

# MORDHEIM™

Damned if you play! Damned if you don't!

by Dennis Layson



## Why Mordheim?

Since I picked up my first copy of Warhammer and Warhammer Role Play, I have wanted to build a medieval city to run adventures in. When I saw the first articles in the White Dwarf on Mordheim, I knew that this game would become extremely popular. Since I am also a member of the Warfair Atlanta staff, and an enthusiastic GW games player, I thought that we should use

the Mordheim City as the central game for our Fantasy and sci-fi room. The Warfair staff agreed on the idea, and I was off to the design phase of the city.

## Warning! I'd turn back if I were you!

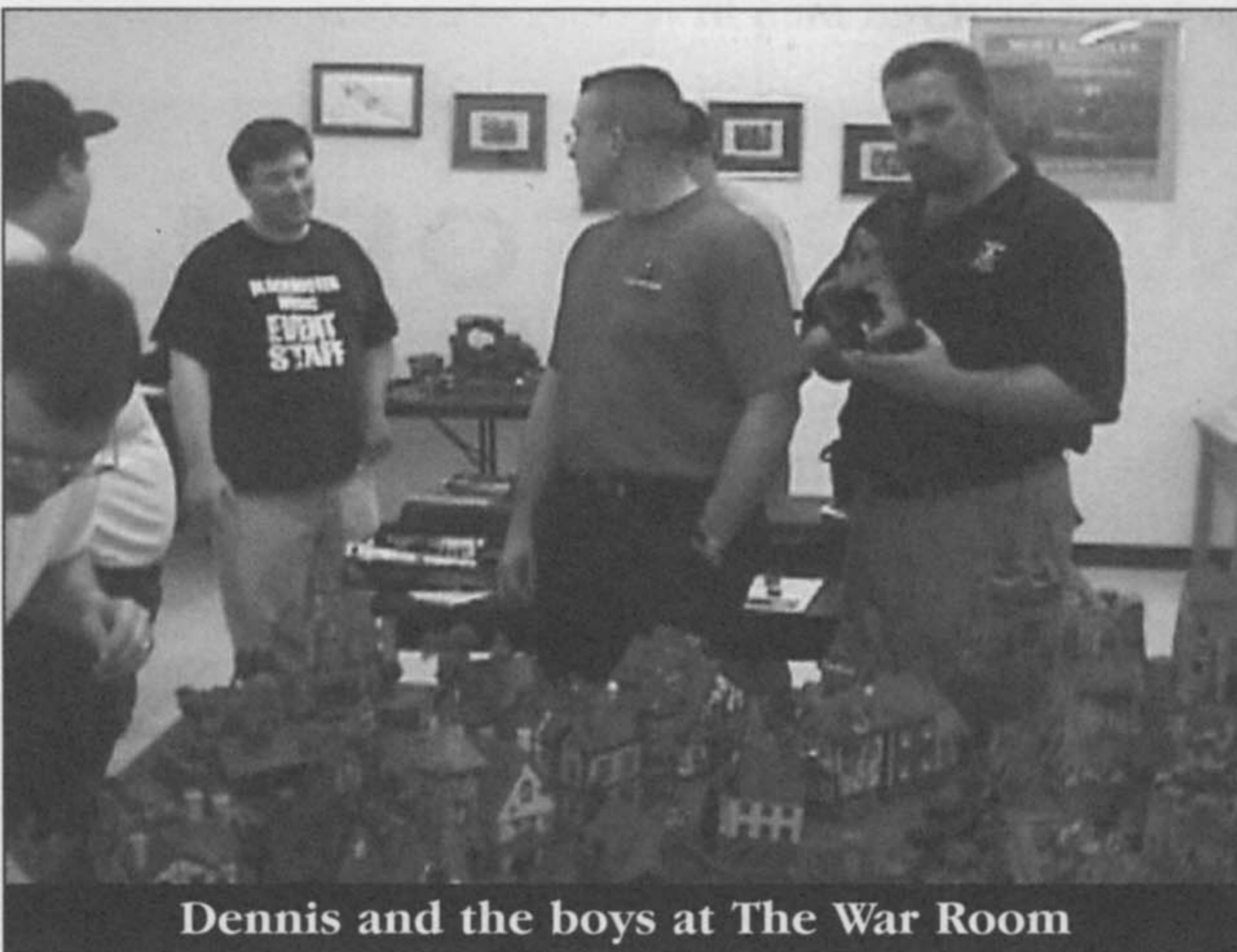
The graveyard section was made from from carved insulation foam covered with latex house paint and blended green turf. The tomb stones were made from balsa wood and old miniatures. The cobble stones were carved into the base foam with a ball point pen. The cobblestones were painted black and then dry brushed. Most of the buildings can be found painted or unpainted in local craft stores. They were labelled on the bottom to aide the game umpires. The statue and monument were made

from cake decorations and appropriate miniatures.

The trees are individually based on large sheet metal washers. This makes them easier to move around as the figures pass through the woodlands.

## How the City was conceived and built

Shortly after I got the go ahead to run Mordheim at Warfair, I pulled out all my old Warhammer Role Play books and White Dwarf magazines to give me a flavour for the buildings and the layout of the city. I then asked my very talented wife, Mary, who has a design degree to help me with the layout of the buildings. We both decided that the best size for the game to be played on was 8' x 4' (the size of a full sheet of plywood). We then considered transportation and decided to cut the piece of plywood into four equal parts. I had originally decided to scratch build each building, but upon discovering that 'Wal-Mart' (an American store chain) had a medieval looking Christmas village set, Mary and I went to all the stores within a 100 mile radius and bought all the buildings that could pass as medieval. The two castles in the city were part of my collection. The inquisition castle was bought for me by my father in the 60's from Germany and I've had it all these years. The vampire count's castle I

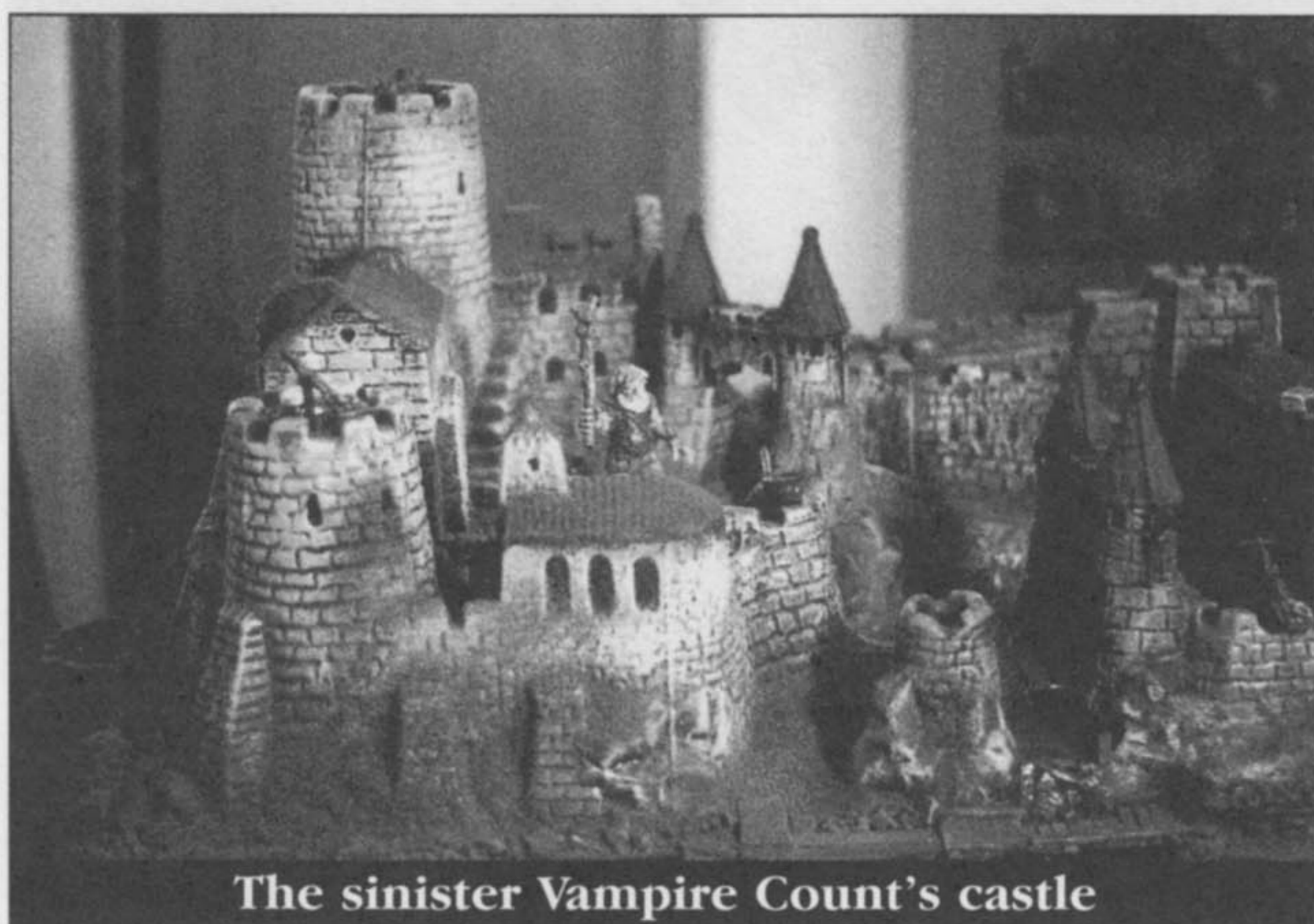


Dennis and the boys at The War Room

picked up in Germany in 1984. The idea of a castle on top of a large rock formation came from an actual castle I saw on wargame manoeuvres in Germany. Now that I had the concept and the buildings, Mary and I laid out the city on our living room floor. Once we were happy with the layout, Mary drew a map of Mordheim and we numbered each building. The numbering really makes setup a breeze. Next we applied a thin pink foam insulation sheet to the top of the plywood. This foam enabled us to cut rivers, roads (complete with cobblestones) and rough terrain. We waited for a sunny day and placed the plywood on some tables and glued the foam on top of the plywood and cut them along the plywood's four pieces. After we glued the foam in place, we put the vampire castle on the boards and cut out the river sections with a foam cutter. We then put every building in place and labelled the foam under each one to match the number on the house. Next, we took a ball point pen and drew every street and every cobblestone. When everything was eventually drawn on, I took all the buildings off and painted the entire board a woodland green except the streets, which I painted black. I then added pebbles and pieces of broken car glass to the river bed and painted it a brownish mixture. Once the paint was dry, I added the grass using standard railroad flock by first spraying a glue mixture over the green areas. I then went back and added rocks, shrubs, and bushes to the ground area. The river is made of a clear two part resin that takes about 24 hours to cure. I needed to blend in the large castle with the surrounding fields, so I used



**Mordheim – pre-comet perhaps?**



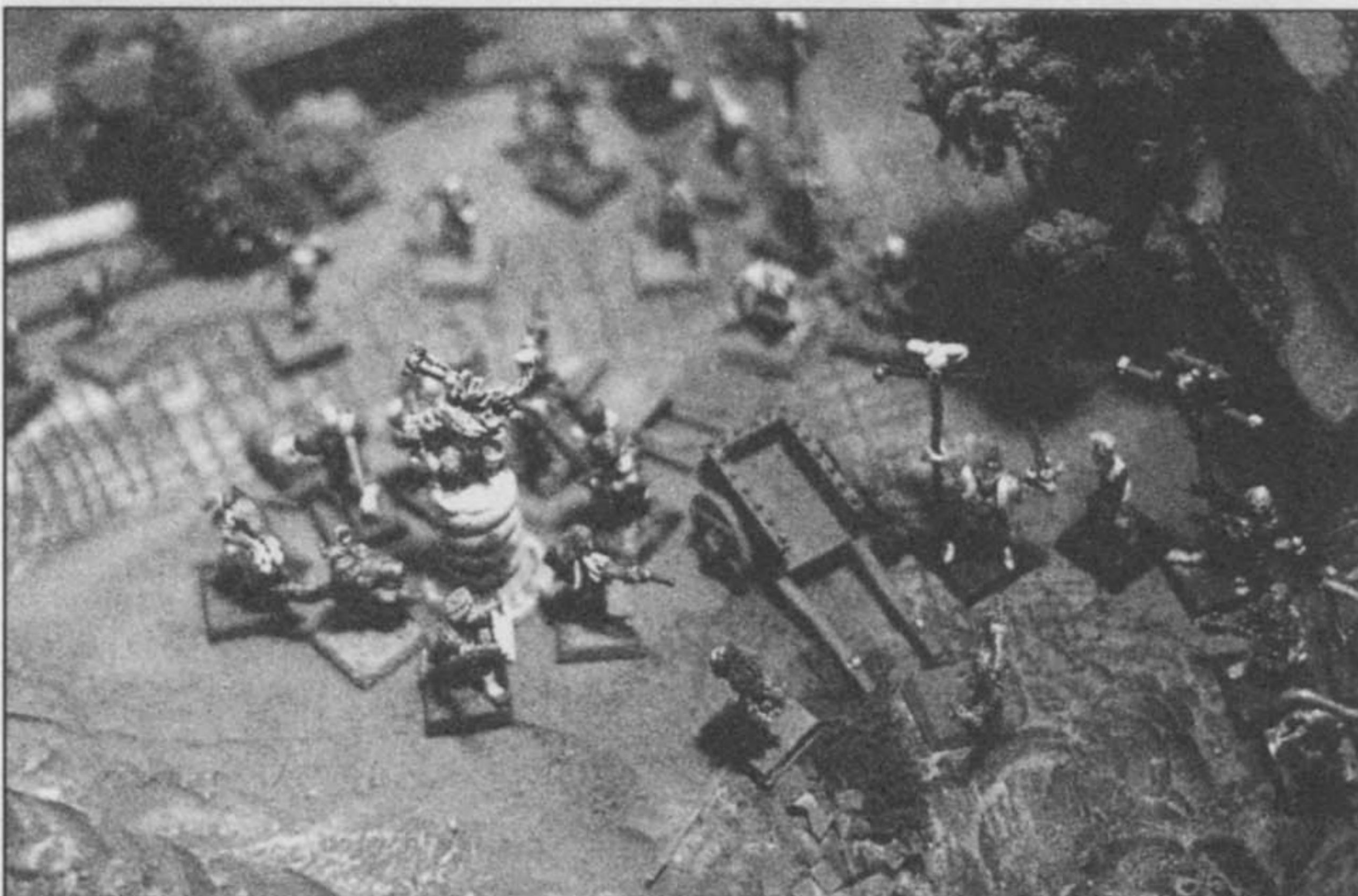
**The sinister Vampire Count's castle**



**...and to the left – The Temple of Sigmar**



**The Inquisition Fortress**



**Blood on the streets of Mordheim**



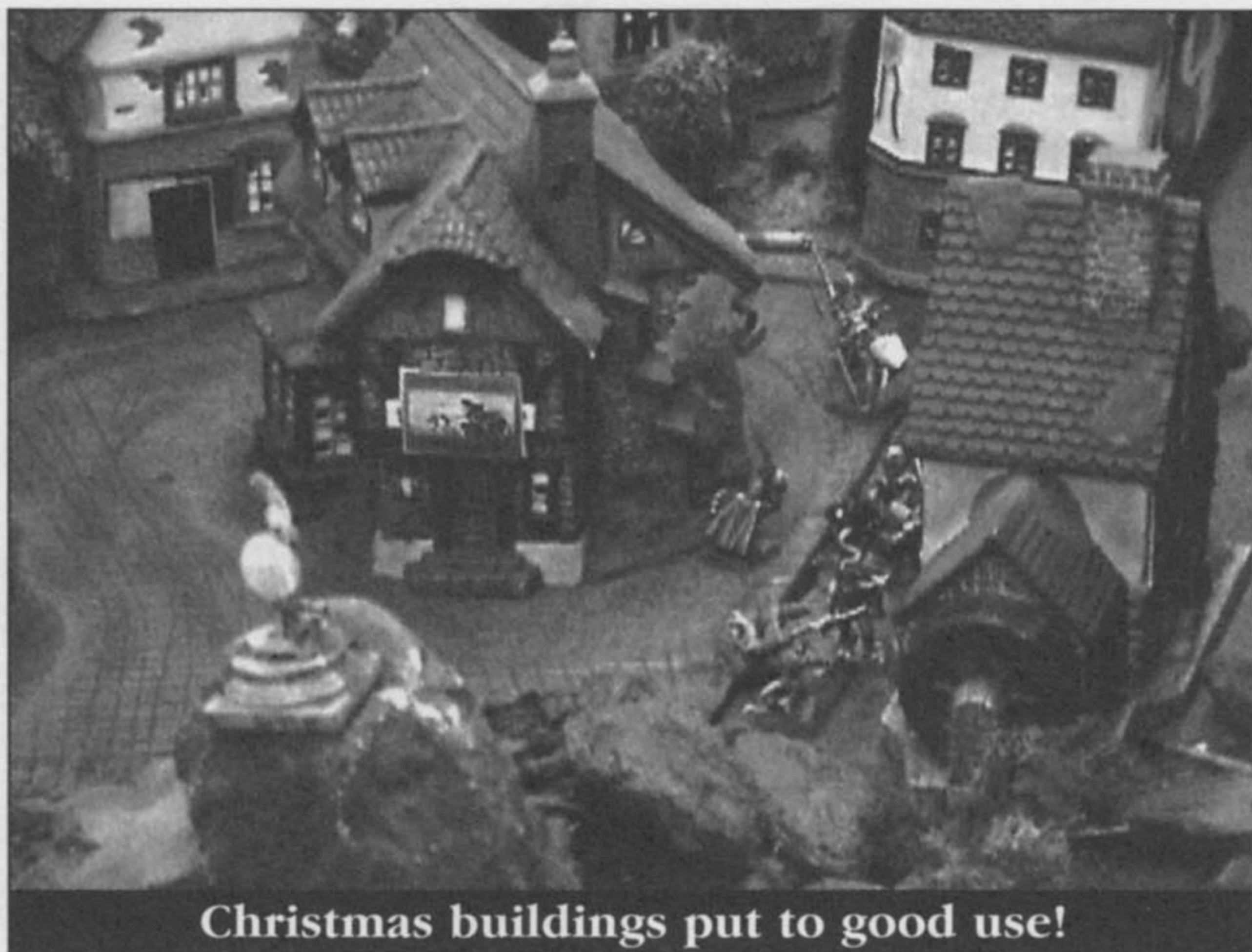
**A Wood Elven Warband confronts a Troll**

some pine bark and blended them to match the colour of the castlerocks. The houses were already painted, but they had snow on the the roofs. I just converted the snow to moss by using more of the flock I used from the grassy areas. Each of the houses were named for some existing Warhammer Role Play building. The signs and posters were taken from the original GW Warhammer card building sets.

### *The Game Begins*

Even before the city was built, several members of the Warfair staff begin working on collecting all the existing rules and warband lists that were originally published in the White Dwarf magazine before the boxed set came out. We also worked out a list for encounters and treasure. We were ready to preview the city and play test the game. When Warfair '99 opened, I was expecting a heavy turnout for the preview, but even I was overwhelmed by the number of people wanting to play. I had over 20 people for each session ready to send their brave adventurers into the City of the Damned, but I knew that if I ran the turn sequence one player at a time, then the game would be too long and some of the players would grow bored. I decided to run everyone simultaneously and if any questions on who charges first or who shoots first came up, then we could settle it with a dice roll. In addition to the simultaneous movement, I came up with some special charts for encounters and treasure. Also, each player was given a specific goal. They had 500 gold pieces to build a Warband with and buy weapons etc... Once the party

was ready, they had to get to their objective and make it off the board with the booty and at least one Warband member alive. Along the way, players had to decide whether or not to explore buildings to find magic items that could be used against the nasty, smelly Undead creatures that they might run into. I did not allow any Warband to buy any magic items at the beginning of the game, but did have some undead villains roaming around that could not be killed without magic weapons just to spice it up. This problem made the players have to decide on moving as fast as they could to their objectives or to stop and explore. Those who wanted to look for a little extra insurance took a chance on waking the dead. Each area that was explored had to make an encounter roll, then if the coast was clear, a magic item roll. Many an adventurer was ripped apart and eaten by hungry Zombies only to find an empty house. Some notable players experimented with unconventional approaches such as the Dwarf player who used his 500 gold pieces to outfit only three figures. Everyone thought he was crazy, especially when his party was ambushed on its first turn by a wandering Troll. Because of his extra armour, and keen tactics, the dwarf player decided to leave his leader behind to fight the Troll and send the remaining two Henchmen on to their objective. Several turns later, the leader was still bashing it out with the Troll when the rest of his Warband arrived, killed the Troll and won the game. I guess he had the last laugh. There was also a player who took a Goblin Shaman and two Ogres. Talk about fun, try moving through a

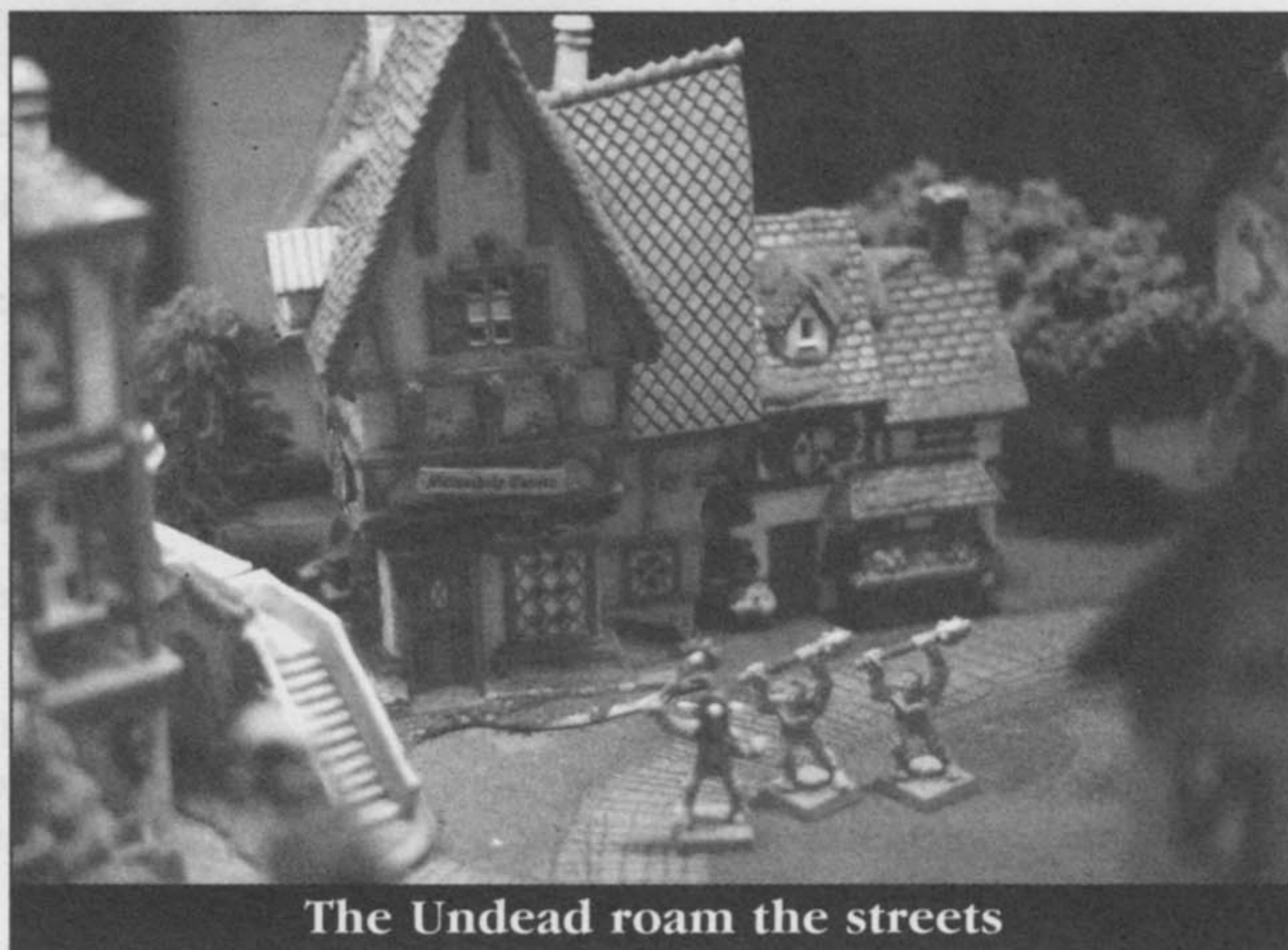


**Christmas buildings put to good use!**

town crawling with dead people who want to eat your brains and other Warbands trying to steal your stuff while keeping two irate Ogres under control.

Running a game with twenty people was extremely hectic, but everyone who played was a great sport and more importantly, everyone had a great time. The City of the Damned was a tremendous hit at Warfair '99. So much so that the miniature games coordinator of 'Dragon Conn' in Atlanta asked if I would run it for him at Dragon Conn.

Within two weeks after Warfair, I was running Mordheim again. The turn out at the second preview was beyond any expectations that I had. I didn't even have time to eat between sessions. There was a waiting list for the entire time that I ran the scenario. Based on the overwhelming response had, Mordheim is definitely going to be a very successful and popular game. I have been asked to bring Mordheim to another gaming convention, 'NATO', Atlanta in November.



**The Undead roam the streets**

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### Don't Get Caught In The Covered Bridge

The river was made by cutting the path of the river into the foam before painting. Then, small fish tank rocks were added. Once the rocks were dry, the bed was painted brown and shaded. After that, a two-part clear resin was added and allowed to dry for 24 hours. The covered bridge was part of a Christmas village set. Although most of the buildings were made from Christmas village sets, there are a number of Hudson and Allen and Epicast buildings visible in the photos.

### Safety Lies In The Temple Of Sigmar

Sigmar's temple was made by cutting a foam block to fit a church from a Christmas village which was glued to the foam. A large angel that was borrowed from the Christmas tree was glued on. The bottom door was from an old toy. Once the glue was dry, the piece was painted and flocked. The bottom right corner of the photo shows a tower and one wall of the inquisition which was made from an old toy castle from Germany.

### Colonial Soldier of Fortune

*When you grow up in Central Georgia, US, you don't find many friends who are into miniature gaming. Most of the folks that I know spent all their spare time hunting and fishing as a hobby. While I also consider myself a decent woodsman, I also felt the calling of the world of miniature gaming at a young age. As far back as I can remember, I have loved toy soldiers and as I grew up, that love of miniatures has stayed with me. During high school and college, I began to wargame. I soon moved into the fantasy arena and finally found that area was my favourite. One day while serving as a tank Lieutenant, in the early 80's, in Mannheim Germany, I found a small hobby store. When I went over to the miniature section, I picked up my first Games Workshop figures and Warhammer 1st Edition. From that day forward, I was an avid GW fan. I now have thousands of GW miniatures and almost every game they have ever produced.*

*During those few years in Germany, I was fortunate to participate in several gigantic Warhammer battles. I always enjoyed the games, but I felt that they were missing something. They needed good terrain to bring them to life. It wasn't until 1988 when I attended a gaming convention in Atlanta, Georgia that I saw the type of terrain that I wanted. There was a Warhammer 40K game being run by my now very good friend Charlie Traylor. He taught me some simple, yet very effective ways to produce outstanding scenery. I soon started building my own terrain. It wasn't until after Desert Storm, when I resigned my commission and started working a regular job, that I began making terrain for other people. I also lived close enough to Charlie to start working with him on some of the wonderful pieces that he used for his gaming convention called 'Warfair' in Atlanta. I soon joined the Warfair team and have helped develop some of the outstanding pieces including the Mordheim City, several large Necromunda Underhives and countless GW Fantasy, and GW 40K tables.*

## CONTACTS AND GAMING CONVENTIONS

### Where to see this game:

#### WARFAIR 2000

June 2nd 3rd, 4th, 2000

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