

CLOSE ASSAULT

By Richard Haliwell and Jervis Johnson

This article gives rules for the new Terminator close assault weapons, the thunder hammer, storm shield and lightning claws. There are several new rules dealing with close assault situations, and with reloading heavy weapons. The article also contains the Terminator Army List for use in your *Space Hulk* games so that the players can get a chance to pick their own forces to match the scenario they are about to fight.

Terminator Close Combat Weapons

When Marines in Tactical Dreadnought Armour go into combat against Genestealers they take with them sophisticated and powerful weapons that redress the balance in the close combat against their inhuman enemies. Many of the close assault weapons are ancestral - passed down from one generation of Marines to the next, just like the Tactical Dreadnought Armour. Against the relentless attacks of the Genestealers, even battle-hardened Marines need all the help they can get.

Thunder Hammer

The Thunder Hammer is an energy weapon constructed around a generator. It produces a blindingly bright explosive energy field capable of blowing apart a Genestealer's carapace. The thunder hammer's generator can be set to overload in the most dire of circumstances; this causes a gigantic explosion that vaporises everything in the vicinity. The thunder hammer is usually carried in conjunction with the storm shield.

Any Marine equipped with a thunder hammer has his close combat modifier increased by +2 when he is facing his opponent. The Marine's modifier is not increased when defending against attacks made from the side or rear.

In desperate circumstances, the Marine may cause the hammer to self-destruct, destroying all models, blips and doors in his section, at a cost of 1 AP. The Marine player can detonate his hammer at any point during the Marine's action phase or the 'stealers action phase, by using the model's own APs or spending CPs as appropriate.

The Marine may detonate his hammer instead of defending when a Genestealer delivers a close combat attack. This doesn't require any CPs, but it must be done before and instead of the Marine rolling for the close combat. In order to detonate his hammer the Marine must also have LOS to a 'stealer that has just performed an action. After the hammer self-destructs, remove all models, blips and doors in the section, including the Marine himself.

Storm Shield

The storm shield is a Terminator defensive energy shield. Shaped like a cross, it draws its energy from the generators inside the Terminator suit. It always glows a startling azure-blue from the electrical energy that snakes across its surface. It glows even more violently when a Genestealer's claws rake across it and disturb the energy pattern.

A storm shield may be used to parry an attack from the Marine's front facing in exactly the same way as a power sword. The storm shield can also be used to parry an attack coming from the Marine's left-hand side.

Lightning Claws

Lightning Claws are vicious bladed gloves surging with lethal energy. These deadly energy weapons allow Terminators to adopt the ruthless fighting style of a primeval cat. The claws can hook into a Genestealer's carapace and tear it away, exposing the livid flesh beneath. Lightning claws are extremely difficult weapons to use; it takes many years of study to become totally proficient with them.

Lightning claws are always worn in pairs, as the Marine's sole armament. A Marine equipped with lightning claws has his close combat modifier increased to +2. In addition, the Marine rolls two dice in close combat, instead of just one, adding the close combat modifier to each die roll.

Lightning claws may only be used when a Marine is facing his opponent. The Marine may only roll one die against opponents to his side or rear, and adds his normal close combat modifier.

New Rules

These new rules clarify the details of close combat and introduce rules for reloading during the game.

Attacking Genestealers

Genestealers attacked from the side or rear are disadvantaged, in the same way as other models. A Genestealer attacked from the front rolls three dice. Genestealers attacked from either the side or rear roll only two dice. Genestealers who survive the first round of an attack from the flanks or rear are, of course, allowed to turn to face their opponent.

Shooting into Close Combat

Terminators in overwatch are not allowed to shoot into a close combat. Thus, if a Genestealer attacks but the result is a draw, Marines in overwatch cannot fire at the Genestealer. Other than this Marines are allowed to shoot into a close combat, provided they can trace a normal line of sight to their target.

Ammunition and Reloading

During a long game, the Marine player may find that his heavy weapons have run out of ammunition. Reloading an assault cannon is awkward and time-consuming. However, you may find that the extra ammunition gives the Marines that slight edge they need to complete their mission.

Ammunition

If you are using the Terminator Army List, additional ammunition is paid for with points at the start of the game when choosing your squads and weapons. The points cost for buying ammunition for assault cannon and flamers are listed in the options for squads with these weapons.

A flamer begins the game loaded with enough fuel for 6 shots. You may buy 1 extra canister of fuel for a flamer when purchasing squads from the army list - this allows the flamer another 6 shots.

An assault cannon begins the game with enough rounds in its magazine for 10 shots. Each Assault Cannon

Marine also carries an extra magazine, giving him 1 free reload. Up to 2 additional magazines can be bought when purchasing squads from the army lists. Each magazine allows the Marine to fire another 10 shots.

Reload Actions

Reload actions cost 4 APs. Reloading must be completed as a single action, so all the APs must be spent at one go. Marines cannot partially reload, perform some other action and then complete the reload.

[Christopher's suggestion: You can split a reload over two action phases, provided no other actions are taken in between (e.g. spend 2 APs at the end of a turn, and the remaining 2 APs at the start of the next). If the Marine is interrupted while reloading, such as by being attacked or deciding to perform some other action, the reload is lost.]

The points cost may, of course, be supplemented by expending command points. Reload actions can be performed during the enemy turn.

When you reload a weapon, the Genestealer player hands back the markers that have already been used by it.

You can reload a heavy weapon at any time; you don't have to wait until it is completely empty. However, a reload will only take the weapon up to its normal full load of shots - i.e. a flamer can never have enough fuel for more than 6 shots and an assault cannon magazine only holds enough rounds for 10 shots. Any extra shots are lost and cannot be saved until the next reload.

Assault Cannon Malfunctions

The rules for the assault cannon state that the weapon may malfunction during the first 10 shots. This no longer applies. Assault cannon will not malfunction until they have fired 10 times. After that, the normal rules apply. The safety limit is determined by actual shots, not magazines. If the assault cannon is reloaded before the first magazine runs out, it still takes a total of 10 shots fired before the weapon becomes prone to malfunction.

Miniatures

Space Hulk is a fast-paced game with both players taking quick decisions based on a detailed analysis of the situation. While we've been playtesting the rules for the new Terminators, we've found that it can get very confusing if they aren't represented by the appropriate miniatures.

For example, it's halfway through a game and the 'stealer player discovers that what he'd assumed was an ordinary Terminator with a slightly different paint scheme is actually armed with a thunder hammer - you can imagine the problems if the game isn't restarted. The game will run far more smoothly and enjoyably if you use the correct metal Terminator models for all of the new Marine weapon types.

[Otherwise known as a shameless plug for the Traitor/Lightning Claw/Thunderhammer Terminators advertised in the issue. Only £3.99 for two then, sigh. -Christopher.]

Terminator Army List

The Terminator Army List allows the Marine player to hand-pick the squads under his command, carefully choosing his forces to fit the situation he faces. This flexibility allows you to decide what weapon combinations you will use, and whether the situation calls for specialists such as the Captain or Librarian.

Using the arms list brings a whole new feel to the game. The potential for variation is enormous - you can replay every scenario several times, trying out different squad and weapon combinations for each. If you get beaten with one force, pick a different force next time and try again.

The rules can be used for any of the published *Space Hulk* scenarios, as long as *both* players agree to use them before the game begins. Note that these rules only allow the Marine player to pick his forces; the Genestealer player follows the forces and deployment instructions given in the scenario as usual.

Choosing the Marine Player

Before you choose the Marine player, decide which scenario will be played. Both players then secretly write down the number of points they would like to spend on the Marine force for the scenario, up to a maximum of 40 points.

The player who makes the *lowest* bid gets to be the Marine player. He then uses the number of points he bid to pick his force from the army list. This force is used *instead* of the force listed for the scenario, not in addition to it.

In the case of players bidding the same amount, both players must make a new bid until one player makes a lower bid than his opponent.

Remember when you're bidding that the higher the number of points you bid the more Marines and weapons you can buy, but that you're less likely to get to be the Marine player. On the other hand, if you bid too low you're certain to be the Marine player, but your chances of winning are slim!

Using the Army List

Selecting your Marine force is a simple three step procedure:

1. Select up to 2 squads from those listed below. The Marine player may only use 1 squad in the *Suicide* mission and *Exterminate* scenario, and must use 2 squads for the *Rescue* scenario. In any other scenario the Marine player can use 1 or 2 squads.
2. Decide for each squad on any weapon upgrades or reloads that you want from the *Options* section of the appropriate box.
3. Add up the total value of your command and make sure it does not exceed the amount of your bid. If it does, you've got to redesign your force until you've spent the right amount of points.

Now you're ready to play. Objectives, Genestealer forces, deployment, special rules and victory conditions apply exactly as stated in the scenario.

Nerrak looked around at the devastated remains of his Close Assault Squad. Theree brother Marines were dead, their bodies shattered and torn. Sergeant Cogan lay on the floor, his armour ripped open, blood dissipating into the vacuum. Nerrak heard the final death-cry over his comlink; now he was alone.

Genestealers began to pour in through the ruptured bulkhead. He waited. How many more were out there? His fingers played over the nova rune cut carefully into the handle of his thunder hammer - with this he could release all the hammer's energy into a single vengeful explosion.

Sixteen more 'stealers skittered into the room.

There was one consolation - they were all going to die with him. He pressed the rune as he whispered a prayer to the Emperor. The hammer's power generator shifted into overload.

COMMAND SQUAD ... 20 POINTS

The Command Squad represents the mind and soul of the Marine fighting force. This squad is used to resolve the most problematic of conflicts; when the Captain himself feels that he must be there in the thick of the action, either to boost morale or because command decisions would be more effective if made on the spot. After the Captain, the most important member of the Squad is the Marine Librarian with his psychic abilities. Librarians are powerful warriors in their own right and their addition to the Command Squad turns it into a devastating fighting force.

1 Captain with storm bolter, power sword and power glove

1 Librarian, psychic Mastery level 1, with storm bolter and force axe

1 Marine with assault cannon (1 free reload) and power glove

1 Marine with flamer and power glove

1 Marine with storm bolter and power glove

OPTIONS

Increase Librarian's psychic mastery ... 3 points per level (max 4th)

1 reload for flamer ... 2 points

1 or 2 reloads for assault cannon ... 1 point each

TERMINATOR SQUAD ... 10 POINTS

This squad is the classic Terminator assault unit and is the backbone of any Marine boarding party. They are commonly deployed to deal with a variety of offensive and defensive situations. The general balance of weapons throughout the squad allows these Marines to put up a strong resistance against any enemy, whether at close quarters or long range.

1 Sergeant with storm bolter and power glove

1 Marine with power glove and *either* assault cannon (1 free reload) *or* flamer

3 Marines each with storm bolter and power glove

OPTIONS

Replace Sergeant with Captain armed with storm bolter, power sword and power glove ... 5 points

Replace Sergeant's power glove with power sword ... 1 point

Replace 1 Marine's storm bolter with assault cannon (1 free reload) or flamer ... 4 points

Replace 1 Marine's power glove with chain fist ... free

1 reload for flamer ... 2 points

1 or 2 reloads for assault cannon ... 1 point each

HEAVY WEAPONS SQUAD ... 5 POINTS

The Heavy Weapons Squads are used to give additional fire-power to an assault force; they are at their most effective when used in the more open areas aboard a hulk, such as long corridors or large rooms. Their powerful heavy weaponry makes them an important addition to any boarding party. An extra heavy weapon in a Marine force can mean the difference between achieving the mission objectives or death.

1 Marine with power glove and *either* assault cannon (1 free reload) *or* flamer

1 Marine with storm bolter and power glove

OPTIONS

1 reload for flamer ... 2 points

1 or 2 reloads for assault cannon ... 1 point each

CLOSE ASSAULT SQUAD ... 10 POINTS

The Close Assault Squad are in their element in the narrow, twisting corridors of a space hulk. They are specially trained to fight effectively in confined spaces at close quarters using energy weapons like the lightning claws and thunder hammer. Given the right corridor configuration they are one of the most deadly Marine fighting forces.

1 Sergeant with storm bolter and power sword

1 Marine with lightning claws

1 Marine with thunder hammer and storm shield

2 Marines each with storm bolter and power glove

OPTIONS

Replace any Marine's storm bolter and power glove with one of:

Flamer and power glove ... 4 points per Marine

Storm bolter and chain fist ... free

1 reload for heavy flamer ... 2 points per Marine with heavy flamer

RECONNAISSANCE SQUAD ... 7 POINTS

Stealth is the watchword of the Reconnaissance Squad. When a Reconnaissance Squad leaves the assault boat its job is to identify as quickly and quietly as possible the strategically important positions aboard a hulk, such as command system areas and cryogenic chambers. Frequently the Squad is ordered to locate or establish beachhead zones that can be easily defended. The Marines fall back to these areas in dire circumstances, knowing that they afford some protection.

1 Sergeant with storm bolter and power glove

2 Marines each with storm bolter and power glove

OPTIONS

Equip Sergeant with power sword ... 1 point

Replace 1 Marine's entire armament with thunder hammer and storm shield *or* with lightning claws ... free