

Fables&Tables Magazine

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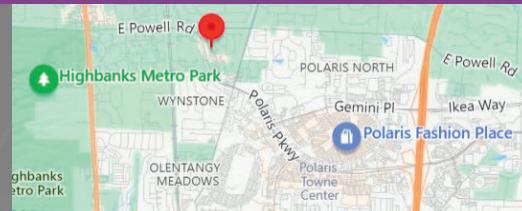
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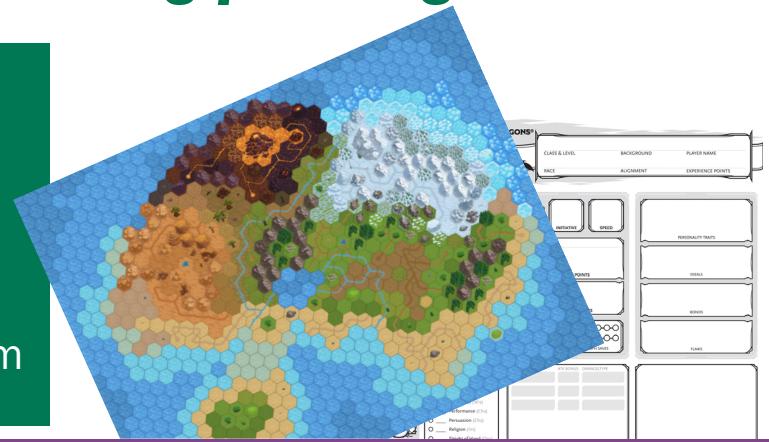
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Tumblin' Dice

Overview

By: Kimberly Gonzales and Devin Skelton

The game plays over four rounds (or first to a total number of points). Every round, players will take turns launching one of their four dice, until everyone has used all of their dice. Then, points are tallied, the dice are cleared from the play area, and a new round starts.

Points are earned for dice still remaining on the board at the end of a round. The points earned by each die is equal to the face-up value of the die multiplied by the score bonus on each level of the board, with lower levels giving higher multipliers.

The only rules you need to follow when sending your dice a-tumblin' are:

The die needs to make contact with the launch platform (the black section with the Eagle-Gryphon logo at the top), and you must not make contact with the die once it leaves the launch platform.

Any dice that fall off the board (either because they were launched poorly or because they were bumped by another player) are out

of play until the start of the next round! Your goal on your turn is to maximize your points while knocking other opponents' dice out of play!

Thoughts:

Devin

Tumblin' Dice is designed by Randy Nash and published by Eagle-Gryphon Games (and Ferti games)! The game was originally released



in 2004, but different versions have been produced from then all the way up to 2022 with the release of the Eagle-Gryphon Games

version, which is the version we own.

The game board itself is made of high-quality wood with an attractive paint job that makes it a joy to play, and overall it doesn't take up much more space on the table than any other board game, and it packs away neatly into a slim box for storage. However, we held off on picking it up for a long time due to the relatively high price. We've heard of folks making their own Tumblin' Dice boards at home and just buying some colored dice to play with.

Personally, I find the game to be a ton of fun. It's quick, exciting, and you're always interested in what's going on. You and your friends will alternately cheer and groan as perfectly placed dice are knocked completely off the board, or as a poorly positioned die is bumped further down the board and rolled to a higher value! Even with just the two of us playing at home, we had a lot of fun! It's so fast that it's easy to say, "Okay, just one more time!" Until you've been playing for well over an hour! Tumblin' Dice feels like a classic party game that adults and kids alike can have fun playing. It's going to be a staple in our household for the foreseeable future as something we can bring to parties or bars, or even just play at home when we want to mix things up with a more active game.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

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Thoughts:

Kim

We've been having such a good time with *Tumblin' Dice!* Like Devin mentioned, the price put us off buying it for a while, but when we found it half off at a local game store we immediately purchased it. So far we've played it at 2, 3, and 6 player counts and it works

great at all of them. The higher the player count, the more chaos that will happen with more dice on the board and players possibly accidentally (or purposely!) Knocking off other players' dice.

We played it with both of our families and everyone had a blast! This is the perfect game to play with your family and friends when you just want to have fun and play something very different. Everyone we played with even wanted a copy of their own for future get-togethers. ■

sleeves (or, in my case, a sweaty, plastic Ben Cooper Superman smock) without getting pelted with rocks.

Now? Entire conventions are built around it with enthusiasts strutting about in elaborate armor builds that look like they were designed by NASA engineers on Red Bull.

And, my god, it's glorious.

Now, cards on the table: I didn't always get cosplay

Back in my early con-going days, I'll admit I was one of those guys who rolled my eyes a little. I saw it as a distraction, something happening on the periphery while the "real fans" were digging through long boxes or arguing about whether Jason Todd should've stayed dead.

(Sidebar: Yes, he should have.)

And then...I started paying attention.

I saw the work. I saw people with burns on their fingers from hot glue guns and paint on their arms up to the elbow. I saw kids light up when Deadpool or Sailor Moon stopped to pose with them. I saw shy, quiet people transform into absolute rock stars because the mask or the cape gave them permission to be somebody louder, braver, bigger. I realized this wasn't a sideshow...It was the beating heart of the con.

Cosplay is performance art with the volume turned to eleven. It's improv. It's craftsmanship. It's therapy. It's community. And, maybe most importantly, it's joy. Somewhere along the line, my "I don't get it" turned into "oh, I love this."

Cosplay, believe it or not, didn't just pop up one day fully formed like Athena from Zeus' skull. It's been around a while. The earliest instance most folks point to is 1939, the very first World Science Fiction Convention in New York City. A guy named Forrest J. Ackerman (the patron saint of monster nerds everywhere) and his partner Myrtle R. Douglas...better known as "Morojo"...showed up in what they called "futuristic costumes." Imagine Flash Gordon serials stitched together on a Singer machine, and you're in the ballpark. This was back when people were still figuring out what "fandom" even meant, and here were two trailblazers deciding, "Eh, let's just be the pulp heroes."

Meanwhile, over in Japan, by the mid-1970s, a little shindig called Comiket (Comic Market) was gaining steam. Fans were already doing their own manga, their own art, and pretty soon they started showing up dressed as their favorite characters. It wasn't called cosplay yet, but the seeds were there.

The actual word "cosplay" comes a bit later, thanks to Japanese journalist Nobuyuki Takahashi. He went to a Worldcon in Los Angeles in the early '80s, saw folks in costumes, and thought, "This 'masquerade' thing sounds like something old rich people do at a castle. We need a new word." Thus: costume + play = cosplay.

Boom.

A movement named.

By the late '80s and into the '90s, cosplay was everywhere. In Japan, it exploded into a phenomenon at conventions. In the U.S., comic cons and anime cons started embracing it too. And from there? Forget it. The floodgates were open. Suddenly you've got contests, masquerades, entire hotel lobbies taken over by Stormtroopers, Sailor Scouts, and whatever the hell Final Fantasy was spitting out that year.

And now here we are: EVA foam, 3D printers, wigs that cost more than my first car, tutorials on YouTube that'll teach you how to make armor out of yoga mats. Cosplay went from "two people at Worldcon making nerd history" to "an international subculture with its own stars, scandals, and fashion lines." It's no longer the sideshow at a convention, half the time it IS the convention.

Cosplay is the purest form of love letter a fan can write. You don't just read *Batman*, you BECOME *Batman*. You don't just watch *My Hero Academia*, you duct-tape foam padding for three straight weeks until you can barely fit through the convention doors, and then stand in the lobby sweating out electrolytes while strangers ask for selfies. It's art, performance, and masochism all rolled into one.

Now, do I cosplay? Not very often. You see, my body type (let's call it 'Dad Bod Xtra') doesn't scream "Spider-Man" so much as "Spider-Man's accountant." That all changed, however, when my daughter, who LOVED dressing as Belle from *BEAUTY AND THE BEAST* convinced me that I look enough like Josh Gadd to put on a big, pink bow tie and stockings (which are surprisingly comfy) and spend all day dressed as LeFou from the live action version.

Whether or not I participate, I always adore watching the cosplayers parade through convention halls like gods among mortals. It's theater, it's carnival, it's drag. It's everything that makes fandom big and bold and weird.

But...and you knew there was gonna be a "but".... There's always a goddamned "but"....it also shines a bright, unforgiving light on the toxic underbelly of fandom:

Gatekeeping.

Body-shaming.

Creeps with cameras pretending to "document" while actually being human mosquitoes doing their best to suck the fun out of what is otherwise joyful pageantry.

There are still too many people who think cosplay has to "look a certain way" or only be for "certain" types of fans.

Spoiler alert: those people are wrong. Cosplay is for everyone.

Super skinny Wonder Woman? Great. Plus-size Wonder Woman? Also great. Male Wonder Woman? Hell yeah, bring it on. If you put your heart into it, you're doing it right.

And don't even get me started on the "sexy costume" discourse. Yes, people will dress as Sexy Pikachu. Yes, you will roll your eyes. But before you clutch your pearls, remember: fandom is play. It's fantasy. It's adults finally feeling comfortable enough to embrace joy in public. If that joy comes with fishnets and a pair of foam ears, so be it.

The best cosplay I ever saw wasn't a screen-accurate Iron Man suit or a \$5,000 Gundam with glowing LEDs. It was a kid at Steel City Con dressed as Ash from *Pokémon*. His Pokéball? A painted Wiffle ball. His Pikachu? A yellow plushie duct-taped to his shoulder. He strutted around like he owned the place, and in that moment, he did.

Because that's the magic. Cosplay doesn't care if you've got EVA foam and an airbrush or a Sharpie and a dream. It's about showing up and saying, "This is who I love. This is who I am today."

So here's my advice, friends: if you've ever thought about cosplaying, do it. Don't wait until you've lost twenty pounds or until you've perfected the seams or until the internet decides your favorite character is "valid." Just grab some cardboard, some hot glue, and a ton of foolish confidence and go for it.

Remember what we talked about, last time? Tempus fugit. Time flies.

Wouldn't you rather spend that time as Superman than as "Random Guy #3 in line at Starbucks"?

See you in the costume contest, nerds. I'll be the one dressed as "Exhausted Dad Who Ate Too Much Convention Pizza." ■

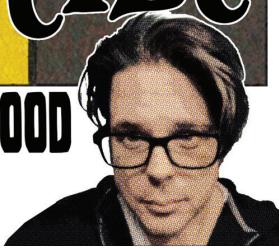
RECOMMENDED READING:

THE PRINCE AND THE DRESSMAKER by Jen Wang



CON Artist

BY MIKEY WOOD



Episode VII: "COSTUMED IDENTITY CRISIS (OR: HOW I LEARNED TO STOP WORRYING AND LOVE SPANDEX)"

Not that anyone asked...

Let's talk about cosplay.

Or, rather, let's talk about how I once nearly suffocated in a plastic Darth Vader mask purchased at a Bradlees Department Store in 1979 and how that connects to a multi million-dollar industry of people dressing up like super-heroes and anime characters while waiting four hours in line to buy Funko Pops

Because, you see, when I was a kid, "cosplay" wasn't even a word yet. We just called it "wearing your mom's old tablecloth like a cape and hoping you didn't put a hole in it because she'd notice."

Halloween was the one sacred day of the year where nerds could wear their passions on their



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THE MOST HAZARD-OUS MEDIEVAL GAME

-Craig Israel

If you've ever thrown dice at the Craps table at a casino, then you're already familiar with the ancient dice game of Hazard. Gambler's today may go overboard hoping for that next lucky seven, but that's nothing compared to medieval gamblers who would wager everything they had—including the clothes on their backs—hoping to gain Fortune's favor.

RULES

To play, you need two 6-sided dice. Hazard is a gambling game, so you'll also need coins, beads, candy, or whatever to wager.

Any number of people can play, each rolling the dice in turn. The "caster" is the person who currently holds the dice. Everyone betting against the caster is called a "fader."

To start, the caster throws two dice to set a target number, called the "main." This number has to be from 5 to 9, so any other initial rolls are ignored and re-rolled. Once the main is set, the caster rolls again to set another target number, called the "chance." The chance has to be from 4 to 10.

Here's where it gets complicated. Certain numbers result in an immediate win, called a "nick." Other numbers result in an immediate loss, called an "out."

Once you set your main, hitting that number again while rolling for the chance is an immediate win. A roll of 2 or 3 is called the crabs, and is always an immediate out. Consult this chart when rolling:

If you don't roll a nick or an out on your next throw after the main, that number becomes your chance. Once you roll a chance number, the chart no longer applies. The only numbers that matter are the main and the chance. You continue to roll

until you match either your main or your chance. If you match your chance, you win all the stakes on the table. If you match your main, you lose, and the stakes are divided equally among the faders.

While this may seem confusing at first, after playing a couple of rounds you'll get the hang of it.

WHY "HAZARD"?

According to medieval chronicler William of Tyre, the game was invented during the First Crusade, as Christian soldiers lay siege to the city of Azaz in 1125 CE. In Crusader sources, Azaz is referred to as Hazart, giving the game its name. This story is almost certainly apocryphal given that Tyre's original account doesn't mention dice at all. Hazard doesn't appear until a translation published nearly a century later; Hazard presumably added by the translator.

New Orleans. It was here that the modern game of Craps got its name. One theory is that "craps" comes from the French word "craapaud" (toad) which was used to describe the players squatting down to throw dice. More likely, Craps is simply bastardization of "crabs," the term used for centuries

To learn more about the rules, history, and strategy of Hazard as well as how to make your own dice, check out these links. ■



Main	Nick	Out	Chance
5	5	2, 3, 11, 12	4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10
6	6, 12	2, 3, 11	4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10
7	7, 11	2, 3, 12	4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10
8	8, 12	2, 3, 11	4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10
9	9	2, 3, 11, 12	4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10

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However, it does appear that Hazard has a connection to the Arabic world. The word "Hazard" may be a corruption of the Arabic word for dice, "az-zahr;" or even "yasara," meaning "he played at dice." Or, it may come from the Spanish verb "azar," meaning "an unfortunate dice roll." However the name was first coined, over time and distance it evolved into the English word we know as hazard.

CRABS/CRAPS

The losing rolls of 2 or 3 in Hazard are called "crabs." The etymology of crabs is disputed, but some sources believe it comes from "crab-apple" — the face a caster makes when losing being likened to biting into the sour fruit.

Hazard travelled to America in the 1800s, becoming wildly popular in

RULES/HISTORY/STRATEGY:
<https://youtu.be/yWQU3x1h9d8>

BUILD VIDEO:
<https://youtu.be/MdnYclBzMJ8>



Trusty Rusty

Rust application

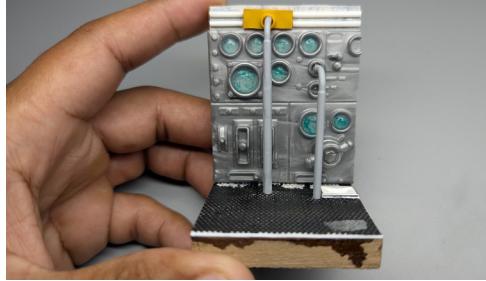
- Jasper Troncoso

Are you a part of a game coming up, and have some terrain models that need some rust effects? Then this tutorial is for you!

A beginner-friendly introduction to "rust effects" with zero skills, fast and easy.

STEP 1

Prepare your model/models, clean them to get rid of all fingerprints, dirt, or grease. I suggest using 70% Alcohol and scrubbing them down with an old toothbrush or rough paint-brush; you can also use cold water and dish soap to clean them of any mold released from the factory.



STEP 2

Prime your model/models with any primer of your choice. I recommend using a flat black primer. Black primer helps sell the effect of gritty and grime that is why I prefer using it for effects like these.



STEP 3

After letting your primed model fully dry, begin the paints application. Using an artist sponge or make up sponge as your primary tool of application will save you a lot of time as well as create a natural organic effect. I used 6 colors separated into three categories 1: base coat colors 2: shade colors 3: highlight colors and as a final step a wash using any of these colors from any category. I recommend any two colors from the shades or highlights. For each category I used two contrasting color saturations yet similar in hue. Lets get started in the next step.

STEP 4

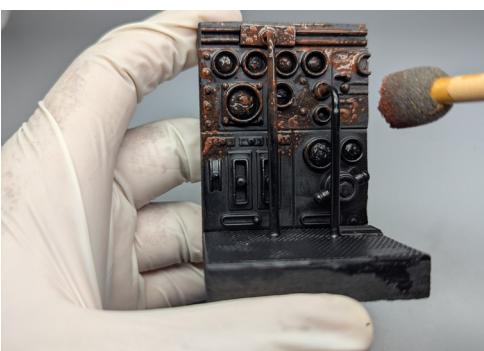
Base colors used here are a dark brown and a dark burgundy (dark reddish purple) you can use any brand paint of your choice.

Apply the dark brown as your foundation color first covering about 90% of the model, followed by the burgundy only covering about 70% of the model.

1



2

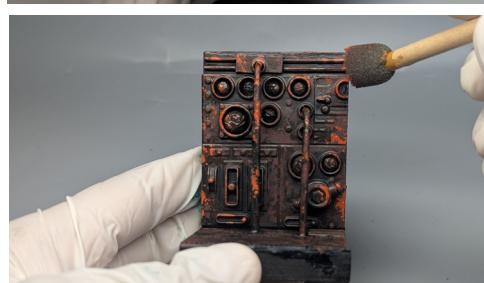
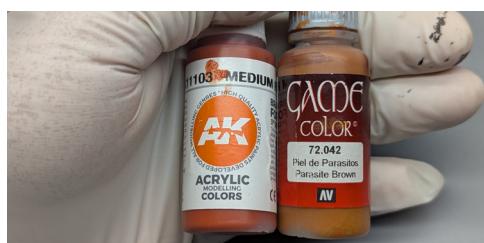


STEP 5

Following rite after move on with your shade colors. These two colors will be brighter than the base coats. For a rust effect chose any two colors that are within the dark orange and caramel category in hue. Beginning with either one of the two colors.

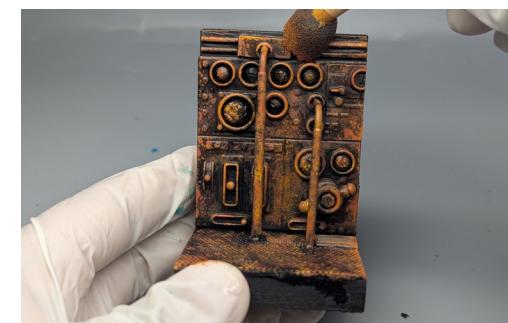


Either color you chose first, only apply about 50% of it on the model. Your second color should be about 30%



STEP 6

In this step apply the last two colors (highlights). Pick a brighter orange than the shade, and one more addition color that has a slight dark yellow hue to it. Apply the darker color first about 20% followed by the brightest covering about 10% of the model. Use any colors of your preferred brand.



STEP 7

Choose any one of the colors from either the shade group or highlights and water down that color to a coffee or milk consistency, then apply that wash all over using a paint brush or an air-brush for smoother application. The purpose of the wash is to unite all of colors together cohesively. You can apply this wash as many times as you like letting each layer dry in between. After painting any other little details, you want you are done. These steps to paint the rust only took me about 2 or 3 minutes total. Below is the finished piece with a model on it for perspective and visual interest.



In conclusion you don't have to be an experienced painter to achieve this effect. There are other more advanced levels of painting rust effects and many other things, but just like this one it could be done easy and fast without sacrificing quality. You'll end up with a really good looking and immersion gaming terrain. Remember to trust the process and have fun! ■

Local Daily Quests

Monday: Dragon's Lair
The GuardTower East
The GuardTower West

The Warp Gate

Tuesday: Dragon's Lair
The GuardTower West

The Warp Gate

Wednesday: The GuardTower East
Dragon's Lair
The Warp Gate

Marche of Tirnewydd
The GuardTower West

Thursday: Dragon's Lair
The GuardTower West
The FORGE Tavern
The GuardTower East
Canton of Pfedersdat
The Warp Gate

Friday: The GuardTower East
The GuardTower West

May the Force be With You Mondays
Magic The Gathering
Altered 6PM-10PM
Paint Club 6PM-8:30PM
One Piece 7PM-10PM

Magic The Gathering Legacy 7:30PM
Player vs. Player Night
Cookie Run Braverse 5PM-10PM
Pokemon TCG 6PM-10PM

Magic The Gathering Modern 7:00PM
MTG Free Cube Drafting 7:30pm
Grimm's Keep
Weekly Foam Fighting Practice
Pokemon
Warhammer Kill Team & BattleTech
Magic The Gathering Pioneer 7:00PM

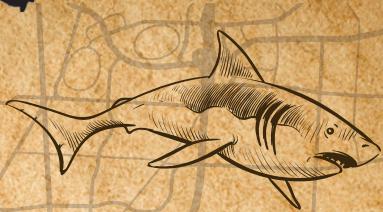
Digimon 6:30PM
Weekly Gathering Meeting &
Armored and Rapier Practice
Warhammer League 6PM-10PM

Paint and Take
Lorcana 6PM-10PM
Star Wars Unlimited 6PM-10PM
Trivia Night
Youth DnD
Armored and Rapier practice
Commander Open Play
Magic The Gathering

Magic the Gathering: Draft 7PM-Midnight
Magic the Gathering:
Commander 5PM-Midnight



S



Friday:

The Soldiery

Dragon's Lair

The Warp Gate

7:30PM

Saturday: The Soldiery

The GuardTower West

Dragon's Lair

Sunday:

Barony of the Middle Marches Armored and Rapier practice

The GuardTower East

The GuardTower West

The Warp Gate

MTG Casual Commander

Friday Night Magic
Casual CommanderMagic The Gathering Draft 7:00PM
Magic The Gathering Modern

MTG Casual Commander

Flesh & Blood 12PM-4PM
Alpha Clash 4PM-8PM
Gundam TCG 4PM-8PMYouth Pokémon,
All ages Pokémon, Lorcan*Magic The Gathering
Open Play DnDBolt Action 11AM-6PM
Battletech 11AM-6PM
Marvel Champions 12PM-4PMWarhammer 40k Open Play
Pokemon League 6-8PM

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SPOTLIGHT ON

The Barony of The Middle Marches - *Justin Rood*

When any gamer gets ready to play, there's always a gathering of the necessary supplies. The RPG player grabs game books, dice, a notebook, more dice, maybe a miniature, some more dice, and some more dice. The board gamer has the game box and its contents. Collectable and trading card gamers have their decks, folders of other cards not currently in their decks, and a disregard for their fellow humans. War gamers have maps, terrain, cases of miniatures, and the even larger number of unpainted miniatures just out of sight. Then there are those whose game requires them to get dressed properly in garments to mimic styles of 400 years ago or more, their armor and weapons, a tent, and making sure that their mess kit doesn't include the scandalous modern invention known as a three-pronged fork. These are the people who play in The Society for Creative Anachronism, more often referred to as the SCA. We, recently sat down with Baron Uilleag Balbhan and Baroness Slany bean Uillic, leaders of the Middle Marches (the local SCA group in Columbus, OH) to talk about their organization.

The SCA has a long history compared to a lot of the other linchpins of gaming, pre-dating even Dungeons & Dragons by almost a decade. What was created by a group of history nerds in Berkeley California in 1966 has become a world spanning organization with more than 30,000 members. An educational non-profit group (501c3), the purpose of the organization is to research and recreate the arts, culture, skills, and combat of the world before the 17th century. The SCA has a corporate board who handles the overall structure of the group, including handling things such as insurance, while the actual activities of the group are all done at a local level.

The world of the SCA is split up into 19



Baroness Slany and Baron Uillieag

kingdoms, with each kingdom having its own leadership and being broken up into baronies. While kings and queens are decided by tournaments of arms, the selection of barons and baronesses varies

from kingdom to kingdom. Uillieag and Slany were among the names offered by the populace to the king and queen of the Middle Kingdom (which includes Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Kentucky and

small parts of Iowa and Ontario) who then chose them to be baron and baroness. Members of the SCA often take on a "persona," a name from a certain culture and time period, and then attempt to best mimic that time in their garb and accoutrements. Having a persona is not a requirement, however, and though very rare there have been kings who never created a persona.

Uilleag and Slany got involved in the SCA after their daughter entered college and they found themselves with a lot more time on their hands. Slany had joined the SCA for a time in high school and suggested they look into it given that they had an interest in historical dancing.

It was actually some time before either of them got involved in the martial pursuits that the SCA is most well known for, starting with Uilleag getting into fencing and Slany later becoming involved in armored combat. While the two joined to explore their interest in an historical art, and found many others interested in the same, what ended up making it a large part of their lives was the community that they found.



A gold stitched dragon created by an SCA member

There's also a great deal of interaction between people of different generations. Uilleag and Slany's friend group that's developed from the SCA includes people younger than their daughter. "But there's no formality behind it, it's not forced," Slany points out. "You're all just there together, doing whatever it is you're doing."

The melting pot quality isn't simply contained to the "Arts and Sciences" such as dance, or weaving, or dozens of other pursuits. The martial sports SCA members engage in are similarly mixed. There are no weight or age classes, except for minors, and

there's no division by gender. Anyone who wants to fight can fight. Safety is the only concern, not where someone is from, how old they are, or their gender. More than one crown tournament has been won by a woman; men and women fighting in the same tournaments and on the same battlefields is unique to the SCA among groups that aim to re-create pre-1600's martial arts. Whether in armored combat, the original sport the SCA focused on, or fencing, archery, and other martial pursuits have been added over the decades, everyone is on the same footing and the only distinction is personal prowess, not an arbitrary demographic or physical feature.

One of the things that helps the SCA bring everyone together is being at an event and participating in the activities which guides conversation in ways that avoid many of the traditional dividing lines when people get together. "When you're

at an SCA event, you're talking about SCA things," Slany explained, allowing the divisions of the outside world to be put aside so that "you can just talk about what you're passionate about, with other peo-



Nordic and Coptic Jewelry

Slany commented that one of the things she thinks is special about the SCA compared to similar re-enactment groups or martial sports groups is the variety of people. SCA members come from all walks of life, up and down the socio-economic ladder. "We have a NASA polymer scientist sitting next to a pizza delivery guy and it doesn't matter, they're the same."



The Middle Marches Baronial Field Presence

ple who are passionate about that thing."



The Dread Queen Katherine Processing to her Coronation

of a carving knife in the 1400s," he gave as an example. The profound variety in subjects available not just to learn but to practice, lets people look around and try

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

any number of arts and crafts. Want to learn how to weave wool into clothing? You can do that. If you want to learn how to cast bronze or embroider or make illuminated manuscripts or do woodwork, there are people who would love to show you how, talk about it, and even more who will be happy to see what you've made. If you can think of an area of study that is "period," meaning before the 17th Century, there will be people who want to study it with you. If they're not in the local group, then the local people will help to find the right people. The SCA makes use of social

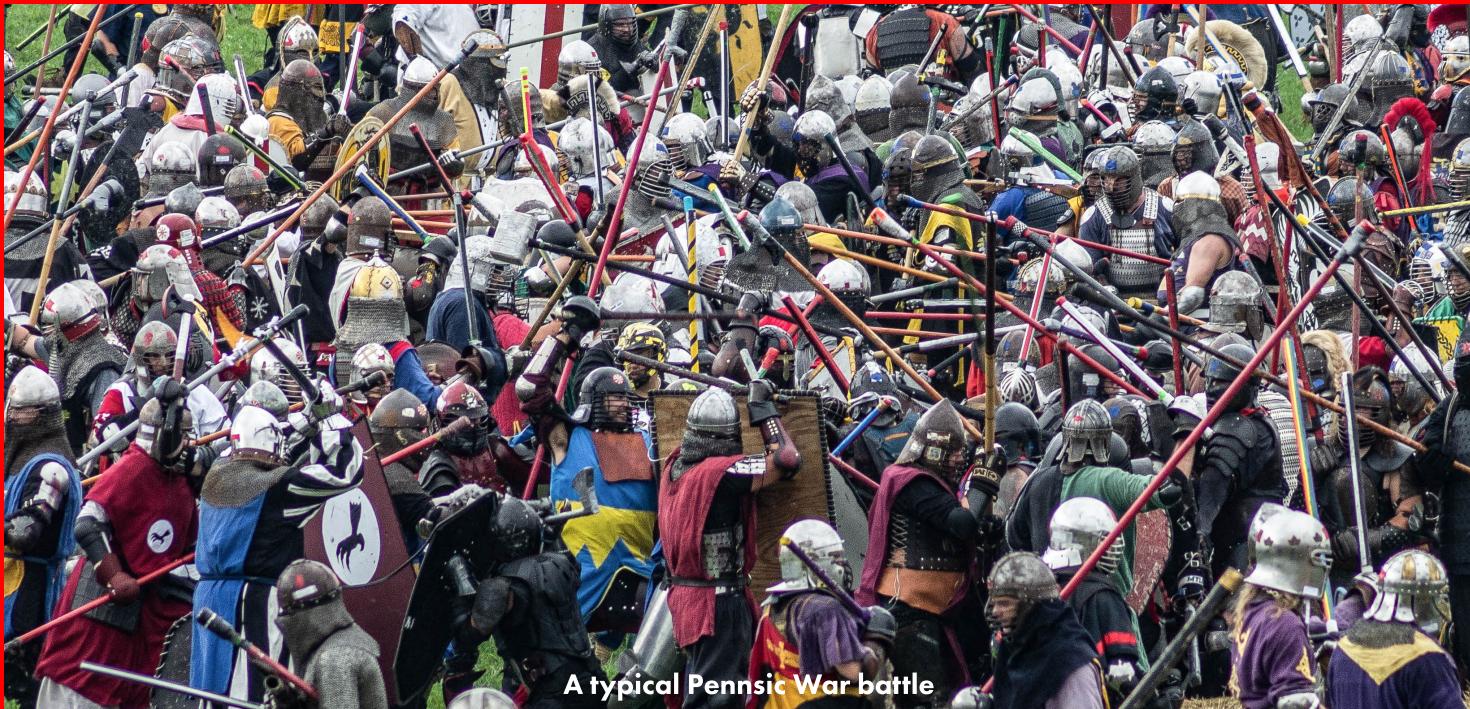
being one of the few modern conveniences in sight. Period clothing, kitchenware, armor, and more can be found, all depending on the event. A dozen or more people might attend a weekly meeting, while some events will have hundreds. The largest events can draw thousands.

These large events are called Wars, organized between kingdoms who compete to see who will win the War. There are tournaments, contests for crafts and art to be judged, but the big events are the Melees. The kingdoms will gather as many of their fighters as they can, in addition to trying to recruit other kingdoms



Local Fighters Training for war

The biggest of these Wars, and the largest event in the SCA, is the Pennsic War. Held annually over two weeks in July and August, the Pennsic War takes



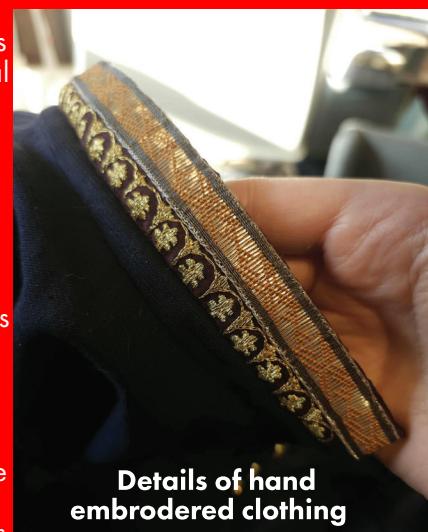
A typical Pennsic War battle

media tools like Facebook and Discord to get people in touch with each other and share the many things that they care about.

The local groups are really at the heart of the organization. While the SCA provides guidance, some funding, and a framework, and kingdoms have their own structure and rules, events are all done by local groups of volunteers. From small weekly practices to weekend-long events with multiple contests, classes, and tournaments, all are planned, organized, and run by SCA members themselves. Many are centered around one or more tournaments of the martial sports, particularly armored combat and fencing. Others are focused on seminars and hands-on instructions about history, arts and crafts, and so on. Most events are also accompanied by merchants, with electronic pay devices

as allies, even pay mercenaries to join in on their side, and form armies. Over the course of the War, the armies will fight several battles. Some will be open field battles, others fought in woods, or on a simulated bridge, and others scenarios to add variety and different ways to win. Points are earned from the battles but also the tournaments

and contests to determine which kingdom is victorious.



Details of hand embroidered clothing

place in a large camp ground near Slippery Rock, Pennsylvania. Over 13,000 SCAdians come to the event, more than triple the population of the nearby town. The many camps form a whole town of their own, complete with named streets and a medical center. People come from all over the world to fight, socialize, and shop at Pennsic. The War has run for over 50 years at the same location to the point that the camp ground has had improvements made and the SCA built permanent structures. There are landmarks that frequent attendees can use to navigate that have been there for thirty years or more. While the war between the East Kingdom and the Middle Kingdom is the main focus,



Gold embroidery recreation

one can attend Pennsic and never have anything to do with the martial aspects. There are more classes, dances, and other events in these two weeks than in much of the rest of the year put together. Merchants come from all over the world as well and just about anything a SCAdian might want will be on offer in the shops. There's a

to stay with that thing," Uillieag said, "try out something else, and keep going until you find what you want to do."

The diversity of activities that the SCA offers is one of the factors that attracts the even greater diversity of SCA members. At a time when the idea of differing groups of people being together is under pres-

functioning, Ice cream shops, cafés, and several restaurants. Pennsic is "Like Disneyland," according to Uillieag, "no matter how many times you go, there's always something new to enjoy, and it's always fun."

While Slany and Uillieag would encourage attending the big events like Pennsic, their advice for anyone interested in the SCA is to start smaller. Look up your local group and go to a weekly meeting, or even better go to an event in your area. This is the best way to get an idea of the full range of activities and see how the SCA works. "Ask questions, try something out, but you don't have

sure, this very thing is what has allowed the SCA to grow and continue to prosper while so many traditional social organizations have begun to fade away. With the setting of a simulated pre-1600's world and a focus on the research and recreation of that time period's arts, culture, and martial arts as a focus, people can just be people and share their interests. The ability of the SCA to embrace all of these different people and to change rather than stagnate has given it a future to envy, even while it looks to an idealized vision of the past.



Fencers during Combat

If you want to get more information about the SCA, or search for your local group, sca.org is the website for the organization as a whole. If you're in the Central Ohio area, the Barony of the Middle Marches advertises in this very publication and you can find all relevant contact information there. ■



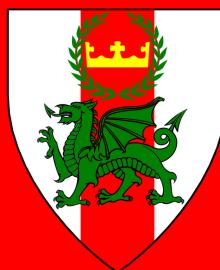
Local Middle Marches Baronial Practice

**For more information about the SCA,
The Middle Kingdom, or the
Barony of the Middle Marches, check out these links!**



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BATTLE REPORT

Game: Warhammer 40k, 10th Edition: Date: 8/20/25: Game played at the Guardtower East

Reported and Written by

- Cassie Rood

Good afternoon folks, and it's another perfect day for a war! A Warhammer, of course! Here we are, a fine day at the Guardtower East, and I'm your friendly neighborhood battle reporter, Audelan Bloodfury, and with me as always is my best nemesis, Zagdur! I'm looking forward to a real barn burner of a fight today, I don't know . . . Zagdur? What in the Emperor's name are you doing?

'Allo, Audie! I'm lookin' forward t'one bloody great WAAAGH t'day! Nevva min' th' chains 'ere, jus' tryna keep ye safel! Cause we got ORKS on th' field t'day! An' y'know 'ow it goes, Audie, when th' WAAAGH gets called, I ain't sure I'd be able t'stop m'self. An' just lookit 'em BOYZ! Warm's th'eart, it does!

I've asked you not to call me that, Zagdur, but you're entirely right! We've got a Xenos-on-Xenos fight today, Warhammerer Jon's Aeldari against Warhammerer Ivan's Orks! We'll give folks a rundown of the units each one of them has brought so we all know what we've got on the field. Warhammerer Ivan's working with his War Horde detachment today, and naturally he's got a full squad of Gretchin and their Grotherd he's stationing on the point in his deployment zone.

Awww, lookit th'lil snotlings! Almost look cute from 'is distance, but they can be deadly with 'eir lil grotblastas! Oh, an' take a look, a Battle Wagon just loaded t'burstin' wiv Slugga Boyz and Ivan's Warboss! 'At's a full twenny-one in th' Wagon, and a squad of 5 Nobz comin' out as well!

They sure are, looking as bold as brass. And it appears that Warhammerer Ivan's keeping his Deffkoptas and a squad of 10 Shoota Boyz in reserve, clearly hoping he'll be able to turn the tide later in game as needed! That's all he's got, so let's take a look at the Aeldari forces Warhammerer Jon's brought today! I'm seeing a squad of 10 Banshees, Zagdur, and they can be deadly close up!

So can Orks, Audie, but I ain't gonna underest'mate them ladies! Banshee blades slice frew Orks like anyone else. I'm seein' a squad 'a Storm Guardians, an' looks like 'ey got a Farseer leadin', and cause 'is 'tachment is Seer Council, 'e's got a Warlock Conclave attached to 'em too! I nevva met a Warlock wot didn't git krumped right quick – leavin' 'em alive is damn risky.

That's the truth, Zagdur, that's the truth. And some Rangers for him as well, showing off the ranged capabilities of the Aeldari today as well. They'll be a real problem for the Orks, they do much better up close. And 5 Dark Reapers, I remember those missile launchers from the last time we watched these two go head to head!

Ahhh me too, me too! Can't wait t'see 'ow they goes 'gainst a propa War 'Orde. An' Fire Dragons on top a' it, though 'eir armor's a bit bright, innit? Lotta or'nge, stands well out from th' rain. Makes 'em a propa set a targets, but I'm sure 'ere's a plan. An' 'is Vyper's in reserve,

waitin' for a opportune moment t'strike. You can't tell, Audie, but I'm tryin' t'make a snakey move with m'ands.

The chains do limit your ability to gesture, it's true, but I understand what you're getting at, Zagdur. Now, that's the end of the lists, down to the business part of the game. Looks like Ivan and Jon have gotten the Maelstrom of Battle, so there will be two different rules applying to this encounter – looks like Targets of Opportunity, they'll have more choices to pursue victory with plenty of paths, and Scrambler Fields. Someone's been down there messing around with tech, and that'll make it harder for everyone to scout, infiltrate, or deploy too close to an objective.

An' they've got the Ritual, Audie! Th'Aeldari'll be tryin' t'get close t'at lone objective in th'middle an' set up a couple more'a 'em, lookin' t'cleanse th'Orkses's spores off 'is place, and th'LADS'll be tryna spread 'em around e'en more. An' Warhammerer Jon's Farseer seems t'be doin' some sorta eldritch rit'al, I s'pose we'll learn more 'bout 'at when th'time's right, eh?

Right you are! Time to get into it, and start Battle Round 1! Warhammerer Jon goes first, and let's see what the Aeldari seers have predicted for this fight! Or, rather, I suppose we'll see it when it happens. Wouldn't be good strategy for them to let us in on the future, would it? Let's see what else they have up their sleeves!

Battle Round 1, Turn 1

An' it looks like Warhammerer Jon's gonna start by havin' his Storm Guardians secure 'at home point, clever lad. Sendin' 'is Rangers towards onea 'em green containers on the field, righ' towards th'Ork lines. Migh' not be



wise, but 'e's gotta get close 'nuff t'hit 'em. An' th' Banshees follow 'em, a lil faster and lookin' propa murd'rous.

He's having his Storm Guardians extend towards the center as well, now that they've got that point secured, bringing the Warlock Conclave and the Farseer along with them. And now the Flame Dragons are coming around the wall they were taking cover behind, with the Dark Reapers holding their position on top of that wall.

Th'Rangers're takin' the firs' shots'a the WAAAGH, firin' at 'at group'a Nobz wiv 'em

long rifles 'ey're carryin'. Five shots inta th'Nobz, but only three 'it 'eir marks. An' a'course, 'em Nobz is Ork tuff, only two get through, with one takin' down a Nob! Too bad for'im, innit, but Orks neva say die.

He didn't have to say it, Zagdur, since he was doing it! And it looks like Warhammerer Jon's got his Dark Reapers shooting into that swarm of Gretchin and the Nobz as well. Only eight shots into the Nobz from them, with 6 of them hitting! Only half wound, not ideal, and the Nobz manage to avoid taking another loss even if one of them has a hold in his hide! And nine shots into the Gretchin and their Grotherd.

Almos' feel bad for th'lil snots, 'ey take seven of 'em 'its, an' five'a th'Gretchin down! Good thing 'ere's more where 'at came from! An' 'at wraps up Warhammerer Jon's firs' turn! Audie, I got a s'spicion 'bout what's 'appenin' next. So best'a luck t'ya in 'ere!

Battle Round 1, Turn 2

Well, folks, hopefully Zagdur's wrong . . . nope, he surely isn't. Warhammerer Ivan has called the WAAAAAAGH and Zagdur is out of commission for a bit while he gets himself under control. That means all the Orks will be more mobile, stronger, tougher, and hit more in melee. Dangerous stuff, especially this early in the fight! It looks like Warhammerer Ivan's got his Battle Wagon full of Orks heading to reinforce the Nobz, not a bad plan. Zagdur, how are you doing over there?

'Alfway through m'chain, Audie, so I 'ope you've got a bleedin' knife on you!

Doesn't look like he's back yet, but no worries, folks, I never go anywhere without at least three weapons on me. Back to the war! The Nobz are making a move to neutralize the Rangers if they can, advancing around a stand of plants. Oh, but it looks like the Rangers are moving backward, giving themselves some more space to shoot. Or at least making it a bit harder for the Nobz to get right in their faces!

Won't matter, 'em Nobz'll tear 'em apart! An' I'll be pryin' you outta 'at armor in jus'a moment, Audie, get ready!

Zagdur, I'm as ready as I'm going to get, but I think we'll be all right. In the meantime, the Gretchin are staying on that home point, gathering up Command Points, though I see them moving to reposition better after their losses. Warhammerer Ivan's decided to not try to shoot, not usually the Orks' strong suit anyway. And his Nobz are getting set to charge those Rangers – thanks to the WAAAGH, they've got a shot. Oh, I can hear the chanting from here, they're hollering "Ere We Go", it's a way they get charged up for a run.

Migh' make a hole righ' through 'at Marine clamshell, Audie. 'Is chain's bein' more challengin' 'an expected, but I'll be done soon, mark m'words!

The Nobz fail their charge! The odds on that happening were NOT good, and it looks like Warhammerer Ivan is spending a Command Point for another shot at it. And AGAIN, Emperor's eyelashes, I did not expect that! Looks like the Nobz have to stay where they are and take a few more shots, what a twist to end this Battle

WAAAAAAAGGGHHHH! VRS. AELDARI!

Side A: Ivan's Orks

Round!

Battle Round 2, Turn 1 (VP: Jon 5, Ivan 2)

We're really into it now, folks, and Zagdur regrettably is still sort of frothing at the mouth, so I suppose I'll handle the bulk of the work myself! Warhammerer Jon is directing his Rangers to move up near where his Banshees are, likely looking to use the ladies as screening. A clever move for the Aeldari, if not exactly chivalrous! And the Banshees are moving as well, heading to engage with those Nobz and try to take them out.



Audie! Audie, come 'elp me, mate! 'Ese chains're squeezin' too tight, I can't breave!

Zagdur, of course I . . . won't help you. Stop trying your Gork-tricks on me, Xenos! The Storm Guardians and their leaders move towards the center point, with their warlock conclave getting up onto that central structure, while the Fire Dragons are headed the other way around the center point, trying to get a better angle, I presume.

Awwww you ain't 'ardly fun, Audie! Jus' lemme get a 'and free an' I'll be set! Join th'ladz down there an' leave ye be!

You chained yourself up for a reason, and that's that. Looks like the shooting has started on the field, and it's the Banshees starting us off with their shuriken pistols! A bunch of shots, but nothing seems to make a dent in those Ork hides! But they're serving as a block while the Rangers work on the main objective and create a point, smart move!

Nuffin' can get frew a propa Ork f'long, Audie, an' I know y'won' be able t'old me back once 'is las' chain breaks!

We'll see how it goes when you do, Zagdur. And Warhammerer Jon's got his Warlocks firing into the Battlewagon. Not a lot of hits, and . . . too bad for the Aeldari, not even a dent in the sides. But the Dark Reapers are splitting their shots, taking aim with at the Battlewagon and that group of Gretchin. With three hits, they're able to put a couple of holes into the wagon, and

Side B: Jon's Aeldari

I bet they're thrilled with that result. Well, maybe not thrilled, but relieved at the very least.

Ain't enuff t'stop 'em, 'at wagon's gonna run 'em down! Orks! ORKS! ORKS! ORKS!

I don't think they can hear you over the gunfire, Zagdur. Oh, and five more of the Gretchin down! Not quite half of the dozen shots into them, but there's a lot fewer of the little fellows now. And it's time to see what sort of charges the Aeldari can pull off. Looks like the Banshees manage to close that distance and get up close with those Nobz, piling in to get the most blades against skin.

'em Boyz can 'andle a few lil girls, Audie! No doubt, Orks nevva say die!

They sure don't! And Warhammerer Ivan is using two stratagems on those Nobz, 'Ard as Nails and Orks Never Lose, which will make it harder for the Banshees to wound them, and if they do manage to take down one of the Nobz, they Orks can fight back immediately. Trying to stack the deck as much as he can, very reasonable. And each of those Banshees swings twice with her Banshee Blade.

Stay strong, lads! Don't let 'em lady panzees take ye down! Stay in this WAAAAAGH!

It looks like they didn't take your advice, Zagdur, despite the incredible volume it was delivered at. The Banshees have training in taking down infantry units, they still have their Aspect Tokens up still, and they are hitting HARD. Every single Nob goes down with a stab or slash or both, but they surge back at the Banshees! Oh, they hit back with a vengeance, only fair, I suppose! All but two of the Banshees go down, a big loss for the Aeldari but I'd say it's an even exchange, all told! And now we're into Warhammerer Ivan's turn, so I believe . . . Zagdur, are you feeling more yourself?

Battle Round 2, Turn 2 (VP: Jon 7, Ivan 3)

I am at that, Audie. Sorry f'tryin' f'trick you, I'm glad never a' us got 'urt, woulda put a real damper on our pr'fesh'nal relations. I'll jus' loosen up 'is an' . . . ah, much betta. Now, back t' th'WAAAGH on th'field! Ivan's 'avin' 'is Boyz unload from th'Battlewagon, since I 'agine 'ey're whereabout 'e wants 'em. Lookit 'em all, warms th'heart! An' 'ey're advancin' towards 'at center, tryin' t' get wivvin krumpin' range.

It looks like the Aeldari Storm Guardians were waiting for them, though, and fire overwatch into that big group of Orks! And they get lucky this time, their fusion guns, spear, and shuriken pistols rake over the Boyz, three go down from that and then the flamer and Destructor flamer come in! Those Destructors are nasty, they use psychic flames to . . . oooooooof! To melt 4 Orks into slag, and the normal flamer get 3!

Y' ate t'see it, Audie, but fire's an Ork's nat'rul enemy, as you well know. Oh, Ghaz's guts, looks like one'a th'Farseer's predictions is 'app'nin'. 'E's frownin' out 'is 'and and tossin' a blast a' psychic, knockin' down two MORE Boyz! I s'pose psy-chick'in' is also an Ork's nat'rul enemy!

Brains do seem to be their weakness, Zagdur, you're absolutely right! But that ends the overwatch, and the Boyz that are left take up their positions around the center of the field. The

Battlewagon moves on its own towards the green shipping container near where the Nobz met their end before stopping.

Th'Snots ain't earnin' 'eir keep none 'is time, I s'pose a little shook by losin' so many a' th'group, but no Command Points from th'Gretchin 'is time 'round. Oh, but take a lookit 'at, War'ammerer Ivan's brought in some Deffkopitas, usin' 'em t'deep strike near th'Fire Dragons! Tryna keep 'em flamey lads pinned, no mistake.

Or maybe not, look at that! The Koptas are firing into the Dark Reapers, trying to neutralize that heavy ranged capability. 7 shots into them, but only 2 manage to hit, and it looks like only one of the Reapers goes down! Aeldari armor at its finest, that's almost as good as you can hope for. And the Battlewagon takes some shots at the Rangers there, they'll be hard to hit but the wagon's blasting away.

Battlewagons's guns can be dang'rous, but looks like the Rangers' camouflage is better'n Ork shootin' – not a 'igh bar, if I'm bein' honest, Audie – as not a single shot gets frew. The Green Tide's 'avin' a rough go t'day, but th'Koptas are chargin' inta th'Reapers, maybe 'ey'll turn fings around. An' 'em spinnin' blades do a number on th'Reapers! Three a' th'Aeldari cut t'ribbons, 'opefully 'ey 'ad 'eir gems on 'em!

Battle Round 3, Turn 1 (VP: Jon 7, Ivan 6)

We can only hope, Zagdur, but I think we can assume they'll be safe from predation. The Banshees and the Reapers need to check to see how they're doing with the losses they've taken. The Banshees seem shaken, but the Reapers are fine and fall back from the Deffkopitas. They do better at a distance anyway, so it's a smart move for them. The Rangers decide to stand their ground, getting set to take the shots they need to.

Th'Banshees are movin' regardless, settin' up on one'a th'craters in th'field, not too bad'a place t'set up. An' looks like th'Storm Guardians are closin' up the space 'tween 'em an' the Boyz, but still stayin' far 'nuff back t'shoot. Y'gotta keep th'distance if y'don't wanna get beat t' th'groun' 'fore y'get off a shot.

Warhammerer Jon brings in his Vypers, right near the Gretchin, likely planning to make a move against them soon. Oh, and Warhammerer Ivan is using Rapid Ingress to bring his Shootas onto the field. Threatening the Rangers with them, I bet that'll change what they wind up shooting when it gets down to it. And now it gets down to it, what will the Aeldari fire at this time? The Vypers fire everything they've got into the Gretchin, the shuriken cannon and the Starcannon both tear into those little fellas, almost makes you feel sorry for them.

Almos', but 'ey 'ad a job t'do an' didn't deliver, too bad for 'em. An' th'Rangers shoot int' th' Shootas, but don't manage t'take 'em down! Too bad, Shootas is bad news, but sometimes th' guns don't like t'co'perate. And th'Reapers also fire inta th'Shootas wiv a bit more luck! Mebbe th'blasts from th'Starwarm launchers, but 3 Shootas go down! 'Magine if 'ey'd been painted up yellow, Audie!

It wouldn't go with their look so much, but good point, Zagdur! And the Fire Dragons empty their

BATTLE REPORT

Game: Warhammer 40k, 10th Edition: Date: 8/20/25: Game played at the Guardtower East

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13



clips into the Deffkoptas, those Dragon Fusion Guns pack a wallop. And it shows, 8 shots and half of them wound, the Koptas go down to those blasts of fusion energy! What a crash, you can hear the melting metal crackle from here! And now it's time to see what the Storm Guardians and their Conclave get up to with those Boyz.

I feel pretty sure it ain't gonna be good, Audie, not at all. But 'em Stormy lads start off wiv a grenade, blastin' 2 Boyz into green dust! An' th'shootin' goes on, shuriken pistols, flamers, fusion guns, an' spears! 'Tween all'a'em, 7 Boyz go down. Anyone tells you Aeldari can't frow out some 'urt, 'ey're lyin'! An' the Farseer whips up an Eldritch Storm, th'Aeldari psychin' th'Boyz right out!

The last of the Boyz go down to that psychic storm, and the Warboss is left by himself against that untouched group of Storm Guardians! What a wild turn, it's been a long time since we've seen such dominant shooting from any army. Let's see how the Orks respond!

Battle Round 3, Turn 2 (VP: Jon 12, Ivan 6)

Th'Grots don't give War'ammerer Ivan anyfin', an' I wager th'Runtherd'll take 'at up wiv 'em after th'WAAAGH. Th'Shootas move up towards th'Rangers. An' th'Rangers figured it out, looks like 'ey managed t'dance back a bit an' maintain 'at distance. Th' Runtherd drives the Grots up towards th'Vypers an' Banshees, 'opin' t'put 'em on th'defensive. An'lastly, th'War Boss 'eads closer t'th'center, 'opin' t'be able t'charge th'Aeldari, I s'pose.

But the Storm Guardians fire overwatch against the War Boss! Shuriken pistols, fusion guns, spears, and flamers all go off at once! The spears and fusion guns miss, but the shuriken pistols, destructor flamers, and normal flamers manage to take down even the big War Boss. That was a gamble that Warhammerer Ivan lost, and too bad for him.

Now th'Orks get t'shoot, an' 'ey're startin' wiv th'Gretchin. 'Ey're a bit betta at shootin' than th'av'rage Ork, but it don't seem t'matter 'against

'em Banshees, as 'ey dodge e'ry shot but one. An' 'at shot don't even make it frew. 'em little snots ain't done nuffin' so far, and you'd fink 'ey'd manage somefin'

Don't be so hard on them, Zagdur, they're just little fellows. I'll admit they haven't done amazing this fight, but they are serving a purpose. Oh, and it looks like the Shootas are firing, splitting their shots between the Rangers, the Dark Reapers, and the Storm Guardians. Three are firing into the Reapers, and out of 6 shots, not a single Reaper drops! That's bad luck, honestly, but you hate to see it.

Th'Rangers take 3 shots from th'Shootas' rockets an' 2 'its from th'Slugga, an' . . . again, not a single 'it manages t'take 'em out! A lot more shots into th'Storm Guardians, but only 4'a 'em shots 'it, an' 'at Aeldari armor saves 'em in spite 'a all 'em shots! Now th'Battlewagon starts firin', blastin' away at th'Storm Guardians again – tryna save th'War Boss, no doubt. Th'Big Shoota takes 5 shots, an' nuffin' again! Th'Lobba frows out 8 shots, an' 3 hits, but none get t'knock down an Aeldari.

The Gretchin are going to charge the Banshees, seems like a suicide mission to me, but things are looking dire for the Orks today! And the charge fails, so they'll be staying where they are. The Shootas charge into the Rangers and close the distance. That's going to go badly for the Rangers, no mistake. Oof, and the Shootas take out some aggression there, slashing away with those power claws.

Twelve swipes, an' ten 'its from 'em, 'at's th'bes' we've seen from th'lads t'day. An' 9 wound, th'armor only stops 2! 'At's it f'th'Rangers, th'Shootas take 'em all down an' 'ey'ead onto th'point th'Rangers built up! An 'splosive end t'th'round, I'd say, Audie.

Battle Round 4, Turn 1 (VP: Jon 17, Ivan 11)

Start of Round 4, and Warhammerer Jon uses the Unshrouded Truth stratagem on the Fire Dragons, letting them disappear and reappear behind the Gretchin, near the Orks' home point. That'll be dangerous for those little fellows, especially with the Banshees in front of them. And the Banshees move closer to the Gretchin as well, it looks like they're about to have a very bad time of things, doesn't it?

An' th'Vypers move toward 'at Ork 'ome point, th'Aeldari're dead-set on grabbin' it. Th'Storm Guardians pull t'gether 'roun' th'center point, wiv 'em warlocks an' th'Farseer, makin' sure 'ey got a firm grip. Th'las' Dark Reaper fires e'ryfing 'e's got into th'Battlewagon, an' War'ammerer Ivan uses th'Ard As Nails stratagem on th'wagon. 8 shots, an' 5'a'em 'it. On'y 1 does anyfin' sides ping off th'platin', an' e'en 'at don't bust anyfin'.

That Battlewagon may be in the best shape of the Orks' units at the end of this, Zagdur, no matter how much we both might want to see an explosion. The Farseer is casting a spell, looks like he's using Guide on the Shootas! That'll make it easier for the Aeldari to hit them, and the Storm Guardians are taking advantage of it already, blasting those shuriken pistols right into them. They make 7 shots with them, and take

down one of the Shootas with the lone wound that got through.

Th'flamers start goin' off as well, th'reg'lar ones an' destructors manage 10 'its each,



an'tween 'em 3'a th'Shootas go down smokin'. No kills off th'fusion guns or th'spears – it feels like th'its from 'em are endless, don't it, Audie? – and fin'ly th'Farseer's Eldritch Storm, an' looks like a powerful one 'is time wiv 8 crashes'a funder. Not a single Shoota dodges 'em, an'at's th'squad! Shame, 'at, but WAAAGH don't play fav'rites.

Too true, and the Banshees fire into the Gretchin, knocking the last of them down with two shots. It's a bit sad, isn't it? The Vypers shoot into the Battlewagon, but no luck for them despite the shuriken and star cannons. The Fire Dragons take their turn shooting at the Battlewagon, the dragon fusion guns doing more than the Exarch's firepike, melting part of the Battlewagon's front end.

Th'Banshees charge into th'Runtherd, swingin' away wiv 'eir blade an' spear, an' as ye know 'em ladies train up t'kill infan'ry. 'At skill means e'ry one'a 'em swings 'it, and 'ey cut 'im t'shreds. A tuff end for a lad, ye 'ate t'see it, Audie.

Battle Round 4, Turn 2 (VP: Jon 19, Ivan 11)

The Battlewagon's turn to move, and it heads towards the Fire Dragons. And the Fire Dragons seem to be expecting it, firing overwatch on the Battlewagon. Only one hit, sadly, with one of their dragon fusion guns – melt damage is more dangerous the closer you are to your target, and they've managed to melt a hole in the engine casing of the Battlewagon.

Didn't stop th'Wagon, though, an'th'Big Shoota an'th'Lobba both unload into th'Fire Dragons, wiv on'y two'a'th'Lobba shots gettin' frew, but th'Aeldari armor comes in t'save 'em! Th'Fire Dragons make a lil skip back towards th'near'st container, reflexes kickin' in wiv th'closeness'a th'Battlewagon. Th'Wagon makes a charge t'th'Fire Dragons, an' makes it – firs' bit'a luck t'nigh', an' maybe too late.

I suppose we'll see, Zagdur, but you might well be right. The Battlewagon's wheels and tracks try to mash the Fire Dragons, but the Aeldari are a bit too nimble to get caught that easily. Only one of them gets caught, and the armor again takes the hit rather than the Aeldari wearing it. And now the Fire Dragons

WAAAAAAAGGGHHHH! VRS. AELDARI!

Side A: Ivan's Orks



fight back, with 10 swings resulting in 7 hits. But the armor manages to keep them from taking any damage. That craftworld gear is coming in strong this war.

Battle Round 5, Turn 1 (VP: Jon 19, Ivan 11)

'Ere's been a lotta chances t'show off what it can do, 'at's true! I don' 'spect we'll see much 'is round, Audie, since th'on'y Ork unit up curren'ly is th'Battlewagon. Looks like th'Storm Guardians are gonna secure 'at center point an' 'ead off t' th'next closest one, th'one th'Rangers made early on in th'fight. Looks like 'ey're workin' t'cleanse it as well, straightenin' out th'data on it.

The Banshees head to the Ork home point, and they start the process of cleansing it. They're taking their time to be sure to get all of those spores burned away, while the Fire Dragons fall back away from the Battlewagon, a smart move

Side B: Jon's Aeldari

– it's always hard for ranged fighters to stand up directly to a vehicle. The Aeldari Vypers move a bit forward towards the Battlewagon and fire at it, I suspect more out of form than any real hope at taking it down. And it's good they probably didn't, since nothing from the shuriken cannons or star cannons does a single thing, just some more dings and scorch marks on the Battlewagon.

Battle Round 5, Turn 2 (VP: Jon 29, Ivan 11)

Not a lot lef' t'do, Audie. War'ammerer Ivan moves th'Battlewagon towards th'center, but you can tell ain't much 'eart in it – th'Orks know when it's time t'retreat an' figger out how t'come back stronger an' badder. Orks nevva say die, as you know!

I do know, Zagdur, and please stop calling me that. And they put up a great fight today, but the Aeldari just had fate on their side, and the Farseer knew it. Too bad for the Orks, and as a Human, I have mixed feelings on either side winning, but both sides fought well. Looks like Warhammerer Jon and Ivan are shaking hands to wrap up this fight, so we'll call it here. Victory goes to Warhammerer Jon, 34 point to Warhammerer Ivan's 16.

It's a 'ard day t'be an Ork, but we'll – th'Boyz, 'at is, 'll be back again soon an' ready t'win another WAAAAAGH! From me an'Audie, 'til we sees ye again on th'fightin' field, keep yer guns blazin' an' blades sharp!

Final Score: Jon 29, Ivan 11. Aeldari win! ■

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The Forge Tavern Presents
Spring Cocktail Recipe:

SPICED MULLED MEAD

SERVES: 4-6

TIME: 10 MIN PREP + 20 MIN SIMMER

INGREDIENTS

- 1 bottle (750 ml) of mead (traditional or semi-sweet works best)
- 1 orange, sliced into rounds (optional: stud with whole cloves)
- 5-6 whole cloves
- 2 cinnamon sticks
- 3 star anise
- 4-6 allspice berries (or 1/4 tsp ground allspice)
- 1-inch piece fresh ginger, sliced

INSTRUCTIONS

• Combine ingredients:

In a medium saucepan, pour in the mead. Add the orange slices, cloves, cinnamon sticks, star anise, allspice, and ginger.

• Heat gently:

Warm over low to medium-low heat. Do not boil — this preserves the alcohol and avoids bitterness. Simmer gently for about 20 minutes, covered.

• Strain and serve:

Remove from heat. Strain into mugs or heatproof glasses. Garnish with an orange slice, cinnamon stick, or star anise if desired.

For a non-alcoholic version, substitute mead with apple juice or pear juice.



State of the Series

Lovecrafting a World

By: David "Blue" Wendt

Welcome back, friend. Changing things up a bit this issue—join me on my porch, have a glass of lemonade, and let's enjoy this late summer weather while we chat.

I've been thinking a lot about change lately. In my five-plus decades on this planet, I've seen plenty of it—cultural, personal, technological. Some good, some bad, all life-changing. And right now, I feel like we're on the cusp of some serious shifts.

Maybe that's why I've been trying new things in the gaming workshop and at the table. Last month, during one of our big face-to-face game gatherings, I stepped out of my comfort zone in a big way.

My wife and youngest had been hinting they wanted me to run some horror—specifically Call of Cthulhu. While I've played it once or twice, I've always shied away from running horror. I've collected plenty of horror-themed books and supplements, but never worked up the nerve to use them.

To be fair, part of that hesitation comes from childhood nightmares—most memorably, a short story about a patchwork monkey. As an adult I tracked the story down, but I still don't dare re-read it. That monkey haunted me far

longer than I realized.

But back to the present. My loved ones wanted horror, and a member of my Discord had suggested a summer camp snipe hunt when I asked for ideas. Those two threads came together as Camp Echo Lake: a ritualistic snipe hunt at a cursed summer camp, unfolding under a once-a-decade storm.

One of the things that long held me back from running horror were the repeated recommendations to "set the scene" with props, lighting, and ambiance. I used to think it was silly. But since I was experimenting, I decided to lean way in:

- I printed a dozen one-page maps of camp locations and scattered them on the table—roughly positioned, but not neat. Even before I explained why, players picked up that the camp's geography was fluid.
- I used distinct minis—not to represent characters, but simply to help players remember where they were.
- Pregens were styled as camp intake forms with counselor notes on the front, and minimal stats on the back. A subtle way to reinforce that they were young teenagers.
- I framed the story with a scene of the PCs as adults (inspired by *It* and *Stand By Me*). After a few moments of "remembering," I shut off the lights, switched on lanterns, and we dropped into the main story. We returned to the present for a teaser of a potential sequel.
- For ambiance, I found a campfire playlist on Prime Music. Usually music is more trouble than it's worth at my table, but this one worked beautifully.

• Finally, I explicitly set expectations about tone: I wanted players to play it straight, not crack gags. I had to remind one player once or twice, but the result was a story that held together. Humor still arose naturally, supporting the atmosphere instead of undermining it.

That's a lot of new tricks for this old dog—but it worked. Everyone had fun, myself included.

I'll definitely consider running more horror one-shots when I have a strong core idea I can really bring to life. And I'll keep looking for new tips, tricks, and genres to explore. Keeps the imagination fresh and the brain young.

What about you—what changes or new tricks have you tried at the table? What worked? What didn't?

In other news, I'm trying to spin up a face-to-face D&D game here in Cleveland. My game room is too cool to only use once a month. I've got some interested players, but scheduling has been the big challenge. Next time, I'll let you know if I figure out any tricks for managing a shifting cast of characters.

That's all for now—I should get back to creating. Until next time, happy gaming. ■

David "Blue" Wendt

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