

LURE OF THE GODS

COLLECTING A CHAOS ARMY

Over the past few months White Dwarf editor Paul Sawyer has been building a Chaos army for Warhammer. With £30 to spend each month the army has steadily grown in size, and after early losses on the battlefield it's become a force to be reckoned with...



NO TIME TO TALK

It's been a couple of issues since I last penned these articles and in the meantime my Chaos Lord, Vradchuk the Heinous, and his followers have been rather busy on the battlefield so rather than bore you I'll dive straight into the game reports...

WORLD'S BEST PIZZA

I was honoured to be asked to fly to Chicago as special guest at Adepticon. This event is an annual affair which covers not only Games Workshop games but also has a healthy portion devoted to other games. My first thoughts were "Hmmm, Chicago in March? Not exactly the sun-kissed beaches of the Caribbean". Never being one to turn down a free trip overseas, though, I jumped at the chance and was mighty glad I did.

Before I forget – many thanks to everyone who looked after me so splendidly during my time in the Windy City (Josh, Drew, Duane, Nick, Ogge et al). It was, without doubt, the best time I've had at a convention anywhere in the world.

Aside from generally chatting to all and sundry and beating my friend Ryan Powell 2-0 at Blood Bowl, I took in a painting tutorial with Jennifer Haley and Anne Forster (well known names to all who follow the showcase standard of painting – Jennifer is the current US Golden Demon Slayer Axe holder). It really was an education to

hear Anne and Jennifer talking about painting red in fourteen stages...

I was also fortunate enough to meet another American hobby icon – Joe Ortez. Joe has a very distinctive style when it comes to painting and sculpting and he gave me a few tips on how to convert models and more importantly how to use Green Stuff effectively. What made it even better is that Joe is one of the nicest guys you could wish to meet and made time for anyone who asked his advice, no matter the hour.

Aside from milling around in a sleep-deprived trance for most of the event, I was to be pressed into earning my keep by being the fall guy, er, prize in the Warhammer King of the Hill tournament. Simply put, the player that won the tournament would play against Vradchuk's horde. Great! I get to play a tournament winner – looks like another defeat for Vradchuk's lads then.

Vradchuk's force for Adepticon was:

| Characters (718 points) | |
|--|-----|
| Vradchuk, Lord of Chaos | 241 |
| <i>Chaos armour, hand weapon, great weapon, Helm of Many Eyes</i> | |
| Riding scythed Chariot | 120 |
| <i>Barded steeds, crew member with halberd & heavy armour</i> | |
| Qae'larne, Enraptured of Slaanesh, Exalted Champion of Slaanesh | 206 |
| <i>Hand weapon, great weapon, Chaos armour, shield, Mark of Slaanesh, Armour of Tormented Souls, Stead of Slaanesh</i> | |

| | |
|--|-----|
| Uuz'Bedyre, Chaos Sorcerer | 151 |
| <i>Level 1, Hand weapon, Chaos armour, Barded Chaos Stead, Two Diagonal Swords</i> | |

Core (794 points)

| | |
|---|-----|
| Scythed Chariot | 120 |
| <i>Barded steeds, 2 crew members with halberds & heavy armour</i> | |
| 6 Warhounds | 36 |
| 6 Warhounds | 36 |
| 16 Warriors of Chaos | 302 |
| <i>Halberd, heavy armour & shield, Full Command</i> | |
| 5 Chosen Knights of Chaos | 300 |
| <i>Full Command, War Banner</i> | |

Special (405 points)

| | |
|-----------------------|-----|
| 16 Daemonettes | 240 |
| 5 Screams of Tzeentch | 165 |

Rare (75 points)

| | |
|---------------------------|----|
| 1 Fiend of Slaanesh Spawn | 75 |
|---------------------------|----|

Total: 1,992

THE FOLLY OF MANKIND

There was a slight change of plan when event organiser Josh Wimberley asked me if I'd play another game first – this time against the player with the best Sportsmanship award. After a few running repairs to my army I was ready to face this fresh quarry: one Ralston Heath and his Empire army. Ralston is well known on internet forums, such as the Warhammer Players Society message boards (www.players-society.com), and assumes the alter ego 'Skeetergod' in such environs. These two reports are

much more substantive than my previous efforts as they didn't rely on my selective memory – many thanks to Michael Holt and Jamie Ott for recording the battles.

The scenario was 'Totem Hunt' – a specially designed scenario which matched the classic Pitched Battle scenario apart from each banner captured being worth 100 VP's with the army battle standard being worth 200 VP's (in addition to the normal VP's given for taking standards).

Ralston's Empire army was thus:

Characters (735 points)

Holy Sister Bertha,
Warrior Priest of Sigmar148
Heavy armour, Icon of Magon, Crimson Amulet, great hammer (deployed with the Swordsmen).

Brother Gunther,
Warrior Priest of Ulric.....141
Heavy armour, shield, Biting Blade, White Cloak (deployed with Greatswords).

The Reverend Schultz,
Warrior Priest of Sigmar151
Heavy, Dawn armour, shield and horse (deployed with the Plunderers).

Wizard Atremus.....295
Level 4, Orb of Thunder and Rod of Power

Core (675 points)

20 Swordsmen165
Full Command, Hand weapon, light armour and shield.

Detachment: 10 Halberdiers60
Halberds and light armour.

Detachment: 10 Militia50
Additional hand weapon and light armour.

8 Huntsmen80
Hand weapon, longbow.

10 Handgunners105
Hand weapon and handgun, Marksman with Hochland long rifle.

10 Handgunners105
Hand weapon and handgun, Marksman with Hochland long rifle.

Detachment: 10 Halberdiers60
Halberds and light armour.

Detachment: 10 Militia50
Additional hand weapon and light armour.

Special (584 points)

20 Greatswords.....270
Full Command, Greatsword and full plate armour.

Great Cannon100

Great Cannon100

6 Pistoliers114
Hand weapon, two pistols and light armour.

Total1,994

We rolled up our spells with Ralston taking *Bane of Forged Steel*, *Distillation of Molten Silver*, *Transmutation of Lead* and

Commandment of Brass for Wizard Atremus. Uuz Bedyre took the ever faithful *Dark Hand of Death*. Ralston won the roll-off to go first, and chose to take the initiative.

Turn One

The first turn began with Ralston moving his Huntsmen forward and marching the Pistoliers to the left flank of the Chaos army. In the Magic phase, Ralston was able to activate the *Orb of Thunder* stopping the Screamer from flying. During the Shooting phase a well-aimed cannon ball destroyed one of the Tzeentchian Daemons. I manoeuvred my army right, ignoring Ralston's feint on the left flank.

Turn Two

No charges were declared by the Empire and their Magic phase came to nothing. In addition, the Shooting phase was surprisingly disappointing as only one Warhound was killed by the huntsmen whilst the Fiend of Slaanesh only suffered a single wound. That could have been a LOT worse.

In my turn I decided to take the bull by the horns – I couldn't stand around and let the Empire army pepper me with missile fire. I had to get stuck in. I charged the Huntsmen with a pack of Warhounds with both sides inflicting 1 wound, although the Warhounds lost the combat due to unit strength, promptly fled and were cut down by the pursuing Huntsmen. The overrunning Huntsmen proceeded to attack my Sorcerer for every remaining turn of the game...

The Daemonettes, however, did much better, winning the combat against the Halberdiers but they were unable to catch them as they fled. My other

pack of Warhounds took on the Free Company with each side killing two opponents but the Warhounds lost, again due to unit strength. Luckily they held thanks to the army general, Vradchuk being close by.

Turn Three

The fleeing Halberdiers rallied and Ralston's Swordsmen charged the Chaos Warriors. Once again the *Orb of Thunder* was activated meaning the Screamer spent another turn flapping around feebly. The Free Company's combat with the Warhounds ended in a stalemate with no wounds suffered. The Swordsmen, mainly due to the mighty Warrior Priest, killed four Chaos Warriors with two Swordsmen being destroyed in return. The Chaos Warriors lost by 5 (unit strength, combat result, ranks) and fled 3'. Not good at all. The Ruinous Powers were kind to me on this day, however – as I was about to remove my unit from the battlefield, Ralston rolled double 1! 'Could the tide have turned?'

In my turn the Fiend of Slaanesh smashed into the flank of the Free Company, the Daemonettes charged the now rallied Halberdiers, the Screamer stumbled into the Handgunners, the Chariot and the Chaos Sorcerer both charged into the Swordsmen's exposed flank, and the Chaos Knights smashed into the Great Sword's Halberdier detachment. This was a big turn for Vradchuk – with all these charges going on I needed to be breaking some of the Empire units and running into the missile troops and characters if possible.

The fleeing Chaos Warriors rallied and steeled themselves for next turn's charge. In combat the Screamer killed three Handgunners and destroyed the unit in the pursuit.



Deployment is always the trickiest part of the game for me and this game would be no different.



Although the Free Company killed two more Warhounds, the Fiend of Slaanesh killed three Free Company in return and the combat was drawn.

The Daemonettes, which were now in Ralston's deployment zone, killed four Halberdiers and ran them down. Unsurprisingly, the Chaos Knights wiped out the Greatswords' Halberdier detachment and overran 15" which unfortunately exposed their flank to Ralston's cannon a mere 6" away. Every silver lining has a cloud and this looked like being a cloud with several dead Chaos Knights in it...

Turn Four

With the battle in a crucial stage and things swinging from one general to the other, the Pistoliers failed their charge and made a prime target to receive Vradchuk's furious charge next turn. *Transmutation of Lead* was successfully cast on the unit of Chaos Warriors meaning they suffered a -1 to hit and -1 to their Armour save. The Cannon which had a near-perfect shot down the rank of Chaos Knights fell short killing only one Knight - it seemed that this Great Cannon wasn't so great (shoddy human workmanship, certainly not up to the highest of standards you can only find from a Dwarf engineer...) after all! That had been a big moment and things were looking like they were slipping from Ralston's grasp...

The Great Cannon crew desperately loaded grapeshot and aimed at the dangerously close Daemonettes but then misfired and exploded. In combat the Free Company were hacked apart by the Fiend of Slaanesh and the Warhounds killed the remaining five brave soldiers. The Warrior Priest took aim at the Chariot, causing a wound with none in return, forcing the Chariot to flee. Ralston refrained from pursuing the fast moving Chariot and left himself exposed in the open.

In my turn I charged the Chaos Warriors into the rear of the Swordsmen who fled. The Daemonettes chased off the Cannon crew and my Chariot rallied. There was no further combat and it looked bleak for the Empire.

Turn Five

Ralston threw the Pistoliers into combat with the rallied Chaos Chariot. Atramus the Wizard cast *Distillation of Molten Silver* (2D6 S4 magic missile attacks that count as fire) on the Chaos Knights, incinerating one. The remaining Handgunner unit opened fire on the Chaos Spawn killing it. Reverend Schultz and his Pistolier unit managed to take 2 wounds off the Chariot receiving only 1 wound in return, but the Chariot held firm.

I sent Vradchuk and his Chariot charging into the Swordsmen and their leader, Holy Sister Bertha, whilst my Warhounds, Chaos Knights, Qae'lame and the Screammers crashed into the remaining Handgunner unit. Ralston opted to stand and shoot at the Screammers and inflicted 3 wounds on the Daemons, felling one.

After killing 2 Pistoliers, the Chaos Chariot ran them down as they fled and ended up overrunning into the

flank of the Greatswords. Vradchuk slammed his Chariot into the Swordsmen killing eight, breaking them, capturing their banner and also running into the Greatswords. The Handgunner unit was overwhelmed by the combined attacks of the Screammers and Qae'lame and were butchered.

Turn Six

Ralston elected to charge the Huntsmen into the Chaos Sorcerer, who fled. The remaining Free Company charged into the Chaos Chariot. The Chariot only inflicted 1 wound on the Free Company and also took a wound. Unit strength and ranks were enough to force the Chariot to flee. Vradchuk inflicted 5 wounds on the Greatswords taking 1 wound in return. The stubborn Greatswords tested and failed! Vradchuk ran them down to capture his second banner of the day and reclaim the banner taken when his Chaos Warriors had fled earlier.

Charges were declared against the Wizard Atramus by Qae'lame, the Chaos Knights and the remaining Warhounds. The Chaos Warriors and the remaining Screammers charged the Free Company. All fleeing units rallied. Uuz'Bedyre was finally able to cast a spell, killing two Huntsmen with *Dark Hand of Death*, causing the unit to panic and flee. In close combat Qae'lame, Enraptured of Slaanesh, easily despatched Atramus. The Chaos Warriors inflicted 5 wounds on the Free Company, while the Screammers added a further wound to the tally then chased down the unit as it fled.

The end result is a complete victory for Vradchuk in a game that in the first couple of turns looked very good for Ralston's Empire army. Victory was achieved by Vradchuk holding two enemy standards to Ralston's none, although wiping out the entire Empire army did help...



Vradchuk speeds by in his chariot as the Chaos Warriors take on the Swordsmen.

It was easy to see why Ralston was voted Best Sportsman in the tournament – a really nice bloke who gave me a tough game even though in the end it looked bad for the Empire.

LEARNING POINTS

1. *Orb of Thunder*. This item should have been nullified by a *Dispel Scroll* but I was fixating on the Level 4 Wizard too much. This meant the screamers weren't as effective as usual in a game where they would normally have been very effective in dealing with the Empire war machines and missile troops.

2. I still hate Elves. I know this has nothing to do with my game against Ralston but it's always worth saying again...

GREEN TIDE

With one victory under my belt it was time to play the big game against the winner of the tournament, Mike Marko and his Greenskins. It would be a classic Pitched Battle game and despite having beaten Greenskins each time I'd faced them with Vradchuk's army, I was still apprehensive to be playing a tournament winner...

Mike's Orcs & Goblins horde was:

| Characters (401 points) | |
|---|-----|
| Orc Warboss | 146 |
| Great Axe, Dead 'Ar'd Armour | |
| Narblet, Night Goblin Big Boss | 57 |
| Light armour, Army Battle Standard | |
| Fizzbang | |
| Level 2 Night Goblin Shaman | 145 |
| Tough Wamozz, Dispel Scroll | |
| Porklette, Goblin Big Boss | 53 |
| Hand weapon, great axe, light armour, Riding Wolf | |

| Core (1204 points) | |
|---|-----|
| Red Fang Boyz | 153 |
| 15 Orc Big Uns with choppy and light armour, Full Command | |
| Broken Bones Boyz | 303 |
| 25 Orc Big Uns with spears, light armour and shields, Full Command, War Banner | |
| Black Crag Howlas | 210 |
| 15 Goblin Wolf Riders with spears, light armour and shields, Full Command | |
| Da Scoutas | 72 |
| 6 Goblin Wolf Riders with short bows | |
| Red Eye Clan | 174 |
| 16 Night Goblins with spears and shields, standard Beaver and Musician, includes 2 Fanatics and 2 Netters | |
| Bad Moon Clan | 173 |
| 17 Night Goblins with short bows and shields, standard Beaver and Musician, includes 2 Fanatics | |



| Valley Boyz | 44 |
|--|-------|
| 20 Goblins with hand weapon and shield, Musician | |
| Piles of Snot | 75 |
| 3 boxes of Snotlings with rocks and sticks | |
| Special (190 points) | |
| Da Charging Wagons | 120 |
| 2 Goblin Wolf Chariots | |
| Dinna on a stick | 70 |
| 2 Goblin Spear Chukkas | |
| Rare (205 points) | |
| Borg Smash'm | 205 |
| 1 Giant with tree | |
| Total: | 2,000 |

We rolled for spells with Uuz'Bedrye taking his favoured *Dark Hand of Death*, and Mike rolling *Gaze of Mork* and *Brainburst* for his Shaman. Mike won the roll-off for first turn and elected to take it.

Turn One

The first thing to mention about this game was how every time he had to make Animosity checks Mike would chant "where there's a whip, there's a way". It seemed to work as he rarely failed these checks...

Mike deployed his army across pretty much all of his table edge and I countered that by taking a refused flank option and leaving only the Screamers on my left flank.

The Greenskins marched forwards en masse. In Mike's Magic phase the *Gaze of Mork* took a wound off one of the Screamers, and in the Shooting

phase a Chaos Knight was skewered by one of the Goblin Spear Chukkas.

I sent the Screamers onto the far left flank to use their slashing attacks on the Goblin Wolf Riders, killing one. The rest of the army marched forwards with the Fiend of Slaanesh and Qae'lame headed to secure the right flank. I sent the Warhounds on my right to draw out the inevitable Fanatics in the Night Goblin mob, which they duly did. This would mean that both of us needed to tread carefully for fear of running into these fungus beer crazed lunatics.

Turn Two

Mike elected to charge the Screamers with the Goblin Wolf Riders who promptly failed their Fear test and were destroyed. The Night Goblins and a Chariot both charged one of my Warhound packs which was, unsurprisingly, wiped out and the Chariot overran into the Daemonettes. The Night Goblins overran into the Chaos Chariot.

I countered this by sending Vradchuk's Chariot smashing into the Big Uns mob containing Mike's Warboss. I also sent Qae'lame charging into the Goblin mob on my right flank. This was a really stupid thing to do given that they had a big combat resolution (full ranks, outnumber and standard) but Mike had said how they were 'Super-Goblins' as they'd seen off a lot of hard opponents. I wasn't going to fall for that kind of provocation until he mentioned they'd killed a Dwarf Lord and then the red mist descended and I charged...



In addition to the two characters charging, I sent the Screamer into the Night Goblin mob and the Warbonds rallied.

In the Combat phase all the pent up anger and frustration that Vradchuk had bottled up from his early losses spilt out. In the resultant carnage ten Big Uns were killed and the rest fled, taking their Warboss with them.

Turn Three

This turn wasn't good for Mike. Firstly he failed to rally his fleeing Big 'Un mob (led by his Warboss) and they fled off the table...

Mike's Chariot then charged my Chaos Knights, killing one. In return the Knights destroyed the Chariot for its temerity.

In my turn the Chaos Knights charged the Giant and, in a pretty poor show of strength, only caused one wound off the huge creature. The Giant reacted by swatting a Knight from its saddle.

Elsewhere the Chaos Warriors charged the Wolf Riders killing two whilst the Wolf Riders reciprocated by killing a Chaos Warrior. Out on the flank, the Fiend of Slaanesh only accounted for two Goblins. All in all a successful turn for me although the Knights and Chaos Warriors should have done better.

Turn Four

The loss of his general and Big Uns meant that Mike had it all to do to beat me, but there were still plenty of things that could go wrong - I have an unhappy knack of grasping defeat from the jaws of victory...

It started ominously as the Goblin

Shaman caused a wound on Vradchuk with *Gaze of Mork*.

In the Combat phase, the Chaos Warriors despatched three Wolf Riders and lost one of their own number in the mêlée. Neither side was prepared to give any ground though as the Wolf Riders made their tests. The Giant's

combat with the Knights ended in a draw as nothing much happened.

In my turn Vradchuk charged his Chariot into the Night Goblins and the resultant carnage saw them fleeing, only to be run down under the Chariot's scythed wheels...

My other Chariot charged the Goblin Wolf Chariot which fled. Luckily it stopped just at the table edge! On the right flank there was a stalemate as the Goblins exacted two wounds on the Fiend and received two in return.

The Chaos Warriors killed three Wolf Riders whilst the Goblin Boss ran through a Chaos Warrior. This was enough to see the Wolf Riders flee.

The Screamer of Tzeentch charged the Orc mob causing four casualties with no wounds against them. The Giant was wounded by the charging Daemonettes and he swatted one of the Daemons of Slaanesh aside as the stand-off continued.

Turn Five

The game was all over bar the shouting at this stage and was more about how much of a bloody nose Mike could give me before I destroyed his Greenskins.



It all started badly though as Mike's fleeing Chariot failed to rally and left the table. This was tempered somewhat when a Fanatic smashed a Chariot apart. The Bolt Thrower finally found its aim and smashed my Sorcerer, Uuz Bedyre, from his saddle.

On the flank the Goblins finally managed to see off the Fiend of Slaanesh but were isolated from the battle and would now only be contesting table quarters.

The main contest though was the one remaining Chaos Knight and Daemonettes of Slaanesh taking on the Giant and the lone Knight finally killed the creature which, as a final insult, landed on the Daemonettes killing three of them!

The Screamer's killed another three Orcs, suffering no wounds in return.

My turn started with the Chaos Warriors charging the Orcs which duly fled. In the same vein, Vradchuk spurred his Chariot to charge the Bolt Thrower but the Goblin crew decided they were outmatched and fled.

Turn Six

The fleeing Wolf Riders kept on fleeing right off the table as the Greenskin army began to disintegrate.

With a last act of defiance Mike sent his Snodlings into battle with my Screamer's. One of the Tzeentchian Daemons lost a wound and this was enough to send the already wounded creature back to whence it came. Its brethren took three wounds from the tiny Greenskins in return.

With Vradchuk undoubtedly commanding the battlefield he sent all his remaining forces into combat with the Orc mob. The Screamer's killed four Orcs, the lone Knight another two and the Chaos Warriors despatched three more.

Unsurprisingly the Orcs fled and were run down by the Screamer's.

The result was a massacre in favour of Vradchuk, although despite the end result being so one-sided, the game was probably the most fun I've played with my Chaos army and Mike played a big part in that – he was a very gracious opponent.

LEARNING POINTS

1. I am having a LOT of success against Greenskin armies. I think Mike's deployment let him down as it was fairly easy to isolate his big mobs of Orcs.
2. I need to take deep breaths and not

rush in when the banter starts. As soon as I heard that the Goblins had killed a Dwarf Lord I rushed in. Even though Qae'larne is a formidable opponent, he was up against massed ranks and a standard so was always going to struggle.

EXIT STAGE LEFT

And so it ends. For years I've fancied doing a Chaos army but there has always been something else that got in the way (White Scars and Dwarfs mainly!) but the current crop of Chaos models were just too good to miss out on.

I'd like to thank those of you who have written to tell me how much you've enjoyed the series – those comments have kept me going when the results weren't coming.

With the army at a nice size and having finally got the hang of it on the battlefield I'm hanging up my paintbrush for a while.

It won't be the last you'll see of Vradchuk and his army though – I have plans for more troops and conversions. Especially now the Beasts of Chaos book is out, and those lovely new Daemonettes on Slaaneshi Steeds are too good to be true...



The army is now a very respectable size and allows a lot of flexibility on the battlefield. Paul still plans to add more in the future though...