

# 48 HOURS

(The ravings of a man suffering from paint-shock)

by Nick Davis

**Yes, it's a movie starring Nick Nolte and Eddie Murphy, but Hollywood connections aside, it was also the total time Nick Davis took to paint his first 1,000 points of Dark Eldar! For most of us it takes months to raise an army. So we asked Nick to tell us how he achieved this epic feat, and more importantly, why?**

## NO, NO YOU CAN'T STOP ME - I MUST TELL THEM THE TRUTH...

I have always wanted to start an Eldar army - not a Craftworld Eldar army but an Eldar Pirate army. I put considerable thought into what it would look like: the Pirate Lord riding to war on the back of a Vyper, followed by squadrons of Eldar jetbikes and Pirate bands on foot. Well my imagination was as far as I got with my Eldar Pirates. I was still busy painting my Imperial Guard, Lizardmen, Chaos, building terrain etc, etc, etc...

Then the Dark Eldar appeared on the scene. In the eyes of the Imperium, these guys are the Eldar pirates. After all, the Imperial officials don't really distinguish between subtle racial differences. As far as they are concerned, all Eldar are evil, heretical Aliens out to destroy the Imperium. Their Codex hinted at them being one of the groups of Eldar who survived the Fall and that they had some desperate fear of a great, unseen enemy. The only way they can keep this enemy at bay is to keep up an existence of inflicting pain and suffering on all they meet.

This background sounded really cool. Besides, they are really great miniatures; sleek, spiky and with a real decadent, evil feel about them. How could I resist? I was also given the opportunity to get my hands on loads of new miniatures (the army was originally going to appear in Codex Dark Eldar) and that swung it.

I was able to grab loads of excellent, new plastic Dark Eldar, which would be used to build up the core of my army. Also if time permitted I wanted to convert some of these plastic Dark Eldar into units not yet available, such

as the Scourges. Plus I got my hands on enough Wyches to make a ten-man squad and have a spare to convert into a Beastmaster. For the Warp Beasts I planned to use Chaos Hounds - these will be replaced with the actual Warp Beast models when I am able to get hold of them. And finally to finish off this initial collection of miniatures I managed to blag the splendid Archon model.

## THE PLAN

Before I continue there is one last thing you must know. I have already mentioned that this army was going to appear in Codex Dark Eldar. Consequently, I was given a very tight-time frame to paint my army in. When I volunteered to attempt this mighty task, the guys, who were putting together the Codex were delighted. "Good", they said, "You have a week and a half to start and finish it!" Right in the middle of the World Cup as well... Doh!

Now I have always been able to paint up armies quickly, but never in quite such a short space of time. So I had to come up with a plan and stick to it. The first things I

needed to paint were the troops - two Warrior squads would give me my core force to start with. This would then be followed with the squad of Wyches. The final section of my force to paint would be the Archon, along with a bodyguard of six Warriors. This was my initial force and would be the core that I chose my army around when I started playing a game with it.

Then, if I managed to finish all that in time, I intended to build a squad of Scourges and if possible, paint up a Warp Beast pack and a Beastmaster. So that was my painting plan set - now to choose the colours.

## PAINT SCHEMES

This was the second army (the first was a small Khorne Daemon army) for which I have tried using a limited colour palette - that is choosing a handful of colours to paint an army with and sticking just to them. This is a great discipline as it forces you think about the colours you use. I wanted to link this colour scheme into the dark, evil, brooding nature of the Dark Eldar and keep the paint scheme simple. So I looked at a couple of the Studio armies to get some ideas. The Eldar and the brooding Dark Elf army looked a like the ideal place to start.

The Eldar army uses bright, primary colours, usually with a different contrasting colour for the helmet - I didn't think Dark Eldar would look right in colours like that. But after taking a quick look at the Dark Elves, with all the deep, moody colours like dark blue and very dark metal, I decided that these were the colours I would use.

With this in mind I selected my paints: Chaos Black, Skull White, Bleached Bone, Blood Red, Midnight Blue, Boltgun Metal, Chainmail, Brown Ink, Blue Ink, Flesh Ink and finally Black Ink. This was the palette of colours I used on my models. The bases were finished off using Goblin Green, Snakebite Leather and Bubonic Brown.

Everything was in place. The miniatures were going to be built at lunchtimes at work, and I planned to paint at least two hours in the evenings and get in five or six hours a day at the weekend (World Cup permitting). Now to work...

## PAINTING MY DARK ELДАР

When I start to paint a new army, I always find that the first five figures are the hardest to paint, as I'm never quite sure if the colour scheme will work.



The first thing I did was plan how to use the paints I had chosen for my colour palette. I wanted this army to look really dark, so I used a black undercoat. When I selected my paints I already had Midnight Blue in mind to be the main colour of my army. This paint was used on the Warriors' armour and vehicles, and was shaded with Blue Ink. I drybrushed the helmet plumes Blood Red to add a contrast to the dark blue. To distinguish them even more from Craftworld Eldar, the guns, face masks and any decoration were

painted in Boltgun Metal, shaded with a mix of Black and Blue Ink. The squad leaders, the Sybarites, were painted in the same colours as the Warriors, but I painted their helmets Blood Red and the plumes in Midnight Blue, to make them distinct from the Warriors.

Wyches are not members of a Kabal, but of a Wyche Cult, so their colour scheme is different to rest of the army. My Wyches were painted in the reverse of the Warrior colour scheme, with Blood Red armour, befitting their bloodthirsty status (I used Gloss Varnish to give the armour a shiny effect). The armour was shaded with Brown Ink. Any hair or plumes were painted in Midnight Blue.



The Dark Heart Raiders, of the Kabal of the Black Heart. The first 1,000 points, the first 48 hours.



## PAINTING MY DARK ELDAR cont...



I managed to find the time to paint my Scourges. Their colour scheme was influenced by the strong, comic book colours of the movie 'Flash Gordon' that I had watched earlier that week (it was the attack of the Hawkmen on War-Rocket Ajax that really did it). Again, each model was painted up from a black undercoat with Boltgun Metal on the armour and wings. This was then shaded with a mix of Black and Blue Ink. The

Scourges that were wearing helmets had them painted Midnight Blue to tie them into the rest of the army. A quick note on my Scourge Sybarite (pictured above); its power weapon is from a Necromunda Spyrrer (a Malcadon). I found the Spyrrers to be an excellent source of conversion material for the Dark Eldar.

To finish off I wanted to add a tiny detail that would give my army it's own individual character. After flicking through some old White Dwarfs, I chanced across a picture of some old Eldar Pirates with war paint on their faces. Perfect – the Dark Eldar are the same exotic, twisted aliens! So all my Dark Eldar who were not wearing helmets received facial tattoos, or in the case of the Wyches, war paint.



## FINISHED IN TIME... JUST!

I finished painting the very last miniature the night before the deadline. In total I had spent approximately 48 hours painting and building my army. I had managed to paint everything including the Beastmaster, his Warp Beasts and a bonus squad of converted Scourges, plus a Haemonculus and 3 Reaver Jetbikes! I was pretty amazed at what I had achieved – although it didn't make up for England being knocked out the World Cup on penalties (Nothing will ever make up for that! – Paul Sawyer)! I handed it all over to the guys in production, who were as amazed as I was that I had got it all painted in time, and then it was finally photographed.

Phew... in 48 hours of painting time I had finished a completely new WH40K army. It is now time for the ultimate test, learning how to fight with them over a WH40K battlefield.

## ANOTHER 48 HOURS

(BIGGER BUDGET, MORE CAR CHASES)

Some of you are probably flicking through your Codex Dark Eldar, trying to find a picture of my army. Well, sorry, you won't find it. After all that hectic work, my army was dropped due to lack of space. This did not particularly bother me as it had given me the chance to collect a fantastic, new army and it had shown me what I could do in a very limited space of time.

Since I first wrote this article my Dark Eldar army has grown quite a bit (see below). And after many games I have also discovered a few neat little tricks using the Raiders and the rapid moving Reaver Jetbikes (and try an Archon, tooled up with combat drugs and an Agoniser). Some of these stratagems I detailed in Dark Raiders (check out WD228). Unfortunately I have run out of space to explain some of my more fancy tactics. Perhaps I will get a chance in a future Dwarf, until then, strike fast, strike hard and strike first.



Additional reinforcements, another 48 hours.