THE EPIC PLAYTESTER'S VAULT

The Epic Vault is a vital resource for all serious Epic players. It contains experimental rules & army lists. They are available as PDF files that can be downloaded for free. You will require a copy of Acrobat to read the files. You can obtain a free copy of this software from Experimental rules (sometimes called trail rules) are literally the rules that are being worked on by the Epic development team at the moment. As soon as any changes are made they go up here in the vault first of all. This means that you can join in with the playtesting process if you wish to do so.

PLAYTEST ARMIES

When we recently released the new edition of the Epic rules, in the splendid Epic: Armageddon rulebook, practical considerations limited the number of armies we were able to release alongside the game. Each army requires several dozen different boxes and blister packs (or 'codes' as we collectively refer to such products), and releasing so many new codes obviously places a great demand, and a great deal of strain on our ability to sculpt the necessary new miniatures, have them moulded, begin production, package them and ship them all over the world. In short, releasing armies representing all the races of the 41st millennium simply wasn't practical.

Instead, we chose the solution you see now – Epic Armageddon. This meant we could release the Epic rules in a single neat volume, with a small number of armies in it. To make the book an altogether more cohesive product, we themed the armies and the background it contained around the Third Armageddon War. Conveniently, this allowed us

to focus on the three most popular Epic armies – the Space Marines, the Orks and the Imperial Guard. Between them these three armies still accounted for several dozen boxes and blisters (and a great deal of work for our valiant sculptors, mould makers, casters and warehouse staff), but were nonetheless a manageable quantity of releases for a small outfit like Fanatic.

So, all well and good, we had managed the fairly colossal task of releasing a new edition of the Epic rules and releasing a sizeable enough miniature range to revive the entire game system. However, that certainly wasn't an end to it. There were obviously thousands of Epic players out there with existing armies not covered by the Epic: Armageddon book. With work on the rulebook complete, we realised some provision would have to be made for those players…

NEW RACES

Some games, like Battlefleet Gothic and Warmaster, are in their first editions, and while they may lack some races, that's just a simple fact of life – we'll get around to releasing them one day, but until then they simply aren't part of the game. The matter wasn't nearly so simple with Epic, where several previous generations of the game inevitably left many players with existing (and, in many cases, substantial) armies. In the past, Eldar, Chaos, Tyranids, Squats and the Titan Legions had all had their own miniature ranges and army lists, so we could be fairly certain there were still players out there with those forces.

The solution, as it transpired, was the Playtester's Vault. During early development of the game, Fanatic's limited resources had made it an absolute necessity for us to find other means of playtesting the rules, so free, downloadable versions had been made available via the website on condition that anyone downloading them respond with all the useful comments and suggestions which are needed while a game undergoes its initial development. Even with the rules complete, it seemed the obvious solution to make Vault a permanent fixture of the Epic community, and use it as the place where we could provide all future playtest material for comment. The mainstay of this material would be the playtest versions of army lists for all the existing races not yet covered by the Epic rules – Eldar, Chaos and Tyranids. What's more, we thought, with such a convenient resource at our fingertips, why not make playtest lists

available for races who don't yet even have a figure range. Inside GW, all playtesting begins using stand-in figures, long before the figures are sculpted, so why not offer the same opportunity to dedicated players the world over. Accordingly, lists for Tau and Necrons were added to the vault.

As well as lists for races not featured in the Epic: Armageddon rulebook, the Playtester's vault is also home to a number armies for existing races, so players of Imperial Guard, Space Marine or Ork armies will still find plenty to interest them. Currently, the Vault contains the following lists:

- Ulthwe Eldar
- Tyranid Army List
- Eldar Army List
- Feral Ork Army List
- Black Legion
- Black Templar Army List
- Tau Army List
- Necron Army List

All of the lists are available as downloadable PDF files, which can be opened with the freely availabe Adobe Acrobat PDF viewer. As new versions of the list are written, they are uploaded to the site, so check back often for updates!

PLAYTEST MODELS

Perhaps the only real drawback of the Vault is that it includes rules for many miniatures which aren't available anymore, or in some cases are brand new and have never been available, even in previous versions of the game. The lack of appropriate models can be offputting for some would-be playtesters, so there are a couple of alternatives.

Stand-in models can be used, basically any appropriately sized model which won't be confused with other figures in the game. In this way, you might use a Space Marine army to represent a Necron army.

The other alternative is to scratchbuild, thus avoiding the need to wait for the release of the new models in question. Over the page, to show just how easily this can be done, experienced gamer and modeller Audrey Ewing takes a look at two as yet unreleased units from the Chaos list – the Doomwheel and the Defiler....

EPIC WEBSITE

The Playtester's Vault isn't the only useful resource on the Epic Website. Fanatic webmaster, and Captain Ahab wannabe, Keith Krelle faithfully ensures that the website is full of all manner of useful downloads, news items, photos and other stuff for the dedicated Epic player.

**Keith Krelle
Southampton Fan**

Not only does Keith's site include the Vault, but it also houses an archive of all previous Epic articles from Fanatic magazine, which are available for download free of charge. A Living Rulebook (updated to take into account any changes to the game rules themselves) and a full catalogue of the Epic range are also vitally useful resources, well worth checking out.

www.epic-battles.com
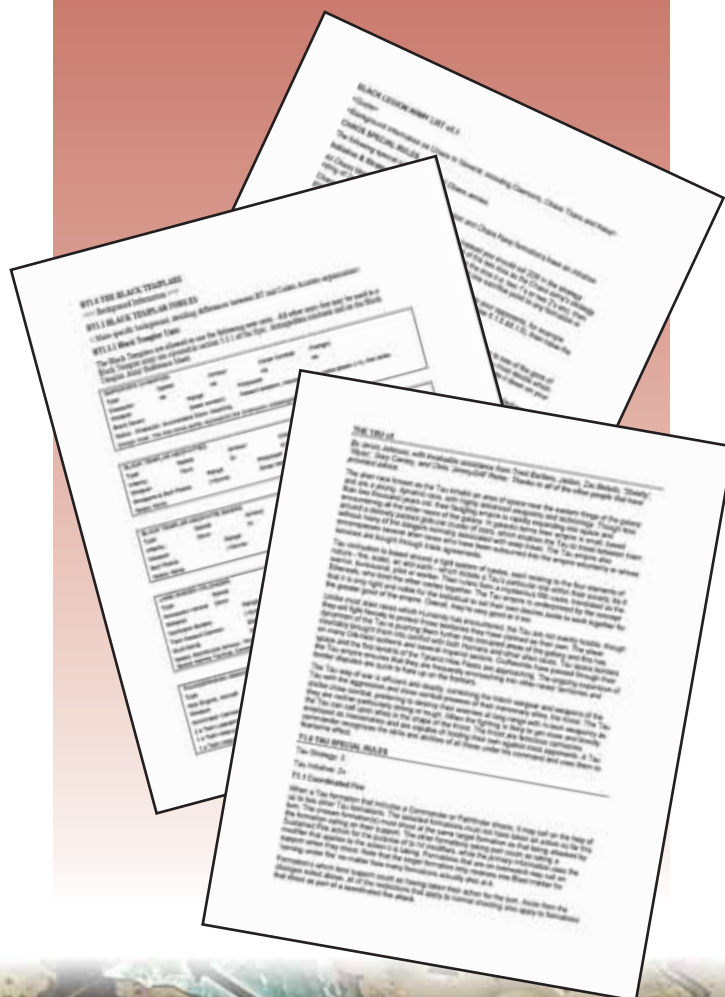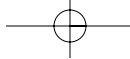
CHAOS DEATH WHEEL

by Audrey Ewing

Want to play with Death Wheels and Defilers? Audrey shows you how.

I'd seen the Epic Armageddon Chaos test list in the vault and wanted to try out some of the new Chaos War Engines. There are no models for them yet, so I thought about what weapons were on the Death Wheel and how I could create it. I went to my bitz collection and searched for parts that matched what I imagined. Here's how I did it.

Items List:
– 2 x 40mm round bases
– 2 x Imperial tank track – 8 link piece
– 1 x Imperial tank track – 2 link piece
– 1 x Imperial tank track – 1 link piece
– 4 x Chaos vehicle spike rings (The 'older' half circle rings)
– 2 x Epic Chaos Land Raider turrets
– 2 x Imperial cupolas (the newer Imperial cupolas should work)
– 2 x Chaos autocannons (an old part from hoarding bitz for years)
– 2 x Battlefleet Gothic Chaos towers
– Plasticard to fill some holes and make a base
– Various Chaos bitz

First, glue together the two 40mm bases with the flat sides facing out. Match up the circles on the underside of the bases and glue those together. Do not glue the outer edges.

Next, cut off the bevelled outside edge with a jeweller's saw to create a flat surface for the tank track to fit onto. The cut doesn't have to be perfect, the tracks hide the outer edge and will cover minor imperfections.


Bend the tank tracks between each link to match the curve of the 40mm bases. Glue on the tracks, starting with the 8 link pieces. Next, glue on the 2 link piece and lastly the 1 link piece. The tracks do not fit perfectly, so just slide the 2 and 1 link pieces so they look evenly spaced. Glue the Death Wheel onto the base with the 2 and 1 link pieces on the bottom so any gravel and flock will hide them. Cut off the three longer spikes on all four of the Chaos spike rings.


Side sponsons – Glue the cupola to the upper inside of one Chaos spiky ring. Next, glue a second Chaos spiky ring to the cupola to make a complete circle. Be sure to glue the cupola to the inside of the rings, not on the top, as it won't fit correctly on top of the ring. I created both sponsons this way.
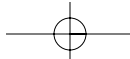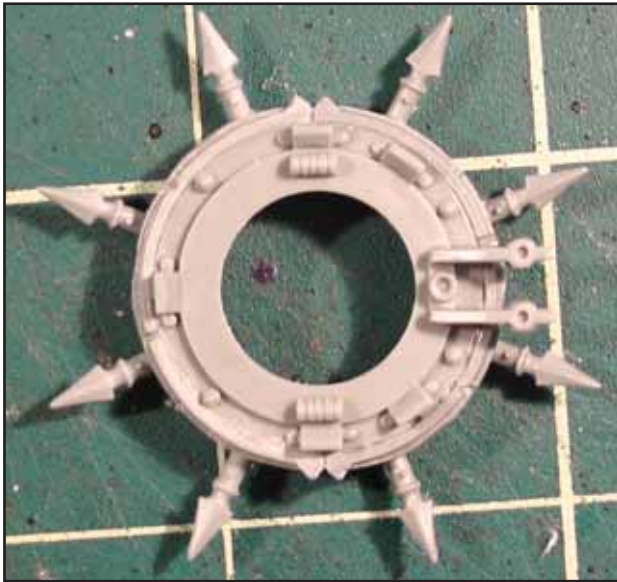
Weapons turrets – Cut off the inside linked lascannons from the Epic Chaos Land Raider Turret. I cut a small U shape for the battle cannon to fit in between the new Reaper autocannons.
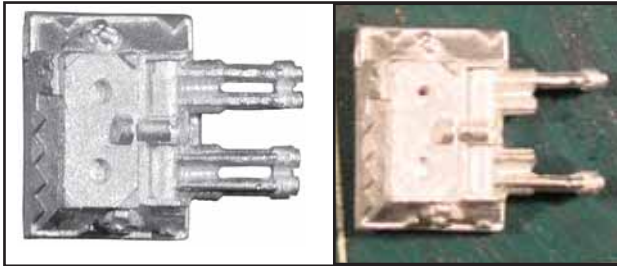
Battle cannon – Use the ends of the Chaos autocannon. I feel the autocannon heads look Chaos-like and add to the model. You can easily make a battle cannon out of some tubing, a 40K lasgun or other suitable weapon.

Glue the battle cannon into the U-slot between the Reaper autocannons on the turret. Do the same for the other turret.

Void shield generator – Cut off the top deck of the BFG Chaos tower and glue it to the bolter mounts of the cupola. Use extra skulls or symbols from your bitz collection and glue them on to the void shield generators.

To finish the sponson, glue the turret piece to the centre of the sponson. It should almost fit perfectly, although I had to file the cupola a little. After the turret is glued into place, fill the two gaps with a circle cut out of thin plastic glued inside of the sponson and add some Chaos bitz to cover the two holes on the turret. I made the second sponson the same way.

All that's left is to glue the sponsons to each side and add some battle damage. That's it, finished!!!

Here you can see Audrey's Chaos Death Wheel glued to a movement base soon after the stage by stage you've just finished reading.

Here you can admire the Death Wheel painted and based, ready to crush the enemies of the Dark Gods.

CHAOS DEFILER

Wanting to playtest all the units in the Epic Armageddon Chaos list, I kept looking for appropriate stand-in models. Even when play-testing I want models in a game to look as closely as possible like whatever they're representing. After some planning I came up with a way to build a Defiler. This is my general guide of how to create a Defiler:

Items List:
6 x MOW Hulk iron claw
1 x Epic Chaos Predator left heavy flamer sponson
1 x Epic Chaos Predator right lascannon sponson
1 x Epic Chaos Predator turret 2
1 x Imperial tank track – 2 link piece
1 x Imperial tank track – 1 link piece
1 x Epic Chaos ram bar 1
1 x Epic Chaos Land Raider left and right side twin lascannon 2
1 x Plastic Orlock lasgun
1 x BFG Chaos tower
Plasticard

A number of the items in the list above are optional bitz I used to complete my Defiler. You can substitute various pieces with others that work as well.

First, cut off the parts with the reddish marked areas from all six MOW iron claws.

Next, take the tank tracks and glue the 2 link & 1 link together. Cut out a strip of plasticard and glue it under the bottom to give it more strength. This is the body of the Defiler.

Cut out four foot blades from plasticard using the template. Cut off the small 'pins' on the tank track. Glue the four legs into the indentions on the tank track. You may have to trim the tank track indentions so the legs fit. See Foot Blade template.


Cut off the tip of the Orlock lasgun for the battle cannon.

Cut off the two lascannon barrels from the right Land Raider sponson and the single lascannon on the Predator sponson. Glue the two barrels onto the Predator sponson giving you a Reaper autocannon. You can order both the left and right Predator flamer sponsons to have a Reaper autocannon on a different side or position.
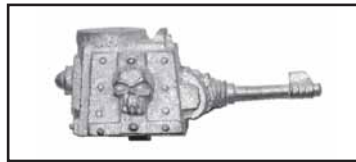

Taking the Predator turret, cut off the autocannon barrel and the skulls on the sides of the turret. Take care not to ruin the skulls when cutting them off, they will be used later. Glue the battle cannon to the front of the turret and the sponsons to the side of the turret. Now you have a Defiler turret. Take a close look at the picture of the three turrets and you will see I have used a different battle cannon for each and the sponson weapons are in different positions and/or locations.
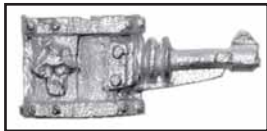

Next glue on the 'foot blades' to the legs and the Chaos ram bar to the main body. It is now starting to look like a Defiler.
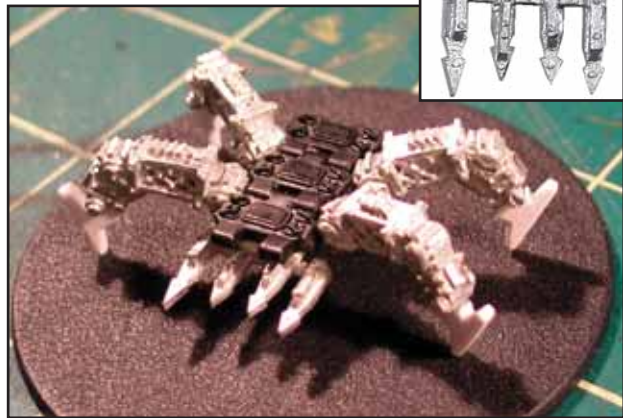

Put aside the main body and turret to work on the claw arms. This is the most difficult part. Glue the claw template to a piece of plasticard and cut out the shape with a jeweller's saw. Cut out 4 claw pieces (2 for each claw). See Claw template.
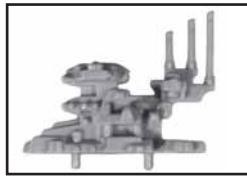
Glue two claw pieces together with the 'thumb' piece in between and a strip of plasticard between the 'wrist' to separate the two claw pieces. Trim down the 'wrist' length of the claws and cut a 'C' shape in the end, then glue it to the arm piece.
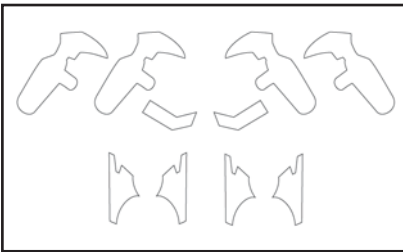
Cut some armour plating out of a plastic blister packaging for the claws and glued it on to the top and sides of each claw 'wrist'. Then glue the claw arms to the main body.
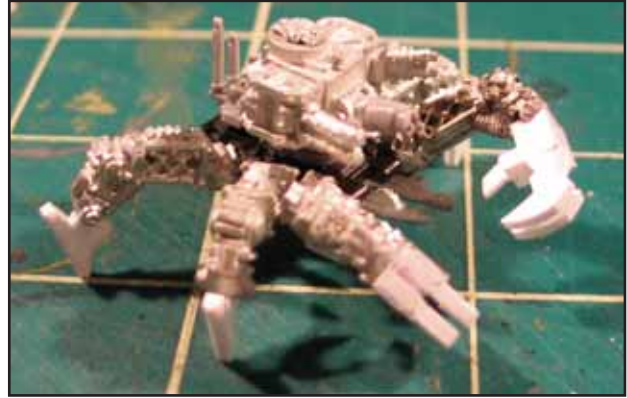
To finish, glue the first turret spacer ring (an Epic infantry base) and the second smaller turret spacer ring cut from plasticard to the body. Glue the turret on. Glue one of the saved skulls on top of the turret hatch. I don't like the Defiler 'head on a machine' look, so you are on your own if you want to do that. Cut down the BFG Chaos tower and glue it to the back body to look like a set of exhaust pipes. That's it. Finished!!!