

IGNITING THE BEARD

A battle report by the Tanelorn Wargames Club at Salute
2003

Scribed by Erwin Jackson

Long before the human kingdoms of the Old World were forged, the elder races of High Elves and Dwarfs clashed in a devastating war from which both their glorious civilisations never fully recovered. Raging for over 300 years, the mournful tale of 'The War of the Beard' started with Dark Elf raids against Dwarf colonies and trading caravans. The Dwarfs, unaware of the existence of the High Elves' evil cousins, blamed the noble kin of Ulthuan and mustered their armies for battle. It was on a cold spring morn of the 201st year of Caledor II of Ulthuan's reign that the armies of these three peoples clashed. The Dark Elves, their mission accomplished, sought retreat to their waiting fleet.

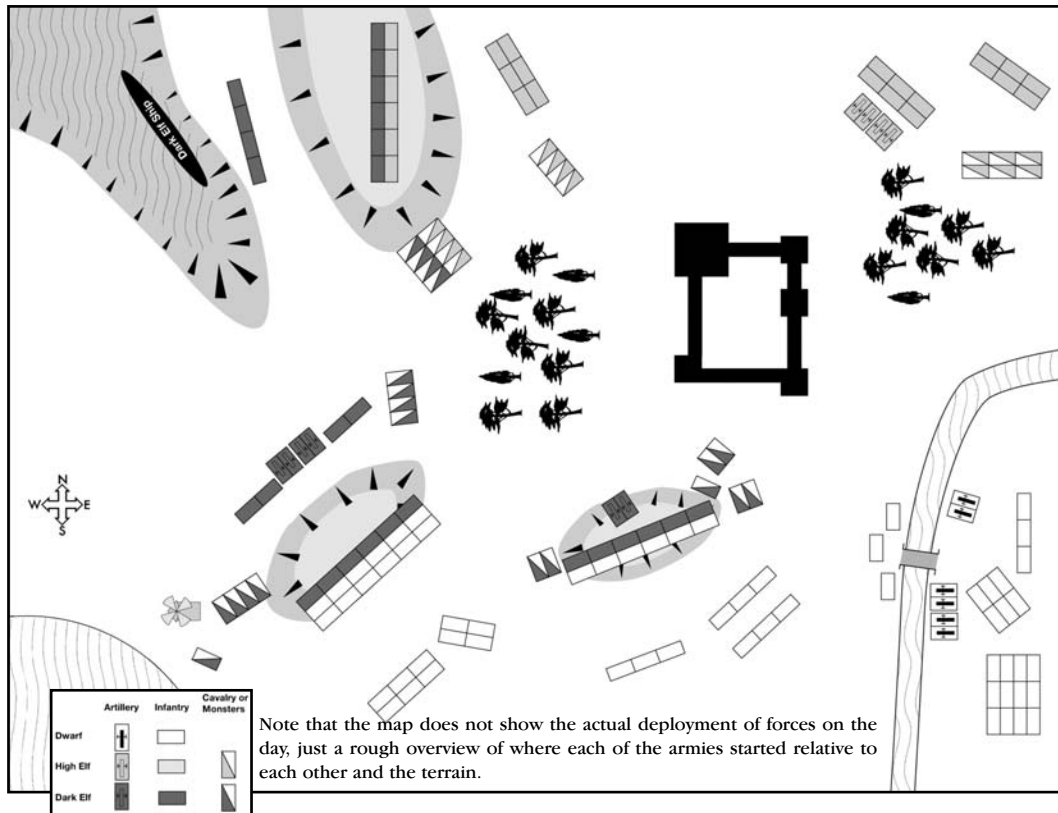
The Dwarfs had massed an army to destroy the Dark Elf force. The High Elves, unaware of their evil kin's army, advanced to meet the Dwarf threat to their borders. So it was that one of the first major chapters of this sorry tale came to pass.

Big Battles! That is what Warmaster is all about. So when the players at the Tanelorn Wargames Club had an opportunity to run a big demonstration game at Salute 2003 – one of the UK's biggest wargame shows – we jumped at the chance! We decided to run a 22,000 point Warmaster game. It was a three-way battle between Dwarfs, High Elves and Dark Elves set at the beginning of the War of the Beard.

Overall, the day went really well and the game generated a lot of interest from fellow gamers and onlookers. We even managed to finish it as well! We also had visits from friends such as Stephen Hess and Wayne Rozier, names that will be familiar to readers, and the crew from Fanatic who were present at the show. This

article presents the scenario we used and a pictorial report of the battle itself. Enjoy!

This scenario was inspired by the narrative of the War of the Beard. I liked the concept of one army withdrawing, leaving their mortal foe in the fray instead take the blame. The scenario thus required the Dark Elf army to withdraw, drawing the Dwarfs and Elves into the battle. So, at the beginning, the Dark Elves were in combat with the Dwarfs. The High Elves' objectives revolved around the destruction of the Dark Elves and so began the battle in combat with them. The Dwarfs' main objective was to regain control of a significant border town that was surrounded by Elves and obviously a solid defensible position for the High Elves (or so you may think!). These objectives presented the respective generals with conflicting needs, preventing one army from destroying you while you attempt to

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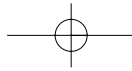
destroy another. With troops starting in combat, it would also make each objective harder to achieve and prevent generals from redeploying troops to achieve objectives quickly. It also allowed spectators to see some interesting combats from the start of the game.

In addition, I also wanted to give the Dwarfs a slight numerical advantage to try and prevent the High Elves concentrating exclusively on the Dark Elves. I also introduced some heavy gyrocopters (armed with flame cannons!) so that the Dwarfs had additional possibilities...

SPECIAL RULES:

- Table Size: 8x6 feet
- Each army group has its own Generals (Command range reduced to 60cm). The game lasts 10 turns and the turn sequence is Dark Elf/Dwarf/High Elf.
- Dark Elf Generals have Command 10.
- The Dark Elf ship moves into the sea and off table in two turns. The ship is assumed to have 10 hits and a 3+ save. Any forces on the ship may fire normally.
- Dwarf and High Elf Flyers start off table and arrive on Turn 2 on a 5+, 3 on a 4+ and so on. Roll for each army separately. Any character can command the group.





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VICTORY CONDITIONS:

Dark Elf:

Minor victory if 500+ points (excluding characters) leave the battlefield aboard the ship.

Major victory if 1,500+ points (excluding characters) leave the battlefield aboard the ship.

High Elf:

Minor victory if a Dark Elf General is killed.

Minor victory if they sink the ship.

Major victory if they capture the ship.

Dwarfs:

Minor victory if a High Elf General is killed

Major victory if they capture the town and control it with at least 500 points (excluding characters by the end of turn 10).



The Dark Elf Army

Dark Elf Force 1

Deployed north-west on the map near the High Elves.

- General 125 pts
- Hero on Manticore 160 pts
- Sorceress with *Scroll of Dispelling* 110 pts
- 5 units of Crossbowmen 375 pts
- 4 units of Spearmen 240 pts
- 2 units of Witch Elves 140 pts
- 1 unit of Cold One Knights 110 pts
- 4 units of Dark Riders 400 pts
- 2 units of Harpies 130 pts
- 1 battery of Bolt Throwers 60 pts

Total 1,850 pts

Dark Elf Force 2

Rearguard, deployed near the town.

- General 125 pts
- Hero on Chariot 90 pts
- Sorceress with *Scroll of Dispelling* 110 pts
- 2 units of Crossbowmen 150 pts
- 3 units of Spearmen 180 pts
- 2 units of Witch Elves 140 pts
- 4 units of Cold One Knights 440 pts
- 2 units of Dark Riders 200 pts
- 1 War Hydra 135 pts
- 1 battery of Bolt Throwers 60 pts

Total 1,630 pts

Dark Elf Force 3

Deployed south-west on the map.

- General 125 pts
- Sorceress with *Scroll of Dispelling* 110 pts
- 4 units of Crossbowmen 300 pts
- 4 units of Spearmen 240 pts
- 4 units of Witch Elves 280 pts
- 4 units of Cold One Knights 440 pts
- 3 units of Dark Riders 300 pts
- 1 War Hydra 135 pts
- 2 batteries of Bolt Throwers 120 pts

Total 2,050 pts

Igniting the beard**The Dwarf Army****Dwarf Force 1****Deployed closest to the town**

• General	155 pts
• Runesmith with <i>Scroll of Dispelling</i>	110 pts
• 2 units of Rangers	220 pts
• 2 units of Troll Slayers	160 pts
• 14 units of Warriors	1,540 pts

Total 2,185 pts**Dwarf Force 2****Reserves, deployed rear the ravine**

• General	155 pts
• Hero	80 pts
• Runesmith with <i>Scroll of Dispelling</i> and <i>Anvil</i>	120 pts
• 4 units of Handgunners	360 pts
• 4 units of Rangers	440 pts
• 3 units of Troll Slayers	240 pts
• 15 units of Warriors	1,650 pts
• 4 batteries of Cannon	360 pts
• 2 batteries of Flame cannon	100 pts

Total 3,505 pts**Dwarf Force 3****Deployed south-west on the map**

• General	155 pts
• Runesmith with <i>Scroll of Dispelling</i>	110 pts
• 4 units of Rangers	440 pts
• 3 units of Troll Slayers	240 pts
• 10 units of Warriors	1,100 pts

Total 2,045 pts**Dwarf Flying Reserves****Start game off table.**

• 9 Gyrocopters	675 pts
• 2 Heavy Gyrocopters	240 pts
• 1 Dirigible (airship)	350 pts

Total 1,265 pts**The High Elf Army****High Elf Force 1****Advance force, deployed north-west, closest to the Dark Elves**

• General	155 pts
• Hero on Giant Eagle	100 pts
• Wizard with <i>Scroll of Dispelling</i>	105 pts
• Wizard with <i>Scroll of Dispelling</i> and chariot	115 pts
• 4 units of Archers	300 pts
• 8 units of Spearmen	480 pts
• 3 units of Reavers	300 pts
• 5 units of Silver Helms	550 pts
• 3 units of Chariots.	285 pts

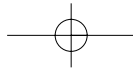
Total 2,390 pts**High Elf Force 2 – Reserves, deployed north-east behind town**

• General	155 pts
• Hero on Giant Eagle	100 pts
• Wizard with <i>Scroll of Dispelling</i>	105 pts
• 2 units of Archers	150 pts
• 6 units of Spearmen	360 pts
• 5 units of Reavers	500 pts
• 4 units of Silver Helms	440 pts
• 2 units of Chariots	190 pts
• 5 batteries of Bolt Throwers	325 pts

Total 2,475 pts**High Elf Flying Reserves start game off table**

• Hero on Giant Eagle 100 pts	
• 7 Dragon Riders	2,450 pts
• 4 units of Giant Eagles	280 pts

Total 2,830 pts

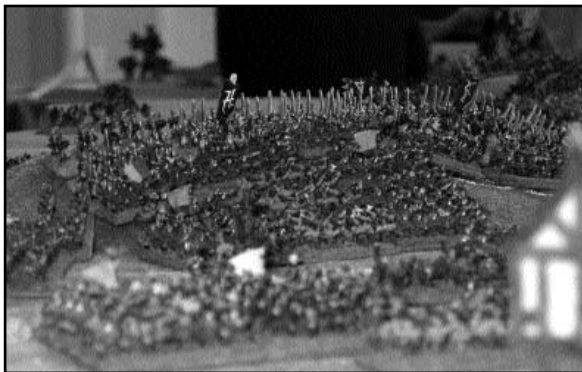


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TURN 1

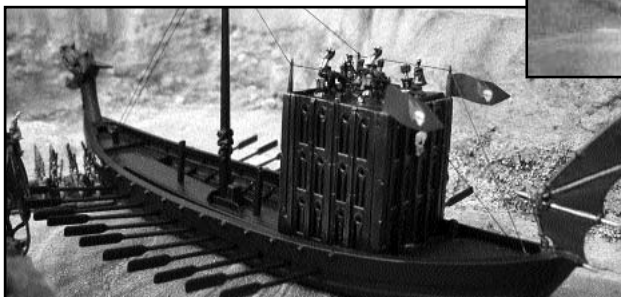
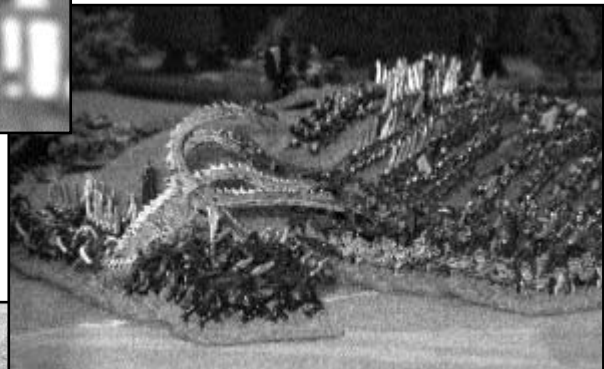


Deployment and the start of Turn 1. Dwarfs and Dark Elves clash to the south-west (top right) and south-east (top centre). Dwarf reserves prepare to advance across the ravine (top left). High Elves and Dark Elves meet between two forests (bottom centre). Note: a High Elf reserve force is out of shot to the bottom left hand side of the fort.

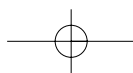


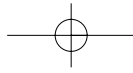
◀ Near the town, the Dwarfs' devastating charge against the Dark Elf rearguard leaves the Elves surrounded and all but destroyed.

▼ Dark Elf ship (by Christian Burnett) waits in the inlet for retreating Dark Elf forces.

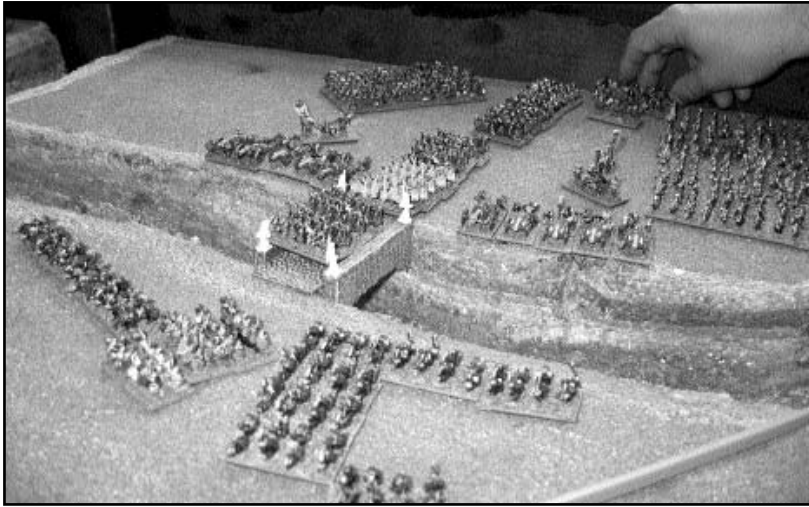


▲ As the majority of their forces in the south-west continue to retreat towards their waiting ship, a small force of Dark Elves turns and attacks the forward force of the Dwarfs. The assault halts the Dwarf advance.





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◀ Eager for battle the Dwarf reserves begin their advance over the ravine (but are wary of the 'Da pesky Troll!').

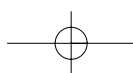
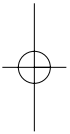
TURN 2

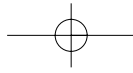
Turn 2 ▶
in full
swing!



◀ The Dark Elf rearguard in the south-east is destroyed by the Dwarfs – a mighty Hydra the last to fall.

The Dwarfs continue to cross the bridge. ▶





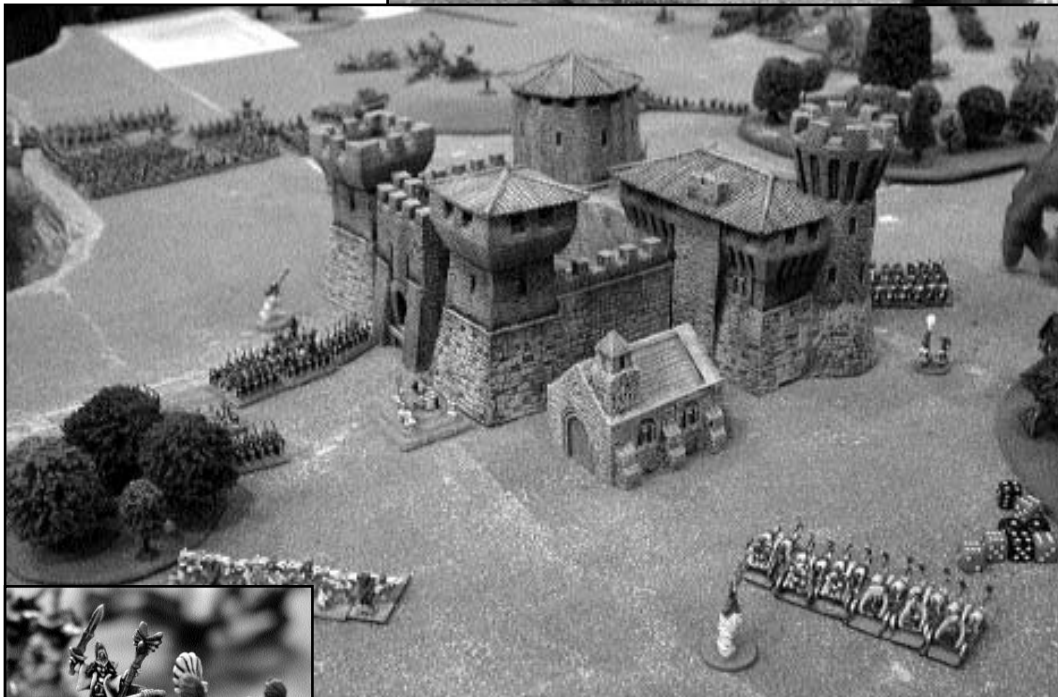
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TURN 3

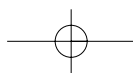


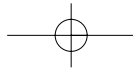
◀ “There be Dragons!”
The High Elf air divisions arrive to join the battle.

“I love the smell of napalm in the morning!” Not to be outdone in the battle for the skies – the Dwarf air wing also arrives. ▶

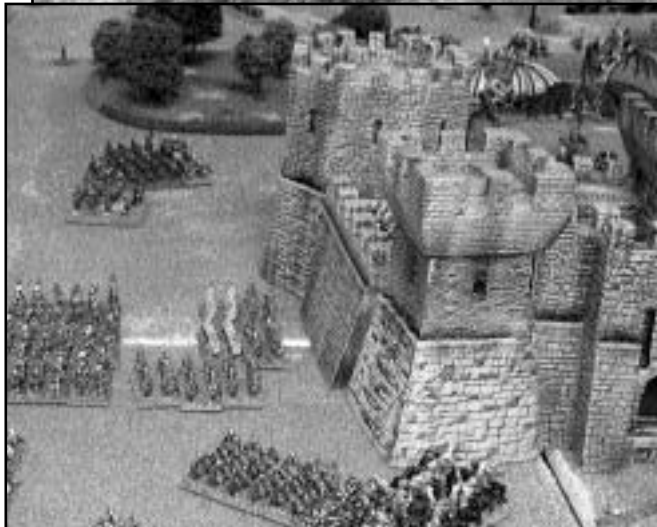


▶ Meanwhile, the opening moves of battle for the town are played out as the Dwarf and High Elf reserves begin to close on each other. A few High Elven infantry units enter the town and begin to prepare their defences.





TURN 4

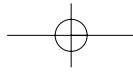


▲ With their airship, in support the main Dwarf force closes on the town.

Attempting to blunt the Dwarf assault on the town, the High Elven cavalry reserve smashes into the Dwarfs front line. The Dwarfs are too strong however and after heavy casualties on both sides the remaining High Elves are pushed back.

“Ouch! That’s gotta hurt!” Dragon Riders swoop on Gyrocopters, tearing them from the sky. ▶

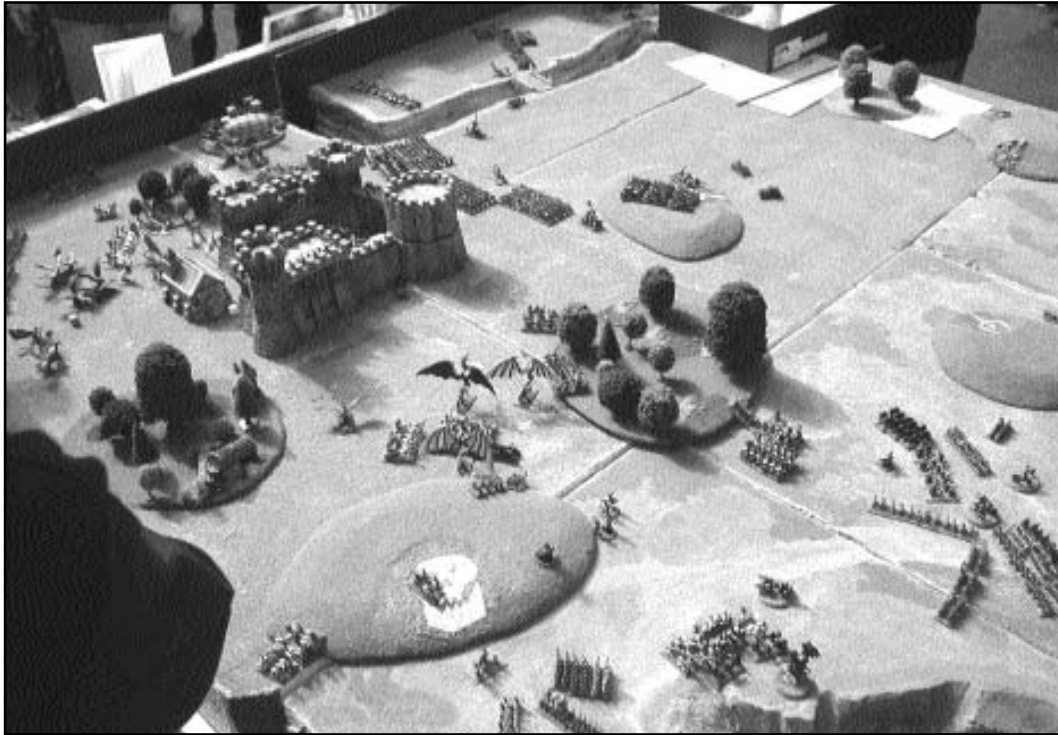




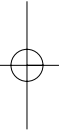
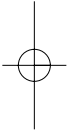
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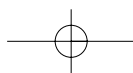
TURN 5

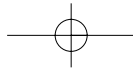


Turn 5 sees major action around the town and the desperate last stand of the Dark Elves (bottom left). ▲



“At them boys!”
With the High Elf
cavalry all but
destroyed the
Dwarfs hurl
themselves
towards the
remaining Elves
and town’s walls.





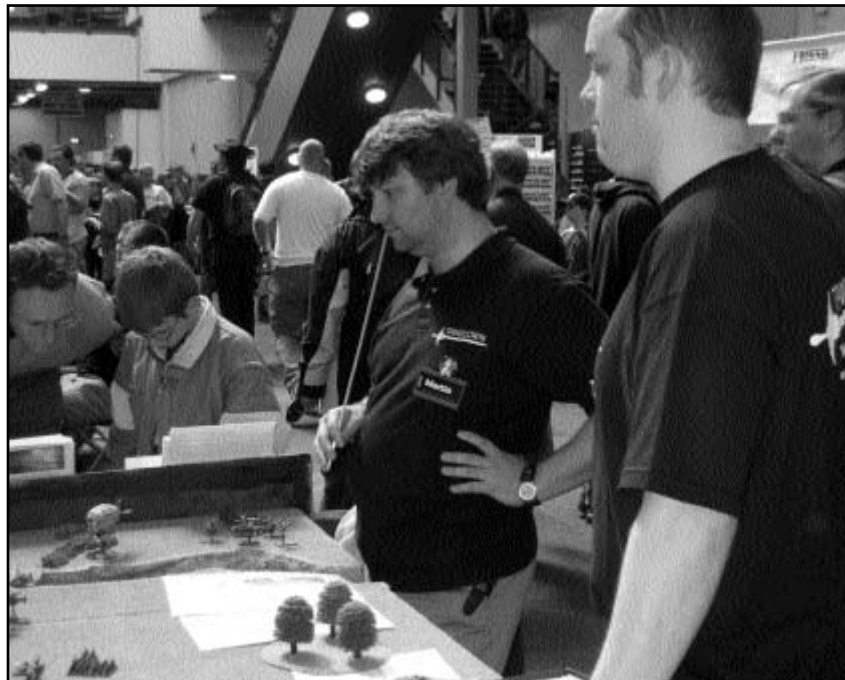
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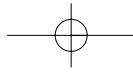
Finding a weak spot in the High Elf defence, Dwarf Rangers enter the town. ▶



The High Elves' deadly charge heralds the beginning of the end for the Dark Elves. ◀

Dwarf Generals, Martin Turner and Andrew Mitchell, ponder their next move against the High Elves that have moved to occupy the town. ▶



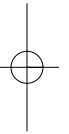
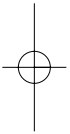
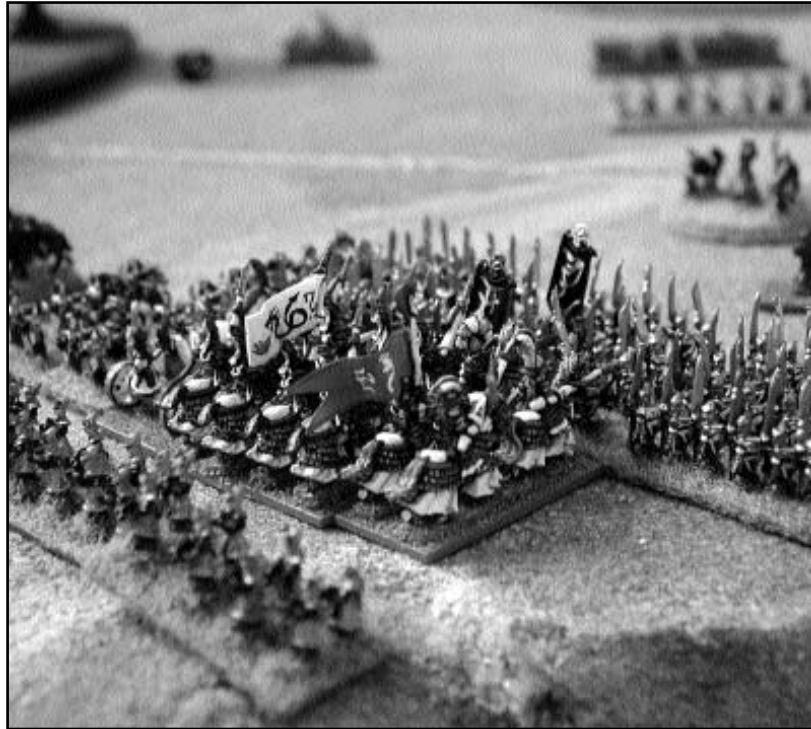


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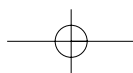


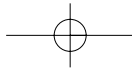
TURN 6

In a final attempt to reach safety, the remaining Dark Elves counterattack the High Elves. All is in vain however, as the Dark Elves are finally destroyed, with only two units of Spearmen making it to the ship. ▶

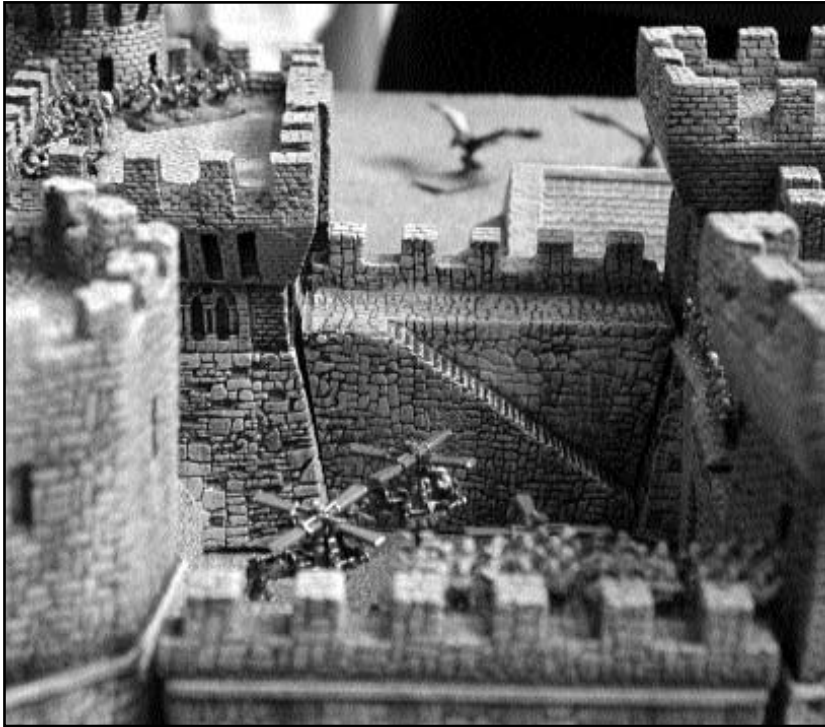


“Errr... Sir!” last words of the Dwarf airship pilot as they round the wood to find three Elven Bolt Thrower batteries.





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Victory! With the Dark Elves all but destroyed and the High Elf army badly mauled, the Dwarfs march triumphantly into the town, claiming the day.



Da Crew (minus photographer Erwin Jackson). Left to Right: Conrad Gonsalves, Mike Eytle, Alex Janaway, Shane Bradshaw, Andrew Mitchell, Martin Turner, John Snape, Christian Burnett and John Kersey.