



BEST OF...

# BATTLES OF LEGEND

## THE BATTLE OF HEL FENN

A historical scenario by Andy Hall  
 Played by Matt Keefe, Rick Priestley, Tom Merrigan & Steve Hambrook. Battle report by Steve Hambrook

This is the second in a series of articles where we take a look at some of the legendary battles in the Warhammer world's history and set about re-enacting them on a truly epic scale. Big games aren't always easy to cater for, even for us here in Fanatic, and we had to improvise heavily from the Khemri army just to have enough troops for the Vampire Counts.

After the success of the first Battles of Legend in issue 12, where history was rewritten and Asavar Kul triumphed over Magnus the Pious, we thought it was time for another game and the release of the Vampire Counts gave us just the excuse we needed. The Battle of Hel Fenn immediately came to mind and so I set about writing the scenario that follows.

As before we also deal with the rather sticky issue of Special Characters. So just to be clear, the rules for Special Characters are intended for use with this scenario only and are in no way official. If you wish to use

them in your own games then that's fine but check with your opponent first, and don't even think about using them in a tournament.

### THE BATTLE OF HEL FENN – 2145

*The last and most dangerous of the von Carstein Vampire Counts is Manfred – a subtle, devious and treacherous individual. Some say he was awake when the von Carstein ring was stolen and laid a glamour upon the sentries to prevent them from noticing. While Konrad von Carstein ravaged the Empire in an attempt to emulate the victories of the great Vlad, Manfred laid low and studied the art of necromancy. It is said that he journeyed as far as the Kingdom of the Dead in search of the secrets of unlife, returning to Castle Drakenhof with a fund of dark lore... biding his time there until he felt sure of his power. After Konrad's death he became the undisputed ruler of the Sylvania hosts, but for a full decade he did nothing, letting the various contenders for the Imperial throne think that the Sylvania threat was over, giving them time to fall out among themselves, which they duly did.*

*Once the Empire was again racked by vicious civil war, Manfred deemed it time to strike. His Undead legions crossed the Sylvania border in the depths of winter and marched through the snows to Altdorf, putting any villagers they met to the sword and adding them to the ranks of their army. In the infamous Winter War of 2032 he defeated several hastily assembled Imperial*



armies which attempted to block his path. Victory followed victory and mere rumours of Mannfred's approach were enough to send villagers fleeing from their homes to freeze to death in the snow. His force reached Altdorf in late winter and he arrived to find the city battlements empty of defenders.

Triumph filled Mannfred. He looked set to take the Empire's greatest city when the Grand Theogonist Kurt III appeared on the battlements and began to recite the Great Spell of Unbinding from the Liber Mortis. Seeing his followers begin to crumble to dust, Mannfred ordered a hasty retreat. Although he was probably the most powerful of the Vampire Counts, his foes now seemed prepared to meet the Undead threat head on.

Mannfred marched his battered army down the Reik to Marienburg. He intended to lay siege to the port, but found his plan thwarted by the army of Marienburg and a company of High Elves who had recently established a trading colony there. Among the Elves was the High Mage Finreir whose awesome power turned the battle against Mannfred's force at the crucial moment. Mannfred settled down for a lengthy siege until his scouts revealed that an army from Altdorf was fast coming up behind him. He was forced to lift the siege and flee back the length of the Empire. So began a long game of cat and mouse, where neither side was entirely sure who was the cat. Mannfred's army would be whittled away by armies of the various Imperial states and then would replenish itself after a great victory.

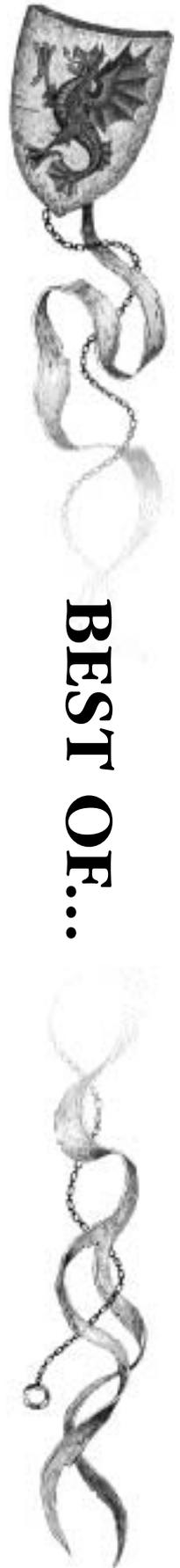
Mannfred was driven back into the Sylvania forests. Determined not to make the same mistake as they had before, the desperate nobles of the Empire swore a truce among themselves and slowly but surely began to scour the Sylvania woods. In this task they were aided by the Dwarfs and Elves. Now united, the citizens of the Empire were relentless. Eventually

Mannfred was brought to battle at Hel Fenn.

Located deep in Sylvania and forming part of a large foetid swamp. The three armies of Humans, Elves and Dwarfs finally cornered Mannfred's Undead horde. Like a cornered rat, Mannfred desperately committed his troops in a vain attempt to distract the allies while he made his escape on his Black Coach. However this time the combined forces of the Empire had a definite objective, that of killing Mannfred. With the swamp to his back and the Empire force ahead of him, Mannfred tried to cut along the line but was blocked one way by the Elves and then boxed in by the Dwarfs. Still he fought, an army of mortals would have surrendered rather than fight but not the Undead, they relentlessly battled, never



tiring and never showing fear. Mannfred was finally cut down by the Count of Stirland, his Runefang glowing as the Vampire was severed in two. Unfortunately, during the ensuing melee, his body was lost at the very edge of the great swamp and was never found. For his feat, Martin, Count of Stirland, claimed all of Sylvania and added it to his domains. Since no one else actually wanted to claim the accursed land, no one gainsaid him. Thus was ended the threat of the Vampire Counts, or so it seemed.



## Battles of Legend



# BEST OF...

Big Game Alert! This massive game of Warmaster will take you all day and maybe even all weekend to play, so make sure your wives and girlfriends have been warned.

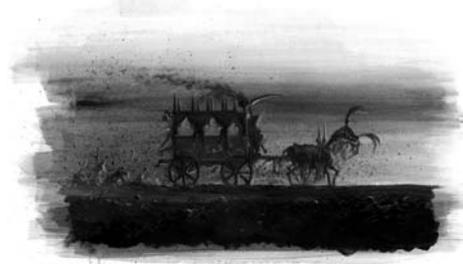
The Battle of Hel Fenn was fought on the edge of a large swamp. We join the battle as the Empire forces discover Mannfred's cornered Undead horde. However, the Elves and Dwarfs are still marching through the harsh forest and scrubland so are yet to appear.

### FORCES

The allies consist of 3,000 points of Empire chosen from the Empire army selector, no Steam Tanks maybe chosen, Count Martin of Stirland is the army General and is free with the scenario. The Dwarfs consist of 1,500 points chosen from the Dwarf army selector, a General must be chosen as normal. The High Elves consist of 1,500 points chosen from the High Elf army selector, a General must be chosen as normal. Characters may only command units in their own army and for all intents and purposes each of the allied armies count as separate armies for death of the General and casualties. The only exception to this is that magic items may not be duplicated throughout the armies.

The Undead force consists of 5,000 points chosen from the Vampire Counts trial army list (see the Warmaster Annual). Mannfred von Carstein is the army General and is free with the scenario.

Because there are three separate armies for the Empire alliance, the game will end upon any two of them withdrawing due to casualties or the death of their General.

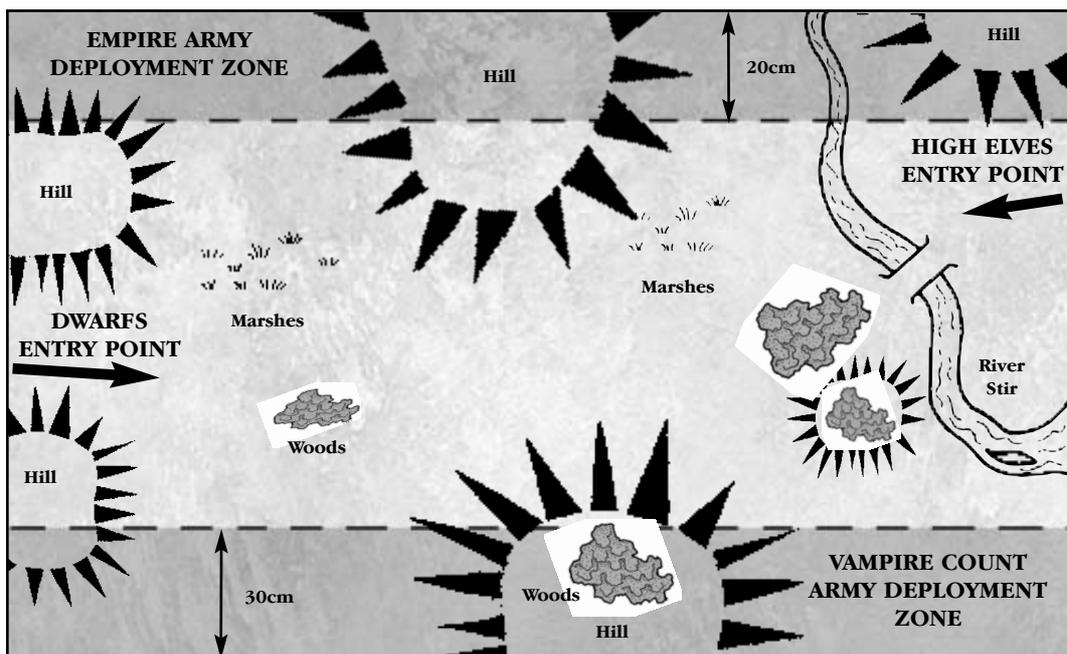


### SPECIAL RULES

The Empire and Undead forces deploy first as shown on the map. The Dwarf and Elf forces will arrive on their shown table edge on a 5+ in Turn 2, 4+ in Turn 3, 3+ in turn 4 and on a 2+ in Turn 5 (they may not arrive on the first turn). Roll for each force, (so it is quite possible for the Dwarf and Elven forces to arrive at different times). When an allied force arrives, place it on the board edge in any brigade/formations you wish and then move as normal. The allied force may not use its Initiative to charge on the turn it arrives, otherwise it may be ordered as normal.

### BONUS VICTORY POINTS

Normal victory conditions apply, however if the allies manage to kill Mannfred then they get an additional 500 Victory points.



## COUNT MARTIN ADDRESSES THE TROOPS...

So, here we are again with our second Battle of Legend. This time around it is for the forces of light that I shall be fighting and in an almost a total reversal of my role in the Battle at the Gates of Kislev from issue 12. I shall attempt to fill the boots of Martin, the Elector Count of Stirland, the Empire Hero who finally put the Vampire Lord Mannfred von Carstein to rest at the end of the Wars of the Vampire Counts. In this scenario it is I that shall be on the defensive (at least initially – until my reinforcements arrive!) and will be facing off against 5,000 points of Vampire Counts troops with my 3,000 points of Empire troops. New boy Matt Keefe, editor of *Battlefleet Gothic* and *Necromunda* magazines, will take up the marshal's baton for both the High Elf and Dwarf armies as reinforcements, which should prove interesting! Arrayed against us is the tactical might of Rick Priestley and the author of the Vampire Counts army list Tom Merrigan – we would have our work cut out for us.

Mmm... the Empire is one of the better defensive armies in Warmaster, with fairly decent firepower and access to lots of cheap troops. So, bearing in mind how cheap most of the troops are in the Vampire Counts army, I was going to have to make some wise choices. In a 3,000 point army, my compulsory choices are six units of Halberdiers and six units of Crossbowmen. To this starting choice I would add another four units of Halberdiers to give me a nice chunk of ten units which would act as the backbone of my army. Four stands of Skirmishers would help bolster some of my Halberdier units and two units of Flagellants would prove most adequate shock troops, especially against the Undead.

With the mainstay of my infantry sorted I decided that a strong missile arm of the army was necessary if I was to try to hold the Vampire Counts army back for as long as possible. I would have little to worry about from enemy fire for this is negligible from the Vampire Counts army. I already had six units of Crossbowmen to which I added four units of Handgunners who with their -1 save modifier would be able to deal with any Grave Guard or Grave Knights that came their way. Additionally, what Empire army would be complete without a battery or two of smoke and shrapnel belching

Cannons! I decided to go for the maximum and purchased three batteries of Cannon and a couple of Helblasters – if the Undead wanted to get to my battle lines they would have to pay dearly!

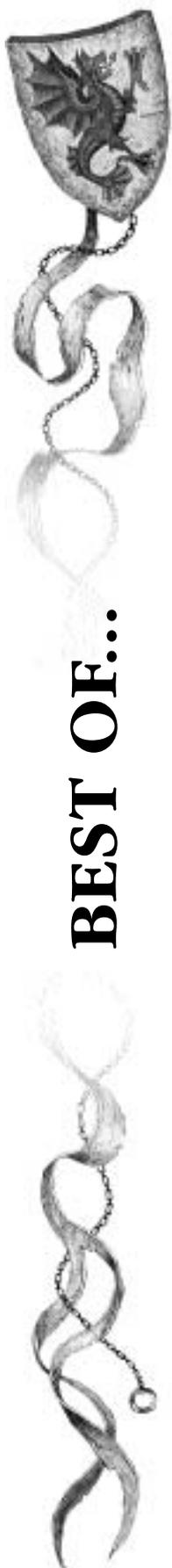
I had a strong, defensive battle line but this was far too static – what would happen if the enemy broke through and threatened my rear or flanks? I needed some cavalry, to be held in reserve and committed only when the enemy broke through the battle lines. Four units of Knights supported by four units of Pistoliers would be able to handle any forays through my lines more than satisfactorily and would hopefully be able to chase away any of those annoying Fell Bats that might disrupt my Command tests.

Finally, I needed some characters to lead my troops and inspire courage when the going got tough. I already had the General sorted – the Elector Count was free with this scenario. To this I added a couple of Heroes, one of which I mounted on a Griffon (you never know when the *terror* nullifying effect it has may be needed) and equipped with a *Sword of Might* (four Attacks is always handy too!). Some magic wouldn't go amiss either and so I bought a couple of Wizards, equipping one with the almost obligatory *Scroll of Dispelling* and the other with the *Staff of Spellbinding*, especially for Mannfred.



The army done – what was the plan? Simple really, I had to hold out until the High Elves and Dwarfs arrived on the Undead flanks and then together we could destroy them. I decided to form two battle lines, the first entirely comprised of missile troops with the artillery – these would die, yes, but before that they could march out to range and pound the Undead, hopefully disrupting their attack. Immediately behind the expendable missile troops would be four brigades of infantry – Halberdiers, Flagellants and Skirmishers. This second line would have the hard job of holding the enemy and would have to make the best use of the hills and defended status. The two brigades of cavalry would serve as my reserve and plug any gaps that appeared in the second line – although hopefully by then the reinforcements would appear and send the Undead back to hell! – Steve





## SPECIAL CHARACTERS

Troops	Type	Attack	Hits	Armour	Command	Unit Size	Points	Min/Max	Special
Count Manfred von Carstein	General	+3*	-	-	9	1	-	1	*1
Elector Count of Stirland	General	+2	-	-	9	1	-	1	*2

### Special Rules

**1. Master Vampire.** Manfred has the Von Carstein Bloodline power (page 65 of the Warmaster Annual). Manfred rides to battle mounted in his Black Coach and so causes *terror* and has +1 Attack (this is already included in his profile). Manfred may re-roll one failed spell casting attempt during the game.

**2. A Man called Martin.** Martin carries a Runefang which allows him to re-roll any failed attacks in close combat.

### Undead Horde of Manfred von Carstein

#### Left flank division

- 3 Vampires 240 pts
- 2 Necromancers 90 pts
- 8 units of Zombies 240 pts
- 8 units of Skeletons 240 pts
- 4 units of Grave Guard 240 pts

#### Centre division

- *Count Manfred von Carstein* – General, on Black Coach Free
- 3 Vampires 240 pts
- 1 Necromancer with a Scroll of Dispelling 65 pts
- 8 units of Zombies 240 pts
- 12 units of Skeletons 360 pts
- 6 units of Grave Guard 360 pts
- 6 units of Dire Wolves 360 pts
- 4 units of Fell Bats 260 pts
- 2 units of Ethereal Host 240 pts

#### Right flank division

- 3 Vampires 240 pts
- 2 Necromancers 90 pts
- 6 units of Ghouls 210 pts
- 11 units of Grave Knights 1,210 pts
- 1 units of Fell Bats 65 pts

Total – 4,990 pts

## Empire Army of Stirland

### Left flank division

- *Captain Steinbeck* – Hero 80 pts
- *High Priest of Morr* – Wizard with Scroll of Dispelling 65 pts
- 2 units of Knights (one unit has a Battle Banner) 270 pts
- 2 units of Pistoliers 190 pts
- 2 units of Halberdiers 90 pts
- 3 units of Crossbowmen 220 pts
- 1 Helblaster 50 pts

### Centre division

- *Martin, Elector Count of Stirland* – General Free
- *Grand Theogonist* – Wizard with Staff of Binding 75 pts
- 6 units of Halberdiers 270 pts
- 2 units of Flagellants 140 pts
- 2 units of Handgunners 130 pts
- 2 batteries of Cannon 170 pts

### Right flank division

- *Marschall Reiner* – Hero mounted on Griffon with Sword of Might 170 pts
- 2 units of Knights (one unit has a Banner of Shielding) 270 pts
- 2 units of Pistoliers 190 pts
- 2 units of Halberdiers with Skirmishers 140 pts
- 3 units of Crossbowmen 220 pts
- 2 units of Handgunners 130 pts
- 1 Helblaster 50 pts
- 1 battery of Cannon 85 pts

Total – 3,005 pts

## The Dwarf Throng of Karak Kadrin

- *King Baldrok* – General 155 pts
  - *Durgrim* – Runesmith with Anvil of Doom 100 pts
  - *Lokri* – Hero 80 pts
  - 5 units of Dwarf Warriors 550 pts
  - 2 units of Rangers 220 pts
  - 2 units of Troll Slayers 160 pts
  - 1 battery of Cannon 90 pts
  - 1 Flame Cannon 50 pts
  - 1 Gyrocopter 75 pts
- 1,480 pts

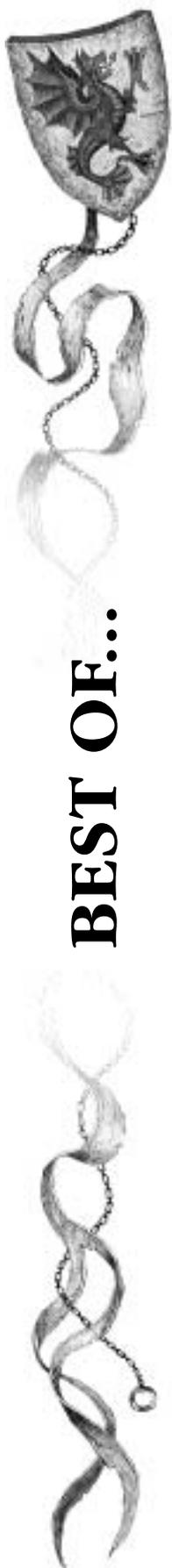
## The Elven Army of Marienburg

- *Prince Araldir* – General 155 pts
- *Malendis* – Hero mounted on Giant Eagle 100 pts
- *Finreir* – Wizard 85 pts
- 2 units of Spearmen 120 pts
- 1 unit of Archers 75 pts
- 4 units of Silver Helms 440 pts
- 3 units of Chariots 285 pts
- 2 units of Reavers 200 pts

Total – 1,460 pts



BEST OF...



BEST OF...

**WISE WORDS FROM THE ALLIES**

When Steve first asked me to play this battle report, I thought – bugger! I'm going to have to write one of those pointless introductions that always start off with "When Steve asked me to play this battle report...". Instead of pretentiously claiming some guiding principle for my army selection, I'll take this opportunity to mention one of the common problems we encounter whilst playing battle reports. Contrary to popular belief of some kind of happy hunting ground of painted miniatures here at GW HQ, we actually in fact tend to suffer from the fact that our armies are designed for photography rather than actually using in games. This often means that we have only one or two painted examples of even the most common troop types in some armies. Inevitably, this has the effect of making army selection a little difficult. Our dastardly opponents decided to get around this by using substitute figures (such as the Khemri and Chaos models you might notice in a few of the battle shots), but I didn't really want to do this since I would invariably forget which models represented what. So it was that the Dwarf army pretty much chooses itself, as I was basically forced to pick everything we had in the cabinet to make it up to the requisite 1,500 points.

The High Elves were less of a problem, since this is probably the most extensive Warmaster army we have in the building. This at least would allow me some choice, and some tactical options for the battle ahead. Since I had no way of knowing on which turn the Elves would enter the battle, speed and versatility would be of the essence. If they arrived late they would potentially need to cover ground very quickly to reach the fighting, and would also be entering into an uncertain situation. With this in mind, I decided to take the maximum number of chariot units, the minimum required amount of infantry and spend the rest of my points on as many units of cavalry as possible – Matt.

**DARK PLANS OF A VAMPIRE...**

I have realised from using the Vampire Counts army on numerous occasions that it is important to take advantage of the elite units of Grave Knights and Grave Guard. Skeletons and Zombies are good for harassing the enemy and soaking up casualties, but it is your elite units that will

cause the damage that will break your opponent's force. In this light I chose to take only the minimum number of Skeletons and Zombies required and as many units of Grave Knights and Grave Guard as I could find models for.

Lastly, we added some Dire Wolves to support the cavalry and units of Ghouls and Ethereal Host to harass the enemy where they could. As it would turn out, the minimum number of Skeleton and Zombie units combined with the rest of the force was enough to ensure that the Vampire Count army of Mannfred von Carstein would still outnumber the combined Empire, Dwarf and High Elf alliance.

When it came to setting up, things were relatively straightforward. We had so many units that it was simply a case of putting them down where we had room. In the end we covered pretty much the entire deployment zone with an exceptionally large force. We were however, able to make some tactical decisions.

Rick and I knew that the Dwarfs would be arriving to the left of our force and the High Elves to the right, so we were able to arrange our army in order to defend against their arrival. On the right we placed six units of Ghouls who would move into the woods to their right and their front. On the right we also placed all our cavalry. The aim was for the fast moving cavalry to push forward and break the Empire lines before wheeling to face the inevitable High Elf attack.

On the left were placed the majority of the Skeletons in the force. Their job was to move forward onto the hill in front of their position and defend it against the Dwarfs when they arrived. The Dwarfs only had a narrow area from which to assault our force and it involved taking the hill that we hoped to occupy. Although Skeletons are poor fighters we hoped that their numbers, combined with their defended position, would be enough to waylay and even defeat the enemy.

In the centre of the battlefield were placed the elite Grave Guard, along with the rest of the army. These would push forward as best as possible and help support the cavalry charge on the Empire position. With a little luck our superior numbers would allow us to overwhelm the Empire army before their allies arrived on the battlefield – Tom.

### DEPLOYMENT

Because both armies were so large, especially the Undead army, that deployment was carried out simultaneously by brigade. The Empire army deployed with both regiments of cavalry on the wings and the mainstay of regiments upon the large hill just left of the centre. On the left flank between the main hill and the cavalry brigade, a Helblaster gun and two units of Crossbowmen were deployed with a brigade consisting of another unit of Crossbowmen and two units of Halberdiers deployed behind in reserve. The Empire Hero Captain Steinbeck and the High Priest of Morr commanded the Empire left flank. In the centre, upon the big hill, a firing line

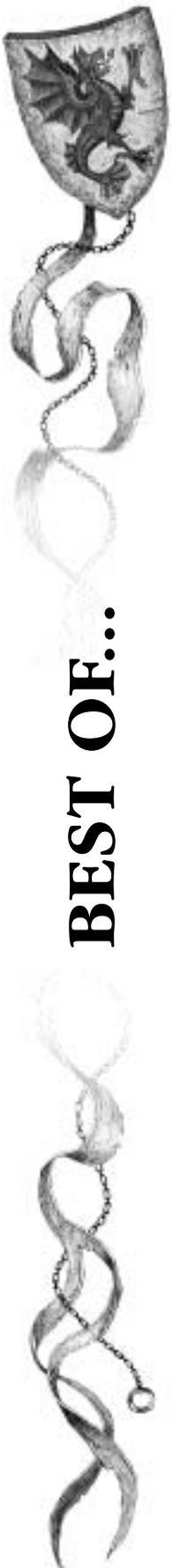
of two batteries of Cannon and two units of Handgunners was deployed, with two large brigades consisting of a unit of Flagellants and three units of Halberdiers apiece immediately behind in reserve. The Empire centre was commanded by the Elector Count himself and the Grand Theogonist. The Empire right flank was deliberately weak and consisted of a firing line of a battery of Cannon, a Helblaster and two units of Handgunners. This was supported by a brigade of two units of Halberdiers with skirmishers and a unit of Crossbowmen, two units of Crossbowmen and the right flank cavalry brigade. The Empire Hero Marschall Reiner, mounted on his Griffon commanded the right flank.



*The battlefield after deployment.*



**BEST OF...**



*Matt & Steve ponder Rick's latest anecdote...*

The vast Undead horde of Manfred von Carstein deployed opposite the army of Stirland, dwarfing the army of the humans. Opposite the Empire left flank, two large brigades of Ghouls were deployed along with all of the Grave Knights, eleven regiments in all. These were supported by a unit of Fell Bats. The Undead army centre was so massive that it filled the entire deployment zone! In the Undead army centre from right to left were: two brigades of Zombies supported by six units of Dire

Wolves and a brigade of Grave Guard led by an Ethereal Host. Then there were three brigades of Skeletons supported by four units of Fell Bats and finally another brigade of Zombies supported by a brigade of Skeletons. The Undead left flank was weakest and comprised two brigades of Zombies, two brigades of Skeletons and a brigade of Grave Guard. His unholy highness Count Manfred von Carstein took up position in his dread Black Coach just to the left of the Undead army centre.

### **Empire Turn 1**

The sight of such a gargantuan horde of the living dead must have had a debilitating effect on the courage of the Empire troops, as many regiments were reluctant to take up positions in the battle lines. The cavalry brigade on the Empire left flank resolutely marched to a forward position between the woods and the marshes covering the left flank. Meanwhile, on the right flank, the firing line of two units of Handgunners, a Helblaster and a battery of Cannons advanced slowly to a better firing position. These were the only units to move at the opening of the battle and enraged officers and sergeants had to march up and down the ranks of the other units shouting a mixture of threats and encouragement to their scared soldiers.



*Turn 1 - 'Porker' Hambrook moves the Empire army.*

### **Undead Turn 1**

With much of the Empire army dithering and procrastinating, Manfred smiled and ordered his Undead legions forward, he would exploit their ultimate weakness – their fear. The Undead army advanced all along the front apart from the Undead left flank and a brigade of Zombies in the centre which just shuffled around on the spot as their commanders struggled to

urge them forward. The two brigades of Ghouls on the Undead right flank scampered down to the dense woods near the Wolf's Tongue tributary of the great River Stir to await the impending arrival of the High Elves and impede their advance. The units of Dire Wolves moved with supernatural speed and formed a screen in front of the advancing Grave Knights of the right flank obscuring them from the view of the Empire gunners on the central hill.

### Empire Turn 2

With the rapid advance of the Undead horde, both the common Empire soldier and his noble officer began to sweat with trepidation. Emboldened by the fearless advance of their cavalry the Empire left flank marched into the dank marshes ahead of them, taking up positions amongst the twisted trees and foetid pools. With a spurious succession of Command tests, the Helblaster on the left flank sped across the battlefield to set up sacrificially before the cavalry brigade. The Empire army centre, consisting of two units of Handgunners, two batteries of Cannon and two brigades of Halberdiers and Flagellants, advanced to the crest of the big central hill and commenced firing. Meanwhile on the right flank, two units of Crossbowmen advanced into the quagmire and the right flank cavalry brigade, led by two units of Pistoliers, advanced close to the enemy, unleashing a volley of shot that had little effect on the Undead. In time honoured tradition, the Dwarfs arrived early and marched upon the right flank of the battlefield. Much of the firing from the Empire Cannons was at long range and ineffective but a unit of Dire Wolves was still wiped out.



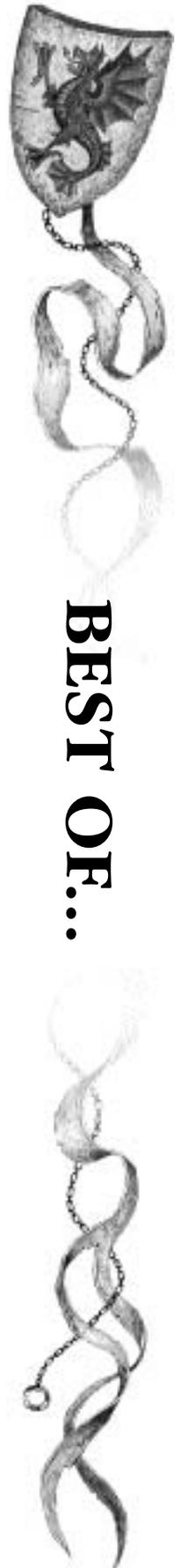
*Rick wishes he'd left his anecdotes at home!*

### Undead Turn 2

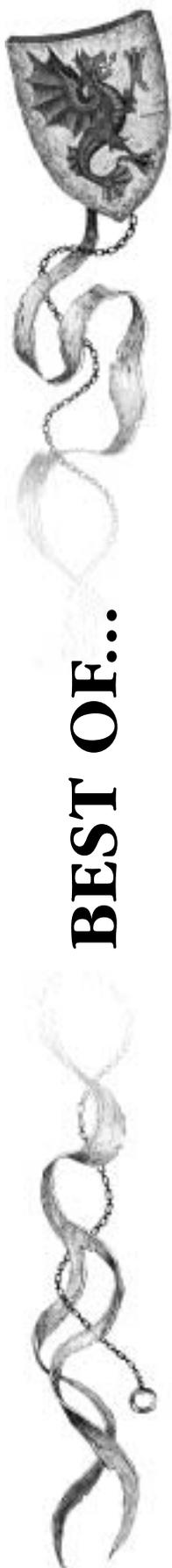
With the Dwarfs already on the field Manfred knew that he had to move quickly to ensure victory. On the Undead right flank, a single unit of Dire Wolves supported by a unit of Grave Knights charged the Helblaster and, despite taking heavy casualties, destroyed it with ease and advanced straight into a hail of fire from the Pistoliers. In the ensuing combat both units were pushed back and destroyed but did manage to reduce a unit of Pistoliers to a



*Turn 1 – The Undead centre surges forward.*



**BEST OF...**



*The battlefield after turn 1.*

single stand, which then retreated behind the marsh. The massed ranks of Grave Knights (seven units in all) advanced to within charge range of the Empire troops upon the central hill whilst a unit of Dire Wolves and three units of Grave Knights protected their flanks from the impending charge of the Empire cavalry.

In the centre, a brigade of Grave Guard, two units of Dire Wolves with a brigade of Zombies in support charged the firing line on the Empire's right flank destroying it utterly for the loss of only a few stands of troops. With their infantry support wiped out the Empire cavalry on the right flank were looking vulnerable stuck so close to the enemy lines. Four units of Fell Bats took to the air and then descended behind the Empire cavalry brigade, cutting off its line of retreat whilst a brigade of Skeletons charged them to the front. A Necromancer attempted to cast *Vanbel's Danse*

*Macabre* upon the brigade of Zombies that were skulking in the small clump of woods to the Empire cavalry's flank but the magic was dissipated with a flash as the Grand Theogonist used his *Scroll of Dispelling*. This was to prove the saviour of the cavalry as they soundly beat the Skeletons in combat, destroying a unit and a stand for no loss.

On the Undead left flank Manfred ordered his officers to try to contain the Dwarf advance whilst he concentrated his main forces on the Empire battle line. A brigade of Zombies clashed with a brigade of Dwarf Warriors but was decimated for the loss of only a few stands of Dwarfs. The Undead host had started taking losses but was drawing inextricably closer to the thin Empire battle line.

### Empire Turn 3

With a grim countenance Matt rolled the dice for the High Elf reinforcements. He had been lucky the previous turn with the timely arrival of the Dwarfs – if the Elves were to arrive now it would relieve the pressure from the weary Empire army. The Empire

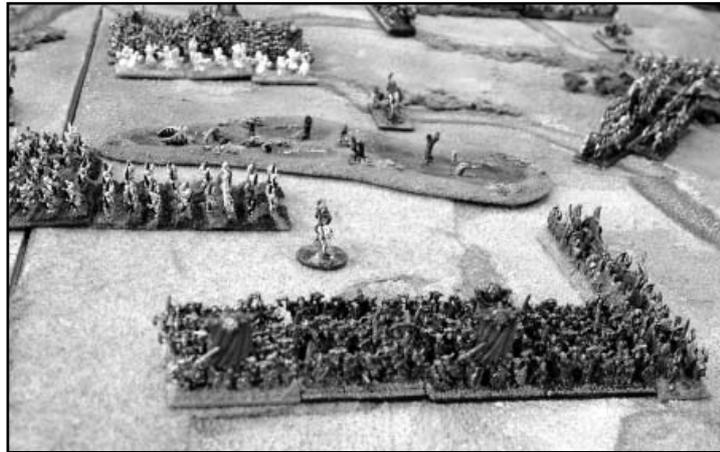


*Turn 2 – The Dwarfs arrive nice & early.*

army centre was staring down the hill at a massive brigade of Grave Knights and there was much buttock clenching! A '4' was needed – Matt rolled a '3'... Rick commented that the Elves were still doing their hair – I cannot write what we said! Knowing that the Empire centre was in trouble the Pistoliers and a unit of Knights on the left flank charged, using Initiative, into the Grave Knights and Dire Wolves that were screening the massive unit of Knights. In this endeavour they were aided by the Imperial Hero, Marschall Reiner, on his Griffon. Another unit of Knights that were just out of Initiative range were ordered to charge home also but the order was blundered and they decided it was prudent to retire to safety! An insanely brave unit of Crossbowmen were ordered from the relative safety of the marsh onto the lower slopes of the central hill in an effort to hold up the Grave Knights should they come charging up the hill.

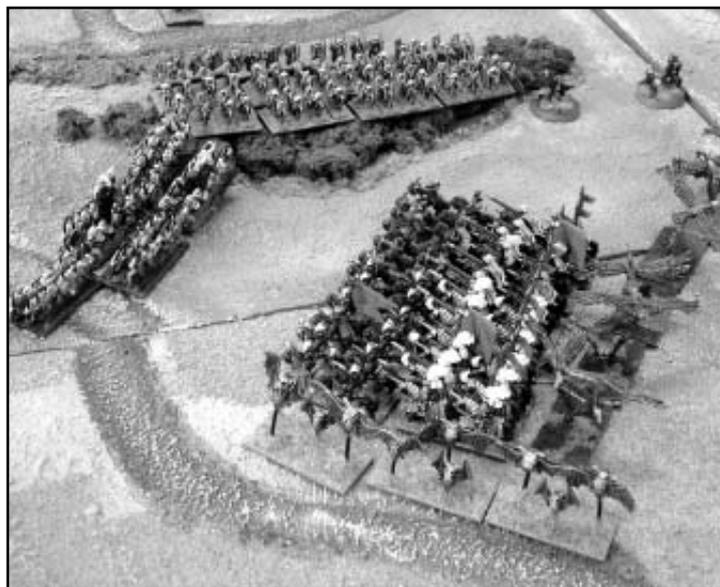
On the Empire right flank the cavalry brigade found itself almost surrounded and cut off from the few troops that remained there. This was because the brigade of Halberdiers and Crossbowmen that were supporting the now destroyed missile troops were ordered onto the slopes of the central hill to defend its flank. There was only one thing the cavalry could do – charge and take as many of the foul Undead with them. In the meantime the Dwarf brigades were still ploughing their way through the Undead left flank units like a knife through butter as the two units of Troll Slayers got stuck in charging a brigade of Grave Guard.

With a roar like thunder, the Empire firing line on the central hill poured fire into the massed ranks of Grave Knights that were



**Turn 2 – The Undead smash the Empire's right flank.**

squaring up to charge. Both the Grand Theogonist and High Priest of Morr attempted to cast balls of fire to drive the enemy away but failed. A few units were driven back out of alignment with their brigades and several stands were lost, although this had little effect to the fighting force that was arrayed before the Empire troops. The Empire cavalry that charged on the left flank managed to destroy two units of Grave Knights and a unit of Dire Wolves but were so badly mauled in the process



**Turn 2 – Fell Bats surround the Empire cavalry.**

that they were reduced to single stand units and left vulnerable to counter-attack. On the Empire right flank, the cavalry fared well and destroyed several units of Skeletons and drove back a unit of Fell Bats for the



**BEST OF...**



*The battlefield after turn 3*

loss of only a couple of stands of Pistoliers. The Empire alliance was still holding out but for how long was anybody's guess!

#### **Undead Turn 3**

Finally, the Grave Knights on the Undead right flank charged. Two units charged the tattered remains of the Empire cavalry. Two units charged the Crossbowmen that were waiting on the lower slopes of the central hill whilst a further unit charged the Cannon batteries on the brow of the hill. This attack was supported by a brigade of Zombies that charged in against the Handgunners that were in support of the Cannons. Spectacularly, the brigade of Grave Guard that had performed so well against the firing line of the Empire right flank refused to move and so slowed the whole assault. The Dire Wolves in the centre also refused to move but another brigade of Zombies moved up the centre in support of the stationary Grave Guard in preparation for a joint assault. The remaining brigades of the Undead left flank consolidated and advanced towards the mighty Dwarf army that was still posing a threat to Manfred's plans. The remaining Skeleton units in the centre assaulted the Empire cavalry on the Undead left flank. Many spells were

attempted, mainly *Raise Dead*, but the Dwarf Runesmith proved his worth and dispelled any that were initially successful.

In the ensuing close combat, the Grave Knights slaughtered the single stands remaining from the Pistoliers and Knights of the Empire left flank, killing Marschall Reiner in the process. With a deafening roar and blinding flash, the Empire batteries on the central hill unleashed their grapeshot upon the charging Grave Knights, taking many down. Likewise, the Handgunner units waited until the last minute before pouring a devastating volley into their adversaries. Charging infantry in defended status is never an easy prospect and this wasn't helped by Rick's unlucky dice rolls in the close combat. Somehow

the Empire defenders managed to drive the Grave Knights and Zombies back down the hill only losing a single gun in the process.

In the centre the fighting was bloody and indecisive, a few stands of Skeletons were lost the Empire cavalry were slowly getting whittled away and one unit of Empire Knights was *Confused* when a unit of Pistoliers were driven back into them.

#### **Empire Turn 4**

So far the valiant Empire defenders had managed to hold out against repeated attacks from the Undead army. The right flank, however, had folded leaving only a couple of stranded units of Crossbowmen firing ineffectually from a marsh and the cavalry in danger of being swamped and destroyed. The Dwarfs had almost smashed Manfred's left flank and had drawn away precious units that could have been used to assault the Empire battle line but at a cost. The army of Manfred Von Carstein had suffered horrific losses but both the Empire army of the Stir and their Dwarf allies were close to withdrawing. The battle was now on a knife-edge – what the Empire needed above all else was the intervention of their High Elf allies. Matt took up the dice; all he

needed was a '3'. He rolled a '2' – there was much swearing from the alliance and much laughing from the Undead players. Oh dear... how on earth could we hold out for another turn? Much of the Empire army consolidated with the brigade of Halberdiers swinging around and ascending the slope of the central hill defending the flank (better to lose support from units behind and gain defended status I thought). Both the Empire cavalry and the Dwarfs on the right flank consolidated in preparation for charges next turn.

#### Undead Turn 4

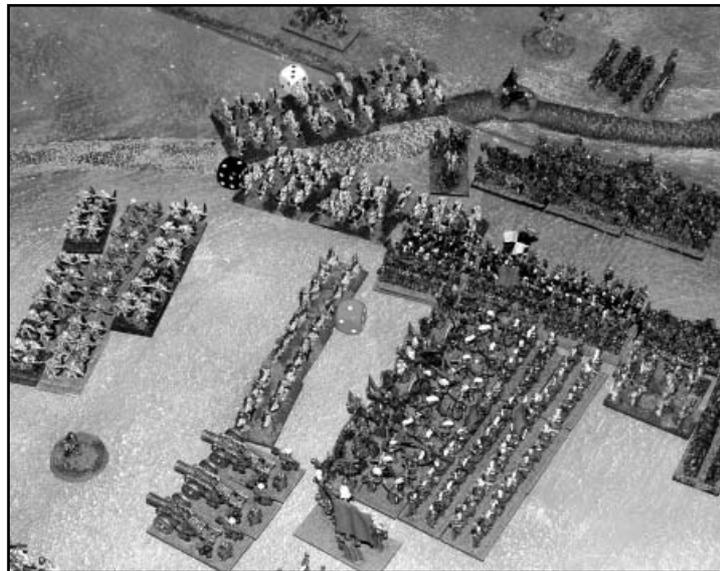
Mannfred was aware that all would be lost should the High Elf allies arrive in the next turn and so redoubled his efforts to crush the Empire. Again the Grave Knights charged the Crossbowmen that were still miraculously holding the lower slopes of the central hill and this time destroyed them. The brigade of Skeletons on the Undead left flank charged the depleted Dwarf units that were still holding out. In a flurry of bad rolls, the Undead centre ground to a halt and refused to move, much to Mannfred's dismay. It proved to be the Undead side's worst turn for magic as well, as either all of their spells (mainly *Raise Dead* and *Vanbel's Danse Macabre*) failed to cast or were dispelled by the Dwarf Runesmith.

#### Empire Turn 5

With a blare of trumpets accompanied by a "where the bloody hell have you been?" the High Elves finally joined the fray as Matt managed to score the much needed '2'. In typical scene stealing-fashion, a brigade of two units of Silver Helms and two units of Chariots thundered across the ford and smashed into three units of Grave Guard on the Undead right flank. These were destroyed for the loss of only two stands of Silver Helms. The Empire firing from the central hill was relatively ineffective and the cavalry charged some Skeletons on the right flank but fought to a stalemate.

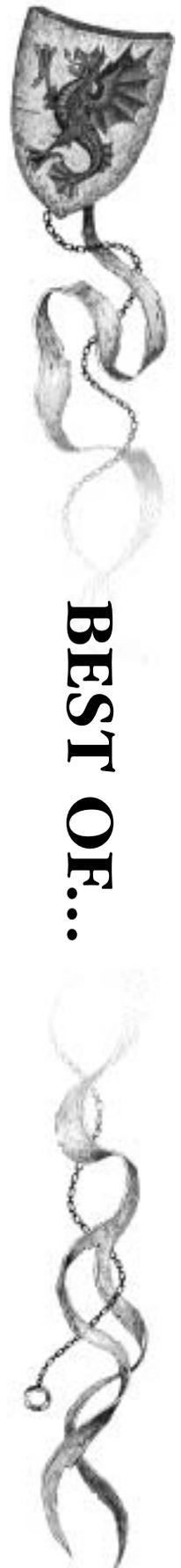
#### Undead Turn 5

For the first time in the battle, the odds were now stacked against the Undead. If they could break about six units then they would force the Empire army to withdraw and probably win the game. Rick and Tom, the Undead players, scoured the battlefield for easy kills amongst the Empire army. Again, the remaining Grave Knights charged the Handgunners on the hill that had proved so important to the Empire army's survival. A unit of Dire Wolves supported by Skeletons charged the depleted units of Empire cavalry on the Undead left flank. The brigade of Grave Guard that had been so instrumental in the earlier stages in the battle by dividing the Empire army in two finally got on the move again. The Grave Guard, supported by Zombies, charged the brigade of Halberdiers holding the flank of the central hill. On the Undead left flank the Skeletons charged the remaining Dwarf units. A lone unit of Fell Bats charged the solitary stand of Pistoliers who were skulking behind the marsh on the Empire left flank.



*Turn 5 – Savage fighting around the central hill*

In the ensuing combat the Dwarf Troll Slayers were decimated, along with some more Skeletons and with that the shattered Dwarf army retired from the field. All the Undead had to do now was break the Empire army and they would win the battle. The Grave Guard and Zombies assaulting the central hill made some gains, destroying the Crossbowmen and pushing back the



## Battles of Legend

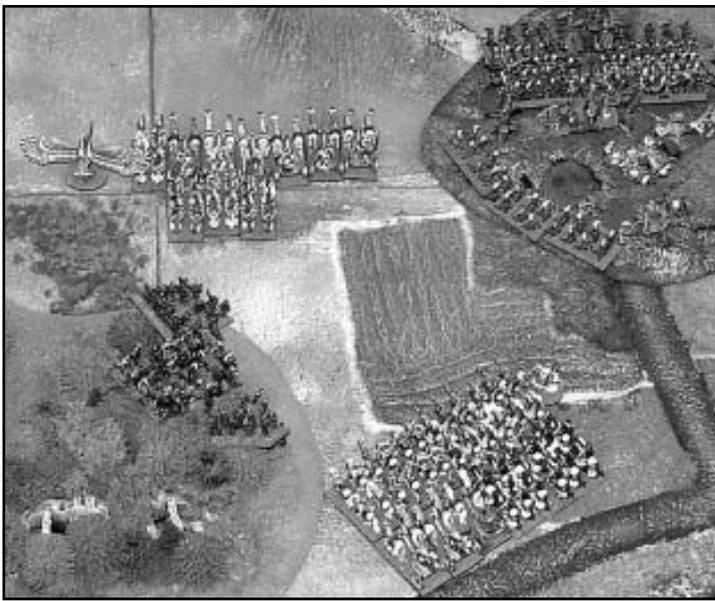


# BEST OF...



defending Halberdiers but the Empire line still held. The Grave Knights destroyed the weary Handgunners on the hill and careered headlong into the brigade of Empire infantry directly behind them. After a brief fight with some Flagellants the Grave Knights were again pushed back down the hill. Proving their worth in the battle, the beleaguered cavalry on the Empire right flank managed to beat off the combined attacks from the Skeletons and Dire Wolves. Finally, the Fell Bats destroyed the single stand of Pistoliers behind the marsh, bringing the Empire army dangerously close to its Break point.

Before anything else the Flagellants were obliged to charge – they were just itching to taste some of the action! Howling and whooping madly these sons of Sigmar charged down the hill into their aggressors, the weakened Grave Knights. With a “Hurrah!” the surviving Handgunners charged into the Zombies assaulting the hill which allowed the unit of Flagellants behind them to charge the Zombie regiment that was starting to threaten the Empire guns. Two units of Halberdiers that had been battered and pushed back by the Grave Guard levelled their halberds and charged the hated foe.



*Turn 5 – The Elves make their dramatic entrance.*

### Empire Turn 6

The Dwarfs had been forced to withdraw and the Empire defensive ring upon the strategic central hill was starting to crumble but now it was the allies' turn to counter attack. Just as their arrival had been a dramatic turning point in the battle, this turn the High Elves spectacularly failed almost all of their Command tests! Only the Elven infantry far away on the Empire left flank and behind the Undead lines managed to attack the Ghouls that were waiting for them amidst the woods. With the haughty Elven cavalry and chariots apparently taking a bit of a breather and most likely celebrating their earlier success this left the hard work down to the war-weary Empire troops. This time it was for Matt and Steve to survey the battlefield and look for easy pickings to assure victory.

On the extreme of the Empire left flank the Knights, who had unceremoniously sat out the entire battle after blundering and retreating in Turn 2, finally found their courage and after a couple of Command tests managed to charge the Fell Bats in the army's rear. The overworked Pistoliers from the Empire right flank passed a couple of Command tests and charged into the rear of a depleted unit of Grave Guard supporting the main attack on the hill. Count Martin, the Empire General, ordered the remains of the Halberdier brigade to wheel round and protect the flanks of the hill which were fast becoming overrun.

Both magic and artillery fire was ineffective this turn with only a few hits being scored. The battle would now be decided in the close combat. The High Elf infantry, resplendent in their highly decorative uniforms received a bit of a 'bloody nose' from the Ghouls in the woods and were pushed back. The Knight's charge was so effective against the Fell Bats that they were destroyed in a single round of combat. They then fell back (or forward as the case may be!) onto the hill in a supporting position for the Empire infantry. The Pistoliers failed to destroy the Grave Guard and fell back in preparation for another charge.

All that remained was the decisive fight on the hill. The first unit of Flagellants destroyed the Grave Knights and fell back to the Halberdier brigade. The second unit of

Flagellants had similar success and destroyed a couple of units of Zombies before falling back after a stalemate. The combined attacks from the Handgunners and Halberdiers shattered the Zombie brigade that was assaulting the hill and destroyed a unit of Grave Guard also. This broke the back of the Undead horde and Manfred was forced to concede and withdraw, leaving the allies in possession of the field.



**Turn 6 – The Empire is victorious!**

#### VICTORY POINTS

**Empire Alliance – 2,218**

**Vampire Counts – 1,810**

#### LAYING THE DEAD TO REST...

It's been emotional – that's for sure! Lining up my army across from what had to be the biggest Undead horde I've ever seen was demoralising and watching them inexorably shamble across the battlefield to get me was truly frightening. Waiting for those bloomin' Elves to turn up certainly left me needing a change of underwear on many occasions! Despite all of this it seems that my master plan worked – well, more or less. Missile fire against Undead is pretty useless on the whole unless you concentrate your firepower and strip units of stands. My firing did little to halt the advance of the Undead – they don't get *Confused*, the main bonus of shooting, and so rarely give way to units that are driven back. The early intervention of the Dwarfs and the defensive position on the hill definitely saved my bacon! Initially, it was surprising to see the Grave Knights have such a hard time shifting the infantry from the hill but then again *Defended* infantry with a lot of stand & fire are tough little blighters.

I committed the cavalry far too early as has been seen but they fared rather well, especially the cavalry brigade on the right flank. Tom tried to crush the cavalry in a neat box of units so that they'd have nowhere to retreat but they burst out and gave his Skeleton and Zombie units an utter kicking. Again, a very close game and thoroughly enjoyable but Manfred

escaped my clutches no doubt to hide away and plan his revenge. – Steve

#### BACK TO THE GRAVE...

Well it didn't all go perfectly to plan, but it was a very close fight. Unfortunately, the Dwarfs arrived on the alliance's second turn before the Skeletons had a chance to get into position on the hill. This meant that we were constantly on the back foot on the left flank for the entirety of the battle. In the end, all we could do was continually throw units against the Dwarfs until we broke them. Although the Dwarfs were finally driven from the battlefield the cost was higher than we had hoped. Our left flank was in disarray and in no position to rejoin the rest of the fight. We had also lost more units than we had originally hoped, bringing us close to our own Break point.

On the right flank we had better luck with the High Elf force not arriving until the second to last turn of the game. This gave us enough time to get our cavalry and elite infantry into position to charge the Empire's position on the central hill. Their defended position proved too strong though and each time we attacked, our force was thrown back, only to try and assault in the next turn. By the time we started to make any headway, the High Elf cavalry arrived and assaulted our flank, ruining any chance of a victory.

In the end we were only two units away from breaking the Empire and winning. In all it was a terrific game that I would recommend to anyone if they get the chance. Just the sheer spectacle of the Vampire Count force was a sight to be seen –Tom.

