

Warp Rift

The Battlefleet Gothic Netzine

March/April 2004 Issue 01

This Issue:

Pinning Your Bases

Tyrannid Evolution

New Fiction

Mars V Overlord

Alternative Critical Hits



From the Nexus Publishing House

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01

W A R P
R I F T

Hi, and welcome to the very first issue of Warp Rift. This publication is the first of many, dedicated to the game of Battlefleet Gothic. You hold in your hands (or in your computer screen) a publication put together by dedicated fans of the game, for fans of the game, and printed on high quality paper (you did print this on quality paper, right?).

I won't go on too much about this publication, as I have already done that on the next page. Instead, I will say a few words about the cover picture for this issue. This vessel is from the collection of kr00za, and I have been asked to mention that this, and others like it, are available for sale. For more of his work, check out pictures at <http://briefcase.yahoo.com/bc/kr00zza>, email him at kr00za@blueyonder.co.uk, or simply head over to the EpiComms Forum at the site hosting this publication where he is often found.

I also want to use this space to personally thank the fine team here at Warp Rift, who have worked very hard to bring this together, and done a fantastic job, and to apologise for the lack of a Battle Report this time around. It will be here next issue. Well, I am already running out of space, with no room to talk about the Rogue Trader fleet on the way from Fanatic. There is just enough to ask for any kind of feedback or comments on this issue and to request submissions. This publication needs them to keep going, so please send your articles in as soon as you can. Good Hunting,

CyberShadow

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Incoming Publication!

CyberShadow

Hi. And welcome to the first issue of Warp Rift. I don't get many opportunities to write an editorial of any kind, so now I have the chance to tap out an extended piece here, I am not going to turn it down. I thought that I would take this opportunity to explain how this publication came into being, and what I see as its purpose and direction.

The whole thing has been going on in my mind for a while, about six months now. There is a web-based publication for the Epic community, called Incoming, and run and hosted by the NetEpic group. This bi-monthly publication contains articles, fiction and other bits and pieces and is well-received by the community in certain circles. Now, I always swore that I would not get involved in something like this, as it takes a lot of time and effort to put together. Nonetheless, I always thought that a similar publication would be a benefit to the Gothic community.

Fast forward to the end of 2003 and Fanatic announces that the official Battlefleet Gothic magazine, along with all of the Fanatic publications, would cease to exist as separate

publications and instead be combined into a single publication. This is all well and good, and I can appreciate the reasoning behind this, but I can't help feeling that the Gothic community, more than most of the Fanatic games, would suffer. Some players would not want to buy the Fanatic magazine, and instead download the rules from the web site. This is fine, but I can't help feeling that we are losing something.

Fast forward some more, and Incoming runs a poll to see if its readers want to see other games aside from Epic in its pages. The resounding vote is no, but there does seem to be interest in the idea.

So, I start to put out the idea that a dedicated internet publication for Battlefleet Gothic might be a good thing. Then it gets a bit hazy and the next thing I know, I am organising it. And here we are.



So, enough random waffling about the past, what is the publication about? Firstly, it is launched to coincide with the end of Battlefleet Gothic magazine. This is not done to set up any kind of comparrison, but instead happens to take advantage of the gap in the market. The new Fanatic magazine is the only place that you will see any official rules and additions to the game that can be used at tournaments or in your games without asking permission, but this magazine will contain informal rules and ideas which are designed to get you thinking and to suggest things for your own games. This gives us a certain amount of freedom that official publications cant have. We try to make everything balanced, but we cant guarantee it, and we will try to make the background fit with the established cannon. The aim is to continue the tradition of Battlefleet Gothic magazine, but be thoroughly a magazine by the platers, and for the players.

One question that I am sure will come up is 'why are you using this format, PDF, instead of HTML/Word/insert your preferred format'. Yes, PDF can result in large files, and for those of you using modems I will attempt to keep an eye on

this to make sure that it does not get out of hand. PDF has the advantage that the files are fixed and cannot be altered. This means that we can be sure that we are not being mis-quoted. The format of the magazine is focussed on the proposed use. I imagine Warp Rift as being a publication that is downloaded onto your computers, and then either read in your own time, or printed out and taken for long journeys or sitting in waiting rooms.

When this all came together, I was sure about one thing. I did not want to get into this unsupported. I got lucky. When this was starting out, I put out a call for a few people to help me out. I knew from the start that this publication would stand or fall on the quality of the editorial team. In the end, I got more responses than I thought I would, and of these four people volunteered to help edit the publication each issue. The five of us are real players, and very dedicated to the game. We will need to be.

Once this was organised, we just needed to define what the publication would include. For my part, I wanted it to be able to accept pretty much anything.

In the end, we narrowed it down to a number of sections and gave each editor a section to watch over and pretty much run how they wanted.

So, that is Warp Rift. I hope that it is well received, and that people support it in two ways, by downloading a copy of their own from the official web site (www.epic40k.co.uk/bfgmag/) so that we can see how many people download a copy each time and work out which issues are most popular and why, and by sending in articles and comments to be included in the

publication, as this type of thing can only survive with input from the community. You can find details of how to submit at the very beginning of this, and every issue.

That's it for this article. Next issue, I hope to use the space for the second of these special opening articles to introduce the editorial team here at Warp Rift, and explain a bit about the various sections and domains of the different parts of the publication. Until next time, all the best, and safe passage through the void.



Is Mars the God of War, or is Overlord Underloved?

Chris French

Recently, this writer has noticed a disturbing trend in Imperial battlecruiser (hereafter "BC") selection, amongst those players who decide to follow the banner of the Lord-Emperor. What's happening? Very simply, in all the Imperial force package selections I've seen posted to the BFG mailing list, no one - not one Imperial player anywhere - has selected the Overlord-class BC. Instead, Imperials inevitably select a Mars-class battlecruiser-carrier (BCV). This struck me as odd - rarely if ever in my long years of gaming have I seen such unanimity of opinion amongst players (typically, getting gamers to all head in one direction is like herding cats).

So I asked myself, "Self, why is it no one seems to want Overlords?". It seemed to warrant sitting down with the Basic Rules, and doing some serious number-crunching. (And occasionally shifting a kitten, who wondered what all the fuss was about.)

Here's what I found out concerning the two Imperial BCs (yes, I know there's a third one out there, but until the new Annual comes out, I'm not going to consider it an "official" unit):

UNIT TYPE: Both are classed Cruisers, so that's a non-issue.

HITS: Both have 8 HP, so that's a wash, too.

SPEED: Both have 20cm speed. Another no-score draw.

SHIELDS: Both have 2 shields, the standard number for cruisers.

ARMOR: Same on both units - 6 front, 5 elsewhere (Imperial standard).

TURRETS: Both types get 2 turrets (but see later remarks on unit upgrades).

WEAPON BATTERIES: Ah, finally some variance! Mars has FP 6 / 45cm WBs on each flank; Overlord has FP 8 / 60cm on each flank. Slight advantage to the gunship here.

LANCES: Both units have ST 2 / 60cm lance batteries with L/F/R arcs. No advantage either way here.

NOVA CANNON: Mars does; Overlord doesn't (it uses torpedoes; so far as has been established, NC and torps may not be mounted on the same unit).

TORPEDOES: Mars has no torps at all (see previous remark); Overlord has ST 6 torpedoes (F arc).

LAUNCH BAYS: Mars has launch bays on each flank, each of which can launch 2 squadrons (total: 4); Overlord has none.

UPGRADES: Mars can have a leftward column shift for its WBs for 15 points; Overlord gets an extra turret for 10 points.

POINT COST: Mars is worth 270; Overlord is 235.

So, the question is, what is it about the BCV that has Imperial players swooning about it? It could be the launch bays, since bombers can maneuver and chase down opponents, while torps just plow straight ahead. But the Nova Cannon presents as much of a hazard to Mars's aircraft as it does to the enemy; NCs are notoriously indiscriminate about their targets. (Also, in a hypothetical fight between these two, the gun BC could have more than enough turrets to neutralize the BCV's aircraft, while still costing less.)

Perhaps that Nova Cannon is what attracts folks. I can't say I'm overly impressed by NCs; it seems that, NCs are like any other artillery - mainly useful for convincing the enemy to spread out and huddle up. (This from the guy who has seen a BFied cruiser walk off two

direct hits from NC.) And, as mentioned, the NC is going to swat one's own ordnance as easily as it will the enemy.

I know it isn't the WB - Overlord wins this one by (if you'll excuse the pun) a long shot. Two extra FP and a 33% range increase puts the Mars to shame. Yes, the BCV could have that upgrade to its targeting systems, but it only manages to equal Overlord's WB FP, and it still doesn't affect the range deficit (and, of course, the lances are wholly unaffected by the upgrade).

Tactically, I don't see a difference - both units require a Reload Ordnance roll, and both perform the same in speed and handling. More, Mars cannot handle assault boats - one needs a battleship-sized unit in order to keep the local Space Marine chapter from tearing out bulkheads while trapped in some Imperial Navy tin-can (at least Overlord can use Boarding Torpedoes...).

How these units stack up against foes is a relevant concern. Both units have WBs for dealing with Eldar, lances for whomping anyone else, and a special weapon for causing havoc amongst the Emperor's foes. Overlord's upgrade, though, could be quite handy for dealing with Chaos and its embarrassment of riches in the ordnance department, while Mars might have a minor advantage in

performing Eldar-ectomies on Imperial space.

So, very frankly, I don't see why Imperial players invariably select Mares over Overlords. Mars does have aircraft and a Nova Cannon; but Overlord has a larger hitting range, and is cheaper by at least one escort to boot. It would

seem to me that Overlord is a much better choice, and that CV work is best left to Dictators. So, Imperials, feel free to write in and explain to Your Humble Narrator just what it is about Mars that makes you-all so dead-set against Overlords. If you'll forgive the pun, I'm game to listen.

The Emperors Light sat in the dock, warning lights blinking the length of her flanks. All seemed still, but there was an air of controlled power. On the bridge, Admiral Pontius glanced around, making sure that his bridge crew were prepared and ready for the departure.

Silently, he nodded at the Master of the Helm, who barely acknowledged the command and stared at his console, his fingers flickering over the runic keys.

From the dock, a crowd watched at the viewing ports, as tethers were cut, boarding ramps recalled and klaxons sounded harshly. Then, with a smooth grace, the Emperors Lights slipped into the void like a wraith in the night.

Nathan Montes (Revised by Ray Bell)

There is nothing inherently wrong with the current critical hit table but there is no harm in trying to improve on a functional design. The only problem with the critical hit table is that it doesn't take direction into account. I've always found it strange when my starboard broadside is taken out of action when I was being shot at from the port (I can imagine this being possible but extremely unlikely). As such Nate Montes created these great little arc specific critical charts (with help from a couple of his friends). Please try them out in your next game but remember they are designed for all the races that currently use the 'normal' critical hits table.

Shooting from different angles would be able to cause only certain critical hits to a ship therefore there are three arc related critical hit tables. For bombers you may choose which arc to bomb (this will generally be the rear arc). Hit and runs have their own table. Boarding and for types of damage that can cause damage with out weapons i.e. asteroids should use the original table.

When firing at a closing ship use the closing table when firing at a ship when its abeam use the abeam table and finally when firing at a ship that is moving away use the, you guessed it, the moving away table. When using these tables roll 2D6 and take the lowest value. (Apart from Hit and Run table).

Closing Table	Critical Caused
1	Dorsal Armament Damaged
2	Prow Armament Damaged
3	Fire! (+1 Hp in every end phase if not repaired)
4	Thrusters Damaged (+1 Hp)
5	Hull Breach (+D3 Hp)
6	Bridge Smashed (-3 Ld, cannot be repaired)

Abeam Table	Critical Caused
1	Dorsal Armament Damaged
2	Port or Stbd Armament Damaged (depending on targeted side)
3	Fire! (+1 Hp in every end phase if not repaired)
4	Thrusters Damaged (+1 Hp)
5	Hull Breach (+D3 Hp)
6	Bridge Smashed (-3 Ld, cannot be repaired)

Moving Away Table	Critical Caused
1	Engine Room Damaged (+1 Hp)
2	Shields Collapse (cannot be repaired)
3	Fire! (+1 Hp in every end phase if not repaired)
4	Thrusters Damaged (+1 Hp)
5	Hull Breach (+D3 Hp)
6	Bulkhead Collapse (+D6 Hp)

Hit and Run Table (D6)	Critical Caused
1	Fail
2	Prow Armament Damaged
3	Starboard Armament Damaged
4	Port Armament Damaged
5	Dorsal Armament Damaged
6	Thrusters Damaged (+1 Hp)
7	Fire! (+1 Hp in every end phase if not repaired)

Tyranid Evolution, Mutation

By Raymond Bell (inspired by John Kemp)

It's fair to say that Tyranids are a very awkward fleet to fit into a campaign. This is because they shouldn't use the sub-sector map in the same way as everyone else, not to mention hindering everyone else's use of warp space thanks to the 'Warp Shadow'. Putting this all to one side you can fit them in if you say the campaign is set over a very short time and when ever a world is taken by a Tyranid player it only attracts the Hivemind (Reinforcements) it isn't consumed (allowing a normal campaign to be played). To this end the Tyranid player replaces the effect of ships experience (and Refits) with the Tyranid Evolution table.

I would suggest that if the Tyranid player wants a Refit in the conventional way (4+) he should roll twice on the table and pick the desired result. Also if a Tyranid victory results in capture of a world the Tyranid fleet should receive reinforcements of equal hits (or less) corresponding to the repair points of that planet (depending on renown). Note: it's hard to gain a Hiveship due to not having 6 escorts to accompany it, make sure you have enough escorts to field it and make sure you have enough Hiveships to field everything else. You would be able to do it if you used up 2 reinforcement rolls in one campaign turn. In any case the current rule set for the Tyranids is on hell of a bastard mutation, look forward to seeing revised rules for them in a future issue of Warp Rift, in the mean time don't evolve too fast!

The Tyranid fleets are evolving to counter new threats and adapt and absorb the genes of target species to further the tendrils of the Great Devourer. Hiveships and smaller vessels of the Hivemind may display numerous mutations breaking from the general trend of its species: Hiveships may have up to all types of mutation (but may only have one Reactive Evolution), in which case it would cost a staggering amount on your fleet roster! Cruisers may only have up to 3 mutations so make sure you really want the mutation before you change your fleet roster, as the mutations won't just fall off (at least not yet)! Escorts may only have one mutation that must be applied to all other escorts in the squadron. (Reactive Evolution may only affect certain escorts due to not possessing certain weapons, and so the others will count as not having a refit on your fleet roster (these escorts may not gain a different refit).

After each battle roll on this table for each ship or squadron of escorts used. Escorts suffer a -5 modifier on this roll and Cruisers suffer a -1 modifier to this roll. Roll 2D6 and apply the result if wished (Note you may decide the mutation is worthless and ignore the roll and wait until next time). If the ship or squadron has already taken the result rolled for or rolls below 2, the result counts as a 'Failed Evolution' (result 7 maybe taken twice and result 9 up to four times):

2: Failed Evolution, No change.

3: Failed Evolution, No change.

4: Solar Vanes; +10%pts, +5cm speed.

The ship has Bio-engineered solar wings that spread to absorb the smallest of ambient solar energy.

5: Celestial fins: +5%, Not slowed by BM's or Gas/Dust clouds.

The ship has developed a streamlined set of fins and constrictor muscles, making it easier to navigate through debris or gaseous terrain.

6: Adrenaline sacs; +5%, +2 D6cm AAF.

The primary valves and constrictor muscles at the rear of the bio-ship have grown in size and strength.

7: Extra spore cysts; +10pts, + 1 Spore cyst (Max of +2).

The ship gains one spore cyst. No more than two spore cysts can be gained in this manner. Escorts may only gain one additional spore cysts and Kraken may never gain spore cysts.

8: Accelerated healing; +10pts, Ignore blast markers when healing.

The bio-ship has enhanced its ability to heal when in a conflict having a honeycomb of secondary carapaces filling with healing enzymes or smaller creatures when critical damage is sustained.

9: Reinforced Carapace; +10pts, +1 hit (max +4). The creature has grown to an inordinate size with correspondingly reinforced endostructures and additional ablative carapace, increasing its total mass and capacity to sustain damage. The ship gains one hit. No more than four hits maybe gained in this manner. If a Cruiser attains 10 hits in this manner you 'may' replace the Cruiser with a Hiveship. The 'new' Hiveship will still have all other Evolutions but will have a totally new set of armaments, which may be picked as if you were designing a new Hiveship (as such the Hive ship will cost a great deal more than the original Cruiser).

10: More Discharge vents; +10%pts, Reduces turning distance by 5cm.

The number of discharge vents along the beast's length has increased dramatically. The creature reduces the distance it needs to move before turning by 5cm.

11: Tenacity; +10%pts, When on AAF, BR, CTNH, weapons strength in unaffected.

The creature has evolved the capability of effectively bringing its weapons to bear on its enemies even when following the prerogative of the Hive Mind. When on All Ahead Full, Burn Retros or Come to New Heading special orders, it's Pyro-acid batteries and Bio-plasma are unaffected.

12: Hive Mind Nexus; +0pts (Free), Range of Hive Mind increased to 60cm (but -1 Ld over 45cm).

The Hive ships connection to the Hive Mind has grown exceptionally strong able to relay thoughts and override instincts at great distances.



Reactive Evolution:

If any doubles were rolled that would result in an Evolution; you may instead choose a specific refit dependant on the enemy of the last battle as shown below. A ship may only ever have one Reactive Evolution.

Imperial, Space Marine, Necrons, Demiurg: Enlarged Bio-Plasma constrictor muscles; The ships Bio-Plasma weapons range is increased by 10cm at a cost of +5pts per point of Bio-plasma strength (All the ships's Bio-Plasma have to be upgraded if this refit is chosen).

Chaos, Tau: Enhanced Pyro-acid conflagration enzymes; The ships Pyro-acid batteries cause fire criticals on a 5+ instead of 6+ (No change against Eldar/Dark Eldar) at a cost of 5pts per 4 points of firepower. (All the ships's Bio-Plasma have to be upgraded if this refit is chosen).

Eldar, Dark Eldar: Solar Vanes; The ship has Bio-engineered solar wings that spread to absorb the smallest of ambient solar energy, the ship gains +5cm speed at a cost of +10%pts (rounding up to the nearest 5).

Orks: More Discharge vents; the number of discharge vents along the beast's length has increased dramatically. The creature reduces the distance it needs to move before turning by 5cm (escorts may Come to New Heading with no penalty to weapons strength) at a cost of +10%pts (rounding up to the nearest 5).

At the Dry Dock

By John Webber

Welcome to the first issue of the Warp Rift Painting and Modeling section we call: At the Dry Dock!

This issue, we'll try to show you one approach at overcoming the minor disaster that results from frequent breakage of the plastic model base stems particularly if they are supporting the heavier metal Battlefleet Gothic (BfG) models.

I recently acquired some very nice Ork and Chaos models in a trade for some of my old Blood Bowl goodies. (Thanks, Jerry!) However when the parcel containing the models arrived and was unwrapped with due excessive diligence (yeehaw! new models!) It was found to contain several nicely finished models with snapped base stems. Any BfG veteran knows that this happens all too frequently, sometimes even while a fleet is engaged in desperate battle on the tabletop!

Well, I decided this would be a perfect opportunity to apply my previously developed

xenotechnology for effecting repairs once and for all! And I'd make digipix as I went along to use in this new forum.

So, 'ere we go!

Step 1- Bill O' Materials

1 ea.-Large Games Workshop flightstand base (added stability for heavy model)
1 ea.-Small Games Workshop flightstand base (optional use on cruiser or smaller size ships)
1 ea.-1-inch x 1/8 inch wood screw
1 ea. wood golf tee (may use plastic tee if available) heavy brass floral wire- about 3/32 in. diameter
Electric drill motor drill bits: 1/4 in., 1/8 in., 3/32 in.
Isocyanate glue (super-glue) or your favorite equivalent
Big metal ship to glue on top!



Step 2 - Prep components

Large and small Games Workshop flightstand base discs: Drill existing holes out with 1/8 in. bit.

Large flightstand base disc: using small hole as pilot, drill 1/4 in. countersinkhole in underside of base to a depth of about half the thickness of the disc so as to sink the screw head at least flush with bottom of disc.

Golf tee: using 3/32 in. bit, drill a 3/4 in. long shaft axially through large end



Apply super glue to threads and shaft of screw and screw the large end of the golf tee onto it to contact the topside of the small



base disc.

Step 3- Assemble Base

Apply a modicum of super glue to the countersunk hole in bottom of large disc and insert screw all the way through.

Apply a bit of super glue on the underside of the small flight disk and fit it over the screw threads and press down onto the topside of the large disc.

Step 4- Final assembly

Determine the desired height of the flight stand (how high the model will be) and using sidecutter pliers or a modeling saw, trim the pointy end of the golf tee off to the desired length and square it up with a bit of sanding, then drill axially again, this time down only about 1/4 in. with the 3/32 in. drill bit.



Cut about 3/8 in. of the brass floral wire and super glue into the hole. This should be a nice close fit.



If you model was like mine, the remains of the broken plastic stem were still in the mount hole of the model. Use the 3/32 in. bit and drill a new mount hole into the remaining plastic. Apply super glue to brass and top of the golf tee and insert into the mount hole of the model. Support the model in position for a couple of minutes 'til the glue sets up.

If you like, use epoxy or hot-glue to

add additional support where stem meets model.

Paint the base and stem flat black (or your favorite color), then if you like, use a Galaxy white marker or Marvy or Pentel gel pens to add stars to the base.



But, using gel pens and markers for detailing will be the subject of another 'At the Dry Dock' section in Warp Rift!

Best Regards,
John

Battle of Pelucidar

By Space Cadet

Battle of Pelucidar, BFG Mag 14, p9, substitution.

This was based upon a what-if question, asking what would happen if other races got into the action at Pelucidar, and what would be the results.

Admiral Parol watched as his fleet retreated towards the planet Armageddon. He had sent his fleet towards the side of the Ork armada approaching the planet, hoping to defeat enough of their ships to make them slow down to cover their cripples. Unfortunately, the Ork Hulks had been deployed to meet his forces, and although they had managed to destroy five kroozers, three Roks, and a Hulk, he had lost over half his escorts, along with three cruisers of his own. Four of the escorts were mere hulks at this point, and he was sure that the Orks were busy moving ships into position to salvage everything they could, to build more warships.

Still, there were the orbital defenses to help against the Ork fleet, and his ships should get repaired a little faster at the yards in orbit. Turning towards a comm station, he was about to tell the Tech-Priest standing there to open up a channel to the base

when one of the sensor lookouts called out to his Flag-Captain, "Captain, surveyors are reporting four, possibly six contacts in the vicinity of the Ork fleet. Configuration unknown."

Watching his Flag Captain walk over, Admiral Parol was curious. Were these unknown aliens more allies of the Orks, or something else entirely? Calling up the volume specified in the report, he saw, something.

There appeared to be four definite contacts heading towards the Ork fleet, each in two groups of two, and what appeared to be a haze behind them, in roughly two slight concentrations. Eldar? Not Imperial definitely, and not the Traitors either. Obviously not Ork. Fra'al mercenaries coming to fight Orks?

Whoever they were, the Orks were launching their fighter-bommas to intercept them, and behind them were two escort squadrons closing as well. It looked like one squadron of six Onslaughts, and another squadron of 4 Brutes. Suddenly-

What was that? Some sort of particle weapon was fired at the Onslaughts, destroying four outright, and smashing the shields down on another. And

that had been just from the first squadron of alien ships. Watching the fighter-bommas, he saw that they had gotten behind the alien ships, and snorted. Obviously these aliens didn't take small craft seriously enough. Suddenly a flare lit up the region, and he nearly gasped at the sight, as every single fighter-bomma was destroyed in the energy wave. Focusing his screen on the second squadron, he watched as those two ships destroyed two Brutes, and dropped the shield on a third. Mentally going through the sequence, he saw that there were only two Onslaughts and two Brutes left. He did chuckle though, as the aliens directed some form of lightning at the Ork vessels, but did it against their front, which everyone knew was heavily armored against attack.

But now it was the Orks' turn. Two more squadrons joined in the fun, with one Ravager in one squadron, and six Ravagers in the second. The Onslaughts in the meantime engaged their engines, but their gunners fired early, before their ships impacted. The brutes managed to ram the alien ships though, and one of them had a minor power fluctuation detected, but the other had no damage that was noticeable. At the next attack, he almost laughed. The six Ravagers fired their torpedoes, making a total of 29 torpedoes on the way in, but the Onslaughts were in the way, and the first two waves of torpedoes from them were

wasted upon the Onslaughts. The remaining four waves, attacking the first alien squadron though, managed to score just four impacts, but there was only a minor power fluctuation from one of the ships.

The alien response was swift and deadly, as particle weapons, and what appeared to be some form of directed lightning destroyed all of the Ork escorts. The aliens had managed to get to the sides of the Ork escorts, and their weapons had annihilated every vessel there. Apparently these aliens learned quickly. Unfortunately, their bows were facing directly towards the Ork fleet, and he could see more movement within the fleet. Although these aliens had destroyed six Onslaughts, four Brutes and seven Ravagers, that was not even a thousandth of the Ork fleet that was beginning to notice them. Two more escort squadrons were already moving to engage them.

Each of the escort squadrons numbered two vessels, one made of Brute Ramships, and the other of Savage gunships. The Savages were potentially nasty due to the torpedo salvos, but these aliens had gotten directly in range of the Brutes for a ramming attack, and he could see the signatures of the Brutes increase as they overloaded their engines to ram. Even if these aliens survived the Brutes and Savages, there were Kill Kroozers moving in behind

them, and he could even see a Rok starting to fire jets, to change course.

The Brutes had selected one ship each, and they roared in, their engines flaring from the fuel dumped in, as each Captain of the Brutes slammed his fist on the "Red Button" that was installed in every command cockpit of an Ork ship. The vessels screamed in, their tail fins glowing white from the heat of their engines. The Brutes slammed into their targets and-

The alien vessels were still there. Even more surprisingly, the Brutes weren't. The alien vessels had appeared fragile, with long fins, and a thin body, but they were surprisingly resilient to damage. The brutes though, had shattered upon impact, and their shattered pieces were drifting past the alien vessels, the pieces still having the same momentum before the impact.

Admiral Parol watched in admiration and horror as the Savages began their own attack run on the other pair of alien warships. Both of them had selected the same warship, and their heavy gunz belched fire, as they opened fire upon the aliens. The aliens though, hardly seemed to care. The orks had gone to far forwards, and were opening fire on the abeam aspects of the alien ships, one of the most difficult

shots to make. The Ork accuracy reflected that. Only one of the two Savages even managed to hit its target, and the aliens simply ignored the effect of that shot.

He briefly thought about what a fleet of those vessels could do under his command, or worse, against it, but watched the screen again, almost eager to see the alien reaction to the Savages. With what appeared to be casual disinterest, the vessel only identifiable as a cloud fired its own lightning weaponry, and destroyed both Savages. Neither of the two main alien warships had even bothered to use their weapons.

The aliens maneuvered again, combining their forces into a central position, covering each other's vulnerable side arcs, while keeping their unusual weaponry available for use. It was good that they did this, as a Kill Kroozer was now in range of the vessels, and it began opening fire upon them, with its forward gunz. Its shooting was pathetic though, and none of the shots that were fired even managed to impact the armor. Swinging around, the aliens managed to get broadside on the Kill Kroozer, and Admiral Parol could imagine the results of that maneuver.

The alien shooting was neither pathetic nor inaccurate, and Admiral Parol watched the bursts that he had nicknamed "Solar

Flare" impact on the Kill Kroozer. Two flares hit it from the front, but the forward armor was able to help the shields, and no damage was scored. The Particle weapons were next though, and they dropped the shields, and inflicted some damage on it. Their lightning weaponry was next, and while an Imperial vessel would have been hampered shooting through the explosions from the shield impact and damage, these aliens were not hampered at all. Unfortunately, the solid armored front of the Kill Kroozer resisted all their attentions, and they only managed another crater in the armor. The strange stealth ship in the rear opened fire as well, but it was unable to even damage the armor.

Now though, the second unit of starships opened fire upon the Kill Kroozer. Their attacks were going against the side armor, and were far more deadly, to the Ork. The Solar Flare attacks did not harm it though, but the Particle weapons were savage, and half of them hit immediately. The Kill Kroozer's energy signature flickered wildly, indicating that the volley had crippled it. The Lightning weapons though, did not open fire with their full violence. Instead, the fire was carefully metered, and finally the Kill Kroozer was nothing more than a blazing hulk, drifting forwards, while infernos raged through its hull.

Admiral Parol smiled as he watched the Ork response. Apparently the destruction of the Kill Kroozer had set the Orks into a frenzy, and there were several Kill Kroozers jockeying for position to engage. Two were in the lead, and there were several following them, but the ones following were actually firing upon each other, in their desire to be first. The two lead Kill Kroozers came into range, and they opened fire upon the alien side arcs again, as the aliens were maneuvering to avoid close action, and offering their side arcs for each volley.

The first Kill Kroozer opened fire upon the aliens, and its prow guns reached out, targeting the lead ship. The heavy armor and the difficult shot though, made the Orks miss again, and Admiral Parol could imagine the threats the Ork Kaptin was spewing at his gun crews. The second Kill Kroozer, had maneuvered to an unusual angle, and opened fire. This time though, the prow guns were in position so they could only hit the trailing ships, and were firing at their forward aspects. This volley did some damage, causing a power fluctuation again. The side arc weapons fired at the lead ships though, but missed entirely, due to the alien armor, and abeam aspect.

It was the aliens' turn to reply now. The lead trio of ships proceeded to put their Orks into their abeam aspect, and Admiral

Parol had seen enough of the alien targeting to know that even abeam, the aliens would easily hit the Ork Kroozers. The aliens fired upon the first ship, using their solar flares to knock down its shields, followed up with their particle weapons to deliver more damage. Their lightning weapons were last, and proceeded to savage the Ork Kroozer. A brief series of low-level power surges was detected, and a massive explosion was witnessed at the engines section of the Ork ship. He knew the signs well. The Ork ship had just received a series of massive explosions in the engine room, and would be unable to turn until it was repaired. However, the Ork ship was little more than a wreck now, and he doubted the Orks would be able to fix anything on it. As he watched, the fires burned themselves out, and the Ork ship began drifting, a memory of its former danger.

The second Kill Kroozer's Captain's expression was not hard to imagine. After all, the alien vessels had just crippled his partner, and now the other ships were coming after him. Solar Flares washed out, but they again had no effect on the forward armor. The particle weaponry lashed out at the forward armor, with five of the main pulses hitting and damaging the Ork ship. He expected to see the lightning weaponry go to work next, but strangely, only the stealth ship in

the third group opened fire with its lightning. Apparently, the larger warships were unable to fire their lightning weaponry directly ahead. A valuable reminder for the future.

The lightning slashed towards the Ork Kroozer, though very little of it penetrated the forward armor. Enough penetrated though, and this Kroozer was also crippled, its defenses and weaponry having lost too many of their personnel to keep the ship in fighting shape.

At first he thought that the aliens were simply stuck there, wondering what to do with the Kill Kroozer, when he remembered the stealth ship in the first group. As he watched, it directed a stream of lightning towards the Kill Kroozer, judging the stream so it took out the Ork Kroozer, but not cause it to explode. Their precision was shown again, and the Ork Kroozer was reduced to a drifting hulk, following its two mates in their dance across the stars. The Kill Kroozer that had been a burning hulk earlier slowly went out, with a few more explosions, but joined the other Kill Kroozers.

Admiral Parol was tempted to cheer at the sight, but remembered that the Orks would likely salvage the hulks and put them back in action, unless the aliens intended to redirect a few shots, and dispose of them. Still the rest of the Ork fleet was

getting very annoyed at the alien actions, and he could see a few Roks starting to line up an attack run. The Kill Kroozers were passing them, but the Roks were closing. A couple of Hulks had also noticed the commotion, and were slowly coming about to engage the aliens.

The next Kill Kroozer Kaptin had apparently learned a little from the previous encounters, and charged his ship directly into the middle of the alien fleet, placing one trio of ships into its side arc, and the second trio into his forward arc. The Ork ship seemed to shake as all of its gunz fired, and it seemed to even drift to the side slightly, from the firepower unleashed. But that was an illusion caused by the firepower, and the targeting systems retracking the Ork vessel. He watched the alien ships, curious to see the results of the salvo upon them.

For the trio in the side arc, the stealth vessel took a hit from the gunz, while the larger vessels were the subject of the heavy gunz. Unfortunately, the heavy gunz again failed to score, and he knew the aliens were planning a nasty attack on it. The forward ships though, were within range of the prow gunz, but not the heavy gunz, so they received a single impact from a large volley of the gunz. Even as Admiral Parol watched though, the section of hull that was hit merely reformed itself, and was just as good as

before.

Now, the aliens' weaponry spoke. Solar Flares went out from the two closest ships, and the Kroozer's shields fell. Their Particle weapons opened fire next, and the Kroozer's hull was shattered by the beams, and immediately began drifting. There was still some life in it though, and the Lightning weaponry arrived next. Those arcs of energy washed over the hull, looking for and finding the chinks in the armor. Measuring carefully, the Kroozer was knocked down, and Admiral Parol watched, wondering if the aliens could hulk the fourth ship as well. The answer was yes, and a fourth Hulk drifted through space.

The next Kill kroozer moved up, some distance from the other vessels. The aliens moved to meet it, staying away from the drifting hulks, in case any of them were attacked by the Orks to make them blow up. A Rok showed up as they were maneuvering, and Admiral Parol watched as its long-range gunz opened fire upon the alien ships. Unfortunately, in spite of the Orks being able to get the guns to fire at near their maximum rate, the fire was completely ineffective, and nothing even managed to get near the alien vessel.

The Kill Kroozer opened fire as well, using its prow guna to target the rearward trio, and its port gunz

to target the closer trio. The port gunz were also ineffective, while the prow gunz managed to score a single hit on another of the alien vessels, but as he watched, the armor seemed to heal itself there as well. The aliens returned fire upon the Kill kroozer first, and he watched as the closer group maneuvered into its side arc, to take advantage of the weaker armor there. Solar Flares leaped out, but the shields held, and their particle weapons spoke again. The shields died, and armor was raked by the weapons. Their lightning weapons danced over its hull after that, and the Rok convulsed as the lightning seemed to shred the hull, leaving a wrecked hull moving onwards. The fifth hulk drifted through space, joining the other four.

The stealth ship opened fire upon the Rok after that, and the Rok was crippled by that first salvo. The second trio spoke, and their Particle weapons danced over its hull, opening gashes along its sides, and detonating ammo bins within the hull. The Rok broke up into a group of asteroids, its hull totally destroyed by the attack.

Another Rok showed up to entertain the aliens, and its own gunz let fly again. The gunners on board managed to get all the weapons swung around to target the aliens, and all the guns were able to fire as well. A pity though, as the aliens had managed to swing their sides around,

presenting a side aspect again, likely so they could use their lightning weaponry on all ships. The result of this was that even with the massive salvo, only one blast hit, and the armor healed that as well.

The alien reply was just as sure as last time, and even faster in speed. Particle and lightning weapons bathed the Rok in their unnatural energies, and the Rok vanished from view, leaving only a scattering of asteroids. Something apparently was decided among the aliens, as the stealth ship destroyed all four of the escort hulks present. Briefly, he wondered why they would do that, then realized that the aliens had realized that even with their power, they could not hold the field, and sought to deny the hulks to the Orks.

Unfortunately, now, an Ork Hulk had showed up, and even its mass would take some time to destroy, even for these aliens. Its weaponry was far vaster than anything a mere Rok could dish out, and he watched Ork fighta-bommas launching from its sides as well. Its gunz were the first to fire, and the alien orientation was barely enough to put the closest group's aft aspects to the Ork weaponry. The only saving grace the aliens had was that they were all in the port aspect, so only the weapons from that side, and the dorsal Lances could fire. The lances fired first,

and a single alien ship took some damage from the volley. The port gunz were next, but they either went wide, and the single crater was healed by the metal.

A massive volley of 16 fighta-bommas came out, and six torpedoes were fired as well at the alien ships from its port side. The aliens would be hard-pressed to deal with them.

The aliens turned to handle this new threat though, and opened fire with all their weaponry. Solar Flares punched out at the torpedos and fighta-bommas, and four of the fighta-bommaz were left from the waves of energy. The torpedos were out of position now, and the aliens opened fire upon the Hulk, firing their Particle weapons. The hulk's shields were downed in the first volley, and the lightning weaponry fired next. Fires broke out among the Ork's ships shield generators and dorsal Lances, as the aliens had been deliberately aiming there. The second wave also fired their Solar Flares, trying to remove the last of the fighta-bommas. With those flares, there was only one fighta-bomma left, and it tried to commence its own attack run. Unfortunately, the alien vessels had their own turrets, and the fighta-bomma was shot down short of the target.

Another Hulk pulled in range, and it began opening fire as well. Its

own Lances opened fire as well, and the closest alien vessel managed to reflect the energy away. The hulk fired its own gunz as well, but their fire was only able to slightly damage one of the alien ships. The first hulk opened fire as well, its two Dorsal lances opening fire first, but missed entirely. The gunz opened fire as well, but the blast field from the first fire made all their shots go off target. The port torpedoes were launched as well, and more fighta-bommaz got launched, a total of 12, and they sped towards the alien ships again.

The aliens returned fire upon the Hulk, Particle beams and Lightning arcing across its hull, while Solar Flares were popped off to destroy fighta-bommaz. The Solar Flares were frighteningly effective, removing all the fighta-bommerz from the area. For the weaponry, the Particle Whips removed large chunks of the hull, eating their way in deeper. The lightning weapons from the first group of cruisers took the Hulk to destruction, and it drifted through space, its internal systems too horribly ruined to affect the battle any more. The other ships opened fire upon the other Hulk, and began removing systems. A lance projector flared, and then it was the turn of the stealth ships. Their fire didn't seem as effective though, but the Hulk shook from the bolts. The Dorsal Lances were

damaged again, obviously the aliens figured the lances as the deadliest threat.

Another Hulk arrived in range, but barely. Already the aliens were pulling away from the battle, their cogitators likely telling them that the Ork Hulks were simply too massive to be damaged quickly enough. The new Hulk opened fire with its Lances again, and another alien ship was damaged. The first Hulk opened fire as well, but its single Lance that hit was unable to cause any damage. The new Hulk launched assault boats this time, and a cluster of four sped towards the alien ships.

The aliens took their time though, and Solar Flares reached out to the small craft, vaporizing all of them in the energy waves. Their particle weapons reached out to the damaged hulk, and a series of massive explosions rippled down its side. The Dorsal Lances were knocked out by the Particle beams, along with one of the shield generators. The lightning weapons fired next, cutting deeper still into the hulk, seeking out its vital components. The stealth ships split their fire between the two hulks, causing the damaged hulk to be a burning nightmare, gouts of flame shooting from all the holes in its structure. The fresh (and only hulk within combat range) took some shield loss, but not enough. The second pair of alien cruisers fired their lightning weapons

against it, dropping the shields but scoring only a little damage against its structure. A lance projector flared and dies, a victim of the alien accuracy.

A fourth hulk entered the region at this point, but the aliens were already pulling out of range, and it only managed to score on one of the alien ships, while the aliens seemed happy to leave the area. Tallying up the damage seen and recorded, Admiral Parol saw that the aliens were getting ready to finish off the last Hulk. They had placed themselves ahead of the burning hulk, and the flaming debris pouring behind it prevented the Orks from using their prow torpedoes. The Dorsal Lances reached out, damaging another ship. None of the alien ships were crippled, but all of them were showing scorched craters and burn lines along their hulls, and he knew that the aliens, though not crippled, were definitely not wanting to fight much longer.

The Hulk fired its prow gunz again, but Admiral Parol wanted to laugh. The Orks were firing the gunz at the abeam aspect and past the burning debris of the previous Hulk. The aliens weren't in range if the Hulk were to detonate, and the Orks had decided to fire their weapons at the aliens instead. Surprisingly enough, two volleys managed to hit the aliens, but their hulls were able to repair the damage quickly.

The aliens replied against the damaged Hulk, and began to wear away its defenses. Their Particle weapons removed the shields, and a Lance projector went up in an explosion. Their Lightning weapons fired next, and a massive series of gashes was torn in the side of the Ork Hulk, and the last Lance projectors were destroyed in the fire, along with a single shield generator. The stealth ships fired as well, but their fire seemed woefully underaccurate, yet the shots that hit destroyed the other shield generators.

The blazing hulk continued to burn, and the other Hulk moved up ponderously, and managed to turn slightly, to bring its starboard armament into play. The aliens were getting close to the Heavy gunz range, yet the Ork Kaptin of that Hulk seemed to know that the aliens would destroy him with the next volley. The Port gunz targeted the rear formation of alien ships, and they were no longer in the shadow of the burning hulk. The prow guns fired, though managed to incredibly miss with everything. The Starboard guns, firing on the other trio of aliens, managed to get a single volley on target, but the alien ships were able to regenerate the damage quickly.

The aliens replied with their weapons, and Admiral Parol watched as the last functioning parts of the Ork Hulk were

destroyed by the aliens. Fires surged out of control from the Hulk, and the aliens merely paced themselves beside the two burning monstrosities, waiting for them to either go out, or explode. Their ships were out of range no matter what happened, and he watched as the first Hulk went out, but the second Hulk was suddenly ripped apart by internal explosions, and the rocky structure it was based upon drifted apart, forming a new asteroid field in the system.

The aliens seemed to be merely looking over the drifting ships, and Admiral Parol looked over what the aliens had managed to grab. Five Kill Kroozers and two Hulks drifting away from the battlefield, and the aliens were pacing them. Slowly though, the stealth ships each slid up next to a Kill Kroozer, and began changing their signature. Their signatures were growing more focused, and the Kill Kroozers' signatures were being washed out by it. A sudden flare, and both of the stealth ships vanished, taking a Kill Kroozer with each.

The larger cruisers detached two of their number, and they began closing on the hulks. Their signatures changed as well, and two more cruisers vanished, each taking a hulk with them. The last two cruisers carefully herded the three remaining Kill Kroozers together, and one of the cruisers expanded its energy signature to

include two of them. It vanished, taking them with it. There was only one alien cruiser left, and a single Kill Kroozer left. A cogitator reported that the alien vessel was performing a massive sensor scan, and then the alien moved towards the Kill Kroozer, and it also popped away, taking the last hulk with it.

Admiral Parol stepped away from the display, thinking over what he had seen. The losses to the Orks were useful, but not strategically significant to the defense of Armageddon. But the aliens though, they had not seemed to be doing this to assist him. They had instead been acting as though they were just here for a resource raid, rather than an actual fight. He speculated that the Kill Kroozers the aliens took would be harvested for materials to build more of their warships, and the Hulks likewise.

That was beside the point, and he gave orders for a copy of the battle to be sent by astrotelepathy to the nearest relay, so it would reach authorities that had less bothering them than an Ork Waaagghhh! In the meantime, he would fight in defense of Armageddon, and he would win.

The aliens though, he knew he would be seeing them again.

The Necron Lord reviewed the damage to its starships. All four of

the Scythes and one of the Shrouds had taken damage in the resource raid, while the other Shroud had gotten off undamaged. The damaged ships would repair themselves quickly, but for the next period, they would be unavailable for operations. Still, the resources gathered were higher than expected, and it devoted a minor routine to exploring the statistical reasons why. It had been ordered to bring back a Hulk, and the second was a bonus. The five cruisers that it had hulked were also a bonus, and the Necron Lord could do with them what it chose.

The first Hulk had been ordered by the C'Tan, and one of its cruisers had just transported the Hulk to the collection station for resource extraction. The five other cruiser hulks would have three of them smelted down for raw materials, but two of them would be upgraded with proper weaponry, and used to scout out territory, while hiding their capabilities.

The second Hulk though, was another matter. The Lord reviewed the capabilities of the station, and its manufacturing capabilities. It ran a thousand possibilities through a subprocessor, and reviewed the results. Taking half a second to decide, the Lord gave the order, and the Hulk was boarded by Wraiths and Immortals, and they began slaughtering all Orks on

board, guided by life form scanners, until there was nothing left alive. From there, the Lord ordered a metal seed to be implanted in the hull, and a control center installed as well. The metal seed would slowly grow on the Hulk, covering it with the sentient armor, and the control center would encourage it to convert its structure into weaponry, in the proper patterns.

The Hulk would take several years to finish, but when it was finished, it would be a Juggernaut of space.

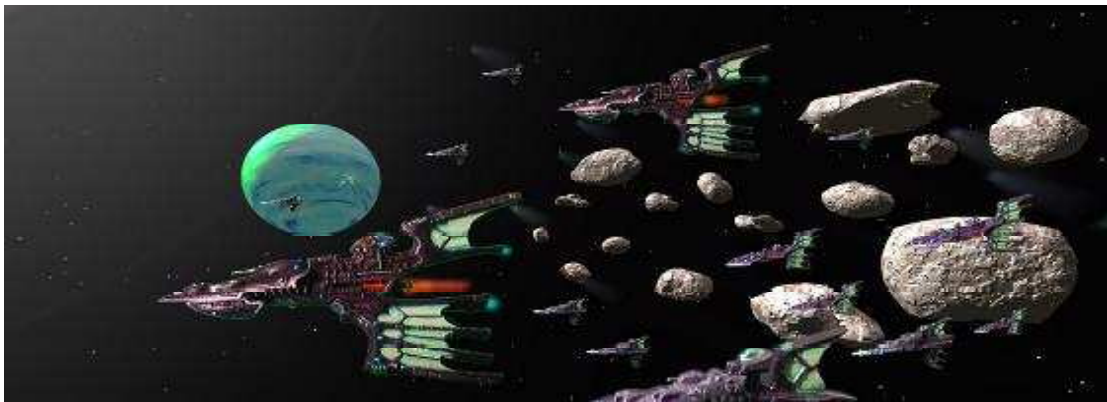
Totals:

Necrons:	Destroyed	6
Onslaughts,	6 Brutes,	7
Ravagers,	2 Savages,	5
Kill Kroozers,	2 Roks,	3 Hulks (3965),
5 Kill Kroozer drifting hulks (50/,		
250 pts),	2 Hulks drifting (100/)	

Need 1485 + 643 to win = 2128

Necrons won by 1737 pts

Orks: will wind up holding field, 100 pts of wreckage (100)



Astronomicon

This section of the magazine serves to highlight some of the questions and points raised on the Yahoo Gothic List. None of the answers here are official, but can be considered as a sensible interpretation of the rules. Also, if we get any questions or emails here at Warp Rift, they will be published here.

Q: A torp salvo, str 6, hit a squadron of cobras. The torp template hit the first ship, his turret missed. I successfully hit with 4 of the 6 torps, but the cobra only has one point of damage capacity. Is the resulting remaining torp salvo strength 5 or 2?

A: *It is two. The thing is, your torps hit simultaneously and although it was overkill, they DID impact the same ship. I suppose it was an unintentional perk in the sense of games balance.*

Q: *Does the eldar holofield allow a save versus ramming or boarding or teleportations? And if the save succeed for a boarding action, where does the blast marker must be displayed ?*

A: *Yes, the holofield allows a save against all directed, non-firepower table attacks. The blast marker gets placed in the direction that the attack came from.*

Q: *What is the effect of a warlord attached to a ravager squadron with looted torpedoes?*

A: *One ship gets to double it's boarding value, (+1 then) and one ship, (The same one) gets to reroll its torp strength. Never put a Warlord on an escort.*

A: *The bonus and benefits goes to the whole squadron, not to just one escort. However, it is really a waste of a Warlord to put it on something as expendable as an escort squadron.*

Q: Just wondering how vp on escorts are calculated with the new vp for squadrons? If four Idolators are in a squadron, and one is destroyed, does this mean you gain 10% of 45 points in victory points, as the squadron was not crippled?

A: *Escort squadrons are treated as capital ships. Your 4 Idolators are essentially a 4 hit, 180 point capital ship. Lose one and you are down zero points unless you disengage in which case you drop 10% or 18 points. Lose two and you are the equivalent of crippled and down 45 points whether you disengage or not. Lose all 4 and you lose the full 180 points.*

Docking Claws

The best of the web, listing sites which deal with Battlefleet Gothic. If you have a site that you would like listed here, drop us an email.

www.epic40k.co.uk (www.epic40k.co.uk) - The host of this publication, www.epic40k.co.uk is a growing site featuring the EpiComms Forums for great Gothic and Epic chat, the Players Index to find players in your area, and the Spotters Guide, a discourse on the vessels in the game, as well as lots more.

[Port Maw](http://www.one-end.com/portmaw) (www.one-end.com/portmaw) - Currently undergoing a revamp, Port Maw has always been a favourite for web surfers looking for Gothic. In particular, the site has a large collection of new vessels for the game.

[Blackstone 6](http://blackstone.outpost10f.com) (<http://blackstone.outpost10f.com>) - While currently not being updated regularly, there are still a lot of useful articles here, and some excellent extra counters and downloads.

[The Golgotha Spiral](http://www.angelfire.com/games4/chubbybob/bfg1.htm)

(<http://www.angelfire.com/games4/chubbybob/bfg1.htm>) - An excellent site focussing on the vessels of the Golgotha Spiral, and the unique vessels which patrol it. An gold mine for the Gothic converter.

Incoming

Got an event for Gothic coming up? Let us know. We want to hear about meetings, groups, conventions and games. So, put the word out, and drop us an email detailing your events.