

In California, we like to take it easy, man...

Apocalypse

A Necromundan campaign of cataclysmic proportions

By W. Jason Peck

I'm twenty-seven, live in Fremont, California in the U.S. where it's always sunny (except when it rains), am married to a beautiful and incredibly tolerant woman and own eight exotic birds. (Any more of this and he'll start harping on about the merits of collecting Orcs and Gobbos – I refer you to Journal 29's foreword by Gordon Davidson – Ed.) I play almost every GW game, especially now that I'm getting the hang of Epic 40,000. I specially love Blood Bowl (the third incarnation of which confirmed Jervis Johnson's place amongst the Gods!).

When not at home, I dwell in the Eye of Terror, from where I despatch my teeming Chaos hordes (and I shamelessly admit my favouritism towards Chaos Cultists) to smash all

that lie in my path – notably my brother's endless Ork legions.

On occasion (usually when the medicine wears off!), I stop, change hats and lead my implacable Warhammer Gobbo army in its quest for victory (Orcs themselves are only good for distracting the enemies from my mighty Goblin Wolf Boyz and for screening my Night Goblin archers!). Yet all these pursuits are only secondary when compared to my devotion to the awe-inspiring 'Shadowmoon Swampbats' (my Gobbo Blood Bowl team). I would go on, mentioning my Necromunda gangs especially the Chaos-tainted Cawdors 'The Changers', but I'm afraid that you might report me to the authorities!

The End is Nigh...

Hive Secundus has fallen! A Genestealer cult has seized control of the Spire from within and hordes of Brood Brothers and Genestealers are invading Hive City. The carnage is terrible and no force can stop their advance down-hive. The Imperial Guard forces protecting the city have been practically decimated due to half its number taking up arms with

the aliens. Only the private armies of the Hive City Houses remain to resist, but each is too wary of its neighbours to unite against the advancing foe. It is only a matter of time before the entire Hive falls to the aliens.

In the Underhive all is chaos, even more so than normal. Underhivers run this way and that desperately trying to escape. Many have gone up-Hive to join the defence forces

in the city, while still others have retreated to the furthest reaches of the Underhive and beyond in the search for somewhere to hide. Rumours are spreading like wildfire: a Tyranid Hive fleet is approaching the planet, the Adeptus Astartes are coming to rescue the planet, Hive Primus and the other Hives are unaware of their plight, the Tyranids are already here and their monstrous creatures

have joined the approaching cultists, in the Underhive no one knows the truth.

The tunnels of Down Town on the bleak shores of the sump lake of Hive Bottom have experienced a boom in population like never before. Underhivers, rival gangs, Bounty Hunters and even mutants all crowd the town. But these newcomers have not come in search of the wealth to be found at Hive Bottom, they've come in search of escape. But there is no escape, this is the furthest reaches of the Hive and there is no where else to go... or is there?

It is being whispered that there is a chance of escape. A slim chance, but a chance nonetheless. In ancient times, eons ago when the Hives were first constructed, the closest Hives were all connected via enormous conduits that ran beneath the surface to link them together. These vast, city sized highways carried power, traffic and supplies to the other Hives without having to risk the ash storms of the atmosphere. These conduits are long forgotten, buried along with the other countless secrets of the Hive Bottom. The whispers also speak of certain Ratskin Scouts that know the way to one of these conduits. Perhaps a determined gang could make the long, perilous journey to Hive Primus and sanctuary. Then again, considering the horrors of Hive Bottom, who knows what may be lurking in the ancient conduit?

Campaign Rules

This is an extended Arbitrator Campaign, consisting of about 15 weeks (game time), with about one battle a week. It is

assumed that this is the time required to make the journey to the next Hive. If the Arbitrator wishes, he can increase or decrease this time period.

For each week of their journey, after choosing an opponent, every gang will roll on the 'Apocalypse Scenario Table' to see what kind of fight the gang has to face during that week of travel. At the Arbitrator's discretion, the gangs will forego this roll and instead participate in a special scenario prepared by the Arbitrator. These scenarios represent special locations or obstacles that must be overcome in order to continue the journey. These scenarios can be of any nature the Arbitrator wishes, but here's some suggestions: a special Outlaw Trading Post hosting the most malformed and grotesque of mutants, a dark temple dedicated to Chaos teeming with Beastmen and perhaps even a few Daemons, a forgotten tomb or warehouse packed with Archeotech, a nest of Genestealers in suspended animation which is disturbed by all the commotion, etc. The possibilities are only limited by the Arbitrator's imagination.

Beginning the Campaign

Each player must build a new gang from scratch in the normal way. Due to the nature of this campaign the Arbitrator may decide that Spyrer gangs are inappropriate. Given the nature of the campaign, the players should strongly consider using every credit to purchase extra equipment or members instead of saving spare credits in the stash.

The campaign begins in Down Town and each of the players may play a standard scenario from the rulebook. This represents the final preparations of the gang before it breaks contact in the Hive to seek escape through the Conduit. This also allows the players one last chance to do a bit of shopping and get some equipment that will become very scarce in the battles to come. Due to the invasion, all gangs may visit Down Town after their first battle, even Outlaw gangs.

After week one, every gang becomes an Outlaw gang and follows the rules for Outlaws with the following exceptions and alterations:

- **Territory:** All gangs lose their territories and must roll on the 'Conduit Territory Chart' after each scenario to see where they have set up their next base camp.
- **Collecting Income:** Each gang collects whatever income they can from their current territory before they move on to the next. The Territories from the Conduit Territory Chart are treated as Outlaw territories for the purposes of collecting income. In this campaign, income is considered to be food collected or foraged (see below) that equals the amount collected in credits.
- **Foraging:** This is treated in exactly the same way as in the Outlanders rulebook except that the income collected is actually food that equates to the number of credits rolled.
- **Gaining Additional Territory:** A gang that gains a new piece of territory follows the same rules as in the

Apocalypse Scenario Table (2D6)

2. The player with the higher *Gang Rating* may choose which scenario is played. This scenario is fought in an old dome which is prone to cave-ins. If either side uses a heavy weapon or grenade during the game the roof caves in on a D6 roll of 4+. Roll each time such a weapon is used. If the roof caves in, then the game ends immediately in a draw and all models must roll under their Initiative to escape. Any gangers who fail this test sustain a S4 hit with a -1 armour save modifier.

3. The player with the higher *Gang Rating* may choose which scenario is played.

4-6. Play the *Gang Fight* scenario.

7. Play the *Scavengers* scenario.

8-11. The player with the lower *Gang Rating* may choose which scenario is played.

12. The player with the higher *Gang Rating* may choose which scenario is played. The game is fought in a dangerously polluted area of the Conduit: roll a D6 for each model that moves on the tabletop, as opposed to on gantries or buildings. On a 1 the model suffers a S3 hit from the deadly toxic waste. Even Ratskins are at risk from the poisons.

Outlanders rulebook, but must remember that they roll for a new territory after their next battle. In addition, a gang cannot Loot a territory because the territories in the Conduit are so poor it is assumed that this has already been done.

- **Bounty:** Due to the nature of this campaign, these rules from the Outlanders book do not apply.

- **Outlaw Trading Post:** Since all the gangs are journeying into the wild unknown of the

Conduit, there are no Trading Posts to visit. Indeed, the other gangs are the only other signs of 'civilisation'. A player may send one (or more) of his gang members to visit another gang to attempt to trade equipment or food (credits). A gang member may trade with only one other gang at a time, so if a player wishes to deal with more than one gang, they must assign a separate gang member to visit each gang. The chosen gang must then be willing to assign one of its own gang members to meet and trade or the deal is off. Gang members who trade with other gangs may not work the gang's territory or *Forage*. These inner-gang trade agreements are very informal negotiations with no set rules, so individual gangs can trade any equipment they want (with the Arbitrator's approval) as long as both parties agree.

- **New Recruits:** All of the gangs are on their own in the Conduit, they may not hire new recruits or *Hired Guns* (unless the Arbitrator prepares a special scenario that includes some way of doing so).

Scenarios

After rolling on the Apocalypse Scenario Table, players may choose from the scenarios listed below. Since all of the gangs are considered Outlaws in this campaign, then they can all choose from these scenarios. Each of these scenarios is played following the normal rules except for the following modifications:

1. **Scavengers:** The Loot collected at the end of this scenario is considered ancient equipment. The player may

use the total Loot scavenged to buy any equipment he chooses from the Outlaw Trading Post equipment price charts. The player may not pool any credits from his stash to this total and any left over credits are lost. Due to their ancient condition, any weapons bought in this manner are treated with the Scavy Weapons rule (ammo rolls on a 1 or 6).

2. Hit and Run:

- **Blitz:** If the Water Still in this scenario is destroyed, then the defending gang must halve its income from foraging after this scenario (this week).

- **Stick Up:** If the attacking gang in this scenario escapes with the Loot, then the defending gang must forfeit half its income from foraging to the attacking gang.

3. **Ambush:** If the gang that wins this scenario is entitled to take a territory from its opponent, then they may exchange territories with their opponent if they choose after the territories have been generated following the scenario.

4. **Rescue Mission:** Up to one of these scenarios may be played after each of the scheduled weekly scenarios (but if a gang member is captured during this scenario, then they may not be rescued). Captured gang members may not be sold to the Guilders (the gangs left all 'civilisation' behind), but they may be used by the capturing gang as a beast of burden. When used in this manner, the gang receives an extra 1D6 credits when tallying up their

Conduit Territory Chart

D66	Territory	Income	Notes
11-15	Wastes	0	
16	Collapsed	0	One gang member may try to <i>Dome</i> scavenge in the area, and will earn 2D6 credits. On a roll of 4+ the area collapses and the ganger make a successful Initiative test or die!
21-22	Tunnels	0	Your gang has found a buried entrance to a labyrinth of ancient service ducts beneath the Conduit's floor. When the gang fights its next scenario (if the scenario allows), then it can use these ducts to position up to three fighters anywhere on the battlefield at ground level. Models are set up at the end of the player's first turn and cannot be placed within 8" of enemy models.
23-24	Sump Spillage	5	The ground here is just fertile enough to support fungal vegetation.
25-26	Vents	0	(See <i>Tunnels</i>)
31-35	Wastes	0	
36	Fungus Grotto	0	The gang may choose to eat fungus growing in this cave to avoid starvation and, thus, put all its scavenging in its stash. However, on a D6 roll of 1 a randomly selected gang member dies from food poisoning.
41-46	Sludge Sea	0	A gang member may dive here to see if he can drag up any valuable artifacts that have sunk to the bottom. Roll a D6: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The ganger dies, either eaten by some horrible mutated monster, or killed off by swimming into a highly toxic area. 2-4. The ganger finds nothing of value, but survives. 5. The ganger discovers something worth up to 10 credits. The player may buy one piece of equipment from the Outlaw Trading Post equipment chart, and any left over credits are lost. Due to their ancient condition, weapons bought in this way count the <i>Scavy Weapons</i> rule (ammo rolls on a 1 or 6). 6. The ganger discovers something worth up to a D6x10 credits (see 5 above for details).
51-52	Clean Water	5	The gang works this site to replace their more contaminated water <i>Hole</i> supplies, thus saving 5 credits worth of food.
53-56	Wastes	0	
61	Spore Cave	0	Your gang has discovered a hidden cave where many kinds of rare fungi grow. A ganger can harvest the cave, Roll a D6: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1-2. The ganger finds 1-3 doses of <i>Stinger Mould</i>. 3-4. The ganger finds 1-3 doses of <i>Blade Venom</i>. 5. The ganger finds 1 dose of <i>Icrotic Slime</i>. 6. The ganger finds 1 dose of <i>Spook</i>. <p>After the ganger has harvested the cave, he must make a Toughness test or he contracts Spore Sickness. This is a fungal disease in which plump and colourful fungi sprout from all over the victim's body. Spore Sickness is not lethal and recovery is automatic, but the ganger will not be able to take part in any future fights until he rolls a 4+ at the start of a game.</p>

Conduit Territory Chart

D66	Territory	Income	Notes
62	<i>Snake Pit</i>	0	The gang has discovered a pit that serves as the lair of a Wild Snake. A ganger may attempt to catch this snake, but on a D6 roll of a 1 he was careless and is bitten, killing him. Assuming the snake is captured, then the gang may distil one bottle of <i>Wild Snake</i> for every 2 credits spent, up to a maximum of five.
63	<i>Archeotech</i>	0	The gang stumbles upon a cache of hidden equipment. The gang <i>Hoard</i> may use 2D6x10 credits to buy any equipment they choose from the Outlaw Trading Post equipment price charts. Any left over credits are lost. Due to the ancient condition of this hidden equipment, any weapons bought in this way are treated with the <i>Scavy Weapons</i> rule (ammo rolls on a 1 or 6).
64	<i>Hermit Camp</i>	0	The gang befriends a strange hermit who dwells alone out in these wastes. He invites the gang to share his camp. He is a Wyrd and will fight with the gang in their next fight (see pages 68-75 in the Outlanders rulebook to determine his powers and equipment). He fights for free, but will not join the gang on its journey. Redemptionist gangs must re-roll this territory.
65	<i>Plague Infestation</i>		The gang has unfortunately set up camp near a localised concentration of Zombie Plague. The plague's affects are not strong enough to infect the entire gang, but 1D3 random gang members have to roll on the Zombie Plague table (p28 of the Outlanders rulebook).
66	<i>Spirit Site</i>		The gang has unwittingly chosen a site steeped in the powers of the Underhive spirits. As a result, the gang is possessed and made to do the bidding of the spirits for a short time. Instead of rolling normally to determine the gang's next scenario, the Arbitrator will assign a specific scenario and opponent. The exact nature of these details are left up to the Arbitrator, but they should serve to further the story of the campaign in some way and reflect the whims of the Underhive spirits. The week that the gang occupies this territory, the gang may not collect income, participate in any activities, attempt any rescues and does not consume any food (thus the stash remains untouched).

income for the week (this represents the work saved by using this forced labour), but must also expend 2 credits to feed their slave. In this case, the gang member's original gang may attempt a rescue (but remember, only one Rescue Mission may be attempted per week of game time) until successful. The rules for exchanging, ransoming and seizing a prisoner's equipment remain unchanged.

6. The Hit: This scenario is treated as normal except that the rules for putting the opposing leader out of action are ignored (nobody has any established territory to take advantage of).

7. Loot and Pillage: This scenario is treated the same as normal except that each Loot counter is only worth 1D6 credits (due to the poorer nature of the territories). In addition, if there is not even enough money in the gang's

stash, then too bad, the attacker just takes everything there is.

Winning the Campaign

As can be well imagined, just surviving the full fifteen weeks in this campaign is quite an accomplishment. The rules are designed to make a harsh environment (the Underhive) almost intolerable. Many gangs will be mauled and then be forced to continue with few members or with poor equipment or both. Such

gangs will probably be continuously walloped in their future games, but this is the whole point of this campaign! The fun is the challenge and watching as the gangs struggle against each other and the dangers of the Conduit in their desperate flight to freedom. A player can retire his gang at any time (they didn't make it), and they are out of the campaign. This is a fight for survival after all, and it's unfair to allow fresh new gangs to enter a race already in progress.

The winner of the campaign is the gang who reaches the next Hive with the highest Gang Rating.

Adding a Little Flavour

- Design an 'Apocalypse specific Campaign Events Table' using the table found on pp 87-88 of Outlanders as a guide.

- Use the *Monster Roll* rule from the Scavengers scenario (p70 of the Necromunda Sourcebook) and the *Treacherous Conditions* rules from Outlanders for all scenarios to simulate the fact that the Conduit is crawling with hostile creatures and is a dangerous environment.

- In order to emphasise the scarcity of equipment even further, every time a weapon explodes then the player must make another ammo roll. If

this ammo roll fails, then the weapon is permanently destroyed in the explosion.

Scenario I The Bottleneck

This scenario is ideal for three to four gangs, but by making the setup larger can accommodate as many as six (although that would certainly be a tight fit). Ideally, the arbitrator should have the gangs split themselves into teams of three to four gangs and then run the scenario for each of them in succession. This means that the arbitrator should be running the scenario 1-3 times (or even more for larger campaigns). Since a gang must have its members pass through the bottleneck on the opposite side of the table in this scenario to continue in the campaign, gangs who are forced to withdraw may have to make the attempt again, perhaps joining the next wave of gangs attempting the run.

Setting Up

The Bottleneck is played on a full-size table which needs to be at least 6' by 4'. The table should be filled with as much terrain as possible. The arbitrator should select four 'booty' chits or some other suitable marker to represent rat warrens and place them across the board at ground

AT FIRST, the rats were a blessing; they made for good hunting, but after a week the numerous vermin went from food source to menace. Finally, by the week's end, all the gangs had discovered the bottleneck where the rats came from. The Conduit in this region consisted of little but ruins and collapsed tunnels. Only one small section of the Conduit, barely a hundred yards wide, was large enough to allow further passage. Unfortunately, this section of the Conduit was teeming with the rodent vermin.

The first few gangs who attempted to pass were driven back by giant rats. The mass exodus halted and rumours began to pass through the various groups. Some said that the rats were led by a crazed half-rat half-man mutant. Others spoke of traps, swarming rats and strange sounds. Soon, however, the various gang leaders decided to hold a truce-talk. At first nothing was accomplished, but once the initial posturing and insulting had passed, the talk became constructive. Too much time had already been wasted and, for all they knew, the Tyranid hordes could even now be closing in behind them. Therefore, it was decided: The gangs would unite to brave the gauntlet and smash their way through the bottleneck. Once through, however, then things would be different...

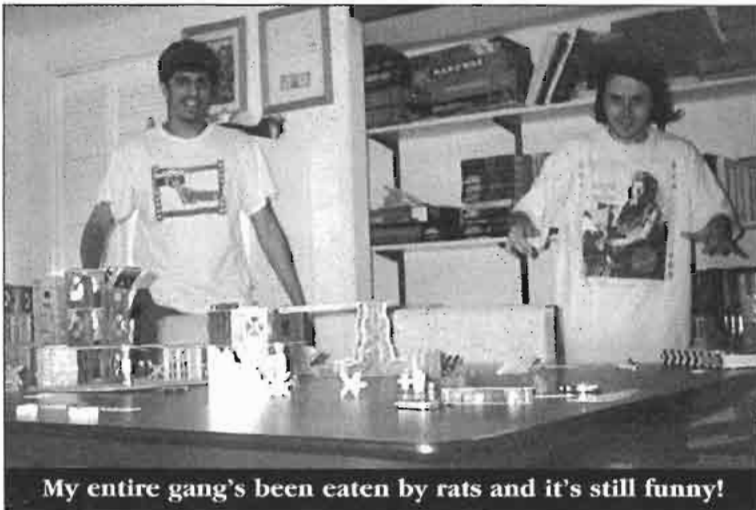
Giant Rats

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
6	4	0	3	2	1	3	1	4

Special Rules

Dodge: 4+ unmodified save which counts against all attacks apart from those that don't allow any armour saving throw.

level. In addition, a section measuring 24" should be



My entire gang's been eaten by rats and it's still funny!

clearly marked in the middle of one side of the longer table edges. This is the 'bottleneck' and is the only place a model may leave the table on this side. All participating gang members must set up within 6" of the opposite table edge, in any manner mutually agreeable to the participating players.

The Objective

The objective of this scenario is for a gang to have more than half of its members leave the opposite table edge via the Bottleneck. Gangs are not supposed to compete against one another in this scenario and should not purposefully attack rival gang members for it will be hard enough as it is (although firing dangerously close to 'allies' or unfortunately catching these allies in the radius of area-affect weapons is allowed and even encouraged!). Gangs needn't make Bottle Tests although they may Bottle by choice (unless half of their members have already made it through the Bottleneck). Gangs that chose to Bottle must make an attempt to pass through the Bottleneck again until they

succeed in order to continue the campaign. The gangs move first, beginning with the gang with the highest Gang Rating and then continuing in descending order (this will remain the turn sequence) followed by the arbitrator.

Treacherous Condition

This ruined section of the Conduit is very dangerous and the following Treacherous Conditions are in affect across the table: *Sludgy Surface* (12) and *Rats* (55).

In addition, the arbitrator controls six Necromundan Giant Rats for each gang participating in this scenario. These rats should be broken up into groups of three and placed in hiding anywhere on the board the arbitrator chooses, but at least 18" from the nearest gang member). Note: if the gangs are exceptionally weak in your campaign by this point, you may wish to limit the rats to 3 or 4 per gang. Naturally, these rats are hostile, and the arbitrator uses them to attempt to destroy the gangs and prevent them from

passing through the Bottleneck (see below).

Reinforcements

This section of the Conduit is swarming with rats and, therefore, each time three or more rats are put out of action, the arbitrator is entitled to roll a D6 at the start of his turn. On a roll of 1-4, three more giant rats appear from one of the warrens (the arbitrator chooses which), but they may not move this turn. Simply destroying the rats is not enough, the gangs must actively move towards the Bottleneck or lose to attrition.

Carrying Fallen Comrades

Due to the nature of this scenario, a gang member may find himself in a situation where he wishes to keep moving forward, but he doesn't want to leave a wounded comrade behind. The following rules cover such a situation:

A ganger can carry one *downed* comrade (or even a *downed* 'ally') slung over his shoulder by ending his turn in base-to-base contact with them. On the ganger's following turn, he may pick up the fallen ganger and move normally, except for the following penalties:

1. He may not run or charge farther than his base movement rate.
2. He may not shoot with anything other than a pistol.
3. All ballistic attacks are made at -1 to hit while carrying another ganger.
4. When participating in hand-to-hand combat, the ganger



The dangerous and foreboding depths of the Underhive...

may not use more than one single handed weapon unless he has more than two arms (one arm must be used to steady the extra burden).

5. Those with only one good arm carrying a ganger may not participate in hand-to-hand combat or fire a weapon at all.

6. A fighter may choose to drop his burden at any time by simply tossing him onto the ground, out must spend the next turn as normal to pick him up again.

Ending the Game

The game ends once all of the gangs have either Bottled out or have passed through the Bottleneck. Gangs who had at least half of their members pass through the Bottleneck are considered successful in their attempt to continue and all wounded members who survive or are captured (treat as 'Full Recovery') are allowed through as well. Gangs who fail in their attempt to pass through the Bottleneck must continue to make attempts

until successful or retire from the campaign.

Experience

- +2D6 Survive battle (even if wounded).
- +5 For taking one of the arbitrator's models down and out.
- +5 For carrying a fallen ganger off of the table edge and through the Bottleneck.
- +10 To the Gang Leader whose gang first succeeds in getting half its members through the Bottleneck.

Suggestions

This scenario can be very challenging for the players, but the harrowing nature is sure to keep the players thrilled. Desperate gangs battling their way through swarms of Giants Rats, never taking their eyes off of their so called 'allies' – this is the stuff of legend. The arbitrator should encouraged the players to develop a strategy and work together (at least initially) in their attempts to run this gauntlet, after all, it will make for an even richer storyline once they are beyond the Bottleneck and at one another's throats again. Imagine a ganger who encounters an opponent prone in a future battle who once carried him past a swarm of ravenous rats to freedom. Will he be able to bring himself to take advantage of the man while he's down? Or will he slink off into the shadows, pretending that the encounter never happened?

However you do it, enjoy it!