



TAKE THE TUBE

(or ten pounds... that's a bargain!)

by Stuart Witter

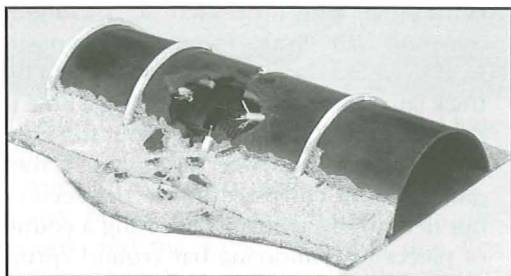
'The hives of Necromunda are scattered over the cloud-strewn surface of the planet, linked by a network of overground travel tubes and subterranean passages. From the top of a hive it might be possible to see the tips of distant hives projecting from the seas of poison mists like far-flung islands. Some closer hives are connected by open roads across the wastes but most are connected together by transportation tubes supported on pylons and suspended on cables,' said Stuart.

'Lets make one,' said Rob.

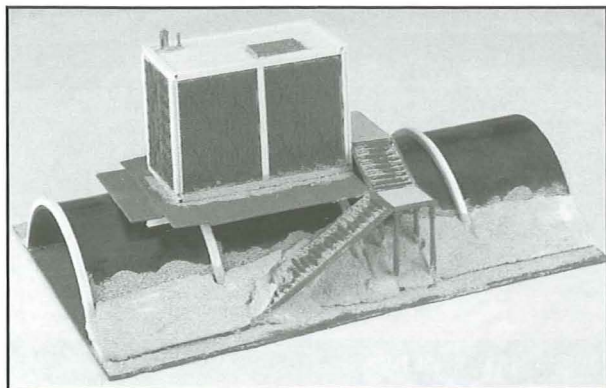
So we did!

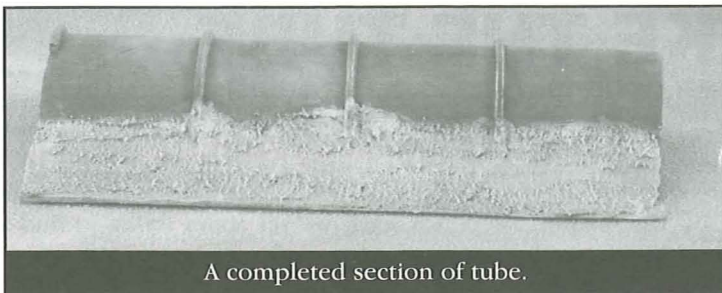
To start with we discussed whether we should attempt a suspension bridge-based travel tube hanging over the battlefield supported by girders and alike, or a tube that would be almost completely covered with ash. The latter not only sounded a bit easier to start with, but also allowed us to model a breach into the travel tube that we could use in a scenario we had devised. As such we headed to our local B&Q to see what kind of tubes they could offer us in order to aid our scenery building endeavours. An erratic and somewhat knuckle-whitening ride later we were browsing the extensive drainpipe range that the hardware store offered. The half drainpipe that we thought would be the most useful turned out to be four quid for two metres! Top value we thought and after picking up some interesting looking bracket

things that held a hefty price tag of twelve pence, each we set about trying to find an unsuspecting staff member to cut up our pipe... Now the folks at the shop usually help me out cutting up bits of wood to facilitate getting them into my car and alike, however this particular staff member informed us that they did not have the relevant equipment to do it for us. If the shop did not have an extensive range of saws I might have believed him, we responded to his comments with a half hearted shoulder shrug-come-sigh paid and left.



The basic tube construction is really simple and cheap, after cutting of one foot long pieces of drainpipe, we glued them onto some hardboard bases. Cutting up the brackets we made strengthening ribs that were glued in equally spaced intervals along the tube. As you can see from the pictures one rib is placed at the end of the pipe so joins look a little tidier on the tabletop. After adding these we built up ash on one side where it would be blown against the walls of the tube. I used polystyrene cut into shape using one of GW's hot wire jobbies (it seems to be the quickest method and I only burnt myself a few times!). I am sure there are loads of ways to build up ash type mounds, polyfilla, etc. that would be a lot better looking in the long run but we wanted to make this lot in a day and as such needed something that would be quick and mess free. Talking of mess we then applied a liberal coat of PVA to the bases and dumped a bucket full of sand on them to dry (later inspection





A completed section of tube.

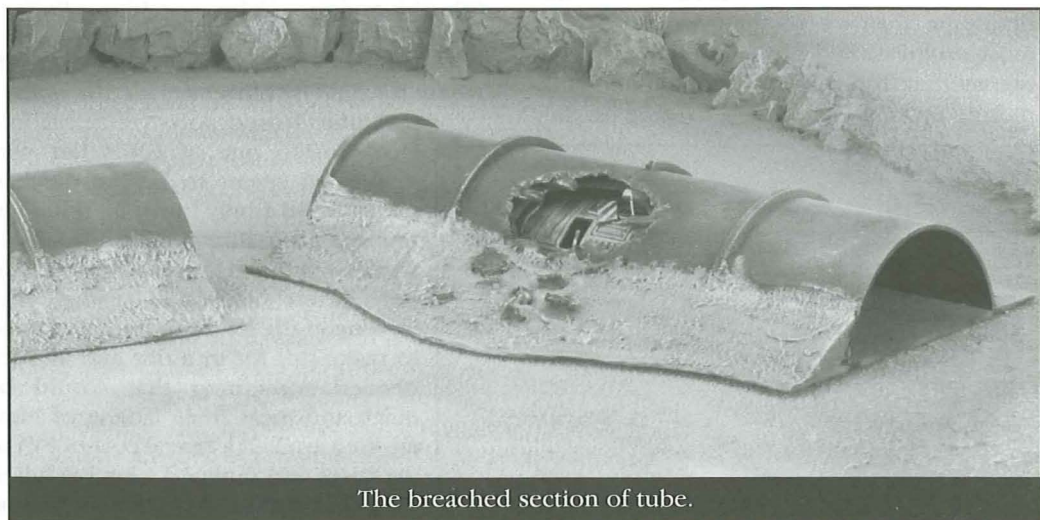
revealed a few more coats would be in order and I decided to apply them laced with paint later on). We made four plain sections so that on a six foot by four foot board we could have a completely plain travel tube running the width of the table that could be blown up during the game and replaced with a breach segment.

The breach section required a little more planning. The walls needed to look substantial and I decided to include a transport train inside. I wanted a composite kind of feel to the wall rather than just a big thick concrete one, so after cutting a hole in the wall I cut a smaller hole about the same shape in the left over drainpipe. I then glued the off cut piece inside the section, but held it off the main wall using a couple of pieces of reinforcing bar (round sprue) and an energy conduit (wire). To make the rubble wall look convincing I filed down the edges to look like they had been made of some kind of stone/plascrete. This looked a lot better than the original drilled and snapped plastic look it had previously sported. The rib that ran across the hole

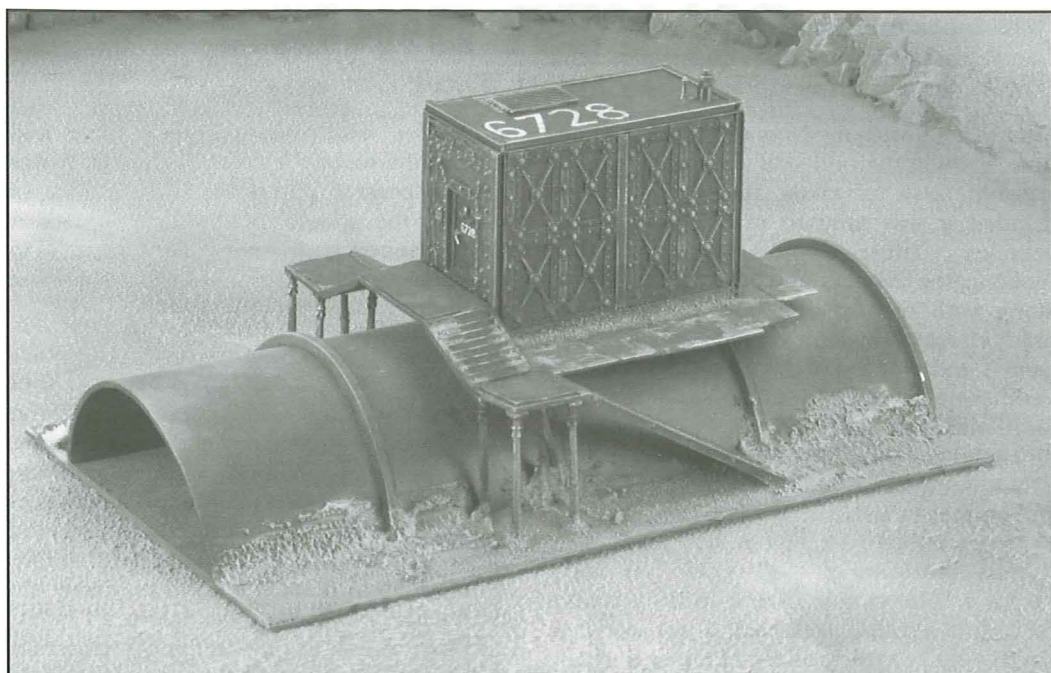
was then snapped and glued on – a reinforcing bar (wire) was added in the ends of these to make them look functional. I saved the middle pieces of the blasted out section, cut them up and filed the edges down in a similar fashion to the tube so that

I could add them to the base later. I couldn't decide what to make the train out of for age, then in a flash of inspiration (I was sat where I have most of my good ideas) I saw a redundant R2D2 bubble bath bottle sat on the other side of the bathroom. I thought his midriff was an excellent sci-fi train type shape and after a little more 'deliberation' took him to pieces for a better cause (don't worry I had two of these little babies so I didn't mind cutting one up). I removed a panel from Artoo's side and added a little interior detail for those who might peer inside of the train, and glued it into the tube. I then packed it away from the side so that the train didn't look like it filled the entire tube. I glued the beast down and added polystyrene to represent the build up of ash and then used the afore prepared rubble and the obligatory corroding skeleton to finish the job before giving the base a thick layer off sand.

Whilst I was cutting up R2D2, Rob busied himself creating an access point with the last section of drainpipe we had managed



The breached section of tube.



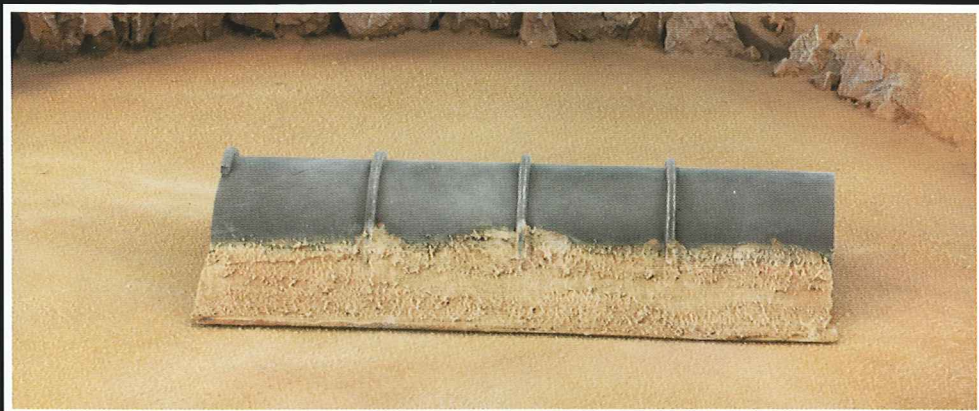
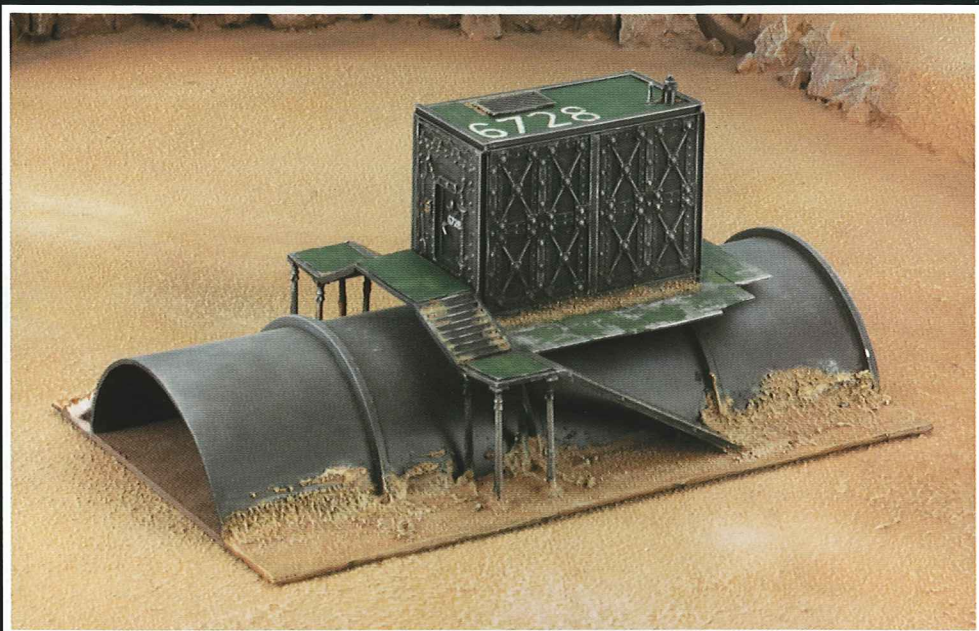
The Maintenance section of tube

to squeeze into his Orion. Again the finely honed basic tube technique was used to superb effect, and the access point was to be built on top of the tube. A rather sorry looking railway set footbridge formed the base of the cabin, its roof being used as the tread plates that the small building sits upon. The actual building itself was constructed using Necromunda bulkheads that had the ladders removed. They had been carefully cut to size and then plastic rod, girder shaped extrusion, was used to build a frame for the pieces to sit into. The end pieces of the cabin used one of the cut down ladders and a bulkhead with a door hole. The door that sits in the frame was scratch built by Rob out of plasticard. He detailed it with a skull and scroll device, a door handle and hinges. The railway footbridge parts were arranged in such a way as the door is at the raised level, and on entering you would descend into the tube from above. The roof was just plain plasticard with a vent hatch and aerials added to give interest to the cabin. The hatch is a piece of unsuspecting railway kit and the aerial is part of a chimera's multilaser.

The paint job is a very simple one and

needed to match my ash waste board, I have chosen to play my games in an area of wastes rich in corroded iron deposits, a pinky brown shade covers my bases and board, and the scenery matches this. The tubes themselves were to match the conventional Warhammer 40k feel, grey with industrial yellow and black stripes meant the wastes still gives the impression that the tube is part of the hive.

All in all the six foot of transport tube we made only cost around ten pounds (OK, the railway bits should have cost about that to, but they were just lying about) so you can see that the simple gaming terrain we made whilst play testing the game was done quickly and cheaply. We were more interested in playing the game than what it looked like to start with, having no models or scenery seems daunting to start with but the ash waste is fairly sparsely populated with the stuff. Games can be played with only a handful of rocks and a burnt out wreck of a vehicle, whilst still providing an interesting battle. Winning at Battles in the Ash Wastes does not rely as heavily on hugging cover, tactical manoeuvre of your vehicles around the scenery is what counts – and not crashing into it!



Stuart Witter's Asb Waste 'tube' terrain pieces. Read all about how he made these on pages 2-16 of this magazine.