



THE 9TH SCROLL

ISSUE #006 - NOVEMBER 2017

BATTLE FOR LITHEMHEIM

SPERBER'S Highborn Elves

LASTSWORD Miniatures

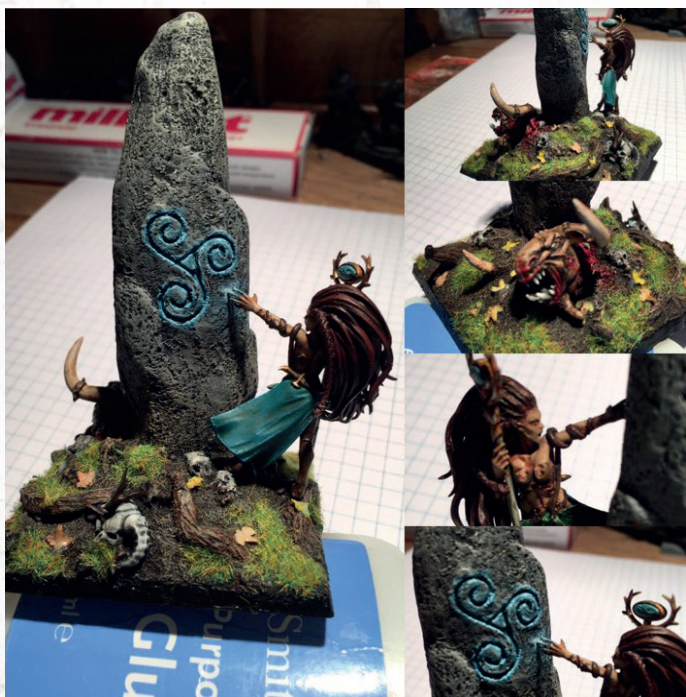
Ninth Age Starter Set!

EDITOR'S NOTE

I am super excited for this issue of the Scroll! A lot is happening in the world of the 9th Age at the moment. 2.0 is so close, and we have been seeing the sneak peaks for the last month! This issue of the Scroll will augment what you have seen so far. The battle report will give a sneak preview of some of the new magic rules, and we have two new chapters in the background compendium! We also have our usual segments on top of these articles, making for a jam-packed edition of The 9th Scroll!



Since the last issue of the Scroll, I have been traveling in Mongolia on horseback for three weeks, and I ran a 100-person tournament in Copenhagen – Giant Fanatic. Apparently, it was one of the largest 9th Age events so far!



I have really been trying to clear my painting table. A project that I have been working on for a long time are my forest rangers. I have a philosophy that if I can't find models that I like, then I will build or convert my own. My Sylvan Elf army is predominantly a Games Workshop army, but I don't like their mono-pose Wildwood Ranger models (the eternal guards with the spears look much better as mono-pose). With my rangers I decided to do some conversions that were a bit more dynamic. I used the bodies of the Games Workshop Shadow Warriors and the leftover hooded heads and axes from the Eternal Guard kits to do a kit-bash. It required a lot of green stuff, repositioning, and patience, but I am really happy with the end result. I also made a unit filler for the unit using a way-stone.

I hope you enjoy this Issue of the Scroll!

HPM

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BATTLE FOR LITHEINHEIM

Battle report by Rasmus Jørgensen and Henry Miller

This is a 5000pts battle between Dread Elf slavers and the current undead occupants of Lithenheim, a Vampire Coven. The armies are fighting to occupy the town, the Elves for plunder and the Vampires for human cattle to fuel their dark rituals and sustenance.

The battle will be fought using Classic Deployment and "Hold the Ground" secondary objective.

This Battle Report has been written to give a sneak peak of the 2.0 magic phase, without giving too much away. For this reason, we are playing with 1.3.4 armies and rulebook (apart from the magic phase). We hope that you get a nice preview of the new magic phase from what we divulge during the game. Please note that combining the two editions of rules may bring about some unusual combinations or situations that might not happen in 2.0! Also, the 2.0 spells and rules are still going through the final phases of playtesting so they might change slightly before release!

Druzina was crouched, unmoving, at the bow of The Leviathan. The Oracle was the eyes and ears of the slavers' galley. The swirling mist was impenetrable to the naked eye, but she scanned the darkness for land through a tiny tear in the veil she had engineered. The impenetrable fog had come upon them in the night. It was unsettling, but the Red Krakens were hardy and battle-tested. Druzina knew that the captain had marked a small coastal town on the plundered human maps. Known to the humans as Lithenheim, the town promised good slaves and a lot of booty. Slaves meant sacrifices.

The tendrils of fog seemed to cling up and over the sides of the warship, lovingly wrapping around her slender wrists like a serpent strangling its prey. Shaking off the clingy mist, Druzina peered back into the veil. She could almost make out the outline of ramparts upon a cliff looming in the distance.

This would be a perfect ambush, Druzina thought as she marched through the fog alongside the corsairs. The blanket of mist completely covered the Dread Elves advance toward Lithenheim's landward walls. The humans would have no warning of their coming. Druzina sneered a wicked smile. Her only concern was the foul scent on the air. Druzina thought the smell was something akin to the stench of the reptilian pens of Caen Dracín. A place she rarely chose to vacate.

Suddenly, a mournful wail reverberated through the mist. The sound shook Druzina to her soul. The anguish and pain of the deathly voice terrified her inwardly. The line of elves halted. As if by some unnatural wind, the mist evaporated and the walls of Lithenheim emerged ahead.

The walls were a ruin. Something was amiss. The wail rose again. This time the noise was amplified. Without the thick fog to soften the howl, the soundwave rippled through the elves like wind through a field of wheat. A crack of a whip and barked orders from behind Druzina snapped her to her senses. The town was dead and ruined.

The Banshee appeared upon the ruined walls, silhouetted a ghostly white against the dark sky. A third shrilling shriek came out of the mouth of the spectral monstrosity. The ambushers became the ambushed. From between the ruined segments of Lithenheims walls, dead soldiers marched towards the elves in ranks, tattered banners unnaturally still in the night air. Skinless hands dug themselves out of the deep snow, emerging as skeletal corpses brandishing halberds and swords. The smell of rotten flesh became intense. Regiments of undead warriors rose from the snowy ground ahead of the dread elves. Druzina realised there was only one way out of this mess. Looking to the cosmos, she drew power from the veil into her staff and began to chant.





Vampire Covenant

Vampire Count(ess)

General, Lamia Bloodline, Great Wepon, Mask of Innocence, Shield

Apprentice, Witchcraft

Court of the Damned: Bloodties
Divine Icon, Eternal Ring, Glittering Cuirass - 1220

Necromancer

Alchemy, Ring of Fire, Sceptre of Power—230

Necromancer

Alchemy—160

Fell Wraith

Banshee—220

Fell Wraith

Banshee—220

40 Skeletons

Full Command—390

33 Skeletons

Halberds, Full Command, Flaming Banner—449

20 Zombies

Banner, Musician—150

Altar of Undeath—400

30 Barrow Guard

Halberds, Full command, Banner of the Barrows Kings—765

Cadaver Wagon

Endless Horde—240

5 Dire Wolves—80

5 Dire Wolves—80

Polly the Varkolak—360



The Vampire Covenant, played by Henry, are occupants of Lithenheim. They will fight until the light of undeath goes out of their soulless eyes, or until their master releases them from servitude. The force is led by a Vampire of the Lamia Bloodline, Elsbeth the Haughty. Seeking a place that she could spend the cold months of winter, Elsbeth came to Lithenheim to feed on warm flesh. The undead noblewoman and her deathly retainers joined the court of Lithenheim, only to take it over through the use of subterfuge and ample bosoms.

Elsbeth's newly dead bodyguard were raised from the Imperial guards of Lithenheim. They wear the same armour and wield the same weapons that they did in their previous life. They march under the flag of the Lithenheim Guard.



Alongside the undead Imperial Guard march the town's regiments, raised through macabre ritual by the necromancers in thrall to Elsbeth the Haughty. The Temple Mauverines are an infantry regiment once assigned as guardians of the shrine to Sunna within Lithenheim. Recently stripped of flesh and souls, these halberd wielding warriors march under the wolf banner of Lithenheim.

The Crimson Fangs, another skeleton regiment raised at the whim of Elsbeth. This unit was once the Crimson Skulls before Elsbeth changed the company heraldry to be more to her liking. These brave infantrymen died many millennia ago at the walls of Lithenheim but have now been raised to defend the town again in death.





The Red Krakens played by Rasmus are a feared naval force of dreaded elven slavers lead by the Beastmaster-Prince Assaci Kirthur. They march under the flag of the Red Kraken.

The force consists of multiple formations of Corsairs who are expert slavers and the fanatical Blades of Nabh—all of which are devoted to their Captain and Prince.

Assaci Kirthur has hired a large squadron of Dread Legionaries from the garrison of Caen Dracin. These dread mercenaries are a common sight bolstering any raiding party and march under their own banner.

The guardians of Kraken's Keep joined their patron on this enterprise. Kirthur's personal guard are veterans of many campaigns and stalwart defenders of the Princes tower in Silexia. These troops are the cruellest and most capable of the Red Krakens. While they don't have the best sea legs, they are foes without peer on land. They march under the flag of Kraken's Keep.



Dread Elves**Prince**

Beast Master, Great Weapon, Ring of Shadows, Lucky Shield, Dragon—970

Oracle

Wizard Master of Cosmology, Wandering Familiar, Ring of Fire—520

Captain

Battle Standard Bearer, Fleet Commander, Banner of Gar Daeros, Hardened Shield—370

30 Dread Legionaries

Spears, Full Command, War Standard—570

10 Corsairs

Paired weapons, musician—200

10 Corsairs

Paired weapons, musician—200

10 Blades of Nabh—280**13 Tower Guard**

Full Command, Banner of Blood—454

12 Executioners

musician—312

Hydra—440**Medusa**

halberd—144

10 Dancers of Yema

Champion—220

Raptor Chariot—190**5 harpies—130**



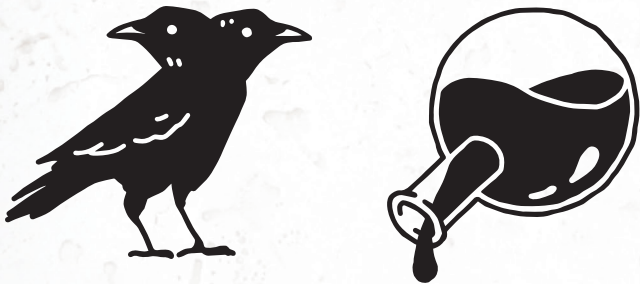
Spell Selection

The spell selection works a little differently in 2.0. Depending on your classification of wizard (Novice, Apprentice, Master) you automatically get certain spells depending on your chosen path. No need to roll for them anymore! You can also swap spells for the trait spell of your race and other spells in your chosen path.

Henry's Vampire Coven army had three apprentice wizards. The Vampire herself uses Witchcraft and both Necromancers use Alchemy.

The Vampire started with Deceptive Glamour and Twisted Effigy. Henry swapped Twisted Effigy to the Vampire Covenant racial trait spell Evocation of Souls.

Both Necromancers begin with Word of Iron and Glory of Gold. Henry chose to swap out both Glory of Gold spells. One necromancer chose the number one spell – Quicksilver Lash and the other necromancer chose Evocation of Souls.



Evocation of Souls (Mf) 4+ [7+] {10+}

18" [6"Aura] {12"Aura}

Augment, Instant

When resolving the spell, choose one of the following for each target:

- The R&F part of the target Raises a number of Health Points equal to its Evoked value.
- Up to one Character within the target Recovers a number of Health Points equal to its Evoked value.

Models with Towering Presence cannot Raise more than 2 Health Points from this spell in a single Magic Phase.

Rasmus' Dread Elf Oracle was a master wizard using Cosmology. He automatically starts with Touch of the Heart, Ice and Fire, Perception of Strength and Unity in Divergence. He chose to swap Unity in Divergence for his racial trait spell Crippling Fatigue.

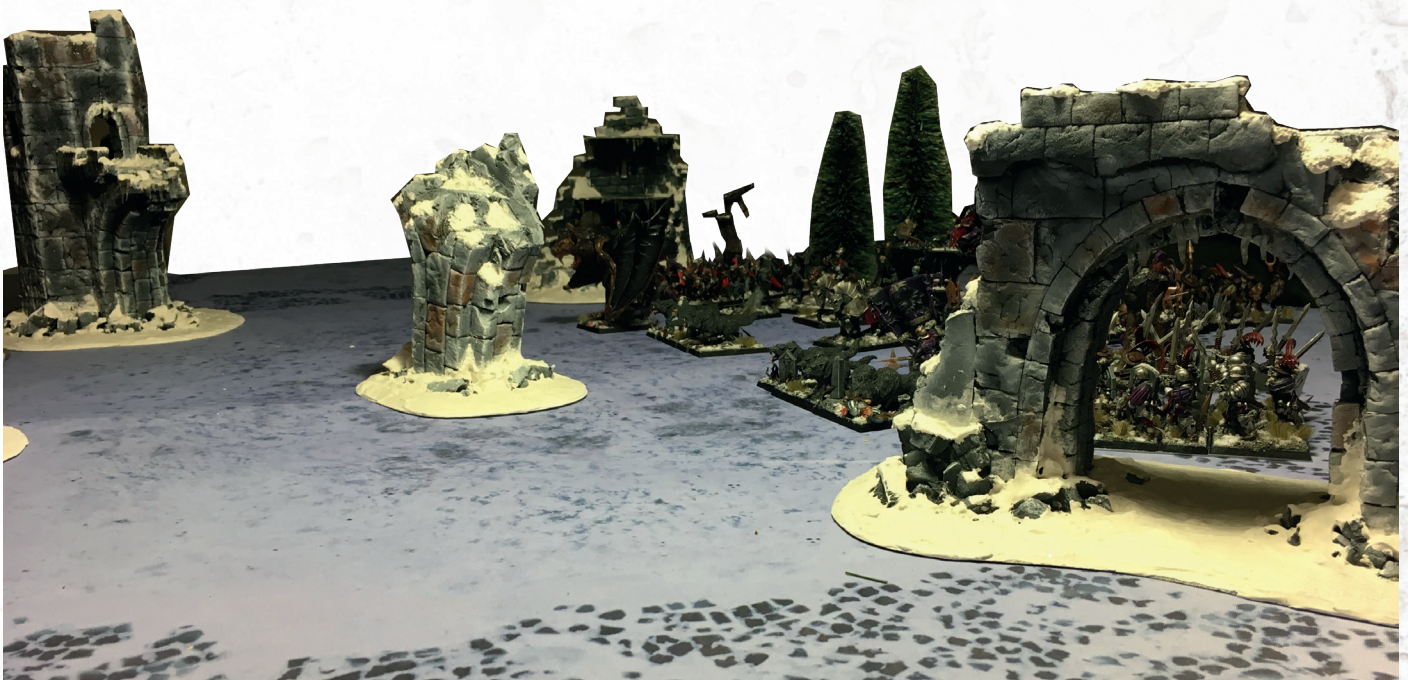
Crippling Fatigue 8+ [12+]

18" Hex

Lasts one Turn.

Failed to wound rolls with Melee Attacks [Ranged Attacks] against the target must be re-rolled.







Vampire Covenant Turn 1

Looking at the matchups that faced me across the field, I had very little that could damage the hydra and dragon. I was hoping to be able to fight the dragon with the Vampire on the Court of the Damned. The fight would be pretty even but I had Distracting, a better armour save and a ward save. If I could get it in an isolated fight, I was hoping to grind the Dread Prince down.

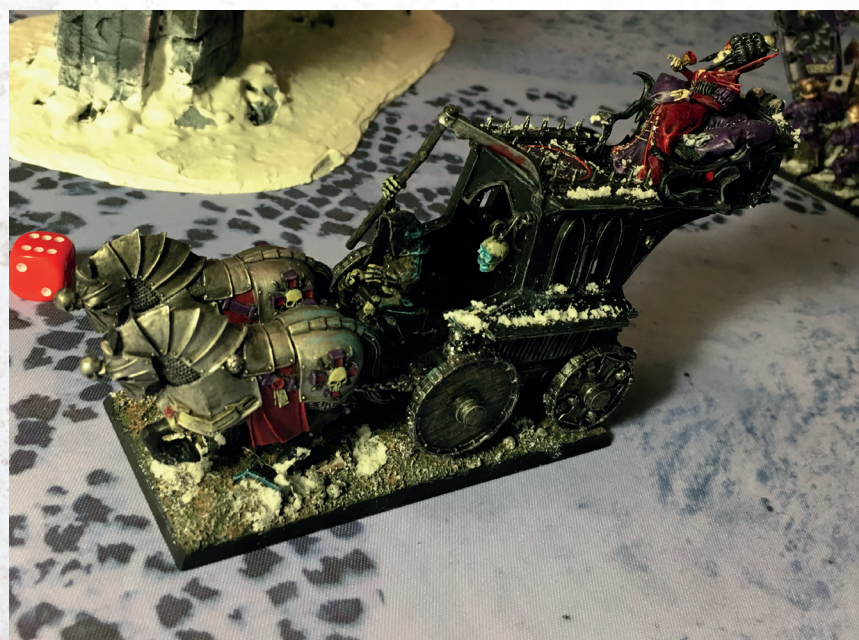
The hydra was a problem. I thought that I could kill the hydra with the barrow guard so I dropped them opposite. On both sides I would use the impassable terrain to hold the flanks and try and pick off the small scoring units with Polly the Varkolak and my magic. I was hoping to beat the legionaries with the halberd skeletons. It's a bad matchup, but I had the right spells and buffs to do it. The banshees were there to add some extra punch to the combats and sneak in some shooting here and there.

I moved up to threaten some turn 2 charges if he came in and got too close. Hopefully I can swamp the center of the board with scoring units and bodies and win the objective.

The new magic phase starts by choosing one of 8 cards instead of rolling for magical flux. There are essentially 8 predetermined phases. These are randomised. We think it's best to roll a D8 (8-sided dice) to decide the card, rather than having a "shuffled deck". I rolled a 7 and used 6 Veil tokens for 2 extra dice.

The Veil tokens can be traded for magic dice at a 3:1 ratio, which meant I ended up with an 8 vs 6 phase. Otherwise the casting process is similar to before.

Rasmus stopped both Evocation spells I cast, and the only other thing that was in range was the witchcraft hex spell Deceptive Glamour which I cast on the tower guard in the forest to slow them down slightly (from the attribute), along with the corsairs behind them. The necromancers' missiles were out of range.



FLUX CARD 7

6 Magic Dice
(both players)

7 Veil Tokens
(active player)

Dread Elves Turn 1

My plan was to outflank the Undead and pick them apart from behind. Henry had not given me any easy charges and I had little shooting to deal with the chaff. I moved up to get into position. The Hydra was deployed close to the Beastmaster on Dragon so that it could benefit from Hatred.

I rolled a 5 on the D8 which is a solid phase. I threw 5 dice at Ice and Fire (now Strength 4) on the Varkolak and got a 20 without miscasting! Henry used his shielding scroll instead of risking a failed roll. I rolled low on the 2D6, and it resulted in 1 wound on the beast after saves. My other spells were dispelled.





Vampire Covenant Turn 2

I pushed the wolves into position to chaff his units so that I could slow his advance and pick my charges the next turn. I pushed Polly up round the flank of his army so that I could threaten and try and get into the small units and hopefully his wizard bunker in a few turns. A little risky moving it away from 18" of the general for healing but worth the reward if it worked.

In the magic phase I rolled a 1. This is the weakest phase. We each had only 4 dice as I chose to save my tokens for next turn. I 2-diced a Quicksilver Lash on the dragon (now in range) which was disrupted with all the dice. I then tried to cast Evocation twice on 1 dice each, needing a 4 or more, which both rolled a 1!



Dread Elves Turn 2

Henry had left an opening for the Dancers of Yema to charge into the Bat Swarms. This would result in me overrunning into the altar and getting into the meat of the army early. The charge was a 7, but I failed. The chariot also failed into the skeleton swordsmen. The Hydra and Executioners charged into the chaffing Dire Wolves. The rest moved up a little. I chaffed the Varkolak with a unit of Corsairs and pointed the wizard towards the monster. I also blocked the general with the medusa. If I got lucky it would hold it a turn with Distracting. But otherwise it would stop it counter-charging into the executioners.

This time I rolled a 4 in the Magic Phase and used all my veil tokens to improve my dice pool to 8. I cast my trait spell, Crippling Fatigue (reroll to wound) on the Barrow Guard so that if the Hydra overran in the following turn, I would do more damage. Henry allowed this to go through but disrupted Ice and Fire on the Varkolak with all the dice. The Ring of Fire went through with the 2 remaining dice and did 1 wound to the Varkolak (now on 2 wounds)



The Executioners and Hydra killed both the chaffing units, and the Hydra overran, but didn't reach, the Barrow Guards.





Vampire Covenant Turn 3

I charged the blocking medusa with the Vampire on Court, Hydra with Barrow Guards. I thought that if I could get another +1 to hit using the Cadaver Wagon on these guys, they would do some nice damage. Polly went hungrily into the Corsairs. I blocked the Chariot and Dancers with the Bat Swarms and moved a Banshee over so that they could both shoot into the Executioners.

I nudged the Zombies so that the cart was in range for Lightning Reflexes on the Barrow Guard.

For magic I rolled an 8 on the D8. This is a good phase because miscasts are diminished in power. Quicksilver Lash was disrupted again against the dragon. I cast an aura Evocation from the necromancer which gave Lightning Reflexes to the Barrow Guard as planned and raised some Zombies and halberd skeletons. I failed to cast the +2 armour save on the barrow guard—rolling a double 1.

I managed to kill a handful of executioners with the double Banshee wails. These girls are good!

Polly took 1 wound from the Corsairs despite the +1 to wound banner coming into effect. It forced me to make about 3 saves which could have killed the Varkolak. In return Polly did what Polly does. It killed 4 with attacks and 1 with a stomp, the unit failed its re-roll-able break test and fled through the whole battle, and the rest died to dangerous terrain! An overrun would have put me in front of the Tower Guard so I elected to reform. She healed a wound from vampiric, meaning she was back up to two!

The Vampire killed the Medusa with no problems. Impact hits and the Vampire attacks were enough.

The Barrow Guards do only 1 wound to the hydra after an awful to-wound roll (which is about average all being said). Didn't do my maths here and it essentially cost me the game! Hydra killed 10 in total after the breath weapon, including the champion! Ouch! I thought I would win that combat, but clearly that was a bad decision in deployment. I also completely forgot about the Hatred provided by the Beastmaster.



Dread Elves Turn 3

Druzina had worked up a sweat. The Vampire and her acolytes had pressed her hard. Nevertheless, she knew she was better. She had studied the cosmos for centuries. The Vampire's rudimentary witchcraft was no match for her understanding of the veil.

Kirthur had told her to deal with the vampiric monstrosity bearing down on the elves' left flank. Until now her efforts had been exhausted. This time she would try something different. Drawing power from the veil into the lodestone embedded in her ring, she unleashed the energy towards the Varkolak.

A gout of flame rushed forwards like an ancient dragon's breath. Druzina had timed the siphoning perfectly. The Varkolak thrashed violently as it was engulfed in flames. Emitting a dreadful screech, almost as shrill as the banshee, but much more satisfying. It fell to the icy ground in a steaming pile of charred fur.

The Dragon charges into the Barrow Guard, now champion-less. I charge the bats with both Chariot and Dancers. Executioners decide they are not long for this world, and the best they can do is to try and assassinate the Banshees with their Multiple Wounds (2). They charge into the skeletons. I turn the Tower Guard to face the Varkolak and block the charge on my wizard bunker.

Rolled a 1 for magical flux. I 3-dice Ice and Fire into the Varkolak, which is disrupted. I then try a 2-dice bound spell fireball. Henry has no dice to disrupt, and I roll a 6 on the D6 and 3 from the D3. Polly ends up a smoking pile of fur!

The Dragon and the Hydra wipe the rest of the Barrow Guards, and the bats die. The Prince on Dragon wanted to get itself outside the vampire's arc but rolled high and hit the Zombie train.

1 Executioner managed a wound on the right-side banshee (which multiplied to 2 wounds). That 3++ ethereal save is strong! I did enough wounds to stick in combat with the final Executioner.





Vampire Covenant Turn 4

Polly died, which was sad. But the Dragon running into the zombies was good. Hopefully I would hold it there for long enough and it would spend the rest of the game eating rotten corpses. Chomp away! The Tower Guard had presented my Vampire on the Court with a tasty rear charge on an 8. I only rolled a measly 5 on Swiftstride and stumbled a few inches forward. The halberd skeletons with the flaming banner went for the Hydra (this would be a better matchup). Turned out that I could only get a few models in (7 attacks), but with the flaming banner I was hoping to do some wounds, especially with magic support. I had to kill it; otherwise, I'd get charged by the legionaries the next turn. It had only 3 wounds left!

For Magic I rolled an 8 again so had to reroll the D8 and got a 3 (you have to discard the cards so you can't have the same magic phase twice in a game). I cast Evocation of Souls on the Zombies, which also gave me Lightning Reflexes on the halberd skeletons fighting the hydra. So far so good. Rasmus chose to disrupt the boosted Deceptive Glamour on the legionaries, which would counter-charge the skeletons next turn.

This should make them hit on a 3+ rather than a 2+ and potentially strike last if my coven throne was in range for the aura, giving a further -2 initiative (agility). I cast a boosted Word of Iron on the halberd skeletons to give them a 6+ armour save and a 6+ regen (from the Altar) against the Hydra's S5 attacks. But more importantly, it made the beast flammable! Rasmus failed to disrupt this one because he had used most of his dice on the previous spell.

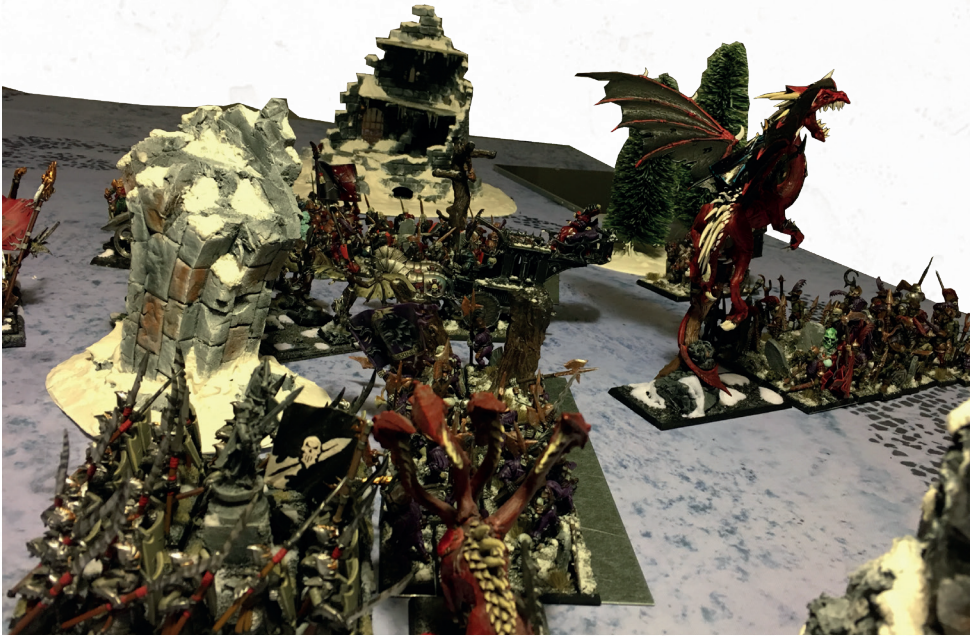


In the end I managed only 2 wounds on the hydra from my 7 attacks! So close! The hydra did enough so that I lost combat. It then reformed to face me and I chose to reform to face the incoming legionaries. This meant I would keep my rank bonus. Hopefully I would swing and kill the hydra in the next turn with the one-turn buffs still remaining from my magic phase.

The Zombies took some damage but nothing significant.

Dread Elves Turn 4

I charge the Dread Legionaries with spears into the halberd skeletons fighting the Hydra. With the +1 to wound banner from the BSB in effect, this should go my way if the Hydra survives. The Chariot and Dancers now reach the skeleton block. Hopefully my impact hits can do enough damage to win the first round, and I can try and snipe out the Banshees with my other attacks. Then I will win the grind.



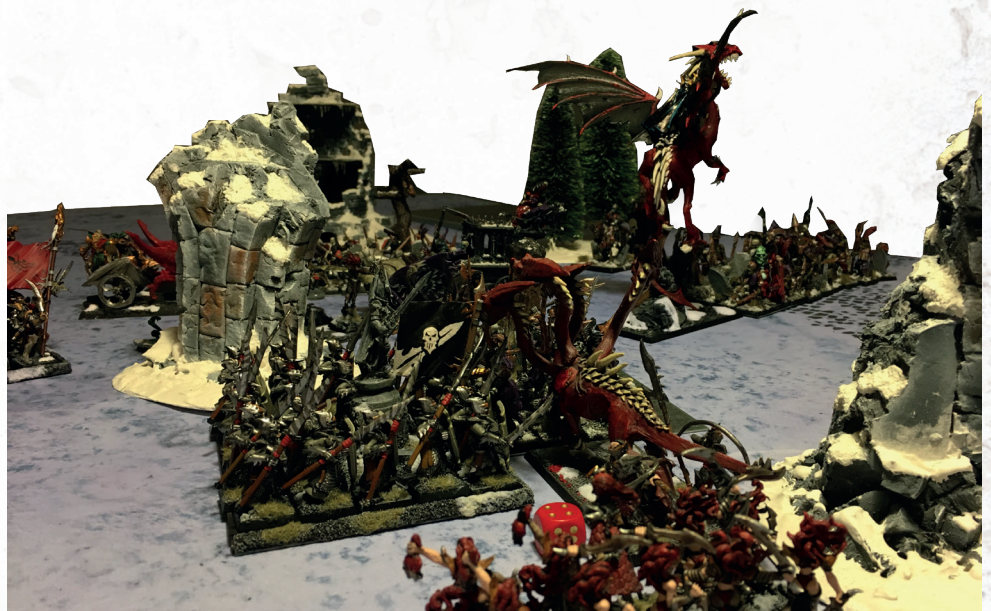
I again block the general, this time with the harpies that have been lurking.

The Dragon in the Zombies is not going to be good if it keeps fighting like last turn.

For Magic I rolled a 2 and added a veil token giving me a 6 vs 5 phase. Ice and Fire was cast with 3 dice. Henry failed the disrupt attempt which resulted in 2 wounds on the Altar. Perception of Strength, giving +1 strength and +1 armour penetration, was cast on the spear unit with the last 3 dice. This was also too high to disrupt on Henry's remaining 2 dice. This would be an easy fight.

The spears strike with 16 attacks and do 14 wounds! That's what hitting and wounding on a 2+ will do! The Hydra survives and kills some more. The end of the combat leaves just 5 halberd skeletons alive.

The Prince and Dragon combine for just 3 wounds on the Cadaver Wagon, and I roll really badly with my stomps and do no more wounds. I actually lose vs the zombies with 3 ranks and a banner but pass the test on a 9!



The chariot rolls a 1 for impact hits, and I fail to kill the Banshees (again). I win combat by 2, which does very little to the skeleton block.



Vampire Covenant Turn 5

I fire up the Altar at strength 5. It's a little disappointing. I do nothing to the Dragon, 1 wound to the Legionaries, nothing on the Hydra, a couple on the Dancers, 1 on the Harpies, and just 1 wound on the chariot.

The Harpies are in the way of the Court and Vampire, so I charge them. Pretty much everything else is in combat. It's at this point that I realise the scenario—and probably the game—is slipping away from me. I need to keep the altar alive to try and kill the Dragon and Hydra in the last turn with the damage aura.

For Magic I rolled a 7. With my remaining tokens I got 3 extra dice, making it a 9 vs 6 phase. I cast a boosted Deceptive Glamour on the Dancers, rolling high with 3 dice. Rasmus failed to disrupt with 4 dice.

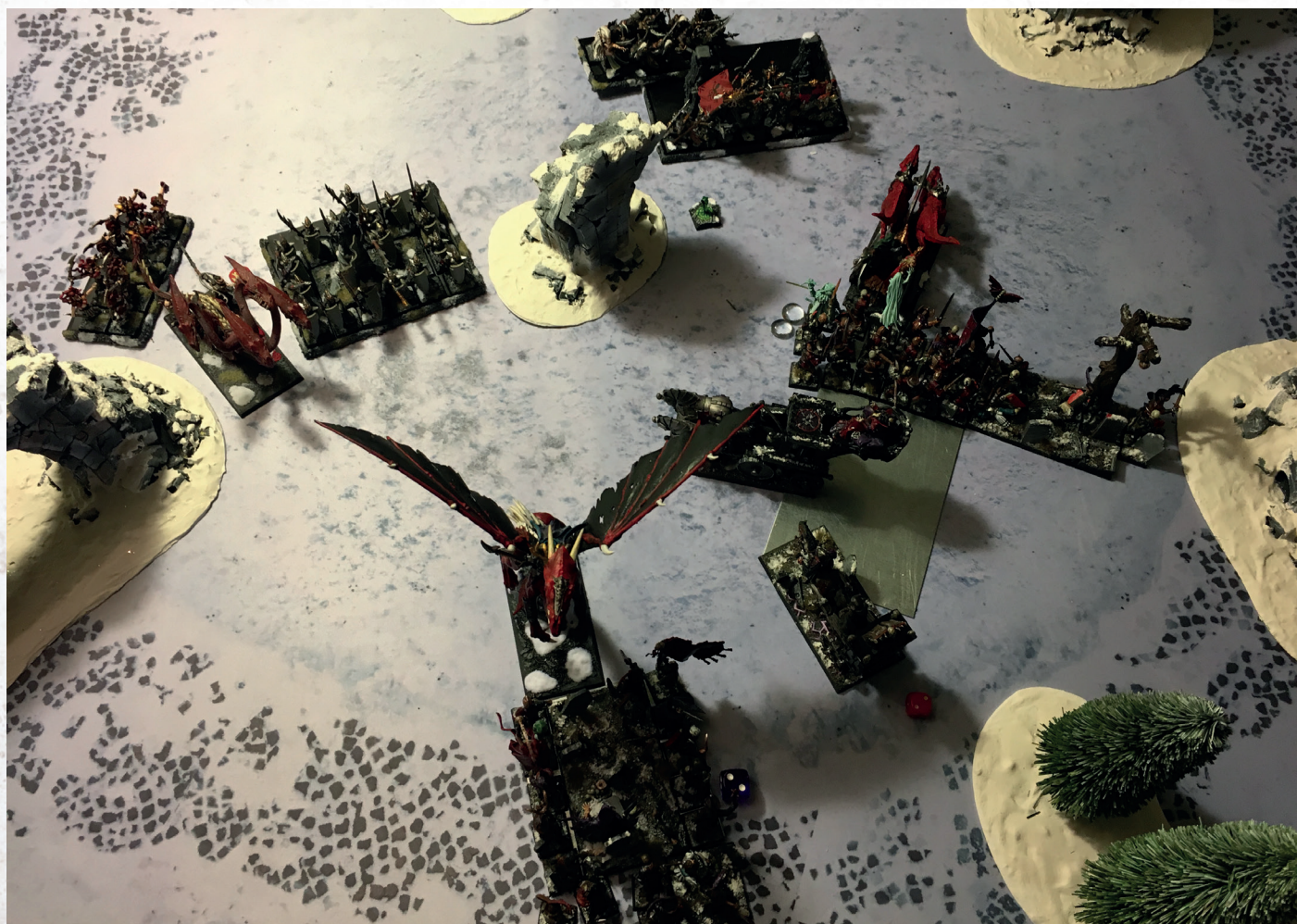
This means that the Dancers of Yema will be initiative/agility 3. With the court close by, this will reduce them by a further 2, meaning they strike at initiative 1 (after the skeletons and banshees). It also makes them WS2, but this doesn't make too much difference because I parry anyway.

It essentially forces him to use paired weapons to strike simultaneously. Last turn he used flails and went through my armour and wounded me on 2's.

I healed the Cadaver Wagon using Evocation of Souls with 2 dice, which he let go. This meant Rasmus would have to concentrate on the wagon to kill it and not generate much combat res. again.

I then cast +2 armour from Word of Iron on the vampire with my remaining dice, which wasn't disrupted.

The Halberd skellies died, and the Legionaries turned to face the general. The Dancers needed a 4 to stick in combat after the banshee had done a few wounds. They broke and ran, but the chariot being stupid and immune to fear passed its test on a 5 on the re-roll! The remaining two Dancers would eventually run off the table. I reformed the skeletons wide to stop a flank charge from the Tower Guard on the general that was now awaiting the oncoming charge from the Legionaries.



Dread Elves Turn 5



I charged the Legionaries into the Vampire, hoping that I would have enough combat score (with a charge and a War Banner) to pop it if it fluffed in the challenge. The Hydra came to the rescue of the Dread Prince on the Dragon. The Tower Guard were still blocked by the chariot, so nudged forward. The Oracle was lacking targets, and if it went badly in the combats her bunker might come under threat. I chose to take her out of the unit near the impassable terrain and use the familiar to shoot around the corner into the Altar.

I rolled an 8 for my Magic Phase – awesome! This was a 9 vs 7 phase after using my veil tokens.

I 3-diced Ice and Fire on the Altar, rolling a 2, 1 and 1. But because of the new “Fizzler” rule (WIP name we assume), I got 2 dice back to my pool – those that rolled a 1. I tried to cast Touch of the Heart to heal the Hydra so I would save half the points, but it was disrupted despite rolling 6,6,4. The new miscast rules require a triple to be rolled rather than a double 6. Henry had used all his dice so I used my last 2 dice to cast the bound ring fireball on the Altar. I did no wounds! Hopefully it wouldn't explode too badly next turn.

The Zombie combat dragged on, but after the fight they were now only 10 models plus the cart and a single Necromancer (one of the Necromancers sacrificed himself to the Dragon in a challenge hoping to keep the unit alive long enough to finish the game).

The Legionary leader did no wounds to the general and was splatted in return. This resulted in the vampire only losing 2 wounds from instability.

I had been trying to kill the banshees for the last 3 combat rounds, but the ghosts' ethereal saves were proving too much. However, the chariot hadn't taken many wounds. It stuck again, which was actually annoying because my tower guard were still blocked from the fight.





Vampire Covenant Turn 6

The Altar did better this time. 1 wound on the General on Dragon, but nothing on the single wound Hydra. It did finish off the chariot, though, which gave me a sneaky opening. Because the skeletons and Banshees were now out of combat, I moved my left banshee with the 1 remaining wound through the impassable terrain in the centre of the table (ethereal) so it could wail at the wizard! Rasmus didn't see that one coming!

I didn't have many cards left. I rolled a 5 after a few rerolls, which meant an 8 vs 5 after veil tokens were converted to magic dice. This is probably one of the best phases.

I got off a boosted Word of Iron, giving +2 armour to the Court and Vampire. Rasmus saved his dice for both my raise spells, which were subsequently disrupted.

The Banshee wailed at full power in the direction of the Oracle, and the she-elf's head exploded like a melon landing on pavement!



The Zombie unit crumbles in the face of the overwhelming odds of both a Dragon and Hydra. The Dragon faces the Altar, and the Hydra faces the flank of the Vampire on the Court of the Damned fighting the block of elves.



My General kills a rank or two of Legionaries, and they were forced to take a LD 8 test to stick around due to Fear and the extra -1 LD from the Lusty vampire power. The elves promptly got freaked out by the beauty, ran, and were cut down!

Dread Elves Turn 6

I had won the game at this point. It was probably a 15-5 after the scenario. I didn't need to take any unnecessary risks. The vampire could taunt the prince with her crude gestures all she liked. I decided not to charge the Dragon into the Vampire but into the Altar instead. The Hydra was on 1 wound and stayed in place.

The Blades of Nabh that had been hanging out at the back charged into the Banshee that had just killed the Oracle, which also put them within scoring range should things go horribly wrong. The Corsairs and tower guard charged into the remaining skeletons with shields.

As I had no magic left, we moved on to combat immediately. The Tower Guards and Corsairs wipe the skeletons and leave only two remaining after crumble! The Dragon destroys the Altar.

The Blades of Nabh do about 6 poison wounds to the Banshee, taking its final wound, and the game is over. With this final turn clean up, the game ended 17-3, including the secondary objective.





Post-Battle thoughts

Henry Final Thoughts:

I messed up in deployment. I think I should have swapped the Barrow Guard and skeletons with halberds around to get more favourable matchups. The halberd skeletons would have done better vs the Hydra because of the flaming banner and the Barrow Guard would have done better vs the Legionaries. This was a mistake that probably cost me the game from the get-go. Rasmus did really well to constantly chaff my general throughout the game, and it was unfortunate that I failed the rear charge in turn 4. The Banshees were great! They really give some punch to the skeleton blocks and are useful as chaff and in the shooting phase. A very versatile unit and well worth the points!

I really liked the new magic phase. The new rules are a little complex (especially the wording), although the copy we were using was still not the final version. The mechanic with the veil tokens is really interesting and I can see this being important to manage. It's still all very new, but I'm super positive about the new rules. Once we have gotten used to them, I think it will be considered a vast improvement.



Rasmus Final Thoughts:

The combination of the Hydra and Beastmaster is awesome. Being able to support each other can easily turn a flank, especially with the option of Hatred on either the Dragon or Hydra. The ruined castle had a lot of impassable terrain which meant that I couldn't get around the flank of the Vampire army so well, but instead I punched through with the two monsters. My plan worked to this extent, so I am pretty happy with how it went.

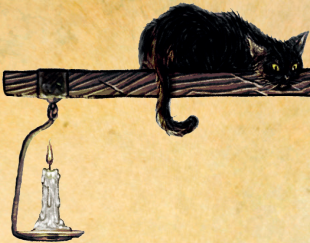
The new magic is great. I think the current random element of rolling a double 1 or a double 6 is sometimes fun, but the new format is less random. This makes for a better game but does take away the extraordinary from happening. I think there will be some really nice combos with the new magic phase, and looking at the new spell selection system, you can really make your combos from home, rather than hoping on the dice when you play.

The battle was won. The fight over the walls of Lithenheim had been brief and the elves had suffered minimal losses. But to her dismay, Druzina knew there would be no slaves and no sacrifices. Undead warriors were soulless beings who obeyed one master. The appearance of the cackling Vampiress and her unholy courtesans had caused some problems, but to her right, the legionaries currently had her cornered. The coven of Vampires would make a valuable prize should they be taken.

To the Oracle's left the Guardians of Kraken's Keep were vanquishing the last of the skeletons in the tattered red and black uniforms. As she approached a fallen-down segment of Lithenheims wall, Druzina's mind wondered at the prospect of the unholy artefacts coveted by a coterie of Vampires. This thought was cut short however. A ghostly hand shot out through the wall in front of her. The spectral hand was swiftly followed by an arm and a hollowed face with sunken eye sockets. The banshee took in a deep and rasping breath as it drifted morosely from the facade. The next thing Druzina knew, she was on her knees. Her hands were clamped over her ears, and a searing headache was developing like a rolling thundercloud behind her eyes. Then, a skull-splitting snap.

The Vampire cackled with laughter at the sight of the Oracle's head exploding in a shower of blood, brain, and bone. The brain matter covered the Legionaries in front of her. This proved too much for the elven mercenaries. Despite the shouted threats and crack of the whip from their general, the Legionnaires broke and fled in terror with the Vampire and her floating court screeching with dreadful amusement in hot pursuit.



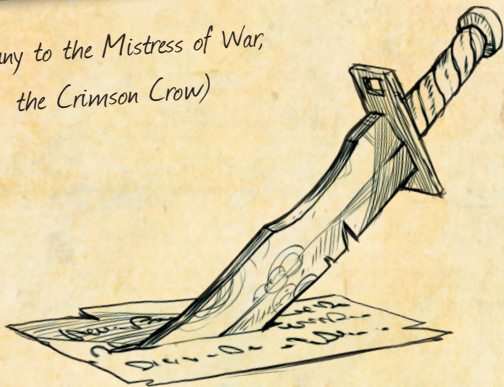


DREAD ELVES



Fly above the fields of war,
Fly above the bones of the enemy.
Ghastly, grim and ancient Crimson Raven wandering.
From the deadly shore of the battlefields,
Protect our deeds of war and glorify our bleeding weapons,
Exalt our heroes, consume the blood of our victims,
Witness our prowess, witness our strength,
Fly above the fields of war
Fly above the bones of the enemy.

*(Litany to the Mistress of War,
the Crimson Crow)*



Sources I can find portray a grim picture of the birth of the nation of Dathen. It seems that in the First Age of Ruin, the Highborn's Vetian provinces faced formidable threats from barbarian hordes and dwarven enmity.

Many elves fled into the West, settling in the colonies that the Pearl Throne had already established in Silexia, and began to tame that wild region. Yet this work made them grow resentful of the Aldan nobles who sought to profit from what they were building, and who had sent no aid to them in Vetia before.

Aldan's control was rejected, sparking a civil war that coincided with internal revolt in the Highborn's home island of Celeda Ablan. It seems that in this war the ruthless spirit of the Dread Host was born and set forever, and the independence of their nation secured. To this day, Daeb ships bring terror around the world.

Graduates

Today we commend you to the service of the Fatherland, free citizens and true. Your time in the academy is complete, and you leave as Legionnaire or Auxiliary - a proud soldier of the Republic, bringing great honour to your family.

Bonds you have made in these bloodied courtyards will last a lifetime, and what you do with that life is your own inalienable right to decide. Some of you will return to your farms, upstanding citizens supporting your family. Some will enter the politics of Karhaen. And some will join military expeditions or levy them, aiding the great might of our people to display its unsurpassed strength and will to dominate the world. The very finest of you may even be selected to compete to be reborn with a new name in the Tower Guard.

Whatever your future holds, whether sailor or warrior, knight or planter, trader or senator, you will never forget what you have learned here at the academy, and you will never cease your quest for self-perfection.

Citizens of Dathen: I salute you!





The Obsidian Thrones are the very core and symbol of power of the Republic. Upon them, the three Crimson Consuls embody the will of the Senate, a body of 99 elected individuals seated in the Tower of Gar Daecos in Rathaen. But there are other key players in the Daeb's great game of intrigue, power and ambition - it appears three principal factions dominate the politics of this land.

At the time of Sonnstahl's birth, our people suffered a terrible assault under the auspices of the first of these: the Fatherland faction, which seeks to reclaim its lost realms in Vedia. The second, the Motherland Faction, attracts those who desire dominion over the old Empire and the Republic's greatest enemies:

the Highborn of Celeda Ablan. Finally there are the Slavers, often popular among the youngest Daeb, or the most daring on the seas. Their faction looks only to Silexia as its homeland, and seeks to build its power on trade... which in Dathen means slavery.



The Highborn do not often speak to humans on such matters, seeing us as unworthy of intelligent conversation. But I was moved by the plight of your son and I pushed my contacts in Aldan as hard as I could for information. I must be blunt, it appears that if he has been taken by the Dread Fleet his fate can only be enslavement. There are three most likely outcomes. First, he may be put to work in the docks servicing the mighty Fleet of Daeb privateers, operated by citizen traders solely for profit, constituting perhaps the most formidable naval force in the world. Second, he may be sent to a plantation in the vast, unknown interior of Silexia, where Dathen's slave-filled lands stretch no one knows how far.

Finally, he may be sold to a household in one of the nation's great cities on its eastern shores - huge metropolises by elven standards. Even the poorest elf has at least one slave to call his own, they say. In any event, you must know it is almost unheard of for the vassals of the Dread to return to their former homes.

I can only imagine your pain at this news. You have my sympathy.

(Letter intercepted between Sonnstahler traders)

I call for you, Lord of Matter, Lord of the Senses,
 Master of excess, the very essence of life,
 For you are the soul of endless pleasure,
 Enticing symbol of power and joy.
 You are life, you are death, you are lust beyond them,
 You are the day and the night of the spirit,
 You only choose those who embrace the unity of the darkest delight.
 You are the knowable unknown of pleasure, the pathless path to eternity,
 The embodiment and the essence of our superiority.
 We look for your delight and we pray you
 To protect the power of Dathen.



(Opening invocation to Yema for public ceremonies)



ARMY SHOWCASE

Sperber's Highborn Elves Army



Since seeing the Lord of the Rings movies, I wanted to play the Highborn Elves. The LOTR miniatures still look great to me. Unfortunately, their scale is too small for our average infantry size of 28mm. On the other hand, I am not a big fan of the miniature style that has recently prevailed at He-who-must-not-be-named. At least the older elven range is beautiful. Their designers did a fantastic job on the old and new Wood Elves and some of the High Elves models.

As there are so many elfish armies out there, I wanted to do something special to create a unique one. The first decision was the colour scheme. Although it is a fitting combination, I have seen too many elven armies painted in white and blue. I did not want to add another one. I decided to go for white and gold as the main colours. This was augmented with red and only a little blue and purple.

The painting itself is not over the top. I would say it is standard. I only tried to paint everything neatly and accurately. I used techniques from dry brushing to layering, just as and when I was in the mood.



Although some people disrespect dry brushing, if you use the technique in a functional way, it can be very useful. The second way that I created a unique army was to invest time in doing conversions. I usually have Games Workshop miniatures, like many elven players. I chose to modify many of my models wherever possible by adding an "antique" to the model. I.e. a Roman- or Greek style component. Mainly I tried to achieve this using different helmets.





One of the parts I included was the Game Workshop Slannesh hero helmet. I like the Greek look, so I collected loads of them. I used these on my Flame Warden Models.



Another beautiful range of helmets is sold by Basicks, for their Amazons. You can use them on male or female models, there is no difference and they really look great. Scibor also sells very stylish shields and there is a lot of possible combinations. I used Basicks Amazon heads and Scribor shields on my small unit of Seaguard.



I have also added components from the Games Workshop Dark Elves and Wood Elves ranges to make my models more unique. As well as adding alternate components, I also expanded on the Games Workshop models. I added arrows and bowstrings to my archer unit to give an extra layer of realism and help them stand out from the basic models.





As well as using Games Workshop miniatures, I have used other manufactures. My Wizard Master is from Fenryll, from the range where they offer triplets of the same character in different states of development. I think he is human, but he looks kind of elfish to me, so I took him in.



I also have some Gamezone Miniatures characters in the form of my BSB and Prince on foot. The Prince is particularly fitting because it comes supplied with a Greek-style helmet.

To make the Dragon Lord more unique, I cooked it in boiling water until he was soft! This sounds drastic, but it allowed me to twist the body of the dragon a little to get a more dynamic pose. This was actually quite difficult, because the two halves of the body need to fit together. Please be careful if you try this yourself! Despite the water having just boiled, I didn't expect it to be as hot as it was.

The Griffon Prince conversions are some of my favourite models. I have used the Games Workshop Slannesh head again, and one of them has been converted using the Dragon Prince parts to make it stand out from the standard model. The only thing that is a bit disappointing is the very limited use and possibility of combinations of the griffon princes in-game. I am looking forward to 2.0 where the Griffon will hopefully be more playable, so thank you 9th Age for this!







VERMIN SWARM



There is no longer any doubt that vermin still live, but since being driven back into the earth by Sunna's victory it is hard to gauge their strength. Unable to work beneath the light of the sun they must contest for the gloomy depths: no doubt some of their old tunnels remain, but without their former vigour, it is dubious whether they have been maintained. Scholars debate: did their defeat cause a weakness of the mind or did their habits, their lack of sunlight and fresh food cause a weakness of the body? Whatever the cause, they are a broken nation, and long may they remain so.

It is reported that in other lands, away from the light of Sunna, they have retained a fraction of their former hubris. There are tales from the north of white-furred snow vermin, who live in cold castles of ice, still carrying the eagle standard. Likewise, the Daeb must be lax in their stewardship of the Westlands, for there are reports of vermin ships calling out of the ports of Silexia to harry our galleons. I am, as yet, unconvinced by these tales, but it is clear that there is much we don't know about the former scourge of humanity.

It is interesting that you say the vermin were daemonic followers of the Dark Gods. Perhaps you do not realise your deviation from orthodoxy on this point. With the notable exception of the rat King slain by Sunna, vermin are mortal beings. Likewise as the scriptures state in Genesis 3:

In the final years of the Avrasi the vermin came forth, born of a triple treachery. Gaius Dexion, the proud soldier, betrayed the Senate; and the high priest Quintus Augustus betrayed mankind. As Dexion and his everyyoung Queen brought war to Avras, Augustus in despair treated with the vermin gods to bring their spawn upon the city, hoping thereby to stop the civil strife. The final treachery was that of the vermin themselves, turning on humans and devouring the entire city whole.

These are the scriptures handed down to the Church. Note that it is the "vermin gods" who are mentioned here. Likewise two accounts of those who have spoken with supernals give the same testimony: that the vermin deities, foul though they may be, are not aligned with the Dark Gods in their opposition to mankind.

(Letter from High Prelate Jaeger)

My father said he'd met one once, in some hovel near Ullsberg. A piteous thing, it spent the whole night trying to convince papa of the glories of Vermin "civilisation". It said that every citizen got a vote, choosing their leaders and their laws. That they elected a 'senate' and 'consuls' after the fashion of the Avrasi Empire. The rat even had the nerve to call us uncivilised for lacking the same rights!

Now, father listens for a while – how he manages not to laugh, I'll never know – but eventually he asks what, if the glories of the sewer so outshine our humble kingdom, it is doing here. It transpires that the creature's mate fell out of favour, and was assassinated, and it, a female, had to flee the kingdom. The best part is, its mate was killed by a 'dusk senator' – this glorious civilisation puts assassins on the legislature. And I thought politics here was cut-throat.



(Overheard in Aschau)





It is with some frustration that I must admit to never having seen a rat, despite all I write here. I have in a

number of cities searched out the gloomy wharfs and taverns which those black marketeers are said to frequent, to no avail. Perhaps it is the final fading competence of the vermin that their illicit operations are so rarely detected.

The vermin were ever fraudsters, unable to create anything new but forced to ape the great nation of Avras. They surely lack the ability to create anything the surface world would wish to purchase openly, instead subsisting off the transport of poisons, drugs, slaves, magics and weapons.

Though I have never met the vermin, I have met many human smugglers that perhaps deserve the label. Some men have lost the ability to feel shame in dealing with them. While the rodents may find more reliable economic partners among goblins and infernal dwarves, there is surely no shortage of their 'wares' found in Vetian cities.

The traders in the east are unable to provide the same quantities as last year. They blame the vermin. As you know, in parts of Sagarika, men and rats live side by side, oblivious to the clear danger. Until recently, these vermin worshipped rat gods - twisted versions of the gods of old Avras. But when plague struck the land, they say a rat went among them, preaching of a new god, the Plaguebringer, who offers salvation through the touch of disease. The pestilence lingered around those who worshipped it and eventually the new cult was driven out, but not before inflicting terrible losses in men and cattle, dealing a crippling blow to our trading posts.

I suggest we redirect funds towards our interests in Qassar. They may not be as profitable but hopefully we can bolster our inventory for the coming year, and profit from the inflated price of spices.

(intercepted on the Silk Road)



Today I was most grateful to one Herr Himmelblau, a magnate of the League of Cogs, who sent me a device discovered in an abandoned space beneath one of his warehouses. The opportunity to examine such a find is a rare luxury, for I am in no doubt that the icy black crystals within the contraption are darkstone. Only the vermin swarms have mastered the substance - despite the claims of Fichtal's alchemy professors (who swear their stricken colleagues are nothing to do with their experiments) and the insistence of egomaniacs like Oppolzer who believe the vermin incapable of anything more than stealing cheese.

I confess my own investigation of the device was hardly more successful than the alchemists' bumbling efforts; a sudden surge of white energy has already demolished one of my bookshelves. Still, every indication confirms the evidence of my other researches - that the vermin are somehow able to magically empower the stone and use its electric properties to fuel their industry and armies. The captives claiming to be from "House Rakachit" swore under interrogation that theirs was just one of many guilds and families by which rodent society is organised - and indeed seemed to show pride that Rakachit was the greatest among these "houses" when it came to the use of darkstone. When my studies of the Book of the Dead are complete, I must turn my full attention to this fascinating field.

(Diary of the unconventional wizard scholar Beatrix von Ueblinger, dated 17 Istar 960 A.S., approximately two years before she went missing in Naptesh)



COMANY SHOWCASE

an article by: LastSword Miniatures

LastSword Miniatures are an independent miniature company from Spain. They are currently in the process of re-launching their Highborn Elves Kickstarter. They have also launched a number of Empire of Sonnstahl models and some terrain/scenery sets.

You can find them at <https://lastsword.com/>

Who is LastSword Miniatures, where are you from and what do you do?

We are just two people, Asdarel and Comi. We also have friends who help us out from time to time. We are from Spain and we now live in Madrid. When we started we just wanted to write a blog where we could show off our painted armies and some cool terrain. Asdarel is the painter and Comi the scenery maker. After two or three years here, we are with our latest Elven Lords Kickstarter.

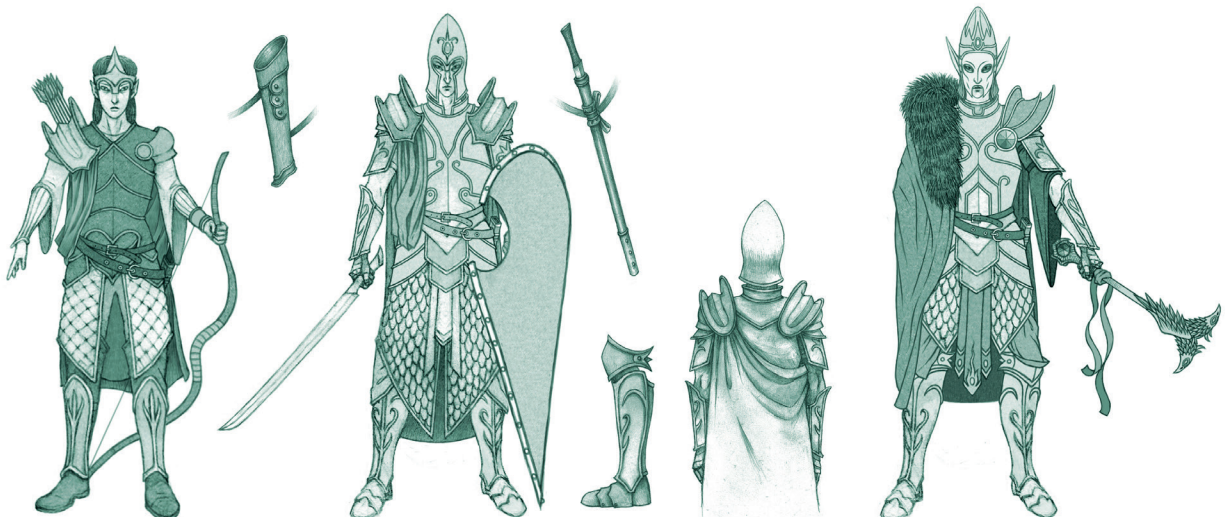


kickstarter.com/projects/lastsword/the-elven-lords



Why are you inspired to make models for the 9th Age (and other games)?

We started playing Warhammer third edition. We collected Elves and Orcs. We have been collecting figures since then. From the classic Battle Masters models back then, to now making our own models. So, if you ask us why we make models for the 9th Age, we're going to say, "Why not!?"



What models have you produced thus far?

We have produced a range of Reichguard Knights models which are perfect for using as Empire of Son-nasthal models. We are now in the process of releasing our Elven Lords range. In the future we would like to produce a Witch Hunter warband to augment our Reichguard collection and continue to expand on the units for the Elven Lords.

**Why did you choose the Highborn Elves as a faction to produce?**

Asdarel is also a Highborn Elves player, so we really just wanted to make some nice models that we could use ourselves. Highborn Elves are also a very popular army. Spearmen and bowmen are core units with very few alternative models. We wanted to make some nice core units that would be used a lot. Our Reich-guard Knights, which are perfect for Imperial Guard aren't always used in armies, whereas core units are. This is why we started with Citizen Spears and Archers.

**What models will be available in the Kickstart, and what will you be producing for the Highborn Elves?**

We have two kinds of models, metal and plastic resin. Plastic resin is what we use for the units. These are multi-pose figures that you can mix and match bits among them. Our heavy spearmen and light archers are plastic resin, so you can do light spearmen and heavy archers for example. The current metal figures we have are a Prince and a Mage.

**Will you be expanding to other factions in the future apart from those already offered? Do you have future release plans?**

We have lots of plans. The problem is we have no money, so we need to get our Elven Lords kickstarter off the ground to be able to invest in other projects.

What is your favourite model that you have made?

Good question! So far, the Reichguard Knights Captain, the Command Squad officer. I think it was the first model we made.



PAINTING DEMONIC BLADES

An article by: Kapten Kluns

“How do we evolve? We look, we imitate and we perfect.”

That is the circle of how we learn. I have been asked once again to do the honours of showing our readers a painting technique or two. What I will be showing is an inner lava glow effect that is easy to mimic and learn. This can be used for anything that has an inner fire. Next, I will show you a similar technique to create a cracked demonic blade effect. I have been using both of these for my Demon Legion.

The “Lava Effect”

Isn't this perfect now that the Warriors and Daemon books are on their way?

...First I get my tools, something to drink, and some nice music. It is important to have everything you need to keep yourself nice and comfy...

Start with Mephiston Red (I use Games Workshop paints), watered down to a milky consistency. Apply this very thin colour with care into cracks, like between abdominal muscles or within a mouth or between the chest muscles. Do not be afraid of the amount of paint on the brush—just make sure that you are in control so it doesn't make a mess.



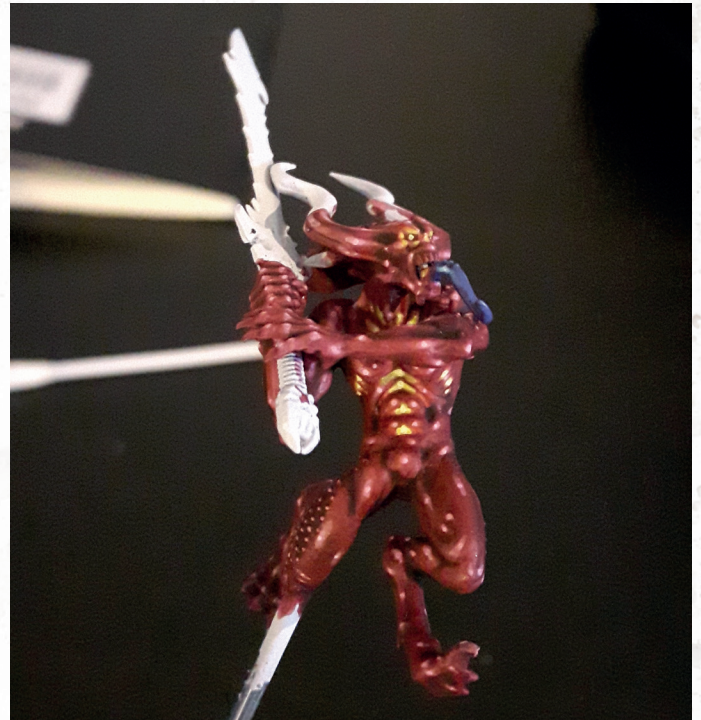
The next highlight is a mix of Flash Gitz yellow and the Mephiston red, creating a bright orange. As with the previous Mephiston red, add some more water so the consistency is the same. Apply this orange to the same surface as the previous colour but not on the same wide area. Narrow down the surface so that the orange is centred on the slightly raised areas and covers maybe 60% of the red.



Once dry, using a milky, thick batch of only Flash Gitz yellow and repeat the step with narrowing down the surface and painting over about 50% of the orange with yellow.

The last step is to brighten up the yellow significantly. I recommend 2:1 of white to yellow, and do a really small dot or line within the yellow part to really show where the heat is emitting from.

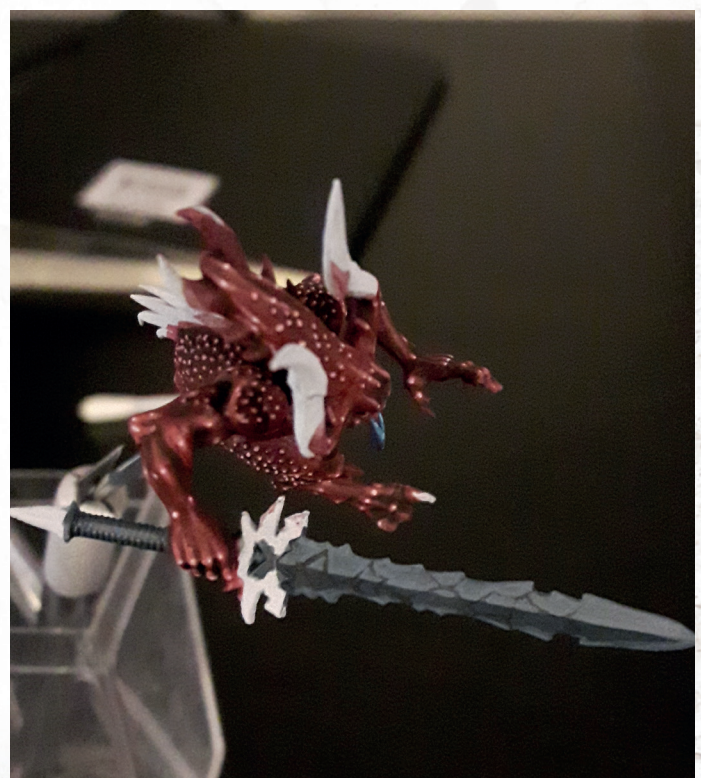
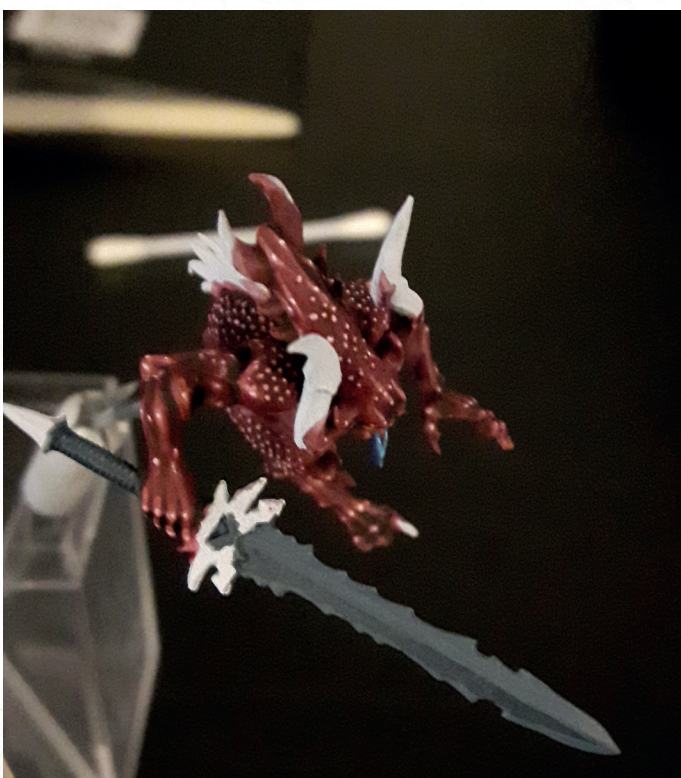
I hope you can see from the photo that the Slaughterer looks like he has an inner fire or glow emanating from within. This effect can be used for anything flaming; from Infernal Dwarf weapons or Kadims to Warriors' eye sockets.



The “Cracked Sword Effect”

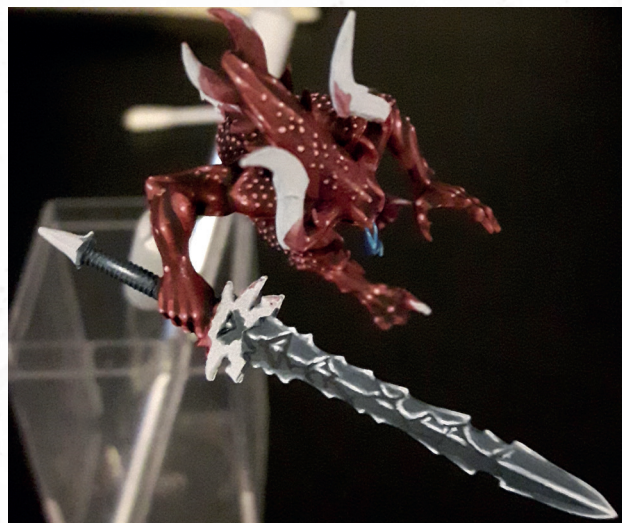
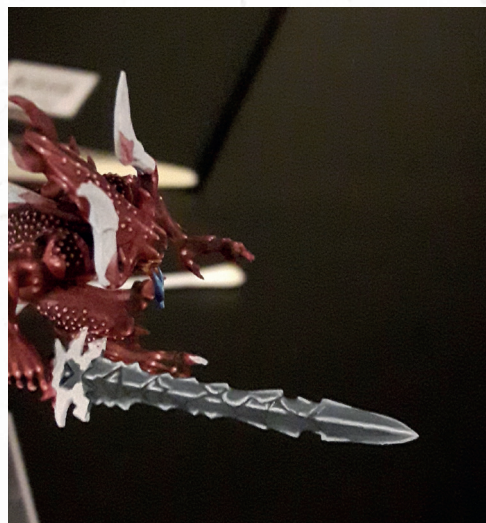
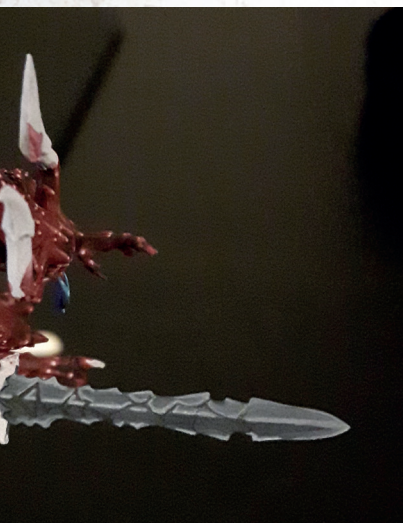
The base colour of the sword is a mix of Abbadon black (50%), Stegadon scale green (25%), and Fenrisian grey (25%). This mixture can be a little thicker consistency than for the lava effect. Use this colour for the entire blade.

Next, add more Fenrisian grey (30%-ish) to the current mixture. Add in a little water and then decide which side of the blade is supposed to be in the light. I usually pick the side that faces upwards. Paint the side you chose with the new mixture and leave the other side the base colour. Also try to apply a careful line from the tip of the sword down the edge of the blade's length on the “shadow” side. Paint the cracks with Abbadon black.



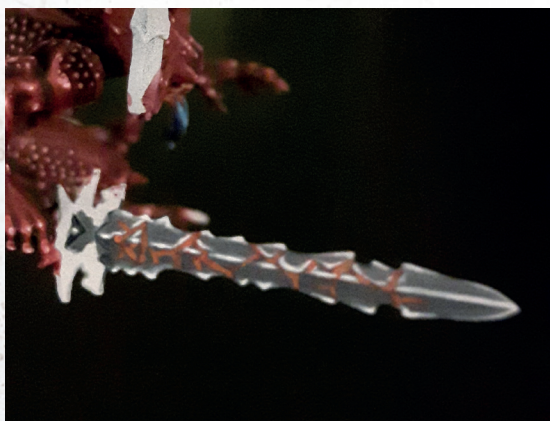


Go back to the mix and add some white (10%). Highlight the tip, the centre line, the edges of the shiny side, and where the cracks would give off a reflection (be careful not to overpaint the black cracks). You might also notice that I am doing the same steps on the handle. Repeat the same process, adding more white (20%), and do increasingly finer lines so that you leave some of the prior paint to be seen.

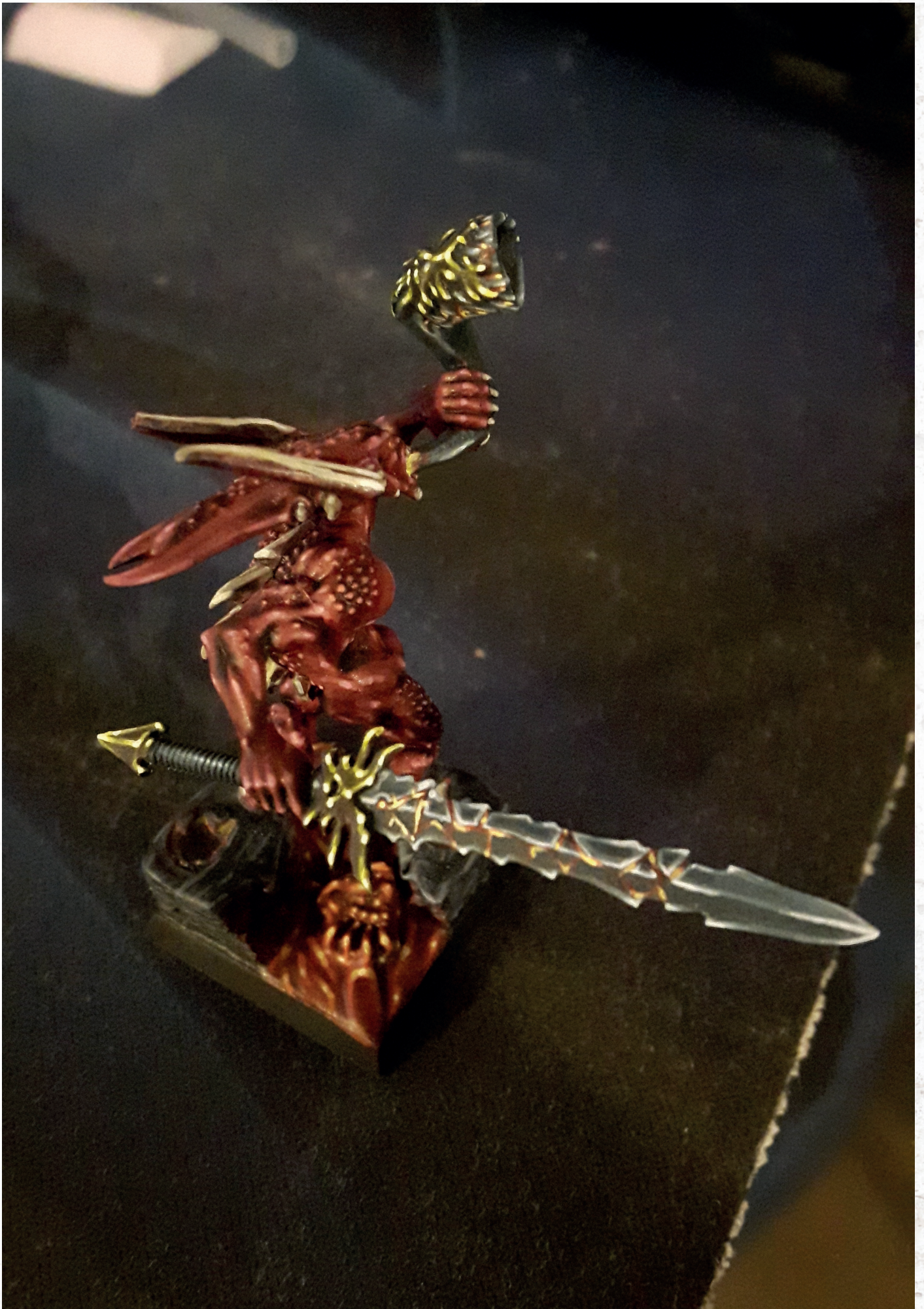


You can repeat the previous step with more and more white, as many times as you want. For extra points, finish with the absolute finest lines humanity has ever seen with... just white!

For the “energy effect” inside the blades, you can choose any colour you want that goes from dark to brighter. Incidentally, I used the “lava effect” to tie it together with the model. See below.



If any of the readers have any questions, feel free to get in touch on the forums. @kapten kluns. And as always, happy painting!



NINTH AGE STARTER SET

Tabletop Miniatures Solutions

The 9th Age has its first official starter set! Tabletop Miniatures Solutions (TMS) will be bringing out its very own 9th age specific starter set this month. The 9th Scroll team caught up with TMS to find out some more info about their new release.

<https://tabletop-miniatures-solutions.com>



Q: When will the starter set be available?

A: We will launch the Kickstarter most likely on the 20th of October, but it is still not ready so we might push the date. It will be available as soon as we get the boxes and books printed. Hopefully very soon.

Q: Will it be available in shops? Which shops? Where Else Can you buy it?

A: It might be available in some shops. But I'm not sure yet. It will be available on our webstore for certain.

Q: What models will the set contain?

A: It will contain two Quick Starter army lists from the 9th age and Quick Starter rules pack (available from the 9th Age downloads). Both the Undying Dynasties (UD) and the Kingdom of Equitaine (KoE).

Q: Why did you Choose KoE and UD?

A: These two factions are two factions that we currently have comprehensive miniature ranges for, so it seemed appropriate to choose them.



Q: Do you have any plans to release other starter sets?

A: Yes, once the 2.0 is released.

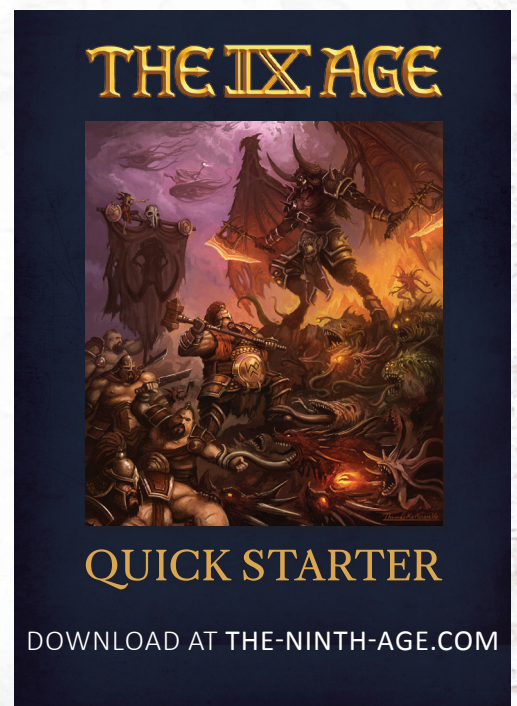
Q: Why do you think the starter set will appeal to beginners of the 9th age or those starting table top games for the first time?

A: I believe the QSS is meant for people who want to migrate to T9A from other systems.



Q: Finally, could you tell us what TMS have planned for future releases?

A: Right now we are waiting to see how the starter set goes, if it goes well we will resume work on the Beast Herds. As for new projects, we will be releasing a game this year. Next we have a Vampire Covenant terrain supplement ready. We also have plans for some Blood Bowl teams. Additionally, we have started work on 2 more board games, but that is something that will be showing probably the end of next year.



BEGINNERS CORNER: CHOOSING A NEW ARMY

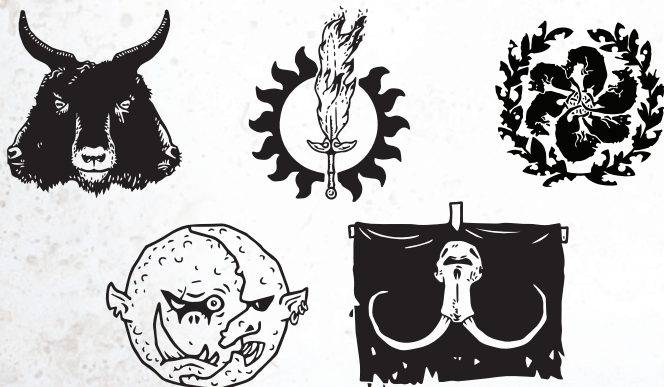
Article by AxelVicious

Greetings readers!

My first article in the Ninth Scroll, how exciting! Anyway, I'd like to talk about a subject very close to my heart – collecting an army. More importantly, "How do you start collecting and building an army?"

I find there tend to be two types of people who play wargames: the super competitive gamers and the hobbyists. If your vocation is to destroy your opponents and feast upon the tears of their women folk, then this article probably isn't for you! This article is aimed at the hobbyists, but more importantly, inexperienced players. If you are unsure as to how to start collecting models for the 9th Age and making a significant investment in time and money, this article might be of interest. It's important to be sure you will enjoy painting, playing, and forging the narrative of your army if you are going to invest into the 9th Age. You can get to the competitive side of your army once you've actually got an army together.

There are several things to consider when starting a new army. Obviously the first choice you should make when starting a new army is deciding on a faction! In the 9th Age there are (currently) a whopping 16 different factions to choose from! Trying to go through all the different army books, looking at each unit, magic items, special rules, etc. can be daunting. My advice is to make some key decisions first to whittle it down. This a very personal choice. It depends entirely upon what you want from your army and what dynamic of the game you are most interested in. For example, do you see yourself fielding an army of the undead, consisting of hordes of shambling zombies (who doesn't?), wearing down your opponents through attrition? Or would you prefer the stalwart mountain folk of the Dwarven Holds, fighting stubbornly in defence of their mountain strongholds? Each army forges its narrative in its own way and has its own character. The first thing to consider is alignment.



Alignment

One way of making the decision easier is to divide the armies between the goodies and the baddies. Do you want to save civilisation or tear it to pieces (not blow up the world though, I'm not mad!)? The way I interpret the 16 armies we have are as follows:

Goodies

- Empire of Sonnstahl
- Kingdom of Equitaine
- Highborn Elves
- Dwarven Holds

Neutral

- Vampire Counts
- Undying Dynasties
- Ogre Khans
- Orcs & Goblins
- Saurian Ancients
- Sylvan Elves

Baddies

- Warriors of the Dark Gods
- Daemonic Legions
- Beast Herds
- Vermin Swarm
- Dread Elves
- Infernal Dwarves

This is a very simplistic view of the armies, and it is largely based on my personal opinion – we are lacking a complete background on many of the armies. For example, the Infernal Dwarves could be just misunderstood brothers of the Dwarven Holds. They aren't evil, they just have a penchant for slavery. Although the Kingdom of Equitaine are humans and tend to be seen as the "Good Guys," when they look down their noses at peasants and use them as cannon fodder, is this not evil? You could start a whole debate on ethics in the 9th Age here, but you get my point.

Faction

The next thing to consider is what faction to choose. Do you want to command legions of immortal daemons that are literally the stuff of nightmares? Is the swift deadliness of an immortal race of Elves more your thing? Fantasy games give you a sheer diversity of characteristics, and the 9th age is no different. Within an army there are several different races, such as the Orcs & Goblins, Elves and Tree spirits in the Sylvan Elves, and the diverse types of Beast Herds. The bestiary is large and whatever mythical beast you can think of, it has a spot in an army in the 9th Age. What is important is that you really need to “relate inwardly” somehow to one, or a part of, a faction. That could be a unit, character, or monster, but it should be something you think is cool!

Play Style

How you want to play the game is definitely worth considering when you start a new army. If you like the idea of out-maneuvring your opponent and choosing the terms of engagement, then the elven armies might be for you. If blasting your opponent apart with magic and weakening them before they can get to grips with you, then you can't go far wrong with a mighty Cuatl Lord and the Saurian Ancients. For me it's all about the combat phase. Personally, the highlight of any game is rolling a ridiculous number of dice

and tearing my way through units in hand to hand combat, so I play with Warriors of the Dark Gods. All armies can certainly take part in this phase, but some do it better than others.

Each army has a preferred method of playing the game. Nevertheless, lists can be tailored to go away from their usual playstyles. Sylvan Elves can be played without a single bow in the army. It is possible to play avoidance Warriors of the Dark Gods who don't fight and just run around blasting opponents apart with magic. There is no right way to play an army, and you can play it any way you want to!

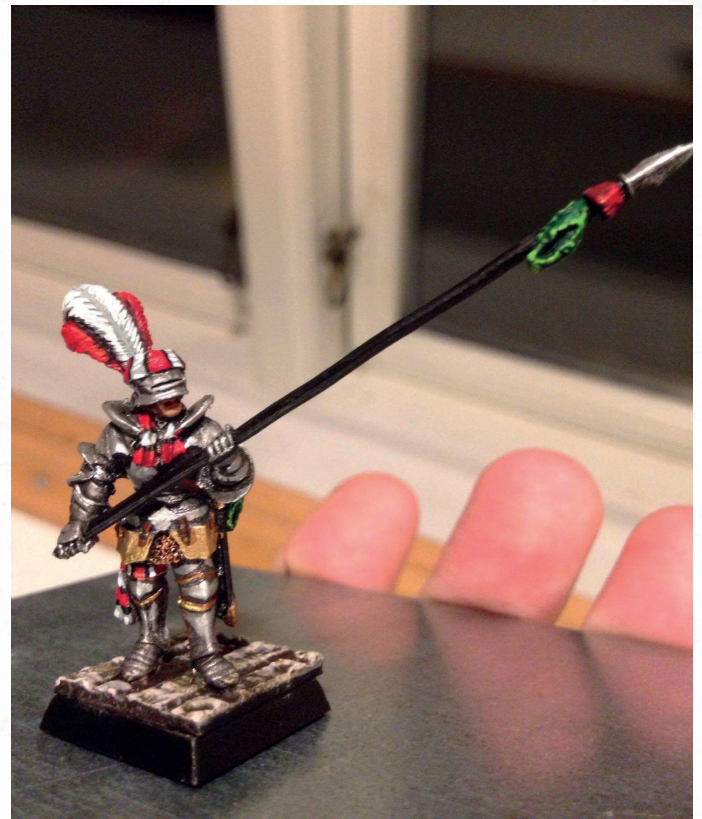
Another thing to consider is the units that an army has available to it. If, like me, you are obsessed with monsters, focussing on the armies that can field the big beasties is a good idea: Beast Herds, Saurian Ancients, Warriors of the Dark Gods, Dread Elves, or Ogres are good places to start. If massed charges of medieval Knights and the historical-fantasy setting are more to your taste, then you could consider Kingdom of Equitaine or Empire of Sonnstahl.

I think from just these few examples you can see that there are many options available for the new player and many play styles available for every army!



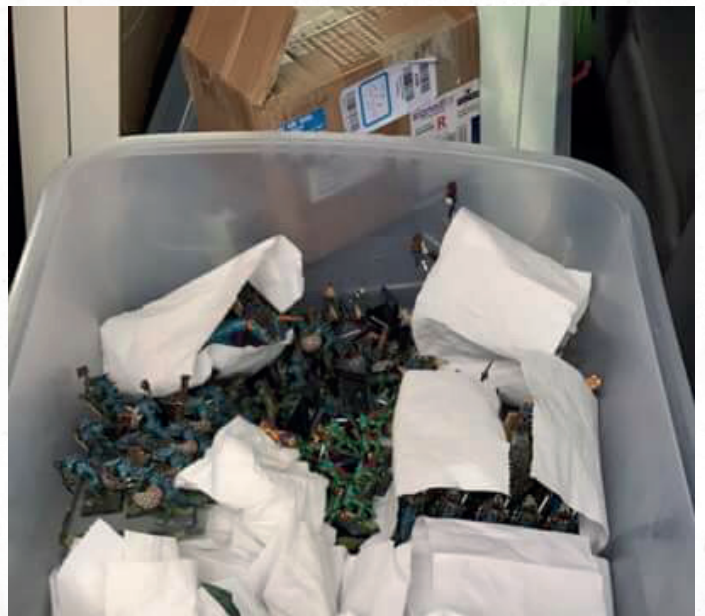
Models

Despite these many considerations an important aspect for many wargamers when they pick an army is the available models. With so many companies producing a wide variety of models, you really are spoilt for choice. Building an army around a centrepiece unit or character is a fantastic way to start. For example, an awe-inspiring classic Giant or a treasure trove of forgotten Dogs of War miniatures in a dark recess of your house could be an inspiring way to start an army off.



If you're starting afresh then a good place to begin is eBay or any other second-hand seller site. There are many social media groups or similar places where you can get great bargains. It just involves patience and some cash. Second hand, uncut sprues will go for near enough the retail value. The best bargains are assembled and painted models. Models lose their value once they have been painted (apart from pro painted obviously). You will also get better value for money by going for larger lots of models. You may end up with some models you will rarely use, but they can always be used for conversions or for unit fillers. Try to avoid buying models by unit or individually.

If you are unsure about what models you can use, each individual army forum will have several suggestions from a variety of different companies. Some of these companies will be cheaper than others. My advice is to shop around for what you want. Depending upon what army you choose, the core choices of your army will inevitably become the most expensive parts of your force due to the substantial number of models you will need to acquire. Some armies are also more expensive than others. This varies widely. The hoard armies such as Vermin Swarms, Goblins, Undead armies, and some human armies require a lot of models, compared to say Ogres or Warriors of the Dark Gods. You should also consider how long your army will take to paint. The prospect of painting 60 zombies might be daunting for you. Or it might not!



Stripping painted models is a good skill to learn if you are buying used models. I've tried all sorts of products; Dettol, Fairy Power Spray, and even White Spirit, but the best product by far is Biostrip (check out Issue 5 of the Scroll for a product review). Just dip your models in the tub, take them out, and leave for an hour. Then scrub the models, and the paint comes off easily.

Needless to say, there's no right or wrong way to start an army. Collecting an army that you feel passionate about will make painting it and playing with it much more enjoyable. I hope this guide has given you some ideas and help in choosing an army!



SNEAK PEEKS AND BUILD UP FOR 2.0: AN ACS PERSPECTIVE

Article by DJWoodelf

The 9th Scroll Team got a Q and A with Rules Support/Army Community Support (ACS), DJWoodelf, to get some inside info on his role(s) in the forthcoming 2.0 release.

Q: In the release process of 2.0, what is your role?

A: I am quite active on the 9th age staff. As Rules Support, I was involved in a lot of activities concerning the main rule book (BRB). This included compiling summaries for the Rules Team from the community suggestions. I also had a hand in the community questionnaires about the Full Magic Phase, Terrain Proposals, Deployment Types Proposals and Secondary Objectives Proposals.

As Sylvan Elves ACS, I was automatically invited to join the SE Task Team. The role of the ACS in the Task Team is representing the wishes and ideas of our specific army community (and of course we can bring in our own opinions as well!). The ACS members don't have a voting role but can influence brainstorming, discussion, and decisions by giving community input. We also express our ideas and concerns when it comes to trying to make every unit viable.

I'm also a play-tester! I use my gaming time (around 2-3 games a month) as an opportunity for playtesting. That means playing army lists and reporting feedback of different armies that mainly involves stuff that will change with version 2.0.

Q: Why is 2.0 going to be better than 1st edition?

A: Concerning the Army Books, I think that having the ACS involved in the task team has a positive effect on the Army Books. Even though we don't get an official vote, being a part of the team helps to better change things in a way that the players wish. Furthermore, we have heavily focussed on the background when possible. That means when you are using a unit on the battlefield, it should match the background narrative. This will hopefully mean a more immersive game and a better experience.



Concerning the rule book, there was the possibility to use a much higher level of community feedback (surveys etc.). Additionally, we have had V1.3 frozen now for an extended period. There has been information and discussion in various threads available for a long while and we have a better idea of what works and what doesn't. This has resulted in the core rules being stronger than ever before.

Q: How do you choose exactly what info to be released as a sneak peek and how do you choose the order of what info is to be released?

A: Basically, it was suggested that the aim would be to post one information post every week for every army, leading up to the main release. Provided the army had passed the Rules Team review, every ACS team can freely decide on how to define the order in which they release info about their specific army.

In the Sylvan Elves ACS, we agreed to present the Fey Arrows change (in fact, to present the new Sylvan Longbow) first, because some other changes (all shooting units) depend on this larger change. From then on, we let the community decide in a poll which slot(s) to present next.



Q: Is there a purpose to releasing the information in small chunks?

A: It is important for us to explain in detail how and why changes have been made. We also want to offer to the community an ongoing discussion about the individual changes. For this reason, writing one very long post is not only time consuming but impractical. The discussion and feedback would not be as constructive, and we felt that it would not do the intricacies of the changes justice.

Secondly, we would reduce the excitement and hype of the release. If we showed everything in one go across all forums, there would be no build-up until the release of the open playtesting versions.

Finally, from post to post, we can learn from the feedback what can be done better with the next post/sneak peek. We can also check the other ACS posts across the forum and get inspiration. This can improve the quality of our posts moving forward in the release process.

Q: What is your favourite change for 2.0 that you can tell us?

A: If there was one single change to highlight, then I would say it's the new Spell Selection process. First, the specific frame within which you choose your spells. Secondly, that this is scaled by the wizard levels, which means only the Wizard Masters have access to the most powerful or special spells. I am looking forward to having no problems with bad luck when rolling for spells!

I hope you are all enjoying the buildup to 2.0!





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