

JUDGEMENT SQUADRON

During the Third War for Armageddon, the skies of the beleaguered hive world were set alight by aerial battles as the Imperial squadrons desperately fought to hold back the tide of invading Ork craft. None were more steeped in glory than Judgement Squadron.



The Imperial Navy prides itself on the skill of its pilots, the speed of its aircraft, and the firepower of its guns. In a galaxy riven by war, they defend the airspace of worlds that have come under attack and provide aerial support for Imperial armies when they march to war. Rarely do the Astra Militarum fight without the air support of the Imperial Navy, and many wars of conquest or liberation would have come to a grinding halt without these skilled pilots protecting supply lines, escorting drop ships to the planet's surface, and running sorties on enemy positions.

Indeed, such was the case on Armageddon, a world that has suffered four major invasions in recent history, first from the forces of Chaos, then twice by the Orks, then once again by the legions of the Dark Gods. The pilots of the Imperial Navy have fought at every one of these engagements.

MORE AERIAL CAMPAIGNS

The *Rynn's World Air War* campaign book contains information on how to run your own Aeronautica Imperialis campaign, including additional rules for pilots who manage to survive long enough to become fighter aces.



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Over the next few pages, you'll find an exclusive campaign for Aeronautica Imperialis set on Armageddon, featuring the renowned Judgement Squadron and its most hated Ork adversary, Da Skymuncha. The first four missions use scenarios presented in the *Rynn's World Air War* campaign book, but use the additional rules presented here to represent the battle taking place around Hive Volcanus. The fifth and final mission enables you to re-enact the last flight of Judgement Squadron, which you can read about to the right.

You'll also find a squadron list for Judgement Squadron, complete with aircraft names, plus rules for two Fighter Aces – Flight Commander Leoz Answith in his Thunderbolt Fury Wings of Courage, and the Fly Boss known as Da Skymuncha in his Dakkajet Killa Eagul. Hopefully your air wars will be as successful as theirs!

THE FLIGHT OF JUDGEMENT SQUADRON

When the Imperial Hive World of Armageddon was invaded by Ork Warboss Ghazghkull Thraka's Waaagh! the Imperium mustered vast armies and space fleets to repel the brutal xenos hordes. The opening days of the Third War for Armageddon saw the Imperial Navy suffer devastating losses, both within the surrounding sector and upon Armageddon itself. When the Ork Warboss Ghazghkull Thraka darkened the skies of the world, he did so at the head of a fleet far larger than what the Imperium could hope to muster in defence, sweeping aside Battlefleet Armageddon with contemptuous ease. With the way clear, an unceasing tide of landing craft fell upon the world, taxing the planet's defences severely. In answer, Commissar Yarrick, commander of the planet's defence and hero of the Second War for Armageddon, ordered every Imperial Navy aircraft scrambled in a desperate attempt to delay the Orks for as long as possible. It was a battle the Navy could never hope to win. Within six days, the Orks had claimed both the planet's orbital approaches and its skies, leaving what remained of the Imperial Navy scattered and disorganised.

Such events ensured the Imperial Navy was to play only a minor role in the coming war, at least until reinforcements were able to reach the beleaguered planet. Despite this, records are keen to stress that the Navy was not idle during the war. Indeed, many aircraft squadrons – assembled from the remnants of those that survived the initial air war – were vital in maintaining supply routes, repurposing their bombers to ferry food and munitions to the hives. For Hive Volcanus, support of this nature came in the form of the so-called Judgement Squadron.

Commanded by Flight Commander Leoz Answith, Judgement Squadron was formed from the scattered survivors of the 642nd 'Steel Devils' Fighter Wing, 91st 'Skyborn' Fighter Wing, and 209th 'Firestorm' Bomber Wing. The force's new designation was sealed when each craft was daubed white, a symbol of the hope they sought to deliver. Hive Volcanus benefited from its links to the sea via a series of connected rivers and waterways patrolled by the Volcanus Archipelago Offshore Defences, and it was here Judgement Squadron conducted regular sorties in support of supply runs. Capable of fielding only eighteen aircraft, the squadron nevertheless became the defending angels of Hive Volcanus, punishing the xenos who dared visit such woes upon the Emperor's people.

It was inevitable that the war would see the end of Judgement Squadron, its success drawing ever more Ork Flyboyz to Hive Volcanus seeking the

glory of claiming the lives of Armageddon's hardest squadron. For two weeks the Imperial pilots reigned supreme, throwing back all challengers with only three losses. Then came Da Skymuncha, an Ork Fly Boss who had terrorized the Fire Wastes of Armageddon. His arrival was announced by an ambush upon Judgement Squadron as it sought to intercept an armada of Ork ships, squadrons of Dakkajets plummeting from the clouds. In the resulting duel, Judgement Squadron claimed eighteen Ork aircraft kills, but at the cost of nine of its own.

Flight Commander Answith escaped with the remnants of Judgement Squadron – just six operational aircraft, most too battered to remain airworthy for much longer. Day by day, the flow of supplies into the hive declined, and the air grew thick with Ork aircraft. Devoid of air support, the defenders watched helplessly as a mountain of scrap metal grew upon the horizon. Outside the reach of the hive's guns, the Orks began the construction of three Gargants, and the defenders of Hive Volcanus could only watch as their doom became manifest before their very eyes.

It was then that Judgement Squadron marshalled for its final fight. Answith and his crews set out fearlessly across the Ork lines, evading the barrages of air defences and Ork aircraft alike. Unable to contest air superiority above the hive, Judgement Squadron set out to topple the Gargants, knowing their own lives were forfeit. Unprepared for such a sudden assault, one Gargant was destroyed before the Orks could even react. In a desperate attempt to preserve their war machines, Ork Meks awakened their partially completed creations and unleashed their guns upon Judgement Squadron. Another Gargant was brought down in flames, yet by this point only Answith remained, his weapons dry and his engines trailing fire. Pursued by Da Skymuncha, Answith took the only option remaining – ploughing into the exposed belly of the remaining Gargant.

From the walls of Hive Volcanus the defenders watched the ballet of combat playing out above, cheers breaking out as each Gargant fell. A singular fireball signalled the death of Judgement Squadron, a broken aircraft tearing through the final Gargant. Though still surrounded by Orks and with little hope of immediate relief, the death of Hive Volcanus had been averted once more, and in that its defenders took heart. When the time came to throw back the Orks, the names of those who had given their lives were inscribed atop the gates of Hive Volcanus, those of Judgement Squadron chiselled above them all, to watch over the dead forever.

RECREATING THE FLIGHT OF JUDGEMENT SQUADRON

Those wishing to recreate the battles fought by Judgement Squadron can use the scenarios below to do so, linking each together using the rules presented in *Aeronautica Imperialis: Rynn's World Air War*. When constructing a Squadron List for the campaign, players follow the standard rules, with both players constructing their list to an agreed-upon points value. Between battles only the Ork player can replace aircraft – Judgement Squadron was unable to replenish its numbers. Neither side can include named Aces other than those described in this article.



If both players agree, the Imperial player may use the following historical Squadron List instead. If they do so, the Imperial player is allowed a total of 40 points to equip their aircraft with additional weaponry. The Ork player constructs their list as normal to a points value of 300 and must include the Ork Ace Da Skymuncha. As described before, only the Ork player may replace aircraft between battles.

SCENARIOS

The Flight of Judgement Squadron uses five linked scenarios to represent the key action undertaken by Judgement Squadron. The first four can be found in *Rynn's World Air War*, and each has a special rule presented here that represents the unique conditions of the battle. The final scenario is Last Flight, the rules for which are presented later in this article.

The linked scenarios are as follows and should be played in the order given.

JUDGEMENT SQUADRON – SQUADRON LIST

Flight Commander Leoz Answith
Thunderbolt Fury



Wings of Courage

Thunderbolt Fury Fighters



Unrelenting



Judge, Jury, Executioner



Death Aboard

Thunderbolt Fighters



Wild Knight



Lucky 508



Thunderstruck



Maverick



Undercover



From Above



Final Prayers



Fist of Glory



On Fiery Wings

Marauder Destroyer Bombers



Reaper



From On High

Marauder Bombers



Mercy's Nightmare



Last Thing



Terra Above

1: RAID ON DA MEK-YARDS

At the start of the invasion, Judgement Squadron focused their efforts on enacting vengeance on the Orks for the destruction they had brought to Armageddon. Their main targets were Mekboy workshops built along the coast responsible for churning out the Ork gunboats seeking to halt the flow of supplies into Hive Volcanus. Players may recreate one of these raids by adding the optional special rule presented below to the Bombing Mission scenario. In this scenario, the Imperial Navy side is the attacker and the Ork Air Waaagh! is the defender.

Optional Special Rule: Gunboat Flotilla

Many of the workshops were constructed across the Volcanus Archipelago, a series of islands situated in the waterways leading up to Hive Volcanus. The aircraft duels conducted over them were often accompanied by the fire from supporting gunboats from both sides. During the End phase of each turn, Ground Defences can be moved up to two hexes in any direction, with players taking turns to move a single Ground Defence, starting with the player who won initiative. A Ground Defence cannot enter a hex already containing another Ground Defence.

2: RESUPPLY

To compensate for their relatively low numbers, Judgement Squadron often ferried high-value supplies by air, relying on the densest fog to throw off pursuers. Players may recreate one of these raids by adding the optional special rule presented below to the Garrison Relief scenario. In this scenario, the Ork Air Waaagh! side is the attacker and the Imperial Navy side is the defender.

Optional Special Rule: Smog-filled Skies

Much of Armageddon was covered in smog, the product of the vast industrial sprawl scattered across the world. Judgement Squadron used this phenomenon to its advantage to conceal its aircraft and avoid fights where possible. In this scenario, no aircraft at Altitude 4 or below can fire at Long range – the sky is much too polluted to see that far.

3: AMBUSH IN THE CLOUDS

The death knell for Judgement Squadron came during a seemingly ordinary raid, scrambled to halt an approaching flotilla of Ork gunboats heading towards Hive Volcanus. As the Imperial forces engaged, a horde of planes burst from the clouds above. It screamed down upon Judgement Squadron, led by Da Skymuncha who was intent upon claiming the kills for himself. Players may recreate this raid by adding the optional special rule presented below to the Bandits Over the River scenario. In this scenario, the Ork Air Waaagh! side is the attacker and the Imperial Navy side is the defender.

Optional Special Rule: Ork Armada

Judgement Squadron was ambushed attempting to sink an approaching group of Ork ships and now finds itself trapped between them and the attacking Ork Flyboyz. For this scenario, both players should build a mutually agreed points value up to 200 points; the Imperial player can include Bombers in their squadron list. In addition, the Ork player has 25 additional points that must be spent on Ground Defences. The Ork aircraft start at Altitude 5 and the Imperial aircraft start at either Altitude 1 or 2.

4: RETREAT TO HIVE VOLCANUS

Though they emerged victorious, Judgement Squadron was severely damaged by Da Skymuncha's ambush. Most notable was the heavy damage done to Flight Commander Answith's Thunderbolt Fury. The retreat of Judgement Squadron was heavily harried by Ork fighters determined to claim the prize. Players may recreate the retreat by adding the optional special rule presented below to the Straggler scenario. In this scenario, the Ork Air Waaagh! side is the attacker and the Imperial Navy side is the defender.

Optional Special Rule: Flight Commander Answith

Of those that survived the ambush conducted by Da Skymuncha, the most heavily damaged was the Flight Commander. Despite ordering his troops to abandon him, the crews of Judgement Squadron risked all to stay by his side and ensure he returned safely. The Imperial player adds Flight Commander Answith to their force for free; the Flight Commander replaces the Bomber for this scenario and follows all the scenario rules that apply to the Bomber. Any Imperial Navy aircraft within two hexes of Answith can re-roll a single dice once per Shooting phase.

5: LAST FLIGHT

BACKGROUND

Determined to sell their lives dearly, the survivors of a decimated squadron assault a heavily fortified enemy with little hope or expectation of survival.

FORCES

Players should mutually agree a points value between 100 points and 200 points and choose their forces accordingly.

Only the defender can include Ground Defences.

SET-UP

In this scenario, one player is the attacker and the other is the defender. The winner of a roll-off decides which they will be. The defender may spend up to 30 points on Ground Defences; these points are in addition to the points value agreed upon for both player's Squadron Lists.

Before deploying forces, the defender places three ground targets with structure 10 within the Area of Engagement. No ground target marker can be within three hexes of another, or within three hexes of any edge of the Area of Engagement. The defender then deploys any of their Ground Defences in any hex adjacent to a ground target.

Players set up on opposite sides of the Area of Engagement. The defender deploys first, picking an edge of the Area of Engagement and placing all their aircraft within three hexes of that edge. The attacker's aircraft are set up in hexes touching the opposite edge of the Area of Engagement.

Both players may choose the Speed and Altitude of each aircraft before setting up.

SPECIAL RULES

Awakening War Machines

The attackers are targeting the towering war machines of the foe to destroy them before they are complete. The ground targets have a Terrain Height of Altitude 3. At the start of the game the Ground Defences are inactive and cannot fire. From Turn 3, the defender can fire with a single Ground Defence that is adjacent to each ground target. From Turn 5 onwards, the defender can fire with all their Ground Defences.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

The attacker scores 5 Victory points for each ground target that has been destroyed. The defender scores 5 Victory points for each ground target remaining.

The game lasts for 12 turns, until one side is forced to disengage, or until only one player has aircraft left operating in the Area of Engagement.

When the game ends, calculate Victory points to determine the winner.



THE LAST FLIGHT OF JUDGEMENT SQUADRON

With their numbers heavily depleted, Judgement Squadron had little hope of continuing to secure the transport of supplies in Hive Volcanus, yet was determined to spend their lives for a purpose. To this end, the survivors of Judgement Squad set out to destroy the Gargants being constructed within view of the hive, aware it was to be their last flight. Players can recreate the Last Flight of Judgement Squadron with the Last Flight scenario by adding the optional special rules presented below. In this scenario the Imperial Navy side is the attacker and the Ork Air Waaagh! side is the defender.

Optional Special Rule: Last Ditch Effort

Even a single Gargant left standing would present a dire threat to Hive Volcanus, lending considerable firepower to the Orks' siege. If an aircraft controlled by the attacker crashes into a ground target, the player can roll a Handling check. If the check is passed, the ground target loses a number of Structure equal to the number of remaining Structure the crashing aircraft has. The aircraft is then removed as normal. If the Imperial Navy player fails to destroy all ground targets, the best they can achieve is a draw.

FLIGHT COMMANDER LEOZ ANSWITH

Answith's first true taste of aerial combat came during the Third War for Armageddon. A true trial by fire, the opening days of the war saw many of the more experienced Navy pilots wiped out. By the time the Orks had achieved air superiority, Answith was the most senior officer left, and it fell to him to organise a resistance. The following weeks highlighted Answith's natural talent for command. His service in Judgement Squadron was to be his last, sacrificing his life to ensure the survival of Hive Volcanus.

Wings of Courage may take additional weaponry as described on page 69 of *Aeronautica Imperialis: Rynn's World Air War*, but may not take any other crew or aircraft upgrades.

Your force may include one *Wings of Courage* piloted by Flight Commander Leoz Answith (in other words, your force cannot include one without the other). Flight Commander Leoz Answith is included in the points cost of *Wings of Courage*.



DA SKYMUNCHA

The legendary Ork Fly Boss calling himself Da Skymuncha was a known terror even before Ghazghkull Thraka returned to Armageddon. Da Skymuncha honed his skills against both Imperium and T'au pilots, becoming one of the most successful Flyboyz within Ghazghkull's Waaagh! On Armageddon, Da Skymuncha travelled wherever a story of accomplished Imperial pilots led him. Upon hearing of the success of Judgement Squadron, Da Skymuncha became determined to add their lives to his already impressive tally of kills.

Killa Eagul may take additional weaponry as described on page 77 of *Aeronautica Imperialis: Rynn's World Air War*, but may not take any other crew or aircraft upgrades.

Your force may include one *Killa Eagul* piloted by Da Skymuncha (in other words, your force cannot include one without the other). Da Skymuncha is included in the points cost of *Killa Eagul*.

