# Gathering of the Horde

*The ancient rivalry between the Reikland Reavers and the Puritan Sect dates back many years. These two warbands have been at odds ever since the first of their dubious orders set foot upon the accursed soil of Mordheim. Blood debts are outstanding, revenge pacts still owing and a raging scroll of dark deeds and threatened recompense exists staked to the rotten beam of the gibbet in Executioner's Square. Fitting then that these two bitter enemies should meet again at that very place to battle for supremacy of this part of the city... Little do they realise however that the Rogue Imperial warship, the Irrepressible, has weighed anchor and its captain means to quell their riotous ambition with a burst of cannon fire, leaving the way open to plunder whatever clandestine artefacts lie within...*

## Terrain

The battle is fought on a 4' x 4' table. Players should take it in turns to arrange ruined buildings, temples, walls, etc, around the edges of the tables but no building should encroach more than 6" from the table edge to ensure there is a large clear area in the centre of the table for the battle to take place. In the very centre of the table there is a gibbet or statue surrounded by a low wall or wooden fence roughly 6" x 6".

## Special Rules

Captain Helmgartt Shard means to act upon his orders to flatten the clashing warbands so the rest of his master's mercenary forces can secure the square. He is guided by the gathering smoke from fires lit in the city as a destructive preamble to the battle. The warbands will be blissfully unaware of Shard's orders but as soon as the battle reaches its seventh turn, roll a D6 at the start of that turn and each turn thereafter and consult the table below to discover when the Rogue Imperial forces arrive and Shard begins his cannonade.

| Turn | Roll | Cannonade begins | Imperial forces arrive |
|------|------|------------------|------------------------|
| 7 | 6+ | ✔ | – |
| 8 | 5+ | ✔ | – |
| 9 | 4+ | ✔ | ✔ |
| 10 | 3+ | ✔ | ✔ |
| 11 | Automatic | ✔ | ✔ |

When Shard's cannonade begins, he fires into the very heart of the battle. D6+3 'mortar shots' strike the battlefield. Players roll a D6 each with the highest roll placing the first mortar blast and then take it in turns to place further mortar blasts on the field (or if you have an independent arbitrator they will place all the templates). Once placed, roll a Scatter dice for each blast, a 'hit' indicates the blast hits that precise position, otherwise move the template D6 inches in the direction of the arrow rolled. Each blast has a diameter of 2" (use the Mortar template from Warhammer) and causes a Strength 3 hit against a model under the template and a Strength 6 hit against the model directly under the centre of the blast. All these attacks have an extra -1 save modifier.

The rogue forces are a small regiment of sixteen handgunners ordered to mop up any survivors or persistent rioters and then search the square for the artefact. The handgunners move in from the east table edge (players should agree a direction for north at the start of the battle) and are placed 8" in from the table edge but cannot move on the turn they arrive but are able to shoot immediately. Players take it in turns to control the handgunners, dicing off to see who controls them first and the Imperial soldiers fit into the turn sequence before both players have their turns. The handgunners are a regimented formation and so each one must remain within 1" of another at all times, moving closer to do so if necessary. Furthermore, they do not block line of sight for their comrades as they are well drilled at shooting in ranks. In order to maintain a steady rate of fire, only half of the handgunners fire each turn, allowing the remainder to shoot in the following turn.

## Warbands

Each player rolls a D6, with the highest roll setting his warband up first. Warbands may be set up within 18" of the table edge but no closer than 12" to the east or west edges to ensure they cannot set up models within buildings.

## Dramatis Personae

Two Dramatis Personae have been pre-generated to represent the Horde Masters for this scenario.

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## Dirk 'Cleaver' Halstadt

*Dirk is a Reikland Captain and the Horde Master of the Reavers. He is a battle-hardened man, losing an eye in a battle with his arch-nemesis - the Witch Hunter, Priest Valnor, Horde Master of the Puritan Sect. He now sports a glass replacement with a black Reikland eagle in lieu of a pupil. Dirk is uncompromising, fierce and merciless. He is not without honour though and will seldom stab a 'worthy adversary' in the back, preferring to humble his enemies face-to-face and witness the fear in their eyes as he drives his blade deep.*

| Profile | M | WS | B | S | T | W | I | A | Ld |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Dirk 'Cleaver' | 4 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 9 |

**Weapons/armour:** Cleaver (counts as an axe but with a +1 Strength modifier), sword, helmet.

**Skills:** *Step aside, combat master, resilient, fearsome.*

**SPECIAL RULE**

**Destiny:** Dirk is fated to meet his erstwhile enemy, Priest Valnor, in battle. As such Dirk has a special save of 2+ if he is reduced to his last wound. Dirk somehow manages to avoid the killing blow or dodge the fatal strike as his opponent slips. Once he is in combat with Valnor, any attacks from the Priest ignore Dirk's special save.

## Priest Valnor

*An honourable, utterly devout man, Priest Valnor is the Horde Master of the Puritan Sect. His code is black and white, he will suffer no abomination nor would-be infiltrator of what he believes is the property and right of Sigmar. His arch-nemesis is Dirk 'Cleaver' Halstadt. The two have fought on many occasions, their last encounter leaving Dirk without an eye...*

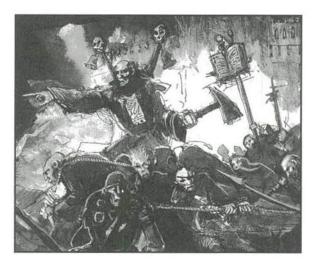| Profile | M | WS | B | S | T | W | I | A | Ld |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Priest Valnor | 4 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 9 |

**Weapons/armour:** Blessed warhammer (also counts as a Holy Relic), sword, light armour, holy tome.

**Skills:** *Mighty Blow, Strike to Injure.*

**Prayers:** The Hammer of Sigmar, Armour of Righteousness.

**SPECIAL RULE**

**Destiny:** Valnor is fated to meet his erstwhile enemy, Dirk 'Cleaver' Halstadt, in battle. As such Valnor has a special save of 2+ if he is reduced to his last wound. Valnor somehow



manages to avoid the killing blow or dodge the fatal strike as his opponent slips. Once he is in combat with Dirk, any attacks from him ignore Valnor's special save.

## Starting the game

Each player rolls a D6 - with the highest roll taking the first turn.

## Ending the game

The game ends when either Dirk or Valnor is taken out of action - at which point the victorious warband assumes control of Executioner's Square. Neither warband will rout until the Imperial bombardment begins at which point if they have lost enough warriors (add up the respective warbands collectively) they must make a Rout test. Note that a failed rout test will result in a mass retreat, ie, all the warbands horded together will rout. The game also ends when a warband routs.

## Experience

**+1 Survives.** If a Hero or Henchman group survives they gain +1 Experience.

**+1 Winning leaders.** The leaders of the warbands on the winning side gain +1 Experience each.

**+1 Per Enemy Out of Action.** Any Hero earns +1 Experience for each enemy he puts *out of action.*

**+2 Horde Leader Out of Action.** Any Hero earns +2 Experience for putting the Horde Leader Out of Action.

**Author's note:** Although the aftermath of the battle is not represented here, ie, the handgunners searching the ruins for the artefact, there is no reason why players can't devise a follow-up scenario that tells this 'story' and who knows, maybe there will be a follow-up scenario to this effect...

## Campaigns

The rules for horde battles are intended to be used in campaigns as well as being an exciting one-off battle as a slight diversion from the usual Mordheim rules. I would encourage players to use the above rules as a guide and devise their own inter-campaign narratives to include these large battles. The rules were devised with this proviso in mind and I was also keen to explore the idea of mass conflicts in Mordheim involving 40 to 60 models each side.

Finally, as well as the scenario presented above, there a few ideas that follow on other scenarios that players can develop for horde battles.

### Storm the Bastion

A gathering of warbands is holed up in an ancient ruined tower in the centre of Mordheim. As the sun dips below the brooding clouds, a great roar erupts from the encroaching darkness as a rival gathering descends upon the bastion intent on sacking it…

Essentially, this is a kind of siege battle but without stout defences. The walls will have holes in them and the defenders will probably only have rubble to throw at their enemies, while the attackers will make use of grappling irons and perhaps a few ladders to storm the walls. Victory would go to the player with the most models within the boundary of the walls at the end of a pre-determined turn limit. In a campaign the tower could be a special objective, containing a wyrdstone mine, ancient circle or treasure vault.

### Across the Bridge

Two warband hordes meet across a mighty river that runs through the city filled with all manner of taint and effluence. The battlefield is treacherous - with the sheer press of bodies upon the massive bridge that spans the river warriors can easily lose their footing or be pitched into the watery gloom beneath…

This battle presents a large hazard that the hordes will battle over. Rules could be included to represent players being pushed over the edge of the bridge and the effects of the tainted water on them after the battle (some kind of Special Injury table, maybe they get washed downriver or develop a Chaos mutation – this would be particularly interesting in a campaign battle). There is also scope to add a special rule for disturbing a beast in the water, its flailing tentacles reaching out sporadically to ensnare unwary warriors to drag them to a watery doom.

Hopefully, these suggestions have sparked a few ideas for horde battles and their inclusion in regular games of Mordheim as part of a campaign or merely one-off battles. I also hope it has demonstrated how movies and stories can generate exciting ideas to develop your own scenarios and games with only a modicum of special rules.