

Building a Mercenary Army

Whether for a private war or to supplement the forces of a kingdom, mercenary contracts provide the powerful and wealthy with a means to build an army quickly. Though most patrons prefer to hire larger contingents, in a pinch smaller bands can be combined to form a force large enough for any conflict. The mercenaries of the Iron Kingdoms may be a diverse lot, but they can be relied upon equally to set aside their petty differences for the right price. After all, few loyalties are as solid as gold, and with enough coin one can buy an army—or at least rent one for a time. On the other hand, even though each man has his price, not every mercenary is willing to serve any master.

To field a mercenary army, you must choose either a mercenary contract or a Theme Force. Each contract and Theme Force includes rules for building the army. In addition to the guidelines presented in a contract or Theme Force, mercenary armies follow all the normal army composition rules.

The complete rules for Theme Forces can be found in *WARMACHINE: Prime Mk II*.

Contracts

Mercenary contracts detail the background of the mercenaries' employers, the history of the contract, and rules for constructing an army. While one player may choose a new contract each time he plays, another might dedicate himself to a particular contract, painting and modeling his forces to reflect the flavor or color scheme of a specific army.

The Four Star Syndicate

A shadowy organization notorious even among the pirates and cutthroats in the back streets of Five Fingers, the Four Star Syndicate fills its own pockets through daring raids overland and at sea. As the Mercarian League has learned at great expense, no target seems to lie beyond the reach of this exceptionally well-funded confederacy of mercenaries, thieves, and desperate men. Supported with warjacks controlled by freelance warcasters, the Syndicate acts brazenly in openly targeting rail yards, small fleets, and even Cygnaran military supply trains. Land-based raids along the shores of the Dragon's Tongue have captured several shipments of armaments, explosives, and even warjacks that the Syndicate then quietly sold on the black market for outrageous profits. For reasons unknown, however, the group seldom operates in Ordic waters.

Few know anything of the Syndicate's inner workings. Only the organization's internal documents, signed simply with four black stars in a diamond pattern, provide a clue to the identities of its hidden benefactors. A favorite target of these operations, the Mercarian League has spent no small fortune to uncover the secrets of the organization but with disappointing results. Syndicate loyalties are bought with gold coin and bound with iron promises of retribution.

The success it enjoys has drawn much attention to the organization. Profit is the purest motive for a mercenary, and those who know a way into the mercenary market in Five Fingers can easily find a way onto the writ of the Four Star Syndicate. Even those who might not regularly serve beside treacherous villains often find a way to compromise their values. The Syndicate pays well, and in Five Fingers a full purse can buy anything—even a clear conscience.

Army Composition

- An army constructed under the Four Star Syndicate contract can include any mercenary models/units that will work for Cryx or Khador.
- The army can also include Captain Sam MacHorne & the Devil Dogs and/or Rupert Carvolo, Piper of Ord.

Special Rules

None.

The Highborn Covenant

Many of Llael's exiled nobles have turned to mercenaries to fight the Khadorans occupying their nation. The Highborn Covenant contract represents the most coherent of these efforts. With considerable backing from émigré nobles and certain merchant concerns, the Highborn Covenant has assembled a formidable army that may not care much about Llaelese land but has a great interest in Llaelese coin. Rumors hold that the free chapters of the Order of the Golden Crucible also sponsor the Highborn Covenant but keep their involvement secret to protect the lives of brethren held in service to the Khadoran crown.

While the Highborn Covenant has the lofty and somewhat long-term goal of liberating Llael from its Khadoran invaders, it also serves to help the exiled nobility maintain some legitimacy. Without this mercenary army, the exiles' claims on land, title, and station would be tenuous at best. The Highborn Covenant ensures that they maintain some grip on authority in Llael, even if only in appearance.

The Highborn Covenant was drafted only days after news of the fall of Merywyn reached Corvis, shortly after Cygnar pulled most of its forces out of Llael. By the end of Rowen 605 AR, the organization had begun actively seeking mercenary interests that had previously demonstrated hostility toward Khador.

Mercenary forces under the Highborn Covenant serve six to eight months, with extensions offered to individuals and mercenary companies that prove trustworthy and reliable.

Army Composition

- An army constructed under the Highborn Covenant contract can include any mercenary models/units that will work for Cygnar.
- The army can also include one Arcane Tempest Gun Mage unit or Long Gunner unit. This unit is considered to be a friendly Mercenary unit instead of a Cygnar unit and can include attachments.

Special Rules

- Solos in this army gain Advance Deployment XICONX.

The Searforge Commission

Fighting in the south has allowed the Rhulfolk to stay apprised of the ongoing struggles across the countryside as well as giving valuable combat experience to the dwarves of the Hammerfall Fortress and others who have joined them. No matter who wins the southern wars, the clans of Rhul are determined to keep trade lanes open.

In the days following the invasion of Llael, Clan Searforge, one of Rhul's wealthiest mercantile clans, realized it could be caught in a bad situation if it did not act. The clan had taken a controlling interest in the trade of several clans that shipped weapons, alloys,

and steamjack parts south to dwarven enclaves in the lands of man—including Khador and Cygnar, now embroiled in bitter war. The hostilities were threatening the clan’s business.

In 605 AR Clan Searforge founded the Searforge Commission to band together mercenaries working outside the kingdom and began deploying them wherever necessary to keep trade flowing. The commission primarily serves the interests of its founding clan, but it has accepted contracts that benefit other mercantile Rhulic clans, such as Clan Ghordson, Clan Grundback, Clan Serric, and even Stone House Dhurg, which controls the Hammerfall Fortress.

This group exists to protect vital weapon, steamjack, and alloy trades. To that end it coordinates the actions of mercenary groups and assigns forces to escort trade shipments through hostile territory. If Cygnar and Khador clash along Searforge trade lanes, the commission sends forces to resolve the problem one way or the other and reopen the roads or railways. The Searforge Commission takes a direct approach to business that is sometimes brutal, with no fear of shedding human blood to protect its interests. These highly effective mixed forces consider themselves the equal of any regular army, and they have no fear of engaging in all-out war if pushed.

The hard-edged commission is determined to ensure outsiders do not underestimate the risks of interfering with dwarven business. Though the nation of Rhul prefers its neutral stance and avoids stepping on toes, the Searforge Commission is ready to load double-barreled rifles and lay down fire. People have learned not to mess with agents bearing the organization’s sigil unless they want to deal with a nine-foot-tall ogrun and his war cleaver.

Army Composition

- An army constructed under the Searforge Commission contract can include Mercenary Rhulic and/or Ogrun models/units.
- Increase the FA of all non-character models and units included in the army by +1.

Special Rules

- Your deployment zone is extended 4" forward.

The Talion Charter

The *Talion* Charter sets out the terms and conditions for the crew of the *Talion*, a ship bought on the booty acquired over years of mercenary fighting along the Dragon’s Tongue River and manned largely by men and women brought together by the mutiny of the *MLS Exeter*.

The ship’s captain, Phinneus Shae, is wanted in both Khador and Cygnar on charges of piracy but has thus far managed to evade capture and incarceration. Facilitating his operation is the Rhulic exile “Lord” Joln Rockbottom, who maintains extensive contacts among mercantile and smuggling groups.

The charter names the Mercarian League as the foremost enemy of the crew, effectively declaring war on Mercarian shipping lanes, but they have seized many other vessels from a variety of trade organizations and even taken on navy vessels periodically. New recruits are continually necessary to replace crew killed in battle, but the rewards for those who survive have proven worth the risk.

While a few fools have tried to claim the bounty on Shae’s head, brutal reprisals have

disinclined newer recruits from attempting such a betrayal. The steadfast loyalty of the *Talion's* officers ensures their captain's place in command.

Army Composition

- An army constructed under the *Talion* Charter contract can include Captain Phinneus Shae, any Privateer mercenary models and units, and/or any mercenary warjacks.
- The army cannot include the Commodore Cannon & Crew unless Captain Phinneus Shae is also included.

Special Rules

- You gain +1 to your starting roll for the game.
- You can redeploy solos after both players have deployed but before the first player's first turn. The redeployed models must be placed on the table in a location they could have been deployed initially.

Mercenary Theme Forces

Magnus the Traitor

Most Wanted

Warjacks

Mercenary non-character warjacks

Units

Idrian Skirmishers, Steelhead units, Greygore Boomhowler & Co., Croe's Cutthroats

Solos

Gorman di Wulfe, Kell Bailloch, Orin Midwinter, Saxon Orrik, Steelhead solos

Tier 1

Requirements: The army can include only the models listed above.

Benefit: Reduce the point cost of each Renegade warjack by 1. Additionally, this army can include one Cygnar Long Gunner Infantry unit or one Cygnar Trencher Infantry unit. This unit is considered to be a friendly Mercenary unit instead of a Cygnar unit and can include attachments.

Tier 2

Requirements: The army includes two or more Steelhead units.

Benefit: Small-based Steelhead units gain Advance Move. (Before the start of the game but after both players have deployed, a model with Advance Move can make a full advance.)

Tier 3

Requirements: Magnus' battlegroup includes three or more warjacks.

Benefit: For each warjack in Magnus' battlegroup, place one wreck marker of the corresponding size anywhere within 20" of the back edge of Magnus' deployment zone after terrain has been placed but before either player deploys his army. Wreck markers cannot be placed within 3" of a terrain feature.

Tier 4

Requirements: Magnus' battlegroup includes two Renegade warjacks.

Benefit: Models in Magnus' battlegroup can begin the game affected by his upkeep spells. These spells and their targets must be declared before either player sets up models.

Magnus the Warlord

Magnus' Agenda

Warjacks

Mercenary non-character warjacks

Units

Idrian Skirmishers, Steelhead units, Greygore Boomhowler & Co., Croe's Cutthroats

Solos

Gorman di Wulfe, Kell Bailoch, Orin Midwinter, Saxon Orrik, Steelhead solos

Tier 1

Requirements: The army can include only the models listed above.

Benefit: Reduce the point cost of each Mangler warjack by 1. Additionally, this army can include one Cygnar Long Gunner Infantry unit or one Cygnar Trencher Infantry unit. This unit is considered to be a friendly Mercenary unit instead of a Cygnar unit and can include attachments.

Tier 2

Requirements: This army includes Croe's Cutthroats.

Benefit: You can redeploy one unit/model after both players have deployed but before the first player's first turn. The redeployed models must be placed on the table in a location they could have been deployed initially.

Tier 3

Requirements: The army includes two or more Idrian Skirmisher units.

Benefit: Models/units in this army gain Pathfinder XICONX during your first turn of the game.

Tier 4

Requirements: Magnus' battlegroup includes two or more Mangler warjacks.

Benefit: Your deployment zone is extended 2" forward.