

# THE ANTARES INITIATIVE



ARTICLE BETA 0.02/OCT 2016

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OCT 2016

PLANET: DEFOR

ARTICLE BETA 0.02

LOCATION: DETERMINATE



HUW EVANS



CONCORD COMMANDER

Hello friends and welcome to month two of The Antares Initiative! We're knees deep in Antares over at WNW at the moment and I have had the privilege of getting three games in so far with my newly constructed Concord army. "Lieutenant Teflon" has experienced significantly more success against the Isorians than the Boromite menace, but we'll talk more about that next month. This time around it's all about the painting.

There are more than a few exceptional painters involved in The Antares Initiative and I'm not ashamed to say that I do not number amongst them. Despite this, I do know how to get a decent looking army ready to hit the tabletop in a reasonable period of time. As such, I decided I would write a painting tutorial for those guys and gals out there who want an army that pops from arms length, but doesn't require you to sacrifice an undue proportion of your precious free time. After all, less time painting means more time for gaming right?

This tutorial uses a Concord Drop Trooper (who are my standout favorite from my games so far), but could and should be applied to any unit in the army.

For starters, I kicked the model off with a bone coloured spray from Army Painter. I knew a significant portion of the model would end up a more-or-less bone colour and I really like it as a base for the other parts of the model as well. Generally, if you're going to start off with a brighter base coat like this, your colours will end up looking brighter rather than the more common black undercoat, which leads to a more subdued finish. I thought this fitted my imagination of the Antares universe perfectly.



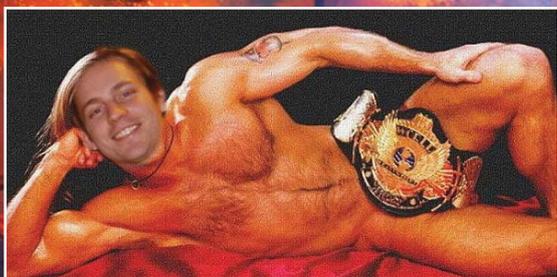
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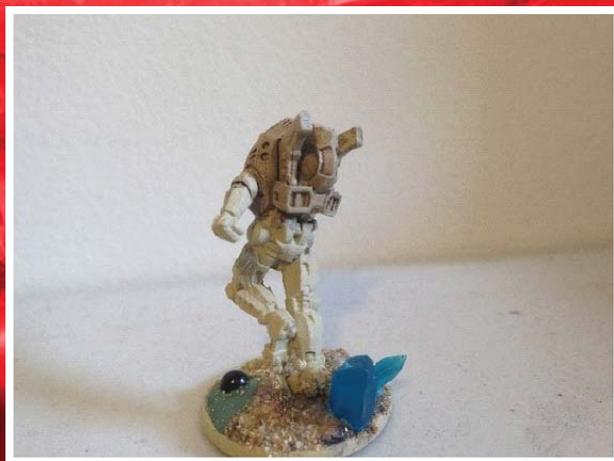
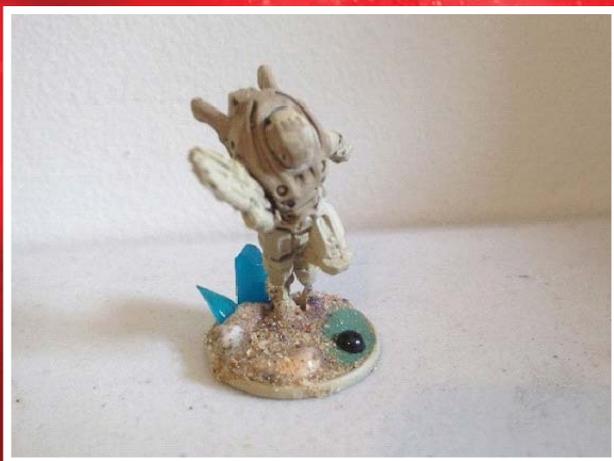


HUW EVANS



CONCORD COMMANDER

The next step was to wack some sand and green stuff on the base along with a couple of pretty crystals from Green Stuff World. Rick Priestly's idea for the planet our club is fighting on (Defor) was one of red sand deserts, boiling tar seas and a peculiar race of sentient crystals. Well I thought, why not include all three? The green stuff will serve as a tar slick, which you'll see at the end, complete with a little black bubble made from a plastic bead.



After applying a brown wash to those parts of the model I want to end up staying bone, I applied a watered-down layer of greyish-blue to the remaining parts. This acted as the base for the arms and legs of the trooper.



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Next up I painted the oil slick, visor and lights on the model black. This contrasts so starkly with the bone that I found you didn't need a thick layer. For this same reason, a liberal application of black ink was enough to make the knee joints and backpack vents look good without the need for several layers of highlighting. I also applied a blue ink to the blue parts of the armour to give that area more depth.

Now for the first highlight layer:

For the bone sections I used a similar bone colour to the initial spray. If I were you, I would be a little less liberal with the brown ink than I was in the picture; use just enough so the highlight layer isn't quite so obvious. Nevertheless, a brief brushing of the raised edges of the torso produced an effect that I knew would pop across the table.

The blue highlight was more subtle, but still important. For this I used a combination of the same initial greyish blue, mixed 50/50 with a lighter shade of blue. On a whim, I decided to paint the crystal a purple, with a pink highlight on the pronounced edges. This wasn't really necessary and if you wanted to you could easily leave the crystal untouched.



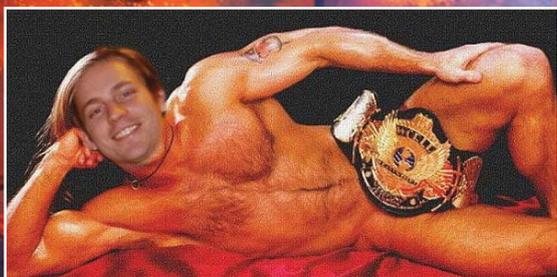
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CONCORD COMMANDER

Time to start painting the small details:

I applied the same dark purple of the crystal in tiny lines or dots on the interior of the gun and the various lights on the torso. Are they lights, gems, buttons? Who knows. Regardless, a tiny pink dot alongside or just on top of the purple (leaving black exposed for at least half of the area) was enough to give them a bright light of their own. I reasoned that this could represent the trooper using a similar power source as the crystals to energize his gear. More importantly, it didn't clash with the other colours on the model and made a nice change to the usual red, green or blue that most people choose.

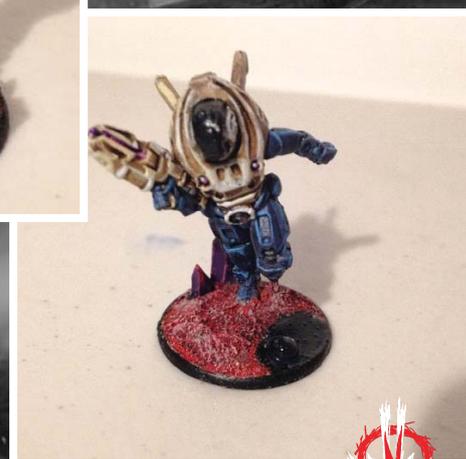
I then applied a second highlight layer on just a few of the raised areas on both the torso and limbs of the trooper, using the light blue from earlier and a stark white respectively. Lastly, white was used in minute proportions on each light/gem/button and on the visor to make it look like they are made of glass or reflective plastic.

You could skip this whole step if you really wanted, but for a total of perhaps 10% of the total painting time, I feel it was well worth it.



I was happy the trooper had hit "tabletop standard" so now it was time for the base. I applied a heavily watered red to the sand, followed by a quickly dry brushed bone. I also squeezed a tiny bit of this colour onto the bottom of the trooper's boots which was in keeping with the fact that he is running through the dirt.

Now that my red sand was good to go, I painted the edge of the base black to cover up the paint I had got all over it previously. To really complete the model I then chucked a liberal coat of gloss varnish over the oil slick and the visor, giving them both an appropriately shiny finish. Very satisfying!



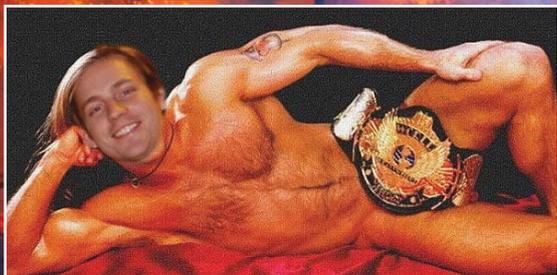
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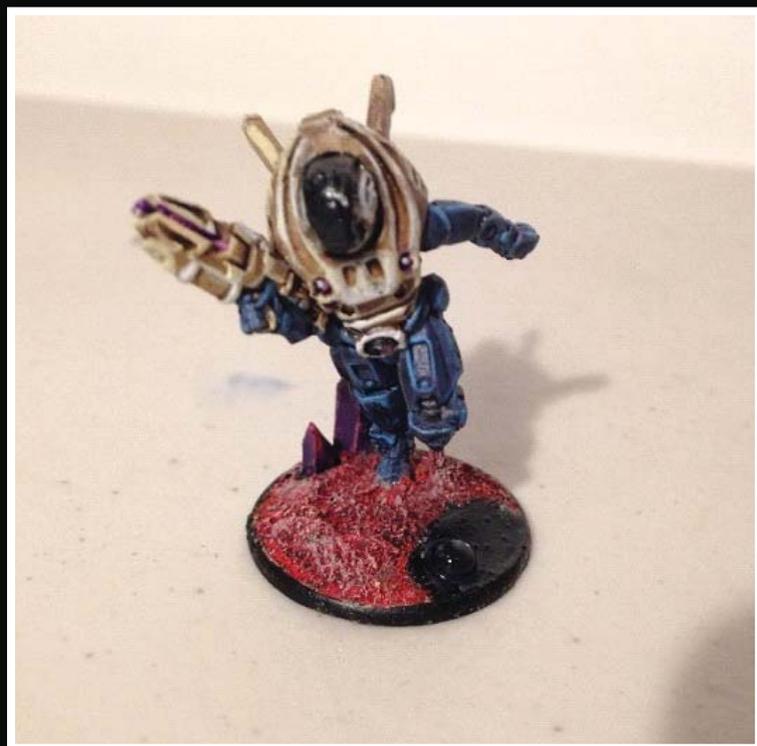
CONCORD COMMANDER

With that, my Concord trooper was ready for action. He wasn't about to win any painting competitions, but I'm sure you can appreciate how an army of these guys would look from across the table. They will look especially appropriate on the red sand board some of the other lads have in the works. The aim of the game here was bright contrasts rather than dull subtlety.

I hope you found this guide suitably im-formative and im-telligent... I'm going to go now. Good luck and don't forget to have fun!

Oh, by the way, if you would like to see a great video tutorial (using the standard Warlord colour scheme) you should check out this clip by The War Gamer:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PZ1j9xsubL0>



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BEN KOCHSKAMPER



ISORIAN COMMANDER

After weeks of waiting, theory crafting and rulebook reading, a large box had turned up on my doorstep; it was my Isorian force. Very exciting!

Without delay I got to work assembling my 500 points. A recap of what I had selected:

a Command Squad, a Phase Squad, a small unit of Tsan Ra, a phase sniper and a targeter probe shard.

Upon opening the phase and command squad I was quite surprised with the amount of detail in the miniatures. These two units went together quite easily due to the fact they are pretty much one-piece models. I think the only issue I had with these two squads was trying to work out how the tentacles attached on the commander. I wasn't sure which way they were suppose to go in; even while working off the image on the website I couldn't seem to work it out.

When I eventually completed the phase / command squads I moved onto the sniper and the targeter shard. Both of these were pretty easy to put together though I did find that I had to shorten the tips of the flying stands so the probes and sniper would fit flush. The sniper is such a nice model and I'm really looking forward to painting it.

At this point I was feeling like I was going to have this force put together within the hour... then I unboxed the Tsan Ra. I really like these models I think they are probably my favourite in the Isorian range, but putting them together was a bit of a nightmare. All the pieces had fallen off their metal sprue sections so trying to find out which part belonged to what body was really quite difficult. After asking for assistance on the Facebook page I had someone help me match which bits go where. That made it so much easier!

The other issue I had with the Tsan Ra was that some of the pieces were a tad bent. This wasn't a huge problem but it did mean figuring out how to bend them back so they sat flush with the base when assembled. I got close but not exact.

As far as preparation goes, the models were reasonably flash free. I didn't have to do a whole heap of cleaning to get them ready for an undercoat which was a great. I am yet to do any conversions on my force purely because the miniatures are made from metal and I find that hard to work with when you have to chop them up.

Overall the models are really good and I'm glad I picked the Isorians as I think they will paint up well. If I was to give any feedback on the miniatures it would be to add some assembly instructions, whether that be a note to point to an online resource or just printed on the box.

In regarding to painting my force, I have gone with a colour scheme of bright blue armour, orange faceplate and white helmet top. I really wanted my Isorian force to be bright and contrast well with our planet. We have all agreed to base in a similar scheme of an orange/red colour with some weathering powder to finish.



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BEN KOCHSKAMPER



ISORIAN COMMANDER

After completing the first trooper I was quite surprised how well the colours contrasted (see images below).



As for my other models that I've yet to get to, I want my probes to be bright and to stand out (so that I remember to use their abilities in game). I will probably make these a mix of blues, oranges and light greens.

For the sniper, I'm planning to make look like he's camouflaged into his surroundings. I'm painting his feet up to his chest to be red/orange like the base and then blend it into the blues I'm using in my phase squad. The idea is that the sniper only appears as he shoots his weapon (I'm going to do something similar on the gun).

The Tsan Ra will probably be something similar to my phase squads, can't wait to paint these!



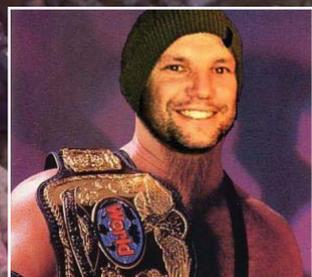
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MAT SELICK



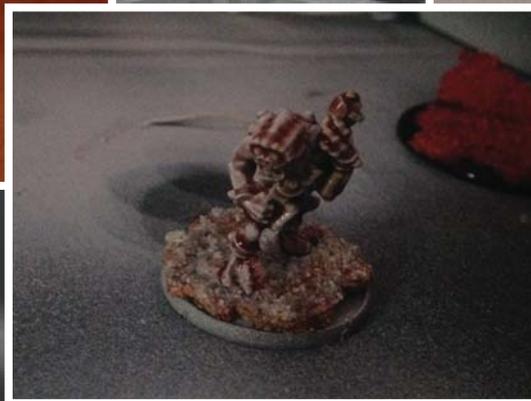
GHAR COMMANDER

After unpacking the Ghar, I was impressed by how detailed the models were, in particular the plastic battle suits. Although after reading multiple requests for the need of building instructions for the plastic battle suits I was a touch concerned, however, I found it was quite simple to quickly review the contents of the boxes and understand how to clip them all in groups and keep them together with a touch of glue.

The one thing that impressed me the most was the personality (or was that raw fear?) in the faces of the Outcast. While not the most optimum in-game choice, Outcast's can put out a surprising amount of firepower, albeit risking the limited ammo – Outcasts are easily my favourite Ghar model so far.

Preparation of the models was easy enough; the usual modelling dags. Nothing a swift clip and file won't fix. The only time consuming part for me was the metal base on the Outcasts requiring a bit of leg (hand?) work to get the basing built up around it. We used cork to build up the bases with a pumice paste and the occasional modelling putty to fill these gaps.

While only early on in the painting phase; I'm going with a light grey base building up to whites and a touch of green then dirtying them up. I think this will contrast the Defor red earth planet well, particularly with the large flat surfaces of the Ghar suits. No conversions have been completed at this stage however initial plans are on the way for a basic assault suit conversion to have the gouger gun spinning off towards the enemy rather than being statically attached to the left arm.



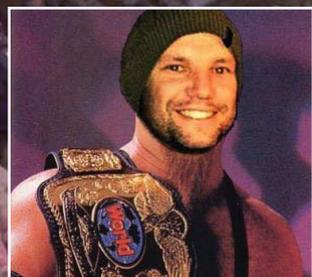
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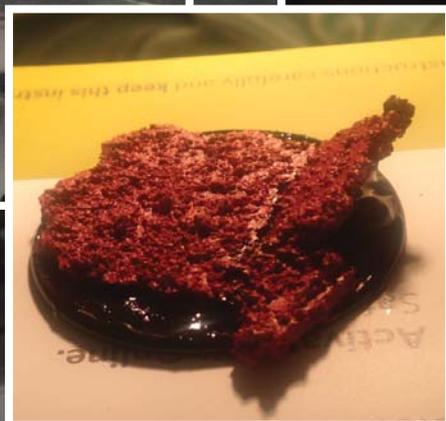
GHAR COMMANDER

The Defor planet has really got me out of my comfort zone when it comes to terrain and basing as historically I've avoided a desert-like basing style. That said - what a challenge! With an uninhabitable planet such as ours, I really thought about how all of our races would be able to survive on this barren, desolate planet.

I imagined the inhabitants of Defor, being an alien crystal-like species, would not share the same basic requirements for life as a human being. For that reason, I decided the humans landing on the surface would have to use some sort of pipe system in order to distribute the scarce amount of resources available. So off I go to the hardware store to pretend I know about 15mm PVC plumbing supplies.

The loose plan here is to paint these PVC pipes up with a rust like finish to represent the corrosion from the harsh climate. I think this look will then blend to the red earthy tones, contrasted by the occasional bright crystal and dark, bubbling, sticky tar.

So far I'm really enjoying my Antares journey in play and in hobby!



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BEN RANTALL



BOROMITE COMMANDER

Boromites. My sweet, sweet ugly/cute rock monsters had finally landed upon my door step and the world rejoiced (though from the other WNW lads, cries of joy sound a lot like screams of woe). Appropriately cast in metal, (for plastic would not do) the heft of the Bro-mites could not just be felt on the gaming table, but also while held in hand. The full 500 pt force was heavy!

Unpacking all the toys with as much haste as my dexterous phalanges could muster, the full might of my army was assembled within a night. The metal was surprisingly flash-free and mold lines were almost non-existent. This was a massive change to what I was normally used to. Add to that, almost all the units were a breeze to glue together with the only exception being the Locomite riders I added on top of my standard 500 points (who could resist?).

\*The work gangers were a two-part kit with just the head of each Bro' needing attachment.

\*The lavamites were also a two parter, with just the upper jaw needin' a gluin'.

\*The micromites were no different from the previous with a small proby-bit needing \*cough\* insertion into the roof of the mite.

\*The support teams, not to stray from tradition, were the same as the gangers. Heads needing to be sewn on.

Now as much as I like the feel and detail that the metal provides, it does come with some drawbacks. First being the weight and how that impacts with transport. Normally I'd just use a foam case dealio but with so many pointy bits from mite legs, magnets were probably the best choice. That meant a larger case would be needed to allow the entire force to be able to stand upright and give enough space between figures in case there was a bit of movement during travel. Secondly conversions are more difficult. The Bro-mites are quite collected or gathered in their center, either kneeling with a weapon in front of them or standing with their weapon in front of them. Limbs aren't easily chopped and changed and neither are the weapons. If I was to do any sort of converting, the heads look like the least frustrating opportunity – but not having any sci-fi pieces in my bits box, I decided to keep the Bros pure and unadulterated... for now.

So with those drawbacks considered and the figures cleaned and primed, a colour scheme was in need of selection. This is where it takes me the most time to reach a conclusion.

I searched online for inspiration; the Warlord site, Antares Facebook groups, google images, yet nothing really grabbed me. I didn't want to copy the style set by the Warlord painters and didn't want to go outrageous with my colour choice as I almost always paint with a more muted palette grounded in reality. With online sources exhausted I turned to my fallback – theme and backstory.

As you may have read in our previous Antares article (if you haven't, why not?! Quickly, there's still time to go and check it out!) the short story I devised for my Bros were that they had settled on Defor generations ago. Being a fringe planet of, at the time, little worth with almost nothing in the way of life, my Bro-mites became almost hermit-like. Keeping to themselves, mining what they could and developing an understanding of the mysterious crystalline natives, Defor became their home... a home they will defend aggressively. This leads into a snippet of lore I read in the rulebook, about the Boromites taking on features of their surroundings if given enough time. This allows them to adapt to almost any climate. The Eureka moment then made itself present.



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BROMITE COMMANDER

I decided that the Bro's will take on the red earth of their subterranean home and their skin will be tinged yellow from the methane and sulphurous air. A good starting point and with the main colours down, I next moved onto the equipment and details. Not having much access to traders, I would imagine the Bros with old, dusty mining tools and weapons. This means that any metals (which would make up the remaining surface of a Bro-mites equipment as cloth or woven materials would degrade too quickly to be practical) would be aged and not at all shiny. Easy done.

Lastly, I felt the scheme needed some contrast colour otherwise the figures would all just blend in with the base. I devised that the Bros, being of a working culture, would include hi-vis colour into their work gear for safety reasons. Blue was the colour of the day here as it was a good opposing colour according to the standard colour wheel. This will also be replicated in any lighting that appears on models eg. Support weapon screens, probe lights, generators and other power gizmos (although these details will be a glowy blue / white to give a nod to the Defor backstory of when giant molten plasma balls destroyed a Vorl fleet).

Now that I've all the ingredients for a delicious serving of Bro-mite, all that was left was the application. I won't bore you with the details, but basically I took the basing scheme and applied it to the rocky skin. From there I highlighted with lighter and lighter shades, picking out the edges of each individual crack.

The underbelly, for lack of a better word, was a simple mix of a desert or sandy yellow, and blending that up to a bone colour. Metals were also too easy. Paint silver. Wreck with washes. Pick out a few edges with silver. Done.

Lastly the blues were a simple strong blue base, washed with a darker blue and blended up a little to an electric blue. The Lighting blues were the same but just starting higher up in shades, using a light blue and blending to white.



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BOROMITE COMMANDER

The rock monsters also required little thought. Although I'm yet to completely finish a unit, I've made a good start on them, being painted in, well, rock colours: greys, browns, grey / browns. This will be offset with a lava effect within their jaws and I plan to employ some Object Source lighting into the mix.

One other thing I've tried, is use the sprues from the pins and templates (red and blue) off the starter sets to create small crystal spires to use as flight stands. Unfortunately, I've forgotten to attach the first probe I've painted – rookie mistake. At least the idea is sound!

The WNW table is slowly coming together in terms of terrain. The excellent MDF terrain that was supplied by Warlord has been assembled and is just awaiting their turn in the painting line. The resin crystals that were also supplied have been ripped off their round bases and popped on the "forest" templates, also awaiting some attention.

In addition to this I've purchased bags of little crystal-like beads as well as slightly larger "table crystals" (decorative things that some people think look nice when put in glass containers which also have no practical use). I'm aiming to make some crystal spires and barriers so we have more natural obstacles as opposed to the manufactured kinetic barricades. I say aim because I truly feel like I'm going to make a mess of them.. But you'll just have to wait until next month for an update on that ;)

So until then, may you never roll a dud shot and may all your lavamites continue to give your opponents nightmares.

-The Wednesday Night Wargamers.

