

ALEPH SECTOR CAMPAIGN SYSTEM



OVERVIEW

The Aleph Sector lies in the eastern quadrant of Segmentum Obscurus. Its position makes it particularly vulnerable to attack from chaos, Tau, tyranid and eldar forces, though orks too are a constant nuisance. In addition there is a warp lane direct from the Eye of Terror to the Perseus Deeps which makes Chaos incursions a frequent and unwelcome occurrence.

BUILDING A NARRATIVE

When we say campaign, we mean story. The very act of playing a game creates a story. Each player's perspective is different, yet unified by the sci-gothic universe of the game. Warhammer 40K is a game of the imagination. There isn't a hobbyist on the planet that does not visualize the battle in narrative terms. Everyone has model sized heroes, moments of glory and instances of high drama that are best chronicled in the imagination.

For many hobbyists, the end of the one-off game ends the story, but for us, that's not good enough. We want more. In a campaign the table-top saga continues in the imagination. Many years for their games to actually mean something, and contribute to a developing chronicle. That's where the narrative campaign concept comes into play.

The Aleph Sector is a narrative campaign. The continuing story line is what drives it and each and every individual character's contribution. Aleph Sector was started in 2001 by a handful of friends who wanted their games to mean something more than just shoot-em-up matches. They wanted their forces to have objectives to meet and consequences to pay when things didn't go quite according to plan. They wanted interactions between characters to go beyond just table-top trash talk. They wanted an element of diplomacy to be a part of the story and count towards the outcome of a campaign. The idea behind the Aleph Sector is to collectively tell a story through gaming and help make games have more of a lasting impression. Within the Aleph Sector, we're all the script writers and actors. The GM (Game Master aka referee aka Duncan) acts as the director.

To do this, a player needs to establish his characters and forces, give them a context as to why they are in the Aleph Sector in the first place, and get assigned his first set of objectives.

Different types of player

All gamers are not created equal. The following are a few examples of how different players may interact with the campaign in different ways....

Example 1

This player would like to be involved in the campaign but would rather play the games then have the GM fit them into the story by inventing the background etc.

Example 2

This player works closely with the GM and provides new ideas. He defines the overall objectives of a race or races and suggests rules and ways to measure campaign goals as well as playing their own force.

Example 3

This player is not interested in the campaign at all (fine!) and just plays one off games. (We'll still count them though!)

Example 4

This player is actively involved in the campaign., defining his own force's objectives and background and coming up with a reason for each game. He works with the GM to push their story forward.

Its important to note that the campaign is designed to be open to everyone, and doesn't require anyone to play anyone else, nor does it matter if players come and go. There are no "fixtures" and no reliance on players to actually turn up! Which is a bonus.

The Aleph Campaign system is predominantly narrative. It's up to players to organise games and explain the motives of their forces. However there is a very simplistic system to measure the pace of the campaign and it works as follows:

NARRATIVE BEFORE OR AFTER

Often the game happens first and the impact on the campaign is worked out afterwards. There are often active warzones where the two sides are battling it out so applying the games in the already active warzones isn't difficult. Alternatively the two players involved may know where and what they are fighting for, adding an extra element of "realism" to the game as they fight to take a certain city or recover a relic.

POINTS FROM GAMES

40K

Wins are classified into 4 sizes based on how good the win was:

- 1 - the VP score was a draw, but you killed more points than your opponent
- 2 - A win on victory points
- 3 - you scored double the VPs than your opponent and scored at least 3 VPs.
- 4 - You wiped your opponent off the table (no models left!)

This applies to games at 1500pts.

EPIC

I haven't worked out the game size in epic yet! But the general principle is that a game which takes 2 hours to play will give you around the same points as a standard 40k game.

GOTHIC

A standard 1500pt game will get you the same points as in 40k, but with the addition of a +2/-2 space modifier (see later about modifiers).

AI

AI is counted rather differently and a game will usually give you extra modifiers in a warzone or enable you to reduce the "cost" of taking a city. Alternatively it might give you a starting point for an invasion or represent an insertion mission to get behind otherwise formidable defences.

A standard win in AI will get you 2 points.

KILL TEAM

Kill team will get you 1 point if you win – but usually kill team will do something specific like kill a special character, governor or destroy an important installation.

SCALING

The general points are scored for "normal sized games". To work out how many you get for playing at smaller or large points values, simply take the normal points and multiply by X/1500, rounding to the nearest integer. This is done AFTER modifiers are applied.

MODIFIERS

In the Aleph Sector you don't always score the same points from a win. Relative strategic position of the two opponents may give the victor more points. The loser always gets zero, no matter what!

GLOBAL MODIFIERS

Global modifiers represent the overall effect waging other wars has on the main campaigning powers. Constant raids and defeats to smaller forces are a drain on resources, while victories over enemy forces can result in safer supply convoys and extra loot.

STRATEGIC MODIFIERS

Maintained by the GM (i.e. me!) the global modifiers are very simple. Each time you beat an opponent, you inflict a -1 to their modifiers – against the appropriate race. When you win a game, you get to reduce a modifier by one, always against the opponent you were playing first. Modifiers cannot go below -3 against any particular faction however.

The total sum of these modifiers is the factions global modifier position.

Orks have a special rule – lacking much in the way of strategy they never choose who to apply modifiers to, but they can go up to +3 in their modifiers (including by playing other orks!) against each faction.

GLOBAL MODIFIERS		O	T	C	I	T	E
vs.	Tyranids	+0	+0	+0	-1	+0	+0
vs.	Imperium	+0	-1	-2	+0	+0	-2
vs.	Tau	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0
vs.	Necrons	+0	+0	+0	-1	+0	+0
vs.	Dark Eldar	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0
vs.	Eldar	+0	+0	-1	+0	-1	+2
vs.	Chaos	+2	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0
vs.	Orks	+2	+0	-2	-2	+0	+0

SPACE SUPREMACY

In addition to overall modifiers there is a “space” modifier representing who is in overall control of space (i.e. who is doing better at gothic!). A 1500pt win will inflict a -2 modifier on your opponent and a +2 on yourself. Smaller games will change the modifiers by +1/-1, up to a maximum +4/-4.

Note space supremacy “decays” over time. Every 3 months the space modifiers are reduced by 1 for every race.

The total global modifiers – affecting ALL games in the campaign are then summed...

Space		-1	+1	+0	+1	+4	+0
Total Global		+3	+0	-5	-3	+3	+0

LOCAL MODIFIERS

Every warzone has local modifiers. Some of these are local to the very planet being fought over while others affect the whole sector. Global + local modifiers are then applied to the game to work out the points gained from the game...

EXAMPLES

Here are the local modifiers in the Perseus Deep:

Total Global	+3	+0	-5	-3	+3	+0	+0	+2
Has systems?	+0	+1	+1	+1	+0	+1	+1	+1
For each 3 systems	+0	+1	+1	+3	+0	+0	+1	+3
For each 3 large worlds	+0	+1	+1	+3	+0	+0	+1	+2
Fleet Base?	+0	+1	+1	+1	+0	+1	+1	+1
TOTAL	+3	+4	-1	+5	+3	+2	+4	+9

So in addition to global modifiers the strategic position is boosted (or made worse) by the number of systems and fleet bases each faction has in the region. Going down to planet level (in this case Parius):

Modifiers		
Space 1	—	+1
Central Junc	—	+2
Isolated	—	+3
Not via road	—	-1

So here there are several modifiers. +1 for controlling the space port “space 1”, +2 for controlling the “Central Junction” and +3 if you are attacking a location which is cut off but -1 for attacking across country. So now we have all these modifiers... What now?

APPLYING MODIFIERS

So how do the modifiers work? Well if you win or draw (and only if you win or draw) you will get 0-4 points from the game. Then you compare yours and your opponent’s modifiers. If the result is **positive** you add the difference to your win.

EXAMPLE

Dark Angels defeat Orks on Parius for a 2pt win. The global modifiers show the orks have +3, and the Imperium -3. However Parius is in the Perseus Deep where the Imperium are doing better. Taking that into account by looking at the Perseus Deep local modifiers, we see the Orks still have +3 but the Imperium have +5. Now lets assume the Imperium control “Central Junc” but the orks have “Space 1” in the above example, and that the Imperium were attacking along a road...

The total for the Imperium is a further +2, while the Orks get a +1 for Space 1. So Orks +4, Imperium +7. The Dark Angels get an extra 3 points to add to their 2 from the win, giving them 7 points to “spend”. Had the orks got a 2pt win, they would not have subtracted the modifiers. They would have got a simple 2 points...

USE OF POINTS

What can be done with the points depends on what’s going on in the campaign. If the campaign is a land based territory capturing one, you take as many “squares” as you gained points. This land based campaign system will be detailed later. If you’re not engaged in a land war on a specific planet, but you and your opponent are in a war on a minor planet, such as those in the Shadow worlds or Rim worlds, you can take territory of your opponent’s racial holdings on that minor world, again up to the number of points you won by.

If you and your opponent are not engaged at all, your faction can boost their global modifiers by +2. In fact you can always do this in lieu of using points, and sometimes that’s a good idea! This is known as “clearing mods”. I represents a raid to boost the overall strategic position of a faction.

However territory taking is not the only thing you can do. There is also building, razing and special missions which have been agreed between you and the GM, based on fluff or a particular objective you want to achieve. If you want to set your faction a specific mission, I will build you something to fulfil it!

MAP CAMPAIGNS

The size of the planet is determined by its number of territories. This is the number of squares you get for each point of win. Planets like Tyranteous are not smaller than planets like Tarsis Major, but they are less important and have less installations, population and armies, so campaigns tend to be quicker. Minor planets (without a map) have even fewer settlements and thus fewer squares.

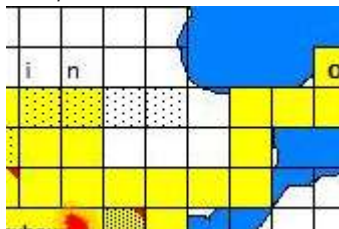
In a land campaign when you win a game you take a number of territories (a number of squares) equal to the amount you won by. On Tarsis Major one territory is one square, but on Tyranteous it is three squares, so a win on objectives gains 6 squares on Tyranteous.

In a single 1500-2000 point game all squares gained must be taken in an unbroken line (no diagonals). In larger games, the number of territories gained is multiplied by the scaling rules (see above) on the winning side, so a 3000 point would net 2x as many territories and can be taken as two lines, or one.

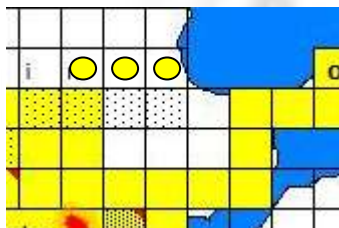
SUPPLY

Armies (Tyrannids are an exception and work differently) need supply on land based campaigns. Cities and other settlements are supply bases, as are large areas of territory (9 squares on Tarsis, 16 on Tyranteous). If a square cannot draw supply (no diagonals) to a friendly supply zone, it is cut off and is surrendered to an enemy.

Example



The Tau (Yellow) play a game against the Imperium (clear or white). Though the game was a draw the Global and Local modifier differences were +3 to the Tau, therefore the Tau gained 3 Territories. The Tau player took the following squares.



The remaining 6 squares are cut off and fall to the Tau. Note if the “cut off” had been 9 squares or bigger it *wouldn't* have fallen, because it would have been a supply zone in its own right.

Tyranids build hive nodes (costing 9 points each), which extend a radius of supply 9 squares away from them. Using the hive mind, tyranid territory within that radius cannot be “cut off”. The only way to “cut off” tyranid held territory is to destroy hive nodes, which work like cities...

TERRAIN TYPES

Usually mountains cost double to take, so on Tarsis they take 2 points per square and on Alphe 6 points per square. This is to represent the difficulty of moving troops and supply convoys across difficult ground.

Rivers usually cost two to cross, and supply cannot be drawn across a river. Again, it will say so on the map and be clearly marked!

CITIES

Cities need more than one “point” to take. Each city will have its worth labelled on the map. If the city is surrounded it costs this to take. If it is not surrounded it costs 1 territory more (1 point on Tarsis, 3 on Tyranteous) to take. So a city worth 3 points on Tarsis would cost 4 to take if not surrounded.

Other settlements and installations may also cost more than 1 to take. Consult the map!

You can take partial cities (and excuse to follow up with a cityfight game).

AIRBORNE OPERATIONS

If your side has air superiority (the highest air modifier) you can launch airborne operations against supply zones far from the front line. You will usually need to gain 3 points or more from a game to take a supply point (see cities), so it is ill advised if modifiers are not in your favour.

BOMBING

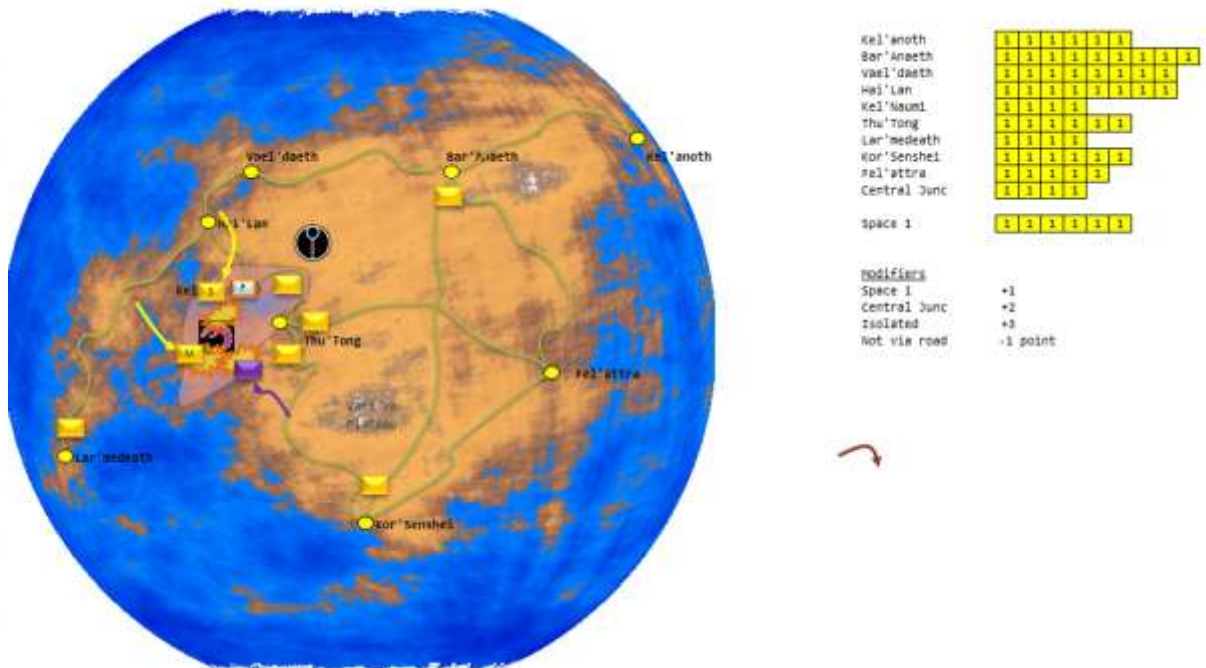
You can also use an AI game to reduce the value of cities (usually worth 3 points). A successful bombing mission will usually reduce the value of a city by X points for X games, where X is the value of the win (2 points for a win in an “average” AI game).

BRIDGEHEAD CREATION

Instead of taking territory points can be used to create bridgeheads – i.e. a supply point. This costs 3 points to do, so a minimum of 4 points is needed to do this as you also need a territory to build the supply point on. This is useful for initial attacks against areas where you have no supply. Obviously there is little point in attempting this without good modifiers!

NODAL MAPS

A nodal map is a simplified map. Here strategic places are identified on the map and will be worth a certain number of points. When you win a game you can take these places as normal, but if you want to attack something you're not currently in contact with, you'll need to conduct a special mission or play an AI game.



CONSULT THE MAP!

Fortunately these rules are restated on the map of the warzone so everyone (especially me!) can keep up. To get the best out of the system its always good to have a look at the map and work out what's best to do – using strategy to defeat your foe in the quickest way possible!

RAIDING

Not all battles are about taking territory. Sometimes daring missions change the course of a war and some armies are design for these vital operations. Therefore there is a mechanism in place to represent this. Both you and your opponent should agree to a raid before playing. A raid must always take place in an active warzone (i.e. somewhere there is a ground campaign going on).

If you win a "raid" (and have suitable background explaining what the raid was) then you get a +X modifier for +X games on that world/theatre, where X is the points from the game. If you lose, your opponent can reverse the result (if you expend all your energy in a raid and it fails its a bad outcome!) or take territory as usual...

The +X would be net of all other modifiers. So if you were at -2 overall on a world, and won by a massacre at 1500pts, you would be at +2 instead for the next 4 games.

FORTIFYING

Instead of taking territory you can use your points to fortify a world or installation to make it harder to invade. The golden rule is that if you have gained X points from a game, you can increase your world's points by X points.

BUILDING ON MINOR WORLDS

Minor worlds usually start neutral. You can take these worlds by playing any opponent, then fortify them into bases.

Minor worlds without a map are represented by a string of boxes. Each point you get can increase every *other* square by up to +3 (4 in total).

Starting minor world "neutral"

Minor X	1	1	1	1	1
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First you need to take the world for your faction!

Minor X	1	1	1	1	1
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Then you can fortify it with your points:

Minor X	4	1	4	1	1
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Here every other square is being built up to its maximum "4".

When you "max out" the minor world it becomes a "map" world, and you get an extra boost for finishing your base:

Minor X	4	1	4	1	4
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Minor X	9	1	9	1	9
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"Minor X" is now a 29 point mapped world. (When someone, usually me, makes the map!)

BUILDING ON MAJOR WORLDS

The most obvious use of points on a map is to place fortifications in the way of the enemy. You can increase a square's difficulty to take by x3, each point of fortification costing a point. Of course if you build a line of forts then get surrounded, they will still fall if not in supply, so it may be futile!

You can also simply increase the number of points on a major world. This might be worth it on a small major world, but would be rather inefficient on a 400 point world!

SPACE STATIONS

Space Stations give you a +1 modifier per region. +2 for 3 and +3 for six (maximum). They cost 18 points to build.

WHAT'S AT STAKE?

It is possible, and both players and the GM agree, to stake anything on a game – usually this is to avoid an apocalyptic battle ending up in a win not quite good enough to win a planet outright!

INVASIONS

INVADING MINOR WORLDS

You need 10 points to start invading a minor world (i.e. a world with 100 points or less), but once earned these points can be applied to the map (if there is one) immediately.

INVADING MAJOR WORLDS

To invade a major world you need to "earn" a number of points equal to 10% of the total planet's "size" to start the invasion. This can be done in 40k games (lightning raids, build up etc) or gothic as usual. Planetstrike is a good option here. Once you have the points you can apply them to the map, creating your invasion. The primary reason for doing this is to stop an invasion happening which immediately gets wiped out in the next game!

RACE SPECIFIC RULES

TYRANIDS

ORKS

CHAOS

SPECIAL MISSIONS!

Not all factions or forces within factions just play to take territory or destroy things. There are a number of examples where a player has thought up their own motives for their force and between us we've come up with a system which makes this "secret agenda" possible. Examples may include:

- Searching for an ancient relic... The force is on a mission to find something of critical importance. After each game roll a dice, modified by the level of win, and on a success another clue or piece of the relic is found!

- Hide the alien worlds. Through a series of raids the force is acting to hide its secret base or worlds. A certain number of wins will achieve this – possibly against specified races.

There are just a couple of examples, but to get your own subplot started, come and see me!

THE GOLDEN RULE

The golden rule is nothing is set in stone. Suggest something to me. A lot of these rules have come about from player suggestions, and new rules will get added. In the end this is just a campaign system to make things more interesting, make sure players don't feel "hard done by" which can happen in narrative campaigns, and to avoid organiser bias!

