



WAAAGH!

'ERE COME DA ORKS

For all of you budding Ork Warlords out there, this month sees the arrival of the entire range of Epic 40,000 Ork miniatures. Having fought using the Orks on many occasions, Andy Kettlewell has some tactical advice to get your Waaagh off to a flying start.

THE GREEN TIDE

Ork tactics in Epic 40,000 are simple. The whole army rampages across the battlefield like a vast green tidal wave, blasting at the enemy with each detachment's huge massed firepower and then assaulting any enemy detachments which stand in their way! Simple, brutal, and not terribly difficult to grasp, in other words very Orky! Other strategies simply don't work, or suit the Ork army poorly.

All your opponent should see is a huge Ork wall steadily advancing across the board. By advancing your entire army in one front you give the enemy too many targets to choose from. If he concentrates all of his firepower on one detachment then the rest of your army can advance unhindered. If he panics and scatters his fire across your whole battle line he will kill a few Boyz here and there, but will ultimately achieve nothing. Your opponent's final option is to charge into your army and hope that he comes out best, which is very risky given that the Orks can muster massive close combat values from their vast numbers of supporting units.

There are certain tricks and refinements to the Ork attack but the main strategy always holds true. One massive wave will overwhelm the enemy.

DA ORK WARLORD

The Warlord gives you a re-roll in close combats and firefights and makes nearby detachments *Stubborn*. This means the Ork Warlord can keep the army moving forward when the blast markers start building up, making him very useful to your force. For this reason I nearly always take a supreme commander in my Ork hordes.

The Warlord can be upgraded or given a bodyguard depending on what role you want him to have in your army. An Ork Warlord in a Gargant, for example, would probably form the centre of your army and could lead from the front. If your Warlord is mounted in a Gargant then the Gargant automatically gets the maximum number of shields. This is a golden opportunity to have a fully shielded Mega-Gargant in your army! If you are fielding a Mega-Gargant then consider making it the supreme commander.

Personally, I like to use my Warlord in a supporting role moving just behind the Ork wave. From this position he can make much of the army *Stubborn*, and is able to support the advance, charging in when the time comes. With this in mind I normally mount the Warlord in a Stompa, for extra survivability and give him a bodyguard of either more Stompas, Nobz or units of Shooty Boyz.

DA WARBANDS

The warbands form the core of your army. These are the boyz who will get shot up the most, but will eventually win you the battle.

At the centre of my wave I like to have at least a couple of warbands on foot. The warbands must be large and cheap, but fortunately the Ork army is one of the few which allows you to do this. Because a detachment is cheap and numerous it will soak up a lot of fire and can kick a lot out in return. Each Ork Boyz unit has a good assault value and reasonable range, and when they are all massed together they can generate a reassuringly large firepower total. A good number of Ork Boyz, Kommandos and Gretchin units make up my core warbands with a few Nobz, Dreadnoughts and Skarboyz thrown in to toughen them up in an assault.

I have found that in Epic 40,000 it is very important to protect the flanks of your army to avoid becoming surrounded. Fast units like Eldar Vypers and Space Marine Land Speeders can quickly concentrate their firepower on your flank detachments and destroy them before the rest of your army can help them out. The best way to prevent this is to make your flanking detachments hard and fast. Mounting an entire warband on Battlewagons is expensive but worth it. Battlewagons have excellent range and will make your detachment much faster, with each Boyz unit able to ride on a Battlewagon. They can speed around the flanks and catch the enemy by surprise. The detachment can also muster huge amounts of firepower, especially if Shooty Boyz are included, and are very hard to stop, because if they have over 15 units they get a bonus +1 to their leadership tests, for me this is a must. Boyz and Battlewagon units also have good assault values so they can be equally threatening at close quarters even if there are less of them than in a footbound warband.

Boarboyz detachments can also be used to protect the flanks or act as a mobile reserve. Boarboyz are fast, have a very good assault value and are hard to kill. They can be used to sweep around the enemy and attack them from behind to cut off their lines of retreat, or kill off any artillery lurking in the enemy rear. A Boarboyz attack also makes a good diversion, attracting enemy fire which would otherwise fall on the main Ork wave.

USING DETACHMENTS

The army lists give gamers almost complete freedom to choose what is in their detachments. This can encourage people to radically change their detachments for every game. However, I have found that it is best not to do this, you should just tweak them. After a few games detachments will build up their own character and your opponents will begin to recognise them from previous battles. Such phrases as "They're the humies that destroyed da Gargant last week... get 'em Boyz!" will make battles far more entertaining.

WAR ENGINES

Warwick: Like the boyz, Ork war engines also benefit from safety in numbers. By war engine standards they are not expensive, so always field more than one if you can. A single Gargant can be targeted by the entire of the enemy army and rapidly destroyed, so I always use at least two! Each can only receive half the fire, and by rights should last twice as long. That means I get twice as much time to blast the enemy apart with my Gargants' massive firepower and multiple super heavy weapons.

Andy K: Gargants should form the centre of your green wave along with your infantry detachments. They pack a lot of firepower and special weapons but also attract a lot as well. If they move off on their own they will be targeted by everything the enemy has and will be destroyed. Individual Gargants are not that survivable and need to have a swarm of infantry around them to divert some of the enemy's firepower. Though Gargants can move faster than warbands on foot they should not race ahead. Remember war engines cannot go backwards, so if your army is halted for some reason, usually because of blast markers, your Gargant is going to be left in no man's land. Again Gargants should form part of the wave, and move at the same speed as the rest of the army.

It is always worth equipping one of your Gargants with a close combat weapon as enemy war engines can do serious damage if they get into close combat or a firefight with one of your warbands. A Gargant with a ripper fist will discourage your opponent's attack and kill any enemy war engines that get too close for comfort.

Battlefortresses suffer from the same problems as the Gargants as they only have Armour 5. This means that they are going to be destroyed by weight of fire. On the bright side they do have a high firepower and can be devastating if used in numbers. They are particularly at risk from flyer attacks. Even fighters can cause some damage to Battlefortresses and have a chance of getting a critical hit. If the enemy has lots of fliers then your war engines need to be protected by putting them in the centre of your army with Flak Wagons to cover them.

Because Ork detachments can be very large you can have detachments with huge amounts of firepower that are cheaper than opposing detachments. One point of firepower from an Ork is as good as one point of firepower from a Space Marine or Eldar, so having more units is a big advantage. I always like to have a big support warband totally dedicated to firepower. By making a Warband from Shooty Boyz and Big Gunz you can easily create detachments with a total Firepower of 24+. Once you get these detachments into range, pick one enemy detachment a turn to blast apart, perhaps going onto overwatch to increase their effectiveness. If deployed behind the main advance your opponent will have to choose between shooting your support warband that is about to blast him, or the detachment at the front of the Ork wave that is about to assault him. Either way, one of your warbands will be free to attack unhindered.

Ork Warbands can be very diverse and most importantly their speed can vary a lot. The main disadvantage of foot warbands is their speed, they are slow. Slow detachments can easily be left behind in the rush to get at the enemy. Likewise fast warbands can move too far ahead of the main wave and get wiped out. The idea of the Ork wave is that the whole Ork army moves forward at the same rate in one line. If detachments move faster or slower than everybody else they should still form part of the wave and not become isolated.

Ultimately your detachments will have to assault the enemy, smashing them with one massive charge. There are some enemies, Chaos or Tyranids for example, that you should avoid close combat with and just move into firefight range. Close combat is a very risky business in Epic 40,000 and you should only enter it if you have the odds stacked in your favour or you are desperate. Firefights represent close range shooting between opposing detachments, at the sort of range Warhammer 40,000 games take place. A firefight will not cause many casualties but does break the losing detachment. If your Ork detachment faces a Chaos detachment then it would be wiser to push them back in a firefight than to charge in to a risky close combat against troops that excel at just that.

Because it takes the Orks so long to get into position it is imperative that when your warbands do assault or open fire they are capable of doing a great deal of damage. It is useless to have a supporting detachment that only has, say, 14 firepower, you need a minimum of 24 firepower! With 24 firepower you inflict the maximum of 3 blast markers on the target detachment which will pin them down for a turn or two.

FIGHTA-BOMMERZ

I have found Ork fliers are good at Intercept missions and very bad at everything else. To use them to maximum effect buy large numbers of them and use their high Intercept value to destroy opposing fliers. They can provide needed air cover for your war engines or your large warbands of Shooty Boyz and Big Gunz. My advice is to never send them on ground attack missions unless the enemy has no flyers left, because they are useless at them. The reason Ork fliers are not very good is they use the barrage template when shooting at the enemy. The main problem being that to get into range to use the barrage template you effectively also have to risk moving into snap fire range. If you intend to make ground attacks then make sure you are a good judge of distances, you'll need to attack within your 15cm range and outside of the 10cm snapfire distance. Good luck!

DA KULT OF SPEED

Adrian: *Being a dyed-in-the-wool Speed Freek in Warhammer 40,000, I also favour the fast attack of the Kult of Speed in Epic 40,000. My own Ork army has three Kults of Speed, two made up of Battlewagons, one of Bikes and Buggies. I only have one large warband backed up by a Gargant, which shows how much I favour this style of attack. Both Battlewagons and Bikes are fast and shooty, the Battlewagons in particular are particularly good at assaulting too. The Kult allows me to outflank my opponent and then hit him hard in shooting as well as in an assault!*

Andy K: A Kult of Speed is a Warband of Orks that are united in their love for Bikes, Buggies and extreme speed. They are usually seen racing towards the enemy ahead of the rest of the Ork army, mainly because they refuse to slow down!

The Kult can be used as a mobile reserve or as a fast flanking force just like Boarboyz. I usually make my Kult of Speed detachment mostly from Battlewagons and Boyz so it will have a high assault total and good firepower. I include Bikes and Buggies if I want extra firepower or just more numbers! If you add a Speedsta or two with Death Rays or Lifta Droppas then even Titans can be knocked out in one swift attack. I find large Kults of Speed more useful than small ones, for the same reasons as with warbands.

The Kult of Speed is particularly useful if you have a problem detachment you need sorting out, like enemy artillery. The Kult can speed around the flanks and attack. The enemy must then divert some of their fire onto the Kult which means they cannot concentrate on your main advance. If they ignore the Kult then their artillery will be destroyed so you win either way!

Another use for the Kult of Speed is to rush around the back of the enemy and surround them just before your main assault crashes in. If you win the enemy must retreat at least 15cm from your units. If they are surrounded however, there is nowhere for them to go and they are destroyed. Fast detachments used in this way can cause a great deal of damage.

ORK WEIRDBOYZ

Ork Weirdboyz are cheaper than every other race's psykers so you should make sure that every warband has one. The bonuses they give in assaults and firefights are well worth their cost and they're always useful to have around. When da Boyz get stuck in you must not give the enemy any advantage that you could have prevented by just spending those extra few points on the detachment.

DA ENEMY

There are a number of things that your opponent and the scenario can do to disrupt your cunning plans and generally make your life miserable.

Many scenarios use the reserves rule which can effect an Ork army badly, because they are generally slow. In my first ever game with the Orks I played an *Escalating Engagement* scenario and for the first four turns the only things to turn up were a small Boarboyz detachment, a big Shooty Boyz detachment and a Great Gargant. The Boarboyz rushed off all by themselves and got jumped on by some Lictors. The Shooty Boyz had nothing in range to shoot at and the Gargant simply got mobbed by the entire Tyranid army and, fairly predictably, was destroyed.

If I had formed the army in a line and advanced the Tyranids would have not been able to pick on one detachment at a time. The combined Firepower and Assault value of the whole Ork force would have probably been enough to hold off any attacks. Orks benefit from safety in numbers and detachments should always try to stick together. A cunning trick is to play the *Forced March* Fate card can help when rolling for reserves as you could play it on a detachment still in reserve to increase their speed which could increase their chance of getting onto the board.

As I mentioned before, flier attacks against your army can be devastating. You cannot protect your entire army from enemy fliers so you must choose who you want to protect. Surround your chosen detachment with Flak Wagons and put a couple of Fighta-Bommer detachments on intercept missions. Fighta-Bommerz have a high intercept value so they should shoot down a fair number of enemy fliers. The Flak Wagons will rarely get a chance to shoot at fliers but their very presence acts as a deterrent to enemy attacks.

INCOMING!

This brings me onto my final point – artillery. Artillery is the bane of Ork armies because it is effective against tightly packed numerous troops and generally has a longer range than everything in the Ork army. My advice is keep the bulk of your army moving forward and send a fast moving unit ahead with the sole purpose of killing the artillery. If you are very desperate Fighta-Bommerz could be sent on ground attack missions in a last desperate effort to kill them, just don't expect too much. Don't try to hide from your opponents' artillery, keep moving forward. This doesn't mean you should march move straight at the enemy in a tightly packed formation, it means keep assaulting, rolling forwards without hesitation. When you do get into range remember that you can choose specific targets with special weapons, so target the siege artillery with your Death Rays and Mega Cannons.

DA END

The Orks are an entertaining army to play, rolling forwards and challenging the enemy to stop them. The only army this does not work well against is the Eldar, because they have the speed to run away, escaping your assaults before you can get stuck in. Your tactics may have to be changed for specialised armies like the Eldar but never be afraid to put all your faith in a horde of Boyz, a big Shoota and Orky spirit.

BEWARE - ORKS MARCHING

Due to the slow speed of foot bound Ork warbands all Ork commanders will be tempted to use the march move. My advice is simple. DON'T DO IT! March move should only be used if the enemy have entirely no chance of shooting at you. This is because, in my experience, if you march then everything that can shoot at you will, because they know it will do the maximum amount of damage. You may be thinking that I have had some bad experiences with the march move in the past and you would be right. Gavin's veteran Chaos Space Marines and Warwick's Imperial artillery have turned my Ork army into mushy peas more often than I care to mention all because they marched and got caught, so beware!

Of course this is just my opinion. When I gave this article in to Andy Chambers to check he wrote "I disagree" next to my comments in big red letters, (normally a bad sign). Many players get away with marching and normally benefit from doing so. When I am playing with an Eldar force I am happy to march here and there, but I find it extremely hard with the Orks. Having said that Andy Chambers has played me twice at Epic 40,000 and won both times, so you can make your own mind up about who to believe. No doubt there is a time and a place for marching, but I'm yet to find it.

FIGHTA-BOMMERZ

Andy C: While Andy K's comments on Fighta-Bommerz are broadly true I've found in games I've played that they are unexpectedly useful on ground attack missions for a few reasons. Firstly they use a barrage, which you can't get in any other way with the Orks. Secondly they allow you to put in an attack anywhere on the battlefield, something else that Orks can't usually do. The combination of these two things means that an opponent has a great deal more to fear from Fighta-Bommer ground attacks than you might think. The barrages mean he can't clump his forces together too much, and the ability to strike anywhere means he will have to think twice before he Marches with any detachments when there is a ground attack coming in. This all adds up to dominating the battlefield in a more subtle way than simply blowing up tanks and troops – your enemy can't move and deploy as he pleases anymore and is likely to get distracted from the real threat of your warbands and war engines. You might lose a few flyboyz to snapfire occasionally, but they're cheap (for flyers) and the psychological effects of their terror bombing is worth it.