

THE RED QUEEN

A unique (we hope!) EPIC Tyranid horror from the depths of space.

By Kevin Petker

DOOM FROM THE VOID

The Imperial victory at Ichar IV was hailed by many as a staggering blow against the Tyranid menace, but many of the Ordo Xenos realized that the scattering of the surviving aliens created a new threat: the Splinter Fleets. Each of these fragmented fleets still seeks to carry out the Tyranid imperative of consuming worlds and, finding enough bio-mass to devour, could develop into a horrifying full Hive Fleet again.

One such Splinter Fleet fell upon the unsuspecting Imperial agri-world of Xersus VI, a lush, temperate planet whose bountiful foodstuffs supplied sustenance for many Hive and Forge worlds in its sector; a bounty that would enable the Tyranids to grow a vast army if devoured!

Local commanders received word of attacks by unknown aliens on outlying neo-wheat plantations, but initially treated them as they did the occasional Ork raids that plagued the system, despatching Planetary Defence Forces to deal with the threat. These defence forces were quickly overwhelmed, the survivors fleeing back to the planetary capital with tales of utter horror and datapics of six-limbed monstrosities killing and devouring their comrades. The Planetary Governor reviewed the information and quickly realized the great danger his world was in and had his Astropaths sent desperate pleas for help into the void. Fortunately for the citizens of Xersus VI, the small size of the splinter fleet prevented the Tyranids from engulfing their system with the Shadow in the Warp that normally precedes full Tyranid invasions and their messages were able to reach nearby Imperial Commanders and a vast mobilization of men, machines, and material was begun. Xersus VI could not be allowed to fall into the maw of the Tyranids; its loss would threaten many worlds with starvation in addition to providing the Tyranids with vast amounts of bio-mass.

Strike Cruisers from the Ultramarine and Nomads Chapters were the first to arrive, followed by several regiments of Imperial Guard and a Quattro-Legio of Titans from the Legio Niveus. The Imperial Navy found no alien ships in orbit around Xersus VI, nor anywhere else within the system: the entire Splinter Fleet had descended to the planet's surface and its influence could be seen as a cancerous blot upon the landscape, tendrils winding through the fertile fields, attempting to reach the vast storehouses and granaries that held the fruits of the planet's labours. The Marines quickly made plans to head off these vanguards and allow the other Imperial forces to prepare a solid defence for these vital areas. With orbital support, the Marines drop-podded down to smash the forward elements of the Tyranid advance.

A NEW OLD ENEMY

The Tyranid creatures the Marines encountered fought with a tenacity and fury which had never before been encountered. Despite maiming and mortal wounds, the Tyranid bio-constructs continued to throw themselves forward, clawing, biting, and spitting, some even appearing to heal their injuries, in an attempt to overrun the Marines. Thunderhawk Gunships were soon called in to evacuate the Marines before they were completely overwhelmed, but they had bought the Imperial defenders some much needed time to prepare.

The Head Astropath of the Imperial forces began to complain of the existence of a burgeoning psychic presence on the planet as the Marines battled the advancing Tyranid tide. Auguries and orbital auspex scans were unable to pinpoint a precise location, but the presence seemed to be moving along behind the main Tyranid advance. Fresh from their initial battle, Nomad Marines were dispatched in stealthed Land Speeders with enhanced sensor arrays to uncover the source of this psychic presence and attempt to destroy it. What they discovered was a horror almost beyond imagining.



Marines of the Nomads Chapter mount a desperate strike against the Red Queen.

THE QUEEN REVEALED

The massive Tyranid creature was dubbed the "Red Queen" by Imperial Commanders and it was swiftly realized that she was the source of the psychic presence on the planet as well as the unholy strength of her brood creatures. It is unknown what other worlds she had devoured before stumbling upon Xersus VI, but one of them had given her the genetic information necessary to grow a massive psychic reservoir

within herself and to use that psychic power to exert even greater control over her spawn; channelling energy to them to keep them fighting and even survive and repair grievous wounds. In addition, the concentrations of psychic power seemed to shield the Red Queen from the sensors and auguries of the Imperial ships in orbit, ruling out an orbital strike against her. The planet and all those around it were in severe danger.

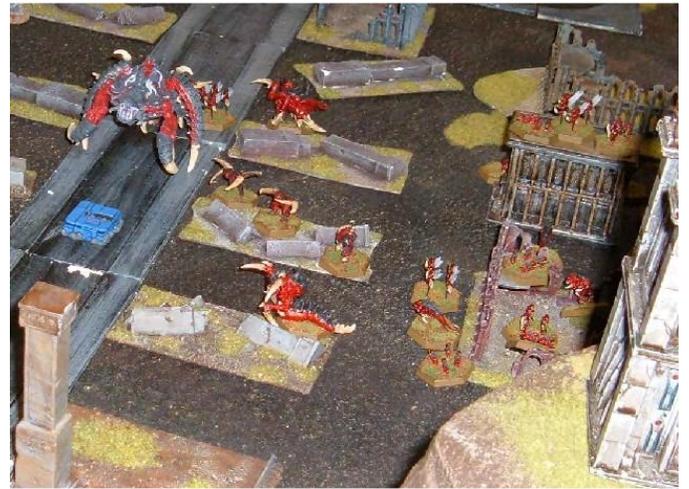
It quickly became obvious that the Red Queen was leading her army of nightmares to take the massive silos and food processing stations that were the greatest assets of the planet.

The Imperial Commanders began a desperate attempt to fortify the positions around the great storehouses knowing that the fates of many worlds rested in their hands and weapons, and that Imperium them would sooner destroy the stores of food and grain with melta-torpedoes from above then allow it to fall into the claws of the Tyranids.

If their defence failed, more than just themselves would be doomed to a brutal death...



The Red Queen assaults some poorly prepared Orks.



The Red Queen leads her brood against an Imperial outpost.



The Red Queen and some of her monstrous brood.

The Red Queen

The Red Queen is a horrific Tyranid bio-construct consisting of a massive bio-Titan body, with an altered and enhanced Tyranid Warrior enthroned upon its back. Monstrous claws and a scything tail adorn the Red Queen in addition to a vast psychic reservoir that pulses beneath its armoured back. It stands as tall as a Reaver Titan, but made of flesh, bone, and chitin, is one of the most terrifying living things in existence.

Special Rules:

All rules for Tyranid Army List version 7.1 apply to the Red Queen; in particular Synapse Creatures and War Engine Regeneration.

The Will of the Queen - So strong is the psychic link that the Red Queen has with her spawn that they continue to do her bidding even after suffering grievous wounds. All Brood creatures in the Red Queen's Swarm receive an *invulnerable save* in addition to their normal armour or cover saves.

Long Live the Queen - The Red Queen is the sole conduit of the Hive Mind for her offspring. No other Dominatrix units may be selected in a Tyranid army that contains the Red Queen, though all other Synapse creature options remain available.

The Queen is Dead! - The death of the Red Queen throws the entire Tyranid army into disarray. Regardless of the number of other Synapse creatures in the army, the full destruction of the Red Queen earns the enemy the "Break Their Spirit" goal. Opponents may still claim this goal if they kill half or more Synapse creatures in the army and the Red Queen survives.

The Red Queen (Unique Tyranid Dominatrix)				650 points	
Type	Speed	Armor	Close Combat	Firefight	
WE	25cm	4+	3+	5+	
Weapons		Range	Firepower	Notes	
Ultra Warp Blast	30cm	2x MW4+/MWAA4+			
<u>And</u>	(15cm)	Small Arms		+2EA, MW	
2x Bio Cannons	45cm	2x AP3+/AT4+		Ignore Cover	
Monstrous Claws	(Base)	Assault Weapons		+2EA, TK(D3)	
Scything Tail	(Base)	Assault Weapons		+2EA	

Damage Capacity: 8

Notes: *Fearless, Invulnerable Save, Reinforced Armour, Supreme Commander, Walker, Synapse (3d3+2).*

May step over units and impassable or dangerous terrain that is lower than the Red Queen's knees and up to 2cm wide.

Critical Hit: Roll 1D6 and consult the chart below.

1-5: The Red Queen suffers massive internal injuries, taking an additional point of damage.

6: With a blinding flash of Warp fire, the Red Queen's Symbiote explodes. All models within 15cm, including the Red Queen, suffer a MW hit on a 5+. In addition the Red Queen loses the Ultra Warp Blast and the *Supreme Commander* special ability; they cannot be regenerated.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

My name is Kevin Petker, though, locally, I'm known as "The EPIC Guy". I live in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada and have stuff for every EPIC army except Tau (Working on it!). Which ever army I'm playing, that's my favourite!