THE INCREDIBLE SPACE HULK

Nick Davis explains how he and Rich Baker built an Ork space hulk board to be used in the Armageddon battle report – in just four days! We also present a scenario to play out your own battles on board space hulks.

BUILDING A NEW GAMING BOARD IN JUST FOUR DAYS

Rich Baker   Nick Davis

Rich and Nick are two of the guys who produce White Dwarf every month.

Picture this; another issue of White Dwarf is heading towards its deadline. Everything is on time and you're about to go on holiday in a week. Then your rotund editor comes up with an idea for a multi-table battle report extravaganza for Armageddon. No problem. Until he decides that one of the tables needed is a space hulk board. Still not a problem, "We can easily build a space hulk board in time for the battle report", I confidently declare, not realising that it is just four days away!

As the resident White Dwarf terrain maker, the job of building the space hulk was given to me. I settled down and started to draw up my plans (obviously the full scale of the project had not hit me yet). I had only a few guidelines to follow: the space hulk must have specific objectives on it for the Space Marines to destroy. Plus I had to remember that: a game of Warhammer 40,000 would be played on the table, so a couple of wide open areas were needed. Oh, and it had to be modular as well!

To invoke the hulk imagery in my head I wrote down a list of words that could be used to describe space hulks – twisted corridors, hollowed out asteroids, dark, gloomy, organic shapes, gantries, catwalks, drainage pipes, cathedral-like open areas and rat mazes. I tried to keep all of these in mind whilst I drew up my plans.

The space hulk was to be divided into three sections each 4' by 2', and each one of these boards would have an objective. The three objectives would be a set of coolant tanks, a fire-control room and a power turbine. Each one would dominate their section of the modular board. The wide open area was going to be on the middle board and would be a huge crater to represent the inside of an asteroid.

With the plan committed to paper and firmly in my head, it was time for a quick trip down the local DIY shop for bits of guttering, a huge tub of PVA glue, polystyrene sheets, copper pipes and hardboard. I also managed to get my hands on an old and heavily damaged space hulk board and was able to salvage many of the resin corridor sections off it. With all the materials, and the promise of help in the form of Rich Baker, I set to work.

I won't go into full step by step details on how I built the space hulk, as it would be a monster article – and besides, no two space hulks are the same. Over the page I have highlighted a few of the interesting features on the hulk that I hope will inspire you to build some of your own terrain pieces.

Rich Baker joined me near the end of the construction and Orkified the hulk as I desperately finished the last board (a mention must go to Fat Bloke and Graham who also helped finish it off). The unpainted hulk itself was finished with about a day to spare for painting it. As we were pressed for time the entire battlefield was spray painted (we used 25 cans of spray paint!).

The space hulk was finally complete. We finished it the day before it was needed for battle. The actual construction and painting took us four days. Turn the page and take a closer look at what we did.
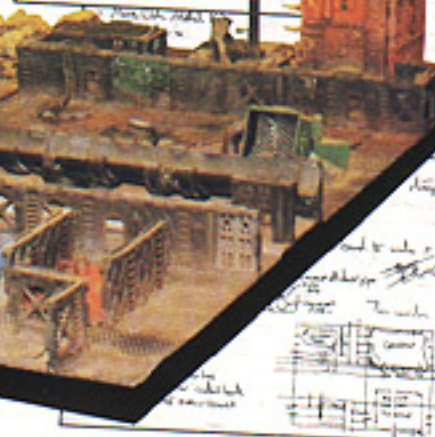
▲ *Four days of manic building and painting and the space hulk was born.*

CAPTURE THE HULK

OVERVIEW

A space hulk has appeared in-system; both sides want to capture its valuable technology and resources for themselves. Your orders are to sweep the area clean of opposing troops. Roving forces must be on the lookout to seek and destroy any enemies they encounter.

SCENARIO SPECIAL RULES

This mission uses the *Night Fighting* and *Infiltrators* scenario special rules. Neither army may use jump packs, bikes or vehicles (except Walkers).

All walls and bulkheads are considered to go up to the roof, block line of sight (yes, even if you are standing on a piece of scenery higher than a wall) and are impassable accept by their access ports. Pipes are also considered enclosed and can be accessed only from the ladders attached to them. Any Dreadnought sized model trying to move under the pipes or through the corridor hatches must make a Difficult Terrain test or become stuck for the rest of the game.

Optional Special Rules (may be used if both players agree)

Low Gravity: This battle takes place in low gravity. Because of this, all units may ignore difficult terrain as if they had jump packs, although the distance they can move is still the same as normal, (the rules above about walls, Dreadnoughts etc, still apply). If a model ends its move inside difficult terrain then on the roll of a 1 it is removed. Also due to the low gravity, all models (except Terminators, Terminator sized models, vehicles, Wraithguard, Wraithlords or Talos) may move an extra D6" instead of firing in the Shooting phase.

No Atmosphere: The space hulk is an airless environment. It is assumed that all models are equipped with pressure suits or re-breathers which allow them to operate in the airless atmosphere on the hulk, even if these aren't shown on the models themselves. The increased vulnerability of models in such an environment is represented by reducing their saving throw by one point (eg, a model with a 5+ save is reduced to 6+, while a model with a 6+ save would get no save at all).

Note: The No Atmosphere rule applies to all models in any army, no matter how strange this may seem (yes, even Daemons or Avatars!). This keeps things nice and simple and avoids arguments about which models need to 'breath' and which don't! It also applies to invulnerable saves.

SET-UP

1 Divide the board into four quarters. Both players roll a dice, the player with the highest score may pick which quarter to deploy in. The other player's deployment zone is in the opposite quarter.

2 The player with the lowest score now deploys one unit in his quarter of the board. His opponent then deploys a unit in his own deployment zone. The players take turns deploying a unit at a time until their entire forces are on the table.

No unit can be deployed within 24" of the enemy at the start of the game. The players must deploy their units in the following order: Heavy Support, followed by Troops, Elites, HQ and finally Fast Attack.

If either side has any infiltrators, they may make one move after deployment but before the game starts.

3 Roll for who gets the first turn. The player with the highest score may choose whether to go first or second.

Armies deploy in opposite corners
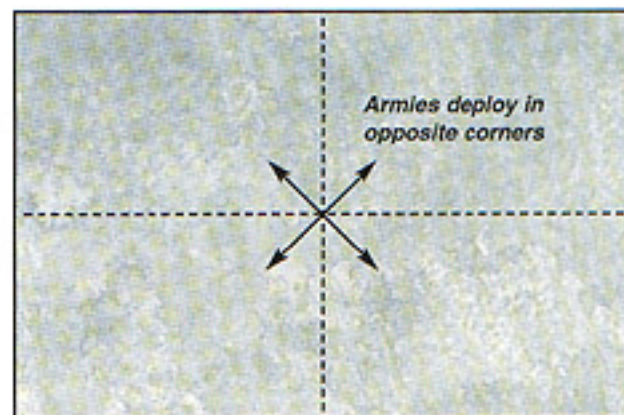
Divide the table up into four quarters and dice for the choice of quarter as deployment zone.

MISSION OBJECTIVES

Both forces are seeking to clear this section of the space hulk of all enemy forces, securing ground as they go. The player who occupies the most quarters of the board at the end of the game wins.

To claim a table quarter as occupied there must be no enemy units over half strength or mobile vehicles in the area. You must have a mobile vehicle, or at least one unit with more than half its original number in the area. Note characters and HQ choices cannot secure table quarters on their own.

RESERVES

None.

GAME LENGTH

The game lasts for eight turns, or six turns if the optional Low Gravity special rules are used.

LINE OF RETREAT

Units forced to fall back will do so towards the nearest board edge of their deployment zone, using the normal Fall Back rules.

COOLANT TANKS

The coolant tanks were the first objective to be built. The tanks themselves are made out of gutter pipe joints, whilst the walkway is thick card with mesh glued on to it (salvaged from an older space hulk board). The ladders and guard rails are available from model railway shops.

In the coolant tanks area I changed the texture of the floor from mesh to smooth metal. I did this by cutting up thin card into triangle shapes and gluing them directly onto the board itself.

The towers were suitably Orkified with glyph plates, which are available from Mail Order.

SLURRY PIT

The slurry pit is in the open area of the space hulk. It was originally intended to be a crater showing the edge of the asteroid in which the hulk is built. But I spilt a pot of PVA glue into the hole...!

The bridge is made out of upturned cavalry bases glued onto card. The rocky outcrops are polystyrene cut-offs glued together with PVA and then shaped by digging into them with my fingers.

POWER TURBINE

The third objective, the power turbine, is built around bits salvaged from an old, burnt-out computer. The turbine is the computer's cooling fan, the shape disguised with plastic bulkheads. The wires are from the same computer. The power converter is from the top of a Forge World bunker that we managed to scavenge from Mark Jones.

AIR CONDUIT

The air conduit is built from another piece of guttering. I imagine it is some sort of giant air pump that circulates oxygen around the hulk.

We added some Ork glyph plates and gubbins which we got from Mail Order. The wire mesh guard has a practical purpose; it stops any miniatures balanced on the edge of the conduit from falling down and getting lost.

MESH FLOOR

The majority of the floor of the space hulk is made out of wire mesh available from model railway stores. This was glued into place by covering the board with a thick layer of PVA glue and laying the mesh directly on top.

SLUDGE PIPE

The sludge pipe or waste pipe is made out of drainage guttering. The actual waste inside the pipe is layered PVA glue, painted green.

Gutter piping is available from most DIY shops in numerous sizes and shapes. You can also get hold of smaller plastic pipes used in plumbing, which are ideal for conduit pipes or just to lay on the board as cover.
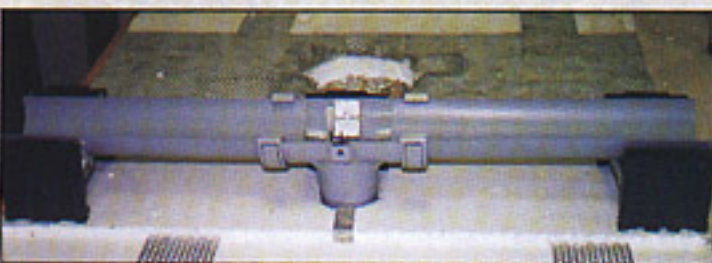
MUNITIONS STORE

The munitions store is a complex of corridors and rooms made out of the salvaged resin walls. The missiles are Stormboy rokkit packs, old pulsa rokkits and bombs from the Fighta-Bommer available from Forge World. Note the use of drinking straws as pipes in the bottom left hand corner.

FIRE-CONTROL TOWER

The fire-control tower is an important objective on the space hulk board. I wanted it to look reinforced and at a different height to everything else on the board. Originally I wanted it in the centre of the middle board, spanning the crater with a single bridge leading to it. My plans changed when I was given a resin Imperial bunker by Alan Merrett. This was perfect for the control tower, but was a little too big to be put in the centre of the board.

The bunker was glued onto a platform of bulkheads and the control room was added to the top using salvaged resin bits from the old space hulk board. Finally, we added the last of our Ork glyph plates and other gubbins.

PURGING THE SPACE HULK *GORKAN*

An Ork Warboss and the Emperor's Champion clash as the battle rages around them.

Sword Brethren Terminators are attacked on all sides.

A Terminator crashes through the doorway.

Surrounded! – the Black Templars Marshal leads his men as they fight their way to safety.