

Adepticon 2005 After Action Report

Part 1: Friday Night

INTRODUCTION

When birds flew north, grass replaced snow, and the sun stayed out past seven in the evening, one thing became clear: Adepticon 2005 had arrived. With three Warhammer 40K armies, I made the four-hour drive to Adepticon's new home, the Schaumburg Marriott, northwest of Chicago. Once again, I had signed up for the "Adepticon Ironman:", the 40K Gladiator Tournament, the 40K National Team Tournament, and the 40K Championships. Ten games over the course of 44 hours.

I guess I just didn't get enough punishment last year.

After checking into my room (coincidentally located next door to the Team Cassus Belli suite - more on that later), I headed downstairs to get some chow, picked up my registration packet, and checked out the hall. I also picked up my Adepticon 2005 mini: a daemon prince sculpted by Joe Orteza. With a little bit of conversion work the figure will fit in nicely with my Night Lords army.

Wandering around the huge gaming hall, I met up with Hank, Brian, Dave, Chris, Kari, and lots of other people I'd met last year. Good people, all of them. I also got a chance to check out the gaming tables. I have to put in a special word for the tables...there was about as wide a variety of terrain as you could ask for. The tables with the "lightest" terrain compared respectably with tables I've played on at Grand Tournaments, and there were many tables with significantly more terrain. Major props go to Dave, who'd made nearly 80% of the terrain.

Friday's 40K event was the Gladiator Tournament. 2000 point armies, almost anything published by GW is legal, and the number one rule is "NO WHINING." Personally, I love Gladiators. Sure the most abusive armies are guaranteed to make an appearance...but since everyone knows its coming, and prepares accordingly (including the possibility of getting wiped out to a man) its generally a good time by all. Walking around before the silliness started, I saw armies guaranteed to make a fluff-bunny cringe. Dual Siren

Prince Daemonbombs. Captain Lysander and his 20+ terminators. Flyers. And An'ggrath, King of the Bloodthirsters, the 888 point Forge World monstrosity. I really wanted to play against that thing.

Last year, I'd won the Gladiator through superior firepower, maneuvering, and Kevin "Janthkin" Brown's inability to get Siren with twelve minor psychic power rolls. This year, I figured: "Why mess with success?" With only slight modifications, my Gladiator force was identical to last years. Since V4 killed the Rhino-based assault, I replaced my assault Inquisitor with a firefight Inquisitor Lord.

This was my army (pictured on the next page)

Junior Officer, Iron Discipline, Mortar; Chimera /w multilaser, heavy bolter
2 x Special Weapons Teams /w 2 flamers, demo charge; Chimera /w multilaser, heavy flamer
Inquisitor Lord /w psycannon, null rod, Emperor's Tarot; 3 plasma gun warriors, 3 mystics, 2 sages, familiar; Rhino /w smoke, extra armor
Junior Officer, 4 flamers; Chimera /w multilaser, heavy flamer, extra armor
2 IG Squads /w lascannon, plasma gun; Chimera /w multilaser, heavy bolter
Armored Fist /w lascannon, plasma gun; Chimera /w multilaser, heavy bolter
3 Cyclops Demo Vehicles
2 Demolishers /w lascannon, plasma cannon
Basilisk /w ID fire

GAME 1

I reported to my Round 1 table, and saw a very familiar army and face: Matt York, with his Tyranids (pictured on the next page), who I had played last year in Round 3 of the Adepticon 2004 40K Championships.

The mission was basically a modified patrol. We each started with a single Troops choice deployed on the board, with the rest held in reserve. The planet was volcanically active, so at the start of each game turn we rolled a d6. On a 1 or 2, all non-vehicle units on

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The Mighty Imperial Guard



Matt York's Tyranids

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the table rolled to see if they were subject to a preliminary bombardment. On a 3 or 4, nothing special happened, and on a 5 or 6, the turn was fought using the Night Fighting rules. In addition, at the start of each player turn, one non-vehicle unit could be redeployed using the Deep Strike rules. If the 2d6 rolled for scatter was doubles, the unit was considered to be lost in the Warp. On a successful Deep Strike, that player would earn bonus victory points equal to double the unit's cost. The mission also had a random game length.

I deployed my armored fist squad as my patrol, since I wanted to be able to react to his movements. He deployed a unit of gaunts. Matt won the first turn lottery, and elected to go second, so I had two turns in which to shoot up that squad of gaunts. On turn 2, my platoon, two of the Cyclops demo vehicles, and all of my heavy support showed up. All that firepower vaporized the gaunts with extreme prejudice.

On Matt's turn his reserves showed up and started deploying in a pincer pattern, with strong elements on both flanks and nothing in the center. My plan was now clear: turn the majority of my force on one flank,

throw some units at the other to slow it down, and wipe out one half before (hopefully) turning back and dealing with the other force. Like all plans, however, nothing survives first contact with the enemy.

Since the Night Fight rules were in effect on turn 2, Matt's shooting was relatively ineffective. His 'Nids apparently feared my firepower, because he hid all of his forces behind the groves of trees that anchored each corner.

The next two turns came fast and furious. The rest of my units all came in on turn 3, and immediately headed up the right flank, while the forces already on the table turned their attention to the left. I concentrated my fire on taking down his "easy to kill" units: his Tyranid Warriors, Raveners, and Gaunts. Matt showed great reluctance to expose his big bugs, but did manage to neutralize a few vehicles (through more lucky glancing rolls). My basilisk and several of my Chimeras died during these turns, but in return Matt lost units of approximately equivalent points. We each attempted to teleport a unit but both ended up losing them in the Warp.



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Turn 5 saw my first successful teleport as I teleported the remnants of a special weapons team into the enemy deployment zone. The SWTs killed off vast numbers of Gaunts, Warriors, and Raveners, but had been nearly annihilated in return.

On the left flank, we reached a stalemate. Matt had managed to kill a couple of units (most noticeably, the basilisk), but was extremely wary of sending any of the units bottled up in that corner across the killing field that my army was only a pivot and a volley from. His advance on the right stalled, but I had taken punishing casualties in doing so.

In an attempt to swing the game back into my favor,

I sent my Inquisitor Lord and his retinue after the nearest Hive Tyrant. Their fire failed to kill it, and the Inquisitor Lord fell back after getting charged. It would take another round of fire to kill the Tyrant, which fell to a long-distance lascannon shot from one of my squads.

By the bottom of turn 6, the situation really looked like a stalemate: I knew better than to approach the 'Nids, and Matt knew better than to expose his troops to the significant firepower I had remaining (among them, my two demolishers). In the bottom of turn 6, Matt took another chance, and deep struck his hive tyrant.



When the game ended, the bonus Victory Points from that maneuver swung the battle into his favor, as he claimed victory by a narrow margin of about 70 victory points. Looks like I was out of the running for the Gladiator this year....

As a sort of consolation, I pretty much knocked Matt out of the running as well. With Victory Points being all-important this year, his inability to completely wipe out my force would probably keep him from winning it all. In retrospect, I should have been more aggressive, and deployed my platoon first, then spent the game teleporting random units to get more victory points.

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Losing the first game of Adepticon was not the start I had hoped, and I knew I had no chance of winning the whole event. But I'm not a quitter, and so after a drink and a smoke in the hotel bar, I headed back to the hall for round 2. I almost felt bad when I saw the army I was up against: Tau. With the mission's funky deployment rules, I knew that, barring some ridiculously poor dice rolls, it was going to be a massacre.

Each player had two deployment zones located in opposite corners. You were required to deploy your units in the order they were listed in your army roster, and you had to alternate your deployment zones with every unit. The mission objective was to take and hold the center of the table.

I went first, and dropped all kinds of ordinance on my opponent's forces. Continual support fire blew away his fire warriors, and I bestowed flamer death on his Kroot. With the troops wiped out, it was a simple

matter to single out the Broadsides and Crisis Suits for some demolisher and meltagun love, and by the end of my turn 3, my opponent had half a squad of Kroot and a squad of Fire warriors left on the table, along with a Barracuda that had not yet shown up. I'd lost a few guardsmen, one Chimera, and two of my Cyclops demo vehicles. He conceded at that point.

I only snapped one picture of this game: I think this was the bottom of turn 2, when my flamers were about to wipe out the rest of his kroot while my Inquisitor and retinue were about to introduce the stealth suits to Mr. Plasma Gun.

Like I said, I almost felt bad...but this was the Gladiator.



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Exhausted (it was now about midnight), I reported to the next table for my final game. My opponent was Ron Spaulding, and he brought 2000 points of Necrons to the table. Great. An army full of models that can all destroy my vehicles or troops with equal finesse. Then I saw that the mission included escalation, and I had to keep from jumping with joy. With escalation in effect, I knew that my units would at least have a chance.

Ron deployed nearly everything in his army, holding his Monolith and his Destroyers in reserve. With the Pariahs infiltrated into my deployment zone, he was set to rush me and engage as soon as I arrived. He went first and put his plan into effect. His warriors marched forward with his Lord, while his Scarabs turbo-boosted for my table edge. By the top of turn two, his warriors were halfway across the board, his Monolith deep struck near my table edge, and his Scarabs lined up neatly on my board edge.

Poor initial reserve rolls meant only a Demolisher, my Armored Fist squad, and two of my Cyclops demo vehicles came on the table. The Demolisher failed to

destroy the Monolith as its living metal proved to be too tough for the Demolisher's shell. One Cyclops detonated in the midst of a scarab squad, gutting it, while the other zoomed in between two scarab bases and detonated in the middle of the Pariahs. My armored fists gunned down the survivors. With their demo vehicles detonated, the two controllers charged a squad of scarabs, tying them up in assault and pulling them away from the board edge.

Ron continued his advance, his squads separating slightly to make better use of the available terrain. The Monolith particle whipped the Demolisher into oblivion, and his Scarabs won their assault.

Turn 3 saw the arrival of the last Demolisher, the Basilisk, the last Cyclops, and my infantry platoon. Multi-lasers, heavy bolters, and ordinance explosions were plentiful, and when the dust had settled, one squad of Necrons had been wiped out. Since they were further than six inches away from the nearest squad, the corpses disappeared without getting a WBB roll. My Platoon's HQ attempted to use their meltaguns to bring down the monolith, but failed.

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Ron responded by teleporting his Lord through the Monolith's portal. Their fire wiped out my platoon command squad, and the scarabs took care of the unit's Chimera. The arrival of his destroyers brought his whole force onto the table, and his Warriors marched around the building that occupied the center. Several of my Chimeras were damaged, but only one was destroyed by the Gauss fire.

Poor reserve rolls meant neither of my HQs arrived in turn 4, so I concentrated my firepower on the best available targets. Another squad of warriors was blown into oblivion, and my basilisk gutted the newly arrived destroyers.

Unfortunately, "We'll Be Back" brought two of the dead destroyers to life, returning the unit to a scoring status. Nuts.

The Monolith glided towards my forces and again brought the Lord and his Warriors through, this time on the Monolith's left side. His shooting took down another Chimera, entangling the squad inside.

At the bottom of Turn 5, things were looking grim. Half my Chimeras were either knocked out or unable to fire that turn, and 2 squads of Warriors were about to move into position to hit my lines. He still had 7 scoring units, including his Monolith. Both of my HQ's showed up, and I decided to play for all the marbles. Each of my Special Weapons Teams engaged one of the nearby Warriors squads, while my Inquisitor and his retinue prepared to hit the

Warrior squad accompanying the Lord with everything they had. The Demolisher maneuvered to support the Inquisitor, while the rest of my force focused on the Destroyers.

Both SWTs gutted their targets, flamers and demo charges knocking both Warrior squads below half. Another earthshaker round, multilaser, and heavy bolter fire reduced the Destroyer squadron to a single model. The Demolisher's shell landed precisely on target, covering the entire Warrior squad, Lord, and having the Monolith under the center hole. The monolith survived with a "Weapon Destroyed" result, but the Lord and his accompanying squad were decimated, with plasma gun fire from the Inquisitor and his retinue adding their weight to the salvo. Only the Lord and two of the warriors remained standing at the end of the volley.

Ron rolled morale checks for his three gutted squads....and failed the test for his Lord. His Lord began falling back, taking the survivors (and the Warriors who had gotten back up) with him. With the recovered models, his Lord's squad was back above half, but his last turn of firing was unable to kill off all the units within 6". My basilisk fell to the fire of his Destroyers, but it was too little, too late.

With my last turn, I concentrated on wiping out what units I could, and took out the remaining warriors near my table edge. Without a last turn, he couldn't do his "We'll Be Back" rolls, and ended the game with only a single squad of Warriors and his Monolith.

A very hard fought game that turned on a single Morale check. With that, and a 2-1 record, my first day of Adepticon was complete. Time to hit the rack and get what sleep I could before the Team Tourney began in the morning.

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Part 2: Saturday

40K Project Mayhem



Saturday morning I woke up on time, performed the necessary hygienic ablutions, and headed downstairs for breakfast and a day of gaming. After gorging myself at the breakfast buffet, I headed over to the gaming hall. Eventually, my team showed up, and we began setting up our army display.

My team consisted of me (Daemonhunters), Jared VanHaitsma (Sisters of Battle), Mike Kasparian (Imperial Guard) and Bud Beumel (Dark Angels). Together we were 40K Project Mayhem.

After we set up our display, I wandered around the hall and looked at the rest of the teams. The judges did the appearance and theme scoring before the

actual games. There was plenty of exceptionally good looking stuff out there. Some teams even had huge banners to proclaim their presence, or team shirts.

Next to our table, Team Gale Force 9 set up their army...and I started to get a sneaking suspicion about what our first round pairings would be. Once they announced the pairings, I had to laugh. Game 1 of the Gladiator: me vs. Matt York. Game 1 of the Team Tourney: Me and Bud vs. Matt York and a GF9 teammate.

After having a good laugh about it, we began setting up. The mission was Unexpected Engagement, with my Daemonhunters and Bud's Dark Angels against two



Team GF9

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Tyranid armies. The catch for the mission was that only one player from each coalition would begin the game on the table...the other half would start in reserve. Bud and I quickly determined that since his force was the shootier of our coalition, he would start on the table, while I (plus Bud's Terminator and Librarian) started in reserve.

During terrain setup the GF9 boys did their best to place every single tree base in a line across the middle, while Bud and I set up firing positions along the deployment zone board edges. The end result was a more or less solid line of trees that stretched halfway down the center of the table, and some good firing positions in both deployment zones. Overall, both teams were satisfied. In an uneventful first turn we managed to kill a grand total of four gaunts, the rest having moved forward and hiding.

Reserves moved in from a 24x36" strip of the table edge, on either the right or left sides of the deployment zone. When we rolled for it, we found that we'd be going from the right sides of our deployment zone. The Tyranids' reinforcements began arriving, with the Biovores hunting for cover while the massed bugs began moving towards the Dark Angel firebase. One squad got tied up in hand to hand with the leaping Warriors, while the Nids also managed to destroy the Vindicator with a lucky glancing 6. Our return fire took out the two biovores. My Grey Knight Terminators arrived, unfortunately without their Crusader. A misjudgement of the distance left them outside of charge range, so they got charged by the Gaunts instead of doing the charging.

Turn 3 saw lots of action, as more reserves showed



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up and the Tyranids began to assault in a serious way. Our own shooting did significant damage as well, gutting several squads of gaunts. One stormtrooper squads did yeoman's work, killing off a hive tyrant and earning the first commander's head for our team. The left flank got hit hard but managed to hold, and our remaining reserves came on.

By turn 4, my Terminators managed to kill all the Gaunts they had been in hand to hand with (Holocaust is a wonderful thing), and had moved into position to wipe out another squad through incinerators, assault, and holocaust. Their massacre roll was anemic, only just enough to get them out of LOS and outside of the woods template. The Dark Angels on the left flank began collapsing, but their sacrifice bought the rest of our force time to almost entirely wipe out all the Gaunts, Warriors, and Raveners coming at us on our right.

Turn 5 was another bloody turn, but the dice

abandoned us. Although we inflicted three wounds on one of the enemy Carnifexes through massed assault cannon fire, Matt made three cover saves to keep it from dying to plasma fire. His return fire took out the Crusader, and he managed to snipe my Grand Master, killing him.

With the loss of my Grand Master the right flank began folding and Bud and I concentrated on holding what ground we could and eliminating enemy squads, but it was too little, too late. Although we inflicted significant damage on the enemy, our forces were unable to kill enough enemy units to make up the difference. When we totaled up victory points at the end of the game, we had lost...by 40 victory points.

Our teammates had managed to wrangle a draw in their game. So with a 0-1-1 team record we moved into Round 2., against Team Tundra, a group of gamers from North Dakota.



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a Falcon, the bulk of 2 guardian squads, 1 wound on the Wraithlord, a squad of Warp Spiders (which subsequently broke), the Whirlwind, and another Marine squad.

Our opponents put a valiant effort but by the end of the game, they lost almost every single model. We'd lost almost all of our transports, but our scoring units, for the most part, remained intact.

Mike and I even managed to claim two table quadrants, giving us a Crushing victory in that mission. Our teammates achieved a draw, so 40K Project Mayhem went into Round 3 with a 1-1-2 record.

In this round, I was partnered with Mike and his Imperial Guard. The mission was a table quarters mission, but in order to claim a table quarter you had to have a scoring unit from both players in the coalition in the quadrant. As I only had four scoring units my army, we knew that this was going to be a difficult play. Mike and I quickly came up with a plan: hide a scoring unit from each of our armies in the rear corner of our deployment zone, and then concentrate on wiping out one army from our opponent's coalition. The lucky player we singled out for special attention was the Eldar player.

There was a curiously entertaining incident in turns 1 and 2 of this game. In our turn 1, we had to measure the distance from the exploding vehicles hit by Earthshaker rounds. I asked our opponents to measure it (as running around the table can be a pain) and the Eldar player breaks out the good old red whippy stick. So of course, I politely ask if he can use my tape measure instead.

I'd like to say that it was our grand strategy and tactical genius that determined the course of the game...but in reality, it was Mike's Basilisk which scattered twice through the entire six turns of the game, both times scattering into a position that was even more advantageous to our plans.

In total, the basilisk accounted for



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In the next turn, that same Eldar player broke out the red whippy stick again, and was using it to measure his Warp Spider's movement. At that point, I felt like I had to speak up. "Um...you realize you're cheating yourself, right?"

"How so?" he replied.

"The red whippy stick is short. Check it against your tape measure."

Several seconds later the red whippy stick was broken into multiple pieces and hurled off into an unoccupied corner of the gaming hall.

The moral of the story is (honors to Snord, wherever he is): Red whippy sticks are, of course, for whipping. Or poking. Or prodding. Or sometimes even throwing. But Never, Ever, for Measuring.

Round 3 of the Team Tournament matched my team up against Team Tall Guys With Glasses. 4 Space Wolf players that were all...um...tall, and wearing glasses.

For this game, I partnered with Jared and his Sisters of Battle. The mission was a "hold the center objective" one, and you had to deploy entirely separated from your opponent (basically, each long



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table edge was split in half, with a short distance separating the halves.)



The Tall Guys won the roll to go first, and being Space Wolves, their first turn consisted mostly of maneuvering. A Land Raider Crusader rolled forward six inches, and the Wolf Guard Terminators inside jumped out. Jared's Sisters took the bulk of the initial salvos, and one Rhino and an Exorcist were knocked out by a Predator and Land Speeder fire. My forces weathered the storm quite nicely, however, and on our turn, Jared and I proceeded to bring the noise.

My Daemonhunters rushed forwards on the right flank, while Jared's Sisters danced sideways, moving to link up with me. In the shooting phase, we concentrated the bulk of our firepower on the dismounted Wolf Guard Terminators. 4 plasma guns plus the remaining Exorcist killed off the bulk of the squad, leaving only a single Wolf Guard accompanying the Wolf Lord. The whipped puppies immediately broke, which more or less forced the collapse of the right flank.

They fought on gamely, however, and at points almost seemed like they would pull off a late-game reversal. This seemed even more likely when I Deep Struck with my Inquisitor, putting its psycannon nicely in the enemy backfield ready to take shots on the Predator and all the Landspeeders...which I then promptly forgot about and got killed in the next turn without accomplishing anything.

My Grey Knight Terminators truly earned the MVP of this game. They cut their way through the remaining Space Wolves on the right flank, then proceeded to take care of the Space Wolves coming in from the left.

Jared sacrificed the majority of his Sisters, but his Seraphim fought a valiant holding action that gave my Terminators time to move up and destroy the Space Wolves coming in from the left. His Canoness took out the Space Wolf Land Raider Crusader with her inferno pistol, then killed off the Wolf Lord to claim the head for that model, and my Grand Master used his Nemesis Force Weapon to kill off the other HQ.

With the additional points we gained by having both a Stormtrooper squad and my Land Raider Crusader in range of the center objective, we won the game handily. Our teammates performed nicely as well, giving our team a 3-1-2 record.



The final round of the Team Tourney put us up against Norm and Team Blood Brothers. I'd met Norm at GT Chicago 2003, and he was a great opponent, and talented tactically (I won our last game, but it was awfully close, which was exceptionally notable considering that he was taking an all-Daemon Khornate army against my Grey Knights). His team this year consisted of 4 Blood Angels armies.

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The pairings for the last round were "Captain's Choice" and since our team had performed well in the last round, I decided to stick with the pairings that had worked well for us. Norm decided he just had to get a rematch against me, so the Sisters of Battle and the Daemonhunters would face off against the Blood Angels, Team Captain against Team Captain. The mission gave bonus victory points for killing off a unit nominated from each enemy player, with the catch that failure to do so would give the opponent the bonus victory points. Jared and I decided to go for our opponent's two Baal Predators, since we figured that those units had the best chance of dealing with our armored units at range.

Both my team and the Blood Brothers deployed the bulk of our forces on a single flank, facing each other. They won the roll-off to go first, and led by a truly horrendous-sized blood raging Death Company,

did what Blood Angels do best, and charged forwards.

My Stormtroopers moved out to try and deal with the Blood Angel Scouts that infiltrated forward. Jared's Rhinos charged forwards, as did my Crusader. My Grey Knight Terminators marched up behind the Crusader (I had deployed them outside the Crusader, just in case) and we opened up on the Death Company.

The results were a little underwhelming, as the Exorcists apparently had a problem loading missiles, and Divine Guidance failed to accomplish much. My stormtroopers did cause some casualties amongst the Scouts, but failed to eradicate them.

The Blood Brothers return fire was anemic. I'm sure that was greatly worrying ...after all, if Blood Angels can't shoot down their opponents, what are they going to do?



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Oh yeah. Assault. The Death Company jumped over my Land Raider and charged into my Terminators, while the two Assault Squads jumped straight at my Crusader and Jared's two Rhinos. One Exorcist got taken down by a lascannon shot, but the scouts that charged my stormtroopers failed to wipe them out, and both squads passed their morale checks. The assault squads wiped out the Seraphim, kept a Rhino from shooting, and managed to blow the assault cannon off my Crusader. The Death Company and Chaplain charged my Grey Knight Terminators and killed half of them, but smart casualty removal kept the power fists from eradicating the squad.

On our turn, Jared and I looked at the field and saw that we were in trouble. With all three assault squads (the two Assault squads and the Death Company) in our midst, and half of our long-ranged firepower gone, we figured our best choice was to go for the draw.

Our first move was to push my Crusader up 6", tank shocking the Assault Marines that had just charged ...and breaking them. Woo-hoo...we now had a chance...if we could keep them from rallying, we figured we probably had a pretty decent chance of eking the draw.

Jared pushed his Sister's Rhinos forward, dismounting and positioning his Sisters to lay down some Divine Guidance inspired hatred on the last Assault squad and the Sanguinary Priest. His Canoness moved up to support the Grey Knight Terminators, and we were about to begin the shooting phase when I noticed that the last Assault squad was almost completely surrounded. I had planned on shooting up some scouts with the Rhino assigned to the now-deceased stormtroopers, but figured, what the heck? When was I going to get another opportunity like this one? So I moved the Rhino and tank shocked the assault squad (with its attached Sanguinary High Priest).

They broke. And since they couldn't complete a fall back in any direction, they got crossfired. That one

event shifted the initiative in our favor, as in one turn we wiped out almost 900 points of enemy units. To add insult to injury, Jared's sisters could now redirect their fire, which took out the Baal Predator on the right flank. As the cherry on top of the sundae, the Grey Knight Terminators, Grand Master, and Canoness wiped out the Death Company, leaving the Chaplain all alone, at a cost a single Terminator.

The Blood Brothers fought on valiantly, but the Chaplain fell beneath the force weapons of the Grey Knights, and even the arrival of two squads of drop podding Blood Angels was too little too late. Their fight was not in vain, however, as they did just enough damage to our coalition to keep us from getting a Crushing Victory. We had to settle for a Solid Victory.

Our teammates were less successful than us, and ended up losing to the other two Blood Brothers. So Team 40K Project Mayhem's final record for the weekend was 4-2-2...a respectable showing for a team that had replaced one of its members a few weeks beforehand, and had given a Space Marine army to a player who normally only played Orks.

As an aside, in the final standings the Blood Brothers ended up with a single tournament point more than we did...so Norm and his partner's valiant last stand definitely had its rewards.

Anyways, the rest of the evening was spent in the Casus Belli suite hanging out with the boys of Casus Belli, the boys and girls of Highly Dangerous, and several other teams (BLOID comes to mind...I'm sure there were more hanging out). Much beer, pizza, and wings were consumed by all...even those of us who probably would have been better served by going straight to bed, to prepare for the 40K championships on Sunday.

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Part 3: Sunday

Waking up on Sunday Morning was an exceptional struggle since not only was it earlier than I'm used to getting up on a Sunday (7:00 AM) but Daylight Savings Time was now in effect...so I'd gotten one less hour of sleep. By the time I'd completed my personal hygienic rituals, I knew I wasn't going to have time for a good breakfast...so a bagel and orange juice was going to have to tide me over.

For the 40K Championships, I brought 1750 points of my Night Lords. Here's my list:

- Lieutenant, Dark Blade, Deamon Armor, CSM Bike, plasma gun, MoCU
- 4 Chosen Aspiring Champions /w Daemon Armor, CSM bikes, 2 power fists, 2 plasma guns
- 3 Obliterators
- 2 x 6 CSMs /w Las/plas, stealth adept, MoCU
- 2 x Aspiring Champ /w power weapon, mutation, strength, 7 Raptors /w 2 flamers, furious charge
- 2 x 8 Furies

Pairings for round 1 were simple: The organizers simply arranged the list of players in alphabetical order and paired us up that way. So I found myself across the table from another guy named Bill. He brought an Ork army, and after a quick count I realized he outnumbered me by at least 3 to 1. The mission was a Cleanse, with Battle Points earned by holding table quarters.

Bill went first. That is to say, the Orks went first. I concentrated on maneuvering while the footslogging Orks...footslogged. Stealth-Adept assisted cover saves stymied the Demolisher, and my lascannon fire bounced harmlessly off its hull.

The bottom of Turn 2 saw my first really offensive moves, as two squads of furies, the Chosen bikers, and a squad of Raptors hit the enemy spearhead. Wiping out the squad they charged, the Raptors and furies consolidated into new units while the Bikers pulled back. The LRD was hit by lascannon fire, and suffered an immobilized and a "may not move or shoot" result. The last Raptor squad moved up, taking



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advantage of the Demolisher's moment of weakness.

Bill tried hard to bring the rest of his Orks up to hammer me, but the ongoing assault got in the way. The assaults I'd consolidated into cost me one squad of furies, but my Raptors and Furies gained the upper hand and the greatly reduced Orks fled, including the Ork Painboss.

I proceeded with the wearying business of slowly chewing through the Ork infantry. The remaining squad of furies assaulted the nearest Killa Kans, while the Raptors and Bikers maneuvered to engage the largest Ork Mob. Flamers cut huge swathes through the Ork Slugga Boyz and Burna Boyz, and the furiously assaulting Raptors followed it up with a massive assault of their own that decimated the Greenskins. My obliterator turned and blew apart the Skorchas trying to sneak around into a hidden position, and more fire from my lascannon immobilized the Warboss's Trukk.

Bill put up a valiant fight, but the simultaneous charge of the two Raptor squads proved too much for his boyz, and another turn or two of assault would see both the Burna Boyz and Slugga boyz wiped out. One unit of raptors was reduced to three models, but the other remained a viable scoring unit. The scoring unit hit and run, jumping towards the Warboss hiding behind the immobilized truck. My Chosen Bikers, also a scoring unit, moved in to destroy the Demolisher with their power fists, while

the obliterator laid down ineffectual fire at the last remaining squad of Kill Kans.

When the dust had settled, every Ork was dead, and only a squadron of 2 Killa Kans remained alive, along with a non-scoring pair of immobilized Killa Kans still locked in combat with my Furies. I owned three of the quadrants, while one was contested.

My next game was against a player whose name I can't remember. Nor can I remember the exact mission. I do remember that he played a Nurgle army...but that's about it.

I'm tempted to believe that it's one of those "repressed memory" type things. It's been a long time since I was so completely and utterly abandoned by my dice. Utterly awful rolling meant that I pretty much had no chance. Some "highlights":

- Rolling 48 attacks for two squads of furies, and getting maybe 2 or 3 kills.
- Raptors failing 6 of 8 armor saves.
- My chosen bikers turning off their close combat weaponry...and managing to kill 4 Plaguebearers. Thus leaving them in the open, and easy prey for the Land Raider targeting them with lascannons. Thus costing me my Teleport Homer, and leading too...
- Obliterator scattering the exact correct direction and distance to land straight on top of the enemy Dreadnought.



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My dice came back to me on Turn 5...but by then, Humpty Dumpty had suffered his great fall. My remaining turns were dedicated to not giving my opponent a Crushing Victory... which I managed to accomplish by hitting most of his units to the point where they were no longer scoring units.

I think my opponent was surprised. The end of the game left me with only the two 6-man las/plas squads...but he'd only managed to win by 600-700 points.

People who know me know I'm fairly competitive. In spite (or perhaps because of that) I don't usually mind losing. If I can look back at a game and go, "I made an error, here, here, and here," I can take the loss as a learning experience. The two other games I'd lost this weekend (both against Matt York and his 'Nids) were definitely learning experiences. This

game, however, had no lessons to teach me except "Roll better next time." Not exactly a useful lesson.

Helpful comments from my opponent like, "I'm sure you're dice will turn around any second now," really didn't help my mood...and I'm afraid I was getting a bit snippy by the end of the game.

Oh well...I guess I'll just have to roll better next time.

After my annoying defeat, I knew I was now completely out of the running for any awards this weekend. So I planned on having a good time with my last game. Then I saw the army I was going to play against, and knew I was going to have a good time with my last game.

My opponent in Round 3 was Rick Curtis's Eldar. A



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more beautifully painted Eldar army I have never seen. Our game was constantly interrupted by people coming over and snapping pictures of his army. Rick was a great guy as well, finding something to complement about my army (the converted Furies) and just a fun guy to play against.

The mission itself was quite...odd. First, escalation was involved. Second, superceding the Escalation rules was the requirement that one HQ be deployed on the table...in the center of the table, to be precise. In the center of the table, about 8" away from the opposing HQ.

Not only that, but the mission had an interesting method for determining who got to go first. Both players would secretly bid how many VPs they were willing to sacrifice in order to go first. The one who bid more got to go first, but forfeited that many VPs in the ending tally. If both players bid the same, they'd re-bid. If both players bid zero...then both players automatically lost and received zero battle points for the mission.

Now I'm not sure if it was totally legal by the mission, but Rick said he always deployed his Farseers with a

squad of Aspect Warriors, and would I mind if he did so. Hmm...let him deploy an expensive and plasma-gun-degradable squad forward of the rest of his lines, where I know where its going to go, and with their transport on the ground behind them, instead of flying at me and making all hits glancing. Or be a rules-lawyering git for a game that really didn't matter (as neither of us was in contention), and probably screw myself at the same time by making it easier for him to keep an expensive squad alive.

So I told him to go ahead. My chosen bikers faced off against a Farseer and squad of striking scorpions. He had a squad of Dark Reapers and two of guardians, while I had only my two other las/plas squads.

He bid 300 points. I bid 1.

That might seem like a crazy thing, but taking a look at the odds, I figured my Chosen Bikers were dead anyway. With their Daemon armor, I figured it wasn't likely that Rick could wipe them out on the charge before they got to strike, and anyways, since the bulk of my army was coming on from reserves, I'd rather have the chance to see how my opponent is coming in before I commit myself to a maneuver.



So Rick won the bet to go first, and went to town on my Lieutenant & Chosen Bikers. Only one died to shooting, as a bright lance from the guardian squad cut one down. The Daemon Armor I'd equipped every member of the squad with proved invaluable, as they laughed at the incoming reaper missiles that pattered futilely on their armor.

The charge itself was a little more devastating, as the massed attacks by the Scorpions cost me another biker. That still, however, left both my power fists and my Lieutenant to strike back, which they did viciously, crushing over half the

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remaining Scorpions. In return, the Exarch killed off the last two the Chosen bikers, instead of my Lieutenant.

Since they'd taken more casualties (7 to my 3) the Eldar had to test Morale. And failed.



I think Rick lost a bit of hope, because for the rest of the game he played quite cautiously. I pushed forward into the enemy deployment zone, keeping the battle on his territory and forcing him to bring his reserves in where I wanted them to come. My Lieutenant carved his way through a squad of Guardians and the Dark Reapers, before he was brought down by a Wraithlord.



That Wraithlord was in turn killed by a squad of Obliterators, who were in turned killed by another Wraithlord.



My Raptors took apart the last squad of Guardians. My furies brought the remaining Wraithlord down to a single wound, while his last squad of Banshees wiped out my Furies.

In the end, I finished up with a massive assault by my Raptors, as I threw the aspiring Champions against a Falcon and hit the last Wraithlord with everyone else. The assault accomplished nothing, and my Raptors passed their morale checks for losing the combat.

I then told Rick it was time to total up victory points. He looked confused, then I pointed out that I only had 870 points of units still alive. I don't think he'd realized, until that point, that our game was pretty much even. When he totaled up his own units that remained alive, he had a little over 850 points of units still standing.

In other words, it would have been a draw...if he hadn't made that pesky 300 point bet to go first. With those additional VPs, I won by a comfortable 320 victory points.

It was a great game, and without a doubt Rick got my "favorite opponent" nods. An excellent way to close out the weekend.

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Top 10 Thoughts From Adepticon 2005:

#10 - Play aggressively. Two of the games that I lost, I lost because I was too cautious. In both games, more aggressive play would likely have won the game for me. The third loss I had, nothing could have made the difference except perhaps some weighted dice. (Just kidding...)

#9 - On the Gladiator, part 1: I really missed the battle point modifiers from last year. They injected an element of strategy that was a bit lacking this year, with the total focus on VP acquisition. Despite that, the Gladiator was great fun, and it was definitely cool to see King Thirster win honors for Hank Edley. I wish I hadn't been so shy about bringing lots of guardsmen...if I wasn't worried about having to deploy and deal with 90+ guardsmen, I would have brought the Baneblade I'd won last year...

#8 - On the Gladiator, part 2: In a conversation with Joe Krone and (I think) Greg of Team CFD, we thought that a better way to run the Gladiator might be to start at 4:00 PM, and play until 11. All of the out-of-towners that are coming in for Adepticon are going to take the day off work anyways...so why schedule it just so that the local Chicago players can work a full day, then go and play for 7 hours. Going 'til 2:30 in the morning was tough. 4-11 seems much more sustainable.

Regardless, though...props to Fred for putting it together, and coming up with some good missions.

#7 - The Schaumburg Marriott was a far superior venue to last year. Props to the Adepticon Council for securing such a great place.

#6 - On the Team Tourney, part 1: Nothing but praise. 52 teams and 208 players, and aside from traffic issues (unavoidable, with that many teams) it went off excellently. Mad Props to Jeff and Matt for running a great event. I really liked the 1-day format, and especially liked finishing up by 10:30 PM.

#5 - On the Team Tourney, part 2: Gorgeous, gorgeous armies were the rule. Having been to a bunch of GTs, while the top armies from both Adepticon and the GTs I've attended were of the same caliber, the overall quality of armies was much higher at Adepticon.

#4 - Props to the rest of the 40K Project Mayhem boys. Mike, Jared, and Bud were great teammates, and it was a lot of fun.

#3 - Props to the Casus Belli boyz for the Lounge on Saturday night. Good beer, good pizza, good times...

#2 - I enjoyed the 40K Championships much more this year than I did last year. Having it on its own day was nice, and the missions seemed much better balanced than last years was. I especially liked the third mission, with its unique way of determining who went first.

I also liked the way that soft scores were handled. Instead of ranking each opponent on a 5 point scale like at RTTs or GTs, we were forced to rank our opponents 1st, 2nd, and 3rd in the sportsmanship and theme categories. I think that's an excellent way to do it, and totally prevents unscrupulous players from deliberately tanking their opponent's soft scores. I cannot praise the system highly enough, and strongly advocate its adoption as the de-facto standard method of rating the soft scores for any event.

And for those guys who were whining because they wanted to give everyone the #1 ranking... grow a pair and make a choice.

#1 - Adepticon continues to provide an example of player-sponsored excellence. To anybody who's bemoaning the loss of the GT's, I have only one thing to say: Get your butt to Adepticon 2006.