

The Big Warhammer Bash

by Mike Popay

What a way to spend a bank holiday! Anyway, for those of us (The South London Warlords to be precise) that have a leaning to play silly games it was the perfect way to spend a day (but I was so knackered at the end of it!).

The game of Warhammer (5th Edition) was played with 35,000 points divided between 10 players – so 5 aside and 3,500 points each. This was enough to allow each of us to field the force of our dreams (well almost), but we were restricted on the number of characters and special characters we could have to prevent it getting too beardy. This (and the rest of the day) was the brainwave of Paul Davies who turned the Warhammer Players Society tournament rules into a workable set of large game rules. There were some on the spot rule changes too, including limiting the effectiveness of magic to 72" (quite limiting, even on a 24' table) and preventing high flyers from 'fly-by' attacks until they'd been in the air for a turn (thereby passing the initiative to those with the first turn).



The "Good Guys"

We played good guys against bad guys (what else!). The good guys were represented by Two Orc armies, Chaos Beastmen, Chaos Dwarves and Undead against the bad guys represented by Dwarves, High Elves, Bretonnians, Wood Elves and Empire (what makes you think that I was playing for the former rather than the latter?).



The "Bad Guys"

We started just an hour late with some of our number not arriving until nearly 1 o'clock in the afternoon (Mark, you know who you are ?!). We got started fairly quickly as the generals of the day Paul Davies and Harry Halgren had predetermined the places and everybody laid their troops out in a complete rush so we wouldn't waste anymore playing time.

The battle itself started out quite badly for the Misfits (us) with the Panzies (them) flying high with 2 out of their three dragons, various Hawkriders and great eagles. Having effectively removed that area of activity, our only choice was to advance on a (very) broad front hoping to close quickly. Harry's Mummy Tomb King and surrounding cohorts advanced slowly (at 3" a turn).

This forlorn move left us open to a massive barrage, which felled far too many of our best troops. This included my Black Orcs, originally 20 strong but cut to 8 by Dwarf cannon fire and Richard Chase's Hobgoblin Wolfriders shredded by High Elf repeater bolt throwers from 10 to 4 in one turn! Still this could not be helped if we were going to close with the enemy, it's the price we Misfits pay for having such good 'hand to hand' troops!?

Worse was to come, second turn the flighty b...boys returned to earth with a vengeance. The Warhawks landed in front of a skull chucker whose skeleton crew ran off (it was later decided that they shouldn't have!) and the Great Eagle in front of a Stone Chukka which was neatly placed less than eight inches away from two Night Goblin regiments full of Fanatics! Needless to say the Great Eagle died in the ensuing chaos but it certainly dulled the Goblin's effectiveness!



Battle Rages !

On the far side of the table the Wood Elf general Julian landed his dragon in amongst the Undead and the ensuing battle broke out between it and Harry's Vampire and Manticore that lasted all game! On my end of the table the Paul's High Elf Blue Dragon and hero landed in front of - and quickly dispatched the main Chaos Dwarf Sorcerer (thinking he was the general 'coz he was on a Taurus).



The tide began to turn, as in our go the Misfits managed to use a small number of their remaining artillery, especially Richard's Earthshaker cannons, one of which blew up a Repeater Bolt Thrower in partial revenge for his earlier drubbing. He also charged the High Elf Dragon with his Chaos Dwarf Lord and knocked the crap out of the rider leaving the dragon and he to fight a long duel that lasted several turns.

The dragon was merely distracted when my Boarboyz charged into the fray (neatly polishing off 10 of the 15 in the process, before finally succumbing to the joint onslaught). The trouble was that in retreating from the fight, the Dragon drew our some of my Fanatics, which spent the rest of the game whirling about my lines causing not inconsiderable damage (though not to the Dragon). Talking of which, all the Misfits in front of the other Fanatics rushed forward to avoid contact, only to watch them all subsequently rush into one another – what a waste of 180 points!



The trouble was that in rush to get out of the Fanatics' way, most of Mike Graham's Orc army had moved into the way of Mark Watkins' charging Bretonnians. And so the tide turned again! Mark not being slow to take advantage charged every unit he could into the Orcs, who without leader (flying high!) or Standard to steady them, ran away to a man practically and then got ran over by the Bretonnian steamroller (ouch!).

This was coupled with the fact that 2 of the Wood Elf Chariots mowed down the remaining Orc Boarboyz and Goblin Wolfriders and even the Mammoth (rules based on Lizardman Stegadon) ran away.

If things didn't look bad enough, the panzies on my side of the table decided to put up a bit of a fight – the Terry's Dwarves especially. They had sat and waited for my Orcs all afternoon firing off salvo after salvo just to taunt me, so finally I cracked and sent over my Dragon, Giant and Trolls to deal with the pesky little things.

I did manage to get rid off the Flame Cannon and ate half the cannon crews, but then the Throne of Power in a regiment of Iron Breakers crushed my Trolls and then descended upon my dragon (they actually managed to charge it!) and killed the poor thing in one turn! Not only that but the ensuing panic (I'm still not sure that a monster should cause a panic test but still) caused my Giant to run away only to caught (oh the ignominy!) by some rampant Troll Slayers before it and my poor little Snotlings had a chance to recover. It has taught me two valuable lessons: one was to stick to your original plan (and that was to avoid the Dwarves altogether and just pulverise the High Elves) and two - not attack unsupported.



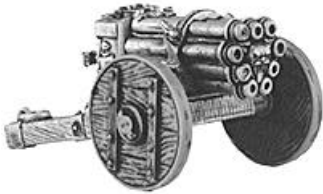
Lesser mortals would have crumbled under such pressure, but not the Misfits - we attacked! The Mummy Tomb King still hadn't made it but the Skeleton Cavalry had, so did the Bull Centaurs, the Giant that was left, my Wolfriders as well as what was left of my Boarboyz, etc. etc. But the sun had already gone down on our chances of recouping this one, though the satisfaction of duffing up of a few panzie regiments never goes amiss especially when that includes the High Elf Lord and a lance of Bretonnian Knights.



If only the game could have gone on longer we would have won, but 12 hours is probably long enough for one day even though the Panzies got

away with it (until the next time)!

You may have noticed that I have not mentioned either Chaos Beastmen or Empire in these rantings, this is for a number of reasons. The first is that a river separated them from the rest of the battle and the second is that Mac Cross (Empire) and Roger (Chaos Beastmen) didn't get involved much in the rest of the battle (partly because of the river).



They had a very sedate battle on their own, that involved Roger advancing and Mac retreating and vice versa for the whole day - it seemed very inconclusive, but hey! 'whatever gets you through the night'.



Everybody survived to fight another day

Photos of the event are by Mark Watkins.

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