

# The Stronghelm Globe

News from the Commonwealth and beyond  
Since 229 YC

## Yaka:

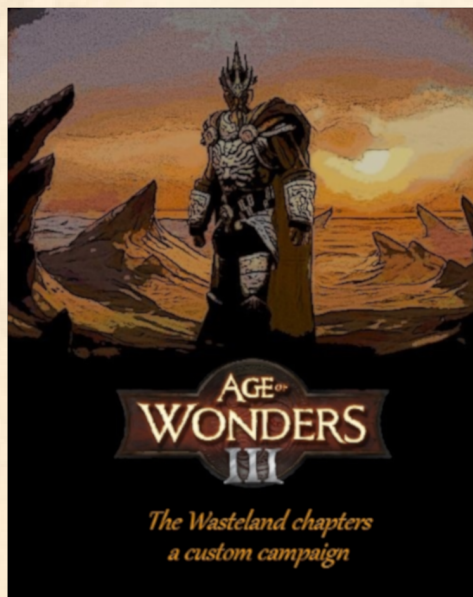
An introduction by  
Lothar von Dhraco



## God of Fire

## The Wasteland chapters:

Refineus work  
in progress  
about the dwellers  
of the south



## Interview

- A true Hero of  
AoW3: AbedNego



**The continuation of:**  
Sverina the Golden  
vs  
Krinla Peas

## Also in this issue:

Tournament Standings  
Announcements  
The Horoscope:  
News about Planetfall

## Contents

Letter to the Readers

Lore: The Merciless "God" Of Fire

Announcement Board


War Diaries

Famous Generals: AbedNego

Workshop

Horoscope

## Letter to the Readers

I EAR well informed citizen of Stronghelm, the commonwealth or otherwise. We finally present you the 4th issue of **The Stronghelm Globe!** Again our reporters spared no efforts to bring you the news.

VIII We did establish contact with Lothar von Dhraco again and his stirring piece about the so called "fire god" Yaka is the first Article in this issue (page II).

XIII The next piece in this issue are the announcements, get up to date with the current standings in tournaments held in Athla and find new challenges or oddities such as Tibbles waxworks in the mixed area (starting on page V).

XXVI Thereafter we printed the next communications we got from Sverina the Golden and Krinla Peas, we only received a slightly tattered letter from Svinla partly slashed by what we believe were gryphon claws. Their rivalry is spiraling out of control. But read for yourself (page VIII), we at **The Stronghelm Globe** hope for a peaceful solution of course!

Not all conflicts on Athla can be solved by peaceful negotiations and fortunately we have potent heroes like AbedNego among us who has been so nice as to give us an interview starting on page XIII even giving handy advice on how to prepare for battle.

This issues workshop section gives us hope that in the not so far future the mysteries of the south could unfold. Refineus talks about his work on making expeditions to the wastelands in the south a reality (see page XVI).

For those of you who think the future can't be soon enough we end with the Horoscope (starting on page XX) in which BloodyBattleBrain again looks upon the stars.

Lastly a short word to our readers: The amount of people that can read is small in Athla, yet the amount of writers is even smaller! If you happen to be one of the lucky few don't shy away and start your breathtaking career as reporter for: **The Stronghelm Globe**

But first we hope you enjoy this issue.

As always yours

**The Stronghelm Globe**

## Lore: The Merciless "God" Of Fire

by Prof. Lothar von Dhraco

**W**E at Stronghelm Globe would like to apologise for the lack of a history feature in the previous issue. Unfortunately, the esteemed Prof. Dr. Shlumpf still found himself unexpectedly indisposed before he could submit his contribution to this issue. We at the Stronghelm Globe consider that the accusations that Prof. Dr. Shlumpf's book, *"100 Recipes for Giant Eagles and their Riders"*, demonstrates greater practical experience in the subject than is permitted under Commonwealth law to be completely ridiculous and hope that the matter will be resolved swiftly.

In the meantime, in light of recent events in the northern provinces, this month's history feature will focus on one of the banished Wizard Kings whose followers were involved in those events - the so-called "God" of Fire, Yaka.

While the actions of each of the Wizard Kings has resounded throughout history, Yaka's influence in particular could be clearly seen in the world both before the banishment of the Wizard's Circle from Evermore. Presenting himself as a god of fire, so powerful that his very presence would supposedly cause the ground to melt into lava, Yaka's worship dominated both the Azrac Empire and the Tigran race that came to follow them.

Yaka's control of the Azracs may have been from a distance, but it is clear from the records that survive of that ancient empire. Yaka's priests, the Yakamajal (which translated to the "Will of Yaka") were the teachers and enforcers of Yaka's Code, which set a strict hierarchy for the running of Azrac society. Naturally, Yaka's militaristic ideology was reflected in his followers, who believed that those who died for the glory of Yaka (or the empire's goals of conquest) would be made immortal.

The Azracs tended to associate many of the things around them to Yaka. The many-eyed creatures now known as Watchers were known to the Azracs as the Yakamehali, or the "Eyes of Yaka", as the Azracs believed that they were sent by Yaka to watch over them. Many scholars today believe that the Watchers may simply have been taking advantage of the respect that this superstition generated, but while Watchers are willing to fight alongside forces that are not aligned with Yaka, the association between them and Yaka's followers remains to the present day.

Even the Undead were called the Yakamapu, the "Waste of Yaka". It is unclear now whether this was intended as an epithet or an indication that the Azracs



*The wizard king Yaka proclaimed himself to be a God of Fire and raised militaristic empires to conquer in his name.*

believed that Yaka possessed influence over the undead beyond the abilities of many priests to repel them. If the latter, however, it might explain why the Azracs were willing to use the Trump of the Dead to blackmail the nations of the Blessed Continent.

The most powerful of the beings associated with Yaka were, however, his Avatars, which could be called by the Yakamajal in times of war. The Avatars were immune to fire and able to dominate the minds of humanoids, supposedly through the projection of Yaka's own will through the Avatar. Interestingly, these characteristics were the same as those attributed to the elder sphinxes at the time of the Wizard's Throne crisis. Perhaps this is coincidence, or perhaps when Yaka created the Tigran race after the Azracs fell out of his favour, he reshaped his avatars into a form more appropriate to his new subjects?

The Azracs were content to remain on the southern continent which Inioch lived and even for a century afterwards, but as the chaos deepened, the Azracs took offense at non-Yaka-worshipping refugees entering their borders. What began as a "Ritual War of Racial Purification" quickly became a full-on invasion of the Blessed Continent.

While it had certainly not been their intention, this invasion led to a reversal of the fortunes of the Keepers. While the Keepers had largely been shunned in the aftermath of the fall of the Verdant Court, none of the races except the humans could stand against the Azrac invasion, leaving them open to the diplomatic



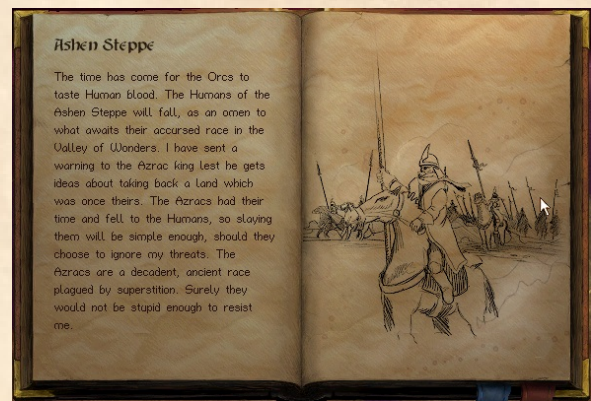
*Sphinxes today have lost the ability to dominate the will of enemies, although they have developed new abilities to compensate. Was Yaka's departure from Athla a catalyst for this shift?*

efforts of the Keepers. The result was the formation of a multiracial alliance that, together, was able to push back against the humans and Azracs alike.

Fearing that defeat in the north would lead to retribution against their homeland, the Azracs acquired the Horn of the Dead and threatened to use it if the alliance did not hold off from continuing its advance. A few years later, a foreign agent penetrated the Azrac treasury and blew the horn - now believed to be the same Melenis who so recently ravaged the continent, starting her long association with the undead. The resulting undead invasion forced both the Keeper alliance and the human empire to shift their focus to the new invaders, giving the Azracs an opportunity to regroup. However, their plans for a second invasion was scrapped when the heatwave of 1197-1201LIR devastated their crops.

The Azracs would not get the opportunity to recover from this drought. The appearance of the star over the Valley of Wonders that presaged the four-way war between the Keepers, Cult of Storms, humans, and undead came shortly afterwards, and while that war was mostly fought in the north, it did result in Cult agents arriving in the south to unify the orcs and goblins there. While the Cult's attention was mostly focused on their human and Keeper enemies, Emperor Sadac of the Azracs thought he saw an opportunity to use the chaos to reclaim lost ground. This would prove to be his downfall, as a horde of orc cavalry swept into the Ashen Steppe in retaliation, slaying the Emperor along with the human settlements that were their original target.

This defeat was a critical blow for the Azracs, and when humans driven from the Valley of Wonders turned their eyes on the once-proud empire, the Azracs were powerless to resist. Perhaps they might have been able to survive and recover, if their god's anger had not turned



*A page from the journal of the Stormlord in charge of uniting the Orcs of the southern continent, just prior to the campaign that lead to Emperor Sadac's demise.*

upon them in defeat. While Yaka's arrival in the world known to mortals did not cause the world to melt as Azrac legend proclaimed, Yaka deemed them unworthy and destroyed the remnants of the Azrac empire and the human kingdoms that had grown in its ruins alike, the survivors being driven out of the cities to intermingle and become a nomadic people who could trace their ancestry to both humans and Azracs.

To replace is once-favoured people, Yaka started anew, creating the youngest race now known on Athla - the tigrans. These catfolk were to be Yaka's new warrior race, his instrument of conquest on the world of Athla. One of Yaka's early targets would be the desert kingdom ruled by Merlin... and in doing so, he sowed the seeds of his own downfall. Before Yaka could consolidate his control, Merlin would return with a new army and wizardly powers of fire magic to match Yaka's own. Merlin's intent was initially solely to evacuate his people, but defection from the tigran ranks and an alliance with Yaka's rival Karissa would grant Merlin the forces needed to strike Yaka a decisive blow. In an ironic mirror of the events which caused Yaka to condemn the Azracs, the heart of Yaka's second empire was torn out by a coalition of orcs, humans, and tigran rebels.

These early setbacks forced Yaka into a secondary role through the rest of the Wizard's Circle crisis, supporting his fellow conspirators instead of acting on his own. In fact, when Yaka took the field against Merlin, Julia and Serena during the siege of the Valley of Wonders (an event which was itself a diversion from the true plot to give Serena and Tempest the opportunity to kidnap Julia), Yaka relied on a force of draconians, presumably borrowed from Tempest, rather than his own tigran forces.

When Yaka finally departed from Athla, many thought that this signalled the end of his influence upon our world. The rebellion among the tigrans grew during the Shadow Wars, with many turning to their own leaders for guidance instead of their creator, and it



*The Sea of Fire was the heart of Yaka's domain on Athla, until it was overrun by the forces of Merlin and Karissa.*

could have been presumed that this would continue after their migration. The recent invasion of Brisska, however, has shown this not to be the case, and that the cult of Yaka remains strong among tigran society. It is unclear, however, whether the tigran cult of Yaka is working alone, in concert with the Shadowborn, or might somehow even be in contact with Yaka himself. Given the long reach of the Shadowborn and the apparent shared goals of the two factions, however, it seems likely that the Shadowborn and the cult of Yaka are likely allied (and the cult might even be Shadowborn themselves) - a conclusion reinforced by the discovery by the frostlings of tomes of Shadowborn magic among the Tigran invasion forces.



*Lothar von Dhraco is a Professor of Theological and Mythical History at the University of Stronghelm, specialising in the shaping of Athla and critical investigation of the Shadai cults. In addition to translations of Archon texts, he is known for his biographies on the Wizard Kings.*

Sources: Age of Wonders Player's Manual, Age of Wonders 2: Shadow Magic Player's Manual, [The Age of wonders timeline \(online\)](#), the games: AOW1, AOW2, AOW:SM, AOW3

# Announcement Board

## Standings in current Tournaments:

### The 2018 PBEM 2v2 team tournament

Has begun! **Mab's Sons**, **Dread & Mac** (Dreadreapr-see first issues interview and Marcuspers - see last issues interview), team **Reckless mortals**, team **Xlnt & Henry** and team **Pandocalypse** already proceeded to the second round. The loosing teams are now in the losers bracket and still have a chance for a comeback! Godluck to all involved and godspeed to all that still have to finish their games! **The Stronghelm Globe** will keep you updated.



### The PBEM 2v2 team tournament 2016:

Started in 2016 this double elimination tournament has also finished with Team **Coup de Grâce** consisting of **Tussel** and **Gabthegab** staying undefeated and winning over Team **Bastards of the North** formed by **Ezekiel** and **AIXStormrage**. They fought their way through the losers bracket to take revenge for being sent to the losers bracket by team **Coup de Grâce** already in the 2nd round of the tournament.

Alas they were not successful and **GabtheGab** keeps cementing his legacy as the strongest PBEM player in AoW3.

### PBEM Duel Tournament 2017:

The PBEM duel Tournament 2017 is over! **GabtheGab** played against **Jean\_de\_Metz**. **GabtheGab** won playing as **Goblin Rogue** against **Jean\_de\_Metz's** **Tigran Necromancer**. The game was decided in turn 44 when **Jean\_de\_Metz** conceded. Congratulation to the winner **Gabthegab** and also to **Jean\_de\_Metz** and **Hiliadan** for ending the tournament in the 2nd and 3rd place respectively!

### 3vs3 PBEM Tournament 2018:

4 Teams are participating, each consisting of 1 expert player and 2 newer players. So far no match has ended. The teams are:

- **Team 1st** led by the tournament organiser **Skuns453Lirik902** with the other members being **Nub Nub** and **Akinos**. They play against:
- **3 fistfuls of wonder** led by **Ezekiel** and his companions **Longinus** and **DiaEmperador**.
- **Dos Equis XX** led by (brew)master **\$eer** together with **El Lobo** and **Badok** is currently facing:
- **Fancy Name Team** led by **AIXStormrage** with his faithful game assistants **Zytozid** and **Fluksen**.<sup>a</sup>

We will keep you updated if anything happens!

<sup>a</sup>Disclaimer: **Fluksen** is a cheap smurf of **Fluks** who writes this text, so beware :D

Mixed:

### 2vs2 PBEM Team Tournament

#### The Live MP Duel Tournament 2018:

Has been cancelled due to players not playing their matches in time ☹



### Tactical Challenge - episode 01

You want to improve your skills in tactical battles? Or you think you're already the best and you want some challenging opponents? Come try yourself vs Imanuit, a Frostling Sorcerer AI with an impressive army! So far, six players have beaten the level 1 of the Challenge and only two players completed its level 2! Follow the [instructions here](#) to set up the challenge, design and build carefully your army with the limited resources, fight Imanuit, and share the results with the rest of the community! Maybe the [video of the victory of Blackwill](#) can inspire you?





'Shadowy twitching cadavers surrounded us. I prayed in despair, knowing our corpses would soon join the Necromancer's army. Then it appeared. The Embodiment of Hope! The Golden Dragon burned through the blackness with its fiery breath. Fierce and aware of every enemy no matter how it attempted to hide in the dark. The Necromancer launched waves of wicked... that the dragon shrugged off. Its fins...

You always wanted to see a:  
**Dragon?**

But don't like to get burned? - Here's your chance! Visit the new exhibition of waxworks in Stronghelm. Everything you've ever heard of and more - right here:

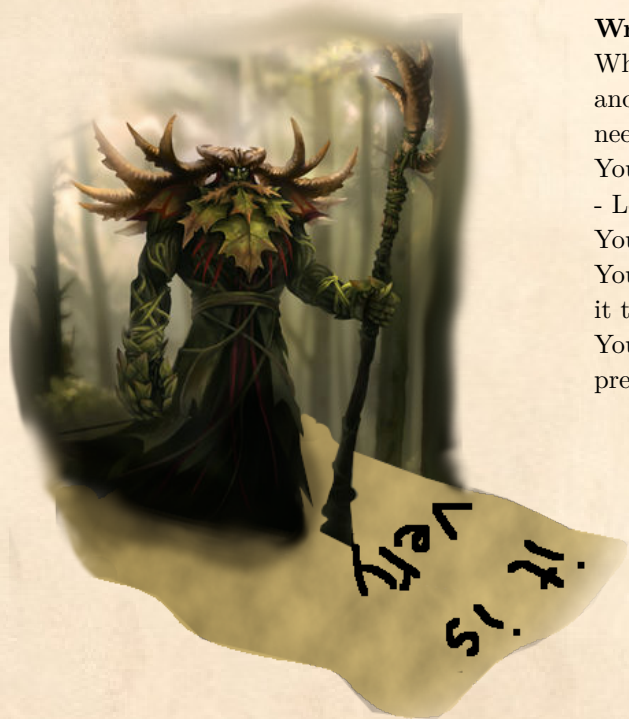
Tibbles Waxworks  
Sculpture Alley 5  
Stronghelm (Commonwealth)

Veterans and Tigran kittens get a discount at the entrance.



**The Shadow Realms Mod:**

Bugs? Shadows? Darkness? Does that tickle your inner Goblin? The gates to the Shadow realm are about to open and brave souls have the possibility to venture into these promising lands even before the gates are fully opened. Want to know more? Contact [Gatemaster Hiliadan](#) for ways into the Shadow realm.



**Writers and Artists needed:**

Whistleblowers, Artists, Writers, Poets, Modders and virtual limelight hogs: **The Stronghelm Globe** needs your input!  
You have leaked intelligence reports about fights? - Leak them to us!  
You wrote a poem/story? - Write it to us!  
You drew an okey-ish (or better) drawing? - Send it to us!  
You've been busy in the workshop and want to present the results?

Contact us:  
**The Stronghelm Globe**  
Inkling alley 13<sup>22</sup>/<sub>7</sub>  
Stronghelm (Commonwealth)



## War Diaries



What happened so far: Sverina the Golden, a vivid reader of our paper, is on an expeditionary trip to examine the fabled seals of power. But soon meets fierce resistance from the wanted human necromancer Malchar the Unholy and a draconian Theocrat named Fai Dural Dzirikon who are also trying to claim this land. Sverina quickly proves her magic prowess and within three weeks has cleansed the land from Malchars Undead plague! Yet at the end of last issues part she learns that there is a fourth character on these lands, Krinla Peas - a radical environmental activist and Halfling archdruid strongly opposing any magic tampering in what she calls "the natural order of things".

The 2nd part of the letters from Sverina and notes from Krinla are printed here, to read the beginning we kindly direct you to look in [issue 3 of The Stronghelm Globe](#). As always: The opinions presented therein are not necessarily those of [The Stronghelm Globe](#).

The game is between BloodyBattleBrain (BBB) and Fluks on a medium size continents map with seals (40 charges to win). Apart from BBB and Fluks there are 2 random AIs on emperor difficulty. There are no teams at the beginning, but team victory is on. The underground has been disabled, cosmic events and empire quests enabled. Heroes match players race. The game is played without mods. Gentlemens agreements are: Manual fights only between main players, no split stacking and no attacks in the beginning of a turn.

### Letters from Sverina

FAO: Dr. Shlumpf

My dearest Dr. Shlumpf,

it is with a heavy heart that I write to you.

You have heard, no doubt, rumours of desperate fights and much bloodshed. It is my earnest hope I can shed some perspective on this.

We have been set upon and betrayed and led to ruination, and the day was almost lost. Not only was my august and sage personage subject to numerous vile abuses, my diaries were lost!

It is one thing to attack me, one expects such rough behaviour in the service of the great Leonus, but such savagery to burn my books.

Thus it is I must write to you from memory, and trust this Eagle Rider is both honest and lucky.

In my last missive, I detailed how we had found and dispatched a Bone bothering boring bad man named Melciar, and ~~appropriated~~ liberated various Human towns, and how our peaceful mission to the east was met by a perverted beast master, a druid by the name of Krinla.

#### 5th & 6th week

- I find myself increasingly distracted by this Halfling. And I am in a bind. The very same geography that allowed me to sweep over Melciar has now trapped me in the Frostling city. My scouts note several bands of Shamans roaming very close to my east. This is very worrying as I have no direct counter. All I have to detect them is my own, dwindling core of Apprentices. As powerful as they are, the Shamans outnumber me and are everywhere.

I proceed north of Fisskala, a Frostling city that had *joyfully* joined me, complaining of territorial infringements to the east- to secure another seal, as news reaches me that Fai has, somewhat dubiously, agreed to a peace with Krinla. I can only assume Krinla wishes to secure her flanks before falling upon me, a suspicion confirmed when I find her main army near the seal. At first, I do not panic as I have another army from the north, descending upon her, which I am confident she has not seen. And a secondary army near the Frostling city.

#### The 7th week

My preparations were toppled as I made a strategic blunder. I found myself and my bodyguards outnumbered and outmatched. They were sacrificed fought valiantly to buy me time, and I was able to commune with the Emperor and leave this world for a while. It appears my cunning plan to use the power of the snows to hide my troops was not so cunning, and not so much mine as it was Krinla's. I am undone.

And then things went from bad to worse! A Queen of the Undead, no doubt a parting gift from Melciar, decided to visit this realm, and took a shine to my northern army. Her hunger was not to be sated by mere wildlife, and my northern army was consumed. And then Krinla marched south, on the Frostling city. Rather than futilely fight, I withdrew the southern army, and made the decision to leave my throne utterly defenceless, whilst I was

travelling to it via the arcane pathways and send every single soldier available to stop, at any cost, the furry footed fan dancing army of Krinla.

I was obliged to leave Fisskala defenceless, but my rage burned deeply in me. It is an insult to all that is good and holy to have a city of allies so despicably occupied.

And indeed the priests \*and\* the Knights, 2 groups who rarely agree on anything, are in complete accord. My generals are worried, and rightly so. We are taking a gamble here. It is because of the thrice damned shamans. However, our wanderings in the void led us to a possible idea. So far we have used all our mana to recruit and train Apprentices, but perhaps our efforts would be better served by summoning more allies, as all of them float or fly, thus evening the mobility disparity. As things stand, our Knights are strong but the shamans swim and are hidden, so can choose when and where to attack.

Thus we hope that marching on Fisskala will force Krinla to commit, and if we are lucky we can blunt her forces, because if not, our empire shall be at her mercy. Our one consolation right now is that it appears Krinla doesn't realise just how overextended we were, and how defenceless. I suspect she knows little of my empire, the same as me, de to my scouts getting continuously shut down.

## The Story of Krinla Peas

### The fifth week:

Fai is growing with an alarming rate. On day 30 we receive a message that his capital is already a real metropolis and the first city in this part of Athla with more than 22000 inhabitants. Such growth can't be sustainable and thus we talk with Fai. To our surprise he asks us if it is true that Halflings are tasty but chewy?! Of course we deny! And tell him that Halflings are not tasty, but that we have great taste! And we are willing to prove this if he makes sure whoever tells such abominable lies can't tell them again, surely whoever spreads such false teachings also denies his god behind his back. On Rikkys advise we accompany our message to Fai with 200 mana.

Fai accepts on day 31 and the same turn the avatar of Fire (as foretold by the stars 4 days ago) arrives in his realm. And on day 32, just as we hear that Fai has declared war on Sverina (obviously she has been spreading the lie about tasty but chewy halflings!) we are also attacked by an confused phoenix, we would have liked to spare this majestic bird, alas it must be have been under the harmful influence of this Avatar of Fire that roams Fais land.

Despite our talk with Fai, just two days ago, on day 32 we again hear news of Fais seemingly limitless greed: He has already pushed his research into dangerous waters and some irresponsible scholars even call him "Sage" for that! We can not approve of such reckless behaviour - Soon after we spot a Lord of the Deep under Fais flag roaming the sea with a suspiciously big trident, he wouldn't go hunting for whales would he?!. We'll have to talk with him once he has done his task to make sure Sverina stops spreading lies about us halflings, now that we think about it we also suspect Sverina to be responsible for the breach in space that allowed the Fire rogue to enter our realm. The next days are similarly exciting as the fairies are in trouble yet again (and again it is Giants trampling around in their turf), fortunately Rikky is still close by and takes care of that and in return one of the fabled nightshade fairies joins us. Meanwhile Kipper and me find a Frost Wyvern egg in a Monster Den on our way towards Fisskala. As Archdruid it is of course my duty to take and protect the egg in the hope that maybe one of these rare and endangered frost Wyvern might hatch from it.

To give you an idea of this majestic natural reserve here we attached a map of our explorations so far.

Worse news are coming from the west. Our free roaming gryphon has been intercepted and killed by a merciless draconian flyer under Sverinas control. This unprovoked aggression once again shows that this sorcerer will stop at nothing and continues spreading her lies. We wonder what Fai is doing, he is officially at war with Sverina but we haven't heard any news on how the war is going.



*The known world so far.*

But our hunter reports that the fire Rogue occupies one of Fais cities now, he can't be too happy about that.

### **The sixth week**

The 6th week begins with an unwelcome surprise: Against all agreements Fai let's Sverina go and brokers peace with her. We remind him friendly that this was not exactly what we sent the mana for and offer him additional 100 gold to convince him to stand by his holy word! He takes the gold, declares war on Sverina on day 39, just to change his mind again on day 40...

With Fais convictions regarding his duties are flailing erratically (a bad sign, especially for an otherwise fanatic believer), Rikky and Pimton decide to go westward to help Fai with the Fire rogue that still is occupying a draconian city in the northwest. Fortunately Fai listens to reason for once and Pimton can arrange mutual open borders between our two realms.

While the Fais realm is on the brink of chaos, Our the realm of the Halflings is prospering quietly, thanks to Lardo the builder who efficiently keeps our realm save from intrusions of rabid animals and phoenixes. We have plenty of peas and could comission 3 new outposts. Also finally a sensible sorcerer: Hastra the Illusionist offers her knowledge to help dealing with Sverina who, unfortunately is also steadily increasing her realm of influence as we see that she has even taken over a draconian city from Fai! Everything is further complicated by the clouds hanging unnaturally deep for 4 days starting from day 39.

We ourselves are now in the icy realms of the south near Fisskala and decide to help increasing the bond with nature by offering mana to the land to easen the discomfort we halflings feel when travelling on unfavourable terrain. We also make sure that the citizens of Ingewal and Amstamla enjoy spiritual freedom.

Just when we arrive from the at the borders of Fisskala they let us know that they no longer need our help because they fell for the foul promises of Sverina. Devastated we return home and on our way we find a strange box, we carefully open it and feel a gush of power, a cold merciless power coming our way. The sky is still too cloudy for our astronomers to see, but we fear what they will spot once the clouds are gone.

With all these disturbing developments we decide that we should remember the spell fireball -as wildfires are necessary to keep weed in check this fireball might come in handy when we have to weed the unnatural being from this land. But we rummage through our book, finding several useful spells such as savage rage, feral instinct and safeguard, but where is the section on fire?! Ah there finally we find fireball and take extra care to remember it well.

The week ends with even more disturbing news: Sverina has taken control of the Seal of Magi Mulaix and Falonxar: Now Fai must come to his senses!

### **The 7th week**

Finally the clouds lift and our Astronomers confirm what we secretly feared: In 4 days an undead plague will arrive on this land. The Lich Queen is coming. And what is Fai doing in this dire situation with a Sorcerer running amok doing who knows what with 2 seals and a Lich queen incoming? He collects the offerings of his followers and makes sure his throne room becomes a truly imperial residence instead of helping this land! We must get a closer relation to him to help him correct his course of action, so we keep sending him offers to ally with us, but he declines all of them.



*A rousing victory for Rikky and Pimton!*

On day 45 finally Pimton and Rikky arrive at Lax Mihin, Fais former city that has fallen to the foul influence of the Fire rogue. In our new role as protector of this land we free Lax mihin and release them as vassal to keep an eye on the area.

With Lax Mihin relieved of the terror of the fiery rogue Fai finally sees the light and declares war on Sverina again, who spreads like a plague across this land already having gobbled down 7 cities in her never ending greed.

With Sverina holding two seals and our trust in Fais abilities to deal with the matter having vanished we see no other option than to step up ourselves and we let Sverina know that we will not tolerate her. We immediately weed out a frost witch and her guard that are suppressing the poor frostlings of Fisskala - with Sverinas encouragement

no doubt. Instead of surrendering upon our friendly request they fight fiercely, heavily supported by Sverinas magic tricks and even kill a dreadmonkey and a tiger!

After the fight we see that Sverina is close by in person fiddling with the Seal of Veve Falonxar. We see her, but

she only sees Kipper the Tireless and his group exhausted from the fight against her frostling henchmen since me and five other companions have paid our duty at the shrine of the frozen duty and are still hard to spot against the white of the snow. Kipper hails her telling her to leave this land and stop fiddling with the seals. But she doesn't listen instead she thinks it is OK to prey on us little halflings and charges towards us, her eyes like that of a predator going after it's prey. She recognizes her mistake too late as she finds that I am not prey but the master of nature so, as punishment for her greed she is sent to the void. Alas we are afraid that this is not the last we hear of her.

After we defeated Sverina we immediately head towards Fisskala to bring the the good news, alas when arriving there we see that not only are they under Sverinas Iron Rule, but her rule even allows draconian arsonists to do as they please within Fisskalias borders, as token of our goodwill we free Fisskala from their terror, but our Druids feel something is not right, and indeed a Dreadnought from Sverinas army is waiting hidden next to Fisskala ready for ambush. But it seems she is wiser than Sverina and retreats. While we move into the completely empty Fisskala to finally release them. As we are watching the Sverinas dreadnought led killer commando retreat we get the message that Sverinas troops have been spotted at the Seal of Lemegeton.

She must be stopped so Pimton and Rikky, who have just freed Lax Mihin from the fire rogue, are heading straight towards the Seal of Magi Mulax to drive Sverina away from there, as the Seal of Lemegeton is too far away.

On the next day the events come thick and fast for Rikky and Pimton, on their way to Magi Mulax the Lich Queen manifests herself very close by and they hear that Fai has taken Magi Mulax it from Sverina. Just shortly after the message they see an army of Sverina, supposedly fleeing from Fai, heading straight towards them. They are led by another dreadnought -Per Notchsson- and it seems they want to attack! But when spotting that Pimton and Rikky both have an army with them he decides to run south, alas he runs directly into the arms of the Lich Queen, the following fight is not nice to watch as the Lich Queen starts her harvest. Of course this enrages Pimton Bane of the Undead and the otherwise quite and balanced Theocrat charges after the Lich Queen and Rikky can't but follow. The following battle still haunts Pimton as he can't bring the Lich Queen and her Reaper down fast enough to prevent them from harvesting his travel companion Rikky.

May he rest in Peace, he died a true Hero of this land freeing it from the Fire Rogue and the Lich Queen before he fell. We don't know if we can, but we will try to find his lifes signature somewhere in the Void and bring him back.



*Svinla thought we are easy prey, how silly of her.*



*Just one of the many despicable traps Sverina uses to stop our mission - A killer commando hidden near Fisskala.*



*The events leading to the tragic dead of Rikky.*

Also in the south things are not calm, a gryphon we sent west of Fisskala is shot down immediately after spotting a worryingly big amount of of Priests, Knights and Apprentices heading towards Fisskala.

To brace ourselves against this incoming storm 3 shamans and a cockatrice are hurrying towards fisskala to reinforce mine and Kippers troops while also Pimton takes the battered remains of his and Rikkys army travelling south for now, but he will probably be a bit too late.

On the next day we decide to move east towards our small reinforcements and promise Fisskala to be back soon to help them defend their independence against Sverina.

Unfortunately Sverina immediately spots our troops absence and preys upon the defenseless Fisskala on day 49. Even more distressing is the message that Fai has retaken another Seal - Magi Mulax in the northwest.

Dear reader, we will make a break in the story here and continue in the next issue of **The Stronghelm Globe**.

You have reports of war crimes or heroic deeds? send them to:

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## Famous Generals: AbedNego

**Stronghelm Globe (SG):** Hi Abednego. First would you like to tell where you are from and what you do beside playing AoW3?

**Abednego (AN):** Hey, I'm from Czech Republic, 30years old guy, happily married for 2 years and working as SEO consultant (online marketing basically). I'm freelancer, so I got plenty of free time.

**SG:** How do you play? Do you listen to a playlist while playing or the in-game background music? Observer mode on or off? Forced high speed tactical combat? Animated movement on the map?

**SG:** Heh, I ALWAYS listen to the original music. It's maybe weird, because I got over 3k hours, but for me it's part of game, I don't listen to any non-game content, it just disturbs me. I also watch all fights fought by other players, basically I give the game full attention when I play. Observe mode ofc off, high speed tactical combat and fast movements is must-have, also hex grid on.

**SG:** When did you start playing Age of Wonders? Did you play previous installations before AoW3?

**AN:** For first try I installed Aow from some pirate copy, because I wasn't sure how good it is. It has pretty poor marketing. Played about 400 hours with friend, than we both bought it on steam. I play since first weeks of release I think.

**SG:** How did you come up with the name Abednego? Does it mean something?

**AN:** It's a biblical name (Babylonian), one of three guys (Shadrag, Meshak, AbedNego), it's my usual gaming name, male version, if I play rpg for female it's usually Lea Kaos. In it's original meaning it means worshipper of god Nego, but it's not really my case, I just like it. I got it since I was 15 years old and I started to play Starcraft Broodwar in a professional clan.

**SG:** You were quite active in the beginning of Age of Wonders, even ranking 3rd in the first Live MP tournament. But then you stopped (or played incognito?) somewhen in 2017 and only returned somewhat recently. What made you come back to AoW3 and what has changed in your opinion during the years?

**AN:** Umm... I got some pause because we were buying a new house and also wedding and stuff. I played Eve online and Overwatch meanwhile. Also I felt a bit exhausted, like I tried most of the possible combos in game. I think friends made me to come back, they still wrote me sometimes even they knew I'm out of aow for the moment. This community around aow is great.

**SG:** What do you think is the strongest race/class/spec combination and why?

**AN:** It's hard to say, AoW3 is incredibly good balanced, depends a lot on settings. On big maps, probably warlord remain strongest due to manticore spam. Lategame rogue is pretty decent too, except its hardcountered by things like hellfire. On smaller maps it's more about good strategy than combo, theo is pretty easy, also necro.

**SG:** Which race/class/spec are your favourites and for what reason?

**AN:** I personally love Shocktrooper rogue (shadowborn master, cruel backstab and enchanted armor shocktroopers), it's not the strongest, but there is a lot of fun with that. My favourite lategame combo is hellfire sorcerer, or lightstorm sorcerer for earth elementals, or elf druid with insane cp. Or very yolo strategic spell rogue – you can kill enemy without touching him with a single unit ☺ I hate halfling eagles crap, plz delete them.

**SG:** Do you have any AoW3 match that you are especially proud of?

**AN:** Not really, I don't remember any specific match, but generally it feels great to succesfully defend. I'm a defensive kind of player.

**SG:** We remember you saying that you want the title "Interview with AbedNego, the only player with his own designed hero in-game." Which hero is designed after you? The only one we know of is Aya Nera designed after Ayenara the winner of the first tournament.



Abednego is one of the best players in the Live multiplayer community since the beginning. He ranked third in the first AoW3 tournament which led to a lasting legacy in the game. Now, after a short absence he has returned to the Age of Wonders Multiplayer community. He also started streaming some of his games on [twitch](#) there are no videos on demand on his twitch page yet, but this might change in the future.

**AN:** Oh yea, that's right. But actually I have been talking with Ayenara after our game (it was pretty close), I don't remember details, but we kinda agreed it was more/less coinflip, so he offered me to make the design for the hero and he gets the name. So Aya-Nera is pretty much the same hero as my elf sorcerer leader.

**SG:** Being one of the best active Live players. How do you think the multiplayer scene in AoW could be improved?

**AN:** Kick DreadReaper out (joke). I think AoW scene is actually pretty good. Best community I met so far, only problem is, that it's so small. AoW could be improved simply by bringing more players (which is kinda late now, when Planetfall is close), I feel like they got almost zero marketing around this awesome game. I played also Civilization and other strategic games and none of those players ever heard about AoW. Before I found AoW I played Heroes of might and magic and I thought it's a pretty good game lol. It's worse in everything, yet got more players.

**SG:** What do you think was the most annoying mistake/blunder you made in a game so far?

**AN:** Not sure if its biggest, but it was with Lightstorm sorcerer I tried some time ago. My first thought was like: Hellfire is boring, let's go for earthquake. But the problem is most of units are flying/floating lategame. So lets go sorcerer and combo it with double gravity. Than I realized that double gravity doesn't tie units on the ground, earthquake didn't hurt them at all. Pretty useless spell then (gravity). So I had to change my strategy to get insane cp, age of magic and basically nuke enemy stacks on the strategic map with lightning storm (15 shock dmg to stack on strategic map, but when you can cast it 6x per turn, its decent). The game after I played full lightning storm sorc and used that spell to kill cities – it kills 1500 population and description also says it hurts the enemies race happiness. You can kill metropolis to outpost in 2 turns ☺ But I realized it hurt my happiness as well, maybe bug.. We won, but I ended up with about -2000 race happiness☺

**SG:** Is there any aspect of the game that you are particularly strong at (tactical combat, economy, strategic movement, clearing sites etc.)?

**AN:** I think I'm decent in tactical combat, I don't do many mistakes, because I watch all battles (and my eyes are bleeding when I see all those missed chances). On the strategic map I feel ok as well.

**SG:** What do you think is your biggest weakness?

**AN:** All-ins and timing attacks. I'm not a very aggressive player and I struggle in these. Which is strong part of 1v1, in which I'm also not good at.<sup>1</sup>

**SG:** What are your thoughts on Planetfall?

**AN:** I hope mechanics will be as good as promised. And I hope Paradox will cover some better marketing for it. I hope they gonna solve team multiplayer games better than in AoW (at least classic team turns). I hope I gonna see old AoW players there – WhiteKnighted, Exnihil, Azzazir, Ayenara etc. . .

**SG:** Anything you want to say that wasn't covered by the questions already?

**AN:** Yep, mods and homerules. It's strange, but there are totally different type of players in different timezones. There are two great modes used nowadays – Griffiths and DreadReapers, totally recommend them if you are new into game. . . And homerules. . . brings kinda hate in hardcore live community players, there are lots of discussions about “taking berries, abusing last sec movements, hiding invisible stack. . .” I would say: Don't care if somebody is not playing straight. It's their problem, not yours. They lack skill, just be better and beat them even if they try to abuse the smallest things in game. Me and Dread don't do that and still got pretty high winrate. And also I remember old times when even splitstacking was allowed, so now it seems kinda funny for me when somebody demands a reload because I came in his empire with an invisible stack and he didn't scout it ☺

And as last, I got some challenges for players. Some people ask me what's good timing for something, what should they achieve by specific turn.. So, with these settings: Med square ++ map, village start, few visit sites, few roads, no cities, far distance, 2v2, rest average, autocombat ai, you will be fine if:

1. Turn 20 you are at the enemy base with 3 stacks of any t1-t2 units or irregulars
2. Turn 30 you are at the enemy with 2 stacks of t3 units with decent heroes or with 3 stacks of good t2 units
3. Turn 35 you are at the enemy with 1 stack of t4 units + one stack of t3 units
4. You got horrors researched turn 28 with a least 60cp
5. Got Gods researched turn 35 with at least 60cp
6. Got stack of exalted turn 20

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<sup>1</sup>A warning to anyone anyone not familiar with Live MP: Abed is blatantly understating here.

7. Got stack of stalkers turn 28
8. Got stack of manticores turn 35 and can build them in at least 2 cities
9. Got dark pact researched turn 50 and 3 stack of stalkers already built
10. Got 7 cities turn 20 with one good creeping stack alive
11. Got stack of flame tanks and stack of cannons turn 35 with advanced logistics researched
12. Got t3 or t4 summon spell from dungeon turn 22
13. Got at least 2 heroes with lategame spell and cp (call beast horde, destabilized mana core, chaos rift) turn 31
14. Got age of magic + t3 summon and decent mana income turn 45
15. Try to make überhero (achieved this only once in my life in multiplayer game). It is 100% (actually some over 100) all protections, tireless lifedrain hero – this screenshot is from 2v2 med++ map, 4 player game as dwarf theocrat.



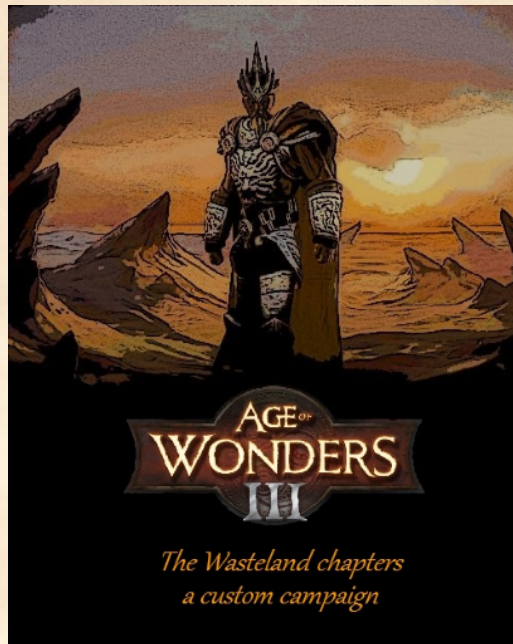
*If you get to this hero in Live MP you'll do fine. - Live Mp counsel from AbedNego.*

Thank you for the interview!



## Workshop

The Workshop - Where new things are created and old favourites improved. This month we have a sneak peak into the wasteland mod from Refineus .



### The wasteland chapters

**T**HIS is a custom campaign with that will be featured in the AOW III universe around 2019 and is expected to be in full development after the Shadow Realm community expansion have its campaign finalized. I will present some information regarding it and present myself as a mod maker. I'm Refineus, I live in Sweden and do play games occasionally as long as my girlfriend doesn't interfere. I cannot say I been too much into the modding scene before, only map making. The most serious map releases I had was for StarCraft I with an attempt for custom campaign named "Razorblade" which was not to successful at the time, I was like twelve years old and played back in the days around with Star edit which was the map editor featured by blizzard.

Then I had a period with Heroes of Might and Magic III a custom campaign, which was lost due a big hard drive crash essentially removing the core files completely. Sadly, I never decided to pick up that campaign again, but the introduction of drop box saving has certainly made the backups easier – lesson learned. Then I had a certain blast in releasing multiplayer maps created for Warhammer: 40000 Dawn of War I. We were hanging around on the Relic forums connected with the game and we became a team of five people releasing map pack for the community. I think we released about 20 maps in total for Dawn of War and they were quite downloaded at the time it was popular with the series. Since then I have not created something in a while, since StarCraft II arrival I tried created some survival maps and MOBA hoping to be featured in the Arcade at some point. But, I dropped it quickly realizing the new editor for StarCraft 2 was too complicated into comparison with the old one.

Then, Age of Wonders series, all titles. I never created something with the older titles but I were busy playing them when I grow up. I used to fool around with editors all the time creating something, but without releasing anything. Then I played Age of Wonders III – well I finished the campaigns, played many of the custom scenarios and felt "meh" on many of the maps around the steam workshop. The games could be fun, but I feltd the various map makers around steam released their content as unfinished products. Some even released unplayable maps, which sadly is still a common problem for many games featured with a steam workshop.

So, why this campaign? Well with almost 900 hours in Age of Wonders 3 where 600 hours is probably inside the level editor. As, I usually do single player games and are nowhere a competitive force in the multiplayer scene. I played the first, ever PBEM game with Hiliadan for the Alpha phase of Shadow Realm community expansion. So, I like to develop the single player scene, more due to reasons I'm not a big fan of random maps.

I like symmetrical balance and the inferior advantage of knowing the base layout. Secondly, I tend to write a lot of random things, connect them somehow, rewrite it many times and then it suddenly became something. So, then it crossed my mind of creating a serious project and my mind turned to Age of Wonders III. I like the lore and the wide stories around connected with the whole AOW universe.



Fig. 1 Horn of Kesh, Drakar Oasis and Jungle of Umbura is all returning including the area of Ashen Steppes.

Then Wasteland Chapters and the heroes were born. Suddenly there was connections with old empire of Azracs and Nomads. As seen in this old map of Shadow Magic (Fig.1) I decided to pick out some of my favourite mission from the Shadow Magic campaign and make them custom for my campaign. Then the conflict was in motion with Commonwealth and then the timeline was set to be in the same period as Edward and Sundren campaign. Then their plots would conflict somehow by the ongoing war with the Elven Court and Commonwealth allowing for a change when another faction decide to interfere in the conflict.

What is the Wasteland Alliance? (Working name for the new faction in the campaign) They are the shared fate for many of desert people united by one king. The Wasteland Alliance will become bigger as soon as you meet new and old faces around Athla. Dependable, how the player progress with the various people met in the campaign, the faction can grow stronger or weaker. They are not nomads anymore, but they're humans with an history of being Azrac and Nomads.

The main leader is Reynald (Fig.2), the King who appear in the main story branch of the campaign. A king which appeared out of nowhere it may seem, but is there more of it? The player is intended to find out as the story progress in the campaign. What choice the player chooses for the king can affect the whole story. I intend to utilize the choices and consequences sce-



Fig. 2 Reynald the main leader in the story who speaks briefly of his duties as a king. Content taken from the previous completed scenarios.

nario at some key areas in the campaign story. Hopefully, the characters introduced in the story also would create a like and dislike for the players who intend to play this story.

When I say there is a main story branch, there is also smaller stories introduced for other characters in the campaign. Much like Reskar, Laryssa, Sulthor and Valery had in triumphs campaign originally. However, it will be different and you can only see the other part as an ally in the campaign missions. This in order to go away from the leader and hero switches that traditionally was part of triumphs campaign. Your ally however will always have a smaller thing done for you in almost every mission like providing support for the king seen in the picture below (Fig. 3). This not mean there are heroes available, only that they are fewer and locked in their respective roles.



Fig. 3 Your main ally will always try to help you in the campaign. He won't be featured as a main hero in the campaign and will only make appearance for Reynald in his stories as a helpful ally.

Custom world maps will be made for every mission in the campaign. As seen in the picture to the below (Fig.4) I made a custom world map for this mission prologue. I made them with a paint program that supports layers and from that I also used the template for World maps made by Triumph. In this world map, Ashen Steppes, Drakar Oasis, Horn of Kesh and Jungle of Umbura central in the campaign. I also create world maps for the Shadow Realm community campaign with the same technique.



Fig. 4 With custom new names for areas and new faction colour. Arrows are in new shape and form to refresh everything.

Maps will have a similarity of the original campaigns with both hints and quest. I will utilize the hint function for the player to get a hang of the missions quickly by introducing the player onto tips and various quests early. Doing certain things will lead player into understand the quests earlier and prepare for it like shown in the Jungle of Umbura mission (Fig. 5)



Fig. 5 Hints and quests are used in similar tradition as they were from triumphs originally campaign.

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From the timeline of Age of Wonders III and a piece of the custom lore added:

224 YC – Order has been restored to most of the outer colonies of the Commonwealth. With tributes flowing into the Capital, the Emperor turns his attention back to the High Elf separatists, demanding they give up their lands immediately. Opposite to the trend, Brisska declares its independence.

So, there was another event taking part at the same time. It was a problematic era for some of the clans of shattered Humans, as they were overrun by various tribes of orcs when they settled in Ashen Steppes after escaping the continent of Kesh. They barely survived and many of the disbanded nomads were to be found everywhere around the southern regions of Athla. Many of the Humans were heavily outnumbered and were pushed further into the desert as they fought for their survival.

As the strongest among the clans rallied their forces again, the time had come to challenge the empire again when emperor's attention happens to be elsewhere. One leader took command, decided for his own people and their families that they would regain control of their lost lands again.

There can be no failure of a man who has not lost his courage, his character, his self-respect, or his self-confidence. He is still a King who will govern his people on the right path. Within a king's past forhold a judgement, but it also holds a responsibility to show where the loyalty is true. A weakening truth, dangerously spreading across the abandoned kingdom whereas there still people who need to regain the trust of their king once more.

The Wasteland Alliance was formed under king Reynald's command to establish an order in the desert. The king shall conciliate the older domains as their newly formed kingdom. But first, they must defeat the ones whom falsely claiming it as their realm, still.

Long live the king, who shall rule the deserts of Athla once again!

# Horoscope

*BloodyBattleBrains musings about the future*

So, since the last article, so many changes and so much news!!!

Planetfall is shaping up to be something special indeed. However, we finally encountered something that split opinion (the new diplomacy system, and vassalage specifically) and we got some...interesting critiques from the Steam forums. Plus, sexbots confirmed, and tin cans manufactured! So, where to begin?

Well, for me, something that initially went unnoticed, but which I think could be a real game changer – when you capture a settlement, you have the option to move those colonists to an existing settlement. This hasn't existed in previous games. That leads nicely onto city management.

Whilst acknowledging that the genre has no shortage of city management mechanics, something this in depth is new for the AoW series. I will sound one note of caution – well 2 really. First, I hope it feels unique and fun, and not a copy/paste job from some other game and second, I hope it doesn't get tedious and absolutely REQUIRE micro-management. My fear is that, at higher levels certainly, micro managing will be essential. I have to say, I think the original AoW system is, overall, the best – you had a set number of cities on the map, and they were locked in size, and the tier of the unit available was utterly dependent on the size. If you had a city that occupied 4 hexes (and yes, cities occupied more than one hex, unlike in AoW2, SM, AoW3 and now PF, where the city itself occupies one hex but the domain, or now sectors, can expand) then you could produce tier 4 units.

The downside of that particular iteration was that t4 units were stupidly powerful stats wise, and the battle system had unlimited retaliations, and magic was (for better or worse) much more impactful, so it was trivial to get a stack of t4 units, bless and haste and enchant weapon them and unleash and just kill everything. So the game was a literal race to find a t4 producing city, the redeeming feature of that being it forced interesting map play ☹. AoW3 is so much better balance wise BUT, I do think that if a system that tied tech availability to city size had been used (I have proposed, at length, elsewhere, a system whereby each hex would have a value, e.g. 3 available slots, and you would have to expand your city outwards to claim a slot, and things like walls occupied a slot – so you could have snaking walls on the strategic map, and fence off parts therein – and level 2 buildings would need 2 slots, lvl 3 3 slots and lvl 4 buildings 4 slots, plus all the prerequisite buildings. For example, an eagle's Nest would need 3 slots and an existing war hall and a barracks, so you'd need to budget 6 slots, or 2 standard map hexes, to build these. And they could therefore be occupied, and razed slowly by enemy forces), not only would the classes have been more disparate/asymmetric (e.g. Druids needing less large cities but Dreadnoughts and Warlords absolutely requiring the highest size cities) but it could have opened the door for multi turn battles in order to occupy a city, because in AoW1 you could have 2 opposing stacks on a city and the possession of the city would be in limbo. I don't know about you guys, but I started to get slightly tired of city wall fights lol :P.



*Here you can see a Human and a Hafling 4 hex city, centrally located, meaning a real flashpoint for conflict*



Once again though, Triumph in their infinite wisdom, have decided to engineer the game so that fights centring on colony centres (aka citadels) are fewer, and they've mixed up the combat maps, so we \*should\* find ourselves with far fewer repetitions of combat maps.

Speaking of the combat maps (which btw are bigger, and have certain destructible parts, like the gas tanks shown in the latest video, and also have things like fields giving you a defence bonus, to simulate cover form view,) it was mentioned at the Paradox Convention (btw guys, go visit Stockholm, lovely city, albeit pricey) that we would get a tactical battles editor. This has since been confirmed by a source close to the project – the intent is to have it in, but it requires testing. Other hardly noticed changes – rivers are now no longer distinct things on the map, instead they are a terrain type, requiring 16 mp to cross. Speaking of MP, it seems that most units are slightly slower than in AoW3. Basically, with the sector system, your cities grow slower and, effectively, consume more space than a city would in AoW3. PLUS units move slower PLUS higher tier units are soft-gated by cosmite (and when you get it, the choice between upgrading your existing, veteran t2 and t1 units or building fresh t3 and t4 units is apparently quite a hard one) PLUS diplomacy PLUS colony management PLUS production rollover by default favouring cheaper units →→ all of which leads me to conclude that Triumph is trying to actively slow down and/or extend the early to mid-game.

Your mileage may vary, but imho this is a fantastic thing. I think the previous games were best at the start and middle of the game, but that the systems started to break down towards the end of the game, but I must caveat that by stating that I frequently would play very slow settings on very large maps, using the [extended settings mod](#), which I highly recommend.

One of my worries, which I hope is utterly unfounded, is that battles towards the end game will become tedious, but if the game realistically ends before too long, and if the other systems, such as the diplomacy one, enable a victory without the extended mop up phase, then I am optimistic this won't be the case.

Talking about endings, I would be remiss if I didn't mention the Promethean doomsday victory.



*You fill the atmosphere with gas and then you light a match! Whoosshhhhh!*

On a slightly more negative note, I came across [this thread](#) on Steam. Here someone is critiquing the units in Planetfall, labelling the art style generic etc, but without explaining why s/he feels that way. Guys, critique is not just useful, it's essential, but good critique, else it just comes across as whining. For example, below you can see the Vanguard engineer:



This is an early screenshot, but 5 defence seems a bit high and imho, the unit looks a bit top heavy. It also seems a bit OP based on what we know, with a high damage attack and a bomb attack and it can repair stuff. Granted this is a fully modded unit, but I would rather it had no attack, or a much weaker one, but had more support type abilities, such as battlefield turrets, deployable cover, minefields etc. That is how you should be presenting your critiques guys. Triumph may or may not change anything, but you can be damned sure they're paying

more attention to that than *“did no one tell you guys some of your AoW3 units are really ugly and out of place?”* ...

While we're on the subject



(a) This is the Valkyrie concept art



(b) And this is a screenshot of them.

I think the concept art is awesome, really badass, but the wings in game look non-functional. I think the wings could be spread out more or removed and the rockets be more obviously rockets.



(a) This is the vanguard bike.



(b) But I think this would look better.

On the other hand, this is the OWL - And I think it looks awesome! Anyway, your thoughts?



I think it quite fitting to wrap this up by linking to the newest information, namely the [Dvar faction spotlight](#). We've known about these guys for a while, but man what a treat to see them in action. Obviously, the next let's play will focus on these guys.

By the way guys, if you're after something a bit different, google DVAR. :D Thank me later.

So, yes, they're Space Dwarves, but such a description sells them short imho. I'll admit, when I first heard about them, I thought they'd just be nicely packaged food for my Kir'ko hordes but now Dvar are close to being my favourite faction. I'm still carrying the torch for the Syndicate, although I know full well a lot of that is due to me filling in the gaps mentally and imposing my desires on the race, mostly because we know so very little about them. Dvar seem very no nonsense (and badass, check out the linked [time stamp](#)), and in the Discord they were described several times as being very "metal."

#### The DVAR line-up:

Their scout unit can destroy mountains – that's one hell of an asymmetric ability, so kudos to whoever thought that up. All their units seem to adhere to the what you see is what you get philosophy. (GUYS I MAY BE WRONG ABOUT THIS < SEEKING CLARIFICATION) After the Prospector, you have the Trencher – I don't like the name, but I do like the unit. It is t1 infantry than can deploy its own cover.

Then you get the Foreman, whose key skill seems to be "incentivise," which we know nothing about. I'm guessing it works a bit like the Tigran ability invigorate, or maybe just boosts morale (we don't yet know how important a role morale plays in the game.) After that, there is the Ramjet, which we know about. One assumes though that it is a jet, that rams things. . .

Following that, we have the sapper, which looks like a mechanic worm and behaves similarly, borrowing in the battlefield (think pounce from AoW3) and then reappearing and messing everything up. We also have the Bulwark, which we know from the dev diary.

Then there is the DVAR baron.

Oddly enough, in the city line-up, there is no earth crusher mentioned, which seems to be their T4 unit (which itself brings up the question of why they showed a T4 in this video and in none of the others. . .)

Is the "Baron" a named derivative of the earth crusher template?

So many questions!



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