. There were also writers, sculptors, game designers and members of the manufacturing team to talk to. Even at the end of the day they were still smiling and brought a positive vibe to the event.

As I was wandering around I started to notice that the hobby participation areas had become smaller, and that the sale areas were bigger this year. This trend has been apparent over the past few years, but I felt this time it was too much. Where there is usually a hall filled with fabulous gaming tables there was only a handful.

Despite being reduced in size, the conversion competition table and the scenery building areas were packed all day, and with the number of ladies carrying the hand made scenery around the plan was clearly to 'get mum to carry it'. These areas are always dominated by the younger attendees, and I was sorry to see them be less prominent this year as they help promote the hobby and get people actively involved on the day.



The lack of a big release this year made the ginormous sales area seem inflated in size, and without any show deals it made me question whether Games Day has turned into a glorified sales event or not. Games Day should be about the hobby, with the focus on painting, gaming and scenery construction, not selling stuff - that's what the stores and website are for.

My wandering ended up at the Forge World display and my eye was caught by the Warhammer Forge stand and it's pretty resin. I was rewarded for my efforts pushing through the crowds and managed to get to all the display cabinets, and as I looked closer I started to drool like Homer Simpson, with the Marienburg Land ship in particular screaming out at me - yes, I do want one (Ed - Shame about that miniature buying ban). I'm pretty excited by this turn of events - Forge world have always produced some pretty spectacular stuff for 40K, so we should see some really cool items coming from Warhammer Forge. It was the part of the show I heard most discussed on the day - usually with bright eyes and a terrified wallet.

This new venture certainly looks like it could revitalise Warhammer, as the books will cover subjects that studio can't, such as campaigns in which Chaos over runs the Empire, not to mention background books for parts of the old World, such as Araby, Norsca, Cathay and every other part of the world map not covered by the main studio. This is an area that I have felt has been lacking for sometime. The Lustria book was a step in the right direction, but with nothing since I was concerned we'd never get to see the far reaches of the Warhammer World.

I was disappointed to not find Warhammer Historical anywhere, but maybe I missed them. This was a shame as I was hoping to pick up a couple of the books, Shieldwall in particular.



This year saw the anticipated Space Marine movie showcasing a new trailer - the queue was huge, with lots of eager folk desperate to get a look. I decided that I'd try later on when hopefully the queue would have reduced in size some what, but I never did manage to get a look at the trailer, though fortunately I've seen it since. It looks like this may be a pretty good film, and I'll try to get hold of a copy when its released.

So, as lunchtime approached, I wandered over to the Plaza hotel and attended the painters meet up. This is where painters from all over the world who are attending the Games Day meet up to share tips and ideas, and generally chat about the hobby of painting small miniatures. Some of the notables in attendance were Ben Jarvis, who was last year's Slayer Sword winner, and is one of the founders of Platoon



Britannica, as well as Rune Keppel - who my other half had a quick chat with - along with a host of other painters, many of whom picked up finalist pins and even Demons later in the day.

It was certainly a fun way to spend my lunch break, although the price of a drink at the hotel was a bit of a shock. How much? (Ed- Too much, apparently.....)

I wandered back over to the show once the meet up had finished and headed over to pick up my Golden Demon entry. As it was handed back I noticed a massive chip on the miniature, which wasn't there when I handed it in. I remarked about this to a guy handing over to me and he just smiled and shrugged his shoulders - I was slightly miffed. Yes, I know it's not a Demon-winning entry, but I had spent time and effort on the piece, so expected those handling the miniature to do so with care and respect, and not to drop it. I understand that accidents happen, but it left me a bit sore to say the least.

Overall I was disappointed with this year's show, it seemed to me that selling products was given preference over hobby participation - which may be a sign of how the economy is affecting the business. At past shows there has always been a buzz, a sort of excited feeling amongst the crowd, but this year I didn't get that feeling.

This has prompted me to make the decision that I won't be attending next year's Games Day. I've been attending the shows for a number of years and have always looked forward to the next show with anticipation, but this year I left with a bad taste in my mouth and feeling very disappointed. It wasn't a showcase for the hobby, and it wasn't a day to showcase the world of gaming - it was a glorified day of selling and that was a shame. I've always seen Games Day as a showcase of what can be done at a wargames show, but this year it felt like a poorly constructed corporate sales event.



The Application of Paint

Words & Photography: David Heathfield

This tutorial concerns the application of paint and does not deal in depth with colour theory. There are many articles available on the subject and it would take a whole book to explain the use of colour.

Before we begin a quick word on preparation. All mould lines and flash should be removed, this can be done with a scalpel, file, wire wool or sand paper. The last two in that list can also be used to smooth off larger areas that will require smooth blends such as cloaks and large metal surfaces.

Undercoating is a personal preference but the choice you make can affect the end result. A black undercoat lends itself to clean lines and a sharp contrast - often described as the 'Eavy Metal style' - but will leave you with slightly dulled colours. A white undercoat gives more vibrant colours and a generally smoother finish but is tricky to master. A grey undercoat will give somewhere in between the two, it is easy to cover, gives a smooth finish and has the advantage of giving more natural looking colours and being easier to view while painting.

Stage 1



For the purposes of this tutorial I have undercoated the miniature a very light grey (Tamiya light grey) which will show the colours and techniques better than a darker undercoat.

Stage 2



After spraying the model with several light coats I painted the difficult to reach areas of his leather clothing. This was done before attaching him to the base as these areas became unreachable with a brush. The miniature was pinned with a long piece of paperclip which goes right through the base in order to create a sturdy join between the model and all the elements of the base.

Stage 3



Now you can begin applying colour. There are several things you need to know about how the paints work before applying it. Acrylic paints, such as the ones used for miniature painting, are a suspension of pigment in several other liquids that help give each paint its own qualities. These qualities vary from paint to paint and so it is useless giving you a description of how thin your paints should be as each one will vary. Instead I will show you the quality you are looking for when applying said paint.

Here the paint is too thin, it is not adhering to the surface of the miniature and is breaking up.

Stage 4



This next image shows paint that has been applied either too thick or without proper mixing on the pallet. Once a layer like this is applied you will never regain a smooth surface to paint on and the end result will be affected.

So the paint should go on smooth and evenly and be slightly transparent. It is also important not to overload your brush or you will end up with large areas of pooled paint which will fill details and affect the following layers.

These layers should be repeated until a homogeneous finish has been achieved. Each layer needs to be painted in a different direction to the last with large clean strokes. This is very important as when you make a brush stroke the paint is laid down in a certain way.

The paint is generally pushed along in the direction of the stroke which as we will see later can be made to work in our favour. At the end of the stroke the brush leaves behind a larger amount of paint than at the start. Therefore if we keep the brush strokes in the same direction we will end up with a large deposit of paint at the point where the stroke ends. This will quickly build up and leave an ugly clump and stroke mark.

It is also important as you are crisscrossing the strokes which fills the gaps left by the last stroke and creates an even, solid mesh of pigment across the surface of the model.

Stage 5 Here is a step by step of 4 layers applied to the skin using this technique.



Next we begin adding light and dark areas to the model to give it contrast and volume. I usually work by adding some shade then highlights then further shade before adding the final highlights and glazes. This allows me to see how much contrast is needed at each step without going to dark straight away and having to balance this with very bright highlights.

Stage 6



Here I begin with a very careful shade. I am trying to avoid using too dark a colour as I want to create a blend by using the transparent quality of the thinned paint. Here is the paint on my palette.

The palette I use is a wet palette which some people believe is a bit of an extravagance but is in fact a necessity and will improve your technique and painting times tremendously.

Now you want to use those brush strokes to create a blend. Begin with the brush at a point where you want the blend to begin and move it toward the area you want to be darkest. This will create a natural blend from the light to the dark area and can be further facilitated by stretching the edge of the paint with a clean moist brush before it dries or applying the previous colour very thinly to the edge of the blend once dry to help disguise the edges of the two colours.

Then another layer is added starting slightly further down into the shaded area with a darker colour paint using the same technique and finally I add some purple to the mix to create a recessive area and begin adding some tone to the skin.



Stage 7



For the next part I have moved to an area of the model that is easier to demonstrate the steps on. It concerns the highlighting of the model. After deciding where to place your highlights (usually opposite the shaded areas) you must begin to highlight in the same manner that we applied shade. By this I mean in several stages using thin coats and using brush strokes to move the pigment towards the lightest areas.

Here you can see the application of highlights on the beard. This was first treated as per the last two steps with several coats of grey and several applications of brown tending toward the darker areas.

The whiskers were then lightened back up to a light grey with two applications treating the area with global lighting (all raised areas are highlighted) the white was applied again in two thin layers tending towards where the light source was coming from.

Stage 8



Now that you have highlighted and shaded an area it may look a little bland. This is because in real life light shows up slightly different tones and colours that may be reflected from lower layers (veins under the skin), be reflected from another object (metals reflecting light) or may simply be stains or discrepancies on the surface.

To display these effects on the miniature we use glazes. The use of these glazes is twofold. First they can help to further disguise blends and smooth the surface. Secondly they can be used to break up large areas of colour and create areas of interest that draw the eye to certain areas when viewing the model.

On my Dwarf the mask was one such area that needed treatment. I used glazes of red and purple to help facilitate blends and break up the surface of the leather. These were concentrated in certain areas particularly the purple which is a recessive colour and so was confined to the shaded areas. Secondly I used a pale blue around the eyes to give the effect of the light reflecting from the metal onto the leather and also to draw the eye of the viewer towards the details of the eye.

The image below shows the consistency of the paints on my pallet but it must also be noted that only a very small amount is needed on the brush else you will end up with paint gathering in recessed areas of the model. It is better to apply these glazes in several layers and the point of them is that they remain transparent and simply tint the colour below.



Stage 9



These images show the model before glazing then with the first layer of red applied to the cheeks and finally worked with the complete array of colours. These areas were neatened up on the final piece.

Metallics and Wood

Now to demonstrate these techniques applied to a few different surfaces. It was requested that I demonstrate metallics and wood.

When working on metal areas you have a choice between using metallic paints and painting non-metallic metals (NMM). In this tutorial I will demonstrate the latter technique. I find it much nicer to look at presentation-wise, that it ties the model together better and I know that I spent hours wondering at the amazing work of other artists when trying to learn this technique. It will also help you become a better painter as you have no choice but to get the blends perfect!

I will show you a simple area of metal that requires not too much blending back and forth, and is easy to place reflections on.

Stage 1



The surface was given a coat of a steel grey colour before receiving several washes of black concentrating on the area in shadow. In this case that was the underside of the steel handle but metal reflects light differently and some research into this can produce surprising results.

The metal was then returned to the original steel colour. At this point it is important to mention that contrast is of particular importance when painting metal surfaces.

Stage 2



The highlights should be very stark and sudden and confined to a small area. This is not to say they should not be well blended in fact the opposite is true but almost all metals should end with a stark spot or streak of white.

To this end I now use the grey colour and add white to it highlighting the surface with thin layers of much lighter grey to create a quick but smooth blend concentrating on a small zone. To finish spots of white are applied and a quick glaze of off white used to blend these in



Stage 3



The light points on the tubes were painted with less watered paint. This is usual for very fine details as getting a perfect blend is less important than keeping the area neat. Below is my pallet with the three colours used for this process and another shot of them mixed while blending between layers.

Stage 4



Metals can also be glazed; this is usually done to give the effect of rust and dirt but can also be used to show the effects of heat or other elements on a metal surface. Below is a rusty metal axe that has been aged using oil paints and pigment powders.

Stage 5



This is a very simple way of painting metals and there are lots more techniques that can be found by looking at metallic surfaces, other miniatures and even classical painters who often use a technique called Sky Earth NMM. I encourage you to go and find these and try them yourself as your painting and knowledge of the subject will increase tremendously.

Then I washed the metals surrounding the wood with thin black allowing some to leak into the recessed of wood near to the metals. This creates yet more contrast easily.

The wood is then returned to the original brown before being given several coats of pale beige. Once dry I return to my ink wash and apply an even thinner coat to homogenise the area and tint the colour of the wood slightly. Then final highlights are added using the beige colour with a small amount of off white mixed in. These highlights are restricted to smaller areas.



Stage 6



Next is wood. I tend to keep my wood bright and vibrant as with the rest of the model and make a feature of it rather than paint it drab colours. I begin with a coat of a flat dusty brown colour and follow this up with several washes of thinned dark chestnut ink. To make this I mix a chestnut ink with a brown ink and water it down slightly. This is then applied as a wash with the brush slightly overloaded so that the colour runs into the recessed detail of the wood. Obviously you can concentrate this more to the darker areas with each passage of ink.



Stage 7



Wood can be glazed with all sorts of colours that occur naturally due to fungi plants and minerals that end up on the wood. Most commonly I use green, purple and red. The picture below shows another handle painted in a similar fashion and treated with some glazes.

Stage 8

Now it is time to paint the details. The reasons I leave these until last because they are often the highest areas and so be difficult to paint around while painting other surfaces. For this reason I don't worry too much if they get some paint on them up to this point. Also I can now use these details to balance out the other colours.

As a general rule I tend to choose two or three colours for the model, then each area may have one or two complementary or contrasting colours in. I can use these colours initially to manipulate the mood of the model, so that it is dark and cold, or bright and warm, etc. I can also use contrasting glazes in these areas to break them up a bit. Once this is done however I may find that one side of the model looks a bit too



red or too warm. I paint the details to counteract this and balance the whole miniature.

Colour theory can help with this to a point but if you haven't got a feel for colour you had better develop one or your miniatures will end up a mish-mash of paint.

So here he is, complete with a nice scenic base ready to join the armies of Tir-Na-Bor or to simply sit on my desktop and get dusty.

Till next time, happy painting.



Flora Basing

Words & Photography: Brett Johnson
& Rebecca Hubbard

Using real mosses and plants on your bases is a great way to add interest to your miniatures.

Before you start you'll need to prepare your plant material to make sure they last - Brett Johnson from WAMP explains how easy this is.

Tools and Materials needed for preparation:

Plants

Glycerin

Absorbent paper (ie kitchen roll)

Water

Small container

This technique can be used on any type of plant but the results can vary. Generally the more 'woody' the plant is, the better. Normally once you cut a plant it will begin to dry out, losing its water which in turn destroys the structure.

This process solves the problem by replacing the lost water with glycerin which acts like an embalming fluid and retains the plants structure.

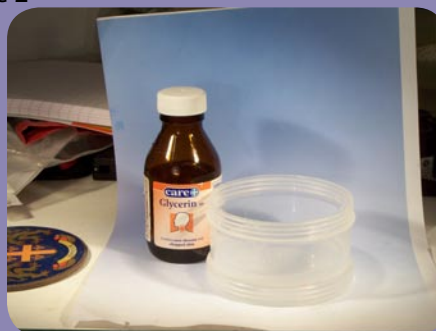
I recommend you do this in advance of when you need the plants. I do batches every now and then and keep them in my bits box - some have been stored for well over a year and are still as good as new. Some plants won't take well to the process, and you'll see within 48 hours if it's failed.

Stage 1



Collect some plants! I like to use mosses as they scale well and you can just pull them from the rock but try anything, small herbs like thyme can be good. For this tutorial I just popped in the garden and grabbed some moss - it took me about 1 minute and I was able to find a good variety.

Stage 2



For this stage you need some Glycerin. It is available over the counter from most chemists, as it's often used as a children's medicine, and also found in some supermarkets. It isn't harmful and you don't need a bio-hazard suit to handle it. It's also pretty cheap, the bottle pictured was about £1.20 and lasts for ages. You will also need a small container and some water.

You need to mix 1 part Glycerin to 10 parts water in the container. Give it a good stir so it's properly mixed. Next take your plants and dip them into the mixture, make sure they are well covered then remove and place on some kitchen roll or newspaper. This will soak up the excess.

Some plants you may want to turn over after an hour to soak both sides. Then simply leave to dry (overnight if possible). After 24 - 48 hours any plants that didn't succeed the process will have wilted so you should discard them; the rest you are free to use.

Stage 3



Now that your plants are prepared you can use them on the bases of your miniatures.

You can take this a step further though, and use certain mosses to create miniature flowers, as Rebecca Hubbard from Sheffield Irregulars explains:

Tools and Materials needed for preparation:

PVA glue

Cocktail stick

Moss with fronds

Coloured flock

Some mosses have fronds that like miniature reeds, and these are great for making simple flowers. Glue the moss to your base using PVA or super glue.



Stage 4



Using a cocktail stick, carefully apply PVA glue to a single frond - you don't need a lot of glue, so don't overload it.

Stage 5



Dip the glue covered 'flower' into the coloured flock to create flower blossoms.

Using different coloured flocks will add a bit of variety and a splash of colour to any base.



Sculpting Robes in Green Stuff

Words & Photography: Richard Sweet

During this article, I'll be showing you how to add a loin cloth to a Games Workshop Sister of Battle - this is just an example, but the techniques will help you sculpt robes and cloth over many surfaces.

Stage 1



At this stage I lay out a rough base for the sister's loin cloth, so that I'll have a solid base to work with and can shape it when I come to sculpting it without having to do it separately. I deliberately haven't sculpted anything around the top of her thighs - there's little point as this will be hidden by cloth.



Stage 2



Once the base layer has completely dried, I begin to work on the top part of the loin cloth first. I start by adding two thin lines of green stuff to the outer most parts that fall across the thighs and push the material inwards, going over them repeatedly to make sure the material is thin and both the lines and edges are smooth.

Stage 3



Due to the way the loin cloth is being pushed together there will be a few natural raised areas in the center of it, both folds at the top and the bottom. I add two small blobs of green stuff at the very top and very bottom and push the material into shape, once again making sure I smooth out the joins between the green stuff by rubbing over them with a metal pick.

Stage 4



At this stage I move on to the rear of her loincloth, as with the top part I create a base layer to apply the detail layer over the top of. I let it dry completely and cut away any parts that are too thick.



Stage 5



As with the front loincloth I start in the same way, two thin lines of green stuff down each side of the cloth and then push the material in, towards each other, while constantly checking both the consistency of the lines at the edges and the texture.



Stage 6



I add another layer of green stuff down the center, making it slightly thicker at the top and the bottom - this will allow me more flexibility with the folds and shapes

This is the final layer for the loincloth on this side, I had a look at some stock photos and some miniatures to get more of an idea of how the loincloth might be shaped by the wind and the motion of kicking off the metal girder. From these references I then add some additional folds making sure they are more pronounced towards the bottom of the cloth where it has most of its flexibility and movement.



A few Do's & Don't's

One thing I would always advise with sculpting is to mix very small amounts at a time, you never know how long you could be working on one area. It could well take much longer than you think and by the time you're finished the rest of the green stuff could be too hard to stick to the green.

Don't get carried away with the amount of green stuff you need for an area. Typically I only ever apply half of what I think I need to the model, even on larger areas like robes and cloth - if you add too much, you end up having to remove a lot of it as well as ruining what you've already done.

Don't be afraid to spend a lot of time on one area even if it's not particularly detailed - if something about it doesn't feel right to you when you leave it then it never will feel right .

Don't be afraid to try new styles to sculpt the same thing. A lot of sculpting is about problem solving, as you look at something you need to sculpt and your mind begins to think of different ways to make the same object.

Step-by-step: Nanny Ogg on Broom

Words & Photography: Mike Dodds

I suppose that, like so many other miniature painters, I always get a thrill of anticipation when I get asked to paint up a model for someone else, especially as in this case when I get asked if I can do it in a week. So after the automatic 'Eeek' and 'Are you kidding me?' mental responses, and being the figure-slut that I am, it took me all of 0.00357 microseconds to say "Yes, of course, I'd be delighted".

So after emailing all the arrangements, what arrived in a nice neat padded envelope on the Tuesday was Micro Art Studio's Nanny Ogg on Broom. (D02700)

Stage 1



So on to the review: The miniature comes as four pieces, including the plastic base - Nanny Ogg herself, the support stand and the cast base in metal. Nanny Ogg herself sits astride her broomstick, legs akimbo playing a banjo, which in this instance had the neck severely bent backwards. This was straightened with a steel rule pressed against the back of the neck and gentle pressure.

Stage 2



Close inspection of the mini showed several areas of flash as well as an area of pitting. That flaw being on the rear of Nanny's hat wasn't too much of a problem, but the flash was in some difficult places to deal with. It appears as if this mini had been cast in a mould consisting of three or four sections. Areas affected by the flash were the edges of the cloak and over the shoulders. I'm fortunate in that a few years ago I discovered a Micro chisel on sale in Historex Agents store, this has several blades between 1 and 2 millimetres wide which with gentle pressure removes most flash, plastic or metal.

Stage 3



There had been a section of flash on the rear of the hat but this had been removed prior to my receipt. However, that removal had left a serious gouge in the creases of the cloak, so coupled with the pitting I was left with little choice but to work some green stuff to replace that and a couple of other "dings".

Stage 4



While the green stuff was curing I turned my attention to the base and stand assembly - fortunately, neither one had any flash or moulding flaws. The cast base has a tab designed to fit into the slot of the plastic base so that was a quick hit with superglue and in place in a seconds. Over to the stand, this had a small stub of excess metal which a gentle pass or two with a fine file removed. I tested the stands best fit and then it too was given a touch of glue and was in place. There were tiny gaps around the bottom of the stand and the base but green stuff and a little bit of coaxing with a sculpting tool (or three) and the gaps were filled. Nanny was then left overnight for the green stuff to fully cure.

Next day was the final assembly and Nanny was fixed to the stand using strong slower drying superglue, which gives a better bond. It is such a slow glue that getting it out of the bottle is like getting a teenager out of bed, but it has a grip like a limpet on a rock face.

Then it was down to the garage to be treated to a gentle dose of Tamiya Fine White Primer.

Stage 5



Somewhere around now I discovered that the tab on the cast base is actually deeper than the plastic base and the figure was left unstable. So once the primer was dry it was back to the paint room and mark the excess on the tab then pry off the base and tidy up.

Onto the painting, with Nanny Ogg being so well depicted in Paul Kidby's illustrations to Terry Pratchett's books I had to follow a more "cartoonish" version of painting. So I bypassed my normal skin recipe and went with manufactured skin tone colours.

In the majority I use Vallejo Model Colours, having come to prefer their behaviour, so I'll list the Skin Tones here but the rest of the colours I'll list at the end.

Base colour: 036 Beige Red.

First Highlight Colour: 017 Basic Skintone

Second Highlight colour: Light Flesh (Not sure if Vallejo make this any more)

Darkening and Mouth: Vallejo Game Colour Dark Flesh.

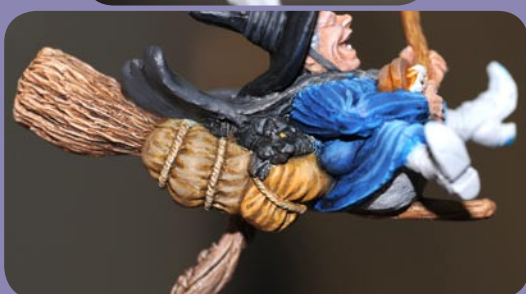


Stage 6



About here I realised there was something wrong with one of her legs, in fact it had a serious crack in it. Not wanting to risk fracturing it by poking green stuff in I opted to dig out the "Ultra Fast Quick Grip PVA" I use for gluing bases. This I applied with a Brush carefully pushing the glue into the crack, and left to set overnight.

Stage 7



Next up for painting was Greebo and the cloak.

Followed by the packs and bottle, strapped underneath the broom.

I worked on the banjo next and then did the work on both the base and broomstick.

Stage 8



The base was completed by painting in the stones, with various colours and then a dilute wash of Devlan Mud. Leaves were picked out, as was the Flower on the stand - a lovely bit of sculpting there - which was given thin washes of dark red.

The voluminous bloomers were gone over with a couple of coats of white paint, then a dilute coat of Ivory to take out the starkness. I then freehanded in the Red stripes and finished off the boots.

Overall she's a pleasant figure to paint, with no massive issues to have to work around; the detail is sharp enough to make the painting easy but not cluttered with extraneous bits.

The face is a delight, showing a superb "Joie De Vivre". Ok the broom handle does look a bit Phallic, but hey it's a fun model.

It's not a miniature for someone to start out from scratch with, but for a collector/painter it's a good one to work on. Overall if I were to give this a score I'd say 8/10.



Face

Beige Red
Basic Skintone
Light Flesh
Dark Flesh



Packs and Bottle

Ochre Brown
English Uniform
Burnt Umber
Iraqi Sand
Cork brown



Dress

Prussian Blue
Dark Prussian Blue
Grey Blue
Deep sky blue

Cloak and hat

Dark Grey
Black Grey
Neutral Grey
Black
Black Glaze



Base

Cork Brown
Chocolate Brown
Burnt Umber
Luftwaffe Camo Green
Blue Grey
Neutral Grey
English Uniform
Ivory
Dark Red

Shoes and Bloomer
stripes Red
Dark red
Burnt Cadmium Red
Bloody Red

If you want to improve your highlighting and shading using gradients can help.

Many people use bands of colour side by side to indicate a change in shade, and while this can be effective, the result is never a smooth transition, it's easy to see where one colour stops and another starts.



Gradients are a way of creating smoother transitions. By layering colours over one another in a way that you can still see the colour underneath you can create a subtler effect - and it's very easy to do.

In my example I have used Citadel paint colours, but you can use whatever brand you have available.

Fabric, such as a cloak is a great way to practise as if it's rippled it will have obvious points of shadow and light. It can be helpful to pick out three pots of paint that are roughly your darkest, lightest and middle shades.



First, make sure your model has been primed. When you're practising it will be easier to see what's happening if you use a light coloured primer - such as a grey, rather than a black.

Paint the entire cloak in your middle shade colour, make sure it's not looking patchy and the paint is not too thick. Mix your paint with water on a tile or palette so you can see the consistency easily.

When you are ready to start shading, add some water to your shade colour until it's slightly see-through on your palette - but not so diluted it has become a wash. If your brush is too wet, wipe some off on a piece of kitchen towel before you start painting.

Find an area that needs to be dark, and starting a little further away push the brush in the direction of the darkest point. This will drag the paint, leaving a stroke that starts off nearly invisible and gets darker where the colour needs to be strongest.



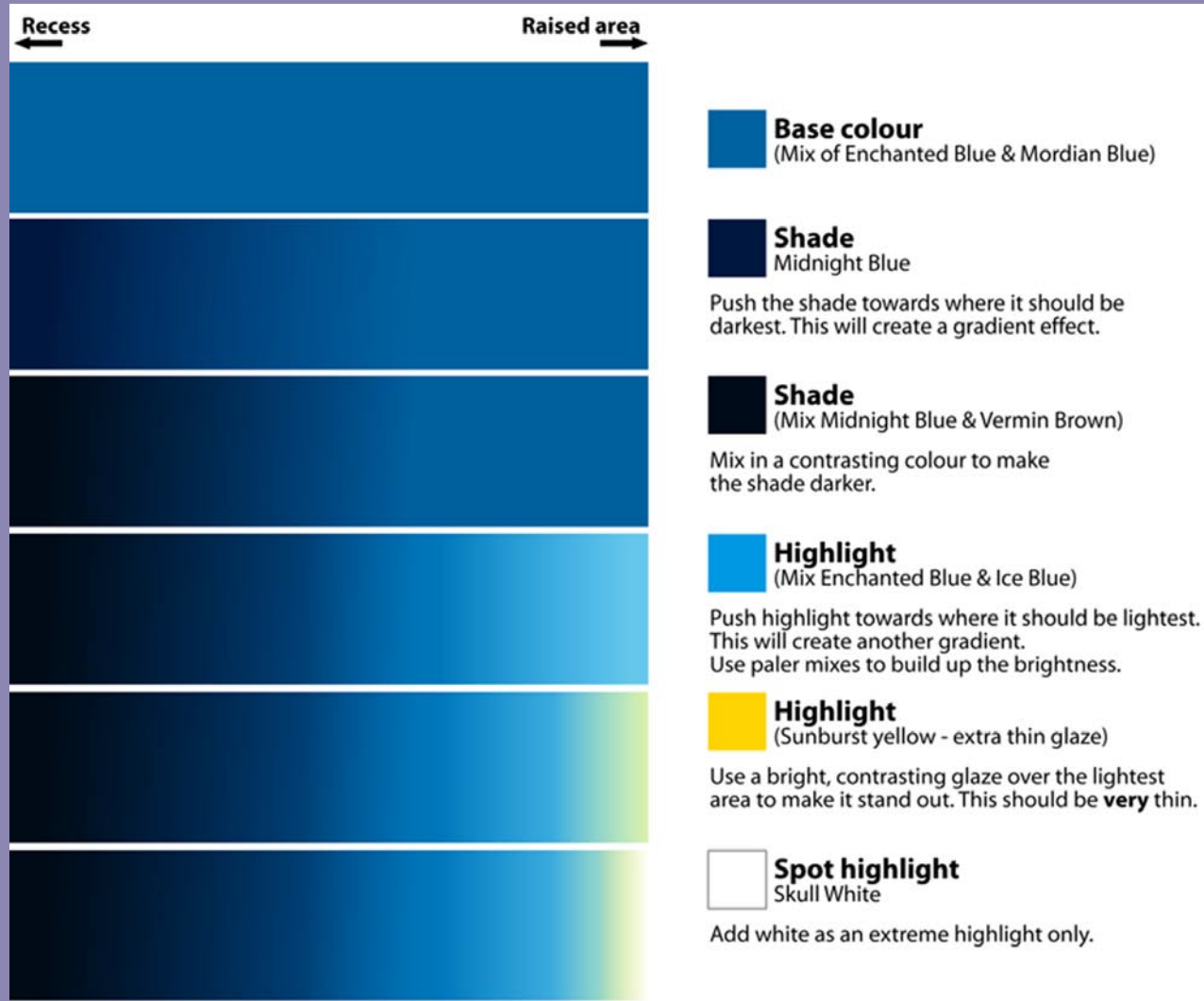
Build up the opacity in layers, by brushing over the same area multiple times - but not while the paint is very wet.

The highlight gradient goes in the opposite direction. The paint should move towards where you want it to be lightest. A good place to start your gradient is the same place you started your shading from so that as one finishes, the other starts. In this example the starting point is the centre of the bar.



The middle is still pretty much the base colour, but gradients get stronger as they move out. This only works if you move your brush in the direction you want the paint to be strongest - and won't work with thick paint, as it will not create the transparency you need to see the base colour underneath.

The chart below details how I built up my colours, and there is a photo of a miniature where I practiced this exact technique on the cloak.



Reviews

Discworld Miniatures Review

Micro Arts studio

The Discworld Miniatures is a line of 30 mm scale, cast metal miniatures from the Discworld fantasy book series. All figurines are based on Paul Kidby's Discworld artworks and consulted with Sir Terry Pratchett personally. At this time there are 32 miniatures in the series. We plan to expand the range of the miniatures constantly. Even now we have 3 new figurines in the sculpting phase. We're always open to new suggestions which characters from the Discworld we should produce next. If you have an idea feel free to contact us on our forum or via Facebook.



Words & Photography: Jason Hubbard, Rebecca Hubbard, Nick Johnson, William Ford, Andy Mon, Willian Ford jnr, Guy Oxley, Scott Radom & Nick Palfrey

Susan Sto-Helit

Jason Hubbard

I really like the Discworld range of miniatures by Micro Arts, that I was quite pleased when I was given Susan Sto-Helit, grand-daughter of Death, to paint. My initial reaction was that this is a really nice sculpt and the cast isn't too bad. While there was a mold line running across her head which was a little tricky to remove, it was a really excellent cast.

I looked at the painted version on-line and found that most people had painted her in black. I wanted to be slightly different in my approach and colour choice for her, so I compromised and went with greys. She is really easy model to paint, and I soon found I was painting quite quickly. The only tricky piece of clothing to paint was her basque, but apart from that her clothing was pretty straight forward. I also decided that I wanted her scythe to be old and weather worn, rather than shiny and new looking. So I painted a damaged rust colour to the blade - the reason for this was I wanted a scythe that looked like it had been passed down to Susan by Death, passing on her future legacy through Death's old blade.

I enjoyed painting this model and I intend at a later date to acquire the complete set of guards, as I already have Vimes, though as yet I haven't painted him. I intend to place him on a cobblestone base (Ed - The Streets of Ankh-Morpork?). The Discworld range is well worth checking out, especially if you're a fan of the books, these figures are excellent quality.



Nanny Ogg
William Ford

Nanny Ogg comes in 2 pieces, the main body and her left hand with broomstick, and a plain round 'slotta' type base. Like the rest of the range she is based on the artwork of Paul Kidby so there is plenty of reference material for her.

The model had no flash at all and the mold lines were minimal and easily cleaned up. One disappointment was the amount of micro-pitting on many of the surfaces and some squashing to the left hand side of her face.

The hand fits well into the arm and shouldn't require pinning. For best results I would recommend a 'slip' of Milliput, or other filler, to cover the worst of the pitting. The piece is posed in a typical Nanny Ogg pose, drink in hand, which is not at all frozen and captures her character well.

A light undercoat went on very well and it was on to painting. I used Vallejo Model Colour throughout on this piece and used references from Discworld art rather than the excellent pictures on the Micro Art Studios website. The model does not come with the cobbled base seen on the site but these are available separately.



The Bursar
Guy Oxley

This is one of collection of miniatures which represent the characters from Terry Pratchett's Discworld. It comes as one piece with a 25mm round base, the newer type seen with ranges from companies like Wyrd.

The figure is a good copy of the illustrations from the Discworld novels, and it captures the essence of the books. The excellent sculpt and clean casting meant there was only a small mould line round the figure. This took about 15 minutes to clean up with a file and knife, the curve of the hat made the underside a little harder to do though.

I think the main difficulty with this kind of 'famous' character is the decision whether to try and match the figure to the book or not. If you decide to, as I did, you are restricted in your creativity but the challenge comes in making the character recognisable. So after a little research the finished figure hopefully matches Discworld aficionados expectations.

Because of the detail the figure itself was a dream to paint, and whether you base coat/wash/dry brush or blend a decent result is easily achieved. It's a great piece for display purposes and possibly for a comedic roleplay game (i.e., the Discworld extension for GURP's).



The Librarian
William Ford jnr

I personally love anything Pratchett so the figure was too hard to resist. With the IMP Implings contest coming up, I decided to use it for my entry into the competition. The model is so characterful in its pose and is a perfect representation of one of Paul Kidby's artworks.

How good a cast this model is! The mould lines were almost insignificant and in some

places non-existent. The white under coat went on perfectly, unlike other metal models were I first have to wash of any excess release agent, so hats off to the casters. I finally scratch built some detail to the base to give the feeling from Paul Kidby's illustration and it was on to painting.

Although not too challenging the model has lots of large areas to practice fur technique, it is basically fur, skin and extras, although it is slightly less detailed on one arm making it harder to detail. One interesting point on the skin is what colour to do it? I decided on a bluey-grey to contrast with the orange, in keeping with Paul Kidby's illustration.

Overall I think this model really stands out in a crowd of good Discworld minis from Micro Art Studios and thoroughly deserves a good look.



Rincewind
Scott Radom

Like a lot of people out there I love the discworld books a lot. Terry Pratchett has really kept me entertained over 30 novels with his story, settings, and perhaps most importantly his characters. One of his key characters is the hapless wizard Rincewind who debuts in the very first novel, "The Colour of Magic".

This figure really captures the spirit of the character. I was really drawn to the "Why Me?" look of his face and the entire stance of the miniature with the stooped shoulders and poor posture. The sculpt is based off the official Discworld art by Jack Kidby and I think the sculptor Kul Asryk nailed it outta the park. I really think this is a great example of taking a two dimensional piece of artwork and springing it into a three dimensional work of art. I am still very impressed by what Kul Asryk accomplished on this mini!

The casting quality was decent. An acceptable amount of mold lines though an odd choice was made to put a mold line that ran down one of Rincewind's eyeballs. That was indeed a pain! The model also needed some more attention in smoothing out some of the larger areas as there are a few pitmarks in the metal. I didn't bother on the version I painted - Patience is for cowards! - but I really wished I had taken the time.

Painting was a lot of fun. I opted for a muted earthy look to the robes rather than the full colour glory a wizard of any status should probably enjoy. My thought was that this might be what Rincewind looked like while staying in "Four-Ecks" after a while. Also I was painting the miniature for a personal challenge over on the WAMP forum and the theme was "Look at my hat" so I felt a more drab approach to the mini might put focus onto the brightly painted hat. Painting this model was tons of fun!

I really look forward to painting some more figures from this range in the future. Nice work Micro Art!



Magrat on Broom
Nick Palfrey

I've read a lot of the Discworld books, many moons ago when I was at primary school. Add to this the fact that I have wanted to get hold of one of these miniatures for a while and I couldn't resist the opportunity to review one of these for Irregular Magazine.

At first glance it's packaged much as most miniatures, in the blister packet, with the very handy foam 'protection'. The miniature itself was quite nice, there was one major mold line, which was a bit irritating, as it ran through the folds of the cape, through the hair, and through the fiddly folds of the long, baggy

sleeves. Another niggle would be the parts. The miniature came in four parts. The main model, half an arm, the tree, which held the miniature up, and a base insert. The arm was particularly hard to put together. It is very small and, on my miniature at least, didn't fit very well which you can see in the pictures. I had to carefully place it with a pair of tweezers, and hold it there for a while. Another poor fit was with the twisty tree. It should fit in nicely, and it really didn't - it took me a while to figure out how it was meant to fit properly, and even then I wasn't quite sure if this was right, but once it was glued and primed the join didn't really show so this is all fine.

So when finally primed and cleaned the miniature almost painted itself! It was great, even if I only had a day to work on it - painting and write up done in a day! The miniature is just as I like it, with nice flat areas, not over detailed just the necklace and little bits in her hair.

So, to conclude - this is a very nice miniature, if you take the time and aren't in any rush in the assembly stage, and the painting is great fun! I would certainly like to get one or two (Nanny Ogg and Rincewind take my fancy). So until I can next get out of my almost permanent lazy state, ciao.



Esme Weatherwax
By Andy Mon

Being somewhat of a Terry Pratchett fan, I couldn't help but get rather excited by the prospect of being sent some of Micro Art Studio's Discworld miniatures for review. As one of the defining characters of the Discworld series, Granny Weatherwax has got to be on everyone's favourite list, and so I jumped at the chance to give these miniatures the once over.



The sound of the morning post landing on the mat roused me, and after stumbling to the door, I spotted the tell-tale jiffy bag that signals that something cool has arrived. Opening up the package reveals two standard foam lined blister packs, and with the distinct imagery of the Great A'tuin adorning the cardboard

backing, the products are instantly recognisable at a glance. Pausing for only moment to explore the packs, I got stuck in with the cleaning and prep work...

The metal is of a medium density which made trimming and filing easy, without it being so soft that you risk damaging the model by going too far. Despite some dubious placement, mould lines were reasonable and there was little to no shear between the halves. They were not particularly clean however, with ganky puddles of release agent that had been over-enthusiastically applied by the caster. There was some major lumping and pitting on many areas of both figures, though thankfully nothing too bad that a milliput bath and a quick bit of green stuff work wouldn't fix. Pleasingly there was no flash, and only a couple of vent worms in the expected places.

The character of Esme has been captured well, and I can just imagine those hatpins being put to good use! One slight disappointment though was that Esme doesn't come with a sculpted base, whereas Flying Esme does. A minor niggle, and another one that a bit of milliput work soon fixed.

Detailing is good on both sculpts, as is to be expected from a Kul Asyrk sculpt, though there were many parts that were below par. Little lumps, sculpted deformities, and irregularities on Esme's face and other small details, were made very apparent once under-coated, and so with a sigh the tools came out again.

Overall neither mini was particularly fun to paint due to the rough nature of the casting and the sculpting inconsistencies, making edging, blends, and detail

picking a real chore. I only had a couple of evenings in which to get them finished, and in hindsight it would've been nice to have allowed myself more time for additional prep work and neatening up before starting. Not that this should put off any Discworld fans though, as they are both good characterisations of Esme that would make fine additions to your cabinet. Seeing them on the shelf has certainly inspired me to pick up some of my other Discworld favourites from Micro Art Studios. It's just a shame that the overall quality and consistency didn't particularly impress me.



The Luggage
Nick Johnson

Paint and review a Micro Arts Studio Discworld figure? In a week? With my reputation? Well, I'll give it a shot. With that, and a rummage through the bag of goodies, I came away from the painting session with a blister pack containing the Luggage, the travelling chest that follows first Twoflower, then Rincewind, in their adventures on the Disc.

He's also the first figure I've painted that can double as a finger puppet if you're careful - true story....

The Luggage comes as a one piece sculpt, with a plain 30mm base. While the tongue of mahogany isn't on display, the teeth, legs and a bit of someone's robe are



all present and correct. One detail that caused a little controversy was the fact that there are two knotholes which are coincidentally in the right position to be a pair of eyes, despite the Luggage being noted for not being able to see. I don't see a problem with this, as they're not actual eyes, but some purists may make a fuss.

Given I only had a week to work on him, it was nice to have a figure that only needed five areas working on - wood, metal trim, teeth, legs and the scrap of cloth. I used a mix of P3 and Vallejo Model Colours, with Games Workshop Washes and Metallics to paint him. There was no noticeable flash, and I didn't spot a mold line when I was prepping him.

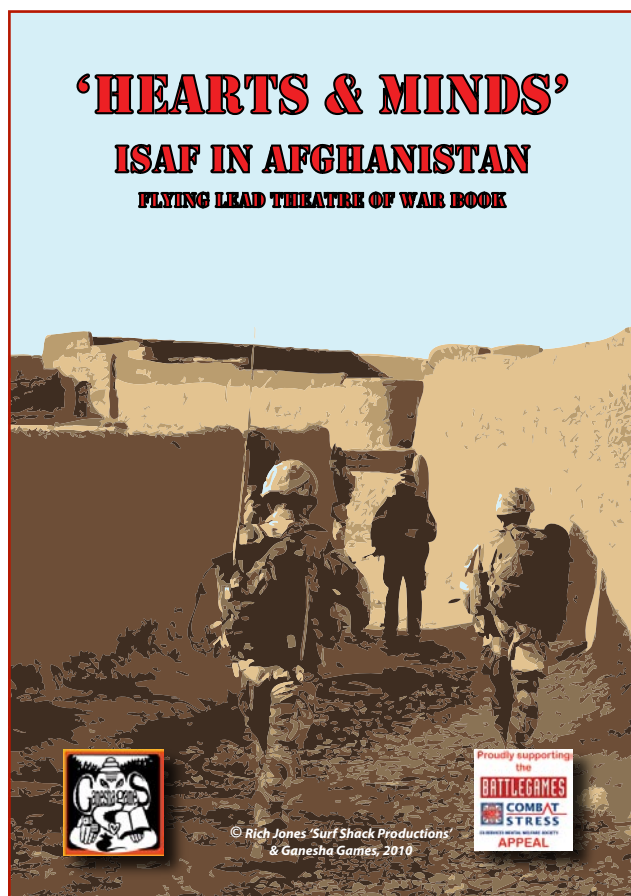
I was a little disappointed that the Luggage didn't come with a sculpted base, as is shown on the pictures on the website - I feel that Micro Arts should probably add a disclaimer to cover this. Either way, it didn't spoil my enjoyment of painting the figure, and I will be picking some more of them up in the future.



'Hearts and Minds'

ISAF in Afghanistan, Flying Lead Theatre of War Book. Ganesha Games

Words: Dave Barker



I have always find it difficult to know whether I should even consider playing games set in wars which are still ongoing, and 'Hearts and Minds' is most certainly a sourcebook that deals with games set in the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan. I might have had more qualms about this if it hadn't been recommended to me by a friend who served in the British Army, who also said that I should write this review. I am also impressed that \$2 from every copy sold is donated to the charity Combat Stress

I am already familiar with the Flying Lead rules, which this expansion is written for, having played several games set in the first half of the twentieth century against our Editor. However, I was pleased to find as I began to read these rules that they begin with a well written one-page introduction to the history of Afghanistan and the West's (especially Britain's) past involvement in the region, leading up to the elections held in Afghanistan in 2005, although the rest of the rules make no kind of distinction as to when a skirmish battle may take place, from Operation Enduring Freedom, starting in October 2001 to the present day.

The rules set out in the book blend easily and naturally into the parts of the text that give a flavour to

the conflict, with many terms and acronyms that I didn't know being explained. The rules cover a wide range of different features of the Afghanistan conflict, from military dog teams, talking to the locals through interpreters and ISAF Rules of Engagement, through improvised explosive devices, dickers (unarmed Taliban observers) and the differences in the levels of technology between ISAF and Taliban forces. Detailed rules for the different types of weapons in use in the conflict are also provided as well as rules for more accurately using vehicles in this particular theatre.

Also introduced is the slightly ironically named "Joys of War" game mechanic, not previously used in other Ganesha Games systems, which are all based around the same core success activation mechanic. I rather like the way this works, providing an extra level of tactical uncertainty into skirmishes without making games suddenly unbalanced and impossible to win.

Fifteen different scenarios are detailed, which provides a nice variety of different engagements, as well as guidance on turning a series of linked scenarios into a campaign. This is more than I was expecting in just a 50 page supplement such as this one, and this is in addition to the breakdown of troop types from which to select your forces and the usual excellent 'cheat sheets' that I've come to expect from a Ganesha Games product.

If you really don't like the idea of playing skirmish games set in a modern, ongoing conflict, then this supplement really isn't for you. However, if the idea of playing this type of game is something that appeals, whether you're gaming with the excellent Flying Lead rules or a different set of rules, then I would recommend this title for the background information and getting a flavour for the conflict, as well as the excellent scenario ideas that it includes.

'Hearts and Minds' ISAF In Afghanistan, Flying Lead Theatre of War Book, Rich Jones, 'Surf Shack Productions' and Ganesha Games.

Britanan Grenadiers & Troopers Tor Gaming

Word & Images : Peter Scholey

These are nice figures and very enjoyable to paint. However they are a pain in the backside to put together! I tried first of all to straight super glue the arms and heads onto the models, however there isn't very much for the glue to bind to, and so then I tried to build up a neck on the models with Green stuff, and that didn't seem to work very well either. In the end I had to pin the heads and arms on, and this has left the models remarkably strong. However, there does appear to be no necks on the models, and some large gaps on the arms where they join. Also, the slots don't go together very well, being either too narrow or too wide, and so some creative gluing had to be done.

This really is the end of all the gripes, as the models themselves paint up dead easily, I started with a



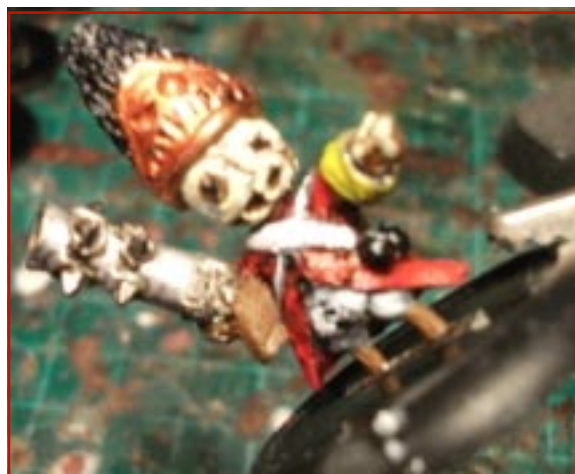
Tamiya black ink coating to bring about the detail for the photos and then painted the jackets purple as well as the cross-belts and trousers grey. I then put a red highlight on the jackets, with a semi dry brushing technique to allow them to look slightly faded. A similar approach with white onto the trousers and cross-belts finished them off too. The Grenadier caps I painted black and dry brushed with a light grey, and used a metallic brassy paint by Daler Rowney for the front and back plate. Their weapons seem to be largely metallic, so I left those with just the Tamiya black ink on, and it looks quite effective I think. I painted the cuffs yellow, the grenades black with a light grey highlight and the backpack brown, all in a two tone approach. Finally I painted the "flesh" parts a light brown to start with and then did a 3 stage highlight with an off white yellowy-cream colour, to try and get a good straw approach, which I am not entirely happy with.

There really is good detail on these figures, with stitches and patches on the clothes and "flesh" areas. The very difficult assembly, coupled with an extremely niche range, makes me wonder how much of a

market there is for these figures though. On the whole, though, they are very nice models.

These figures suffer from the same problems as the Grenadiers, however, in my opinion the extra little bits of detail make them a little nicer to paint. The slots aren't right as with the grenadiers, and they are just as awkward to put together, again requiring pinning.

I painted them in the same style as the grenadiers, except as these have Bicorns, I didn't do a grey dry brush highlight. Instead, I just picked out certain parts of the

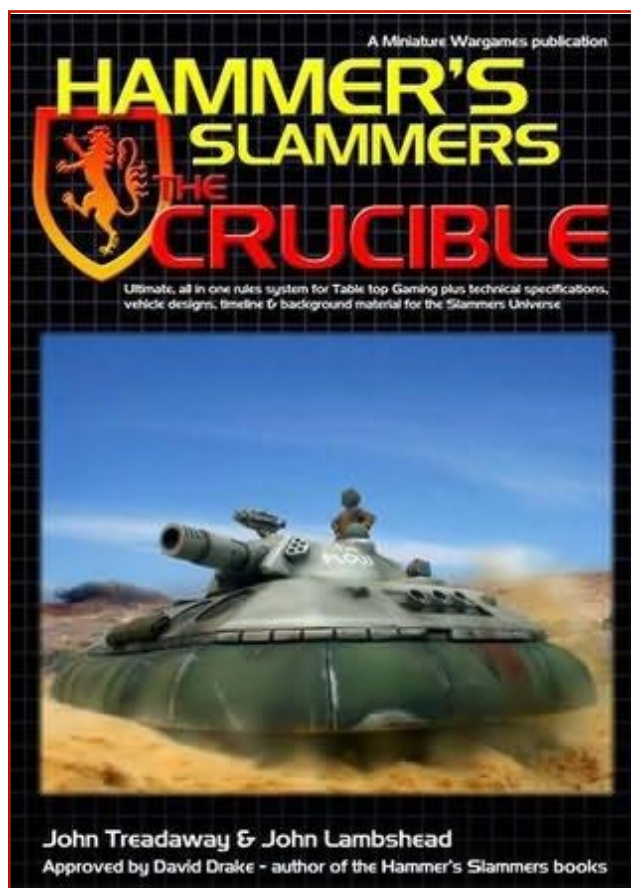


cap, and put a white edging round the top of them. The muskets are worthy of mention, as they have lovely detail, with what appears to be tape binding round them, which makes them very fun and engaging to paint, trying to pick out the little bits. Similarly they have picked out the grain on the wood as well.

Suffers from the same problems as the Grenadiers, but I think the extra little bit of detail, makes these nicer to paint.

Hammer's Slammers : The Crucible

Words; Dave Barker



I first became aware that this new Hammer's Slammers title was being published when I was at the UK Games Expo 2010 in Birmingham with my gaming mate, Rob, and our two five-year-olds. The Hammer's Slammers layout and demo game associated with this book launch were the only thing there - apart from the face painting - that really fascinated the kids. Rob and I were really quite impressed too.

So after I was back home and telling Jason, one of our editors, about the great looking game I was immediately asked to review it and I've got to say up front that I was as impressed with the book as I was with the demo game at the UK Games Expo.

It is a lovely full page, full-colour, glossy hardback packed from front to back with pictures, miniatures and diagrams of various pieces of military hardware or symbols of the military units in the Slammers' universe. Just about every page also has a quote from one of the stories and this is all before the actual content.

The book is primarily divided into two main sections: the first which gives details of the backgrounds and equipment in use by military forces across the inhabited worlds; and the second part details rules that can be used to re-create some of the battles from the Hammer's Slammers stories with suitable miniatures in any scale from 6mm to 25mm.

Recommendations are also given about where such miniatures can be bought.

As a bit of a fan of the Hammer's Slammers stories before coming to this rule book, I found the information in the background section an interesting and enjoyable addition to what I already knew, presented in a different and more factual manner.

I've not been able to find time to playtest the rules properly, but they read well with a multi-phase turn sequence handling everything from off-table artillery to infantry assaults in a unified manner - although, as one would hope from such rules, the main focus is of course around combat between armoured vehicles. A nice touch is an alternate turn sequence which allows you to incorporate Molts - a particular type of alien from David Drake's stories - and their unique ability to be able to teleport in and out of battle.

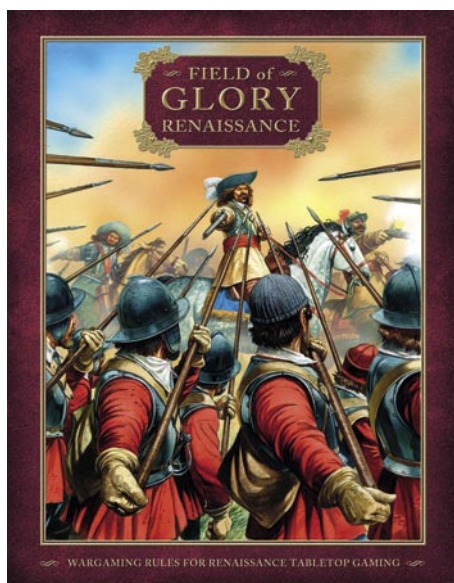
If I was to try and find fault with this book then I'd have to point out that in places the layout does appear slightly cluttered in trying to cram so many nice features onto each page of the book and that some of the terminology from the rules section has crept into the background section, meaning that some terms appear before they're really defined.

However, these small issues do not detract from what really is a superb book and a worthy addition to the Hammer's Slammers material that is currently available. I can offer no higher praise than to say that the Editors will have a fight on their hands if they want the review copy back! And I'll be bringing powerguns to the fight!

Hammer's Slammers : The Crucible, John Treadaway and John Lambshead, Pireme Publishing, ISBN 978-0-9547276-3-5

Field of Glory – Renaissance

Words: Nick Slonskyj
Photography: Osprey Books



I was recently handed a copy of the new Field of Glory – Renaissance wargames rules and asked to write a review, a task which I was happy to undertake given my liking for the Field of Glory – Ancient and Medieval rules and my desire to find a set of Renaissance rules which I would actually enjoy playing. Together with a copy of the rules, I was also given a copy of the first army list book; Wars of Religion, covering Western Europe 1610 – 1660, i.e. encompassing both the English Civil War and the Thirty Years War.

The rules are, as the name suggests, aimed at recreating Renaissance warfare on the table top. They cover a period which starts with the Great Italian Wars at the close of the 15th Century and runs through to the wars of the League of Augsburg, ending just before the start of the War of the Spanish Succession in 1701. In Western Europe this period saw the rise of large pike formations followed closely by a growing importance in firearms which initially complemented and then supplanted the pikes so that by the close of the period the number of pikes had been reduced to a minimum and the majority of infantry were equipped with muskets and plug bayonets.

The books are physically very similar to the current Ancient and Medieval rules and army lists, the same size, shape, binding, general layout and colour providing a very strong family resemblance, as well as a consistent product image. As is the case with the earlier books, both the rules and the army lists are liberally scattered with illustrations taken from various other Osprey publications, combined with photographs of relevant period wargames figures. Again, as with the earlier book, the rules also include a large number of diagrams to help understand some of the complexities described in the text. The diagrams are an excel-

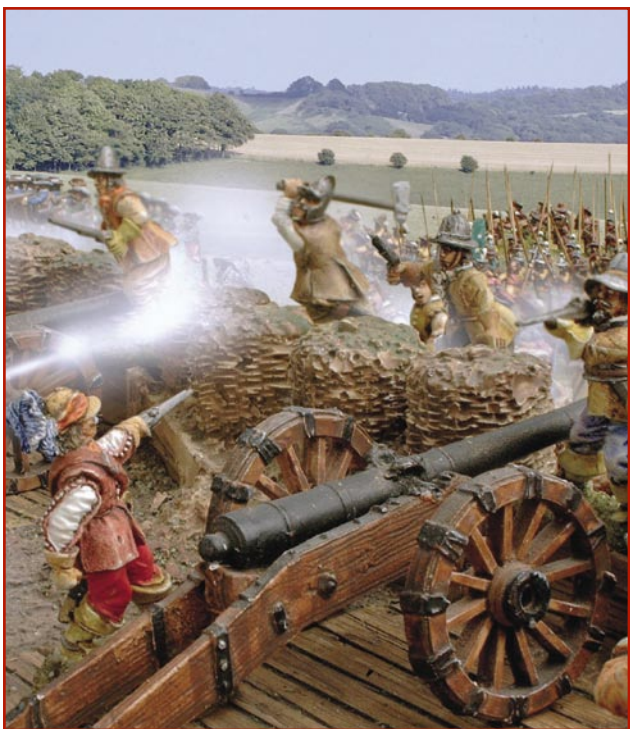
lent feature of the Ancient and Medieval rule set and are just as good in the Renaissance set. The overall production quality is well up to the high standard set by the previous publications.

The rules themselves are obviously built on the same framework as the Ancient and Medieval rules, which greatly aids in their assimilation by anyone who is already familiar with these. The same turn structure is employed with Impact, Manoeuvre, Shooting, Melee and Joint Action phases and the same Points of Advantage combat mechanism, with criteria more appropriate to Renaissance instead of Ancient warfare. As with the earlier rule set, troops are classified by Type, Armour, Quality and Combat Capabilities but all of these differ from the classifications used by the earlier rules except, understandably, for quality which remains as Poor, Average, Superior and Elite.

The Type, Armour and Capability classifications differ from the Ancient rules and are more appropriate to the later era, so Type includes troops such as Gendarmes and Cavaliers, while Capabilities include Arquebus, Musket and Pistol, the latter being potentially available for Impact, Melee and/or Shooting depending upon army list and points paid. Protected is no longer an Armour class but is the term used to describe mutually supporting stands of pike and shot or mutually supporting stands of mounted troops and commanded shot and confers defensive Points of Advantage in certain circumstances.

It is a pleasure to report that the rules do cater for specific Renaissance formations so that there is a significant amount of text devoted to describing Tercios, pike Keils, Swedish Brigades and other Pike and Shot formations. These formation rules appear to have been well thought out and should satisfactorily model the behaviour of the real thing on the table top. I particularly like the mechanisms for modelling the huge early Tercio formations (up to 18 stands under Field of Glory) and believe that they are the best attempt at it that I have ever seen in a set of wargames rules.

The special formation rules go a long way to reinforcing the illusion that an actual Renaissance battle is being modelled on the table top and this is further aided by the rules for Divisions. Divisions are the Renaissance equivalent of the Ancients Battle Lines, i.e. a feature which allows multiple battle groups (the Field of Glory term for a basic manoeuvre unit) to be moved simultaneously and potentially multiple times in a single turn. Unlike Battle Lines, the component battle groups making up a Division must be arranged



with some spacing between them which provides the typical chequer board type army layout seen in contemporary wood cuts and other illustrations from the period.

One significant difference between the Ancient and Renaissance rules is in evaluating the effects of shooting. Both sets of Field of Glory rules use a Death Roll to decide if a base should be removed after a battle group has received hits from shooting or close combat, basically the target unit must roll greater than the number of casualties to avoid losing a base. This die roll is subject to modifiers and where the casualties are due to shooting the modifier is plus two in the Ancient rules, greatly reducing the number of bases removed. In the Renaissance rules if the shooting is mainly from firearms then the plus two is ignored, so shooting attacks in general become far more lethal where substantial number of firearms are present as is the case with many armies in the period, particularly later in the period.

The increased lethality of firepower may result in us seeing more battle groups being destroyed through excess casualties than is the case with the Ancient rules, although this remains to be seen and has not been the case in the two test games (both ECW encounters) which I have played to date. In any case the additional respect which must be given to firearms is in accord with my understanding of how a Renaissance battle should unfold.

The supporting army list book follows similar lines to those already seen for the Ancient and Medieval army lists; the book includes over 20 armies and for each one has some supporting text, an army list

and a starter army of about 600 points value drawn from the list. The lists appear to be reasonable and consistent with what I know of the armies involved. The supporting text, as with the Ancient lists, is fairly lightweight and will not add anything to the understanding of anyone who has done any independent reading but is useful enough as an outline for the more general reader.

As mentioned earlier, I have with the help of some friends from the Sheffield Wargames Club, played a couple of ECW games using armies drawn from the army list book and largely based on the starter armies listed. Both of these games went very well with, as stated previously, some familiarity with the Ancient rules proving to be very helpful in actually playing these rules. Both games had the unquantifiable feel of how I would expect an actual ECW battle to resolve and both games drew out the differences between the two armies, the superior dash of the Royalist Cavaliers opposed to the steady discipline of the Round-head Horse.

For myself I think that this rule set and its supporting army lists will finally provide me with an enjoyable game which has the proper feel for the period. At the very least I have been inspired to dig out my old Great Italian Wars armies for the first time in many years and even start painting one or two additions. I have no hesitation in recommending the books to anybody with an interest in Renaissance wargaming.



28mm Sandbag Emplacement/ Machine Gun Nest Urban Construct

Words & Images: Peter Scholey

I was volunteered to do an article for my friend Dave Maguire who owns Urban Construct, and he sent me this terrain piece.

My first impression of the piece was that it was solid and chunky, so it's practical and unlikely to break. The sandbags themselves had nice detailing and pattern, so the piece would dry brush nicely and I thought that the footprints in the mud behind were a nice little touch. I wasn't personally bothered by the fact that there were 3 German hand grenades on the piece, but I thought that it might put others off because it reduces how generic the terrain is.

I started off with a simple dark brown base coat over most of the bunker, leaving the edges so I could easily



hold it. This was followed by a light brown covering, like a heavy dry brush, to try and bulk up the layers of colouring on it. I wanted to try and achieve a more yellow appearance one the whole, as I felt the one on the Urban Construct website was a bit white and bland. Just personal opinion, but I wanted a bit more colour and brightness to the piece.

The light brown was then followed by a heavy dry-brushing of yellow ochre over the sandbags, leaving only the recesses untouched with the brown in. this was to try and achieve a look of there being mud and



soil inside the bags, and spilling out. The tops of the sandbags were then also slightly highlighted with a yellow ochre-off white mix, to try and make it look a bit sun-bleached and worn.

Finally I painted round the base, and highlighted with a light brown, and then painted the stick grenades and all was done.

On the whole I thought that the piece was very nice indeed. It is very cheap at only £4.35, and I certainly intend to get a couple more for my WW2 skirmish games. The detailing on the sandbags is fantastic, allowing for very easy dry brushing. There is scope for a bit of home-adjustment as well, if you wanted to glue wooden poles in and stick a camouflage net over the top this would be relatively easy, and the piece is large enough to comfortably accommodate a AT gun or at least 5-6 figures.



Cornelius the Wizard

Micro Arts Studio

Words: Rebecca Hubbard
Photography: Anthony Barnes

Cornelius is a generic fantasy wizard carrying a large book, numerous bags and scrolls, plus a cat, some bottles and he even has a small gnome by his feet. This is a one piece miniature from Micro Art Studio and, unlike their Discworld range, he comes in resin. At 5.40 plus pp, which in GBP is less than £5, it's a good price for a resin figure.

There is a lot going on with this model and I found it difficult to tell what parts were until I looked at the painted version on the Micro Arts web store. It's worth noting that the store version has a completely different base. Mine arrived with his feet (plus gnome) flat on an integral standard square 25mm gaming base. In the picture his feet are on top of a stone. I think this is a bit misleading, as this is the only picture of the miniature I could find on the website.

Preparation

I was very happy that it was a one piece miniature, as I like to get my gaming pieces done fairly quickly, and less time on preparation is always good. However, I was very disappointed as it was not the same quality as previous resin items I have bought from Micro Arts Studio in the past.

There was a lot of flash, and with this being a very detailed piece, it's not always easy to tell where you're supposed to stop cleaning sometimes! There were a few small mould lines that cleaned up easily enough, but there was a lot of pitting and roughness in some areas that really needed some putty attention, and if I'd had more spare time I would have spent a lot longer on preparation.



Painting

I usually complete a gaming mini in about 2 painting sessions (I'm not the fastest painter in the world), so I was surprised that it took me 3 sessions to complete the wizard - and that did not include basing. The reason for this was the detail - there's so much of it. There are straps with buckles on his robes, a scroll and a feather on his hat, and the swirls on the book and cloak are sculpted in place. I actually found these swirls a bit awkward. They saved having to add freehand to the cloak - which is a great idea - but it actually made painting the cloak more difficult as I was constantly working around them.



Overall, I did not enjoy working on this model, but now the paint is on it I'm liking it more. I'm not quite sure who it's aimed at though. I think it would be great as an RPG character, but the amount of work required on this mini seems a bit excessive for a NPC. The finish is just not up to the standard for a display piece, but he might work well in a complex diorama. It's a good price, but if you're thinking of giving resin a go for the first time I think you would better get one of Micro Arts scenic bases instead.

WWII German Infantry

Warlord Games

Words & Photography: Jason Hubbard



Another set of plastic sprues landed on my desk again this month, though this time they were from Warlord, and fairly modern, being WWII Late German Infantry. These are the first plastic World War Two miniatures available to my knowledge, not only from Warlord but in general.

I like plastic models, due to the amount of customisation you can do, and the flexibility it allows you in constructing a unit. The sprues have enough heads and equipment to allow you to build an uniquely different miniature each time. The choice of weapons is really good, everything from a pistol, through to MP40 SMGs and a MG42.



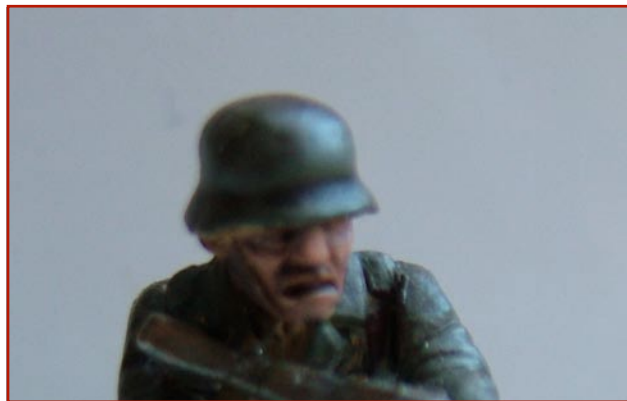
The models are well sculpted, and the cast is exceptional as I would expect from Warlord - these guys excel at producing high quality, cheap plastic miniatures. There was very little in the way of mold lines, and the one I did find were very easy to remove.



I also realised that these guys could be easily customised into modern/sci-fi miniatures if you used parts from other manufacturers.

Each box contains enough parts to make 25 multi part plastic miniatures, and I found them very easy and quick to build, which is great. The detail on these guys is really high, which will make painting them very painless.

For anyone who games in the period of World War Two I would definitely recommend picking a box or two up and adding to your army. If you're thinking of starting a WWII army then these are the perfect choice.



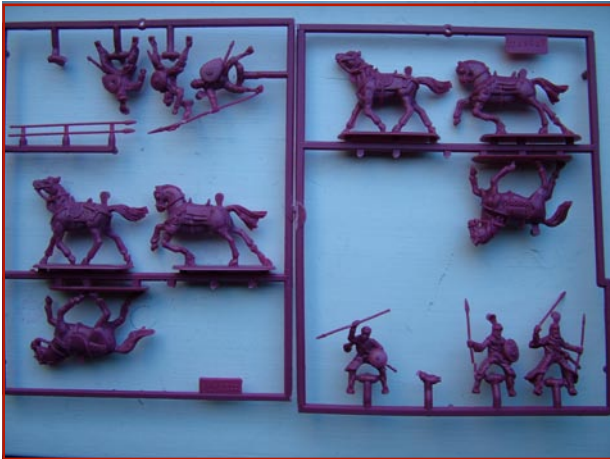
28mm El Cid Range

HaT Miniatures

Words & Photography: Jason Hubbard

This Month a few test sprues landed on my desk from HaT Productions from their 28mm range. These were forthcoming releases from the El Cid range of miniatures which included the following;

28018	28mm Andalusian Light Cavalry
28019	28mm Andalusian Heavy Cavalry
28020	28mm Almoravid Light Cavalry
28021	28mm Almoravid Heavy Cavalry



This isn't normally a period I play or research or know much about beyond the Charlton Heston movie El Cid, so when I picked these up I was slightly intrigued.

As these are test shots I suspect that there will be changes made before the final run. HaT have already informed me that some will need more detailing before the final run.

The first thing that jumped out at me from the sprues initially was the horses. These are really nice, with excellent detailing and are well proportioned. I also liked the poses the horses are sculpted into as well.

The riders have a good combination of differing types, which will give any unit a more individual look and feel. This is something I prefer, rather than a unit of troops who all look exactly the same. This is one of the reasons that these appeal to me - I rather like them, and though I don't game in the El Cid campaign, I could use them as Arabic warriors for early crusade gaming.



An aspect I did notice with these miniatures is the minimal amount of mold lines, and those that do exist are easily removed. The one thing I didn't like were the spears that are connected to the rider, mainly because the spears are quite fragile. I prefer to use metal spears with my cavalry. This isn't a major issue as it would be quite easy to remove the spears, drill out the hands and replace them with metal counterparts.



In regards to their scale, which is said to be 28mm, these are smaller in comparison to other manufacturers, which in itself isn't an issue, but it is something to consider if you're going to purchase other manufacturers ranges to go alongside these.

Overall I really liked these miniatures and look forward to painting some of them.

Warhammer 8th Edition Games Workshop

Words : Dan Lee

First let me begin by making it clear that this isn't a review of the Warhammer 8th Edition rules; I feel that it will take several months of gaming before a proper review could be written - so maybe in the next issue. It took me just over a week to read the new rulebook and there are several qualities to the book that I feel make it stand out.

The book itself is huge at just over 500 pages long, but it seems to be fairly sturdy. Every page is in full colour and it comes with a built in book mark (very handy in a book this big). I also only counted around three typos in the whole book, which isn't bad for something with so much text. These certainly help to justify its price of £45. Of course it is the contents of the book that we really care about. As usual for a Games Workshop (GW) product, the book is filled with stunning artwork. Many pictures are full of small interesting details that you can spend ages looking for.

The book begins, as you would expect, with the new rules for Warhammer. Without commenting on the rules themselves, this section of the book is well written. Each rule begins with a summary in bold and is then followed by more detailed text. By just reading the bold text you can learn most of the new rules in an hour of reading or so. The rules are presented in a sensible order and the special rules have all been consolidated into one section. Notes in the margin help cover things that don't quite warrant a rule, but are worth mentioning anyway, such as resolving disputes and cocked dice.

The next section of the book covers the history of the Warhammer world and this is where I was first surprised. Rather than the usual GW copy and paste job, I found that most of the text had actually been rewritten, with each race and period of history having a little bit of new material. The extra effort made the whole fluff section an interesting read, rather than a chore.

Next came around 100 pages of miniature showcases and this section holds yet another surprise: the chapter actually begins with a brief introduction to the history of wargames and shows evidence of some pretty good research. I had no idea that the earliest model soldiers were found in Egyptian tombs, or that the Prussian army used to supplement officer training with miniature wargames. As for the showcase, many of the models I had seen before, but some pages were dedicated to Golden Demon winners and they were a particularly welcome addition.

The quality was, of course, superb, but the models were also much more interesting to look at than standard 'Eavy Metal models.

The rest of the book seemed to be aimed at getting players to experiment with the rules. Several scenarios are included that aren't necessarily balanced, but look very fun. Advice is also given on designing your own scenarios and running various types of campaign. A battle report is included which is a good example of a scenario run by a games master, though the cynic in me thinks the outcome of a minor win may have been staged. The end of this section of the book details a massive battle, with background for the key units and characters. I found it to be very interesting as I've never seen a battle described in that much detail before (I stopped reading White Dwarf years ago so maybe it's a more common format now).

The book ends with a reference section which includes rules for the laws of magic and common magic items. I heard rumours that the rules summary contains lots of contradictions with the main text, but to be honest I haven't checked - if you have the book with you just look up the rule in the start of the book. The first few pages of the reference section did make me giggle. After introducing the section as containing all the essential information you will need, the first two pages describe how to buy more GW stuff. In a book this big I guess I can let them off with a few pages of advertisement though.

As for the book's downsides: if you try to carry this to each of your games you're going to give yourself a back injury - it is impractically big and heavy. The rules for selecting spells and for magic items are in the reference section rather than with the main rules, which I found to be a bit odd. GW also made a major omission from the first printing: they forgot to explain how to decide who won properly! The positive side of this is that the errata sheet they put in the rulebook provides a convenient second book mark.

Overall I'm happy with my purchase. I enjoyed reading it and I got the impression the GW really tried to produce something new.

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Issue 7 / Winter' 11 out January 8th