002: Fight on the Beaches

Two plug-and-play encounters for 1st-Echelon Draw Steel

by Look Out Behind You Studios

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DRAW STEEL

002A: Wash Out the Coastal Ruins

Goals

Enemy forces have made camp in the coastal ruins of an ancient civilization. Earn 1 victory point for killing all the enemies.

Movement
• Squares with a tree grant cover (whether on the ground or in the tree).   • While in water, use the "Underwater Combat" rules: fire immunity 5, lightning weakness 5, and if your speed doesn't have the Swim keyword, all your power rolls take a bane.
Height
• Trees are *2 squares* high for the purposes of climbing and jumping from.

Encounter

The heroes begin in the box marked "START." The positions of each enemy in **Squad A** are immediately detectable, all other enemy forces start concealed.

- The enemies have not yet noticed the heroes' approach.

- At the apex of the west ruin is a strange machine that seems to operate on its own but not by magic. A thin red beam of light emits horizontally from it, rotating to sweep the beam across the coast and ocean.

The machine is a scavenged turbine from Zakhalakan the World Engine, a titanic machine conduit of some unknowable Outer God of the Timescape. The turbine acts as a Holy Idol dynamic terrain object:

Scavenged Turbine	Size: 1	Stamina: 20
Disable: Direct damage only.		
At the start of each round while the turbine is intact, the Director gains a d3 that lasts until the end of the round. When an enemy deals or takes damage, the Director can roll the d3 to increase the damage the enemy deals or reduce the damage the enemy takes by an amount equal to the result (to a minimum of 2). Only one d3 can be applied to any one instance of damage. Visually, the thin red beam focuses on the enemy to whom the turbine is granting the d3. Extra damage added to attacks from the turbine is lightning damage.		

Encounter Details

Assuming zero victories, this encounter begins at just barely Hard difficulty. Generally, the enemies are more mobile than the heroes are expected to be, either with a swim speed, or with some other means of getting between the platforms very quickly. The turbine's added lightning damage in combination with the lightning weakness from being in water can turn a situation bad very quickly, especially for lower level heroes, so the 1st-level monsters account for slightly less EV than the higher level encounters.


1st-Level Party: Lizardfolk

Party Size	Location	Enemy Forces
2	East West	***Squad A:*** 3 Grunts (m), 1 Skyterror (capn) ***Squad B:*** 6 Tonguers (m)
4	East West	***Squad A:*** 3 Grunts (m), 1 Skyterror (capn) ***Squad B:*** 6 Tonguers (m), 1 Bloodeye (capn) ***Squadless:*** 1 Scaletooth

* for unlisted party sizes, add 1 Scaletooth (West – Squadless) per extra member over a listed party size.

Lizardfolk Suggested Tactics

The tonguers can pull and the grunts can slide the heroes into the water, where they have lightning weakness 5. Then the turbine can add lightning damage to an attack for a big hit on a hero. The water will feel *very scary*!

Make sure the players know the turbine is something that can be damaged. Likewise, the enemies know the advantage that the turbine gives them. To them, it may very well be a holy relic! And they will want to protect it fiercely!
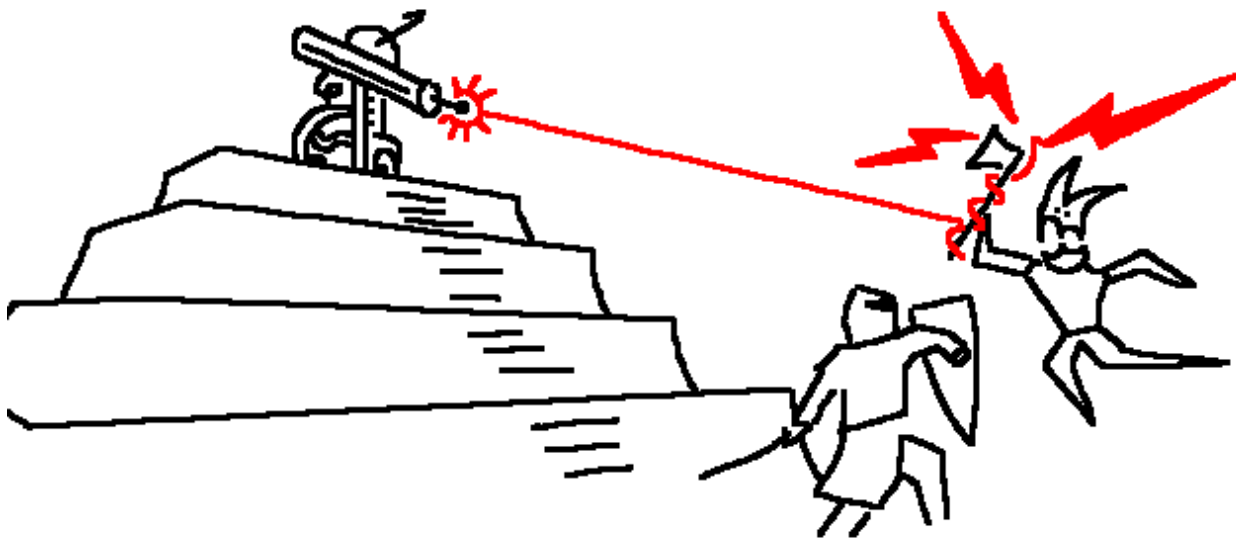
2nd-Level Party: Bugbears & Angulotl

Party Size	Location	Enemy Forces
2	East West	***Squad A:*** 3 Ang. Darts (m), 1 Ang. Slink (capn) ***Squad B:*** 3 Ang. Cleavers (m), 1 Bugbear Commander (capn)
4	East West	***Squad A:*** 6 Ang. Darts (m), 1 Ang. Slink (capn) ***Squad B:*** 6 Ang. Cleavers (m), 1 Bugbear Commander (capn) ***Squadless:*** 1 Bugbear Shadow Sneak

* for unlisted party sizes, add 2 Ang. Needlers (West – Squadless) per extra member over a listed party size.

Bugbear & Angulotl Suggested Tactics

Since this encounter has Angulotls, the Wet condition is in play. Anyone that gets in the water is Wet for the rest of the encounter (or until they use an ability that lets them remove the condition). While wet, if a non-angulotl ends their turn with 0 speed, they fall prone.

The Slink can use its Tonguelash to pull from a great distance, especially from or across from water, pulling heroes into the water (where they have lightning weakness 5 and the turbine's extra damage becomes a lot more dangerous).

The Bugbear Commander can throw Angulotls to close the gap to the heroes more quickly. The Commander can throw the Slink, then the Slink can Tonguelash an ally to pull 6 without hurting them and making them Wet (angulotls that are wet ignore attacks of opportunity).

3rd-Level Party: Wode Elves

Party Size	Location	Enemy Forces
2	East West	***Squad A:*** 6 Yeomen (m), 1 Gweiadur (capn) ***Squad B:*** 6 Scoutts (m), 1 Geurilla (capn)
4	East West	***Squad A:*** 6 Yeomen (m), 1 Gweiadur (capn) ***Squad B:*** 6 Scouts (m), 1 Warleader (capn)

* for unlisted party sizes, add 1 Druid (West – Squadless) per extra member over a listed party size.

Wode Elf Suggested Tactics

Wode elves want to use their Masking Glamor, which requires either concealment (which they can get from the trees) or cover (which they can get from fences and corners of walls).

Lots of wode elf ability restrain the target: while you are restrained, your speed is 0, you can't use the Stand Up maneuver, and you can't be force moved. Your ability power rolls take a bane, abilities against you gain an edge, and you have a bane on Might and Agility tests.

The Warleader's Villain Actions are all burst 5, so it wants to be up close and personal with the heroes!

002B: Summon Goxomoc

Goals

Zakhalakan the World Engine approaches the shore! The ritual to summon the Protector of Ix is prepared, but demons flood from the Abyss to prevent its completion! Earn 1 victory point each for:

- Complete the ritual before Zakhalakan reaches the shore (end of 5th round of combat).

- Defeating the **Demon Boss** (in the center of all the sigils).

Movement

- While in water, use the "Underwater Combat" rules: fire immunity 5, lightning weakness 5, and if your speed doesn't have the Swim keyword, all your power rolls take a bane.
- Squares with any amount of tall grass count as difficult terrain and grant concealment.
- Squares with a tree grant cover (whether on the ground or in the tree).

Height

- Trees are *2 squares* high for the purposes of climbing and jumping from.

Encounter

The heroes begin anywhere on the map. They know where the sigils are and they know where the demon spawns are. The priestess is positioned by the heroes and must be adjacent or on top of one of the sigils. When the heroes are in position, the combat begins.

Enemies spawn immediately at **Top Spawn**, **Bottom Spawn**, and **Demon Boss**. Enemies will spawn again at **Top Spawn** and **Bottom Spawn** at the end of rounds 2 and 4.

There are a number of sigils equal to the number of heroes (min 3, max 6). Ordered sigil locations are noted on the reference map. To complete the ritual and summon Goxomoc, one of the following must be true:

- the priestess lives (civilian, 10 stamina) and at least half the sigils (min 2) are attuned simultaneously

- all sigils are attuned simultaneously

A sigil is attuned while there is a hero or priestess but no enemies within 3 squares of the sigil. Sigils are bound to the magical leylines under Orden and can be moved vertically with the terrain, but not horizontally.

On the reference map, the sigils marked S1 are recommended for all party sizes, and S2 are recommended to be placed from for parties of 4 or more heroes.

The ritual must be completed before Zakhalakan reaches the shore at the end of the 5th round of

combat. The heroes can see Zakhalakan, so they know exactly how many rounds they have remaining.

As the World Engine approaches, the shores feels more and more of the effects of the titanic magma-powered machine. At the end of each round, the battlefield is affected in different ways:

Round #	Effect
1 (chorogaunt VA1)	Zakhalakan ejects magma. Choose one 5x5 area anywhere on the map. Each creature in the area immediately takes **3 fire damage; burning (save ends)**. A burning creature or object takes 1d6 fire damage at the start of each of their turns until the effect ends.
2 (enemies spawn) (chorogaunt VA2)	A basaltic black obelisk falls from the sky into the area marked "OBELISK" on the reference map. The obelisk is the Black Obelisk arcane object (allied with the enemies), but with Stamina = level of party * 30. The distance of the obelisk's Your Fears Become Manifest ability is the entire map.
3 (chorogaunt VA3)	Zakhalakan ejects magma. Choose one 5x5 area anywhere on the map. Each creature in the area immediately takes **3 fire damage; burning (save ends)**. A burning creature or object takes 1d6 fire damage at the start of each of their turns until the effect ends.
4 (enemies spawn)	The water is shallow enough around the World Engine that it begins to boil and steam off. All water on the map becomes dry ground. Any creature in the water takes **6 fire damage; burning (save ends)**.
5	The World Engine reaches the shore. All is lost. The entire map is consumed in Lava at all elevation levels. The ritual can no longer be completed at this point. The heroes can still earn 1 Victory if they get away with the priestess alive.

Encounter Details

Assuming zero victories, this encounter begins at Hard difficulty. The point is not necessarily to defeat all the monsters, it's to keep them out away from the sigils. Every 2 rounds, Top Spawn and Bottom Spawn enemy forces enter the battle, adding approximately another 2/3 the heroes' encounter strength. When enemies spawn again, all minion squads spawn with one fewer units.

1st-Level Party: Demons

Party Size	Location	Enemy Forces
2	Top Spawn Bottom Spawn Demon Boss	*Squad A:* 5>4>3 Frenzied (m), 1 Ruinant (capn) *Squad B:* 5>4>3 Frenzied (m), 1 Torlas (capn) *Squadless:* 1 Chorogaunt (Stamina = 50)
4	Top Spawn Bottom Spawn Demon Boss	*Squad A1:* 5>4>3 Frenzied (m), 1 Ruinant (capn) *Squadless:* 1 Torlas *Squad B1:* 5>4>3 Frenzied (m), 1 Torlas (capn) *Squad B2:* 5>4>3 Pitling (m), 1 Remasch (capn) *Squadless:* 1 Chorogaunt (Stamina = 70)

* for unlisted party sizes, add 1 Remasch (Top Spawn – Squadless) and give the Chorogaunt +10 Stamina per extra member over a listed party size.

2nd-Level Party

Party Size	Location	Enemy Forces
2	Top Spawn Bottom Spawn Demon Boss	*Squad A:* 7>6>5 Frenzied (m), 1 Remasch (capn) *Squad B:* 7>6>5 Frenzied (m), 1 Bendrak (capn) *Squadless:* 1 Chorogaunt (Stamina = 60)
4	Top Spawn Bottom Spawn Demon Boss	*Squad A1:* 7>6>5 Frenzied (m), 1 Ruinant (capn) *Squadless:* 1 Torlas *Squad B1:* 7>6>5 Frenzied (m), 1 Torlas (capn) *Squad B2:* 7>6>5 Pitling (m), 1 Remasch (capn) *Squadless:* 1 Chorogaunt (Stamina = 90)

* for unlisted party sizes, add 1 Remasch (Top Spawn – Squadless) and give the Chorogaunt +15 Stamina per extra member over a listed party size.

3rd-Level Party

Party Size	Location	Enemy Forces
2	Top Spawn Bottom Spawn Demon Boss	*Squad A:* 7>6>5 Frenzied (m), 1 Remasch (capn) *Squadless:* 1 Remasch *Squad B:* 7>6>5 Frenzied (m), 1 Muceron (capn) *Squadless:* 1 Chorogaunt (Stamina = 70)
4	Top Spawn Bottom Spawn Demon Boss	*Squad A1:* 7>6>5 Frenzied (m), 1 Remasch (capn) *Squadless:* 1 Remasch, 1 Torlas *Squad B1:* 7>6>5 Frenzied (m), 1 Muceron (capn) *Squad B2:* 7>6>5 Pitling (m), 1 Muceron (capn) *Squadless:* 1 Chorogaunt (Stamina = 110)

* for unlisted party sizes, add 1 Muceron (Top Spawn – Squadless) and give the Chorogaunt +20 Stamina per extra member over a listed party size.

Suggested Demon Tactics for All Levels

When a squad spawns, send them immediately toward the nearest sigil. If more than one squad spawns (or a squadless), you can send them toward a further-away sigil. Choose a sigil that is unguarded, or guarded by a low-dps hero, and target that sigil with the largest, meanest squad, and possibly also the Chorogaunt. The Chorogaunt has a lot of range, so it works well in between two nearby sigils.

Putting Abyssal Rifts from the spawn points to the sigils is a good way to crowd the sigils quickly, or you can put Rifts on multiple across-map sigils to swarm one sigil, then move forces to the other, since the hero party is likely split up.

If the heroes cleave through minions too quickly, you can be meaner with your Chorogaunt and Rift placement. You could even teleport Top Spawn squads to Bottom Spawn and really focus fire.