

THE HORUS HERESY®

EXEMPLARY BATTLES OF THE AGE OF DARKNESS

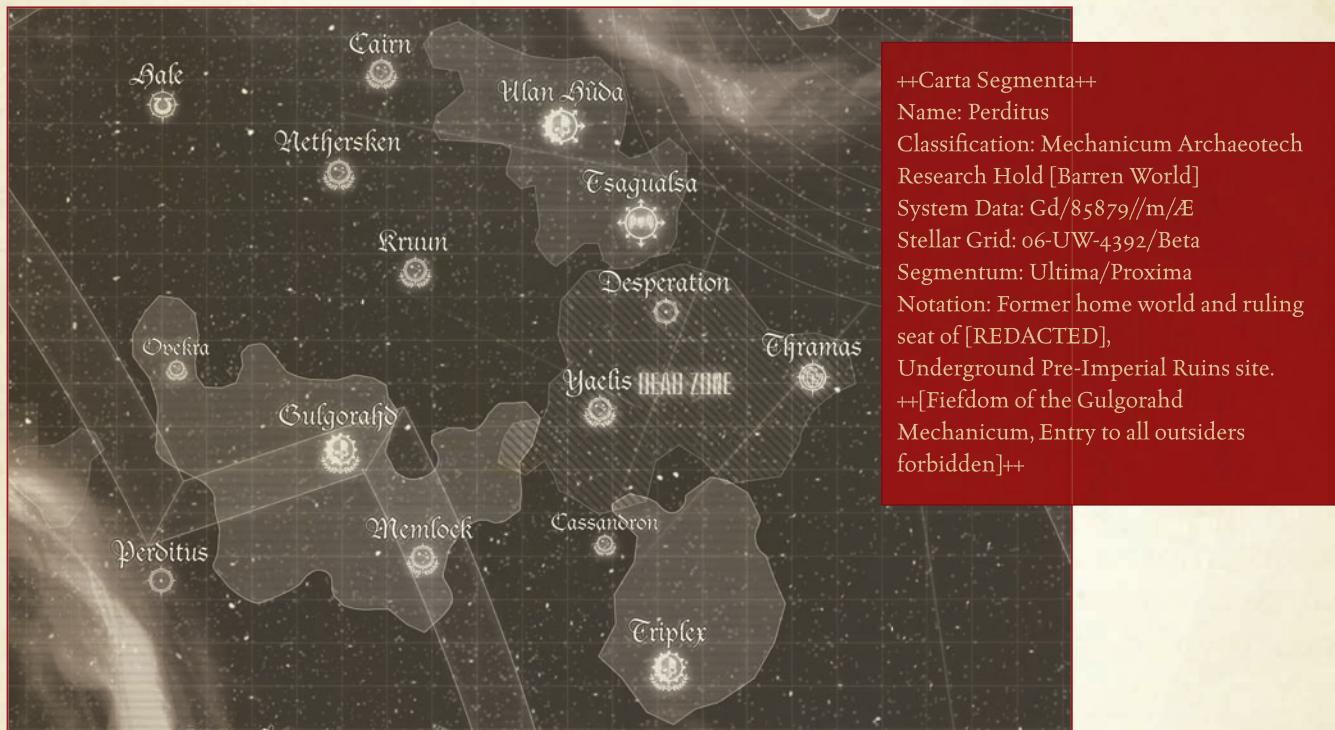


THE BATTLE OF PERDITUS: UMBRAL-51

EXEMPLARY BATTLES

As the Age of Darkness ground ever onwards, the fires of war would spread throughout the entire galaxy, consuming everything in their path. Armies and worlds were reduced to nothing more than ash, in many cases leaving no one alive to bear witness to the sacrifices made or the atrocities committed. During this time, each Legion employed unique formations to prosecute their own style of war, whether by choice or through necessity, making use of unconventional, often abhorrent,

tactics and weapons. Many of these formations would be lost during the dark years following the Horus Heresy, their traditions wiped out and the last stockpiles of their weapons exhausted. Some, however, have been preserved in these records, that future generations may learn of the terrors unleashed upon the galaxy by the Emperor's turncoat sons and the valiant heroes who stood against them.



The Battle of Perditus is often overlooked as a footnote in the annals of the Dark Angels; a conflict waged on the orders of the Lion to seize a cache of arcane weapons whose nature would later help turn the tide of the war. Before the course of Horus' rebellion made the nature of Perditus' secrets apparent, the First Legion arrived in the Perditus System to find its principal world ravaged by war. Elements of the Iron Hands Legion were already engaged in a bloody campaign for dominion over the planet against the ruthless warriors of Mortarion, the Death Guard. The Lion immediately made plain his Legion's claim to Perditus, with the bulk of the Dark Angels forces swiftly landing near Magellix Station, the foremost installation on the planet. By directly confronting the commanders of the two warring sides, the Lion sought to break the stalemate through diplomacy and avoid the cost of unnecessary fighting. Both Legions were expected to put up staunch resistance against any claims of the Dark Angels, but in the face of the Lion's wrath, they would eventually fail to prevent him from claiming the dire secret that lay hidden at the heart of Perditus.

While the ever pragmatic and ruthlessly efficient Lion sought to claim his prize, he tasked others of his Legion with securing additional artefacts from Perditus' dark past. Kilometres deep beneath the hollowed-out mountains, the Mechanicum had dug into ancient ruins dating from the Dark Age of Technology to unearth weapons of such terrible potency that the Emperor himself had forbidden their use. Knight-Preceptor Vendrahel and the Order of the Broken Claws would lead an expedition to seize the concealed archaeo-vaults of Umbral-51 and secure these technological horrors for the First Legion at any cost.

Whilst all eyes were upon Magellix Station, an unseen war was being waged to claim Umbral-51. Elements of the Iron Hands and the Death Guard refused to stop the fighting, carrying their internecine conflict beneath the surface of Perditus in defiance of the Lion's claim to the world's treasures. The archaeotech mine and jagged metal tunnels rang with the sound of boltguns and revving chainswords as the main force of the Death Guard, far outnumbering their opponents, marched towards a massive cavern where the Iron Hands took cover among heavy machinery and tech-ruins.

Extant records, from recovered Xth Legion helmet pict-feeds, indicate that the Death Guard host was led by Centurion Kadus Brekkar, who urged the serried ranks of his Mortus Poisoner squads forward in the guttural tongue of Barbarus. Incoming shells fired from dozens of Iron Hands boltguns impacted the blackened armour of the Poisoners, years of exposure to the deadly biological agents of their munitions having eroded the original colours of their Legion long ago. Scores of their number fell, but the Death Guard inexorably marched on, heedless of the casualties inflicted upon them. As they approached the Iron Hands lines, the Poisoners levelled their flamers as one and opened fire. An emerald inferno erupted from their weapons, the chemical cocktail contained within their canisters igniting at the end of the barrel with a sound like that of a thousand hissing snakes. Iron Hands Space Marines stumbled from their redoubts, thrashing helplessly as the flames engulfing them burned through the vulnerable seals and joints of their power armour to dissolve the flesh of the Legionaries. Several Poisoners down the ranks of the advancing column staggered out of formation as they themselves fell prey to the lethal toxins that fuelled their weapons, the chemicals eating their way through the protective seals of their canisters to ignite and consume their bearer. None of Mortarion's surviving sons broke rank or lost their step as they marched over the corpses of their unfortunate brothers, for they already knew full well that it was a death sentence to serve in the Destroyer companies. Columns of Tactical Legionaries followed in close support, with groups of Grave Warden Terminators and hulking Contemptor Dreadnoughts bringing ruin to any stubborn holdouts that threatened to slow the advance.

Into this maelstrom of destruction stepped the pale-armoured forms of the Order of the Broken Claws. Stormbird and Thunderhawk transporters touched down to deploy the warriors of the Dark Angels before rising again to vanish into the kilometres-deep shafts that linked the archaeotech mine with the surface. Supported by the Dark Angels of the 79th Company, Vendrahel led the Order in an assault that crashed into the rear of the Death Guard formation.

The Knight-Preceptor was the first to engage the enemy, swinging his relic hammer to smash the articulated joints of a Death Guard Contemptor Dreadnought before a return strike crushed its leering faceplate in a savage deathblow. The Cenobites of the Order brought down Poisoners and hulking Grave Wardens alike, experience won in the wars against the bio-monstrosities of the Rangdan now put to use against the abominable warriors of Barbarus. The knights of the First Legion fought fiercely, driven beyond even the superhuman endurance of the Legiones Astartes by the desire for victory and the power of raw hate, against a foe whose weapons were so vile and despicable. Many veteran Legionaries were lost that day, but the Cenobites dragged a dozen of the enemy down with them, swinging their swords in wide arcs to cut through armour and flesh, even as they were engulfed by the fires of the Poisoners' chemical inferno.

Deeper into the complex, the magi of Umbral-51 observed the carnage unfolding through screens projecting the visual link of hundreds of servitors, servo-skulls and surveillance pict-feeds. Desperate to protect their labours, they awakened scores of guardian-automata and unleashed them into the passageways to bring death to all outsiders. Towering Castellax-automata appeared as if from nowhere, breaking through the Death Guard lines to trample and dismember anyone standing in their way. Vorax hunter-killer packs moved around the periphery of the battle, surrounding isolated groups of Legionaries and mercilessly gunning them down with a hail of bullets fired from their multi-barrelled cannon. There were hundreds of these murderous machines, and they all turned their attention to the Dark Angels when the corpse of the last Death Guard within reach hit the floor, torn in two bloody halves. The Legionaries of the First Legion opened fire without hesitation, the impacts of their bolt shells rippling across the surface of the automata's heavy armour like a hailstorm, furious but impotent. Rather than wait for the inevitable assault to crash into his formation, Vendrahel led a counter-charge against the horde of rampaging machines, pitting the stoic swordsmanship of the Dark Angels against the cruel artifice of the Mechanicum.



With his foes engaged in a savage combat against each other, Kadus Brekkar and the remaining Legionaries of his force withdrew into the shadowy passageways that led to the vaults of Umbral-51. The sudden reversal of the battle had diminished any prospect of survival, thus Brekkar resolved to destroy the relic weapons of the Mechanicum and drag every Loyalist within range of the resulting explosion to the grave with him. The Death Guard collapsed tunnels behind them to buy themselves time, but dozens more perished on the way, fighting a running battle against roaming automata gone berserk with artificially induced machine rage. The vengeful Dark Angels came after the Poisoners, the concentrated force of the main assault group having easily swept aside the Mechanicum battle-automata that opposed them.

Before the great adamantium gates of Umbral-51, the Poisoners finally turned to face their pursuers. Paladin Ennedreth stepped forth from the ranks of the Cenobites to declare that there was nowhere left to run, challenging the Death Guard leader to an honour duel. With a gurgling laugh of genuine enthusiasm, Kadus Brekkar raised his chem-flamer and engulfed the lone knight in alchemical fire, reducing his flesh to ashes inside the scorched ruin of his Cataphractii plate. Roaring a cry of indignation at the death of his brother, Vendrahel raised his plasma caster and fired before charging the Death Guard alongside his knights. The Cenobites cut a path through the Poisoners with great cleaving blows of their swords. In response, the Death Guard attacked the knights in pairs, overwhelming their defences and slipping their revving chainblades through vulnerable armour joints. Kadus Brekkar came for Vendrahel with a savage downward sweep of his power scythe that would have cleft him in twain, but the Knight-Preceptor turned the blow aside and barged into the Death Guard Centurion with his shoulder. Caught off-balance, Kadus Brekkar failed to see Vendrahel's relic hammer until it smashed through his power armour to demolish his sternum and spine, leaving his lifeless body crushed into the ground. The combat was brief but decisive, and by its end the Cenobites stood victorious amidst heaps of slain Death Guard Poisoners.

Adhering to his Order's rites of remembrance, Vendrahel knelt over the corpse of his vanquished foe, whispering the names of all the knights who had fallen that day, his hammer still embedded in Kadus Brekkar's chest cavity.

With a hiss of venting air and the moan of protesting metal, the gates of Umbral-51 opened. Through the blinding light came forth the magi of the Mechanicum to parley with the victorious Dark Angels. After the formal greetings were concluded, Knight-Preceptor Vendrahel presented the magi with an ancient seal bearing the sigil of their sect beneath a lion rampant. Upon seeing the seal, the magi resentfully offered their thanks to the Dark Angels for securing the archaeo-mine and surrendered the contents of the vaults to the authority of the First Legion. With the conclusion of the ceremony, the Tech-Priests hastily departed Umbral-51 and disappeared into the darkness of the tunnels. The vaults and tech-fanes were emptied of their rich bounty, which was then transferred to the First Legion ships in orbit within locked stasis containers. The Cenobites deemed Umbral-51 too dangerous to be left behind and placed clusters of tectonic bombs at key locations inside the vaults, detonating them remotely upon their departure from the surface. Savage explosions shook the archaeo-mine and callously destroyed the final reminders of an age forever lost, crushing the magi and countless technological artefacts under tonnes of metal and rock.

The Battle of Perditus has ever afterward been an engagement shrouded in sinister mystery and rumour. Witnesses and members of the Remembrancer Order inquiring about Perditus have been noted to be among the casualty lists of later conflicts or have simply disappeared soon after their investigations. Perditus was declared off limits to all Legions by order of the Lion and warning beacons were placed near the system's Mandeville point, promising swift retribution upon any trespassers. The relic weapons of Umbral-51, a prize that may perhaps have tipped the war for either side, had been delivered into the hands of the Order of the Broken Claws and of their ultimate fate none can be certain. Some sources indicate that the Order transferred them to their chantry houses across the galaxy and kept them hidden. Others point at the cataclysmic destruction wrought by the First Legion in the closing days of the Horus Heresy and suggest that the weapons were delivered to the warriors of the Dreadwing, who made extensive use of them during the period known as the Passage of the Angel of Death. Whatever the truth, the true value of the prize claimed by the Dark Angels can only be judged by the secretive lord of the First Legion himself, Lion El'Jonson.



ELITES

Of the Orders of the First Legion's Inner Circle, that of the Broken Claws had the fewest adherents, but not through insignificance. They alone were responsible for compiling the account of the battles waged against the dread Rangdan and, in the wake of the xenos strain's destruction, these knights were charged with guarding the spoils of those victories.

As the events of the Horus Heresy transpired, the duties of the Order of the Broken Claws were extended, with small groups guarding stasis vaults containing relics and weapons acquired from the vanquished foes of the First Legion. Each knight would vow to prevent these artefacts from falling into the hands of those who opposed the Imperium, and only in the guardian's death would this sworn bond be broken.

INNER CIRCLE KNIGHTS CENOBIUM – ORDER OF THE BROKEN CLAWS

275 POINTS

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Order Cenobite	5	4	4	4	1	4	2	9	2+
Order Preceptor	6	4	4	4	1	4	3	10	2+

Unit Composition

- 4 Order Cenobites
- 1 Order Preceptor

Unit Type

- Order Preceptor: Infantry (Character)
- Order Cenobites: Infantry (Character)

Wargear

- Cataphractii pattern Terminator armour
- Terranic greatsword
- Plasma-caster

Special Rules

- Legiones Astartes (Dark Angels)
- Stubborn
- Adamantium Will
- Order Exemplars (Order of the Broken Claws)*

**This army list entry represents an Inner Circle Knights Cenobium of the Order of the Broken Claws. As such, they may not select a different option from the Scions of the Hekatonystika special rule and instead use the one that follows.*

Dedicated Transport

- An Inner Circle Knight Cenobium – Order of the Broken Claws numbering five models may take a Land Raider Phobos, or a Spartan if 10 models or fewer.

Options

- The Cenobium may take:
 - Up to five additional Order Cenobites +45 points each
- Any model in the unit may exchange their Terranic greatsword for one of the following:
 - Thunder hammer Free
 - Advex-Mors greatsword +2 points each
- The Order Preceptor may exchange their Terranic greatsword for one of the following:
 - Master-crafted thunder hammer +5 points
 - Paragon blade +25 points
- The Order Preceptor may take:
 - Grenade harness +5 points

Advex-Mors Greatsword

A unique pattern of the iconic First Legion Terranic greatswords, the Advex-Mors pattern was created by the Cenobites of the Order of the Broken Claws in the wake of the Rangdan Xenocides, using the valuable experience earned by the sacrifice of their brothers in the wars against the xenos bio-monstrosities.

Weapon	Range	Str	AP	Type
Advex-Mors greatsword	-	+3	3	Melee, Two-handed, Rending, Murderous Strike

Order Exemplars (Order of the Broken Claws)

Of all the First Legion's warriors, the Inner Circle Knights of the Order of the Broken Claws were the most adept at combating and destroying the monstrous bio-forms of the Rangdan. While the knights had dwindled in number at the time of the Horus Heresy's outbreak, their hard-won experience in battling the inhuman, particularly that gained during the Xenocides, would prove invaluable when their blades were turned on the Lion's myriad enemies.

When an Inner Circle Knight Cenobium – Order of the Broken Claws unit is selected as part of a Legiones Astartes army, all models in that Inner Circle Knight Cenobium gain the Order Exemplars (Order of the Broken Claws) special rule for no additional points cost.

Models in a unit representing this Order gain a bonus of +1 to their To Wound rolls when locked in combat with any enemy unit that includes one or more Monstrous Creatures or Gargantuan Creatures, or models with the Daemon of the Ruinstorm special rule. Additionally, when resolving the effect of Penetrating Hits as a result of close combat attacks, models representing this Order add +1 to the result of Vehicle Damage table rolls.

Furthermore, such is the superlative skill of the Inner Circle Knights that they may make Overwatch attacks, despite being equipped with Cataphractii pattern Terminator armour.

Designer's Note: Inner Circle Knights Cenobium – Order of the Broken Claws is a distinct army list entry, different from those found in *The Horus Heresy Book Nine – Crusade*. As such, models representing this unit should be modelled and painted to visually distinguish them from other Inner Circle Knight Cenobium that represent those from different Orders.



ELITES

Part of the dread arsenal of the XIVth Legion's poison ships, there existed a specially trained and equipped cadre, known as the 'Mortus Poisoners', within the Destroyer companies. Wielding a high proportion of chem-munitions even by the standards of the Death Guard, Mortus Poisoners were most frequently deployed in support of more conventional troops. Aboard ships or within the close confines of hive complexes, their formidable weapons were a valuable asset in clearing defensive positions, but the horrifying alchemical flame they spread would be the scourge of many battlefields throughout the galaxy.

Such weapons were doubtless effective against Legionary enemies, but close exposure to the concentrated cocktails of chemical and biological agents that made them so deadly inevitably took its toll on even their bearers. To be assigned to a Mortus Poisoner squad was essentially a sentence to suffer a withering, unavoidable demise. As such it was unofficially an act of censure or punishment, doled out to those who failed to achieve what was asked of them by their command. There were, however, those within the Mortus Poisoners who embraced the role enthusiastically, seeking to close with the enemy and dispense toxic death with disturbingly little heed for their own longevity.

MORTUS POISONER SQUAD

125 POINTS

	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Poisoner	4	4	4	4	1	4	1	9	3+
Poison-master	4	4	4	4	1	4	2	9	3+

Unit Composition

- 4 Poisoner
- 1 Poison-master

Unit Type

- Poisoner: Infantry
- Poison-master: Infantry
(Character)

Wargear

- Bolter
- Bolt pistol
- Chainsword or combat blade
- Frag grenades, krak grenades & rad grenades
- Power armour

Special Rules

- Legiones Astartes (Death Guard)
- Hardened Armour
- Counter-attack

Dedicated Transport

- A Mortus Poisoner Squad numbering 10 models or fewer may choose a Rhino or Land Raider Proteus as a Dedicated Transport. Note that if it is using one of the Rites of War special rules (see *The Horus Heresy: Legiones Astartes Age of Darkness Army List*), other Dedicated Transport options may be available for the squad.

Options

- The Mortus Poisoner Squad may take:
 - Up to 10 additional Poisoners +18 points each
 - The entire squad may take meltabombs +25 points per unit
 - Any model in the squad may exchange their bolter for:
 - Flamer with chem-munitions Free
 - For every five models in the squad, one Poisoner may exchange their bolt pistol for:
 - Heavy flamer with chem-munitions +20 points each
 - The Poison-master may exchange either a chainsword or combat blade for one of the following:
 - Power weapon +10 points
 - Power scythe +15 points
 - The Poison-master may upgrade their power armour to:
 - Artificer armour +10 points
 - The Poison-master may take up to:
 - Three phosphex bombs +10 points each

UNIT SHOWCASE

Shown below are some examples of both Death Guard Mortus Poisoners and Dark Angels Inner Circle Knights Cenobium – Order of the Broken Claws that have been built and painted by members of the studio staff. The Mortus Poisoners are based on the Legion MkIV Destroyer Squad, with a selection of upgrade parts from the Forge World range, including the Legion MkIV Power Weapons Set and the Death Guard Deathshroud Power Scythe Set. Some parts are also used from the Citadel MkIV Tactical Squad kit. The Inner Circle Knights Cenobium are painted to represent them as members of the Order of the Broken Claws.





THE BATTLE OF PERDITUS – THE SACKING OF UMBRAL-51

Although most remaining records regarding Perditus tell of The Lion's determined intervention to prevent the Tuchulcha device from falling into the hands of Calas Typhon, the planet concealed many more secrets. It can only be speculated exactly what arcane and terrible spoils of the Great Crusade were stowed there and what dread weapons, liberated by the Dark Angels, during the Rangdan Xenocides, could be found under stasis fields within the vaults of Perditus. During the desperation of the Horus Heresy, few Primarchs would see their Legions relinquish the opportunity to bolster their might and gain advantage over their brothers, so it is of no surprise that domains such as that of Perditus and its vaults would be valuable objectives as the galaxy burned around them.

The missions presented here can be used to recreate key conflicts that took place during the Battle for Perditus, representing the Dark Angels and the Death Guard scouring the planet and ransacking its vaults in an attempt to lay claim to what lies within. Players may wish to vary the forces used in these scenarios, for example substituting one of the armies for a contingent of Iron Hands, to portray alternative conflicts in the Age of Darkness.

THE SACKING OF UMBRAL-5I LEGENDARY MISSION

Perditus held a great many secrets, and in the wake of the extermination of its population during the Great Crusade, these secrets were guarded over by the Mechanicum and their indefatigable automata sentinels. Subterranean caverns and underground complexes threaded beneath the surface of the planet; within them, the magi and their tech-adepts toiled for generations as they sought to understand the true power of the numerous relics in their possession. Some devices could unleash arcane destructive power at the behest of their bearers, whilst others remained inanimate, only to be awoken by fell incantations that evoked forces yet to be understood. Although only a few knew of exactly what the tech-vaults contained, a desperate need to gain the upper hand in the maelstrom of the Horus Heresy drove many to seek out the root of half-truths and forgotten rumours on Perditus.

In this mission, one side has narrowed down the location of a valuable relic or xenos artefact to several potential areas, but they are not alone in their search. The opposing side has patiently followed in their wake and only now, as the prize is within reach, do they strike.

THE ARMIES

The mission presented here can be used to recreate a key conflict during the events that took place on Perditus, representing forces from the Iron Hands, Death Guard, Mechanicum and Dark Angels Legions pitted against each other, although players may wish to vary the forces used in these scenarios to portray alternative conflicts in the Age of Darkness. Regardless of the forces used, players should roll off to see which side will be the Relic Hunters and which side will be the Pursuers.

SETTING UP THE GAME

- The battlefield should be set up using the deployment map that follows. Armoured containers and servo-haulers can be mixed with Games Workshop Sector Mechanicus buildings to represent the outposts manned by the Mechanicum.
- After terrain is placed, but before any forces are deployed, players take turns placing five objective markers, represented by markers 1" in diameter. These markers should be placed in accordance with the rules for Placing Objective Markers in *The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness* rulebook.
- Determine Warlord Traits and Psychic Powers.

DEPLOYMENT

- The Relic Hunters player must select a long board edge as their own board edge and deploys their entire army within the Relic Hunters' deployment zone. If the board being used has four equal edges, any edge can be selected. Any units that cannot be deployed should be placed into Reserves.
- The Pursuers' board edge is the one opposite the Relic Hunters', and the Pursuers player now deploys their army within the Pursuers' deployment zone. Any units that cannot be deployed should be placed into Reserves.
- Players now deploy units with the Infiltrate special rule and redeploy any units with the Scout special rule as per *The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness* rulebook.

FIRST TURN

In this mission, the Pursuers player gets the first turn, unless the Relic Hunters player can Seize the Initiative.

GAME LENGTH

The game uses the Variable Game Length rules found in *The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness* rulebook.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

The winner of this mission is the side that controls the objective marker that represents the relic at the end of the game. If neither side controls the objective at the end of the game or the relic has not been revealed, the player that made the most Location Unknown rolls is the winner.

Rules for controlling objectives are detailed in *The Horus Heresy: Age of Darkness* rulebook.

MISSION SPECIAL RULES

- Reserves
- Morbid Resolve
- Location Unknown
- Wardens of the Forbidden
- Sleeping Sentinels



Morbid Resolve

Once per game, immediately before making a shooting attack with a squad of Death Guard Mortus Poisoners, the controlling player may activate Morbid Resolve. When activated, the controlling player ignores the effects of the Gets Hot special rule upon that unit of Mortus Poisoners until the end of the Shooting phase.

Location Unknown

Each of the objective markers placed during the game set-up represents a potential location of the relic both sides are seeking. During the Movement phase, if a model from a unit finishes its move within 3" of an objective, its controlling player rolls a D6 and adds the number of the current game turn. On a result of 2-6, the objective marker is a false reading or dead end and is removed from the board, but counts as a Location Unknown roll for the purposes of victory conditions.

On a result of 7+, the relic has been discovered; this objective marker is left in place and all other objective markers are immediately removed from the board.

When only a single objective remains and the relic has yet to be discovered, the last one is automatically the relic's location and this rule no longer applies.

Wardens of the Forbidden

When a unit entirely made up of models with the special rule Order Exemplars (Order of the Broken Claws) ends their movement within 3" of an objective, the controlling player adds +1 to the result of any roll made for Location Unknown, in addition to adding the number of the current game turn.

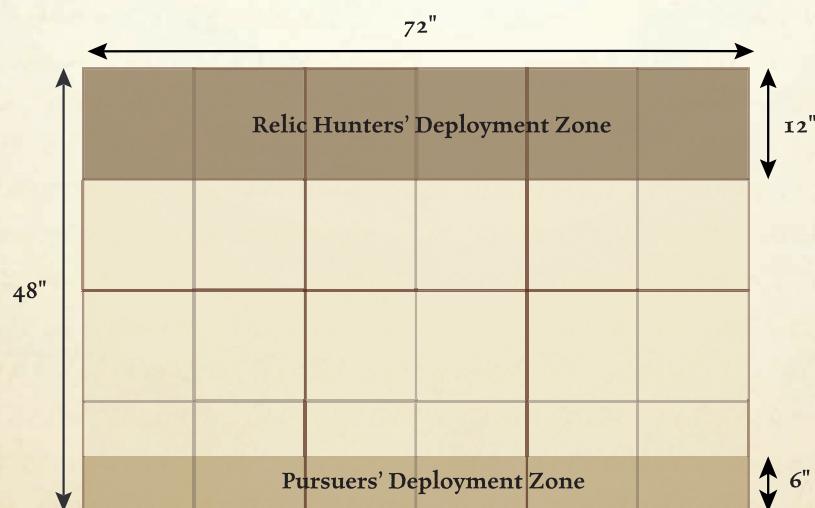
Sleeping Sentinels

On any unmodified roll of a 1 (before adding the number of the current game turn or +1 for the Wardens of the Forbidden mission special rule) for the Location Unknown special rule, a maniple consisting of D3 Vorax-class Battle-automata or Castellax-class Battle-automata is immediately deployed by the opposing player. Models are placed as close to the objective that was captured as possible, but cannot be placed on impassable terrain or within 1" of an enemy model. Models deployed in this manner are controlled by the opposing player and count as Distrusted Allies to the rest of their army.

These Battle-automata can be equipped with any of the options allowed in their army list entries with the exception of the Paragon of Metal special rule, which should not be used; otherwise, they are equipped as modelled or as per the basic army list entry.

Battle-automata deployed in this way are counted as Denial units, but do not trigger Location Unknown rolls and cannot capture objectives.

Note: It is possible for an objective to be captured and for the location of the relic to be revealed at the same time as models are deployed using the Sleeping Sentinels rule.



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