

WARMASTER

Monsters in the Desert

A Warmaster Scenario

By Dan Meredith

"I see something... up ahead, Lord... I think, this time, it may be what we seek..."

since breaking camp at dawn. That was nothing to a Dwarf in normal circumstances, but these were not normal circumstances. The sun was fierce, and in full armour the heat was worse than anything he had ever experienced, even in his youth when he spent most of his time at the Forge with his father.

What's more the endless sands had wearied even the most hardy and stubborn Dwarf. The constant desert breeze was hot and parched the skin and throat. It whipped up the endless sands and lowered visibility to a quarter league at most. What's more the sands got everywhere: into the food, into the water, even into the beer. It was horrible.

The King had felt lost for a long time, though he would never show that to the others. He was King, and it was his appointed task to lead his army to Sa'qqara, the ancient city in the sand. He must lead the slayers to their destiny and bring back the famous gold of the lost city.

There were monsters there, the legends said, fierce things of the desert and of the dead. It was an evil place that it was right to cleanse, and the reputed gold would retain the power of his clan in the mountains for generations to come. Still, the reaction of the local men that lived on the fringes of this place had worried him. His clan would stand though, he knew that. Each one had killed more orcs than he cared to remember. Sand and evil legends held no fear for them.

The old and faded map showed the city far out into the desert. It had been a long journey from his homeland to even the edge of this vast plain. The map said the city lay in a narrow valley, and what landmarks there were in this featureless place made him believe they were close now. But the desert was tricky, and twice already they had been deceived by mirages.

Now though, everyone was tense, a Dwarf has a sense for direction and location. It comes of being born to the dark and labyrinthine tunnels of the mountains. Now they were close. The hills had closed in. The Trollslayers had begun preparing themselves.

A sudden lull in the desert breeze dropped the sands back to the ground for a moment, and it was plainly before them. The lost city. Sa'qqara. The winds whipped up again as he ordered the clan into battle formation, and the ancient, ruined buildings were lost once more.

They advanced slowly, though the Slayers plainly wished to charge headlong into the unknown. Strange shapes loomed in the shifting sands as the Dwarf force drew closer.

Suddenly a piercing shriek cleaved the tense peace. Huge wings flapped free of the ever-present sands, and a dragon rose up above them. Before them the city began to move, and it was no longer the winds and the King's imagination which made it so. The huge shapes he had taken for ancient idols to forgotten Gods were slowly cracking and moving. The Slayers' howling reached fever pitch and, all at once, they charged..."

I see the game as a process involving trying to increase the odds in my favour whilst reducing, if I can, those in my opponents favour. Your strategy and tactics will be dictated to some extent by your army and its design.

THE SCENARIO

This scenario takes place in a narrow valley in the desert between Dwarf and Undead forces, though the dwarves could be replaced by any other force if required.

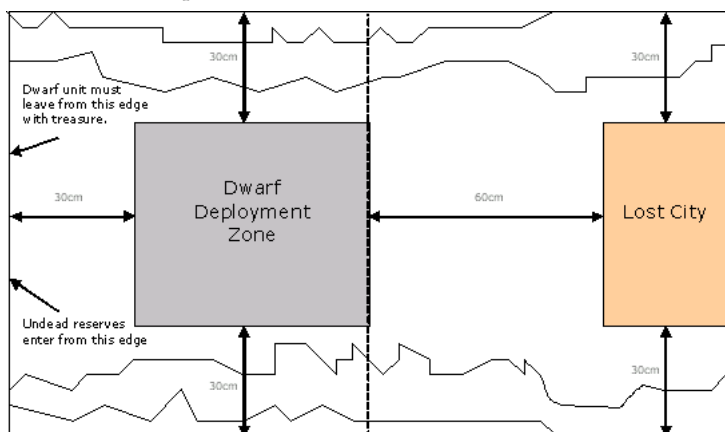
At one end of the valley lies the lost city of Sa'qqara, and in the centre of this lies the dwarves' objective. Place a major temple building or pyramid here. If a dwarven unit (not trollslayers)



Dwarfs are always ready for a scrap!

spends one whole turn inside this building without moving, it has looted the treasure of the City. If it then can leave the table by the far narrow edge, the dwarves have won the game.

The long edges of the table should represent the valley sides, other desert terrain, such as rocky ground or deep sands, can be scattered as required.



The Lost City should be represented by an area as shown on the map with a major temple or pyramid at its centre. The rest of the Lost City area should be made up of appropriate ruins and statuary.

Infantry within the city limits count as defended, though all troop types are allowed to enter.

Army Lists

The Undead force must contain the maximum number of monsters it is allowed, including a zombie dragon (though this may be ridden by either a Liche Priest or the Tomb King).

This is just the sort of quest Trollslayers love. The Dwarf player may take one extra unit of Trollslayers in his army.

Deployment

First, the Undead player must deploy the Tomb King, and all of his monsters and artillery, plus any Liche Priests he wishes within the Lost City.

The Tomb King must start within the temple or pyramid at the centre. The other units must be placed regularly within the city as though they are buildings or statues within the city itself, a

minimum of 5cm apart. As such all units must be placed singularly, i.e. none may be deployed in brigades.

The rest of the Undead force will enter the table from the narrow table edge opposite to the Lost City (i.e. behind the Dwarfs) at some point during the game.

After this the Dwarf player deploys his entire force within the deployment zone as shown on the map, i.e. within the other half of the table to the Lost City, at least 30cm away from each table edge.

The Battle

The Undead player has the first turn.

On turn 3, the rest of Undead player's force may start to enter the fray. Each Liche Priest held off the table may roll to order units held off table as though they were all on the table and with no command modifiers to the roll.

Each command roll passed allows a unit or brigade to enter the battlefield from the narrow table edge opposite the Lost City (i.e. behind the Dwarfs). The Liche Priest may then continue to issue commands to that unit (measuring distance from their table entry point, or command another unit or brigade to enter the table as usual until he fails his command roll. Each unit or brigade entering the table in this way may enter anywhere along the appropriate narrow table edge.

Once a command roll is failed, the Undead player may choose whether to bring the Liche Priest on table when moving characters, or having him remain off table in order to bring on any remaining units in subsequent turns.

Note however that once on table, a Liche Priest cannot be used to command units still held off table.

If an off table command roll is fumbled the Liche Priest is lost to the game and counts as being destroyed.

Winning the Game

The Dwarf player must loot the central temple or pyramid of the Lost City. To do this, the Dwarf player must have a unit (not Trollslayers) remain stationary for an entire turn inside the temple / pyramid and then leave the table via the narrow table edge opposite the Lost City (i.e. where the Undead reserves enter the game).

The Undead player must stop this happening.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Daniel is an avid Warmaster gamer who was unhappy with the lack of Warmaster content in Fanatic Online. So I challenged him to write an article and he came up with the goods! Daniel plays Warmaster at his local gaming club, take a look at their website: www.wellesbournewargames.esmartdesign.com/