

Age of Ice

End of Days

The war is over.

Finally, the war is over.

The last few encounters couldn't really be called battles, broken, desperate warriors struggling futilely to survive a few days longer as your own forces hunted them down, battalions, then warbands, then finally one by one.

Bleak, brutal and cruel, but ultimately necessary.

If there is to be a future for Erebus and the people here, such actions are necessary.

You find yourself repeating that mantra quite often.

Eventually the fighting stops, your last few warriors returning simply because there are none of the enemy left to fight.

Peace, such as it is, descends across the world, the surviving empires pausing to lick their wounds, to recover, to repair and rebuild.

War has ever been the mother of invention, and there have been a number produced during the days of the war, so there are a great many improvements to things back home. Better roads, improved infrastructure, farms, mills...

Every new discovery seems to lead to two or three more, and the spirit of your people begins to lift as they begin to prosper once more, and the ranks of your armies begin to swell once more as patriotism drives people to enlist.

It seems like a good idea to overhaul your forces, and there's some nagging feeling worrying away at you that indicates it may be a good idea...

=====

The Riddle of Steel

While things seem peaceful, you know the truth of things - this is the calm before the storm, and not a true time to healing and recovery. The barbarians and raiders will eventually reorganise and return, their numbers swollen by survivors from your now shattered and broken opponents and from simple peasants and refugees who have lost everything, house and hope and stability. You have to rebuilt, train and reorganise.

It should be enough to keep the barbarians from the gates, but anymore than that? Probably not.

Still as either a solid defence for your lands or simply a screen of ablative meat to allow you to reach the dangerous entities you suspect will swarm soon, they will suffice.

Units may be purchased more than once, unless otherwise listed.

If a unit is listed as a replacement unit for your civilisation, you may only purchase the replacement unit, which is superior.

You now have 2000 CP.

500 Warriors 100 CP

In times such as these, no man is raised without knowledge of how to use weapons, and no household is without a sword. When all others fail, the people themselves are the last line of defence. Warriors are no more than peasants with any weapon they can get their hands on, called upon to defend their homes, their livelihoods, and their families. Although they fight with a desperate bravery and stubbornness born of the knowledge that they are fighting to protect everything they hold dear, their lack of training and haphazard equipment makes them no match for professional soldiers. The Barbarian Warrior has none of the merits of the civilized men, save their fanatical bravery. Warriors form the bulk of the Barbarian war bands that prey on outlying settlements, thriving on destruction and slaughter. Most Barbarians carry on the way of their nomadic ancestors, ceaselessly on the move, still worshipping the ancient and bloodthirsty pagan gods, and their spine-chilling war cries and horrific appearance are the terror of the borderlands. These menaces to the civilized world deserve nothing less than to be

exterminated.

300 Beastmen

Doviello Warrior replacement unit.

100 CP

Most people are peasant first, fighter second. They possess weapons and can use them, but they devote the bulk of their time to other pursuits - farming, fishing, all those tasks that feed and fuel civilisation. The Doviello are different though, for they are all warriors first, farmers and craftsmen a very distant second. Indeed, even if the Doviello you called farmer was actually leading an Oxen in ploughing a field when you spoke, you would be in for a fight.

Doviello peasants are unique in always being ready and eager to go to war. Clad in the pelts of animals they have personally slain, from a distance they appear as bizarre man animals, and it is from this the name beastman is derived. While they are bigger and stronger than the average warrior, and far more skilled and eager, they are still not a match for true, dedicated, disciplined soldiers.

300 Bloodpets

Calabim Warrior replacement unit.

100 CP

Blood pets fit into the Calabim human social ladder somewhere between the oppressed peasant and the favored Moroi. They are kept around the Vampiric governors to do all sorts of menial tasks, not the least of which is to serve as cannon fodder. Due to their closer association with the ruling class they are spared the feasting of their peers, but are the first ones to be fed on in a pinch. Because of this they are truly fanatical in their devotion to their unliving masters, and are also skilled at keeping the teeming rabble below them in order, functioning as surprisingly effective guards who can easily keep captured cities pacified.

200 Archers

100 CP

A bow is a simple, yet effective, weapon, and, with a bit of training, an archer can become a serious hazard to those of an unfriendly disposition. Because of the need of specialized weaponry and some rudimentary training, most archer companies form part of semi-professional militias under the command of lords, guilds or cities. By their very nature, archers do their best work on the defensive, hiding under cover until the opportune time, then unleashing a hellish fury of whistling shafts on the heads of their assailants. Few things cripple an attack better than volley upon volley of random and uncaring death.

150 Dwarven Slingers

Luchuirp Archer replacement unit.

100 CP

The dwarves were slow to embrace the bow, for in the cramped underground environments they favoured, it was essentially worthless and the few forays they made to the surface they were easily able to overcome opposition thanks to rank after rank of heavily armoured

Dwarven soldiers. Now, such tactics are no longer available and alternatives are required, and the sling was one of the options investigated.

Dwarves are naturally stockier and stronger than most races, especially in the arm and shoulder, so they are capable of firing a stone much further than other races, and thanks to the runecraft they possess, the sling bullets all explode on impact, showering an area with razor sharp shrapnel.

300 Javelin Thrower
Doviello Archer replacement unit.
100 CP.

The Doviello have few, if any dedicated ranged units. Few of them hold the patience required for anything other than a direct and brutal charge, and those that do are held in the deepest suspicion. That is not to say they do not wield ranged weapons at all however, for some of the clans favour a devastating javelin barrage before closing into combat, giving their front line forces a hefty punch!

1 Archmage
600 CP
May select three spell schools for the Archmage.
The Archmage may become a companion.

Power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely. The saying springs to mind quickly when considering the vaguely disturbing figure that is the Archmage. Even among the fortunate few laypersons they deign to interact with, it is hard to avoid a creeping feeling of fear mingled with awe.

Archmages have reached the point where their magical prowess is so great the mere threat of their magic is enough to keep possible competitors and enemies in line. As such, many are satisfied to spend their time on more theoretical and scholarly pursuits. Be not fooled by these seemingly placid activities: Foolish people who move them to anger quickly regret it. Because of the enormous amount of work involved in getting to the apex of wizardry, Archmages are a select elite within each civilization. Most practitioners of magic are satisfied with being the less specialized mages.

1 Assassin
200 CP
The Assassin may become a companion.

If an Assassin is doing his or her job properly, no one will ever know. A problem simply goes away due to an unfortunate 'accident' or 'illness'. Certainly not a front line unit by any means, the Assassin is best used weeks before a battle, wreaking havoc on the enemy line of command.

400 Axemen
200 CP

Axes have been used since time immemorial, and not just as tools. When the Gods taught mankind the secret of metal working, the noble art of murdering thy neighbour took a giant leap forward. The battle-axe, preferred weapon of the Dwarves, is a fearsome weapon also in human hands, cleaving flesh and bone with horrific and very final results. Metal battle-axes are expensive and difficult to make, and so they are reserved for the privileged few that make up the professional warrior class, often the personal body-guards of the nobility. These professional warriors are often hardened veterans of countless vendettas and clan wars, which gives them a serious edge in a fight. Frequently ruthless and not very prone to showing mercy, they have been known to completely eradicate less experienced units. Axemen who have fallen into disfavour or been banished often join the ranks of the Barbarian tribes as elite raiders and personal armies of Barbarian chieftains. These coolly efficient killers are often even more terrifying than the disordered warriors that make up the rank-and-file.

400 Swordsmen

200 CP

First appearing some several hundred years before the First High Age, the earliest swords were little more than extra-large daggers. It wasn't until the development of iron forging that swords became viable combat weapons. The earliest swords were short and sharp, designed primarily for stabbing. Further advances in iron-work allowed bigger swords, and by the middle of the High First Age monstrously-long and heavy two-handed swords could cleave through all but the toughest armor.

800 Spearmen

200 CP

The earliest spears were doubtless straight pieces of wood with crudely-sharpened ends; these would quickly break or become dull with service. The spear didn't become a reliable weapon until some early innovator discovered that he could harden the tip by lightly charring it over a fire. Eventually stone tips were employed, then of course metal. Spears are fairly simple weapons to learn, and they can be produced rapidly and cheaply, so they tend to be the backbone of early civilizations' armies.

200 Moroi

Calabim Axeman/Swordsman/Spearman replacement unit.

200 CP

The next step up from the Bloodpet on the Calabim social ladder, the Moroi are those who have distinguished themselves from the masses and can truly claim to be the ones considered for perhaps one day maybe conceivably being granted the gift of eternal unlife. Though they are far fewer in number than the alternatives other races employ, they are far more skilled and perhaps even more devoted to their masters than the Bloodpets, if such a thing were possible.

60 Wood Golems

Luchuirp Axeman/Swordsman/Spearman replacement unit.

200 CP

The novice Luchuirp crafters at the start of the age of rebirth tried working the exotic materials

that their ancestors used, but found they needed more practice to get useful forms for their enchanting process. The wood golems produced by this practice turned out to make decent fighters, and could be found filling out the ranks admist their sturdier relatives throughout the age. Tireless, relentless, the only weakness these constructs have is fire.

1 Beastmaster

200 CP

The Beastmaster may become a companion.

A consumate warrior able to dwell in almost any terrain, the Beastmaster has all but abandoned civilisation to take to the wilds. While a single man (or elf, or dwarf) may not seem worth the effort to recruit, it should be pointed out that a Beastmaster combines his own strength with those of the animals that accompany him (and a bizarre crotch biting weasel). A dozen Dire Lions bursting from a thicket you would swear was too sparse to conceal a single beast and slamming right into the flank of a charging cavalry unit will drastically alter the outcome of a battle. He also converts defeated animals to his and your side.

1 Myconid

Luchuirp Beastmaster replacement unit.

200 CP

The Myconid may become a companion.

There are strange creatures deep beneath the earth. It was on the borders of vast underground lakes that the Luchuirp met one of the most unusual, the Myconid. The Myconid tend to their glowing fungi forests and live quiet lives far from the sun. But late in the Age of Rebirth, if the Dwarves need their strength (and their intoxicating spore clouds) the Myconid will come and fight beside those that befriended them in the underhome. Uniquely amongst Beastmasters, the Myconid can convert more than just animals, for their sporeclouds may affect the soldiers filling the ranks of enemy armies as well, though the results can sometimes be somewhat ... worrying...

80 Berserkers

300 CP

I'll ask of the berserks, you tasters of blood,
Those intrepid heroes, how are they treated,
Those who wade out into battle?
Wolf-skinned they are called. In battle
They bear bloody shields.
Red with blood are their spears when they come to fight.
They form a closed group.
The prince in his wisdom puts trust in such men
Who hack through enemy shields.

--Rough translation of the Doviello Haraldskvæði, a poem written by Thórbiörn Hornklofi commemorating Harald Fairhair.

Berserk is a corruption of the Doviello words 'Baer' and 'Skaen' or 'bare skin', for the first of the Berserkers literally went into battle naked. Possessing the ability to drive themselves into such a screaming, frothing rage that not cold, nor fire or even iron could slow them, and few shield walls could stop them. Berserkers are reknown as unstoppable blood crazed killing machines, and with good reason. While most units will break and run when the Berserkers start to charge, those with the discipline and training to stand their ground can fight back however, for the Berserkers are too far gone to defend themselves, concerned only with killing.

12 Trolls

Jotnar Berserker replacement unit.

400 CP

Troll numbers will increase by 4-8 per victorious battle as severed parts regenerate into new trolls.

The average troll stands nine feet high and weighs roughly 500 pounds, though females tend to be a bit larger than males. The hide of trolls is rubbery, and usually either moss green, putrid grey, or mottled gray and green. Their coarse hair is typically iron grey, or greenish-black.

Trolls initially seem to be somewhat shorter, due to their sagging shoulders and tendency to hunch forward. They walk with an uneven gait, and their arms dangle and drag the ground when running. Despite this apparent awkwardness, trolls are quite agile.

Trolls are infamous for their regenerative abilities, able to recover from the most grievous of wounds or regenerate entire limbs given time. Severing a troll's head results merely in temporary incapacitation, rather than death. After cutting off a troll's head or other limbs, one must seal the wounds with fire or acid to prevent regeneration, and it must be done quickly lest one find themselves facing down two or more fully grown trolls rather than one mutilated one.

1 Seraph

Bannor Berserker replacement unit.

600 CP

The Seraph may become a companion.

"... I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and His train filled the sanctuary. Above him stood the Seraphim; each had six wings; with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew." The seraphim cry continually to each other, "Holy, holy, holy, is JUNIL of hosts: the whole of Erebus is full of His glory."

One of the most devastating units available to the Bannor, the six winged Seraph are truly formidable. Two wings conceal the divine radiance of their features, for to see such perfection is both to die and to cause the shamed Seraph to fall, two wings cover the feet that they may never touch the polluted lands of Erebus and two more bear the angel aloft. Easily ranked amongst the archmages of the other races in casting Life, Spirit and Order magic, they are also fearsome opponents in close combat, a flaming sword twice the height of a tall man born easily in one hand.

3 Clockwork Golem
Luchuirp Berserker replacement unit.

500 CP

It takes the fine tools of a Machinist shop and a sturdy metal such as iron or mithril to produce the intricate detail required in this masterpiece of Luchuirp construction, but the performance is remarkable. Tiny springs and gears plus careful enchantment spells give it reflexes that can rival even a wild beast, enabling the Clockwork golem to damage any units near its target once it gets going. Repairs are not covered by warranty, however, so it is advisable to bring along a dwarven adept for repairs.

2 Brujah
Calabim Berserker replacement unit.

400 CP

Vampires don't tend to shy away from brutality, but most prefer manipulation and petty cruelty to outright savagery. Not the Brujah, however. After leading enough battles, the veneer of civilization that the Calabim have adopted as a survival scheme since the Age of Ice crumbles away. They revel in the carnage of battle, even risking their immortal lives against odds in which Vampire lords would be content to send in fodder after fodder. Their results are hard to argue with, however.

90 Champions
Each purchase can be designated as a ranged unit, spearmen, swordsmen or Axemen.

300 CP

Some of the most battle hardened units available, these veterans have seen a great many battles and survived them all. In combat, Champions are usually held back until the enemy was fully engaged with his other units. Often the armies field commander him or herself would then lead his champions against the enemy's flank or rear, sowing confusion and dismay in the enemy army. The opposing forces never found a satisfactory answer to this combination, and with it the armies of Kylorin conquered most of the known world to begin the High First Age.

120 Wardens of the Web
Archaos Champions replacement unit.

400 CP

Light infantry, the Wardens of the Web are surprisingly durable due to both their extremely tough spidersilk armour and their weapons - Wardens wield twin whips enchanted to drain both health and vitality from those they strike. In times of peace they serve the Archaos by keeping the more territorial spiders docile, in combat they serve by weakening foes for other units to slaughter.

160 Clockwork Soldiers
Mechanos Champions replacement unit.

500 CP

From a distance these appear to be men wearing bulky, claustrophobic suits of some bizzare

armour, and truthfully they are, for each one is ensconced in a converted heavy diving rig. What is within the suit though is not a man, or an elf, or dwarf or even orc. The figure is in reality a series of mechanisms powered by clockwork, a marvel of Mechanos engineering, the soldiers capable of not only keeping each other full wound up but of repair each other as well, despite having a massive blade in place of one hand and a giant drill in place of the other.

1 Battlemaster

Doviello Champion replacement unit.

500 CP

The battlemaster will effortlessly any Beastmen, Javel Throwers, Axemen, Swordsmen or Spearmen to elite status, dramatically increasing effectiveness.

The Battlemaster may be taken as a companion.

A Battlemaster will quickly take command of any rag-tag group of warriors he finds himself in, organizing raiding bands from weaker Beastmen, and even training Axemen into more disciplined Battleborn on the spot. Their leadership skills are often forgotten once battle is joined, however, as they enjoy the rush of combat as much as any Doviello warrior.

1 Boarding Party

Lanun Champion replacement unit.

300 CP

Each Boarding Party has enough pirates to potentially overrun any ship they board and serve as a skeleton crew to bring her back to port, whereupon they can be sent out again.

Most of the Lanun army is conscripted to serve as deckhands at one time or another. Those that show aptitude at sea are trained to be boarding parties, fearless (after enough grog) and deadly (at least on sea) these sea monkeys are ever eager to swing to an enemy vessel and dispatch the crew, claiming the prize for themselves.

2 Iron Golems

Luchuirp Champion replacement unit.

400 CP

Iron Golems were the first golems made, early in the Age of Magic, and they remained the most common type of golem on Erebus until late in the Age of Magic when some crafters spread their secrets to other races and the Copper Golems began to be mass produced. Even then, Iron Golems were superior, fusing Luchuirp fine craftsmanship with a sturdy, dependable metal.

60 Pikemen

400 CP

The pike, due to its unwieldy nature, was always intended to be used in a deliberate, defensive manner, often in conjunction with other missile and melee weapons. However, better-trained troops were capable of using the pike in an aggressive attack with each rank of pikemen being trained to hold their pikes so that they presented enemy infantry with four or five layers of spearheads bristling from the front of the formation.

As long as it kept good order, such a formation could roll right over enemy infantry but it did have weaknesses. The men were all moving forward facing in a single direction and could not turn quickly or efficiently to protect the vulnerable flanks or rear of the formation. The huge block of men carrying such unwieldy spears could be difficult to maneuver in any way other than straightforward movement.

As long as the Pikeman is properly supported however, they are the absolute bane of cavalry, an infantry unit that effectively shattered the dominance of heavily armoured knights on the battlefield.

4 Ogres

Lanun Pikeman replacement unit.

300 CP

Pikemen are disciplined troops wielding massive poles that they brace on the ground to counter cavalry charges. The plunder rich Lanun have no need of these formations; they have Ogres. Massive brutes swinging around tree trunks, they can send cavalry flying with a single swipe. Unintelligent, even compared to Orcs and Goblins, it doesn't take a great sage to realize when a company of cavalry is charging you, you'd better strike hard and fast.

24 Chariots

300 CP

Charioteers are fast, nimble and murderous. Although primarily just platforms for carrying warriors into battle, they can hunt down all but the fastest of units and bring the fight to them. Lightweight and manouverable, the Chariot excels as a firing platform for ranged units, allowing them to be moved to the place they are most needed as quickly as possible.

120 Crossbowmen

400 CP

The crossbow was the preferred weapon of the peasants in the First Rebellion. The weapon is fairly simple to produce in bulk and frighteningly effective at piercing armour, which meant that the peasants finally could take up the fight with the knights and men-at-arms that made up the fist of the Royalist armies. The mechanism is simple: a winch tightens the bow to a tautness that is practically unachievable by muscle power alone. The projectile is a small bolt, rather like a truncated arrow. The result is a weapon that fires straight and true with little effort and with little training required.

120 Longbowmen

400 CP

Longbowmen were highly skilled archers capable of firing up to six arrows a minute over long distances into massed enemy formations. Using bows constructed from a type of wood called Yew, they used arrows specifically designed to penetrate chain mail armor -- even plate if close enough. Frequently they would comprise approximately four-fifths of an army, and their devastating attacks helped to reverse the dominance of knights in warfare. Only lightly-armored, they enjoyed a great mobility advantage should their opponents survive their

barrages.

30 Gargoyles

Luchuirp Longbowman replacement unit.

500 CP

Most Luchuirp, like other practical dwarves, value function over form. Gargoyles, designed to perch upon city walls when not descending upon intruders, are an exception to this. Showing off the intricate detail the crafters are capable of, Gargoyles are expressive, often with demonic appearances, though some are comical as well. These are carved from stone or marble. A Luchuirp city is safer when protected by Gargoyles, and an intriguing place to wander through. While Gargoyles cannot wield ranged weapons, they are surprisingly quick in flight. Who needs a rain of arrows when you can drop several tons of angry, flying animated statue onto your enemies rear line?

6 Druids

400 CP

Infused with the magic of Sucellus, the Reborn, the Druids are the mages of nature and bringers of life. Because the only way to gain true and lasting knowledge of how to manipulate the very fabric of life itself is to devote one's whole existence to intimate contact with nature, Druids are a reclusive and not terribly social folk. The Druids form a loose brotherhood of near-hermits who meet once a year to compete, share knowledge, and bond, before they once again disperse to their various fields and forests. Their powerful organic magic means that many empires employ them not so much for their use in war, but for their use in peace, perfecting the land and making it more fertile. Few established empires are incapable of contacting a few Druids to help them repair the scars of war and industry or bring life and lushness to previously infertile regions.

24 Hunters

200 CP

Years of living in the wilderness on their own terms have taught these men a thing or two about the importance of stealth, speed and senses. When called upon to do so, they make excellent scouts, moving fast and missing little. Though not as magnificently in tune with the land as the Rangers and Elves, hunters know how to bend Nature to their will, and make use of the advantages She gives. Many Hunters are excellent animal trainers, and you will rarely find one without a large hound and a bird of prey as travelling companions.

3 Rangers

200 CP

One purchase Max.

One Ranger can be attached to any ranged unit, dramatically increasing effectiveness.

Rumoured to be the bastard offspring of Elves and Men, the semi-autonomous Rangers are beyond doubt the best scouts available, if you can tempt a few to join your cause. Almost magically in tune with nature, fear neither lofty peaks nor frozen wastes.

200 Horseman

300 CP

The earliest fighting horsemen were armed with spears and swords. As technology advanced and bigger and stronger horses were bred, horsemen were equipped with ever more powerful weapons and heavier armor, culminating in the classic Knights, the lords of the battlefield, though these are far less well equipped and far more numerous and are the perfect scout and raider.

300 Boar Riders

Luchuirp Horseman replacement unit.

400 CP

In the mountainous terrain favoured by the Luchuirp (when they come to the surface at least), the land is too broken and too heavily forested for the horse, and the size of the animal has always meant Dwarves cannot ride them all that effectively either. Unfortunately for the Luchuirp, cavalry is vital, and so an alternative was sought, and eventually discovered in the high mountain valleys. The Common Boar is both massive while not being too massive for a dwarf to ride and incredibly solid, several hundred pounds of bad tempered muscle behind two massive, razor sharp tusks. While a Boar Rider charge has nowhere near the speed or range of a horseborn charge, it has incredible momentum and involves the tusks of the brute itself as well as the weapons of the rider.

400 Wolf Riders

Jotnar Horseman replacement unit.

300 CP

"In battle, the wild ones copy the tactics of civilization, though they could not hope to understand them. They march in rough companies, but break into a frenzy at the first sight of the enemy, thus negating the formations. They hail a leader, but follow their own plans when his back is turned. They divide a portion of their force for cavalry, despite being unable to mount a horse. Although... of the Wolf Riders, I have gained a grudging respect, in their bravery at mounting such a fearsome beast--and at their aptitude for it."

Excerpt from Lilar Jaswin's "Interactions among the lesser races," chapter IV

150 Centaurs

Kuriotates Horseman replacement unit.

400 CP

The Centaur have found life in the Kuriotates confederacy to be greatly to their liking, and their unique talents have made them an invaluable asset in turn. Even amongst the Hippius Horselords there are none who can outrace the Centaur, or ride hard longer, for other races mounts must bear themselves and rider, tiring them much more quickly compared to the Centaur who must simply bear themselves.

120 Horse Archers

400 CP

A horse archer (or horsed archer or mounted archer) is a cavalryman armed with a bow. Because using a bow requires a horseman to let go of the reins with both hands, horse archers need superb equestrian skills. Horse archery is typically associated with steppe nomads. The weapon of choice for horse archers was the recurve bow, because it was compact enough to shoot from a horse and retained sufficient range and penetrating power. The most serious threat to horse archers was arrows, and they could wheel away out of bowshot after every attack. Mounted archers therefore needed little or no armor and could ride light, fast mounts such as ponies. This made them cheap to equip and increased their strategic mobility. A drawback of horse archers was that the movements of a running horse disturbed the accuracy of the shot. After the invention of the stirrup, horse archers would stand up in their stirrups to absorb the motion of the horse.

80 Centaur Archers

Kuriotates Horse Archer replacement unit.

400 CP

Horse Archers are dangerous, certainly - the ability to manouver in, unleash a hail of arrows and vanish before opponents can retaliate is useful indeed, but they do have weaknesses. They must either carry relatively tiny cavalry shortbows if they wish to fire on the move or render themselves vulnerable by stopping their mounts completely and standing in their stirrups to fire longbows. Centaur Archers neatly sidestep these problems since their unique anatomy allows them to wield full sized longbows while on the move, granting increased range and killing power.

24 Knights

600 CP

Mounted on enormous, almost feral, battlehorses, the knights are the proverbial tanks of the battlefield. Though slightly slower and more cumbersome than lighter cavalry, they can nevertheless overtake infantry and pack a fearsome punch once they do. Unlike the religious troops, knights are given nothing. In fact, knights offer their services in exchange for land and titles granted by their feudal lord—ultimately, their king. Only well-established nations can develop a sufficiently complicated infrastructure to allow this kind of warrior/administrator class. Because all their power and good fortune springs the power and good fortune of the king, knights often made up the hard core of the Royalist forces during the Great Rebellions. Where the knights and their companies went in those dark days, little was left behind.

12 Grey Lords

Archaos Knight replacement unit.

600 CP

In the God caves where Mother dwells, monstrous spiders are caught and trained by Archaos sorcerers. These huge beasts carry the Grey Lords, sacred warriors in full plate armor. Should the Grey Lord die, the venom flowing through his vein will cause the body to detonate in a localised holocaust of toxins and acid, and the gigantic hunter spider will continue to fight those

who slew its master. The hunter spider can entangle nearby enemies in webs, and given the arachnids have rapidly adapted to hunting elephants on the surface, their combat abilities cannot be overlooked.

9 Vaetti Moose Riders
Jotnar Knight replacement Unit.
600 CP

The Forest Goblins represent the bulk of the Jotnar cavalry, and the Giant Northern Bull Moose make up the bulk of what they ride. The massive, bad tempered Moose are capable of scattering a line of warriors with one flick of their antlers, and both male and female Moose bear a pair of the meters wide horns! The Vaetti themselves cluster heavily onto the animals back and flanks, dozens of bow and spear equipped goblins raining arrows and utterly infuriating obscenities down onto those trying to avoid the scything antlers and hooves the size of a dining table!

80 Bison Riders
Doviello Knight replacement unit.
500 CP

Horses are not best suited to the colder lands the Doviello favour, and the equines themselves are considered weak, unfit for a true warrior. After all, what animal refuses to defend itself in combat or allows itself to be domesticated by the weak and wretched cityfolk?

Each would be Bison Rider must journey out onto the Tundra, track down a herd of the ill tempered animals, sneak up on them, clamber onto the back of a suitable beast and break its will by riding it till it is utterly exhausted, its fury spent in an attempt to dislodge its would be passenger. Failure results in a truly spectacular death. Success results in a barbarian warrior rampaging across the tundra atop several tons of unruly herbivore, the great beasts horns broad enough to put a battering ram to shame.

24 Centaur Lancers
Kuriotates Knight replacement unit.
600 CP

Formed exclusively from the largest subspecies of Centaur, the Lancers are drawn from Clydesdale stock, the utterly massive draft animals that every farmer dreams of owning. The Lancer is a spectacular replacement for the Knight, though not for the reasons the other Centaur units surpass their equivalents. The Lancer is one of the few Centaur who will tolerate a rider, and each bears a fully armed and armoured Human warrior into battle. Fighting as a team the pair are incredibly destructive, the Centaur covering for the Humans weaknesses, and the Human covering the Centaurs. The pair also, quite obviously, have twice the attacks of a standard Knight as well.

18 Hornguard
Luchuirp Knight replacement unit.
600 CP

While the Boar was adopted as the riding animal of choice in Luchuirp lands, there was an alternative considered. The great Mountain Goats also thrive in the high mountain meadows, and these truly massive animals are to the Luchuirp, short even for the mountainfolk, as Elpehants are to men. The Hornguard is a virtual mobile fortress carried into battle atop a truly impressively sized and incredibly ancient she-goat, the matriarch of her own clan, a viciously cunning beast and formidable combatant on her own, not considering the masses of armour, balistas and Luchuirp warriors atop her.

1 Phalanx (250 men)

500 CP

Phalanxes are the well trained elite soldiers of Erebus. Armed with spears and durable armor, they fulfill the heavy infantry role in most engagements. Phalanxes are tightly packed groupings of eight or sixteen rows of soldiers, who move and attack in unison, scattering less densely organized enemy forces. Phalanxes work well against the forces of the day, but have famously twice been broken when facing more mobile and well-trained professional soldiers, both times on rocky, rough terrain where their unique formation could not be employed.

1 Nullstone Golem

Luchuirp Phalanx replacement unit.

400 CP

It was upon watching an armorer from a friendly neighboring civilization produce armor for their Knights that a Luchuirp enchanter had an epiphany. In the same manor that the forged armor deflected arrows, a properly shaped and sufficiently polished stone body might deflect spells sent its way. The experiment was more successful than the enchanter was prepared for.

The Nullstone Golem deflects magical energy completely, often keeping spells intact and sending them in unpredictable directions. The first time a Nullstone Golem advanced on a group of well-prepared enemy mages, a nearby iron golem was rusted instead, three fireballs were returned towards their senders, and four passing cows were charmed.

2 Stoneskin Ogres

Lanun Phalanx replacement unit.

400 CP

Ogres have tremendous regenerative ability and a very high tolerance for pain. Long lived ogres will typically be covered in scars, but these old wounds give them a thick layer of calluses, further reducing their susceptibility to pain. Their reflexes tend to be dulled somewhat, but killing a Stone-skin ogre is a tremendously difficult task. Even wounding one is rare, and is not recommended without a very effective means of escape.

9 Arachnomancers

Archaos Phalanx replacement unit.

500 CP

Some of the most terrible mages outside the ranks of the Sheaim, Arachnomancers are a horrible fusion of human and spider. Human from the waist up, and a massive spider from the waist down, the true name of these horrors is unknown outside the caves of the Archaos, and

the human spider hybrids are simply called Arachnomancers. Thanks to the eight legs they have, they are incredibly fast and agile, capable of crossing almost any terrain, and thanks to the human half they are exceptionally dangerous casters in combat, specialising in ranged salvos of poisonous death.

1000 Immortals

900 CP

Unless the unit is destroyed completely in battle, Immortals are restored to 1000 afterwards.

Most believe the Immortals to be insane or undying; they are the first into battle and the last to leave. They are left to guard the cities soon to fall and sent alone deep behind enemy lines looking for exposed troops. The Immortals are the best of the best of the best, the most celebrated and the most feared troops available to any civilisation. Typically they fight wearing face covering helmets, their numbers held at a constant thousand, with any casualties replaced immediately giving the impression they are truly immortal.

12 Vultures

Mechanos Immortal replacement unit.

800 CP

Unless the unit is destroyed completely in battle, Vultures are repaired to 12 afterwards.

Something of a rarity for the Mechanos, the Vulture is both a siege engine and a melee combatant. Resembling nothing so much as a steam train given a massive pair of reverse jointed legs and two gargantuan hydraulic arms ending in massive pincers, the Vulture is a slow but almost unstoppable terror on the battlefield capable of bringing a fortress crashing down around its defenders or going toe to toe with even a Storm Giant.

1 Bone Golem

Luchuirp Immortal replacement unit.

600 CP

The Bone Golem resurrects itself in your capital when destroyed.

The Age of Rebirth saw the first appearance of the Bone Golem. Each part must be carved entirely from one piece of bone or similar material, and only elephants, descended from the mammoths abundant in the Age of Winter, can provide adequate sized raw materials. Curiosity lead the Luchuirp craftsmen to attempt these creations, however they become one of their favorite toys, as the bone absorbed their magic as no metal could, leading them to reanimate when defeated.

1 Ogre Warchief

Lanun Immortal replacement unit.

400 CP

The Ogre Warchief drastically improves the effectiveness of other Ogres.

The Ogre Warchief may become a companion.

In human societies 'chief' often denotes a wise and revered leader. Ogres, however, respect only strength. Leadership of their cities can change in a single brawl. Actually, when these brutes receive a shipment or two of Lanun gold and begin to march on enemy cities, they can

change leadership of those cities with a single brawl as well. One look at what the War chief does to the first defender will often induce all the back up to flee in terror.

Vampire Lord
Calabim Immortal replacement unit.

800 CP

The Vampire Lord resurrects itself in your capital when destroyed.

The Vampire Lord may become a companion.

All vampires have unnaturally long life-spans, but the vampire lords have learned to cheat death itself. Whether through massive feasting or some more arcane ritual, the body of a vampire lord is recreated upon destruction. Some spend their stolen years further honing their martial prowess, but many, having experienced everything else in life, study forbidden knowledge, learning to cast advanced death and body spells without mana. A few take the final step towards immortality, and become a Lich.

6 Valkyries
Bannor Immortal replacement unit.

800 CP

The Valkyrie are angels tasked with ferrying the faithful of Junil to their rightful place at the side of the Lord of Order when they inevitably fall in the eternal battle against disorder and chaos. Powerful and skilled warriors, these winged females are also incredibly skilled users of Air and Death magic to boot.

24 Paladins
Bannor Unique Unit.

700 CP

The paladin is a "warrior of the Holy Light". They uphold all that is good and true in the world and revile all that is evil and sinister, especially undead and demons. They offer succor to the beleaguered and smite their enemies with holy fervor. They are particularly potent against undead, as these creatures threaten the goodly races and the Holy Light of Junil burns them terribly. The presence of any evil is reprehensible to paladins, but they focus their efforts on destroying undead and demons.

These warriors uphold the tenets of Junil and defend the Alliance from the predations of any threat to their peoples. Found in almost every corner of Erebus fighting the forces of evil and barbarism, these stalwart warriors of faith ceaselessly uphold their vigil against demonic forces. Paladins are the embodiment of good and selfless dedication to the protection of their peoples. They help the innocent and punish the wicked.

18 War Chariots
600 CP

Scythed wheels whirring menacingly. Huge, furious warhorses in front. Men with spears, javelins and arrows on the platform behind. The heavily armoured chariot gleaming in the sunlight. Banners fluttering in the wind. Is it any wonder the war chariot inspires awe? But

more than being an expression of wealth and power, the war chariot is a fast, murderous behemoth of a war-engine. The sharp scythes will cut to ribbons those that are not trampled by the horses. Its speed, stability, and strength make the war chariot ideal for hunting down and annihilating squads of archers or ruthlessly exploding weak points in the enemy battle line, but its usefulness as a multi-purpose weapon should not be underestimated.

3 Centaur Chargers
Kuriotates War Chariot replacement unit.
800 CP

A War Chariot is a terrible thing to face, a war chariot pulled by Centaur Lancers even more so. A massive six wheeled contraption that looks more like a mobile fort than a chariot is drawn by a dozen massive Centaurs in a lance formation, allowing them to shatter most formations through sheer momentum while archers and Lamia mages in the massive 'chariot' rain down destruction onto the heads of survivors.

Ophanim Chariot
Bannor War Chariot replacement unit.
MAXIMUM OF ONE (1).
1200 CP

Divine Junil is too perfect for the soiled and sin cursed world of Erebus, though in his infinite benevolence he continues to spread his influence and end the influence of disorder and chaos. Because he could never stain himself by setting foot on the tainted soil of the world, Junil was born aloft by a great chariot, though no mere wheel could survive conveying a deity where he wished, so a new choir of angels was called into existence.

The Ophanim are angelic wheels, they form a circle surrounded by eyes and born aloft by three great feathered wings.

Nothing can be hidden from them, for they see all, and nothing can restrain them, for they may travel freely. It is the will of Junil. While the chariot of the God of Order is not available, should a pair of Ophanim agree to bear a chariot forged by the hand of men, a truly terrifying enging of war comes into being. Capable of flight the vehicle is impossible to slow or impede, and anything rolled over by the two angelic wheels is almost always obliterated entirely, body and soul. The body of the chariot itself as well as any brave, faithful or insane enough to ride is enshrouded in divine fire, a pale blue flame that sears away evil and shields those in favour of Junil more effectively than any armour or magic could.

1 Argolath
Archaos Unique Unit.
800 CP

Gigantic and deadly, these truly monstrous spiders are only unleashed under the most dire circumstances. They are too dangerous to do otherwise. Already formidable chitinous armour is enhanced with sheets of worked adamantine rendering the horrors almost untouchable to both magic and melee, and meter long fangs can rend even demons into a few handfuls of smoking,

toxic gore. Should the enemy choose to flee, they will still die for Argolath also function as siege engines, the massive arachnids capable of spitting massive volleys of caustic venom for miles!

3 Catapults

300 CP

The catapult was one of the earliest forms of artillery. It was a large mechanical arm that propelled heavy stones and other missiles from a great distance, battering down walls and inflicting damage on buildings and defenders. Catapults could easily launch projectiles 500 to 1000 feet with a surprising amount of force behind them. Though cumbersome and nearly useless on the battlefield, the catapult was an effective weapon for siege operations.

2 Trebuchet

500 CP

Although it is usually thought of as a type of catapult, the trebuchet is in fact a gigantic sling attached to a lever. The shorter arm of the lever carries a counterweight, while the longer arm carries the sling that throws the projectile. In operation the sling end is pulled towards the ground (lifting the counterweight in the process) and held in place by a trigger while a projectile is loaded into the sling. When the trigger is released, the counterweight falls and the sling flies up and above the machine, releasing the projectile at the top of its arc.

Constructed properly, trebuchets could fire very heavy loads. In modern reconstructions using trebuchets built with the original tools and materials, trebuchets have been able to throw projectiles weighing as much as 300 kilograms. Aiming the trebuchet was difficult and required some practice and knowledge of engineering - both of which were usually in short supply for medieval operators. Trebuchets were also extremely heavy and almost immobile; this, combined with their slow rate of their fire, made them impractical for anything except siege operations.

1 Cannon

700 CP

Closely following the invention of gunpowder, the development of the cannon caused a revolution in siege warfare. Invented by a monk, early cannons used gunpowder charges to fire rocks or metal balls. The cannon forced a redesign of most fortifications, because the straight, high walls surrounding most cities could be easily destroyed by direct fire.

6 Lightbringers

Empyrean Followers Only.

300 CP

Lightbringers can be used to scry out enemy troop movements, giving advanced warning of attacks.

Well before the founding of any of the five great polarizing religions in the Age of Rebirth, Varn Gosam of the Malakim had already consolidated the multiplicity of prophets in his land into one faith, the worship of Lugas. It is interesting to speculate how the age would have differed had Lugas chosen to become directly involved in the conflicts that defined it. Nonetheless, the

Lightbringer was widely used in Malakim lands due to their divine scrying powers.

24 Monks

500 CP

Day 6. Encountered the remnants of a company of Macemen. Theyve seen my foe. If I make haste, I am but a day away from ridding the world of his evil. I must prepare.

--Extract from the diary of Brother Kideran, Demon Hunter.

Only the smartest, most evil of prey is worthy of the Monk's attention. These men have given their lives over to the intense focus and meditation required to leave behind the frail constraints of their bodies and become something more than mortal. Free from the laws of physics, Monks are equipped with the mental tools needed to take up the fight with the Demons themselves, and win.

1 Demagogue

Bannor Unique Unit.

800 CP

1 Purchase Max.

The Demagogue will increase the size of purchased units by 1/2, rounding down.

The Demagogue may become a companion.

Demagogues usually oppose deliberation and advocate immediate, violent action to address a national crisis; they accuse moderate and thoughtful opponents of weakness. Demagogues have appeared in Erebus for as far back as records stretch, a few partial fragments mentioning rabble rousers raising up militia in Patria. They exploit a fundamental weakness in almost every society: because ultimate power is held by the people, nothing stops the people from giving that power to someone who appeals to the lowest common denominator of a large segment of the population. As a result, whenever a crusade is called, the Bannor armies swell massively as the populace rises up, frantic to enlist and fight for the cause.

1 War Tortoise

Lanun Unique Unit.

800 CP

The Lanun travel far, and have discovered a great many things. On one far off and isolated island they discovered something. They discovered a island populated almost entirely by Tortoise. Little ones, big ones, even bigger ones and ones the size of houses. While they will never be slow, these plodding collosi are relentless and essentially impossible to stop. Anything smaller than a fortress is simply ignored and crushed underfoot, a drawn out and humiliating death to be sure. Even ignoring the fact the Lanun mount ships onto the shells of these massive reptiles allowing them to deliver a surprise broadside into a battle miles from the Ocean the shells of the massive herbivores are almost impenetrable.

1 Galley

100 CP

The galley was the first ship designed for war. Galleys were powered by banks of oars on each side, manned by well-trained oarsmen. These oarsmen were highly paid professionals or patriotic citizens (except in Overlords countries). A huge, bronze "beak" mounted at the bow of the ship was used to ram and sink enemy ships. Because of its long, narrow hull, the galley was very unstable in all but the calmest waters, and as a consequence its crew rarely ventured out of sight of land for long periods of time, lest the ship be caught in a storm and sunk.

1 Caravel
200 CP

The caravel is a small sailing ship with three or four masts, a broad bow, and a high, narrow stern. Though often used as a warship, the caravel could also carry just over 100 metric tons of cargo. Due to being the first ship that mounts sails large enough to use for power rather than oars, the Caravel is considerably faster and has greater range than a Galley.

3 Man-O-Wars
Lanun Unique Unit.
400 CP

The ultimate warship, the Man-O-War comes equipped with experimental weaponry, all manner of enchanted or machined siege craft. Few lesser ships will withstand its assault, and city defenses will crumble when it starts to bombard.

Once a civilization begins to experiment with things that go "boom", the next logical choice is to find a nice, safe place to hurl these at the enemy, such as off-shore on a giant, hulking ship.

Queen of the Line
Lanun Unique Unit.
600 CP

The Queen of the Line dramatically increases the effectiveness of any fleet she leads as flagship.

The Queen of the line is the biggest, most extravagant class of ship to grace the ocean before the dramatic end of the High First Age. Some were floating barracks, with enough soldiers packed shoulder to shoulder to take out a small continent, while others were palaces at sea, with luxurious accommodations of the royal court. Rarely seen without a Man-O-War escort these floating titans were capable of engaging entire fleets or slaughtering even the greatest beasts of the deep without issue.

12 Privateers
Lanun Unique Unit.
600 CP

Privateers are the scourge of the seas. Fast, nimble, and totally heartless, they attack without warning and leave nothing alive. These less-than-admirable qualities make them excellent weapons to counter the naval ambitions of one's enemies. Privateers are mercenary pirates, chartered by the Lanun with one goal: attack everything not flying the right flag. Used efficiently, pirates can completely disrupt an enemy's naval trade and coastal industry.

1 Flamethrower
Mechanos Unique Unit.
400 CP

The Flamethrower may become a companion.

The flamethrower is a potent weapon with great psychological impact upon unprepared soldiers, inflicting a particularly horrific death. This has led to some calls for the weapon to be banned, though to date its sheer usefulness and effectiveness have seen the Engineeers quash any protests. It is primarily used against battlefield fortifications, bunkers, and other protected emplacements. A flamethrower projects a stream of flammable liquid, rather than flame, which allows bouncing the stream off walls and ceilings to project the fire into blind and unseen spaces, such as inside bunkers or pillboxes. Typically, popular bardic tales about the wonders and terrors of the Mechanos depict the flamethrower as short-ranged and only effective for a few meters. While this was true originally, contemporary flamethrowers can incinerate a target some fifty to eighty meters from the gunner; moreover, an unignited stream of flammable liquid can be fired and afterwards ignited, possibly by a lamp or other flame inside the bunker.

=====

Vengeance made Manifest

MECHANOS CIVILISATION ONLY

Goliath, the Godbreaker Engine.

When Mulcarn brought about the Frozen end of the High First Age, his first act was to turn his attentions to the golems, the only ones who had been able to endure the icy hell that surrounded him long enough to challenge him.

To Mulcarn they represented perfection. Eternal, unable to change, obedient. He took the nearest, picking the metal man up with one hand.

"Make more." was his command.

"Yes." spoke Barnaxus.

And so it was done. The King of the Golems became less than a slave, and laboured for uncounted centuries crafting the Ice Golems that filled Mulcarns armies.

What thoughts do you have for the machine? How do you deny the guilt when even your tears

stalk the earth crushing those who would oppose its ruin? How cold is the sense of isolation when nature lies dead and frost seizes all in its thrall? But for memories of the world as was, would the world always be white? And what would be worse, to surrender the memories of better times or to discard the error that it might be repeated? When can the pain ever grow numb, when even the escape of dream is denied? Let the memories of all that is hateful, of all the sin and guilt, run through the cracks of the earth, that they might burn in the fires beyond.

When Baranaxus, acting on inscrutable commands that even he did not understand, crafted Ice Golems for the great god Mulcarn, he chose to forget all that he had done, forever cursed to repeat his mistake until Spring dawned upon Erebus. Every regret was ejected in a cascade of sparks, fleeting moments that die upon the wind.

But no sin is truly vanquished without repentance. The shadow thoughts drifted forgotten in dark corners until they found a home they recognised. Settling in the cogs and the camshafts and the gears and the cranks, the first machine spirits were born. Swearing revenge on the gods that had forgotten the world, they sought to bring about new age without gods: the Age of Machines.

All they needed was a body.

In time, the dreams of the Engineers of the Mechanos began to resonate with these entities. To draw them in. In time they came to be called Machine Spirits, though the Mechanos would never know the origins of the oldest of them, they would in time learn to foster the creation of more, and in turn would find their dreams growing greater, filled with images of something that slowly took shape, first in the fevered dreams of clockmen and Engine Overseers, then slowly in reality as men and women came together to forge something they could all see SHOULD be.

Thus Goliath was born. A titan of Steel and Iron, the mountain sized, looming thing is part shrine to the ideals of the Mechanos, part unstoppable engine of war. A factory, a fortress, an unstoppable warrior rising almost nine hundred meters into the air, Goliath has been called the Avatar of the Machine, and given the reverence the Mechanos stare at the war machine with, this may not be far from the truth.

As well as being a nine hundred meter tall humanoid war machine powered by refined Mana, Goliath can function at range as well as in close combat. Up close the giant three pronged claw in place of the right hand will shred even a dragon in moments, and at range the entire machine simply transforms into a Siege Cannon, a truly gargantuan fixed artillery piece. Even if the Cannon misses a target, chances are the pressure wave will reduce it to a thrashing, screaming mess, as well as every other living thing within a seven mile radius.

The onboard factory can produce anything the Mechanos have access to to boot, meaning with the right materials Goliath can construct an army around it as it advances, and thanks to the massive central Mana furnace, it can easily smelt down anything it can fit into its maw, such as castles or enemy regiments.

=====

The Catacomb Libralus

ALL OTHER CIVILISATIONS

The arrival of a messenger actually comes as something of a relief, a chance to possibly escape the endless series of parade drills and training manouvers for hopefully an hour or two.

When you open the parcel that is given to you and discover you are holding a heavy tome apparently bound in human skin, you realise that this is probably going to take more than a few hours, though it might not be the rest you were hoping for.

It turns out the messenger was dispatched by one of your scout groups, a group who have apparently located a massive repository of such books. While your first instinct is that books bound in human flesh generally cause more trouble than they are worth, the messenger promises you that this might not be the case this time, and that he has seen evidence of this himself.

A few days later and you find yourself viewing that same evidence, for the foyer of the ruin is decorated in a series of incredible frescoes clearly magically created showing great mages and spellcaster dying, usually of old age, and then having their remains crafted into tomes that hold all their accumulated knowledge.

It takes only a few days more to move in engineers to rebuild the ruins on the surface and sages to begin to comb through the incredible trove of magic pure luck has bestowed on you, and soon enough you have a collection of volunteers eagerly plumbing the secrets of magic...

Your kingdom may have one dominant Mana type, and will gain any effects listed here. You may use either the Mana type you gained from the special location in Part 1 of Age of Ice, or you may purchase a specific Mana Node for 300 CP. If you have more than one special location available you may choose which one grants you your dominant Mana type, though you will gain access to spells from all types of Mana available from special locations purchased. Any extra nodes purchased here will not grant a location benefit unless you choose it to be your one dominant Mana type, though your mages will gain access to spells from that extra Mana type.

Air Mana

Speed, Travel, Wind

As your mages and sages finally harness the Air Mana Node you have, the effects become

apparent as incredibly powerful winds begin to blow, gale-force winds that never seem to stop, though they never seem to cause anyone any inconvenience, indeed, they all seem to be blowing from behind and speeding citizens along, and it is a rare day when you can't look out and see a surge of dust devils being chased across the planes by a cyclone or a group of hurricanes teasing a massive thunderstorm like a pod of dolphins teasing a whale. Everything always smells fresh and clean, and any sort of pollution is dispersed virtually instantly, as if the winds themselves sought out clouds of toxic smog or the like.

The mana itself allows you and your mages to manipulate the wind. Travel becomes incredibly easy, as does communication - allowing the wind to carry your words for miles means messages arrive almost instantly and in a manner impossible to intercept. Ranged attacks become worthless when used against you, and vastly more effective when used by you. Typical spells include cloud trapeze, call air elemental, haste, summon thunderstorm and air shield.

Dimensional Mana **Distance, Volume, Size**

It quickly becomes apparent mastery of Dimensional Mana bestows a number of benefits, and a few minor complications, and the more of your spellcaster followers begin to specialise, the more pronounced the effects become across your lands. Distances aren't quite so distant anymore. At first the effect is barely noticable, but in time it will be readily apparent that crossing from place to place is considerably easier. A room may be fifty feet across, but a man can still get from one side to the other with a couple of steps.

While Dimensional mana doesn't feature many spells useable in combat, it is incredibly easy to work enchantments with, and in a surprisingly short amount of time there will be few people who do not have pouches or bags of holding, or even dwell in a home considerably bigger on the inside than on the outside. Typical spells include Teleport, Enlarge, Ten League Step and the magnificent mansion.

Entropy Mana **Decay, Disintegration, Degeneration**

Few would think to harness the power of entropy, for the visible effects are so disheartening. Everything begins to look washed out, buildings bleached almost white and visibly starting to crumble, stone weakening, metals rusting, things appearing to age centuries each day though as bleak as things appear, it is simply an appearance, for those who can manipulate entropy need not confine themselves to accelerating it and can slow its effects to almost nothing, vastly increasing the strength of materials.

Mastery of Entropy Mana allows one to attempt to harness one of the most inevitable forces in existence. While it can never truly be stopped, it can be slowed dramatically or increased, rendering this a potent offensive and defensive magic. Typical spells include Rust Weapon, Entropic Shield, Curse of Ages, Shatter Wall, Flesh to Dust, Disintegrate and Cloud of Decay.

Death Mana

Endings, Undead, Negative Energy

The antithesis of life, Death mana is the mana that both fuels the spells of necromancers and allows the undead to exist at all. A surfeit of death mana is surprisingly hard to notice, at least at first. Things appear normal, till one pays close attention to the surroundings. The normal insects are all replaced with the only thing that can thrive in such a place - massive buzzing black flies. The birds don't sing, even in spring. The usual birdsong is replaced by the Caw of Crow and Raven and even vultures, and every night they vacate the area entirely, flying to nests out beyond the reach of the tides of Death Mana. The animals that do remain however? those are the most unsettling, for most if not all are dead. Dead and yet moving, reanimated into a mockery of the life they once lived, driven to repeat the actions they took when blood still flowed and hearts still beat.

The magics of Death Mana is exclusively a magic that revolves around ending the living and raising them as undead. Spells include Soul Syphon, Finger of Death, Quench Life, Unhallowed Ground and a variety of spells to raise the dead such as skeletons, zombies, ghosts, wights, wraiths and even the occasional necromantic titan created from a dead giant or the like.

Body Mana

Health, Constitution, Haleness

Not a type of mana that affects the environment, rather it affects those that dwell within its area of effect, and it does so in spectacular fashion. All living things in the area that the Mana Node affects grow larger and healthier, becoming not perfect representations of their race, but certainly not representing the worst of it in any way. Stronger, faster and healthier, living things become considerably harder to injure as wounds heal with almost trollish speed.

There are few if any offensive combat spells in the Body school, most of them being concerned with dealing with the aftermath of war instead. Spells include Fortitude, Trollish Regeneration, Mass Heal, Cure Disease and the incredibly difficult to cast and nigh legendary True Ressurrection.

Fire Mana

Heat, Flame, Combustion

A surplus of Fire Mana becomes apparent any time anyone starts a fire, and quite frequently when they don't, for even a tiny spark will rapidly become a massive conflagration. Few forests will survive in a place where Fire Mana is concentrated, though the great plains the brushfires leave behind are always extremely fertile, the ashes and burned plants breaking down into extremely rich soil that is constantly replenished by brushfires. Even cooking fires are dangerous, and any building without a massively oversized and solid stone hearth will inevitably end up as a charred heap of cinders for fires grow rapidly and consume things not usually regarded as being flammable.

Fire Mana and fire magic lend itself to combat with both incredible ease and spectacular style,

and given how long fire has been a vital part of civilisation it should be no surprise how many Fire Mages there are. More than that, Fire Magic is regarded as THE combat school, so almost all of those Mages are far more skilled in combat than other Mages, able to cast faster and longer than other spellcasters. The spells themselves grow more powerful the more they are used in a battle, the effect described as being something like throwing fuel onto a fire - the more you hurl into the flames, the greater the flames grow. Typical spells are Fireball, Flame Arrow, Incendiary Cloud, Flame Shield and Beltyn's Burning Blood.

Sun Mana

Illumination, Revelation, Light

Sun Mana is extremely unusual in its effects, for they are only visible during the hours of daylight. What complicates things is the effect the Mana does have - the days themselves become longer, the sun shining brighter, the nights shorter and considerably brighter, as though a full moon shone down. Once extremely popular with mage lords in the High First Age, A heavy saturation of Sun Mana naturally lends to incredible harvests and much lower crime rates due to the lack of shadows for criminals to lurk.

Sun mana lends itself to both the breaking of illusions and the destruction of undead, the spells vastly easier to cast compared to other schools and requiring much fewer resources. Typical spells include Shatter Illusion, Divination, Banish Undead, True Sight and the awesome undead scourging Flase Dawn.

Water Mana

Motion, Fluid, Purity

When properly harnessed, an excess of Water Mana is a glorious thing, especially in drier or desert areas. Scare a day goes by when there isn't rainfall of some description, light summer showers of colossal thunderstorms one would expect to encounter only in tropical rainforests. Soon enough even the most parched terrain will be crisscrossed with rivers and lakes of the purest, cleanest water.

Water Mana lends itself to spellcasting easily, but there is no one dedicated school, instead spells reflect the ever changing nature of water itself, each different to the next. Typical spells include Divining, Summon Water Elemental, Raise Tidal Wave, Fluid Agility and the always useful Wave Shield.

Earth Mana

Stability, Durability, Endurance

Somewhat annoying once mastered, Earth Mana almost completely ruins the surface of any area it is allowed to flood, the terrain becoming rough and broken, a virtual labyrinth of hills, cliffs, canyons and broken terrain, its one saving grace is that it is nigh impossible to invade. Below the surface though, that is something else entirely. Colossal caves will form, a system of caverns that are so massive they beggar belief, and all thick with bizzare mushroom forests and fungal blooms that appear to eerily mimic plants and bushes growing wild on the surface.

Dwelling here is actually an easy transition to make, the soil will always be fertile, the caverns easy to defend and fairly easy to expand, and being filtered through thousands of tons of rock the water will be cleaner than you could imagine.

Earth Mana is not something that lends itself directly to combat, though the sheer durability of an Earth Elemental does make it a solid combatant. Earth Mana users, or Geomancers, are primarily defensive, capable of creating almost impregnable fortresses in hours, building massive bridges than will last centuries, shaping building after building in a fraction of the time a normal team of builders would take or sending magnificently crafted roads snaking across the terrain like serpents. Typical spells include Stoneskin, Boulderstorm, Transmute Ore, Repair Wall, Petrify, Summon Earth Elemental, Stoneshape and Call Landwyrn.

Law Mana **Order, Structure, Harmony**

Law Mana is something of an anomaly, the only kind of Mana that is almost impossible to find occurring naturally in the wild, it only became common when civilisation began its creep across Erebus, spreading cities as it went. As Men wrought laws to regulate how they would live, so this resonance began to warp existing Chaos Mana nodes till in a supreme act of irony they inverted, becoming their own antithesis and the first Law Mana nodes. Cities under the influence of a Law Mana surge become almost perfect reflections of Junil's ideals, with citizens holding tight to the laws of the land, while the land itself becomes more orderly, buildings slowly becoming more alike and peoples behaviour begins to grow more similar as well. Even plants and animals are affected, leaves on trees becoming utterly symmetrical, birds flying in formation and ants everywhere.

Law Mana lends itself well to spells, but few are of any use in combat, indeed, few are quick or easy to cast. The bulk of spells in the Law school of magic are all massive civilisation spanning enchantments that have effects such as twisting fate so that those who follow the laws of the land are rewarded in small unforeseen ways and lawbreakers are punished. Other enchantments bestow almost perfect knowledge of the law to anyone those laws apply to or visibly marking criminals in some way the second the offend.

Enchantment Mana **Delight, Allure, Beauty**

Enchantment Mana is one of the most beloved types of mana, for it both lends itself to spells of delight and entertainment and when allowed to saturate an area leaves it thick with wonderful sights and sounds and scents. Flowers bloom in a rainbow of colours, and each has a unique and heady scent, birds plumage tinted in ways unique and unseen in all other places while the insencts that flit from bloom to bloom leave trails of glitter dancing in the air behind them.

Typical spells include the city wide Hope enchantment that leaves the occupants of a city greatly entertained and considerably happier or Linwie's Instant Carnival, a spell that instantly summons a massive party. There is a darker side to enchantment few speak of though, for it

also include spells to affect the mind, such as charm, Break Will and Dominate.

Spirit Mana

Psyche, Self, Morale

Spirit Mana is another type of Mana that has no visible effect on the environment when a Node flares up or when an area is saturated. That isn't to say there are no effects, for Spirit Mana will affect man and beast alike. Courage is boosted to an incredible degree, the drive to succeed, to triumph, to overcome all obstacles is raised to new, unheard of heights.

Spirit Mana is concerned primarily with shielding the mind and defending against mental attacks. Typical spells include Courage, Mind Shield, Mind War, Beacon of Faith and Cloak of Fear.

Life Mana

Longevity, Vigour, Animation

The effects of a surfeit of Life Mana does not become apparent immediately, indeed, the flare up of a Life Node may not be noticed for years, even decades, though the results speak for themselves. Lifespans are dramatically prolonged. The results are not exactly the same each time, but generally a human exposed to an excess of life mana can expect to enter middle age at around eighty years old.

Typical spells revolve around healing and extending life, so a Life Mage is welcome everywhere and need never fear either a lack of wealth or popularity, depending if they feel the need to charge or not. The most encountered spells are Mass Heal, Purity of Form and Cascade of Life.

Mind Mana

Thought, Awareness, Self

Similar to Spirit Mana in all but effect, unsurprisingly, Mind Mana affects its namesake. People under the effects of long term exposure grow vastly more intelligent, with all the benefits that brings with it. The easiest way to locate areas containing Mind Mana nodes is to look for unusual concentrations of libraries, universities and places of learning.

Mind Mana lends itself to spells that affect the mind, amazingly enough. While temporary bursts of genius or inspiration are possible, the most common uses are on the battlefield - A Confusion spell at the right moment can have charging opponents unable to remember who they were attacking and turning on allies, while shattering the mind of an enemy commander is just as useful. Spells Include Confusion, Wrack Thoughts, Inspire, Enoll-Eva's Duplication, and for the truly mathematically inclined, Mechanus Cannon.

Nature Mana

Flora and Fauna

When an area becomes saturated with Nature Mana, it becomes apparent quite quickly - the

area becomes thick with living things as the wildlife starts to absorb the ambient Mana and grow larger and more impressive, not to mention vastly more aggressive. The air is thick with the cries of beasts as night and day nature proves itself red in tooth and claw, as well as beak, talon, tentacle, even vine and thorn as the plants themselves join the eternal battle for dominance. Beasts both rare and terrible are drawn to the area, and anyone dwelling here will quickly grow used to the sight of things considered legends elsewhere.

While there are a few utility spells that promote growth of plants or animals, the bulk of the spells in the Nature school are summons, calling up a variety of deadly beasts and plants to shatter opponents in combat. Owlbears, Dire Tigers, Atlas Scorpions, Wyverns, Storm Drakes, Sand Worms, Giant Sharks, Rocs and other monstrous creatures await your command.

Ice Mana

Stasis, Cold, Stability

While most of the effects of a surge of Ice Mana revolve quite unsurprisingly around the area being reduced to a frozen winter icescape, the most powerful effects go unseen. The area slowly grows into one where change is anathema. People become incredibly traditional - what was good enough for our great, great, great grandparents is good enough for us.

The two most common spells encountered are used by cultists of Fallen Mulcarn. Cloak of Winter surrounds the caster in a mile wide bubble of winter weather, and Path of Frost allows one to cross water, the liquid freezing solid underfoot. Other spells are Icicle Storm, Frost Spear, Armour of Ice, Summon Ice Elemental, Call Frost Giant and Freeze Heart.

Chaos Mana

Change, Disorder, Pandemonium

Chaos Mana is a favourite of those who enjoy risk, to say the least. The most common effect is that occasionally people will simply mutate. The resulting mutations are always random, but there is always a fifty fifty chance that a mutation will occur. While waking up one morning with your skin stronger than Mithril has advantages, it does explain why people travelling near areas of suspected Chaos Mana saturation will flip a coin every few dozen paces. Sometimes it doesn't stop spinning, or never lands, or turns into a butterfly, these and other odd little quirks marking the area of effect.

There are only three spells in the Chaos Mana school, oddly enough. Or there are all of them, depending on how you view things. The first and second are Mandlebrots Chaos Shield and Rorschachs Greater Chaos Shield, both designed to mitigate the more negative effects of the third spell, Nahals Reckless Dweomer, a spell that when cast will randomly become another spell completely at random. While this sounds pointless, when an apprentice being harassed by bandits summons a dozen Storm Giants its value becomes apparent.

Shadow Mana

Gloom, Concealment, Stealth

When Shadow Mana Nodes flare up, criminals rejoice. Shadows everywhere lengthen, almost moving to shield and conceal people as they go about their business, whatever that business may be. Even the nights seem longer, dusk and the gloom of predawn lingering long after the light of the sun should have banished them, shadows almost visibly coiling around torches and fires as if trying to snuff them out and prolongue the darkness.

The spells of Shadow all involve concealment to some degree, a school much in favour of those who wish to venture forth unseen and remain unseen. Typical spells include Summon Shadows, Shadowcloak, Move Silently, Shadowstep, Invisibility and Cloak of Concealment.

=====

Complications.

Times of War is a required complication, you may face the Four and their Master at your own discretion.

=====

Times of War.

Clan of embers required complication

The population of Braduk the Burning had swelled to ten times normal. Orcs were here that Pugg hadn't seen in the last year. They gathered around the Sacred Flame, more for shelter from the raging blizzard than as worship. Pugg squeezed in between two burly orcs in front of him, who grunted but let the goblin pass. Finally he was warm enough, and could hear the priestess as well.

"Oh great Bhall, goddess of fire, shield us and guide us! Listen to your daughters! Give strength to our spear-arms, and let our enemies feel the searing heat of our hate!" The Orcs and goblins hushed their rowdy conversations, leaning closer to participate in the ritual. "Let your fire follow in our wake!" they intoned, rattling their spears.

The priestess continued her petition, with the orcs repeating their part as prompted, awaiting the climax of the ritual. Soon it came, as the priestess called out, "Bring forth the sacrifice!"

The crowd around the fire parted, allowing the priestess' servants entrance. Grown male orcs, they were nearly naked despite the unending winter and painted from head to toe in mystic symbols. Between the three pairs they carried the sacrifice: three human soldiers.

Striped of any valuables, their tattered rags still showed bits and pieces of the Bannor emblem. Despite the constant conflict, it was rare for their hated foes to be taken alive.

Pugg jeered and yelled along with the rest, tossing a clod of dirt at one human. His aim was off, and he hit one of the Bhall-Orcs instead, who looked down at him as he passed and hissed at him, showing off his tongueless mouth. Pugg recoiled.

"Here, Oh Goddess, taste our devotion!" One by one the human captives were thrown into the large fire-pit, started by the sacred flame itself. They writhed as they cooked, shouting muffled screams until their gags burned away. Then their screams drowned out even the Orcs raucous cheering. "Oh great goddess, show us your wishes!" shouted the priestess, bowing low before the flames. The assembled crowd did likewise.

As had happened at the previous sacrifice, and the one before that, they waited and watched. Finally, the priestess stood and turned to the assembly. "Bhall has given us a sign, in gratitude for our sacrifice of the hated humans. She blesses our plans, and gives consent to the will of her priestesses."

"That's not what I see, hag." Orcs gasped to hear such a word used here, at the sacred circle. A heavily armored and battle scarred Orc approached the priestess while the rest bowed. Or most of the rest, as here and there in the crowd, and especially around the Bhall-Orcs, a few hearty Orcs stood with spear in hand. They wore deerskin cloaks matching the speaker's. "I see the old Crone giving no signs. I see a people full of courage and fury being led by an old woman, who sacrifices the spoils of others."

"Jonas of Three-Spear tribe," hissed the old woman. There was no need to shout now. The crowd, hundreds strong, uttered not a word. "How dare you blaspheme at this-"

"At this what? Sacred Fire? Braduk is not the sign of Bhall's power, it is her pyre. And you, witch woman, can join her in her death." A quick shove and the ancient Orc was in the fire-pit by the remains of the war captives. She died quickly and silently. At the same time, Jonas' allies quickly dispatched the Bhall-Orcs. "You see? It was not blessings that gave the women authority over the warriors, but lies!" As he was speaking, a tremendous thunderclap was heard from far to the north, and the blizzard ended suddenly. "See? Bhall resented having her voice only spoken by weak women." He grabbed the arm of a small girl huddled wide-eyed by the fire. "The priestess' apprentice. Being trained to dominate the strong Orcs with women's lies.

What do you say?"

Caught up in the revolution, the crowd chanted "Give her to Bhall!" And Jonas did. Into the flame went the girl with a scream. Unlike the human soldiers, her scream did not quiet as her flesh was consumed, but intensified, shrieking ever louder. Her thrashing slowed as her body burned, and her voice grew deeper. Finally, her eyes, rolled back in pain, turned to face Jonas even as the flames licked them.

"Jonas Endain!" She roared. The feared warrior went pale and sank to his knees. "My daughters have made their sacrifices... but what of you?"

"My... my Goddess..."

"Take me from the flames, Jonas."

The Orc chieftain stepped into the fire with teeth clenched, and took the girls head in his hands. Her body, nearly ashes, fell away. His cloak caught on fire, and his skin began to darken and blister, but he walked back out slowly, holding the head with both hands. "I have been... inattentive to my people in the mortal realm, Jonas. But this does not excuse your blasphemy."

"Take my life, Bhall," whispered Jonas.

"I shall," spoke the head. The flames continued, but the head was not consumed. "But not to bring to me. You shall be my instrument, Jonas. My first Priest. You will lead my people as you intended, but your glory shall fall to me alone. Lest you forget that your life is my tool, this head, and this girl's scream, will follow you to your death. Now prepare, my people. My foe is gone, and winter is over. It is time for the new age to begin. And to begin in flames."

Ten thousand Orcs raised their spears and roared.

Finally, finally after so long, Fallen Bhall has chosen to act. By her word the Clan of Embers is united. Orc, Goblin, Lizardman, Troll, Ogre and even Formori Giant have ceased their intercene squabbling and united as one, and as one they march. A vast horde that stains the horizon green they come now to end perhaps the last bastion of civilisation left on Erebus. The different races vary greatly. Goblins are quick and cunning and master archers, rank upon rank of them ready with shotbow and poisoned arrow. The Orcs individually are more than a match for the average soldier, larger and stronger and capable of falling into a berserk rage. The Lizardmen are ghostlike murderers in the night, masters of stealth. Fewest in number since the Age of Ice took a greivous toll on the cold bloods, they are still a deadly thorn in your side. Trolls are mighty and dreadful things, twice the height of a tall man when they stand upright and capable of enduring and regenerating from the most terrible wounds. The Ogres are the greatest threat in combat, massive brute, idiot things that care only for crushing those weaker and consuming the remains. The Formori are giants, standing five times the height of a man, but there the similarities to the noble Jotun end. Isolated during the Age of Ice they slowly turned to inbreeding to survive and now all bear some manner of grotesque deformity, minds shattered by insanity they are used as disposable terror weapons by the clan, driven ahead by whip armed Orcs to soak up arrows, shatter defences and demoralise opponents.

March of the Four.

Things are broken. An end is fast approaching.

Stand. Flee.
It matters little.

The First of Four.

+ 400 CP

Stephanos, Rider of Conquest.

... as the people remain blind to the imminent threat to their world despite previous signs, four harbingers of destruction shall arrive, riding dread steeds and each keeping the shadow of terror as a constant companion...

...and the first of the four shall be known as Stephanos, though the terrified mortals in their whispers of dread will name him the Conquerer. He shall claim the lands of mortals as his own, he shall slay the armies of men who attempts to stand against him, and soon all the empires will fall to his unyielding rule...

The Second of Four.

+ 400 CP

Buboes, Rider of Anarchy.

...and the second of the four shall be called Buboes, though the unfortunate survivors of the initial reign of Stephanos will come to know him as the Warbringer...

...dissent and strife shall reign amidst the lands while he rides along the crest of a wave of human blood, revelling in the torrent of death and destruction following in his wake...

...men, women and children of all creeds and nations shall raise their flags for causes long forgotten, battling friend and foe alike 'till only scattered survivors on broken fields remains, soon to be struck down by the horseman's unforgiving blade...

The Third of Four.

+ 400 CP

Yersinia, Rider of Contagion.

...and the third of the four shall be called Yersinia, known amongst mortals as the Witherer. He shall ride across the charred and burned battlefields, travelling to the few settlements that continue to exist in the doomed world, and with him shall fly a terrible plague on black wings, to sweep down upon the poor souls in his path...

...many shall perish with horrible suffering, parents shall watch their children wither and die before their eyes, lovers shall be torn from each others' arms by the horrid embrace of entropy, and the sole comfort to those left behind in the land of the living will be the knowledge that they are soon to follow...

...and he shall cause crops to wither and animals to perish in his wake, so that those who survive the plague will think longingly of even the first blight as a time of plenty, as they vainly seek to sate their hunger with ashes and dust...

The Fourth of Four.

+ 400 CP

Ars Morendi, Rider at the End.

...and the last of the four shall be called Ars Morendi; not to be known by any other name by mortals, as none will know him and live...

...he shall be the most cruel and powerful of the horsemen, dousing the spark of life in mortal souls through his presence alone, yet many shall come to greet him with longing rather than despair...

...his shall be the final embrace, as countless souls will fall to his blade, only to rise again to join his dark retinue of wailing spirits; yearning now to consume the souls of their former families, friends and neighbours...

..he shall leave in his wake an empty world; once proud cities fallen into ruin, marketplaces once filled with laughter and conversation now desolate and abandoned, the only voices heard the rushing of dead leaves in the cold wind...

The Last of All.

+ 400 CP.

Must have faced all four horsemen.

The Avatar of Wrath

I am unborn of flesh, untouched by death, the enemy of peace and rest. That weakness in a sword yet unbroken, that would fail its wielder in battle and cost his life, or crack that will form in the capstone under to much pressure and cause the house to crumble.

In that age any thought of the gods was mirrored in creation. Trees were Sucellus's green musing on the golden pillars of heaven, butterflies the scattered whims of gentle Amathaon. But these gods knew fear as well, and even their fear became manifest. I am their fear of war, of the battles, rage and pain that even they are victim to.

Bound and hidden, as is their fear, I am still a part of creation. And if unbound I will act out their fears upon the land, and Erebus will crumble under my sword.

Misery is the food of the Avatar. Every act of cruelty, every pointless, thoughtless act of spite is a prayer to the Avatar.

Centuries of suffering have fed the Avatar. Millenia of torment, of mortals cursing the uncaring gods have made the Avatar strong.

The horrors of the High First Age when Kylorin and his chosen went mad with power fed him, a feast of misery where the echoes of the most terrible torments were as choice morsels.

The Age of Ice left the Avatar gorged, for those who dwelled in the lands held by Mulcarn did not live so much as die a decades long and drawn out death.

The wars of the Age of Rebirth, the age defined now by your will alone have been as the coolest, freshest mountain spring to a man dying of thirst.

Such a feast you have wrought for the Avatar. Such delectable cruelties. Horrors.

=====

Another war ends, one of a seemingly endless string of conflicts you have fought since coming here.

Countless deaths.

Cities burned.

Civilisations crumbled to dust.

More than a few by your hand.

Erebus has been scarred, yes, but life is a tenacious thing. In time the ash wastes will be colonised by hardier mosses and lichens, and they will in turn make it possible for other growing things to thrive as they break down the ash into soil.

Life will thrive once again.

Civilisation will return as well, farmlands and cities slowly spreading. It will not be quick or easy, but thanks to you it will happen, and the civilisation that will come to dominate Erebus will be indelibly marked by your actions, your attitudes.

Whatever happens after this, know you will always be remembered here as the greatest of heroes.