

FESTIVE RULES

Weihnachtsmann army

By Stephan Hess

INTRODUCTION

Our gaming group has a long tradition of holiday season games. Be it a race with reindeer sleds or a Warhammer battle with special Easter bunny allies, it is always entertaining and reminds us that gaming is supposed to be for fun and not just about winning (we usually forget it as soon as the holiday game ends though). So it was only a matter of time until Warmaster would be under attack from the holiday spirit.

In Germany the Christmas tradition differs between regions and in the last few years American and English tradition has got mingled in with the 'good old German' way of Christmas.

The 24th of December is Heiligabend and the 25th and 26th are the first and second Weihnachtsfeiertag. In the early evening hours (or late afternoon if there are small children or very impatient adults) of the 24th the Christkind puts presents under the Christbaum. The Christbaum (Christmas Tree) will have been decorated with baubles, candles and lametta (thin metallic threads), depending on the age of the children, this will be done by the family or the Christkind. Often children are tortured by having the Bescherung after dinner, and whilst the children eat as fast as possible their parents use the opportunity of revenge and eat real slow. If the children are still quite small they may be sent out of the room, whilst the Christkind arrives and puts the presents under the tree. Because the Christkind has to give presents to so many children it does not stay long and when the small silver bell



calls the children the Christkind is already gone. And now it's time for a presents frenzy. Older children or children with cruel parents might have to sing some Christmas carols before being allowed to open their presents, but in these modern times the CD player takes over, much to the joy of the children but to the grievance of the adults. On Christmas eve children as well as adults receive presents, but for the children there is also a second day which promises presents. While Christmas eve is joy and happiness (besides the yearly bath and being combed and dressed in your best clothes) the second day is a strange mix of joy and pain. On the 6th of December Nikolaus (Santa Claus) is coming to town. He is the guy who records all the children's good and bad deeds and on the 6th of December it is pay day. The good ones will receive presents and the bad ones will be beaten with a Rute. Often most parents will have somebody to dress up as Nikolaus and so a big, white bearded man in a red cloak will appear and cause terror in smaller children and laughter in the older ones. Some of the children will have to recite Christmas poems to placate Nikolaus and rather unsurprisingly it always works. Nikolaus puts in an appearance on

the 6th of December. In historic times (long ago when I was a child!) Nikolaus was accompanied by Knecht Ruprecht and they played the good guy, bad guy game we are so familiar with from American cop movies. Nikolaus would check his database and if the entry was positive he would give a present but if the entry was negative Knecht Ruprecht would give some lashes.

Before the wave of American and English influences there was no wide spread theory on where Nikolaus might live, get his presents from or who was producing the presents for him, but enough introduction and only one thing is left before we start with the army list:

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year
– Stephan

Note: The army list has more special rules than is normal for a Warmaster army, but as this is a fun list it doesn't pose a problem.

LAND OF SNOW AND PRESENTS

All of the north of the Warhammer World is part of the Chaos Wastes. All of the north? According to legend, not entirely all, a small, seemingly barren, mystical isle directly on the North Pole is still free from the influence of Chaos, where a small community struggles for freedom and independence.

This island has no name, nor do its inhabitants belong to a nation in the usual sense. The area itself is just known as the 'North Pole'. These people appear to have no sense of patriotism nor any real understanding of economic mechanics and procedures. They produce goods (mostly sweets and toys) all year long, but deliver the entire year's production on a single day. And the most unbelievable part of all is that they do not even charge the recipients for their goods.

The ruler of the 'North Pole' is reputed to be the Weihnachtsmann (Father Christmas). This large fellow has a long white beard and a deep, throaty laugh. He always dresses in red and wears a special hat with a jingly bell at the end, a bit like a jester's. Don't be fooled by his appearance though, he might



say he only wants to make your wishes come true, but he's really a despotic tyrant. His word is law and he sends out presents or thugs as he sees fit. The 'Ho, ho, ho', his chilling laugh, can make the blood of even the toughest men freeze.

At his side is a girlish-looking woman called Christkind, a real fancy dresser, still youthful after who knows how many hundreds of years. She always wears expensive silks decorated with mystic symbols of stars and glitter. Some sources give mention to wings sprouting from her back. Her precise relationship with Weihnachtsmann is uncertain – she could be his daughter, lover or some kind of counsellor. Christkind does some of the delivery in the Empire of men.

This legendary hoarded wealth can easily lead the foolish into thinking that the North Pole would be an easy and rewarding target for any conquering General. But the fact that this place has existed for thousands of years within the Chaos Wastes hints that there is more here than meets the eye. It is not only protected by strong enchantments but also by a formidable army. It is not unheard of for an army from the North Pole to be sent out to clear trading routes (probably better called delivery routes as the goods are strictly going only one way) or to free some of their people who are being held for ransom.

Festive Rules

North Pole armies are usually lead by a Nikolaus (St. Claus). This appears to be some kind of hereditary title as all the army leaders seem to bear the same name. This man looks like a younger version of Weihnachtsmann and some sources hint at the possibility that Weihnachtsmann is elected yearly from all the Nikoläuse. Other sources state that they are all the Weihnachtsmann's sons, and that he is just too lazy to think of any new names. The last theory is supported by the fact that all Nikoläuse have the same build as Father Christmas, the same beard and the same appalling dress sense. They can often be seen riding a reindeer-drawn sledd, a convertible model also favoured by Weihnachtsmann. Wild tales about the sleighs being able to fly are obviously pure fiction.

Excerpt from: 'My Travels in the North' by Gerbard the Wanderer

TROOP TYPES

Knecht Ruprecht (Grizzle)

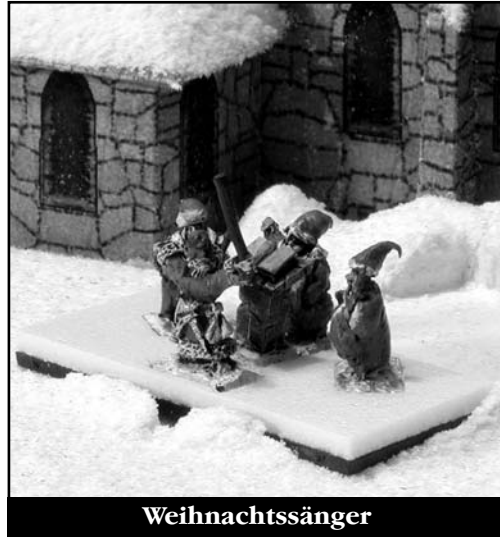
For dirty work like punishing naughty children, Nikolaus has Knecht Ruprecht at his side. Knechte Ruprecht also serve as army officers. There is no further information on them, but it seems obvious that Knecht Ruprecht is a hereditary title and a Rute seems to be their sign of office.



Knecht Ruprecht

Weihnachtssänger (Carol singers)

The North Pole army does not have any wizards per se, but they can cast magic with songs. These Christmas Carols, as they are called, are able to bewitch even the coldest of hearts. Legend has it that in ancient times the singers were accompanied by a brass band, but when the city walls of Jericho fell down during a concert, this was abandoned.



Weihnachtssänger

Elfen (Elves/Fairies)

The main force of the army is made up of Elf infantry. The literal translation would be Elves, but the Elfen look more like Goblins with sharper features than true Elves. The Elfen are part of the working class, producing toys, sweets and most other goods. They are small and nimble and, unlike Goblins, quite clever. They are surprisingly good fighters and are often equipped with the most exotic of weapons, the double-handed teddy bear probably being the most exotic from all. Their reflexes make them very difficult to hit in combat and has proved to be as effective as the hardest armour.

Wichtel (Gnomes)

The Elfen work on the artistic aspect of the products, but the technical aspect is handled by the Gnomes. The Gnome's technical and mechanical skill, but also their physical appearance show that they share a common parentage with the Dwarfs. Wichtel wear red Zipfelmützen and sport beards like Nikoläuse which are often quite short because whenever they get stuck in some mechanism (which happens quite often) they have to be cut free. The Wichtel are highly skilled but not very strong, so they prefer ranged attacks over close combat. The weapons are of the Wichtel's own design and are usually quite short ranged, but devastating. A projectile from a chewing gum gun can bring a regiment to a halt and a sugar can in the eye is no sweet sight. Thanks to their technical expertise their armour is much better than that of comparable troops.

Mail Order Trolls

A rather recent addition to the North Pole society and army are the Trolls of the Mail Order. We are still in the dark about the origin of their name as none of them wear mail nor any other kind of armour. With the world's population growing so fast (despite all those wars), Weihnachtsmann, Christkind and Nikoläuse sometimes just can't manage to deliver all the goods in one day. In this case the Mail Order Trolls step in and deliver some of the goods. Mail Order Trolls fall into two broad categories: Stone Trolls, because anything delivered by them looks as if had been hit by a big (and I mean a very big) stone, and River Trolls, because anything delivered by them looks as if it had fallen in a river.

Green Zipfelmützen

Before becoming a Nikolaus you will have to endure an apprenticeship. During the apprenticeship the trainee has to wear a green Zipfelmützen (hooded cloak), which he can replace with the customary red one on passing the final exams. Candidates who fail the exam can still opt to become a Knecht Ruprecht. The Green Zipfelmützen's most favourite lessons are sleigh driving. The best and most reckless of these Green Zipfelmützen form the Sleigh units in any army.

Polar Bears

The only land animal native to the North Pole are polar bears. These creatures have been befriended by the people of this land and are used mainly as guard bears. Some tried to use them as lap bears but this proved to be a short, bloody and largely unsuccessful experiment. The fur of polar bears is usually snow white as this is the perfect camouflage in the snow wastes of the region, but in a small area call Dalmatia there are hot black stones which stick out of the white snows. The bears living in that area are called Dalmatians and their fur pattern has adapted to their surroundings, being white with black spots. Rumour has it that there are always 101 Dalmatians at any time.

Christmas Trees

The North Pole is an awfully cold and barren region, and the fact that any plants grow there at all is a miracle. The only plant that can thrive in these snowy wastes is a type of pine tree called a Christmas tree. The people of North Pole are so happy to have at least one kind of tree that they decorate them

with small painted glass globes, sweets and lights. Rumour has it that the trees can move and wherever they rest for a while presents appear beneath them. Researchers still argue whether the presents are some kind of fruit or whether the tree and its merry lights act as a homing beacon for Nikoläuse so that they know where to deliver the goods.

Ghost of Christmas

Sometimes an army is accompanied by a Ghost of Christmas. There appear to be three kinds: the Ghost of Christmas Past, Present and Future. There is a theory that the Ghost of Christmas Past is used to frighten customers who haven't paid last year's bill, and the Ghost of Christmas Present frightens customers who haven't paid this year's bill. However, this theory is bound to be wrong as no-one is ever sent a bill anyway, and the Ghosts of Future Christmas wouldn't have anything to do as you never know who will not pay their next bill.



Present Lobber

Sometimes presents have to be delivered to places which are not easily accessible. In these cases presents are delivered with the help of a Present Lobber. Needless to say, the Present Lobber is an invention of the Mail Order Trolls.

Snow Cannon

Once in a while the sleighs have to travel where there's no snow. The inventive Wichtel have designed a cannon that can make snow just for those cases. The cannon itself is mounted on a sleigh and makes snow in front of itself, gliding over the freshly made snow it is followed by the other sleighs. The snow cannon can also be used as a short ranged weapon.

CHRISTMAS ARMY SELECTOR

Troops	Type	Attack	Hits	Armour	Command	Unit Size	Points per Unit	Min/Max	Special
Elfen	Infantry	3	3	5+	-	3	60	2/-	-
Wichtel	Infantry	2/1	3	5+	-	3	55	1/-	*1
Mail Order Trolls	Infantry	5	3	5+	-	3	110	-/3	*2
Green Zipfelmützen	Chariot	3	3	5+	-	3	110	-/3	*3
Bears	Monsters	5	3	0	-	3	85	-/1	*4
Christmas Trees	Monsters	3	4	4+	-	3	125	-/1	*5
Ghost	Monsters	-	-	-	-	1	100	-/1	*6
Present Lobber	Art	1/1	3	-	-	1	30	-/1	*7
Snow Cannon	Art	1/2	2	-	-	1	35	-/1	*8
Nikolaus	General	+3	-	-	10	1	165	-/1	*9
Knecht Ruprecht	Hero	+1	-	-	8	1	90	-/1	*10
Weinacht -ssanger	Wizard	+0	-	-	7	1	45	-/1	-

Special Rules

1 Wichtel. Range 15 cm (ordinary firing arc)

2 Trolls. These are especially stupid creatures. When issuing an order to a unit of Trolls or to a brigade containing one or more units of Trolls, there is a command penalty of -1 in addition to any other modifiers. Trolls also have the ability to regenerate wounds. This is represented by regenerating 1 wound per combat round after removing of whole stands. The wound besides being regenerated still counts towards the combat result.

3 Green Zipfelmützen. The sleighs can fly and are therefore treated as any other flyer, but also get the additional +1 A for chariots charging an enemy in open terrain. (Note the fact that they fly allows them to attack units on castle walls and such, but those units still count as fortified as stated in the siege rules).

4 Bears. Although they are monsters, Bears are mounted facing the long edge of the base, like infantry. As creatures of the forests and mountains under the control of human Beastmasters, Bears are able to move over or into any wooded or mountainous terrain features in the same way as infantry. This does not entitle them to claim defended status. Because of their irascible, ursine nature Bears cannot be brigaded with units of other troops, only with other Bears. Due to their ferocity a Bear unit which scores more hits in the first round of a combat than the enemy will automatically strike 1 more Attack per stand before the combat result is worked out. Resolve these attacks as normal and then work out results. Bears must always pursue retreating enemy where possible and must advance if they are able to do so. Note that these rules apply only to Bear units – not to characters that ride Bears.

Special Rules (cont)

5 Christmas Trees. Although they are monsters, Christmas Trees are mounted facing the long edge of the base like infantry. Christmas Trees can enter woods even though they are monsters, but still do not count as defended when attacked whilst in woods. Christmas Trees can deploy like any other troops in their own deployment zone or (quite special) in any wooded area on the table. Any good army i.e. Empire, Dwarfs, High Elves, Kislevites or Bretonnians will expect to find presents under the trees so they are not willing to put the presents at risk and will not charge Christmas Trees on Initiative. In addition any unit of any army within 20cm of a Christmas Tree stand gets an additional -1 command modifier (i.e. -2 for enemy within 20cm instead of -1 [Undead get -1 instead of nothing]) as they are very reluctant to go away before they have got their presents (and even the baddies and the Undead (old habits die hard) hope for presents. Even if they do not believe in Christmas, they still hope).

6 Ghosts. Ghosts can only brigade with other Ghosts. The Ghosts are ethereal creatures and cannot attack or be attacked by any means. But they do cause *Terror* in any enemy stands within 20 cm. Ghosts are treated like characters regarding Line of Sight. Friendly units can move through Ghosts but cannot end their move so that a Ghost is still in their ranks. Enemy units can neither charge nor move through a Ghost unit.

7 Present Lobber. Range 60cm. Can't stand and shoot. The Present Lobber shoots presents into the enemy ranks. If the Lobber hits, no wound is inflicted and the unit is not driven back, but the enemy unit is automatically *Confused*, because the unit is fully occupied with unwrapping the presents. The unit is not driven back, even when hit by other missile fire or magic that would normally drive them back (casualties are still removed). Should the affected unit be drawn into close combat by any means it is treated as any other *Confused* unit.

8 Snow Cannon. Range 30cm. The Snow Cannon is used to... err shoot snow! This snow is mainly used to create some Christmas atmosphere and to allow every one the excuse to drink some hot spiced

wine. The snow is cold enough to drive people away, but not cold enough to kill anybody. So, instead of rolling to hit you just roll 2 dice for the drive back (or add 2 dice to the drive back roll, when the unit already had been hit). The number of dice is modified for *Fortified* or *Defended* targets as normal and all other drive back rules apply. When the cannon shoots as part of a *Stand and Shoot* reaction, the charging unit loses 2D6 of its movement allowance. This might result in the unit not reaching its intended target. In this case the unit is moved as if the charge would have been successful and is then moved straight back the distance it failed the charge by.

i.e. a infantry unit 17 cm away charges and the snow cannon rolls a 8. So the movement of the charger is reduced by 8 (12 cm left). So the infantry will be moved into contact and then 5 cm directly back.

If the charge has taken place in the Command phase then the active player is allowed to give further orders to the unit, if it happened in the Initiative phase the unit cannot be moved any more in that Initiative or the following Command phase.



9 Nikolaus. Nikolaus is mounted in a flying sleigh. The sleigh counts as a flying chariot and the additional attack is already included in his profile.

10 Knecht Ruprecht. Because of his reputation for being extra tough, a unit accompanied by Knecht Ruprecht causes *Terror* against evil armies (Undead, Orcs, Chaos and Skaven).

CHRISTMAS CAROLS

As aforementioned, The Army of the North Pole has a weird form of magic in Christmas songs!

STILLE NACHT (Silent Night)

4+ to cast.....Range 30 cm

Nominate a single enemy unit within range. Silence will fall heavily on this unit. It can't be given any commands in the next Command phase. It can still use Initiative or home backs to move.

O'TANNENBAUM (O' Christmas tree)

6+ to cast.....Unlimited Range

If there is a wood or forest on the table the trees can be transformed into Christmas Trees. If successfully cast, place a unit of Christmas Trees in any wood or forest on the table. The unit cannot be raised into close combat. This spell may only be cast if there are spare models available.

IHR KINDERLEIN KOMMET

(O come little children)

5+ to cast.....Range 30 cm

Nominate a single enemy unit within range. The unit will be moved its maximum movement distance towards the Weihnachtssänger. If it has enough movement to reach or even pass the

Weihnachtssänger the unit will stop 1 cm before it reaches them. The stand closest to the Weihnachtssänger is moved first in a straight line and ends its move facing the Weihnachtssänger and the other stands are arranged as the owning player sees fit. The move should be as straight as possible. Impassable terrain is circumvented, but troops of the moved unit's side have to make way or the unit is stopped and becomes *Confused* (remember to roll for *Confusion* if unit(s) make way). If the path of the first stand's move crosses an enemy unit the moved unit has to charge that unit by performing an ordinary charge.

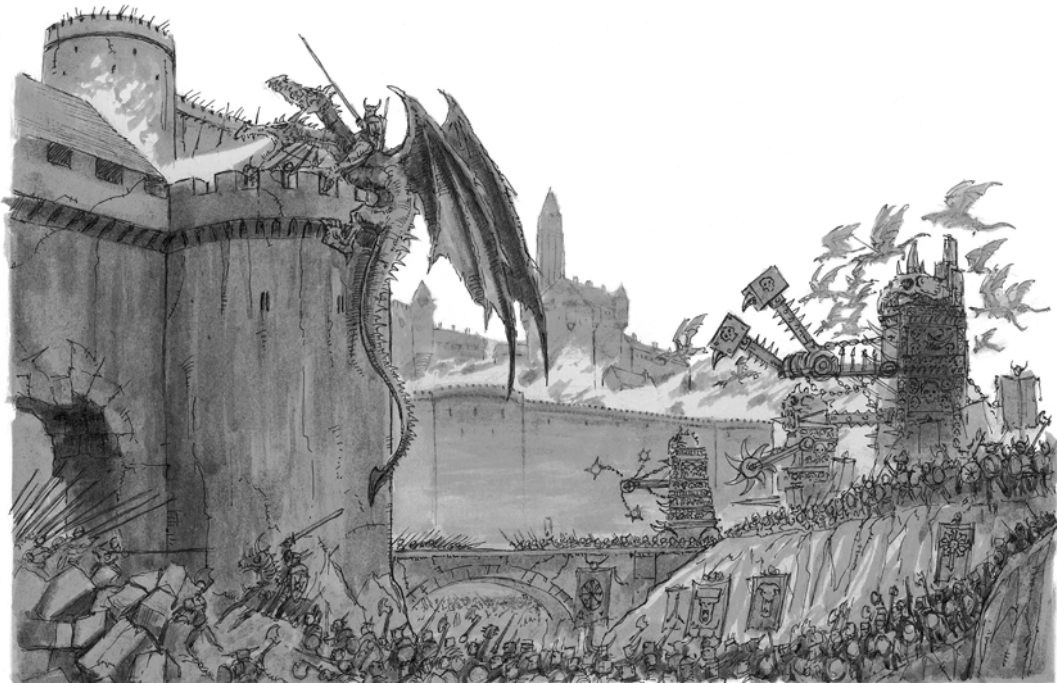
FRÖHELICHE WEIHNACHT ÜBERALL

(We wish you a merry Christmas)

4+ to cast.....Range 30 cm

The spell is cast on a combat of which at least 1 stand (friend or foe) is within range. Please note that this can affect more than one unit of each side. The combatants are filled with the spirit of Christmas and decide not to fight. The combat ends before it even begins! Roll for and execute a fall back immediately as if both sides had drawn in combat. The enemy (of the Weihnachtssänger) has to fall back first.

More of Stephan Hess' festive madness can be seen on the inside back cover.





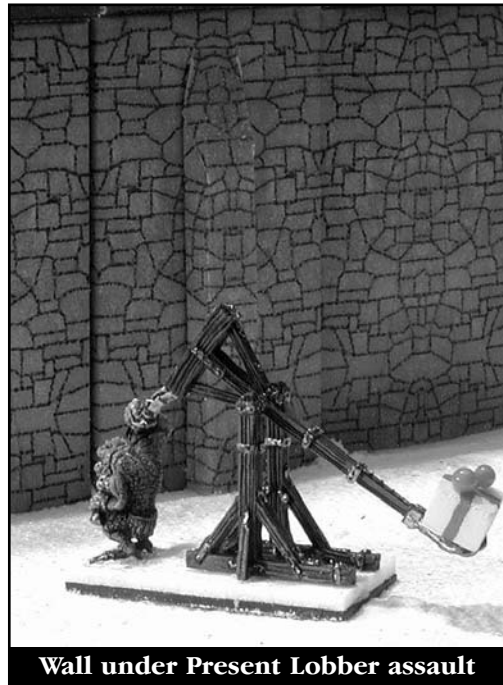
Ghost of Christmas



Wichtel



Mail Order Trolls



Wall under Present Lobber assault



Polar Bears



The Snow Cannon