

ZONE MORTALIS

During the Horus Heresy, the battle-brothers of the Legiones Astartes fought each other across every environment imaginable. The rules for recreating one such war zone can be found over the next few pages. Will you lead your Legionaries into a Zone Mortalis?



The Horus Heresy – *Age of Darkness*: Zone Mortalis allows players to recreate some of the most savage and desperate battles of the Horus Heresy. Whether within the confined decks of Legion battle-barges, the labyrinthine corridors of ancient fortresses or the winding tunnels of Mechanicum forges, the battlefields that the *Principia Bellicosa* describes as ‘Zones Mortalis’ – fatal grounds – were brutal environments for even the most seasoned warriors. The close quarters, limited lines of sight and frequent choke points demanded an entirely unique tactical

methodology, one in which high casualties were an expected price for victory.

The rules presented in this article are a supplemental addition to the core rules for *Warhammer: The Horus Heresy – Age of Darkness*, which are required to play Zone Mortalis. The rules presented here are a precursor to a more complete and exhaustive Zone Mortalis rules set to be released in future publications. These rules are presented to provide players with a baseline for fun narrative games in the brutal conditions of a Zone Mortalis battlefield.

PREPARING FOR BATTLE IN THE ZONE MORTALIS

The following section offers a variety of optional rules and mission types for playing games of the Horus Heresy using Zone Mortalis terrain and rules to supplement the core rules of the *Horus Heresy – Age of Darkness*. Because Zone Mortalis actions are fought in quite dense terrain and without the assistance of transport vehicles to get around, a smaller gaming area can often improve the experience of play. When planning your games, use the table below to determine the size of the battlefield:

Total Army Size (per player)	Table Size
Up to 500 points	2' x 2'
501-1,000 points	3' x 3'
1,001-2,000 points	4' x 4'
2,001-3,000 points	4' x 6'

FORCE SELECTION

Each force used in a Zone Mortalis game is selected using the rules presented in the *Horus Heresy – Age of Darkness* rulebook. Allegiance and Army list are selected by the player as per the standard rules. However, for most Zone Mortalis battles only the Mortalis Assault Force Organisation chart provided here should be used when selecting units.

Forces selected for fighting in a Zone Mortalis action should be chosen from their army list as normal with the following exceptions:

- No unit may include more than 15 models. If a unit's minimum size is greater than 15 models, that unit may not be chosen. Note that this restriction only applies to individual units during army selection. Models with special rules such as an Apothecarion Detachment that are assigned to units before the first turn or with the Independent Character special rule that join units during the battle may increase the number of models in a unit to greater than 15.
- No unit may select a Dedicated Transport.
- No models with the Armiger and/or Vehicle Unit Types may be chosen.
- No models with the Dreadnought Unit Type or Automata Unit Type, or the Monstrous Unit Sub-type may be chosen if they have a Wounds Characteristic of 7 or more.
- No models with the Antigrav Unit Sub-type may be chosen.

WARLORDS

When choosing your army, you must nominate one model to be your Warlord, following the guidelines presented on page 284 in the *Horus Heresy – Age of Darkness* rulebook. You may not choose a Warlord Trait for your Warlord in games with a maximum points limit of 500 points or fewer. In games with a points limit of 501 points or more, each Warlord has one Warlord Trait, chosen during army selection from the list of Core Warlord Traits on page 285 of the *Horus Heresy – Age of Darkness* rulebook (or another list of traits made available as part of that model's Allegiance or Army List) and noted on the player's roster. Some special rules attached to certain Army Lists or models may allow a Warlord to select Warlord Traits other than those presented in the Core list – such rules will specifically note which other Traits may be selected.

Reactions in Zone Mortalis

When making Reactions during a Zone Mortalis battle, an army may not choose to use any of the Core Reactions presented in the *Horus Heresy – Age of Darkness* rulebook nor any army list specific Advanced Reactions.

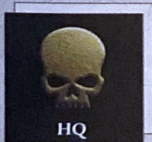
Instead, all armies, regardless of Faction or size, may only choose to use any or all of the Zone Mortalis Reactions as presented in this supplement during a Zone Mortalis battle or any of the standard Advanced Reactions in the *Horus Heresy – Age of Darkness* rulebook.

BASE REACTION ALLOTMENT, ADDITIONAL REACTIONS, AND REACTION LIMITS IN SMALLER GAMES

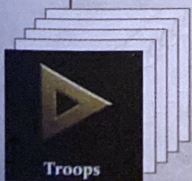
In games with a total army size of 1,000 points or fewer per player, any player may make **one (1) Reaction in each Phase** of their opponent's turn. This number may not be increased in any way. Regardless of any modifications to a player's Reaction Allotment or special rules granting additional Reactions, the Reactive player may never make more than **one (1) Reaction** in any single Phase.

MORTALIS ASSAULT FORCE ORGANISATION CHART

Note that the Mortalis Assault Force Organisation chart does not include any optional Detachments and as such may not take Allied Detachments or a Lord of War Detachment. In addition, additional Optional Detachments from other sources may not be included as part of a Zone Mortalis Force.



HQ



Troops



Elites



Fast Attack



Heavy Support



Primarch

ZONE MORTALIS REACTIONS

During a Zone Mortalis battle, the following Reactions are available to all armies regardless of maximum points limit or Faction. These reactions are only available in Zone Mortalis battles.

REACTIONS IN THE MOVEMENT PHASE

During the Movement phase, the Reactive player may declare a Reaction if an enemy unit ends a move within 12" and in line of sight of a friendly unit. Once the Active player has completely resolved the movement of their unit, the Reactive player may choose to expend their Reaction in that Phase in order to have the unit they control that is within 12" and line of sight perform a **Suppress** Reaction.

Suppress – The Reacting unit may make a Shooting Attack, targeting the unit that triggered this Reaction and following all the usual rules for Shooting Attacks. A unit that makes a Shooting Attack as part of a Suppress Reaction may not make any attacks indirectly (without line of sight). All Shooting Attacks made as part of a Suppress Reaction are Snap Shots, with the exception of Template Weapons. Note that this prevents models from making attacks with weapons that have the Blast (X) special rule as part of this Reaction. Template Weapons may only be used as part of a Suppress Reaction if the target unit is within 8" and must use the Wall of Death rule instead of firing normally. Models in the Reacting unit count as Stationary during this Shooting Attack, even if they moved in the previous Movement phase.

REACTIONS IN THE SHOOTING PHASE

During the Shooting phase, the Reactive player may react when any enemy unit declares a Shooting Attack targeting a unit they control. Before the Active player resolves the Shooting Attack, the Reactive player may choose to expend their Reaction in that Phase to have the unit targeted by the Shooting Attack perform a **Displace** Reaction.

Displace – Each model in the Reacting unit may move a number of inches up to its unmodified Initiative Characteristic. When resolving the Shooting Attack that triggered this Reaction, all range and line of sight is measured to the Reacting unit's new position. If, as a result of this movement, no models in the reacting unit are within range or line of sight of any models in the triggering unit, the Active player cannot choose a new target for their Shooting Attack.

REACTIONS IN THE ASSAULT PHASE

During the Assault phase, the Reactive player may react when any enemy unit declares a Charge targeting a unit they control. Before the Active player has resolved any Charge Rolls, the Reactive player may choose to expend their Reaction in that Phase to have the unit targeted by the Charge perform a **Brace** Reaction.

Brace – The Reacting unit must make a Morale check. If the Check is failed, the Reacting unit immediately Fall Backs 1D6" and automatically regroups when this Fall Back Move is completed. If the Check is successful, the Reacting unit automatically passes any Morale checks they are required to make as a result of losing an assault during the following Fight sub-phase.

TERRAIN IN ZONE MORTALIS

The terrain of a Zone Mortalis battle is, in many ways, what differentiates it from other styles of play. The tight confines and twisting corridors of the theatre of war change the way battle must be waged and tactics applied. Citadel's Zone Mortalis terrain is perfect for representing the narrow confines, twists and turns, and tangled spires of the Zone Mortalis battlefield.

DESIGNATING ZONE MORTALIS TERRAIN

All terrain must be designated before players deploy their armies. In most cases, the features of the terrain will be easily identified by the models used, but where there is any confusion or ambiguity, the players should come to an agreement on how the specific features will be played. In addition to all other terrain features, there are two key features that must be determined when designating terrain during every Zone Mortalis game: ceilings and access points.

DESIGNATING CEILINGS

When designating the terrain features of a Zone Mortalis battle, the players must also decide if the entire battlefield or none of it has a ceiling. If the battlefield has a ceiling, models cannot draw line of sight over or move over Columns, Walls, or closed doors. In effect, the height of the Columns, Walls, and closed doors is treated as the vertical battlefield edge.

If the battlefield does not have a ceiling, models can draw line of sight over Columns, Walls, and closed doors as detailed on page 155 of the *Horus Heresy – Age of Darkness* rulebook.

DESIGNATING ACCESS POINTS

When designating the terrain features of a Zone Mortalis battle, the players must designate at least one access point per player on each battlefield edge. An access point is either a Corridors & Chambers area or an open door (see opposite) that is on a battlefield edge.

MOVING THROUGH TERRAIN

In Zone Mortalis battles, models may not move vertically using the rules on page 165 of the *Horus Heresy – Age of Darkness* rulebook. Ladders and stairways (see overleaf) offer an alternative method for vertical movement in Zone Mortalis games.

TERRAIN TYPES

Zone Mortalis battlefields do not use the categories of terrain types detailed on page 221 of the *Horus Heresy – Age of Darkness* rulebook. Instead, Zone Mortalis games use the following categories: Corridors & Chambers, Platforms, Zone Mortalis Terrain Pieces, and Hazardous Terrain.

CORRIDORS & CHAMBERS

This category covers the vast majority of the spaces in a Zone Mortalis battlefield, from tight interior halls to control rooms and massive landing and storage bays. No additional rules are needed for Corridors & Chambers, and unless otherwise specified, special rules and abilities that affect terrain do not affect Corridors & Chambers.

ZONE MORTALIS TERRAIN PIECES

Individual items of terrain, such as Walls, doors, platforms, ladders, lifts, and stairways are all examples of Terrain Pieces. These items of terrain serve to shelter troops on the field of battle by means of their own bulk and design.

When drawing line of sight to a model that is the target of a Shooting Attack, if it is at least 25% obscured by a Zone Mortalis Terrain Piece, it is eligible for a Cover Save (see page 174 of the *Horus Heresy – Age of Darkness* rulebook). By default, most Zone Mortalis Terrain Pieces are termed corridor debris, and unless otherwise stated, a model in cover behind corridor debris has a 6+ Cover Save.

In addition, some Zone Mortalis Terrain Pieces have additional rules, which are detailed as follows:

Columns and Walls

The sturdy and impenetrable walls of a ship's interior or an underhive tunnel network define the fighting spaces of a Zone Mortalis battlefield.

A model in cover behind a Column or Wall has a 5+ Cover Save. Unless noted otherwise in their special rules, models cannot move or draw line of sight through Columns or Walls in a Zone Mortalis battle. In addition special rules, Wargear, or other effects that affect models within a specified distance cannot affect a model if no straight line between the source of the effect and the affected model can be drawn without passing through a Column, Wall or closed door.

Doors

Chambers and corridors may be sealed off by the use of armoured bulkhead doors, airlocks, or similar apparatus.

A model in cover behind a door of any sort has a 5+ Cover Save. There are two types of doors in a Zone Mortalis battle, standard doors and wide doors:

- **Standard doors** are roughly human-sized openings such as access hatches and airlocks.
- **Wide doors** are larger openings such as loading docks or bay doors.

All doors are defined by two conditions: State and Control.

State

A door can either be closed or open. Unless stated otherwise in the mission rules, all doors begin the battle in the closed state.

- **Closed:** Models cannot move or draw line of sight through a closed door. In addition, distances cannot be measured through a closed door (see Columns and Walls, above).
- **Open:** Open doors do not block line of sight and models may move freely through an open door with the following exceptions:
 - Models with the Dreadnought, Cavalry, and/or Vehicle Unit Types may not move through standard doors.
 - Models with the Bulky (X) special rule with a value of (3) or greater may not move through standard doors.
 - Models with 5 or more Wounds may not move through standard doors.

Control

Depending on the mission, doors may be Accessible, Locked, or Controlled.

- **Accessible:** An Accessible door may be activated once per turn during the Movement phase by a model controlled by the Active player that moves into base contact with the door during a normal movement. The Active player may choose to change the state of the door (from closed to open, or open to closed) at the moment the model moves into base contact. A model that is Running or using a piece of Wargear that allows them to set their movement may not activate doors. If the models in the unit have not yet moved their full Movement distance for the turn, the Active player may continue to move models in that unit. In effect, a unit may open a door in the midst of their movement and continue moving after it has been opened.
- **Locked:** A Locked door begins the battle in the closed state and cannot be opened by any means other than destroying it (see page 116).
- **Controlled:** In some missions, some or all doors are controlled by one or more players. Which players control any Controlled doors will be stated in the rules for the mission. Controlled doors are Accessible to all models in the controlling player's army. Controlled doors are Locked to all models in all other player's armies.

Destroying Doors

Doors in Zone Mortalis are armoured and reinforced structures, and therefore difficult to destroy. Doors are treated as Buildings with no Fire Points or Battlements, a Transport Capacity of 0 and a single facing with Armour Value 10. Standard doors have 3 Hull Points, and wide doors have 6 Hull Points. However, when a Penetrating Hit is inflicted on a door in Zone Mortalis, it loses D3 Hull Points and no roll is made on the Building Damage table. In addition, when a door in Zone Mortalis is reduced to 0 Hull Points, it does not suffer a Total Collapse result. Instead, a door with 0 Hull Points cannot be targeted again by a Shooting Attack, Charge or Melee attack in any Phase and is treated as in the open state by all models for the remainder of the battle, regardless which player controls the door.

Ladders & Stairways

Whether narrow access ladders or grand staircases, moving up and down within a Zone Mortalis is a difficult affair.

In a Zone Mortalis battle, models may only move vertically when in base contact with a piece of terrain designated as ladders or stairways. When climbing between levels vertically via ladders and stairways, models use the rules for vertical movement on page 165 of the *Horus Heresy – Age of Darkness* rulebook. However, ladders and stairways are treated as Difficult Terrain.

HAZARDOUS TERRAIN

Fighting within a Zone Mortalis is a dangerous and treacherous affair, and one in which even light vehicles can flounder or damage themselves, unexpectedly crashing through buckled deck plating, getting crushed beneath falling rubble, or contacting exposed power conduits with deadly results. Note that an area of Hazardous Terrain does not grant a Cover Save. Also note that Hazardous Terrain is neither Difficult Terrain nor Dangerous Terrain, and its effects are not mitigated by special rules or Wargear that interact with those terrain types.

Moving into Hazardous Terrain

If a unit starts its move outside an area of Hazardous Terrain but has a high enough Movement Characteristic to enter an area of Hazardous Terrain during the current Movement phase, the player must declare if they want their unit to try to enter it as part of their move. If the controlling player chooses not to enter any area of Hazardous Terrain, the unit moves as normal but may not enter any area of Hazardous Terrain. If the controlling player chooses for a unit to enter any area of Hazardous Terrain, the unit applies a modifier of -2 to its Movement during that Phase.

This modifier is applied to the unit's Movement Characteristic before it begins its move and continues to apply as long as the unit remains in an area of Hazardous Terrain or until the end of the current Movement phase if it leaves an area of Hazardous Terrain as part of its

move. If the application of this modifier would leave the unit unable to reach an area of Hazardous Terrain, it is still applied, even if the controlling player alters the unit's movement and no longer intends it to enter an area of Hazardous Terrain.

Moving Within Hazardous Terrain

If any models in a unit start their move in Hazardous Terrain, they are affected by the terrain and reduce their Movement by -2" during that Movement phase.

Charging Through Hazardous Terrain

Models are slowed and at risk of injury when charging through Hazardous Terrain. If, when charging, one or more models have to move through Hazardous Terrain in order to reach the enemy by the shortest possible route, the entire unit applies a modifier of -2 to its Charge Distance. This modifier is applied in addition to any other modifiers that might apply to the unit's Charge Distance. In addition, if, when charging, one or more models move through Hazardous Terrain, each model must make a Hazardous Terrain test (see below) as soon as it enters, leaves, or moves within Hazardous Terrain.

Running and Falling Back Through Hazardous Terrain

If, when running or falling back, one or more models move through Hazardous Terrain, each model must take a Hazardous Terrain test (see below) as soon as it enters, leaves or moves within Hazardous Terrain.

Hazardous Terrain Tests

To take Hazardous Terrain tests, roll a D6. On a 1, that model suffers a Wound. No Armour Save, Cover Save or Damage Mitigation roll may be made against this Wound, but Invulnerable Saves may still be made.

Once a model has taken a Hazardous Terrain test for a particular area of Hazardous Terrain, it does not test for that terrain again in the same Phase. However, if the model moves into a different area of Hazardous Terrain, this must be tested for as normal.

Shooting While Within Hazardous Terrain

While within an area of Hazardous Terrain, models suffer a -1 penalty to all To Hit rolls made as part of Shooting Attacks. Models with the Primarch Unit Type or the Night Vision special rule do not suffer this penalty.



CORE ZONE MORTALIS SPECIAL RULES

The following rules apply to all battles that take place in, or make use of, the Zone Mortalis gameplay format.

BARRAGE WEAPONS IN ZONE MORTALIS

Weapons with the Barrage special rule cannot be used to fire indirectly in Zone Mortalis battles, but they may fire directly. Weapons with the Barrage special rule cannot be used to make Shooting Attacks targeting models to which they do not have line of sight but may make Shooting Attacks as normal targeting models to which they do have line of sight.

OBJECTIVE MARKERS IN ZONE MORTALIS GAMES

Zone Mortalis battles use the rules for Objective markers as detailed on page 306 of the *Horus Heresy – Age of Darkness* rulebook with one major exception. Unless stated otherwise in a specific Mission, a unit must have at least one model from a Scoring unit in base contact with an Objective marker in order to control it.

RESERVES IN ZONE MORTALIS

Models begin arriving from Reserve on the first turn, rather than the second. At the start of the Active player's first turn, they begin making Reserve rolls as detailed on page 309 of the *Horus Heresy – Age of Darkness* rulebook.

Models held in Reserve can only enter the battlefield via designated access points on the battlefield edge (see page 114). Models entering the battlefield from Reserve must abide by all other restrictions for which edge the models are able to enter from (for example, the restrictions described in Flanking Assault on page 311 of the *Horus Heresy – Age of Darkness* rulebook).

Deep Strike Assault in Zone Mortalis

If the battlefield has a ceiling, models cannot arrive via Deep Strike Assault. If the battlefield does not have a ceiling, units may Deep Strike using the Deep Strike Assault rules on page 310 of the *Horus Heresy – Age of Darkness* rulebook.

FIRESTORM & SHRAPNEL

The confined spaces of a Zone Mortalis can prove to be death traps to the unwary, and certain types of weapons have their effectiveness increased by the environment, while others become more unpredictable.

Attacks made with weapons with the Blast (X) or Template Weapons special rule gain a +1 bonus to any To Wound rolls made for them in Zone Mortalis battles.

In addition, if the battlefield has a ceiling, Blast markers cannot scatter through Columns, Walls, or closed doors. If a Scatter roll takes a Blast marker's centre point into contact with a bulkhead wall, the Blast marker stops with the centre on the edge of the Column, Wall or closed door. Resolve the weapon's effect from this spot. The portion of the Blast marker that overlaps the Column, Wall or closed door and any portion of the Blast marker with a Column, Wall or closed door between it and the centre are ignored.

NOWHERE TO HIDE

In Zone Mortalis battles, the victorious side in an assault adds +1 to their Sweeping Advance rolls.

Contrary to the usual rules for Falling Back, immediately on failing a Morale check, a unit's first Fall Back move is directly away from the enemy, and subsequent moves are towards the nearest access point.

BLIND PANIC

If any model from a unit that is Falling Back ends its move or passes within 1" of any model from another friendly unit that is not Falling Back or Pinned, then that unit must immediately take a Morale check. Fearless units are not subject to this effect.



ZONE MORTALIS MISSION

Force the Breach

*"Only the fool believes siegecraft to begin and end with artillery. Ordnance is but the start.
A true siege ends with the grim work of butchery within the walls themselves."*

– Perturabo, Primarch of the Iron Warriors

Within the winding tunnels of a Zone Mortalis, holding ground and maintaining control of vital positions can mean the difference between success and failure, life and death. The Force the Breach mission represents a defending force fighting to maintain such control in the face of an attacking enemy. The Force the Breach mission is an example of the sorts of missions that can be played in Zone Mortalis. Future publications will include a variety of missions for Zone Mortalis battles.

THE ARMIES

One player must take the role of the Attacker, and their opponent the role of Defender, deciding which will take a given role either by mutual consent or by rolling off. When selecting armies, the Mortalis Assault Force Organisation chart must be used, otherwise the players choose their armies using the *Horus Heresy* rules.

SETTING UP THE GAME

The Zone Mortalis is a tangled labyrinth of passageways and chambers, and should be represented appropriately. Using the Citadel Miniatures Zone Mortalis terrain, the players set up the battlefield in the following steps:

- **Determine Ceiling:** The players must determine if the battlefield will have a ceiling or not (see page 114) either by mutual consent or by rolling off.
- **Place Columns and Walls:** The Columns and Wall sections may either be laid out in an agreed fashion, or alternatively, the players may take turns placing Columns and Wall sections, until roughly between one third and one half of the battlefield is covered with Columns and Wall sections. When placing Columns and Walls, players must designate access points (see page 114).
- **Place Doors:** Starting with the Defender, the players may take turns placing doors (either standard or wide doors). Once at least three doors have been placed, either player may choose to place no more. The other player may then place one final door.
- **Place Remaining Terrain:** Starting with the Defender, the players may take turns placing Terrain Pieces (not including Columns, Walls or doors) or areas of Hazardous Terrain. Once at least three Terrain Pieces or areas of Hazardous Terrain have been placed, either player may choose to place no more. The other player may then place one final Terrain Piece or area of Hazardous Terrain.

DEPLOYMENT

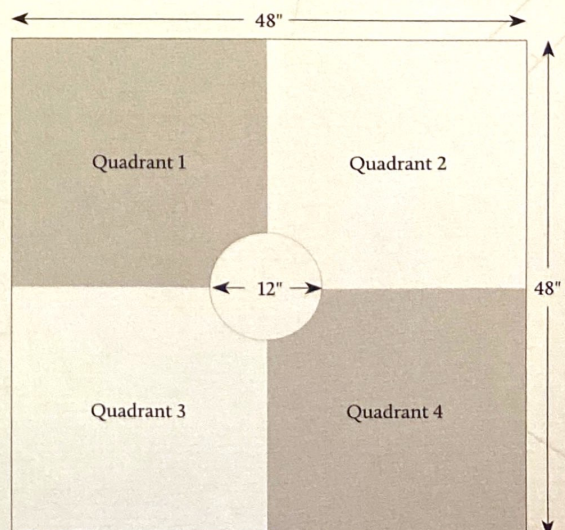
Before the battle begins, both players must divide their army into two separate groups of units – one designated the Spearhead and the other the Reserve. Both groups must include at least one unit, and neither group may include more than twice the number of units in the other.

The battlefield is then divided into four equal quadrants as shown in the deployment map below. The Defender chooses one quadrant to be their Deployment Zone and deploys all units included as part of their Spearhead anywhere in this area but not within 6" of the centre of the board.

The Attacker then rolls a D6. On a roll of 3 or lower, the quadrant opposite that of their opponent is their Deployment Zone. On roll of 4 or higher, they may choose any of the three remaining quadrants to be their Deployment Zone. They must then deploy all units included as part of their Spearhead anywhere in this area but not within 6" of the centre of the board.

After setting up and deploying the armies, but before play begins, the Defender places three Objective markers: one in their own Deployment Zone and one in each of the zones in which neither player has deployed. The Objective markers must be placed following the restrictions on page 306 of the *Horus Heresy – Age of Darkness* rulebook, with one additional restriction:

- Objective markers may not be placed within 6" of the centre of the battlefield.



FIRST TURN

The player who deploys first also has the first turn, unless their opponent can Seize the Initiative.

GAME LENGTH

After four turns, roll a D6. On the roll of a 4+, a fifth and final turn is played.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

The Zone Mortalis Mission: Force the Breach represents the defenders trying to maintain hold of a vital area of the Zone Mortalis, whilst the attacker must wrest it from them. At the end of the battle, the player who has scored the most Victory points has won the battle. If the players have the same number of Victory points, the player who has scored the most Victory points from Secondary Objectives has won the battle. If the players have the same number of Victory points and have scored the same number of Victory points from Secondary Objectives, the result is a draw.

PRIMARY OBJECTIVE

Force the Breach: At the start of each turn, the current Active player gains 1 Victory point for each Objective marker they control. These Victory points are kept even if that Objective is lost later in the battle and contribute to the player's Victory points total at the end of the battle.

SECONDARY OBJECTIVES

Slay the Warlord: If a side destroyed the enemy Warlord, that side gains 1 Victory point. If that Warlord was also a Primarch choice, then an additional Victory point is scored.

Attrition: The army which has destroyed the highest number of enemy units at the end of the game gains 1 Victory point.

MISSION SPECIAL RULES

- Reserves

