

SKATEXENSLIGHT

Issue 10

gazette



SKAVENBLIGHT

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Skavenblight Gazette

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All complainers will be fed to the Mutant Rat Ogre.

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As the Death of Rats would say: SQUEAK!

Having bought an apartment earlier this year, I recently finished the last renovations before being able to finally start moving my belongings into my new home. One of the things you suddenly notice is the amount of stuff you never really realised you had, as well as how much dust something can accumulate, when you leave it untouched for a long period of time. Such as a Fantasy army that hasn't seen a battle in many months.

Having begun with my Skaven over a decade ago, I witnessed the last months of fifth edition (having originally become interested in the game due to the elaborate Undead army book a mate had at that time), the Ravening Hordes and so on, up to the release of the 8th edition Fantasy.

Now when the rulebook of the 8th edition was released, I ventured towards a Games Workshop store for the first time in a long period (as I usually go to a local retailer). It didn't take long before one of the employees addressed me, and showed various products that he believed would be excellent for me. Eventually was standing by the cash register to pay for (only) the rulebook, when a shocking realisation hit me. That enthusiastic feeling I had when I began with the hobby and faced my mates in battle wasn't there any more with the new rulebook I now held.

Obviously, the way you experience (and appreciate) things changes over the years. You don't find a game fun and cool for years on end. Still, despite not having played a single game for months (my last battle actually being in the summer of 2009) and not intending to suddenly start again, I could never part with my Skaven army. It took me a while to figure it out, but I eventually arrived at an interesting conclusion.

With the Games Workshop hobby (and in miniature wargaming at large) you have a few distinct directions. Some really love to paint models, and enjoy spending many hours perfecting painting techniques, and in a few cases reaching the point where one would compete for a Golden Demon. Others however, like the game. They enjoy the tactical decisions. To simply out-think the opponent, beating them not simply due to having a 'stronger army', but punishing them for the tactical mistakes they make. For those there are many tournaments out there, with Grand Tournament victories (or in the case of Europeans, the ETC) being the goal to reach. I, however, am part of another group.

Voices from the dark

What initially attracted me to the game was the richly detailed background in the Undead army book. That background is what creates a fairly unique setting, one that has always interested me and is also a reason why I really never want to quit the game. I like the discussions that take place within the communities, regarding how a Skaven clan would deal with logistics and maintenance, what the exact population of Skavenblight would be, and so on. There really are so many interesting points to find out and, with the internet becoming a bigger and more accessible medium there are so many opinions and ideas on such matters.

This is also one of the reasons why I believe webmagazines (such as Firebase, Word of Hashut or Da Warpath Quarterly) can really grow in the gap Games Workshop left behind when they began to focus their energy on what takes place in their stores and not in the online communities. With all the respect for the White Dwarf (cause even despite my dislike for the magazine, I have to admit that they certainly make it shiny), the editors behind webmagazines really know what goes on at the online community level. This translates towards publications that are made by players of specific armies or games, and aimed at the people that play these armies or games.

Aside from some healthy competition (Hi Willmark, I haven't forgotten about you *grins*), the growing number of webmagazines also give one another ideas and creates innovation. Editors have to come up with ideas that set their publication apart from the other webmagazines, while at the same time see what the rest of the community is doing and build on the successful ideas of others. All of this means webmagazines will become better, and only the future will tell where that will take us.

This January, the Skavenblight Gazette will be four years old. Without the ongoing efforts from regular authors, painters that have sent in pictures of their models, artists and of course, all of you who read this webmagazine, four years of Skavenblight Gazette is something we'd never have reached. I'd like to thank everyone who contributed in the past and hope we can make many more good issues of Skavenblight Gazette.

Vincent / Skaven Lord Vinshqueek

Editor, Skavenblight Gazette

Ask Seer Squeek

by Seer Squeek

Skavenblight Gazette's very own Agony Uncle answering your questions.

Dear Seer Squeek,

My Hell Pit Abomination has repeatedly killed many Lizard-things. Now a Man-thing who owns said Lizard-things is not my Friend-thing. What should Warlord Skitterfang do?

With regards,

Warlord Skitterfang

Dear Skittle,

If your friend-thing no longer wishes to face your army due to the presence of the Hell Pit Abomination, the (perhaps confronting) question might also be whether it is worth facing him for a battle in general. After all, if your opponent no longer wishes to be your friend-thing due to not being able to deal with the Hell Pit Abomination, I (personally) wonder the value of that friendship.

Still, assuming the response to the question being "Yes, I do wish to face the friend-thing", the three options coming to mind would be to either try facing the Lizard-things without a Hell Pit Abomination, you facing the friend-thing with his Lizard-things (oh brother, I will so get hate mail from Clan Pestilens over this suggestion) while he/ she/ it uses your Skaven, or giving him/ her/ it some suggestions on how to alter the play style and be able to deal with the Hell Pit Abomination.

Should none of these options help, perhaps finding other pastimes with the friend-thing might be an option.

Always a fan of multiple choice,

Seer Squeek

Dear Seer Squeek,

As a far travelled and much learned Seer, you must know details of all the great places within the Underempire. Sadly many of us common Skaven know so little about even the fortresses next to us.

So I come to you to ask what you know about the great fortress known as "Black Chasm", since sadly I can find little to no information about the fortress.

Yours hopefully,

Totally not a fake name.

Dear backpacking "Oh, look at how original my name is",

In case you had taken the time to look up the Skaven edition of the Lonely Old World travelling guide, you might have found some information you are looking for. I will admit, after Clan Pestilens returned from Lustria some two millennia ago now and the death of Lord Vask (at that time, the ruler of Black Chasm) whom Nurglitch I challenged for a seat in the Council of Thirteen, things have not gone well for the fortress and should you go to the great library of Skavenblight, you might need to look for some of the older editions of the Lonely Old World.

Still, in reply to your question: The Black Chasm is situated in the mountains of central Bretonnia, a massive underground vault that has opened deep inside the mountains, requiring little work for the Skaven there to expand their territory. Its influence comes from the ore-rich veins that are mined by the Skaven and the harvest of fungi that grow along the underground streams. For both, the clans situated in the Black Chasm use both Skaven Slaves, as well as Man-thing captives they capture from surrounding Man-thing settlements. Since the initial colonization of the fortress, the years of capturing Man-things has made the mountain range a feared region in Bretonnia.

Has a season-cart for the great library of Skavenblight,

Seer Squeek

'ey Seer Squeek,

Wot would you say is da best fmg about uz skavens? Is it our yummy taste, or maybe de fact dat der are so many of us out der to eat? Could it even be dat we are so smarty we can makes such lubbly dwessings (skaven flesh an' worpsinth sauce is so de-lish-us!)?

From a skaven who is not an 'ungry ogre... "squeek squeek"

Dear Throt the Unclean-wannabe,

Now I know that some of our Hell Pit-brethren grow so bloated that they require to feed on anything within their reach, but aren't you taking this a bit too far? I mean, sure, I've bitten a few necks as well in my time, but all meat and no fibre does take its toll on your body. So, I have asked a fellow Seer of mine, the famous Ja Mol'var from Albion, known for its cooking shows on the Farsqueeker where he promotes a more varied meal about his ideas on the matter. His opinion was as follows:

"Due to the high metabolism and hyperactivity of the Skaven, there are periods after extensive work (in battles, for example) where the infamous Black Hunger takes place. Now despite those moments of feeding frenzy, the Skaven bodies have little fat on their bodies and are purely meat. This on itself means the Skaven are actually quite good creatures to eat, even though it might sometimes seriously disturb your minions. To counter that, you could eat those too, but then again, the cascade effect might leave you with an awful few minions in the end and a long, LONG stomach ache. In the end, from the point of view of cuisine, I would say the best thing about the Skaven is the healthy meat itself."

There were a few recipes that came along with it, but after a lengthy debate with the editors, we decided it was best to keep those out of the issue due to the fact that after reading them, we weren't hungry any more for the better part of a day.

Prefers a Wood Elf on a stick,

Seer Squeek

Dear Seer Squeek,

After recently starting fantasy I've faced my friend, a Dark Elf player, four times. (Another friend is going to get Lizardmen, but I haven't faced him yet). Every time I've lost against the Dark Elf. Do you have any tips?

With regards,

Dude37

Dear Clueless Dude,

Based on purely the question "I lose from the evil Elf-things, please help me" I can not give a clear answer on what you need to change. I can give a few tips, though getting feedback from other Warlords who face the evil Elf-things on a more regular base on the army you wish to assemble might give some more insight. Of course, next to that, it's always a matter of practice, revise, practice, revise and so on. Obviously, this brings out the advantage of being a Grey Seer, cause it always gives the chance to blame the Warlord in question for the loss of the battle. *cackles madly*... Still, a few pointers:

- The evil Elf-things can unleash an obscene amount of missile fire. The best way to counter this is to screen against them (with terrain, or large amount of Slaves), assassinate them (flanking with Gutter Runners for example) or disrupting them (where the Stormbanner would be an obvious example);
- Once you've weathered the missile fire, you reach combat. In this case, always remember that T3 is a warm welcome for the Plague Furnace and Plague Censer Bearers. Aside from that, the Hell Pit Abomination will also appreciate a good brawl with the evil Elf-things, though in its case, as well as that of the Plague Furnace you first need to take care of the enemy shooting before marching these towards their lines;
- Watch out for the common Black Guard + Always Strike First banner combination (usually accompanied by a tooled-up Lord and Assassin). Do not go head-to-head with such a unit, especially not with any valuable characters;
- The magic from the evil Elf-things is quite lethal. There for, either remain behind terrain (or be screened by Slaves) while marching towards the enemy line, or while at that time a unit of Gutter Runners or Warplock Jezzails is trying to take the mages out of action.

Other than that, I refer to my earlier pointer of asking fellow Warlords for feedback on your army list, as there are many more options then I can fit in my column.

Prefers a better climate then far-away Naggaroth,

Seer Squeek

A desperate alliance

by Matthew Lee



With the 8th edition of Warhammer comes an exciting new feature, the Allied Armies rules. Unlike previous rules for allies, which was either the ability to spend a small amount of your points on troops from another army book or the more unofficial rules for allies in the General Compendium, the Allied Armies rules allows players to split into teams and gain benefits from the alliance.

These alliances fall into three categories; Trusted, Suspicious and Desperate. For the Skaven, it isn't hard to imagine how they could come to be fighting with those armies that fall into the 'Trusted' category. In the past Chaos has called on the might of the Skaven to carry them to success, while the Orcs and Goblin have always been easily manipulated to serve the will of the ratmen.

However, those in the Desperate allies category are harder to reconcile. This article will look at these armies, and give a couple of examples as to how they can be included in a way that fits into the established background.

The focus here will be on Skaven armies with Desperate allies in tow. So for example, how the Skaven get Dwarfs working for them. Not how the Dwarfs get Skaven to assist in Dwarven affairs. This is an important distinction, as it places the emphasis on who is the master in the situation. And of course, no surface dweller can ever be the master of the Skaven.

So those who are not Skaven players beware. For here you will discover the dark heart of your people.

High Elves



Obsessions

The High Elves see themselves as protectors of the Warhammer world. Lone sentinels guarding against chaos and destruction. It is a silent burden, a thankless task, and yet they do it willingly and with passion. For who will keep the world safe if not for them?

This is especially prevalent amongst the nobility of the High Elves. Rivalry, intrigue and ego are part of the elves way of life, and these drives can find their way into everything they undertake.

Some High Elves become so totally consumed by this endeavour that the good intentions fall away, and only a maddening lust for success remains. For these individuals each failure in a personal insult, succeeding only in fuelling their obsession.

It is not long before such wretches turn to more nefarious means to reach their goals.

Skaven present a unique opportunity for these elves. The rat men can basically go anywhere and do anything. Using them to procure rare items in exchange for information, supplies or trinkets seems like an excellent deal. After all, what price can be put on total success?

As time goes on, however, the relationship turns. Gradually, as the High Elves schemes fail time and again, his desperation will grow. The urgency with which the Skaven are required to deliver every increasingly exotic items will grow. As will the payments due by the elf.

Soon the price will be so outlandish, so extravagant that the elf cannot hope to ever pay. But by this point the High Elf is in far too deep, his obsession and pride holding him in the grip of the Skaven. To fulfil their request, and receive the few morsels they can spare to throw him, the High Elf will betray his people to the Skaven.

It is easy for the nobility to do this. The High Elves hold their superiors in high regard and this trust is easily manipulated. Whether through intimidation, deceit or powerful magics the glittering hosts of the High Elves become the bargaining chip of the Skaven thrall. And so the armies of the High Elves march to war. Not to save the world, but to destroy it.

Wayward Community

All throughout the Warhammer world small clutches of High Elves can be found. Some are emissaries, tending at the courts of mankind's nations. Others are protectors, standing guard over ancient shrines and temples. And some are settlements, far from Ulthuan.

All these groups have a host of things in common. They are far from the rule of the Phoenix King, largely self-sufficient and possessed of their own military might. Largely these satellite communities uphold the laws and beliefs of Ulthuan, the Phoenix King and the High Elves. However, while the High Elves paint themselves as the avatars of order, they are not immune to the lures of evil. The Dark Elves are the ultimate illustration of this.

While it is very rare, there are instances where these communities have broken away from the High Elf kingdom. The reasons have been many and varied, though all contain a central dogma. Displeasure with the laws or attitude of the Phoenix Crown.

The exact circumstances of such an event are largely unimportant. In some cases it is caused by a difference of view, the crown deeming something unimportant that the remote community feels is of worth, for instance. Other times it is social disconnection, the satellite elves simply moving in a different direction to that of the High Elves at large.

Whatever the reason, once the elves break from the conventions and laws of mainstream High Elf society they are highly susceptible to radical new conventions. Again, the Dark Elves are the ultimate example of this occurrence. A group of High Elves that abandoned the established rules of their culture and quickly and wholeheartedly adopted a completely different social norm.

Those communities that take this step, and start down the path towards something less noble than they once were, are prime targets for Skaven intervention. Quite often it is as easy as supplying the thing that led the community to break away in the first place, thereby establishing the Skaven as a kind of de facto sovereignty. Once a report has been built, and the flames of their rebellion fanned, the Skaven have a ready and willing High Elf arm at their disposal.

Dwarfs



Held to Ransom

Dotted amongst many hills and mountains can be found small Dwarf Holds, home to even smaller Dwarf Clans. They are a declining race, and each son and daughter is an important piece in the Clans future. It is them that will continue the traditions and knowledge of the Clan, long after their elders have passed.

To the Dwarfs nothing is as important as birthright and honour. Hundreds, if not thousands, would gladly risk their lives to protect their Kings and Lords. Or indeed, any heir to the throne.

These Dwarf Clans are so near destruction, so close to losing everything they and their ancestors have worked to create, that the death of any of the next in line is tantamount to annihilation. These are the Clans that unscrupulous Skaven target, spiriting away the heirs and apprentices that will carry on the sacred tasks for the next generation.

Some Clans bear the loss, and ultimately die out. Yet others swallow their pride and, for the good of their Clan, give in to the demands of the Skaven. This can be as demeaning as providing weapons and goods, or as unthinkable as marching to war along side the vile vermin. Whatever the cost, the Clans Book of Grudges is opened, and another entry is made against the Skaven. And may the Ancestors forgive this dishonour.

Inevitable Future

On the surface the Dwarfs present a dependable and unified front. A solid wall of unmovable metal and flesh. Of culture and traditions held sacred by all Dwarfs no matter their age or position. But amongst the Dwarfs there are some who hold beliefs both disturbing and at odds with their kinsmen.

Centuries of bitter fighting has made the Skaven one of the Dwarfs greatest foes. The ratmens insane technology, horrific magic and endless troops have brought the downfall of many a Clan and keep. But of all the Dwarfs, a small selection looks on at the Skaven with wonder and fascination. They see not an enemy to be annihilated, but the next step in the Dwarfs continuing existence.

This reverence towards the Skaven doesn't take hold lightly, and can take hundreds of years to develop. It may in part be instigated by psychological trauma, caused by the constant battles against the ratmen. Or perhaps it is more of a religious conversion. Whatever the case, a central set of beliefs permeates.

Most of this hinges on the Dwarfs interpretation of what they see in the Skaven. They begin to focus on the similarities of the two races, of which a few can be found. Both subterranean, they engage with technology and invention. Their society is based around a clan structure, and they work with materials no other races can.

These thoughts slowly develop into a whole ancestry in the Dwarfs mind. The Skaven aren't attacking and capturing Dwarf cities, they are reclaiming their birthright. The Skaven are not abominations, they are the next evolutionary step in the Dwarfs existence. The Skaven are the Dwarfs!

For any Dwarf to admit to this publicly would be madness. Instead, the individual usually slips away and eventually find themselves in the company of like minded Dwarfs. Their numbers will grow until a point where they have a small army at their disposal. From this point it is only a matter of time before the Skaven and Dwarfs make contact, and the Dwarfs offer themselves to the Skaven.

Rather than immediately take them all on as slaves, some Skaven will recognise the unique opportunity they have. While half mad and not entirely to be trusted, a fully functioning Dwarf army is a hard thing to just give up.

Wood Elves



Dark Cousins

There are those amongst the Dark Elves that look upon the Wood Elves with envy. Not only have the Wood Elves left the High Elf kingdom with relative ease, but they have also achieved a symbiosis with a host of powerful spirits and entities. While the Dark Elves struggle to tame beast and elf alike, the Wood Elves have the very forces of nature at their beck and call.

In a kind of vain effort to mimic the Wood Elves success there are some Dark Elves that attempt to replicate the fighting style and abilities of their Wood Elf cousins. Training Dark Elf warriors in the Wood Elf military tactics and skills, while difficult, is not impossible. However, utilising the spirits of the forests is. Even if they could capture a Treeman or Dryad, they are not as easily broken as beasts such as the Hydra.

This is where the Dark Elves defer to the superiority of the Skaven. For a small price the Skaven can build and animate wooden constructs to act in the forest spirits places. Their design can vary, depending on the individual building them. Some are wholly machine, powered by gears and warpstone. Others still are golems, forms bound with the soul of a daemon.

Of all the alliances the Skaven enter into, this is perhaps the most interesting. Typically the Skaven and Dark Elves have a trusting alliance, based on their common characteristics of

brutality, self-importance and deviousness. There is a grudging, mutual respect between the two sinister races.

However, this trust largely disappears when the Dark Elves have contraptions of Skaven design under their control. Both races are always slightly suspicious of the machines, wary of them in case they suddenly turn on their masters or makers. As a whole the Skaven usually know not to over-ride command of the constructs, at least not during battle. They also usually build in some kind of safety mechanism that prevents the Dark Elves from directing the devices against them.

In the end what this all amounts to is a less reliable alliance than normal, but one that yields some benefits that the Skaven do not normally get. And of course, the Skaven are more than happy to provide the Dark Elves with what the need. After all, what are friends for?

Seasonal Upheaval

Unlike most races, the Wood Elves are susceptible to the annual march of the seasons. As the forest around them changes, so does the very nature of the Wood Elf people. While this is normally not a problem, any abnormalities in the regular cycle can yield devastating results. And these events are ripe for enterprising Skaven to capitalise on.

With the onset of winter the forest enters a semi-dormant state. While the spirits of the wood can

still be roused, they are harder to call, and have a much more sullen demeanour. The Wood Elves too reflect this stark and harsh time of year, becoming brooding and introspective.

On occasion Morrslieb has an increased and irregular rise in power. This, combined with the coming of winter, can cause a kind of 'emotional darkness' in some of the Wood Elves and the forest spirits. They are drawn to large amounts of warpstone, the magical stone somehow calls them to it, and they gather around these areas in a trance like state.

It is easy enough for Skaven to take advantage of these rare events, herding and coaxing the Wood Elves towards their enemies using warpstone baits. The Wood Elves stupor quickly turns to dark rage when they near anything or anyone

The Empire



The Rat Gods

While on the surface the Empire appears to be a bastion of order and hope, on the inside it rots and festers. Some citizens of the Empire, be them pauper or Prince, slink away into the dark places and trade their souls for power and salvation.

Foremost amongst these evil covens are the Chaos worshippers. Men and women who have given themselves over to Chaos, and fulfil the whims of the gods of destruction. Others are more benign, those who have taken on other faiths, such as the Lady of the Lake, but fear persecution from the zealous Empire population.

Then there are those who have learnt the truth, turned from the unseen gods and dedicated themselves to living, breathing deities. All throughout the Empire can be found small cults, who meet underground, and bow to the mastery of the Skaven. For what can these creatures of legend be, with fantastical technology and powerful magics, but gods upon the earth.

Of course, the Skaven are happy to play along with the ruse. In truth, there are those who take this worship as validation of their superiority, and begin to buy into the omnipresent powers their followers believe them to have.

The diverse background of those who enter these cults means that, when called upon to muster a force, large facets of the Empire war machine can be utilised. Anything from Witch Hunters to

Knightly Orders can be at the Skavens disposal, ready to discard their disguises of the Empire and march along side the future masters of the world.

Technological Advancement

Technology is one of the main crutches of the Empire. So much of the civilisations prosperity and wealth hinges on the creation and production of machinery of every ilk. From weapons of war to devices for farming, great success can be had by those talented enough to build the future.

However, humans are a fickle species, and it is easy for them to slip from selfless benevolence to single minded greed.

Such examples can be pulled from the annals of the Guilds of the Empire. On more than one occasion masterful Engineers have fallen from grace, neglecting their duty towards their people in favour of furthering their own personal power and goals. The lust of these individuals is so great that it is easy for the Skaven to step in and manipulate the poor wretches towards their own ends.

To many such Engineers, the Skaven sorcery-science is a wonder. Devices of such practical designs, but of such potency. Most have become so deluded in their own abilities and intelligence that they believe they can somehow harness the unreliable power of Skaven weaponry into something safe. Something that will place them firmly in the history of the Empire.

Of course the Skaven know otherwise. But offering the hapless humans glimpses of a power they could truly never wield makes them that much easier to control. In exchange for knowledge on Skaven devices many Engineers give up their professions greatest assets. Soon Helstrom Rocket Batteries, Hand Gunners and Steam Tanks are deploying along side the hunched, dirty masses of the Skaven. And the men of the Empire do this willingly, for who wouldn't make this sacrifice to further the glory of the Empire?

Brettonnia



Power Hungry

There are those in the chivalrous land of Brettonnia that covet power more than justice and honour. Their weapons coercion and trickery, rather than sword and lance. To these individuals flock like mined deviants. Knights who, for reasons of their own, are equally as depraved and corrupt.

Inevitably the Crown hears of these dark courts and sends the might of Brettonnia to crush the fallen knights. Even the most bloodthirsty and crazed know better than to stand alone against the armies of Brettonnia, and so they enlist the help of those with no honour or morals.

The Skaven have eyes everywhere, and even before such dark courts are in their infancy the ratmen are behind the scenes. These sects are often propelled along, in secret, by the machinations of the Skaven. Evidence to support unfounded suspicions is planted. The fires of rebellion are stoked with clandestine assassination. Those who will bring about war amongst the humans are protected and nurtured.

When the time finally comes, the Skaven reveal themselves. Not as the manipulators they are, but under the guise of easily

tricked creatures of evil. By this point the pride and arrogance of the turned Bretonnian nobles is at such a peak that they immediately dismiss the Skaven as brainless monsters to be used and discarded. This makes it all the easier for the Skaven to plant the seeds they need, and bring anarchy and civil war to the fair lands of Brettonnia.

The Travelling Salesman

In Brettonnia the nobility live a life of luxury and entitlement. While below them, scrabbling in the filth, live the peasantry. Here among the wretched villages and hovels of the people, superstition reigns.

There are those who take advantage of these simple people, selling them various charms, ointments and incantations. In fact, seeing the caravan of one of these snake oil salesmen while travelling the roads of Brettonnia is not uncommon.

It is under this guise that the Skaven sow unrest and corruption. Rather than provide items with no medicinal or magical properties the human lackeys of the Skaven sell potent artefacts and potions to the unsuspecting peasants. As their wounds heal, or dire events are ward away, the easily

manipulated peons fall further under the spell of the Skaven.

Where once these men and women were loyal citizens of Brettonnia, and devout followers of the Lady, their beliefs become warped and twisted with each item they buy. Soon whole towns are under the thrall of the Skaven, and where the peasants fall they soon pull the more susceptible knights with them.

From there the effects can cascade, gradually catching up more of the Bretonnian citizen's right up to the Barons and Earls. Soon a veritable army of Bretonnian citizens, drugged and brainwashed, is at the disposal of the Skaven.

Lizardmen



Warped Spawning

One of the Lizardmen's greatest strengths is their ability to quickly breed large quantities of troops. Whole armies emerge from the spawning pools each month, hard wired with all the knowledge they need to fight in the service of the Slann and the Old Ones.

Because of the nature of their birthing, and the frequency with which it happens, the security surrounding the birthing ponds is usually quite minimal. Even if someone were to make it to a spawning pond and steal even a single egg, the environment required to grow said egg to maturity is almost impossible to reproduce. It would be a matter of hours before the egg died completely.

This is of little consequence to the Skaven. Their very nature allows them to slip silently into the spawning ponds of the Lizardmen and spirit away whole generations of eggs. Using unstable and dangerous machinery the eggs can be kept alive and eventually provided to Master Moulders, Warlock Engineers or even the diseased brethren of Clan Pestilens.

From this point it is a haphazard collection of chemicals, devices and raw warpstone that keep the eggs alive and growing. Of course there is no guarantee that such an endeavour will produce results, there is no formula for bringing Lizardman eggs to maturity. No Skaven has bothered to analyse or document the results, or if they have, they have not shared it.

Be that as it may, with the right amount of luck and skill the eggs soon birth fully grown Lizardmen. Because of the processes the eggs have gone through, the results can vary wildly. Some Lizardmen have emerged perfect, uncorrupted examples of the Old Ones genetic design. And yet more have crawled into existence, warped and corrupted. Whatever the result, the Skaven soon have a small army of Lizardmen that is theirs to control.

Guiding the army has always presented a problem. In some cases the Skaven have managed to birth what equates to a Scar Veteran to lead the army, though this is not always the case. Another, far more horrible solution has been the creation of a Slann. Using genetic material stolen from the Slann a mock-Slann can be grown. This is usually spliced with the foetus of some creature, a Rat Ogre or the like.

What results is a horrible, sentient fleshy blob. The magical and physical abilities of these creations can vary wildly, but it fulfils its purpose. Deep in their reptilian brains the Lizardmen recognise the chosen of the Old Ones, and the twisted lizards march to war in aid of the Skaven.

Doomplaque

For the Lizardmen, the way is crystal clear. Enact the will of the Old Ones to the letter, and without question. With the disappearance of their masters from the world, the Slann rely on ancient plaques to guide them in this task. Whole

continents have been shifted, solely because a golden plaque said it should be done.

Unfortunately, the Lizardmen do not know the ultimate intentions of the Old Ones. This can mean that even the most detrimental set of instruction will be carried out with devotion and conviction. What is worse, the Slann and their followers will never question any order that has come from the Old Ones, even if it flies in the face of all they know.

It has taken a lot of resources and some powerful mages, but there have been occasions where Skaven plotters have managed to not only create a faultless Golden Plaque replica, but also slip it into possession of the Lizardmen. As long as the Slann reading the plaque believes it to be genuine, the Skaven can manipulate them into performing almost any task.

Provided the fake plaque is convincing enough, soon Lizardmen troops can be marching to battle along side their most hated foe. While the Slann, and the Lizardman population at large, understand that something isn't right they are far too single-minded about doing the Old Ones will to move from the course set before them. And so the Lizardmen bring their vilest opponents one step closer to domination.

BLOODBOWL STAR PLAYER

VELSKIN LASHTAIL

by Skaven Lord Vinshqueek



With a race as numerous as the Skaven, it is not uncommon for a talented player to emerge from the masses and announce its presence to the Old World. However talent alone won't take you far, and as such there are only a few players who become the legends we know, such as Head Splitter or Hakflem Skuttlespike. Still on occasion, there is a player who truly shows promise enough to place their name next to these legends.

Velskin Lashtail is one such player. Hailing from the northern Skaven territories, where mutations are a common sight amongst Skaven (or any of the races that live there, for that matter), he is blessed (according to the Hell Pit Herald Most Memorable Mutation contest, which he won in both 2508 and 2509) with an elongated tail. While it makes him an easy target to get a hold of (quite literally), over the years he has learnt how to turn this apparent weakness into one of his biggest assets during either offensive or defensive plays.

The most famous example would be the big 'tail-pulling' incident of 2502, the best game Velskin played to date. During his first year in the tournament scene, when he was playing for the now disbanded Masterfull Mutators, the team faced off against the more experienced Hell Pit Hellions. To this day they still reign supreme in the Hell Pit Cup each season.

Their star player during that time was Squeelch McRaur, a Blitzter whom had been physically altered by one of the Master Moulders attached to the team. However during the process of making horns sprout from his skull something went wrong. This resulted in severe trauma to his brain, causing him to become subject to violent rages both on and off the pitch.

Near the end of the first half Squeelch managed to get a hold of Velskin's tail. Pulling the (then) rookie towards him, the crowds chanted the name of Squeelch, expecting a serious beating. However in the fight that ensued, the long tail of Velskin eventually found its way around the neck of Squeelch. While trying to beat the rookie, the star was slowly strangled.

Even though this meant the team lost its star player, the head coach of the Hellions was quite impressed. The infamous former Stormvermin (and some whisper, ex-assassin from Cathay) Squick P'tkush prided himself in having an eye for talent. Unsurprisingly, Velskin played for the Hellions the following season. Tutored by Squick he quickly became a strong player, and more famous with each season played. His trademark tail and hidden daggers quickly made him a feared opponent.

Despite Hell Pit being a fairly remote region, and its cup consisting of local leagues, the large Skaven teams have eyes and ears everywhere. Not in the literal sense, though Clan Moulder did develop organisms with those features. Scouting teams from Clan Eshin, whom can infiltrate almost any stronghold, were sent out by numerous teams to spy on their rivals.

So while the Hellions' management diverted the attention away from Velskin Lashtail for a certain amount of time, it was inevitable that the star would eventually attract the attention of the bigger teams. Initially the Hellions' management refused to talk about a possible transfer. Until, that is, they were visited by a delegation from the Skavenblight Skramblers, known as the 'legal sharks'. The services of this Eshinite firm (renowned for their methods to have deals signed under their terms) are highly sought after by many Skaven teams. Though it does require a large sum of warpstone to actually hire them.

Changing Hell Pit for Skavenblight after seven successful seasons meant Velskin suddenly found himself amongst the stars he striven to join. Although spending the biggest part of his first season on the bench in the dug-out, the new 2511 season began with injuries amongst the Skramblers' starting eleven (an investigation is currently underway in regards to alleged assassination attempts financed by rival teams). As one of the more solid substitutes, this means we will see a lot more of Velskin this season!

Veskin Lashtail

MA 8

ST 3

AG 4

AV 7

Skills: Loner, Prehensile Tail, Stab

Hiring cost: \$150k

VELSKIN LASHTAIL
SKAVEN



MOVEMENT

8

STRENGTH

3

AGILITY

4

ARMOUR

7

SKILLS

LONER,
PREHENSILE TAIL,
STAB

TEAMS

Masterful Mutators, Hell Pit Hellions,
Skavenblight Skramblers

SPECIAL

NONE

150,000 GP

STAR PLAYER

VESKIN LASHTAIL

Age: 13, Height: 5'3", Weight: 99 lbs

CAREER STATS:

✦ Best Game: Masterfull Mutators versus Hell Pit Hellions, 2502.

✦ Rushing 74 paces, passing 4 paces, 1 touchdown, 2 fatalities.

✦ Best Season: 2504, including the Hell Pit Cup Trophy

✦ Rushing 873 paces, passing 182 paces, 1 interception, 11 touchdowns, 24 fatalities.

✦ Career Totals: Rushing 7741 paces, passing 1564 paces, 9 interceptions, 104 touchdowns, 213 on-pitch fatalities, 89 off-pitch fatalities due to the poison used on employed daggers

AWARDS:

✦ Hell Pit Cup winners shard: 2504, 2505, 2507

✦ Hell Pit Cup Most Valuable Player award: 2504, 2505, 2509

✦ Hell Pit Herald Most Memorable Mutation contest winner: 2508, 2509

✦ Farsqueaker TV Best Kill of the Year: 2502

In the Flesh

Behemoths of flesh and bone. Rabid animals. Monsters of every conceivable size and shape. This is the power of Clan Moulder, nightmares and horrors brought to agonising life.

Here Skavenblight Gazette presents a selection of the most vile and gut-wrenching creations of the Packmasters and Master Moulders of the Under Empire Forum, and beyond.

Next issue we will be looking at Clan Skryre creations and inventions. So if you have a contraption of particular potency send it in, with your name and what it is called by 27 March 2011, to sbgfeatures@gmail.com

Hell Pit Abomination



Bassik's Hell Pit Abomination! Made with the finest materials found in the Ratogre, Spawn and Corpse Cart kits, and a healthy dose of the fabled "green-stuff".

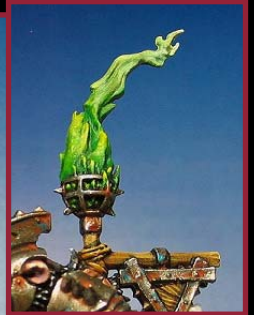
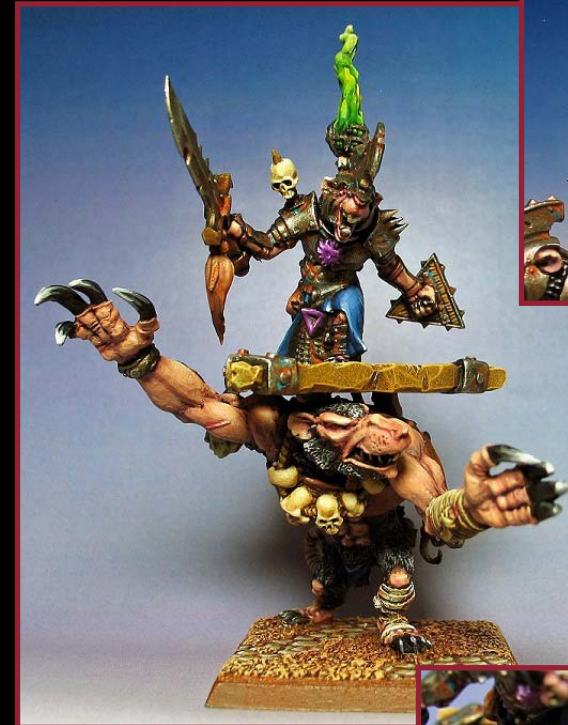


Giant Rats



Giant Rats by Scruitiss.

Warlord on Bonebreaker



Warlord on Bonebreaker by Joe Sleboda. Constructed using the Warlord from Island of Blood, Mordheim, Rat Ogre, Skaven shields, greenstuff and sprue off cuts.

Rat Ogre



Rat Ogre by Scruitiss.

Hell Pit Abomination



Abomination by Chitterfizz.

From Chitterfizz: "This Abomination, duely named Fluffy, sparked me to make my first themed part of my Skaven. With an Almost Shark like fin on the back Fluffy inspired me to make Vishnik Redfurs' Undertide Scourge of The Tilean Coast. A Clan Of Corsair Rats made up of Moulder Outcasts, and Aquatic inspired Mutations."

Warlord on Bonebreaker



Borriss of Skavenblight by Icen.

Tzar Boris, various Skaven bits and greenstuff.

The Master Rises

by Jason Santiago

Silence hung, like a dead man, in the chamber. Only the light of a few sputtering candles illuminated the sparse and pristine interior of the room, empty save for the contorted and gaunt frame of the old man kneeling quietly within. The room bespoke a simplistic and elegant beauty, yet was at odds with the twisted little man who reposed at a low altar. His grotesque figure sat perfectly still on the polished teakwood floors. Snow white, paper thin screens made up the walls of this domain and served only to be a visible barrier to those outside.

Within the gloom of shadows a figure stirred. Darkness seemed to follow and ooze about the black garbed figure like the silently ebbing shadows of the setting sun. The still, dank air seemed almost to pass through the crouching form, disturbing not even a mote of dust.

Shuffling around suddenly to face his former pupil, the Master sneered at the arrogant intruder who froze on the spot, teeth bared.

“Do you think now is your time? You must truly be the master of your destiny, to pick the time of your death.”

The pupil’s eyes blazed with a savage red fury at the sudden quell of restraint. His plan was failing.

After a moment’s pause the Master continued.

“I would have been pleased to hear more of your exploits before you chose to die. I care not for your life, but only that I can spread the dark arts unto the world through chosen pupils, such as you were. Would that you accomplished more before your death, I could send you to whatever hell your god has chosen for you without regret. However, where there is one there were many before, and many to come. You should know that your skills are impeccable and nearly without flaw. But you have failed to learn the simplest and yet most difficult art of our lineage. The art of no-mind.”

“Had you emptied yourself of all thoughts of killing and revenge, I would never have sensed you in my chamber. But your rage extends before you like a wave upon the rocks, and so now, when you might have stood a hair’s breadth of a chance, you have none. It is easy to kill the soft, slow-witted peoples of this earth, but you will find me neither soft, nor slow of action.”

The old Master’s eyes blazed with a sudden fury, his life was as that of hundreds of mortals and yet he still could not find the one perfect student, he who would reign and command the shadowy legions after his ultimate death. No matter, soon this bastard’s foolhardiness would feed the Master’s own blighted soul.

“Very well, I would not deign to deny you the time you’ve chosen.”

The silent figure rose, trembling with fury and fear. The Master spoke again.





“Even now I can see your mind, thoughts racing and flickering. You think you will plunge your dagger into my heart? You feel my blood wash warm over you as my throat lies open? The snap of my dry, ancient bones rings joyous in your ears? Oh I see these things, before you even entered this room. I was wrong to waste the teachings on you, though prior to this evening’s folly you were among the best. But no, you have not even brought weapons, save yourself. You think your skills are my superior? Go now, into your after-realm knowing you failed.”

With a celerity that belied his wizened form the Master leapt from the ground, scrawny and aged arms and legs coiled to strike. His simple brown robes trailed behind him as though he was a horrible, winged creature from nightmares. With a cry he landed on the as yet unmoving figure below. The old man’s fist splintered through the floor, where the figure had once stood.

In his mind the Master knew his pupil would disappear more quickly than he could counter, though he never dare admit it. But with centuries of wisdom he spun, his left hand rigid, gnarled fingers forming into a spearhand strike that licked out as a viper’s tongue at the pupil’s throat. The Master’s arm took on a soft glow as his own psychic rage fuelled the blow. Melting away from the strike, the vengeful pupil barely raised his arm in time to parry the blow past his face. As quickly as he struck the Master recoiled his arm, a mild and unexpected sting from where he contacted his pupil’s whipcord-strong arm. Abject horror spread across the craggy face of the Master.

“Foul creature! Your cowardice is revealed! How-- how did you bring poison to bear? You have no weapons! I sensed nothing! I..” the Master stumbled back, already feeling the radiant burn of the poison.

His fury ebbed away as water from a punctured skin, the hot amber glow of his rage gave way to sickly green hue that crept along his bare forearm. Sinking to his knees he looked upon his pupil, the tight black rags covering his hairy body, all except for his arms.

Baffled, the Master stammered. “How? I must know... grant me this boon! You knew you would never defeat me in personal combat... what blade do you carry... how?”

With well practised fluidity the pupil plucked a single hair from his right arm. Even as the Master’s vision hazed over he could see the dark green poison drip from the single hair, behind that the monstrous face of his killer. A slight frown creased his brow, and as he slumped over into the waiting arms of Death he managed a crooked grin, knowing full well he finally unleashed the single greatest killer the world will ever know.

His last pupil.

Snikch.

Technomancy Terrors

Attention Clan Skryre

Time to
wheel out
your engines
of destruction!



Next issue we will be featuring Technomancy Terrors, a gallery of your Clan Skryre creations. So if you have a Doomwheel, Warlock Engineer, or any other deadly creation that you feel needs showing off, send it in.

Email a high quality JPG image, with your name, what the device is, and any other interesting details by 27 March 2011, to:

sbgfeatures@gmail.com

Island Of Blood Skaven Miniatures

by Clanlord Trask

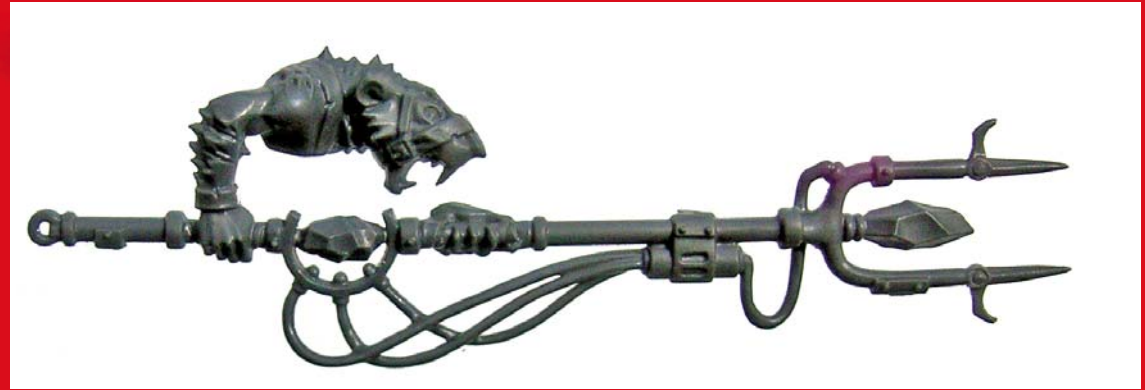
As any Warhammer player worth their salt knows, the boxed game of the latest edition rule book was released some time ago. Called Island of Blood, inside are two armies, High Elves and Skaven.

A lot has already been said about the models in the box. In fact, the internet is already inundated with High Elf and Skaven armies constructed from the contents of Island of Blood. Just pop onto The Under Empire Forum for a mass of well painted and interestingly converted miniatures from the game.

These models go together slightly differently than your standard plastic sets, and so we feel that this article would make an excellent reference. Especially if you were planning on using some of these models for conversions.

Where appropriate we have included shots of both sides of a piece.

Master Moulder 2 Pieces



Piece 01: Head, left arm and prod.



Piece 02. Side 1: Body and right arm.



Piece 02. Side 2: Body and right arm.

Poison Wind Mortar 4 Pieces



Piece 01, Side 1: Loader, Mortar half and crewman.



Piece 01, Side 2: Loader, Mortar half and crewman.



Piece 02: Spare poison wind mortar globe.



Piece 03: Mortar barrel half and crewman right arm.



Piece 04: Mortar tubes.

Rat Ogre 01 3 Pieces



Piece 01: Rat Ogre body back.



Piece 02: Rat Ogre body front with arms.



Piece 03: Rat Ogre head.

Rat Ogre 02 3 Pieces



Piece 01: Rat Ogre body back with tail and right leg.



Piece 03: Rat Ogre head.



Piece 02: Rat Ogre body front with arms and left leg.

Warlock Engineer 4 Pieces



Piece 01: Engineer body and left arm with warlock pistol.



Piece 02: Engineer head.



Piece 03: Engineers power source.



Piece 04: Right arm with warp-blade.

Warpfire Thrower 4 Pieces



Piece 01, Side 1: Crewmen bodies and half fuel barrel.



Piece 01, Side 2: Crewmen bodies and half fuel barrel.



Piece 02: Crewmen head and arms.



Piece 04: Rat on fire.



Piece 03: Half fuel barrel.

Warlord 2 Pieces



Piece 01, Side 1: Warlord body.



Piece 01, Side 2: Warlord body.



Piece 02: Chest, right arm holding halberd and left arm holding cleaver.

Restricted gaming



I love Games Workshop. It gives me light and land, and food, and water. It can do no wrong and will be the saviour of my sinful soul. Without Games Workshop I would be a miserable wretch with no purpose in life.

Are the Games Workshop Assassins gone? *whew* Reality is a tad different. While Games Workshop's pricing is a discussable topic, with good points for both sides, there are other matters which complicate pursuing our beloved hobby. It seems I have been 'blessed' by a generous share of those.

Low to no income, lack of free time, local retailer problems, Games Workshop's policy of not delivering to Latvia (though I'm not sure if this still stands) and my bank doesn't allow internet purchases outside of national internet. Despite all this, having started less than 2 years ago, I now have several fully painted regiments with several more awaiting their turn. And if I can do it, so can you. Here's how.

By Gints Romanovskis

PRE-PREPARATION

Find a channel to get your supply from. If you have a Games Workshop store nearby - perfect. A local game store that happens to sell Warhammer - also good. None available? The internet to the rescue! Games Workshop's website is basically an e-store anyway. If you happen to be in a no delivery zone, then there is always Maelstrom games. And if all else fails, you can try ebay.

GETTING STARTED

You have nothing, but you want to play Warhammer. Good. Assuming you're in a situation like mine, you have saved up 30 lats for the purpose. That's also known as 40 pounds or 60 dollars. If you have access to the Army Book, say flipping through it at the local game store, your best investment would be a Clanrat regiment and the means to paint it. A flesh colour, a fur colour, a metal colour and one for clothing and armour is what you should be starting with. Since you are starting out, cheaper paints and supplies would be a good place to start. For example, the citadel brush set costs Ls 6, my current brush set cost Ls 0.75 with negligible difference in quality. There are some cheaper, good quality products out there, so have a look around. The aim is to have some reserve cash left over.

SECOND MONTH

You have a regiment for a month and you've probably painted several rats. Maybe even bought another coloured paint to make them prettier. Splendid work. But a regiment does not fight battles without rules or leaders. You probably have less money available this time, so you should keep the purchases on the low side. Like an Army Book (Ls 12) and, maybe, a hero choice (Ls 7). Don't forget the dice!

Not the fancy, transparent dice with holograms and glow-in-the-dark pips. The plainest dice you can find. You can even scavenge old board games from your childhood. You will also need a measuring tape. There's probably one lying around somewhere at home, though if live in a country that uses the Metric System you might need to buy one.

CHEATING

Regiment: check. Hero: check. Army Book: check. Dice and tape: check. On to gaming, right? Right, but you'll need to do something first. Most importantly - find an opponent, who has the core rulebook and is acceptive of newbies. Or someone like you, so you can split the rulebook costs. Second - cheat. Your opponent will most probably want to play to an army points size that your models just can't make.

Proxies to the rescue. Cut out squares from cardboard the same size as your models bases. Make twenty and you have another Clanrat regiment. Twenty more and you've got a Slave unit. It may not look pretty, but at least you can get some experience under your belt.

The same goes for battlefields. A 4'x 6' rectangle made from duct tape on the floor with books for hills and boxes for buildings. What more do you need?

ORGANIZATION

Wise decisions are of utmost importance in anything, growing a horde included. With limited earnings you most definitely won't be able to buy something every month. And that's not bad, really. But if you're determined to get something it's good to arrange your expenses (all this should be common sense, but it turns out not to be so common).

First take care of the vitals, like rent, water, food and internet connection (*good thinking, how else do you get the latest Skavenblight Gazette?* –Ed). Then make one Warhammer related purchase. Noticed something awesome later, or forgot to get that one important paint? Too bad! Next time you'll know. Do this before allocating money for goodies, music, events and other such nonsense. Not that you will have time for all that, you'll be at home assembling and painting anyway.

MOST IMPORTANTLY

Have fun! If you get frustrated with your limited painting, hordes of proxies and 10:0 loss streak, remember that you're doing this against economic odds. You are the working class Army Battle Standard bearer.



Proxies in action. In this picture there are 6 Jezzails, 20 Plague Monks, 7 Plague Censer Bearers, 3 Salamanders with handlers, 29 Slaves, a Warplightning Cannon, a Saurus hero and 16 Nightrunners fighting a Kroxigor. Can you find them all?



The Skavenblight Gazette website!

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Allies

Are you a fan created, Warhammer based publication or production? Contact the Adrats and you could reap the rewards of working with the Master Race.

Lesser races, quiver in fear!

Promote your Warhammer ezine or community in the Skavenblight Gazette or on the website.

Email the Adrats at editor@skavenblightgazette.com and arrange your place in the greatest ezine about the master race.

www.skavenblightgazette.com
contribute or die, man-thing!



A blog on
Warhammer, Skaven,
and continued failures.

HEALTH WARNING!

The Health Council of Skavenblight would like to advise that there is little chance of a cure for the 'monkey' disease currently effecting a number of Clan Eshin adepts.



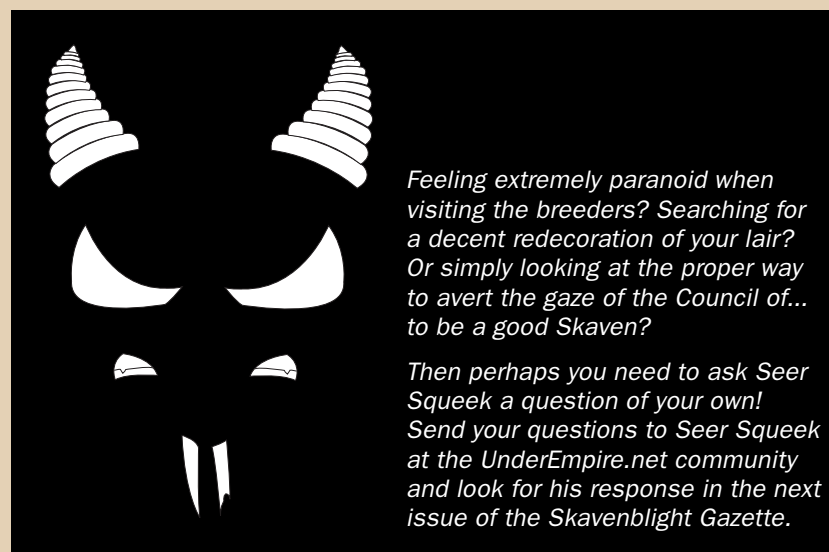
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creation that you feel needs showing off, send it in.

Email a high quality JPG image, with your name, what the device is, and any other interesting details by 27 March 2011, to:

sbgfeatures@gmail.com

Time to wheel out your engines of destruction!



Feeling extremely paranoid when visiting the breeders? Searching for a decent redecoration of your lair? Or simply looking at the proper way to avert the gaze of the Council of... to be a good Skaven?

Then perhaps you need to ask Seer Squeek a question of your own! Send your questions to Seer Squeek at the UnderEmpire.net community and look for his response in the next issue of the Skavenblight Gazette.