HOME DEFENCE

BY MARK BRENDAN

Have you ever wondered what Spyrers get up to when they aren't being sinister and deadly killers? Perhaps you have occasionally mused over what their home bases look like? You may even be contemplating just what would happen if a resourceful ganger was to follow a Spyrer, somehow managing not to be detected, and check out their headquarters. Wouldn't it be great if you could make a daring assault as they sleep? If they sleep.

Sit up and pin back your ears for some cautionary advice on letting sleeping Spyrers lie. You might just live longer!

As any canny Hiver will tell you, Spyrers are something more than human. They don't eat like us, they don't sleep like us, and their world revolves around an arcane and immensely powerful battle suit whose origins are shrouded in the mists of time. Let those who have understanding of such things not forget that these devices seem to learn by themselves, and increase their destructive potential with the passing of the days spent on the hunt. And when the blood craving is briefly satisfied? Then is the time for the very armour itself to become dormant and assimilate it's experiences. During this time the Spyrers enter a state of sleep of sorts, becoming limp and immobile for about a day. Do not be fooled, for they are far from vulnerable…

Contained within a Spyre Hunter's suit is a miraculous set of devices which are fully capable of preventing serious harm

Mark made some models of defence counters out of parts from his bits box.

Inspired by Mark's article Adrian had a go at making some counters of his own. Although you don't need models of defence counters to play, modelling them is easy and fun!

befalling the occupant of the armour as it lies in its unnatural slumber. Through the extensive researches of Guild Technicians, some of the secrets of this mechanism have been revealed. It is known that when the Spyrer shuts down to absorb its recent experiences, certain functions of the suit remain active. Life support obviously, but there is also another system which is only ever seen when the Spyrer is in this state. Millions of microscopic machines, tiny enough to be able to manipulate the very molecules of substances they come into contact with, flood from vents in the armour to pour across the floor of the Underhive. The refuse and scrap in the general area is rapidly transmuted into a nest of wires and conduits linking the recumbent Spyre Hunter to a number of small silver globes. Each of these devices contain a single defence system to be activated when an unwelcome visitor strays too close. And these range from a big gun which blasts the intruder into the middle of next week, to an alarm routine triggering the awakening of a highly irate Spyrer itching to have a word with the unfortunate individual responsible. Each type of suit contains its own unique set of defences, some of which are linked into the weapon systems on board. The following set of rules details their uses in a scenario depicting a raid on a Spyrer home base as they sleep.

"I KNOW WHERE YOU LIVE.."

This scenario may be played if the Spyrer's opponent gets choice of scenario.

ORRUS DEFENCE SYSTEMS (Roll 1D6)

1 *Malformed Construct.* The globe contains nothing more than a puddle of unresolved goo and wires. No effect!

2 *Alarm!* The Orrus awakens and may be used from the next turn onwards.

3 *Sentry Gun.* A cluster of bolt launchers mounted on a turret springs from the globe, and fires as if on overwatch. It will do this every turn, shooting at the first target to move within range and line of fire, and uses the same BS, ranges, and bolt launcher power boosts as the Orrus.

4 *Frag Belt.* This device hurls 1D6 small explosive mines towards whatever activated it. Roll the Artillery dice and place a frag grenade marker that number of inches away from the counter in a straight line between the *Frag Belt* and the source of its activation. Now roll the Scatter dice for each extra minelet and place a blast marker 1D6 inches away in the direction shown by the arrow. Each minelet has the same profile as a normal frag grenade.

5 *Improved Alarm!* As 2, above, but will also awaken a second Spyrer of your choice on a roll of 4, 5, 6 on a D6.

6 *Piggy Back System.* Make two rolls on this table ignoring further rolls of 6

SETUP

The Spyre Hunter player sets up the scenery and deploys their forces in hiding within a six inch radius of the exact centre of the board. Then place defence counters (see below).

The attacking player then chooses which side of the board they wish to approach from and deploys along that table edge. Since the terrain here represents the nerve centre of the Spyrers' territory, security is thorough and the attackers may not use any means of infiltration.

ATTACKERS

Since this scenario requires a great deal of stealth and subterfuge on behalf of the attacker to actually follow the Spyrers all the way to their hideout without being spotted, only a small assault force can carry out the job. Therefore, the attackers are limited to 1D6 gang members on this mission. The attackers may not use any special detection equipment to spot the Spyrers in their hiding places, since the anti-surveillance devices of the Spyrers put anything the Underhive has on offer to shame. Sleeping Spyrers can only be spotted by models within a range equal to their Initiative in inches. Shooting, but failing to injure a sleeping Spyrer will automatically wake it up! The Spyrer may be used normally from the next turn onwards. This is the only way Spyrers can become active, aside from the triggering of an alarm.

I once knew a whole bunch of young braves, just like you they was: proud, honourable, courageous. Not too smart.

Well, one day, as ah recalls it, they all heard tell of a bad place in the Underhive, where wicked spirits had come to live. This place was a big old ruin and it was on the outskirts of their territory. Somethin' made that place its home, somethin' real evil like, and folks out by the border of the territory started windin' up missin'. So these youngbloods gets all hot-headed, and tool up to go out there. An you know what? Those bad ol' Hive spirits just swallowed them right up. Never seen those boys again.

Well, shortly after this, me an the Chief got up a war party of scouts and braves, and we all went in there together. Ah ain't gonna say what we seen in there, cos it's too horrible for a young 'un like yourself. But we cleared the place out that day, an' lost a lot o' good scouts doin' it.

Ah've seen a lot of strange things and a lot of bad things, but if ah was to choose a day not to repeat in ma life, that would be the one. Now, you remember this talk before you get any fancy ideas about glory an' bein' a hero. Fight well and bring honour to your tribe, but know your limits. Oh, and know what your gettin' yourself into before you gets into it.

Danny Clearwater – Ratskin Shaman

JAKARA DEFENCE SYSTEMS (ROLL 1D6)

1 *Malformed Construct.* The globe contains nothing more than a puddle of unresolved goo and wires. No effect!

2 *Alarm!* The Jakara awakens and may be used from the next turn onwards.

3 *Mirror Shield Unit.* This defence can only be activated when it is fired on by intruders. Rather than being destroyed, it may reflect missile fire directly back at its assailant, exactly like the mother system which it works off. It uses the same BS and mirror shield power boosts as the Jakara.

4 *Energy Sink.* When activated, the panels dotting the surface of this device quickly convert energy emissions in its surroundings into plasma. This weapon then fires in exactly the same way as a normal plasma gun and uses the Jakara's BS. As with the Orrus' *Sentry Guns* above, it shoots as if on overwatch, attacking the first target to move within range and line of fire. The shots fired by this plasma gun are all considered to be low power.

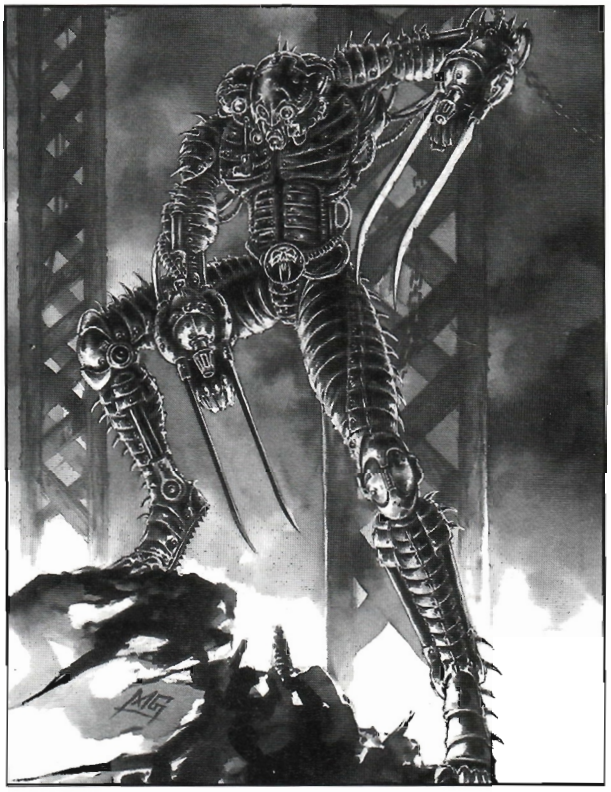
5 *Improved Alarm!* As 2, above, but will also awaken a second Spyrer of your choice on a roll of 4, 5, 6 on a D6.

6 *Piggy Back System.* Make 2 rolls on this table, ignoring further rolls of 6.

DEFENDERS

The Spyrers have, by the point at which the attackers strike, entered temporary shutdown to assimilate new information regarding their suit's running. They may do absolutely nothing until specifically awakened by either getting shot at, as detailed above, or by an Alarm defence function as detailed in the following section.

Each Spyre Hunter suit may run up to 1D3 defence routines when it is first worn. Although all the information for all the upgrades are contained in the suit, like the weapons subsystems, the Spyrer can only access more through experience. The difference is that the defence routines are chosen randomly by the suit every time it is used in this way, and are rarely the same twice. The only limiting factor is the amount of defences the suit can muster at any one time. When the Spyrer gains a power boost from the experience table, you may choose to take this advance on your defence system rather than on the normal power boost tables. This has the effect of increasing the amount of defences you can run by one. These defences are represented in the game by defence counters, which are placed within a twelve inch radius of the Spyrer at the beginning of the scenario. The counters are activated if an enemy model moves within six inches of them. They can be shot at, counting as small targets (-1 to hit) and have a



MALCADON DEFENCE SYSTEMS (ROLL 1D6)

1 *Malformed construct.* The globe contains nothing more than a puddle of unresolved goo and wires. No effect!

2 *Alarm!* The Malcadon awakens and may be used from the next turn onwards.

3 *Sentry Gun.* A turret sporting a set of spinners springs from the globe and fires as if on overwatch. It will do this every turn, shooting at the first target to move within range and line of fire, and uses the same BS, S, ranges, and web spinner power boosts as the Malcadon himself.

4 *Nasty Surprise!* Using Malcadon spinner technology, this device has trapped one of Necromunda's Underhive critters. It has been kept trussed up like a turkey and in a bad mood, waiting just for you to come by and release it! Roll a D6 on the following table: 1-2 Necromundan Rat, 3 Milliasaur, 4 Ripperjack, 5 Giant Spider, 6 Dead! No Effect. The enraged beast will always move towards the nearest target, charging if possible.

5 *Improved Alarm!* As 2, above, but will also awaken a second Spyrer of your choice on a roll of 4, 5, 6 on a D6.

6 *Piggy Back System.* Make 2 rolls on this table, ignoring further rolls of 6.

Even the natural stealth and cunning of the Ratskins could not prevent the alarms ringing out their death knell as they crept into the domain of the Spyrers.

YELD DEFENCE SYSTEMS (ROLL 1D6)

1 *Malformed Construct*. The globe contains nothing more than a puddle of unresolved goo and wires. No effect!

2 *Alarm!* the Yeld awakens and may be used from the next turn onwards.

3 *Sentry Gun*. A turret armed with a duplicate of the Yeld's laser gauntlet pops up and fires as if on overwatch. It will do this every turn, shooting at the first target to move within range and line of fire, and uses the same BS, ranges, and laser gauntlet power boosts as the Yeld.

4 *Psychotropic Gas*. When activated, the hallucinogenic fumes distilled from Hive fungi are squirted at the intruder (use a flamer template). Anyone caught in the cloud should be treated as if they suffered a hit from an hallucinogen grenade (Necromunda Rulebook, p59).

5 *Improved Alarm!* As 2, above, but will also awaken a second Spyrer of your choice on a roll of 4, 5, 6 on a D6.

6 *Piggy Back System*. Make 2 rolls on this table, ignoring further rolls of 6.

Toughness of 5 with 2 Wounds. A defence counter that is hit but not destroyed will be activated automatically. The destruction of a counter will awaken the Spyrer it is linked to, in the same way as an alarm, if the Spyrer player can roll a 5 or a 6 on a D6.

You can use pretty much anything you feel is appropriate to represent defence counters – pennies, pieces of card, bits of coloured plastic, or whatever. The more adventurous amongst you might even consider modelling your own, like we did.

When you place the counters you must keep track of which defence belongs to which Spyrer. Then, as they become activated, roll for their effect on the appropriate table.

ENDING THE GAME

The game continues until either one side bottles out, or has no remaining gang members who can fight. The Spyrers will not bottle whilst any of their number remain asleep, and therefore do not have to make tests until they have all been awakened.

EXPERIENCE

+10	Winning gang leader
+5	Per wounding hit
+1D6/+2D6*	For each surviving gang member

***Special**: If the Spyrers lose this battle, they gain no experience and must generate a new territory due to the capture of their base camp. However, winning the battle gains them an additional +1D6 each.