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SIEGELINE

By Greg Bak and Jervis Johnson

The Warlord strode purposefully towards his personal battlewagon, sending Gretchin assistants scattering before him. The battlewagon's crew saw his approach and quickly snapped to attention. "All is present and correct, Boss." Warlord Nah Badun glowered at the crew, a look that signalled his suspicion of the work-shy bunch. He clambered on board. The crew found a new urgency and dashed into position. The Boss was in a bad mood, best look lively!

In issue four of Fanatic magazine we printed an army list for the Baran Siegemasters, an Imperial Guard regiment famed for their use of fortified positions. This article is something of a follow-up to that article introducing a number of new types of fortified terrain, some new Imperial vehicles designed specifically for siege warfare, and a couple of new Epic scenarios that pit an attacker against a smaller force occupying a fortified position. The aim of these scenarios is to allow players that don't happen to have a Baran Siegemaster army to try their hand at this style of game.

The article is broken down into three sections. The first covers what I have called 'defensive terrain features', for want of a better term. The section gives rules for the various types of terrain that may be encountered on or around a fortified position, such as trenches, bunkers, minefields and razor wire. The second section introduces several new Imperial vehicles that are designed specifically for use when assaulting a fortified position. The third section ties the last two sections together by providing players with a variant of the Grand Tournament scenario that allows for the use of fortified positions.

DEFENSIVE TERRAIN FEATURES

For over a month now the Warlord and his Boyz had been cooped up inside this fortress. The humies had them besieged, his messengers never seemed to come back and none of the other Warlords ever showed signs of coming to help him. Nah Badun had become thoroughly fed up with this state of affairs. You'd have thought the ladz would be up for a scrap, but no, not a squeak, not a sausage, not a single Snotling! He had resolved to sort the situation out himself. Between him and the ladz they had come up with a master plan. They would break out. With this in mind he had gathered all his Boyz; the entire warband was here, da Chargerz and good ole Naffgul's Shooty Boyz. They would punch out through the humie lines and just keep on goin' – there had to be some Orks out there somewhere.

Since the dawn of time, armies have attempted to place obstacles on the battlefield to channel the movements of their opponents to their advantage. This simple tactic remains unchanged in the 41st millennium. Imperial and alien armies alike use a variety of means to make it difficult for an attacking army to overrun a defensive position. In this section we list the most common forms of this type of 'defensive terrain'.

The following rules are optional with no point values given, and therefore are only usable in scenario or campaign games. Of course there is nothing to stop you playing a tournament game across a battlefield that just happens to have unoccupied trenches, old minefields or any of the other terrain features described below upon it, but if you do this then we recommend you set up the features in a way that is fair to both players.

HASTY BARRICADES

The quickest form of defensive position to set up is a barricade of sandbags, rubble, crates, boxes, barrels, old furniture, commandeered civilian vehicles, and anything else that is to hand! Used primarily to protect infantry, they also serve to divert, delay, or harass the movement of vehicles.

Hobby Note: *Forge World sell some beautiful Epic scale barricade models, which they refer to as the defence line set or the "road block" as part of Road Set 2. Otherwise, use a small piece of cardboard made to look like a wall or little chips glued together to look like sandbags.*

HASTY BARRICADES

Type	Infantry	Vehicle	War Engine
Barricade	5+ Cover Save	Dangerous	No Effect

Notes: None

TRENCHES & EARTHWORKS

The easiest way for infantry to fortify a position is to start digging a trench, and then either pile up the earth to create an earthwork, or climb into the trench itself. A trench or earthwork can be anything from a fairly shallow hole if the ground, deep enough to hide a soldier from view and provide them with cover when they come under fire, through to well-crafted defence lines designed for use over a prolonged period of time. Trenches and earthworks are usually built in a 'zig-zag' pattern, to avoid the possibility of an enemy getting to one end of the trench and from there being able to shoot along its entire length. When built for use in a prolonged siege there will often be two or more lines of trenches, joined together by 'communication trench' that allow troops to move from one trench line to the next without having to expose themselves to enemy fire.

Hobby Note: *See the article in Fanatic magazine 4 for information on how to model trench lines.*

TRENCHES & EARTHWORKS

Type	Infantry	Vehicle	War Engine
Trench or Earthwork	4+ Cover Save	Dangerous	No Effect

Notes: None

GUN EMPLACEMENTS

Gun emplacements are similar to trenches in many ways, except that they are designed to protect vehicles or artillery pieces. Gun emplacements can either be small positions designed to hold a single vehicle or artillery piece, or larger positions designed to hold several such units. A trench line will often incorporate gun emplacements along its length.

Hobby Note: *See the article in Fanatic magazine 4 for information on how to model gun emplacements.*

GUN EMPLACEMENTS

Type	Infantry	Vehicle	War Engine
Trench	4+ Cover Save	4+ Cover Save	No Effect

Notes: Gun emplacements provide vehicles with a Cover Save that works in the same manner as an infantry Cover Save (see 1.8.3).

BUNKERS

Bunkers are fortified buildings designed to provide their occupants with as much protection as possible. They can range in size from small buildings constructed from logs and earth, through to large fortifications made of steel and concrete capable of holding an entire formation. In some cases a series of connected bunkers will be built and linked together so as to create a massive fortified position capable of holding hundreds or even thousands of men.

Hobby Note: *See the article in Fanatic magazine 4 for information on how to model bunkers.*

BUNKERS

Type	Infantry	Vehicle	War Engine
Bunker	3+ Cover Save	Dangerous	Impassable

Notes: None

COMMAND BUNKERS

Sometimes bunkers are constructed to hold vital communications gear or weapons rather than troops. These positions are more like an immobile vehicle than a piece of defensive terrain, as the gear or weapons housed in them cannot be moved. They can range in size from small communication relay stations, through to large complexes holding an army's entire command staff.

Hobby Note: *A set of Epic objectives that can be used as Bunkers is available via mail order from your local direct sales team.*

SMALL COMMAND BUNKER

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Armoured Vehicle	Immobile	4+	6+	6+

Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes
None			

Notes: Reinforced Armour. No units may enter the bunker or gun position – it is off limits!

LARGE COMMAND BUNKER

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
War Engine	Immobile	4+	6+	6+

Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes
Varies (see below)			

Notes: Reinforced Armour. Damage Capacity 3. Critical Damage Effect: Internal explosions rock the position destroying it.

ORBITAL DEFENCE BATTERY

Many planets are defended by massive batteries of weapons designed to engage orbiting spacecraft. Although it is rare for the defence batteries to do serious damage to an attacking spacecraft, their mere presence can slow down and hinder sub-orbital attacks. Most defence batteries are housed in heavily fortified bunkers, designed to be able to withstand anything less than a direct hit from a spacecraft's weapon batteries.

Hobby Note: *See the article in Fanatic magazine 4 for information on how to model bunkers.*

ORBITAL DEFENCE BATTERY

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
War Engine	Immobile	4+	-	-

Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes
Orbital Defence Battery	Unlimited	na	Defence Laser (see below)

Damage Capacity 3. Critical Hit Effect: Internal explosions destroy the battery's command centre, rendering it inoperable (counts as destroyed).

Notes: Reinforced Armour. Fearless. May not take actions. However, each defence laser battery in play subtracts -1 from the Action test rolls of enemy spacecraft. No units may enter the bunker – it's off limits!

RAZOR WIRE

Razor wire is a generic term that covers a wide range of linear obstacles designed to slow down or stop infantry before they can reach a defensive position. The most common form is razor or barbed wire, but armies will also use wooden stakes, trenches filled with acid or lava, and in a prolonged campaign have even been known to grow swathes huge of stumbleweed or blood moss in front of their positions in order to disrupt an attack.

Hobby Note: *See the article in Fanatic magazine 4 for information on how to model razor wire. In addition Games Workshop make razor wire for Warhammer 40,000 that can be placed on a standard infantry base.*

RAZORWIRE

Type	Infantry	Vehicle	War Engine
Razor wire	Dangerous	None	None

Notes: None

MINEFIELDS

Minefields represent explosive devices, buried under the ground or left lying on the surface, that are designed to detonate when any infantry, vehicle or war engine moves within range. They are usually made up of numerous small explosive devices, but in some rare cases will consist of a single huge weapon designed to devastate a wide area when triggered.

Hobby Note: *To represent mines take a 2 x 2cms stand or piece of card, add a sign marked with a skull and crossbones, and perhaps a small crater or two. The minefield covers a circular area 15cm in radius centred on the Minefield counter. Or see the article in issue 4 of Fanatic Mag.*

MINEFIELDS

Type	Infantry	Vehicle	War Engine
Minefield	Dangerous	Dangerous	Dangerous

Notes: None

TANK TRAPS

Tank traps are man-made obstacles or deep ditches designed to stop or slow the movement of vehicles, in much the way that razor wire slows infantry. When well constructed it is impossible for a vehicle to move through a set of tank traps, forcing it to detour round them.

Hobby Note: *Forge World sell "tank traps" and "road blocks" in Epic scale as part of Road Set 2. Other means include using old Epic flag poles cut down to half their length and placed together in a "jack" style. Tank ditches can be modelled using the same methods as used for modelling trenches (see above).*

TANK TRAPS

Type	Infantry	Vehicle	War Engine
Tank Traps	6+ Cover Save	Impassable	Impassable

Notes: None

NEW IMPERIAL SIEGE WARFARE UNITS

Although all races take part in siege warfare, the Imperium utilises a number of vehicles and weapon systems specifically designed for either attacking or defending fortified positions. Some of the more commonly used Imperial siege warfare units are described in this section. Please note that several of these vehicles appear in the Collectors' Models section at the back of the Epic rulebook. The rules below replace those in the back of the Epic Armageddon rulebook when there is a difference.

TARANTULA SENTRY GUN SYSTEM

Sentry guns are automated weapon systems, utilising simple logic engines and infused with the Machine Spirit to allow them to operate without a controller.

Many veterans refer to sentry guns as 'Tarantulas'; the origins of this name are unknown. Whatever their name, sentry guns are automated weapons systems, utilising simple logic engines and infused with the Machine Spirit to allow them to operate without a controller. Once placed, set and armed the weapon will remain active until it runs out of ammunition or is destroyed.

They are used in a variety of roles, often placed to cover approaches to key positions, such as roadblocks, or to defend a perimeter from surprise attacks. They are well liked by the troops, as sentry guns free them from long lonely cold nights on guard duty. The advantage of a sentry gun is that, unlike normal sentries, they never doze off or reminisce about the girls back home!

There are many types of sentry gun, the most common by far are those equipped with twin-linked heavy bolters or twin-linked lascannons, deployed in anti-personnel and anti-tank roles respectively.

As a relatively light support weapon, Tarantulas can be carried in the back of a Chimera or Rhino and are also often used by Storm Troopers and Drop Troops, rapidly deployed from the rear of a Valkyrie. They can even be packed in crates and airdropped on a grav-chute into a battle zone.

Many Space Marine Chapters also keep a small supply of sentry weapons in their armoury, finding them especially useful for routine guard duties due to their relative lack of manpower.

Other fighting forces of the Imperium also make use of sentry guns of one kind or another. Arbites use them for crowd control and riot surpression as well as for defending their precincts.

Tarantulas are only deployed for static defence, their lack of mobility severely restricting their use during fluid battle.

Hobby Note: *You can create a Tarantula by using the turrets from the Space Marine Razorback box set. Simply glue them to a base.*

TARANTULA SENTRY GUN SYSTEM

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Armoured Vehicle	Immobile	6+	none	6+

Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes
Twin Heavy Bolter	30cm	AP4+	-
OR Twin Lascannon	45cm	AT4+	-

GORGON CLOSE ASSAULT VEHICLE

The Gorgon is a large, slab-sided vehicle with thick armour and monstrous tracks. It is used to carry infantry under heavy fire, such as in a siege or when attacking an enemy defence line. In many ways it is like a mechanical version of a heavily protected medieval siege tower full of combat troops and bristling with weapons.

The Gorgon is armed with short-ranged mine launchers which lob large barrel-shaped charges a short distance ahead of its advance to clear out enemy troops.

Hobby Note: *The Gorgon can be represented by a Chimera with a dozer blade attached to the front.*

GORGON CLOSE ASSAULT VEHICLE

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Armoured Vehicle	15cm	4+	6+	4+

Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes
Heavy Flamer	15cm	AP5+	Ignore Cover
Minethrower	(15cm)	Small Arms	Extra Attack (+1)

Notes: Reinforced Armour, Walker (represents wide tracks). Transport (may carry two Ogryn units OR any four of the following units: Imperial Guard units: Supreme Commander, Commander, Infantry, Storm Troopers, Fire Support, Snipers)

MOLE & HELLBORE TUNNELLERS

The Hellbore is the largest of the tunnelling troop transporters known collectively as tunnellers or miners. These subterranean machines tunnel their way underground, bypassing enemy troops and fortifications and emerging behind the lines. Tunnellers can move over the ground surface as well as underground, but as they only move slowly overland it is usual to move them to battlefields on huge transporter vehicles. Although transporters don't have weapons and cannot move, they continue to act as guidance stations for the tunnellers.

The Hellbore may move along the surface of the ground, ploughing a deep furrow in its wake. The Hellbore is so huge that it is almost unstoppable in close combat, grinding infantry and lighter vehicles into the ground as it advances!

The Mole is the intermediate sized tunneller, carrying a single platoon of Imperial Guard tactical troops. All Moles carry special communication equipment which allows them to relay orders to the troops they carry.

Hobby Note: *Unfortunately there is no easy way to represent these models other than by scratch-building them, or by getting hold of the old 'classic' Citadel Miniatures representing the vehicles, or by using 'stand-ins' from your model collection.*

MOLE

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Armoured Vehicle	15cm	4+	6+	6+

Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes
None			

Notes: Reinforced Armour, Tunneller. Transport (may carry two Ogryn units OR any four of the following units: Imperial Guard units: Supreme Commander, Commander, Infantry, Storm Troopers, Fire Support, Snipers)

HELLBORE

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
War Engine	15cm	4+	4+	4+

Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes
None			

Notes: Reinforced Armour, Tunneller. Transport (may carry fourteen of the following Imperial Guard units: Supreme Commander, Commander, Infantry, Storm Troopers, Fire Support, Snipers, Ogryns)

This new scenario is a variant of the standard Tournament Game scenario, which allows players to use the terrain and units described above. It pits a powerful attacking force against a smaller defender occupying a fortified position. The attackers need to overrun the defenders in their defensive positions, avoiding minefields, tank traps and razor wire as they go. The defenders must desperately hold their ground and pray that their reinforcements arrive in time to save the day.

SET-UP

Set up the terrain for the game in any mutually agreeable manner. If one player set up the terrain then his opponent may choose where to deploy. If you set up the terrain as a joint effort or it was set up by a tournament organiser then the player with the higher strategy rating may choose the table edge he sets up on. If both players have the same strategy rating then dice roll to see who gets the choice of table edge. You can pick a long edge, or a short edge, or a corner (halfway up each long and short edge). The opponent sets up on the opposite edge. Once the terrain is set up you should take a five minute warm-up period to discuss the Epic rules, as you would in a tournament game (see 6.1.3 in the Epic Armageddon rulebook).

FORCES

Both players pick armies to an agreed points total between 2,000 to 5,000 points using the tournament army lists. Before the armies are selected randomly decide who will be the attacker and who the defender. The attacker picks their army as they would for a normal tournament game (but see the note below for attacking Imperial Guard armies). The defender is allowed to purchase fortified positions and orbital defence batteries for his army, but may not take any spacecraft.

FORTIFIED POSITIONS & ORBITAL DEFENCE BATTERIES

The defender in the Siegeline scenario is allowed to purchase any number of fortified positions for his troops to occupy. In addition he may include up to three Orbital Defence Batteries as part of his defending force. See the table below for points values.

Fortified positions and Orbital Defence Batteries are set up after terrain is set up, and before the coordinates for spacecraft attacks have been decided. They may only be deployed in positions where a vehicle unit would be allowed to deploy. You may split up the different elements of your fortified positions as desired, as long as the rules for formation coherence are adhered to. For example, you could split up trenches into several lines, as long as there are 5cm 'links' between the different parts of the position.

Once set up fortified positions may be used by any unit. They may be captured and used by enemy units too. Each Orbital Defence Battery counts as a 'formation' for the purpose of the game rules, but is never allowed to take an action.

IMPERIAL GUARD ARMIES

Imperial Guard armies taking part in a Siegeline scenario have the option of using some of the new units described earlier in this article. The choices available vary depending on whether the Guard are attacking or defending.

Attacking: If the Imperial Guard are the attackers, then any Regimental HQ formations or Steel Legion Mechanised Infantry formations may replace their Chimera with one Hellbore, or four Moles (one for the Commander), or four Gorgons (one for the Commander). If the formation includes an Ogryn upgrade with Chimera transport vehicles, then the Chimera may be exchanged for a single Gorgon or Mole for them to be carried in, but only as long as the Ogryns use the same transport vehicle as the rest of the formation.

Defending: If the Imperial Guard are defending they may take a Tarantula formation as a Support formation. The formation consists of six Tarantulas and costs 100 points.

PLACE OBJECTIVE MARKERS

After any fortified positions and Orbital Defence Batteries are set up, take it in turns, starting with the player with the higher strategy rating, to place one Objective marker on the table. If both players have the same strategy rating then dice roll to see who places the first Objective marker.

FORTIFIED POSITIONS

Fortified Positions	A fortified position may include any or all of the following things: • Up to 500mm of trenches, earthworks or barricades, or a combination of the three. • Up to 500mm of razor wire or tank traps (or a combination of the two), or one Minefield. • Up to 6 gun emplacements or bunkers, or a combination of the two. • Up to one command bunker (large or small).	125 points
0-3 Orbital Defence Batteries	1 Orbital Defence Battery	50 points

All the objectives must be set up in the defender's half of the table, at least 15cm away any table edge and 15cm away from any other objectives that have already been placed.

Keep placing objectives until six Objective markers have been placed on the table in total. You can use anything as an Objective marker but we would suggest using terrain pieces to represent them if you can. In our games we've found that battling over an actual bunker or fuel dump is far more appealing than having your forces sell their lives for a cardboard counter!

You capture an objective if you have a unit within 15cm of it in the End phase and your opponent does not. An objective is contested if both sides have a unit within 15cm of it in the End phase. Objectives that have been 'garrisoned' count as having been captured from the start of the game. Units from broken formations can capture objectives but not contest them.

Once an objective is captured it remains so even if your units move off, and will remain captured until the opponent has a unit within 15cm of it in the End phase.

SET-UP FORMATIONS

If the attacker is using spacecraft then they are set up now before any other units (see 4.3 in the Epic Armagageddon rulebook).

The defender is then allowed to set up table garrison units. No more than half (rounding fractions up) of the defender's formations may be set up as garrisons, and in addition any formations that are set up as garrisons must be:

- Formations where half or more of the units (rounding up) are Scouts OR
- Formations where no more than one of the units has a move of greater than 15cm, and where none of the units are war engines OR
- A formation that includes units with a Speed of 0

Garrisons may be set up anywhere in the defending player's half of the table. No units may set up in impassable terrain. Units may be set up in dangerous terrain (it's assumed that they took their time getting into position in order to do so safely!).

All of the remaining formations in the defending player's army are assumed to be in reserve just off their table edge, and will not be able to enter play until turn two or later (see the rules for 'Defensive Reserves' below).

All of the attacker's formations apart from aircraft and the units transported in aircraft or spacecraft must be set up within 30cm of the attacker's table edge.

DEFENSIVE RESERVES

Any defending formations that are not set up as garrisons at the start of the game are assumed to be set up nearby 'in reserve'. Note that this includes any aircraft in the defender's army. Reserves are released according to the following schedule. Until released, reserve formations may not be used in any way.

Turn	Reserves Released
One	Formations made up exclusively of fighter aircraft.
Two	All aircraft and skimmer formations, and any formations transported in them.
Three	All remaining formations except those made up exclusively of units with a Speed of 15cm or less.
Four	All remaining formations.

Aircraft formations and any units transported in them enter play normally. Other formations must enter play anywhere along the defender's table edge in the Action phase of the turn that they are released; formations that fail their Initiative test must choose to move as their hold action, and will enter play with a Blast marker for failing the Initiative test. Note that reserve formations must enter play on the turn they are released; you may not keep them 'in reserve'.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

You must check to see if the either player has won at the end of each game turn, starting from the end of the third game turn. Look up the number of objectives controlled by the attacker on the table below to see if either player has won:

	Defender		Attacker
Turn	**Wins**	**Carry On**	**Wins**
Three	0-1	2-3	4-6
Four	0-2	3	4-6
Five	0-3	4	5-6
Six	0-4	5	6
Seven	0-5	-	6

Authors

Jervis Johnson is, of course, the author of the Epic game. He is currently working on (amongst other things) Swordwind.

Further Information

The Epic: Armageddon rulebook and accompanying range are now widely available, See the How to Order pages on page 110.

website

www.Epic-Battles.com