ASH WASTES BEASTIES

EXPERIMENTAL RULES

by Chris Ward and Stuart Witter

Despite the conditions of Necromunda's Ash Wastes, it is not a completely dead wasteland. Life has found many ways, as it inevitably does, of surviving both on and below the surface of the shifting ash plains, as well as in the sludge seas. Microscopic bacteria and the creatures that feed on them may be of little use to wandering Nomads, but there are many larger creatures in the ash deserts too. Mutated creatures living in the wastes may be captured and tamed for riding, and larger, lumbering, armoured beasts make great pack animals as they can carry their own weight and more in baggage. Many beasts used in the wastes are imported from off-world, or genetically bred to survive in the toxic conditions, especially those used by guilders to transport goods from hive to hive. There are many advantages of beasts over vehicles: they don't need fuel or fixing regularly, they will eat virtually anything, and if the gang hits hard times, well, you can always cook the things.

You can use virtually any creatures in your games of Necromunda: Battles in the Ash Wastes. Just make sure you apply the correct rules below and you're away. If you're stuck for ideas, why not take a look at some of the creature conversions in this issue.

TYPES OF BEASTS

Generally speaking there are four sizes of beast: small, medium, large and gigantic. A small beast is a horse-sized beast that one ganger can ride, medium beasts are larger, but still only suitable for one rider, large beasts are considerable monsters able to lug around weapons and equipment and gigantic are so large that they are suitable for several 'crew'. Each of the beast types can then be tailored to represent the beast you have created. You just pay more points to increase the beast's characteristics. Just try to keep everything WYSIWYG.

WHO CAN RIDE?

Anyone can ride a beast of any size, providing they pay the points cost. Note however, that large and gigantic beasts may have mounted weapons... just like some vehicles, and as such the cost of the weapon is added to the beast.

BEASTS IN THE HIVE

Beasts may never enter the hive, and so may not take part in normal games of Necromunda. It is recognised that Guilders often use pack beasts, but the ridden creatures described here are not suitable for the dense environment of Necromunda's hives.

BEASTS AND BOARDING

Beasts may be boarded just like vehicles, with the exception of small beasts, which are treated as cavalry and may not be boarded at all, nor may they attempt to board a vehicle. A cavalry model is a single entity and is treated in the same way as any other foot model.

BEASTS AND RAMMING

Beasts may not ram or run models down, it is not in their nature to do so, and they will naturally avoid a collision. Beasts moving into contact with a model must do so by charging into close combat as normal.

Vehicles can, if they wish, ram beasts. Beasts use the rider's Initiative to attempt to dodge ramming vehicles but randomly determine whether the rider or beast is hit as for rules for shooting at beasts (see below). Bikes attempting to run down large beasts take a hit at the Toughness of the beast, not the rider.

BEASTS, SHOOTING AND CLOSE COMBAT

Any model riding a beast uses weapons as normal, note that move or fire weapons may only be used if the beast remained stationary that turn.

Shooting at beasts is treated similarly to monsters in Warhammer. Roll a dice for each hit to see whether it hits the rider or beast – 1-3 the beast is hit, 4-6 the rider. Resolve each as you would for shooting at individual models.

In close combat gangers fighting a rider and a medium or larger beast should be treated as a multiple combat.

RIDERLESS BEASTS

Medium, large and gigantic beasts may find themselves in the position that they have no rider. Any model may take over a riderless beast just like a vehicle with no driver, however, as beasts have minds of their own they will not move out of control like vehicles. For each beast with no rider on your side, you should roll a D6 at the start of each turn. On a 1-3 the beast stays where it is, not motivated enough to move. On a 4-6 the beast wanders D6" in a random direction, although it will not endanger itself (by walking off a cliff etc). Any models the beast moves into contact with it will attack in close combat. A beast that is charged will fight back as normal.

SMALL SIZED BEAST

Cost: 25 Creds

Only a single ganger can ride a small beast, they aren't big enough to carry more than one man and his equipment, and are treated as one model. The rider of a small beast receives a +1 saving throw, or a 6+ save if it had no save before, to represent the extra protection given by the beast. Movement is increased to 8", which is doubled as normal when running or charging and +1 Attack that is resolved at Strength 3 representing the beast's attack.

Models riding small beasts can fire weapons with a 360 degree (all round) fire arc just as if they were riding a bike.

MEDIUM SIZED BEAST

Cost: 50 Creds

Medium beasts are considerably larger than small beasts. They are stockier, heavy-set animals often used by the guild for transporting goods inside as well as outside the hive.

Although a medium beast is somewhat larger than the small beasts we have described above, they are still only suitable to be ridden by one ganger.

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

Save: 5+ (due to armoured hide, modified as normal).

Leadership: The rider's Leadership is used for all Ld tests, the beast's Ld will only be needed if the rider is taken down or out, and the beast becomes riderless (see Riderless Beasts).

Upgrades: To reflect the variation in models between players, the following characteristic 'upgrades' may be bought for the medium beast: +1 W, +1 S, +1 A, +1 I.

You may only buy one of each characteristic upgrade. The first characteristic increase costs 10 creds, the second 20 creds, the third 30 creds and the fourth 40creds. All four upgrades total therefore 100 creds. Upgrades must be purchased at the same time as the beast; they may not be added later to a beast your gang already owns.

LARGE SIZED BEAST

Cost: 100 Creds

These are substantial beasts often used to carry goods as well as gang fighters from hive to hive. They may often be seen fitted with harnesses that allow the beast to carry a heavy weapon, such as the crude harpoons favoured by nomad beast riders.

Although a large beast is thicker set and able to carry greater loads, they are still only suitable to be ridden by one ganger.

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
	4	3	0	4	5	2	2	2	4

Save: 5+ (due to armoured hide, modified as normal).

Leadership: The rider's Leadership is used for all Ld tests, the beast's Ld will only be needed if the rider is taken down or out, and the beast becomes riderless (see Riderless Beasts).

Heavy Weapon: A Heavy mounted on a large beast may have a heavy weapon mounted just as if he were the nominated gunner on a vehicle. Here the cost is added to the beast, not the Heavy, in a similar way to vehicle guns.

Fearsome: Large beasts are so big and frightening they cause *Fear*. This also makes the rider immune to *Fear* from other fear causing models.

Upgrade: To reflect the variation in models between players, the following characteristic 'upgrades' may be bought for the large beast: +1 W, +1 S, +1 A, +1 Save.

You may only buy one of each of these upgrades. The first characteristic increase costs 20creds, the second 30creds, the third 40creds and the fourth 50creds. All four upgrades are therefore 140creds. Upgrades must be purchased at the same time as the beast; they may not be added later to a beast your gang already owns.

GIGANTIC BEASTS

Cost: 250 Creds

These massive, elephant sized beasts are very rare in the ash deserts of Necromunda, but nonetheless may be found from time to time. They are huge creatures either imported from off world or horribly mutated from millennia of pollution, are able to carry several fighters or giant cargos.

Gigantic beasts may be ridden by up to five models, just as if it were a vehicle with a transport capacity of five. Note that a suitable area for riding models must be on the model, just as with vehicles.

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
	4	2	0	5	6	5	2	2	4

Save: 5+ (due to armoured hide, modified as normal).

Leadership: The rider's Leadership is used for all Ld tests. The beast's Ld will only be needed if the rider is taken down or out, and the beast becomes riderless.

Heavy Weapon: A Heavy mounted on a gigantic beast may have a heavy weapon mounted just as if he were the nominated gunner on a vehicle. Here the cost is added to the beast, not the Heavy, in a similar way to vehicle guns.

Close combat: This is treated differently with gigantic beasts. Only the massive beast itself may fight as the riders are invariably too far away to reach the combat. However, the models riding are not engaged in combat and may continue to shoot in the same turn that the beast is in close combat. To fight models riding the beast it may be boarded in the same way as a vehicle.

Fearsome: Gigantic beasts are so big and frightening they cause *Fear*. This also makes the rider immune to *Fear* from other fear causing models.

Upgrade: To reflect the variation in models between players, the following characteristic 'upgrades' may be bought for the gigantic Beast: +1 S, +1 WS, +1 A, +1 Save.

You may only buy one of each of these upgrades. The first characteristic increase costs 30 creds, the second 40 creds, the third 50 creds and the fourth 60 creds. All four upgrades are therefore 180 creds. Upgrades must be purchased at the same time as the beast; they may not be added later to a beast your gang already owns.

ASH WASTE BEAST CONVERSIONS

After we had completed our vehicle rules and the gang rules we decided that miniatures riding beasts would look great. Just as we had done with the vehicles we decided to write rules that allowed you to field any type of beast you decided to convert. This allows nearly total freedom to tailor-make beasts to reflect the rules or vice versa.

The large sized beast (below) is the first Nomad riding a hideous mutated animal that I converted. It is a large beast that can have a heavy weapon fixed to its back.

The beast of burden was made from a Warhammer Wyvern, a fantastic model that has a really aggressive look to it. Its torso was cut off just below the chest and then pinned to the lower body. I did this because the shoulders would have been too high to add arms to, but also to make the beast look stockier. Next I tried to find a new pair of horns to replace those that you get with the Wyvern. After trying dozens of horns I eventually decided it looked most different without any and as such I left them off. It's horn holes were filed down and I sculpted a scaly head plate in its place. In order to give the beast the right sort of arms, with the right number of claws, I used some from a Dragon Ogre. I cut the arms off the Dragon Ogre and pinned them in the right area on the wyvern before green stuffing some shoulders on. Having allowed the shoulders to dry I added scales to blend them into the rest of the miniature and filled any other resultant crevices.

The Nomad was made from a Tallarn with missile launcher. I cut him away at the legs and used Mutie Raider legs, I had to carve off the extra toes but they were the perfect size to sit on the

Large beast with Heavy rider armed with harpoon