

Shattered Grounds League 2011

by David Carl

Shattered Grounds 2011 will consist of four league seasons, and each season will span four weeks of brutal WARMACHINE and HORDES action. Shattered Grounds leagues serve as a great way for players to challenge themselves, show off hobby skills, and have fun. Leagues ideally suit groups of eight or more players who regularly meet at a hobby store or gaming club where they can play whenever they wish. Each league requires a **League Organizer** who is responsible for tracking players' game results.

The Shattered Grounds league features opportunities for multi-player games, team games, cooperation with faction players around the world, or simply setting up armies to throw down one-on-one against a friend. Each **league venue**, the place sponsoring events (such as a hobby store or gaming club), will have a league champion at the end of each four-week league season, but players of every skill level can work to achieve battle journal commendations for a wide variety of accomplishments. In addition to the commendations, participants will receive a season patch for each of the four seasons that, when combined, form the Cygnaran rank insignia of Commander. The highest-ranked player in each local league will also receive a championship coin.

All games are played at the league venue. A player scores **league points** for each game he plays, and these points determine the player's standing in the league as shown by his placement on the league leader board, or **ladder**. (See Ladder Rankings.) In addition to fighting for the top spot on the ladder, players can earn various individual achievements throughout the league and can help to claim **map bonuses** in accordance to their faction's position on the **league map**. (See League Map.) League Organizers submit their players' map points online to contribute to each faction's influence over the Shattered Grounds online league map.

League games can be played at 15-, 25-, 35-, 50-, 75-, 100-, 125-, 150, and 200-point levels with 50-point games representing the default game size for Shattered Grounds games. Changing the point level of a game from 50 points to a smaller or larger game size requires the consent of both players (or all players in multi-player scenarios). Players score fewer league points for smaller games and more league points for larger games or games with more players based on the time commitment required. (See Scenarios.)

The player at the top of the ladder at the end of a league season is named the champion of that Shattered Grounds league season at their venue and receives the season coin. There are plenty of other achievements available, however, in the form of **commendations** that each player can earn throughout the league. (See Commendations.)

To further set the Shattered Grounds league experience apart from other casual or tournament play experiences, the league provides players with unique special rules called **stratagems** and unique model rules for **season models** that last for the duration of each league season. (See Stratagems and see Season Models.)

Each league season culminates in a one-day **Finale** event in which players have one last hurrah for their season models, the stratagems they've earned, and the special rules from map territories. (See Finale Event Rules.)

Player Responsibilities

Players participating in the league must bring their own models, stat cards, dice, measuring devices, tokens, markers, and templates required for play. The League Organizer must approve any printed media used to track damage.

The objective of league play is for everyone to have a good time. Players must cooperate with their opponent to resolve effects. Refusing to do so is explicitly unsportsmanlike. Players must remain courteous and patient with their opponents and the League Organizer. The League Organizer always has the final word on rules questions or debates. Players must accept all rulings made by the League Organizer whether they agree or not.

Players represent a single faction (Cygnar, Protectorate of Menoth, Khador, Cryx, Retribution of Scyrah, Mercenaries, Trollbloods, Circle Orboros, Skorne, Legion of Everblight, or Minions) in each league season. An online map tracks faction victories of players world-wide.

Ladder Rankings

The League Organizer tracks the position of each player participating in the league on a scoreboard called the ladder. The first five games a player plays each week earn him league points, and these determine a player's standings on the ladder. Players can continue playing games after reaching their maximum for the week, but additional games will not earn league points.

At the start of the league, players are randomly assigned a position on the ladder. After players begin earning **league points**, the player with the most league points occupies the top rung of the ladder and the player with the fewest league points occupies the bottom. As a player's league point total changes after every game, his position moves up or down the ladder.

If two players are tied in league points, the player to attain that number of league points first gets the higher ladder ranking. If two players are tied in league points after playing each other, the player who scored more points *in that game* gets the higher ladder ranking.

The number of league points a player scores for playing a league game depends on the size of the game, the scenario, and the outcome of the game. The following table provides the base number of league points a player earns for playing a game of a given size. All players earn the listed number of **battle points** for simply completing the game. Players can also earn **bonus points** as defined in the rules for individual scenarios. See the individual scenarios for additional information on the bonus points that players can earn.

Game Size	Battle Points	Bonus Points
15-point game (1 warcaster/warlock)	2	1
25-point game (1 warcaster/warlock)	3	2
35-point game (1 warcaster/warlock)	4	2
50-point game (1 warcaster/warlock)	5	3
75-point game (1 warcaster/warlock)	6	3
100-point game (2 warcasters/warlocks)	8	4
125-point game (2 warcasters/warlocks)	9	4
150-point game (3 warcasters/warlocks)	11	5
200-point game (4 warcasters/warlocks)	13	5

League Map

The league map is an important element of the Shattered Grounds league system. This online map is updated to show the progress of each faction over the course of the league. Links to the league map and additional league details can be found at www.privateerpress.com.

Controlling map territories grants **map bonuses** to the controlling faction. Each season is different, but an example territory might grant a bonus warjack/warbeast point or the ability to place an additional piece of terrain. See the league rules for the season in question for the details of each map location.

If a league venue has easy access to the online map, players should use the current online map to determine territory bonuses. In league venues without such access, the league organizer can print out a map snapshot from the online map for use in all league games on a given league night.

During each league game, players can choose *one* territory that their faction controls to “supply” their army in that game. They gain the benefits listed under any map bonuses in that territory for that league game. (Note that a faction might not control any map locations at a given time and that not all map bonuses will be useful to all factions.)

During the Finale event, players receive all map bonuses from *all territories* their faction controls at the time of the Finale. This event represents the culmination of the factions’ conquests, and all territories supply the faction armies for this event.

When players agree to play a game, the player with the *lowest* position on the venue’s league ladder chooses the territory where the game will be played. After the game, players submit their earned league points to the League Organizer for tracking on the ladder. In a 35-point game or larger, the winner must also submit their territory and faction to the League Organizer so that the League Organizer can put that information into the global map.

League Organizers will input 1 Map Point for the victorious faction in that territory. Note this is a change from last year’s Shattered Grounds rules.

Scenarios

The 2011 Shattered Grounds league document includes five scenarios for use in all 2011 Shattered Grounds league seasons. Players can choose to play any scenario upon which they agree.

Each league season also culminates in a one-day Finale event. The Finale serves as a final opportunity to use season-specific special rules such as season models, stratagems, and map bonuses.

Commendations

Each league year, players can record their accomplishments throughout the league seasons in a **battle journal**. Accomplishments are tracked as **commendations**. Each Shattered Grounds league season has a two-page spread in the battle journal, and the left-hand page of each spread is used to track these commendations.

League Organizers should use the **league stamp** on the left-hand page to indicate which commendations a player has earned. Note that league venues or League Organizers should provide a stamp pad for use with the league stamps. They may wish to provide different colors for the different seasons, for different commendations, or to denote earned stratagems.

The details of each commendation change from season to season, so check with the league document for a given season to find the full information on each commendation players can achieve. Commendations are broken down into three major categories. **Participation commendations** award players for playing or getting involved in the community. **Veteran commendations** award players for playing against a broad variety of opponents to experience the full scope of Shattered Grounds. **Overall commendations** recognize the top players of a given league season.

Stratagems

In the rules document for each league season, players can find information on the season’s **stratagems** as well as the season’s map bonuses and commendations. Stratagems are special abilities that are unlocked in a player’s battle journal as they play games and earn commendations. The right-hand page of each league season spread of the battle journal shows the **stratagem tree** for that season.

Each time a player earns a Participation commendation or Veteran commendation, the League Organizer will give him one stamp in the location of his choice on the stratagem tree. Each time a player completes a 35-point or larger game, the League Organizer will also give him one stratagem stamp in the location of his choice on the stratagem tree. After the first stamp is given, additional stamps *must* be placed in a location that is connected to a stamp that is already on the stratagem tree.

Each time a player gets one of the six numbered locations stamped, he earns a new stratagem. The league document for each season will explain what each of the six numbered stratagems do. Before each league game, a player can choose *one* of his available stratagems to use during the game. For example, a player who has the #2 spot and the #5 spot filled in his battle journal can choose stratagem 2 or stratagem 5. Once earned, a stratagem can be used for any number of games during the course of the league season.

Season Models

Each league season features new stories from Privateer Press staff writers. The link to these stories can be found at www.privateerpress.com.

During the Shattered Grounds league season, players have the opportunity to play some of the characters, warjacks, or units found within these stories. The rules for these **season models** can be found alongside the season league document online. During a league season, the original models on which these season models are based *cannot* be used. Moreover, these models count as if they are the models on which they are based for bonuses, such as those granted by the Elite Cadre ability, Leadership ability, or Theme Force benefits.

If, for example, a league season includes the 4th Assault Legion Uhlans (a unit based on the Iron Fang Uhlans), then a Khador player gains access to 4th Assault Legion Uhlans, Kovnik Markov will affect 4th Assault Legion Uhlans, and Theme Forces that include Iron Fang Uhlans can field 4th Assault Legion Uhlans. During that league season, however, that player will *not* be permitted to use standard Iron Fang Uhlans in league games for the duration of that particular league season. In subsequent league seasons, Khador players will be able to field Iron Fang Uhlans again but will not be able to field 4th Assault Legion Uhlans.

Season models are legal for all league games throughout their season (including the Finale) but **are not legal models** for use outside of the Shattered Grounds league.

Finale Events

The Shattered Grounds Finale Event gives players a last chance to use their season models, map bonuses, and favorite stratagems. Map bonuses are particularly important during the Finale because factions receive *all* of the map bonuses currently controlled by their faction, not only the bonus of the territory in which the battle takes place.

League Organizers should tailor the Finale Event to meet the needs of their local community. Options include:

- A final day of league play
- A Steamroller 2011 tournament
- A custom tournament designed by the League Organizer
- A conversion, painting, terrain-making, and open play event
- A demo day with open league play

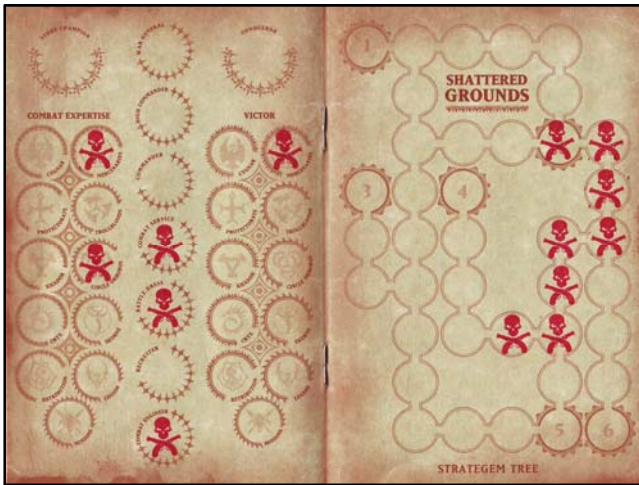
Regardless of the exact details of your Finale Event, it should serve to build the local gaming community and as a farewell to the past month of league play.

The player with the highest Ladder position at the end of the Finale Event earns the league championship coin and Store Champion commendation for his battle journal. The same player cannot win the league coin for two league seasons in a row. If he has the highest rank, the coin goes to the second-ranked player on the league ladder.

Extended Example

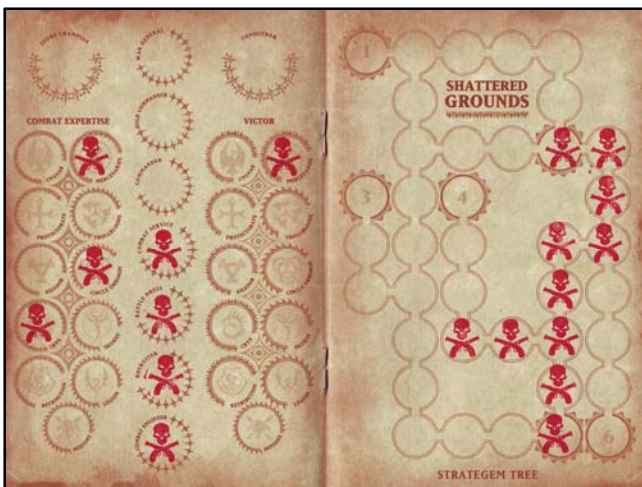
The following example will help to illustrate proper use of the battle journal.

Jack's battle journal currently looks like this:



So far, he has earned three Participation commendations (Combat Service, Battle Dress, and Combat Engineer), three Veteran commendations (Circle Orboros Combat Expertise, Mercenaries Combat Expertise, and Mercenaries Victor), and both his games were 35-point games or larger. This gives him a total of 8 stamps (3+3+2) on the stratagem tree. Jack started with stratagem 2, and he is quickly working his way over to stratagem 4.

Jack next earns the Recruiter Participation commendation and places the stamp on the path to stratagem 4. He then plays a 100-point game against Jason, a Cryx player, and loses the game. This gives him one more Veteran commendation (Cryx Combat Expertise) and one more game played. That's not quite enough to reach stratagem 4, so Jack grabs stratagem 5 instead, hoping that will give him an edge and help him win his next game to earn that elusive stratagem 4. At the end of our example, Jack's battle journal looks like this:



Scenario 1 – Shot Clock

Summary: Players attempt to assassinate their opponent's warcaster(s) or warlock(s) before their own warcaster(s) or warlock(s) fall in battle.

Two or four players can play Shot Clock. The two-player version uses standard 10" deployment zones. In the four-player version, players have a deployment zone of 10"x10" in the corner of the board and an Advance Deployment zone that extends 6" forward from their standard deployment. Determine the first player with a standard starting roll. Play proceeds clockwise around the table.

Beginning on the fourth round, at the end of each player's turn, that players' warcasters and warlocks will have their base damage track reduced by d3 points. Damage boxes that have already been marked with damage will be reduced first. For example, if a warcaster has a base damage track of 18 boxes and they have already marked off 5 damage boxes, then a roll of 3 would reduce their base damage track to 15, but would not reduce their current unmarked damage boxes of 13, since they had previously marked off more than 3 damage boxes from prior combat.

Victory Conditions

A player wins the game if the last opposing warcaster or warlock is destroyed or removed from play.

In a two-player game, the winner receives additional league points equal to the bonus points for the size of the game played.

In a four-player game, the winner receives additional league points equal to *twice* the bonus points for the size of the game played and all other participants receive additional league points equal to the bonus points for the size of the game played.

Scenario 2 – Fight Club

Summary: Players attempt to destroy all of their opponents' warjacks or warbeasts.

Two or four players can play Fight Club. The two-player version uses standard 10" deployment zones. In the four-player version, players have a deployment zone of 10"x10" in the corner of the board and an Advance Deployment zone that extends 6" forward from the standard deployment zone. Determine the first player with a standard starting roll. Play proceeds clockwise around the table.

For every 10 army points of warjack or warbeast models in a Fight Club army list, the list can contain only 5 points of warrior models.

Warjacks that would become inert and warbeasts that would become wild instead become autonomous (see *WARMACHINE: Prime* page 80).

Victory Conditions

A player wins the game if the last opposing warjack or warbeast is destroyed or removed from play. A player *does not win* the game if the last opposing warcaster or warlock is destroyed or removed from play.

In a two-player game, the winner receives additional league points equal to the bonus points for the size of the game played.

In a four-player game, the winner receives additional league points equal to *twice* the bonus points for the size of the game played and all other participants receive additional league points equal to the bonus points for the size of the game played.

Scenario 3 – King of the Hill

Summary: Players attempt to take and hold the high ground at the center of the board.

Two or four players can play King of the Hill. The two-player version uses standard 10" deployment zones. In the four-player version, players have a deployment zone of 10"x10" in the corner of the board and an Advance Deployment zone that extends 6" forward from the standard deployment zone. Determine the first player with a standard starting roll. Play proceeds clockwise around the table.

Place a large hill in the center of the table. Beginning on the second round, at the end of each player's turn, that player earns 1 control point if all of his warcasters/warlocks are on the hill.

If all players agree, the scenario can be modified to Prince of Thieves (replace the hill with a large forest terrain feature), Lady of the Lake (replace the hill with a large shallow water terrain feature), or Lord of the Castle (replace the hill with a large ruins terrain feature).

Victory Conditions

The first player to accumulate 3 control points wins the game. A player also wins the game if the last opposing warcaster or warlock is destroyed or removed from play.

In a two-player game, the winner receives additional league points equal to the bonus points for the size of the game played.

In a four-player game, the winner receives additional league points equal to *twice* the bonus points for the size of the game played and all other participants receive additional league points equal to the bonus points for the size of the game played.

Scenario 4 – Supply Line

Summary: Players attempt to assassinate their opponents' warcaster(s) or warlock(s) before their own warcaster(s) or warlock(s) fall in battle.

Two or four players can play Supply Line. The two-player version uses standard 10" deployment zones. In the four-player version, players have a deployment zone of 10"x10" in the corner of the board and an Advance Deployment zone that extends 6" forward from the standard deployment zone. Determine the first player with a standard starting roll. Play proceeds clockwise around the table.

Place three 50-mm objective markers along the centerline of the table 12" apart. A player controls an objective if he is the only player with models B2B with that objective. At the end of each turn, starting on the third round, a player earns 1 control point for each objective he controls.

When a warbeast begins its activation within 3" of an objective its controller controls, it can discard 1 fury point. When a warjack begins its activation within 3" of an objective its controller controls, it is allocated 1 focus point.

Victory Conditions

The first player to accumulate 5 control points wins the game. A player also wins the game if the last opposing warcaster or warlock is destroyed or removed from play.

In a two-player game, the winner receives additional league points equal to the bonus points for the size of the game played.

In a four-player game, the winner receives additional league points equal to *twice* the bonus points for the size of the game played and all other participants receive additional league points equal to the bonus points for the size of the game played.

Scenario 5 – Unlikely Alliance (team scenario)

Summary: Two teams of players attempt to destroy their opponents' warcasters or warlocks.

Unlikely Alliance is a scenario for at least 4 players split into teams. Each team is composed of an equal quantity of legal armies of the agreed-upon game size.

The players on each side of the board fight as a team. Their teammates' models are considered friendly models (but are not considered Faction models unless they actually share the same faction). Teamed players share a standard 10" deployment zone.

Players can choose one map bonus from their faction normally. This bonus will not apply to any teammates.

Players on the same team take their turns simultaneously.

Until the Victory conditions are met, a player continues to play even if his last warcaster/warlock is destroyed or removed from play.

Victory Conditions

A team wins the game if the last opposing warcaster or warlock is destroyed or removed from play.

The winner receives additional league points equal to *twice* the bonus points for the size of the game played and all other participants receive additional league points equal to the bonus points for the size of the game played.

Note that a League Organizer will award one map point to each victorious player for his own faction. Factions can ally briefly to reach common goals, but each faction stands alone when it comes to the league map and the territories.