

THE STARS ARE RIGHT

DARK OMENS PART: III

W elcome, travellers, to the Inn of the Prancing Peacock. Have a seat by the hearth and let me tell you the tale of the Dwarf King Vidas and his battles against the terrible Vampire Lord, Erlic von Bachmann. It was a long time ago in the foothills of Zhidyryna in the lands of the Kislevites, that Erlic von Bachmann one night claimed the Castle Blut for his own and started terrorising the area. His dark heart was filled with lust for a great prize – a piece of Morsslieb, the Chaos Moon, the size of a grown man's head! With this in his possession, the vampire hoped to gain powers beyond measure. Powers that he wanted to put to use in ousting the rival von Carsteins from his ancestral castle in Sylvania. The vampire searched for years without success, but then came upon the notes of the deranged Arab Alhamrahād. These notes described the Skeleton Key of Oltrakühl, which was a star map pencilled by an ancient astronomer, that would point to the location of the warpstone when used on the right night. The vampire set out to find the grave of Oltrakühl, but was

met by a band of Dwarfs, in what became known as the Battle of Plattdorf Crossing. The Dwarfs had been hastily assembled and were ill prepared to face off against an enemy as formidable as the Vampire Lord. Hence, they were cut down and Erlic von Bachmann proceeded to find the grave of Oltrakühl and his starmap in the vast plague graveyard lying two days ride from Zhidyryna. Outside the graveyard the Dwarfs assembled another force to stop the evil deeds, but without any assistance from the Kislevites of the region, they were not able to stop the Vampire from moving on into the foothills, where an observatory, long deserted by mankind, but now in use by the Dwarfs, was his next goal. The wounded Dwarf king sent word ahead to the garrison at the observatory that foul creatures of evil were about to invade. The Dwarfs took their precautions and moved troops to bolster the defences of the observatory. On the day of Hexentag, dusk had nearly broken when the first leering grins of the dead skulls became visible in the horizon. The attack had started.

THE CAMPAIGN

This game is the third instalment in a campaign (you can find the two first battles on www.c0wabunga.com). The way this campaign is conducted is fairly straightforward. We set a points limit that increases by 500 pts for each game (e.g.. 1000 pts for the first, 2000 pts for this), and use the outcome of the game to decide how the story progresses. This allows us to have a fun narrative to our battles, as well as ensuring that we increase our forces from game to game.

THE SCENARIO

Unlike the previous scenarios in the campaign, this scenario is not just a pitched battle. Instead the scenario is built up around the old observatory in the mountains south of Zhidyryna. The observatory has long been forgotten by the people living in the area and in the Kislevetian cities. But the Dwarfs have found it long ago, and kept it functioning.

Destroying the building: Neither the Dwarfs nor the Undead will be inclined to destroy the observatory. As such this is permitted only through scatter shots or misfire.

Terrain: In the centre of the table an old observatory is placed. It is surrounded by rocky outcrops, small trees, and bushes.

Deployment: The defending player (in our case, the Dwarfs) sets up his army first. The army must be deployed within 12" of the centre. As this is a fortified position, the scouts of the opposing army (in our case, the Undead) are assumed to have localised the troops positions and reported back to their commander. The defending player may place a single unit of core infantry (up to 25 models strong) to the observatory. This unit may leave the observatory on any turn starting with turn 2. The other player must now

deploy his army outside 30" of the centre.

Outcomes: If the vampire wins, the next scenario played is an assault on the Dwarven mines located on top of or near the place that Oltrakühl has determined the warpstone to be

If the vampire loses and is killed, the next scenario will feature his minions trying to recuse his remains using his native soil and his black coach

If the vampire loses and is not killed, he will be chased into the mountains and while he is away the Dwarfs will lay siege to his castle to oust the evil from the area once and for all

First turn: The attacker takes the first turn

Game Length: 6. From turn 4 and onwards night assault rules will be in place.

Victory Conditions: At the end of the game the army that controls the observatory wins the game. The players should analyse the situation and come to a conclusion as to who can claim control of the building.

Night Assault Rules: At the start of each turn roll 4d6. The result is the max visibility and allowed range for shooting, charging, spell casting, panic/fear/terror sensing etc. The conditions apply only to living creatures.



ERLIC VON BACHMANN'S UNDEAD HORDE



DR: THE VIKING: Hmm! We are getting closer to our goal of discovering the location of this much wanted warpstone. My force has now grown to an impressive 2,000 points. This scenario will be a tough nut to crack, I think. Going up against defending Dwarfs is probably ill advised. My choices for the army have not deviated so much from the initial games. Part of the reason, of course, being that I am building slowly unto the 1,000 points army I started with. One thing I missed in earlier games was some sort of way to deal with the pesky Dwarf artillery. What better unit to do this than a few Carrions? So I have squeezed in two of those. Even though I am fairly sure that the Dwarfs will be toting their dreaded banner with the Master Rune of Valaya, which more or less cancels all plans, I have chosen to bring a Necromancer also. It is of course none other than Ulrich Kemler, whom some of you may know from my earlier Warhammer efforts. I need this guy to bolster my units in addition to my Vampire, so he's getting the Summon Undead 1d6 spell. Since we are attacking the observatory I have also added Oltrakühl himself, and rated him as a Mummy Tomb King. He will lead my unit of Mummies. I hope to make these heavy hitters deal with the Dwarf Iron Breakers. With the points

left in the wallet I have bought two units of Skeleton Bowmen. While their BS 2 doesn't promise much, I hope to get off a few extra rounds of shooting with Vanhel's. Lastly, the Ghouls of Charles de Ghoulle have been increased with two, so that the unit is now at 10. I have yet to fully appreciate these guys, but they are a bit more manoeuvrable than the rest, which should come in handy when all my magic is denied.

Deployment wise I hope to avoid the worst of the Dwarf shooting, and get in a decisive charge with the cavalry and chariots in conjunction. I am a little worried that there will now be a unit of slayers lurking on the other side, which might start killing off my characters. The Carrion need to get busy really quickly and end the Cannon as this poses the greatest threat to my chariots. I am expecting Jonas to put a strong unit in the observatory, and fighting that unit will probably be really impossible, but my new Banner of Doom might help to psyche them out.

UNDEAD ROSTER SHEET

ERLIC VON BACHMANN.....450 PTS

Erlic is a Vampire Lord. Erlic carries a single magic item – the Carstein Ring and his sword - The Stormbringer (Blood Drinker Sword). The ring restores him to full wounds, if he should die. Erlic knows the Necromancy spells: Curse of Years, Summon Undead 2d6, and Vanhel's Danse Macabre.

PROFILE	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	LD
Vampire Lord	6	8	6	7	6	4	9	4	10

20 SKELETON WARRIORS.....248 PTS

The Boneheads - armed with hand weapons and shields. The unit has been upgraded with a musician and a standard bearer with the Banner of Doom (-1 LD to all enemy within 6")

PROFILE	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	LD
Skeletons	4	2	2	3	3	1	2	1	5

MORGENS

GLÜCKRAUBERBANK.....75 PTS

Morgens is a Wraith leading the Boneheads. He is armed with a scythe.

PROFILE	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	LD
Wraith	4	3	0	3	4	3	3	2	5

10 GHOULS.....80 PTS

The ghoul unit is lead by Charles de Ghoulle, a former Bretonnian noble. For the purposes of this scenario de Ghoulle is treated as a standard ghoul.

PROFILE	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	LD
Ghoul	4	2	0	3	4	1	3	2	5

ULRICH KEMLER.....68 PTS

Ulric is the distant relative of a more notorious Necromancer. Ulrich knows the Necromancy spell summon undead 1d6.

PROFILE	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	LD
Necromancer	4	4	4	4	3	1	3	2	8

2 UNDEAD CARRION.....90 PTS

The spirit riders are armed with hand weapons.

PROFILE	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	LD
Carrion	4	3	0	3	3	2	4	3+	7

8 SKELETON WARRIORS.....80 PTS

Armed with bows.

PROFILE	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	LD
Skeleton	4	2	2	3	3	1	2	1	5

8 SKELETON WARRIORS.....80 PTS

Armed with bows.

PROFILE	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	LD
Skeleton	4	2	2	3	3	1	2	1	5

7 SKELETON HORSEMEN.....288 PTS

Armed with lances, hand weapons, heavy armour, and shields. Upgraded with musician and a standard bearer flying the Doomrider Banner (automatic hit on charge).

The unit is lead by Verax the Wight.

PROFILE	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	LD
Skeleton	4	2	2	3	3	1	2	1	5
Steed	8	2	0	3	3	1	2	1	5
Wight	4	3	0	3	4	3	3	1	8

5 MUMMIES.....225 PTS

Armed with hand weapons and lead by Oltrahühl.

PROFILE	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	LD
Mummy	3	3	0	4	5	4	3	2	8

BORIS OLTRAKÜHL.....100 PTS

Boris is a Tomb King. He is armed with a hand weapon.

PROFILE	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	LD
Tomb King	3	4	0	5	5	4	4	3	9

2 UNDEAD CHARIOTS.....132 PTS

The Chariots of Fire. One chariot is equipped with scythes (+2 impact hits) while the other is not. Each chariot has a crewman armed with a bow.

PROFILE	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	LD
Skeleton	4	2	2	3	3	1	2	1	5
Steed	8	2	0	3	3	1	2	1	5
Chariot	-	-	-	5	5	3	1	D6	-

TOTAL

1990 PTS

WAVRICH VIDAS' DWARF ARMY



JONAS: Hi again fellow Hammer fans. This time we have a bit of a different scenario and I wanted to try something a bit different too. I started out taking the Wavrich the Unwinning, the Dwarf Lord and Igge Sturson, the Battle Standard Bearer. Wavrich was equipped with his ancestor's Gromril Armour, giving him a toughness of 10 and a powerfull axe forged with Snorri Spangelhelm's Master Rune and a Rune of Fury. This gives Wavrich an extra attack and his axe always hits the target. Igge was given a runic standard with the Rune of Valaya once again, to make up for the lack of wizards in the Dwarf Army Book.

Next up, I tried going a bit old school, taking two units of Crossbow Dwarfs. In the 3rd edition it was suggested in the Warhammer Armies book that two units with crossbows should be minimum in a respectable Dwarf army. This would also give me the ability to protect more flanks of the Lighthouse. To round out the shooting I took the Cannon I already tested out a couple of times and I added a Flame Cannon too. This made me confident that I

was well covered on all sides and would be able to take out most things coming at me.

Specially called in to battle the Undead Horde was the Ghal Maraz Iron Breakers led by Champion Torkl Copperbelt. The Iron Breakers unit is now boosted to 12 man including command. This unit will be joined by Wavrich and the Battle Standard for maximum impact.

The awesome pike Dwarf Warrior unit, now known as The Foothill Pike Guard, would once again show up to defend the realm. Finally, I took the newly (almost) painted Hammerers, another elite unit I have high hopes for.

Setting up I ended going in a different direction than I had planned. I set up the Iron Breakers and Pike Dwarfs to face my right flank and all my shooting to the left and since the Hammerers was the only new infantry unit I put that one into the Observatory. Thinking the shooting would hold one flank while the Iron Breakers destroy the other and the Hammerers could charge out joining wherever needed.

DWARF ROSTER SHEET

WAVRICH VIDAS.....408 PTS

Vidas is a Dwarf General wearing a heavy armour with the Rune of Gromril (T10) and wielding an axe with Snorri's Spangelhelm's Master Rune and the Rune of Fury.

PROFILE	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	LD
Dwarf General	3	7	6	4	5/10	3	5	4/5	10

BATTLE STANDARD.....251 PTS

The Battle Standard is imbued with the Master Rune of Valaya dispelling all magic on 4+

PROFILE	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	LD
Dwarf Hero	3	5	4	4	4	1	3	2	9

8 DWARF QUARRELLERS.....104 PTS

Armed with crossbows

PROFILE	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	LD
Dwarf	3	4	3	3	4	1	2	1	9

8 DWARF QUARRELLERS.....104 PTS

Armed with crossbows

PROFILE	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	LD
Dwarf	3	4	3	3	4	1	2	1	9

10 DWARF HAMMERERS.....207 PTS

Armed with two handed hammers, and lead by the Champion Boldo.

PROFILE	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	LD
Elite Dwarf	3	5	3	4/6	4	1	3	1	9
Boldo	3	5	4	4/6	4	1	3	2	9

12 IRON BREAKERS.....392 PTS

Armed with axes, heavy armour with the Rune of Stone and bringing a standard with the Rune of Courage, meaning that they never break. The Champion Brage leads the regiment.

PROFILE	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	LD
Elite Dwarf	3	5	3	3	4	1	3	1	9
Brage	3	5	4	3	4	1	3	2	9

Steed	8	2	0	3	3	1	2	1	5
Chariot	-	-	-	5	5	3	1	D6	-

20 DWARF WARRIORS.....303 PTS

Armed with spears and protected by light armour and shields. The champion Eirik leads the unit and wears a Rune of Stone on his armour.

PROFILE	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	LD
Dwarf	3	4	3	3	4	1	2	1	9
Eirik	3	5	4	3	4	1	3	2	9

DWARF FLAME CANNON.....119 PTS

The Flame Cannon is a fearsome weapon when it works. It is prone to misfiring and must be looked after carefully.

Crewed by 3 Dwarf crewmen.

PROFILE	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	LD
Crew	3	4	3	3	4	1	2	1	9
Cannon	-	-	-	5	7	3	-	-	-

RANGE STRENGTH SAVE WOUND PER HIT

12" 5 none D3

Units wounded must roll panic.

DWARF CANNON.....110 PTS

The Dwarf Cannon is a trusty machine of destruction.

Crewed by 3 Dwarf crewmen.

PROFILE	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	LD
Crew	3	4	3	3	4	1	2	1	9
Cannon	-	-	-	5	7	3	-	-	-

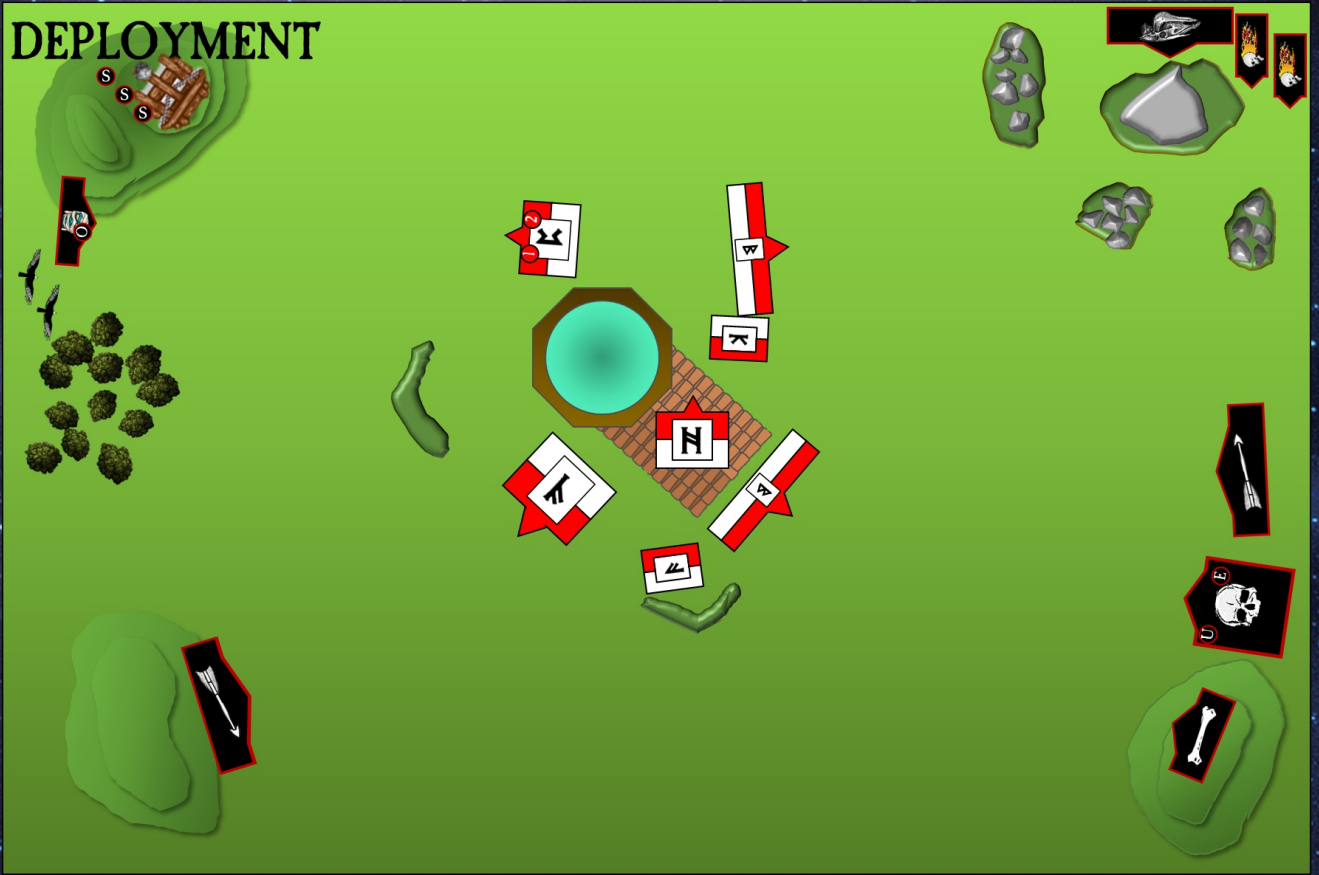
RANGE STRENGTH SAVE WOUND PER HIT

48" 10 none D4

TOTAL

1998 PTS

DEPLOYMENT



The Doom Riders - Skeleton Horsemen



Undead Carrion



The Boneheads - Skeleton Warriors



Wavrich Vidas, Dwarf General



Kraren - Screaming Skull Catapult and crew



Battle Standard



Charles de Ghoulle and his ghouls



Iron Breakers



Skeleton Bowmen



Dwarf Clansmen



The Chariots of Fire Undead Chariots



Dwarf Hammerers



Oltrakühls' Guard - Mummies



Dwarf Crossbows



Ulrich Kemler, Necromancer



Flame Cannon



Erlic von Bachmann, Vampire Lord



Cannon



Boris Oltrakühl, Tomb King

PREAMBLE

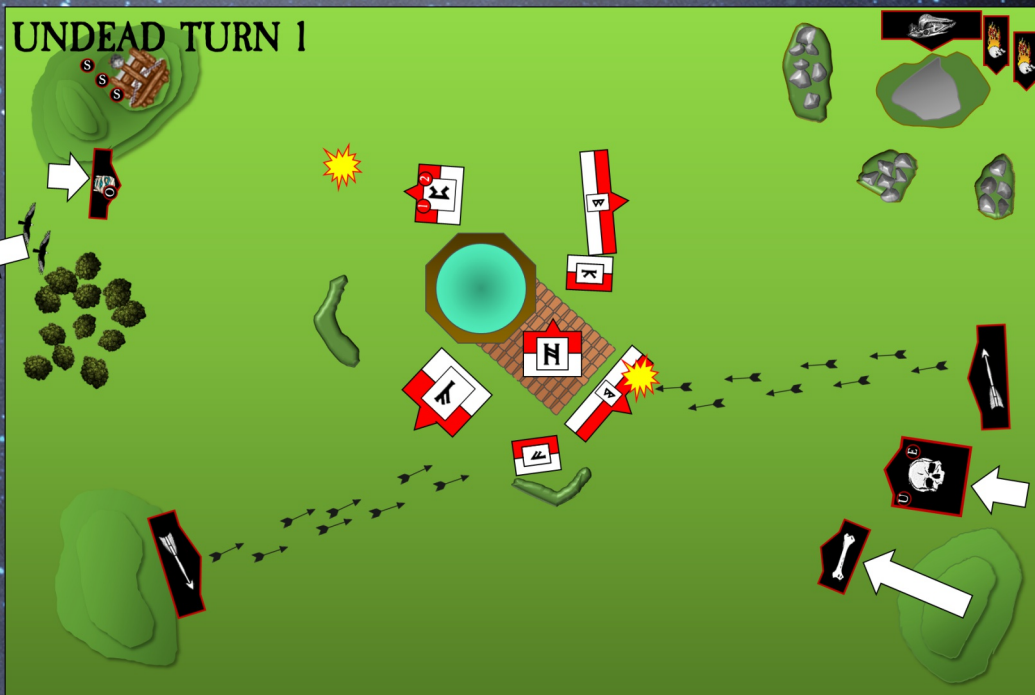
DR. THE VIKING:

This battle follows a long tradition for me playing fantasy. In this tradition I unwillingly manage to make things more difficult than they should be by deploying on a whim and not to my carefully thought out plan. Point in case: the Mummies! How could I forget to put the bloody Mummies closer to my Vampire?!

They were never going to be part of the battle now... ah well. Perhaps they could be enough to scare away things from my catapult. Alas! The brief was straight forward, though: get to the observatory, chuck the Dwarfs out the windows, use the telescope in conjunction with the star map of Oltrakühl to find the warpstone and head off to the mountains! Easy!

UNDEAD TURN 1

DR. THE VIKING: Well, tactical blunders aside Turn 1 was rather fruitless. First, I sent my birds up high, so that they could fall down on the helpless gun crews of either the flame cannon or the cannon next turn. I moved out with my footsloggers and kept the heavy hitters of the cavalry and the chariots back. They were safe from any stray cannon balls behind the rocks. I took great comfort in this, seeing how the cannon had easily blown my chariot to matchbox sticks last game. The Screaming Skull Catapult, dubbed Kharen by the crew for all its agonising wailing, did not leave me down!

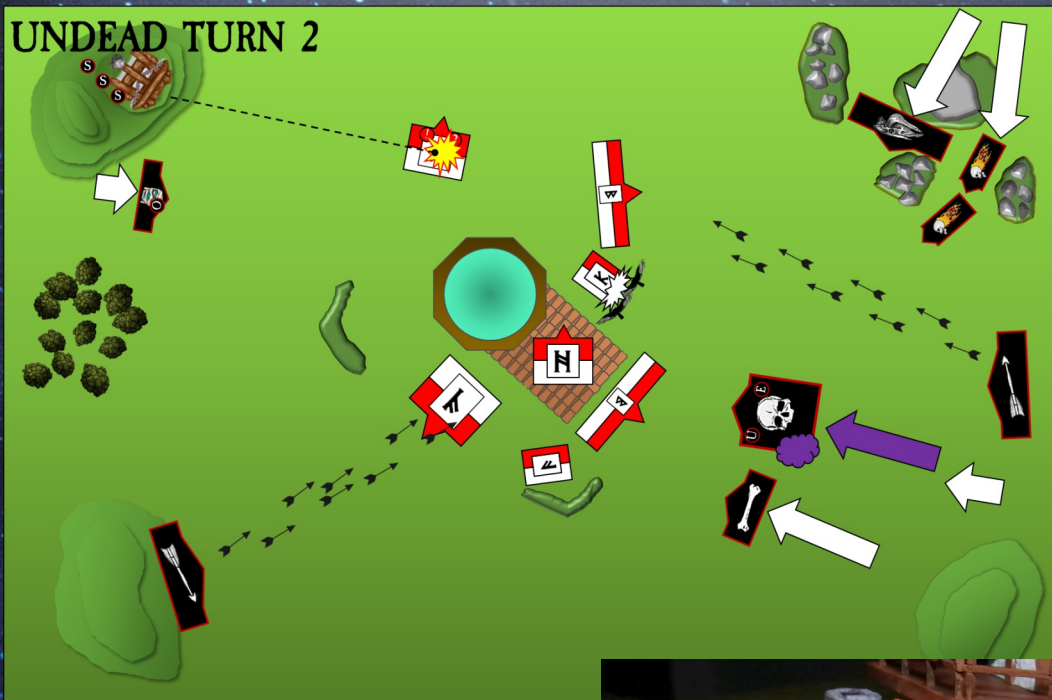


The first shot was a hit... only problem was that my 18" guess was at least 6" of being relevant to kill the Iron Breakers. Oh, but would I have loved to start the game by smacking those little tin cans hard on the mouth. The new guys in the Undead entourage were the Skeleton Bowmen. With Bow Skill 2, I know they are not promising much, and this turn they did not hit anything still or moving. In the magic phase my fears were confirmed - the Dwarfs were



As the sun sets, the Dwarfs at the observatory are oblivious to the uncoming horror

UNDEAD TURN 2



UNDEAD TURN 2

DR. THE VIKING: OK so the Flame Cannon misfired, the Dwarf Warriors failed their leadership test to reform, and the Cannon overshot by far... Seems like I can still make this game! Now what to do though. Well a charge with the Carrion was given - but should it be the flame cannon or the normal cannon? I chose the normal Cannon as it posed a threat to both my Skull Catapult and the Skeleton Horsemen and Chariots. The Flame Cannon was still unnerving though, and I kind of had to try and get my Skeleton Warrior regiment out of harms way... There weren't many good options in this regard, so I decided to try and steer them up and at the Dwarf Quarrellers hoping to just make it. A normal move first inched them a little closer. Then I marched my Ghouls next to the Skeleton Warriors and moved forwards with the rest including the cavalry. Kharen hurled a wailing skull at the Iron Breakers. Again! It! Hit! The Dwarfs took a massive 7 hits, and 6 of them succumbed to the raining skulls. Yes! As bad a choice a catapult can be, the reward it is when it hits a tough enemy, like the Iron Breakers, easily makes up for it. The Skeleton Bow Men again failed to hit anything including the ground beneath their enemies' feet. Then came the moment we had all been waiting for: The Carrion charge! The birds' six attacks were briefly converted to 1 wound on the crew and the Spirit Rider extra attack didn't do much. A little below

average, and of course the crew managed to return the favour and do a wound on the Carrions causing the fight to be a draw overall. I had been ready to sacrifice the birds, but I must admit that I had hoped to bring along something for the ride to Hel. Amazingly, in the magic phase I managed to get off first a Summon Skeletons 2d6, bolstering my



In one fell swoop the Carrion are upon the Dwarf Cannon crew. The Hammerers make haste and come to their assistance.

regiment with 7 new skullies. Ta! Then I threw in a Vanhel's Danse Macabre to make a charge on the Dwarf crossbows. Sadly, my judgment of the distance was off and



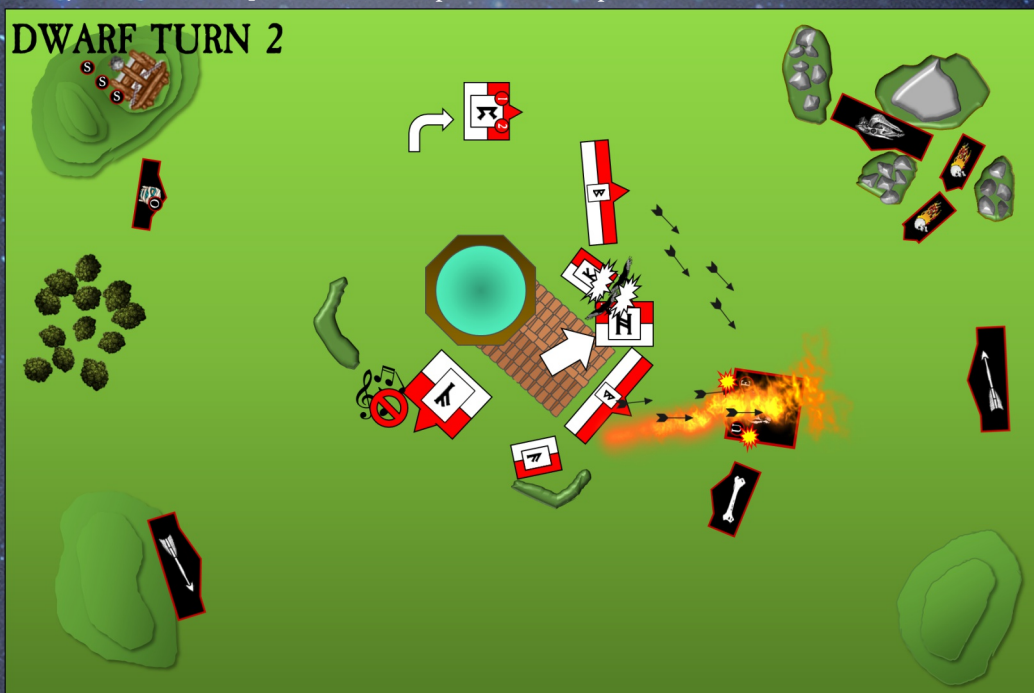
The Flame Cannon spouts forwards its sticky mixture of flaming goo hitting the Skeleton Warriors dead on. The bones are crumbled into dust with no hope of reanimation. Ulrich Kemler barely survives.

the regiment stopped a few inches short.... leaving it fairly open to any potential napalm spewing Flame Cannons in the area. Dread! That was not how I had planned it out.

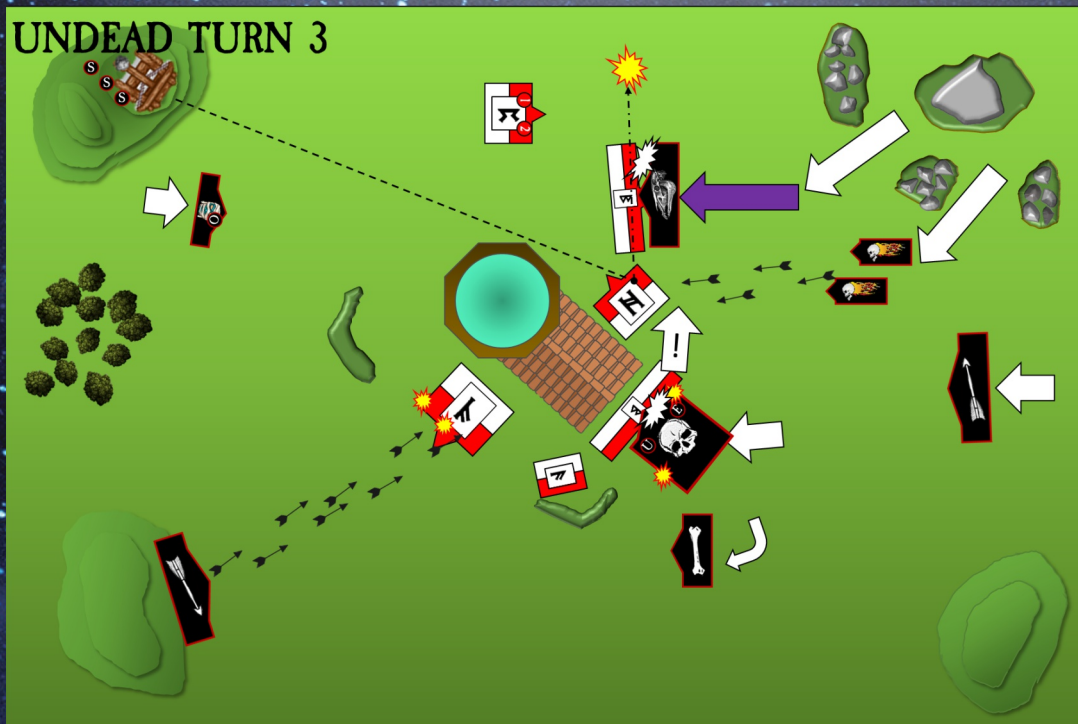
DWARF TURN 2

JONAS: Argh. That is the second time that my Iron Breakers are almost wiped out by that Skull Catapult. I really need to find some way to eliminate that in the future. The Carrion descending on my Cannon was a real bummer too. First, one of my Crossbow regiments had to roll a terror test as they were facing a Wraith, which they passed. The Skeleton Warrior regiment was coming awfully close and would have to be dealt with sooner or later. My Hammerers

charged out of the Observatory to aid the Cannon. Hopefully there would still be time to save the rest of the crew. The Iron Breakers wheeled a bit more and were now facing where I wanted them to go, badly damaged though. And once again the Dwarf Warriors failed to reform, which is unbelievable when taking into account the Dwarf's superb Leadership of 9 (and 10 with the General). But,



UNDEAD TURN 3



even with all the hindrance my Crossbowmen and Flame Cannon were now in perfect position to deal out some serious damage. With the Skeleton Warrior regiment just in front of it, the Flame Cannon had to shoot them (quite literally - the Flame Cannon must fire each turn) and I guessed for 5", then rolled another 4" and the template was just in the perfect spot. Ending with 13 total hits and 12 kills. Perfect! Both my units of Crossbowmen shot the Skeleton Infantry too and 8 more Skeletons died (ed. became de-animated?). A total of 20 Skeletons less to worry about. In the hand-to-hand phase, my Hammerers and Cannon Crew were facing the Carrions together, but since the Hammerers had 2 handed weapons they struck last and the crew couldn't match the Carrions in Initiative. The Carrions killed off my two last Cannon Crew and so the Cannon did nothing this game, what a sad thing that was. The Hammerers on the other hand managed to kill off one Carrion and win the combat, making the second Carrion crumble (ed. Necromantic glue ain't what it used to be!).

UNDEAD TURN 3

DR. THE VIKING: Ugh! The good things first: The army was still there! So was Erlic and his goon Ulrich, the necromancer. Let's not discuss the fact that they're currently standing in a pile of flaming debris and burning bones in what used to be my Skeleton Warrior regiment.

And the Carrions had some hammertime. Argh! Well, on we go. The best retaliation was of course to charge the Crossbowmen, and get in to safety in hand-to-hand combat. This would leave the Ghouls open to a shot, so I tried to wheel them out of the way a bit to the South. I could see my way through the charges now and the Hammerers that had exited the building would not be able to do much next turn except for turning a bit around to face a charge. This meant that lining up my chariots was the right thing to do. My Skeleton Horsemen were also moved forward to allow a charge on the Crossbowmen, which I thought would be an easy target. The shooting this turn saw the Skeleton Bow Men hitting something for the first time. Two of the spearmen (or Dwarves!) went down to their deadly arrows. On the other side of the building both Kharen and the other Bow Men unit failed to hit the Hammerers. In, hand-to-hand combat the battle between the Crossbowmen and the Skeletons Warriors was a brief affair. Erlic von Bachmann, vampire extraordinaire, swiftly beheaded 3 of the Dwarves, and the single wound caused in return was saved by a Skeleton wearing a shield! In the end the Dwarves legged it, and got run over by the Skeletons, placing the regiment right next to the Hammerers (see Dwarf Turn 3 map). Now it was time to cast a few very important spells. The Winds of Magic were strong - a 10! First I tried to summon a few more Skeletons to the fairly depleted regiment. But Valaya said no, then I tried to summon 1d6 Skeletons, but still it was a firm NO. Then I went for a Vanhel's on the skeleton regiment... Valaya said 'no' again. With the last power card I tried for a Vanhel's on the Horsemen and it was actually successful! Wehoo! I charged them into the Crossbowmen. The Dwarves chose to stand and shoot... which actually shouldn't have come as a surprise to me, but still it did! They rolled murderously well and got 6 hits, converting to

And the Carrions had some hammertime. Argh! Well, on we go. The best retaliation was of course to charge the Crossbowmen, and get in to safety in hand-to-hand combat. This would leave the Ghouls open to a shot, so I tried to wheel them out of the way a bit to the South. I could see my way through the charges now and the Hammerers that had exited the building would not be able to do much next turn except

DWARF TURN 3



5 wounds, that saw 4 dead horsemen! I was speechless. In my delirium, I forgot to wait until the following turn to work out the charge, and so did it during the magic phase.

The three (!) remaining Skeleton Horsemen made a single wound on the Dwarfs, lances, Doombanner and all, and just narrowly managed to win the combat resolution. Since the Horsemen no longer outnumbered the Crossbowmen, they would not break automatically. In fact, it turned out to be one of those rare occasions, where the Dwarfs failed their leadership roll. But lo and behold - they were within range of the battle standard bearer, and got a reroll, which they made easily. The fight would drag on. Things were looking bad. And not bad in a good way.

DWARF TURN 3

JONAS: I could see my plan crumble before my eyes, but it was not the end just yet. I needed to get the Iron Breakers

getting a chance of a charge in turn 4. This time the Dwarfs Warriors finally managed to reform and took up a

up-closer and I guess generally just everything needed to find some hand-to-hand action, besides the Flame Cannon of course. First the Hammerers turned around to face the incoming hordes of Undead, but they were not be able to charge this round. The Iron Breakers were just closing in to try and avoid another shot from the Skull Catapult and hopefully

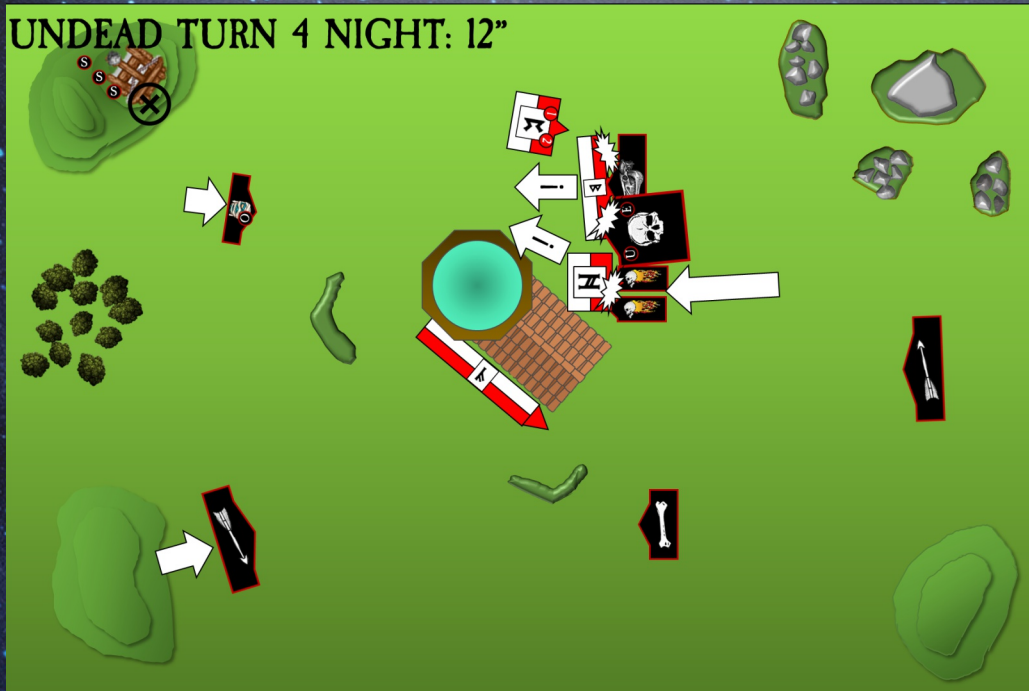


The Flame Cannon tastes its own medicine, much to the liking of Erlic and his troops

column line along the observatory, getting ready to march to the frontlines and making open fire lanes for the Flame Cannon.

With my Crossbowmen and Cannon out of action I relied on the Flame Cannon to repeat last turn's success. The incoming Chariots needed to be dealt with and quick. The

UNDEAD TURN 4 NIGHT: 12"



Flame Cannon took aim, I guessed at 6" and rolled the artillery die hoping to destroy both Chariots with a bit of luck, sending a quick prayer to the Stunty Gods... then my hope turned to disbelief as the die lands on Misfire; to make things worse I thereafter roll a 2 and the Flame Cannon blows up taking the brave crew with them. I am

with frustration as out of the corner of my eye I spot the Battle Standard and see it is close enough for me to make a re-roll. I pass! and so my Crossbows manage to hold back the Skeleton Horsemen. What a terrible round. I will fight on though. The battle is far from lost just yet.



The Hammerers are all but destroyed when two Skeleton Chariots crash into their front. The Skeletons are grinning their laughless laughter with their voiceless voices as they tear through the Dwarfs.

UNDEAD TURN 4

DR. THE VIKING: Huzzah! Begone wretched machine! I had a hard time feeling sorry for the loss of the Dwarf Flame Cannon. The rules for nightfall were now in place. This first and foremost limited my ability to throw around magic. In fact, the rest of the army didn't care much about it at all. I opened the turn with three charges. The Skeleton Warriors would charge the Crossbowmen, the chariots would both charge the Hammerers. The rest of the troops advanced a bit, although the Ghouls seemed to have forgotten what they were doing and did nothing. The Mummies had in so far not gotten even remotely close to being relevant in the game... One of the Skeleton Bow Men regiments advanced to better be able to hit the Dwarf Warriors, while the other stayed put, as the environment wasn't that target rich anyway. The Skull Catapult misfired and was not allowed to shoot for the turn. The hand-to-hand combat saw Erlic cutting down three Dwarfs. The Horsemen failed to cause any wounds, and the Dwarfs caused one, but this was saved by the armour of the Horsemen. Ranks, banners, wounds all included the Undead won the combat and sent the Crossbow Dwarfs screaming away. The chariots hit the Hammerers hard. The first chariots made 7 hits, and the next one made 3.

These resulted in 7 wounds and 7 dead Dwarfs. The steeds and the Skeleton crew both failed to hit. The Hammerers could not retaliate since their whole front rank was dead. They broke and ran. The Horsemen pursued straight into the Iron Breakers, while the Chariots whizzed past (15") and ran down the remaining Hammerers. They were followed by the Skeleton Warrior regiment. I only got three power cards for the magic phase. And in a dimensionless blunder I didn't try to use Vanhel's on the Mummies. They might have been just out of range due to the night rules, but I definitely should have tried that. Instead I summoned more Skeletons... or at least tried to do it. Jonas boosted a dispell with 3 power cards. I reinforced my Summon Undead with a single power card, but his roll to dispell was succesful.

DWARF TURN 4

JONAS: Well, night falls, but since I don't have any shooting left it doesn't matter much. Crossbowmen were gone and the Hammerers were gone. I had high hopes for the Hammerers and really thought they would be bad asses, being the personal bodyguards of the Dwarf Royalty and all. Oh well, I must rethink their role for future battles. At least my Iron Breakers and my Dwarf Lord managed to



The deciding combat ensues as the Dwarf Warriors clash with the Skeleton Warrior regiment next to the observatory. Erlic and Ulric fight for their unlives!

DWARF TURN 4 NIGHT: 12"



get into combat and stand their ground, now was the time to firmly plant my ironclad boots and strike back.

The Skeleton Horsemen managed to kill off Igge and take the Battle Standard down and one Iron Breaker hit the dirt with him. Wavrich quickly struck back dealing three wounds to the Bone Brigadiers and with superiority in rank and still flying the Iron Breakers banner it was enough to win the combat resolution by two and grind the opposition.

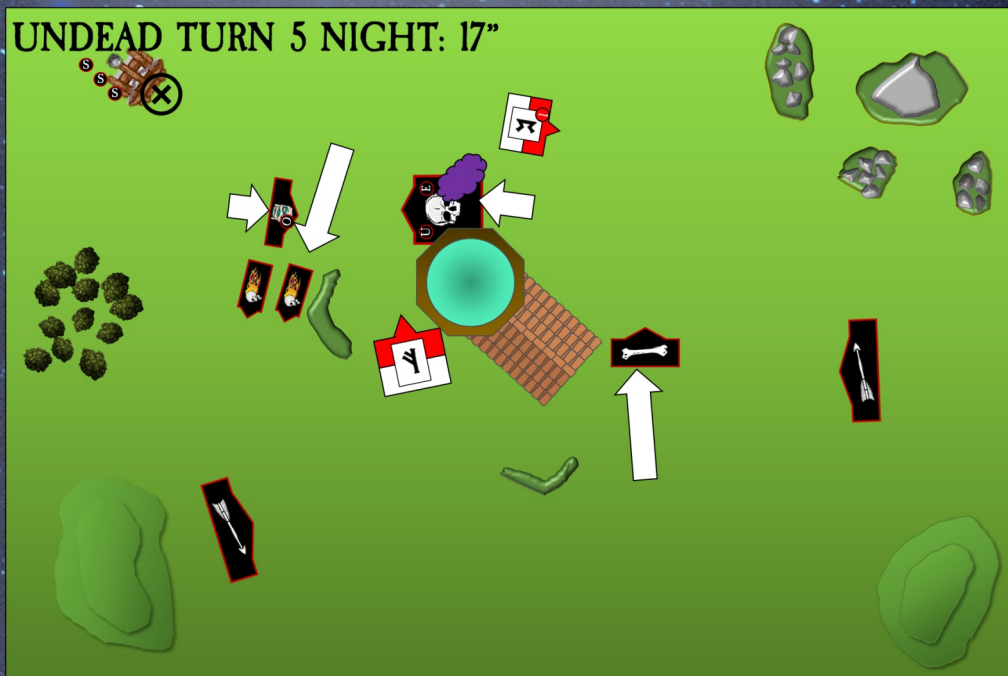
Oh, the Spears just played some music and reformed, it did not seem that important right now, but facing the enemy might just make a difference in the end. Who knows.

UNDEAD TURN 5

DR. THE VIKING:

Oh my. I never thought it could be that easy to get rid of the banner of Valaya! I will keep that in mind in the future. We were in the closing part of the game now and I felt that all I had to do to claim victory was to take out the block of spearmen

UNDEAD TURN 5 NIGHT: 17"



guarding the observatory. The Iron Breakers would be hammered by the skull catapult. I moved everything forwards more or less. A bit of inconsideration saw me not turning around the chariots. They should obviously have lined up to charge the Iron Breakers again. I had somehow convinced myself that they could not turn 180°. But that, in fact, they could and should have done. Instead, I sent them South. In the thick of it, it is sometimes

difficult to keep your cool and strange decisions end up being made. The Ghouls were marched up next to the entrance to the observatory. The Mummies snailed a bit closer to relevance. The Skull Catapult misfired again... a "hit" and "misfire" in fact - so very close to killing off the spearmen (which I ended up targeting). The magic phase was now open! And of course I only got two weedy power cards. Argh. I ended up summoning more skeletons - 7 in total. I had a pretty good summoning average in this game. Valaya or not. In hindsight of course the mummies should

DWARF TURN 5 NIGHT: 17"



reanimated abominations. Four skeletons hit the dirt, but Erlic managed to get the rest of the dead to stay on spot for another round.

I feel a bit of hope returning to my mind and I can't help but

have been moved.

DWARF TURN 5

JONAS: What a merciful round of Undead doing nothing, or at least not killing me right away. At this point I really regret that my Crossbows did not concentrate on the Chariots when they still lived, the big Skeleton Infantry unit with Erlic is back to where it started in size and the Chariots really ripped my regiments apart across the table. I had done my share of damage though and with some luck I could still defend the Observatory. At least I had to try. Wavrich is not popular among his clan and if this would fail I am afraid he would be forced to take the Slayers oath. With that in mind Wavrich decided to leave the Iron Breakers unit and go after Erlic face to face. The Iron Breakers wheeled around to face any incoming foes and also to be able to get to the Observatory and maybe make a final stand there, if needed. Finally the Foothill Pike Dwarfs made an awesome charge right into the flank of the Skeleton Horde surrounding Erlic. The Champion called out to challenge Erlic, even though it might be a desperate and hopeless cause, but instead Erlic sends his Necromancer sidekick to face the challenge. This turns out fatal for the Necromancer. The Dwarfs thrust their spears wildly forward, hoping to break bones and dismantle the

UNDEAD TURN 6 NIGHT: 13"

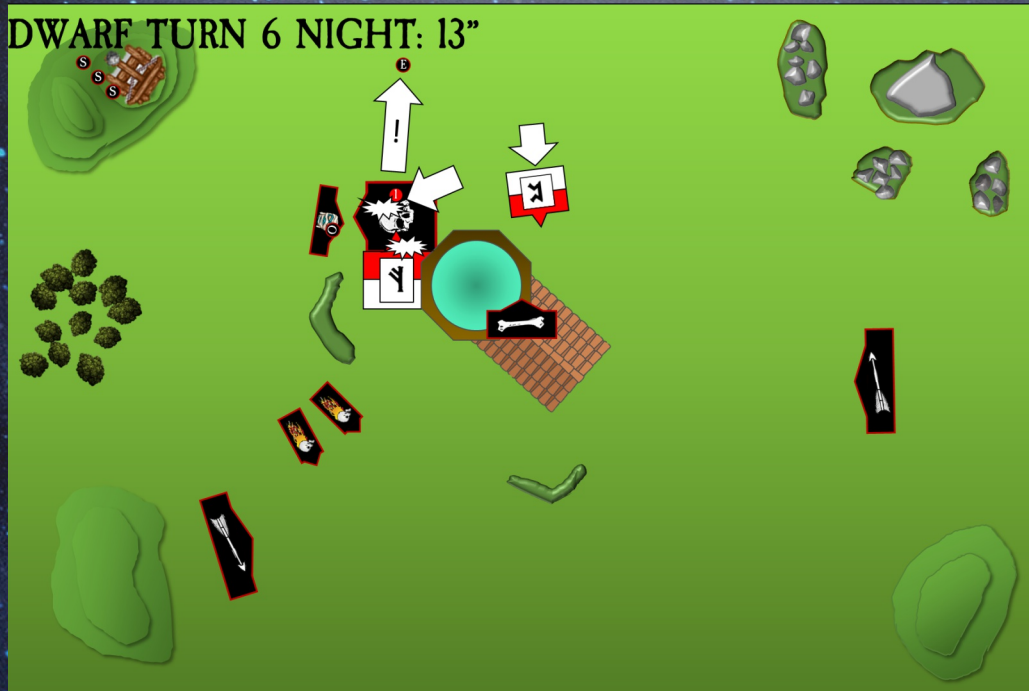


smile a bit while thinking of impaling Erlic right through his dry unbeating heart. Dr. The Viking looks at me and asks me why I am laughing so manically. I just stare blankly and sip my Bugmans Ale, "your move" I say...

UNDEAD TURN 6

DR. THE VIKING: Oh no! I did not expect that the spearmen would be able to charge. It was with the tip of the nails that they could reach. My regiment was drawn out from the building due to aligning. And Ulrich got mauled after Erlic heroically shoved him forward into the challenge. Dread. I went for a charge with the Mummies, but they were just out of reach. The chariots couldn't go through the hedges and so couldn't really get much done. I aimed the Skull Catapult at the emerged Dwarf general. I thought it would make a nice ending to have him flattened by Screaming Skulls. But nooo. The shot deviated far from anything interesting. The combat phase saw Erlic and the Wraith barely surviving and tying up the Dwarf spearmen

DWARF TURN 6 NIGHT: 13"



for another round. Again, the Winds of Magic failed me, although the banner of Valaya was no more. A measly two power cards again. And yes, I should have charged with the Mummies. I know. I know. I know. But hey - my head was somewhere else. I summoned Skeletons again and made up for the losses of the combat round.

out a challenge towards Erlic, but once again Erlic sends a lackey to do his own dirty work. A Wraith materialises in front of Wavrich, but is swiftly chopped away by Dwarven fury. Erlic desperately fends for himself against the ferocious Dwarf Warriors, managing to kill two stout fellows, but spears thrusting like a porcupine in every direction takes out enough Skeletons to make a combat resolution difference of seven in favour of the



The stout Vampire Lord Erlic von Bachmann takes off into the mountains, where he sees another way to victory facilitated by alternative facts.

DWARF TURN 6

JONAS: Hah, some might say I am delusional at this point, but follow me now and see my plan unfold. I charged my Dwarf General right into the Skeleton Warriors and sent the Iron Breakers to take back the Observatory. It might seem desperate at first glance, but Dwarfs are inherently better fighters than Skeletons, and even a dog can bury a bone.

In the hand-to-hand combat Wavrich shouted

Dwarfs.

The Skeletons crumble to dust and Erlic runs to save his life, the 8" flight was just barely enough to get away as the Spear Dwarf stood right behind him at 7" pursuit. Wavrich is chased along at 4" making sure nothing comes up behind surprising anyone.

A last turn show of might if there ever was one!

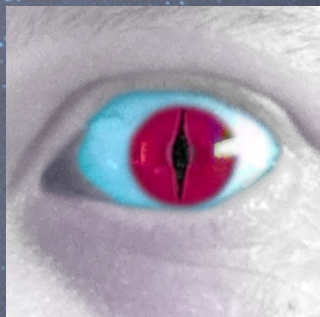
CONCLUSION



JONAS: What a battle. Even though we agreed the Dwarfs won this one it doesn't really feel like a victory. However, for the sake of the campaign it seems plausible that the Iron Breakers would clear out the Observatory and

with Erlic on the flight Wavrich did win back a bit of his honour. Next time I think some of the older Dwarfs from the clan must take over, Wavrich might still be too young to really manage a Dwarf army, not that there is much left of it anyway. I think the major flaw of my plan was to divide shooting and close combat oriented troops to each side of the observatory, it just seemed like such a good idea up front. Personally, I blame Wavrich of course. The Hammerers really disappointed me; I really thought those guys would be hard hitting and hard to kill. They probably are tough, but I might need to use them differently henceforth. I am not giving up on them. I think every unit in the list will have their place eventually and I am still learning what to do, when to do it and learning a lot about what not to do. I feel positive that I am on the right track and with some practise, I might even win a game fully

legitimate one day.



DR. THE VIKING:

Hmmm... I think I threw away the victory there at the end. I did not bother to look up the rules for chariots, and in doing so, I did not realise that they can actually turn on the spot. I also managed to

waste my last precious magic on summoning more Skeleton Warriors rather than Van Hel'ing the Mummies into close combat. In effect I was never using the Mummies nor the Ghouls in this battle. Also, the Skeleton Bowmen didn't really do much. That is a large chunk of points doing nothing, and still the Dwarfs only barely made it. It probably speaks a bit to the relative power level of the army books. In the end, it seems like a suitable end of Erlic von Bachmann's story that he is chased into the mountains because of tactical blunders. I have much enjoyed playing this mini-campaign with Jonas and I think it demonstrates nicely just how effective adding a layer of story untop of otherwise unconnected battles with yours friends can be. You actually do not need to make rules and add extra layers of campaign movement to make something enjoyable. Simple letting the games decided the story line is more than enough to make things come alive. In addition, when I say 'the end' this is of course not the end of Erlic. I am sure he will feature in many more games in the future and become a recurring villain.

After the vampire Erlic von Bachmann was defeated, he took flight into the mountains south of Zhidyryna. Both men and Dwarfs searched the area in the wake of the battle, but von Bachmann was not to be found. For years, travellers were ill advised to venture alone on the roads of the area and many who went against this advise were never seen again. The local shepherds claimed that on the darkest days maddening cries of insane laughter could be heard echoing among the peaks, but some said it was just their imagination letting the howling wind run amuck.