

THE HARLEQUIN GRAND MASQUE 2.00 DRAFT

By William 'Moscovian' Sturtevant

(Special thanks to David 'Tepoc' McLeod and Steve 'ePilgrim' Rogers)

Comments to moscovian@hotmail.com

Harlequins are the warrior-sages of the Eldar, traveling the Webway between the Craftworlds, Comorragh and the Exodite Worlds, putting on their performances to tell the tale of the Eldar, The Fall, and The Great Enemy. Their garish, outlandish garb disguise advanced technology that allows warriors with already preternatural agility to become assault artists of breathtaking efficiency. Enemy soldiers that survive being attacked by Harlequins often tell of the colored blur that killed their fellows, and of the terrifying visions that brought death and despair to the battlefield. To be the victim of a Harlequin attack is to be a victim to ghosts. More than one Imperial commander has been assassinated in the middle of the night while surrounded by armed guards.

Harlequin Design Notes

Armor Values: The costumes of the Harlequin include devices such as anti-grav flip-belts, holo-fabrics, Dathedi fields, and Domino fields . Because of this, infantry units will have better than normal armor saves to reflect these technologies. A 3+ save seemed excessive and invulnerable saves really should be reserved for characters.

Macro-Weapons and assaults: I removed Macro-Weapon extra hits from most of the units. A 3+ Close Combat First Strike Infiltrating extra attack is brutal enough in my opinion and removing the Macro-Weapon makes the unit somewhat easier to balance. I also kept the Firefight at 5+ to represent grenades, Shrieker Cannons, and other miscellaneous tools at their disposal.

Jet Bikes: These things were grossly over the top. So much so it was worthless to bring anything else in light of them being a core formation. As such I've changed their Firefight from 4+ to 5+ and took their FF uber-attacks away.

Assault Decks: I took out this special rule and made it a one line note. This is the Dark Eldar Raider concept spilling into the Venom unit. Some vehicles are designed to allow their passengers room to fight without disembarking. Units transported by vehicles with this ability may fire their ranged weapons or participate in a firefight assault as if they had disembarked. Skimmer transports that choose to firefight will force the units on board to use their firefight profile as well.

Venom: I am aware that the *holofield* provides a 3+ armor save and, as such, showing a 5+ armor save in the datafax may seem useless and possibly confusing. With that said, this is the standard set in Swordwind and no doubt it was done in anticipation that a weapon may be developed that ignores *holofields*.

Vision of the Laughing God: This is quite the departure from my original list where the Avatar of the Laughing God appeared on the board much like the Avatar of the Bloody Handed God. It was pointed out to me that there is no avatar for Cegorach in the fiction. Now I suppose I could leave the idea of Cegorach appearing on the board completely out (and it may come to that) but I would like to give it a go. What remains of the old rules is a watered down version where Cegorach appears as a vision only, having no traditional attack or assault values. Given how he toyed with the C'tan, this feels very much like the fiction in that he will be an undefeatable enemy. I had some other ideas where he could

force one enemy formation to fire on another but I shelved the concept for now. Maybe I'll pull it out for a scenario down the road.

Excessive Special Abilities: In general, I recognize that the Harlequins have a lot of special abilities, but there really isn't a sufficient way to capture the feel of the Harlequins without them. I will strive to reduce them as the list development moves forward, but I wanted players to be sensitive to the fact that I'm looking to move things toward less complicated, not more.

Things I have removed: The Harlequin Raider, Malice, and Great Stage are all gone. I've included transports from the other Eldar lists as options for the Harlequins. This is much easier to balance not to mention relate to. These troubadours would not maintain much equipment of their own and I've decided to follow the advice from previous forum postings by eliminating them entirely. Troupe Leaders are gone for simplicity sake. The Summoning Portal, as cool as I think they are, have been removed too. I may add them back at some later date if I think the list needs something extra to help it out, but till then count on them being gone.

Things I have added: I added the Forces of Discipline and Indulgence to the list. This is in sharp contrast to the 1/3 allotment I threw into the list before. I'm trying to narrow the field of units available to the Harlequins for the sake of ease of balance.

Harlequin Special Rules

The following Special Rules apply to Harlequins: *Hit & Run*, *Holofield*, *Lance*, and *Webway Portals*. Note that formations that do not have the teleport ability will only be able to enter play via the Webway or be placed during the initial set-up. For victory conditions, any Harlequin formation that is off the board at the end of the turn counts as destroyed.

Other special rules such as *Farsight*, *Shadowfields*, and *Fleet of Foot* may benefit the Harlequins indirectly (examples would be: a Harlequin formation in a Barge of Pleasure would benefit from the vehicle's shadowfields, or a Harlequin formation that was chosen for a third activation with the use of *Farsight*).

Webway Mastery

As long as the Great Harlequin unit is still alive any Harlequin formation may try to return to the Webway as their action for the turn. To do this they must declare a formation as using the *Webway Mastery* special rule and pass an action test. If they pass they are removed from the table and lose any accumulated Blast Markers. They are available to return in the following turn by teleporting or using any available Webway opening. Only formations comprised of units with the *Webway Mastery* ability can perform this.

Veil of Tears

The Shadowseer's special psychic halts the attacks of D3 units during an assault. This is determined before any first strike attacks are rolled. For the purposes of the assault, the units closest to the Shadowseer (within 15cm) are affected and do not get attack rolls or cover saves (they do get armor saves, if applicable). Additionally, they do not count toward the number of units in their formation when resolving the assault. If the Shadowseer dies during the assault, the affected units will count in the resolution, but still lose their attacks that round.

HARLEQUIN GRAND MASQUE LIST

A Harlequin army has a Strategy Rating of 5+. All Harlequin formations have an initiative of 1+. All allied Eldar, Dark Seldar, and Exodite formations follow their own specified initiatives, but benefit from the Strategy Rating of the Harlequins.

Individuals (No more than one character per formation)

Unit or Character	Notes	Cost
Wraithgate	0-1 Wraithgate per Masque: The Wraithgate functions both as a Webway portal and as an objective for rules purposes. It may not be attacked or destroyed. Important Note: Wraithgates are one of the smallest types of Webway portals, and may only be used by formations made up exclusively of infantry, light vehicles, and armored vehicle units that have the Walker ability; formations that include any other type of unit may not use a Wraithgate to enter play.	50 points
Laughing God	0-1 per Masque: Cegorach, the Laughing God, can appear on the battlefield as a vision at the beginning of any turn (before teleports). This is a free option for the Harlequin army.	Free
Great Harlequin	0-1 Great Harlequin character per Masque	100 points
Leader	Troupe Leader character	25 points
Master Mime	Master Mime character	25 points

Core Formations

Formation	Units Included	Cost	Upgrades Allowed
Troupe	5 Harlequins	300 points	Great Harlequin, Leader, Shadowseer, Jester, Solitaire, Transport
Promenade	5 Harlequin Jet Bikes	250 points	Leader
Mimic	5 Mimes	250 points	Master Mime, Solitaire, Transport

Formation Upgrades

Upgrade	Units	Cost
Shadowseer	0-1 Shadowseers per formation	100 points
Jester	0-2 Death Jesters per formation	50 points each
Solitaire	0-1 Solitaire (Maximum one per Masque)	125 points

Transport Upgrades

Note: You may not take any more transports than needed to transport units. Units may be brought in any combination.

Unit Type	Cost
One Harlequin Venom	10 points each
One Dark Eldar Raider	20 points each
One Eldar Falcon	65 points each
One Eldar Wave Serpent	50 points each
One Dark Eldar Barge of Pleasure	125 points each

Support Allies

Up to two formations for each core formation may be chosen from either of these lists.
Harlequin players cannot mix Forces of Discipline with Forces of Indulgence.

Forces of Discipline

Formation	Units	Cost
Mounted Guardian Warhost	One Farseer unit, seven Guardian units, and 4 Wave Serpents	350
Aspect Warrior Troupe	Four aspect Warriors in any mix plus one Exarch Optionally up to two Wave Serpents can be added for transport	200 +50 each
Falcon Troupe	Five Eldar Falcons Up to two Falcons may be replaced by Firestorms at no cost	250
War Walker Troupe	Six War Walkers	200
Engine of Vault Pairing	Up to two Engines of Vault (Storm Serpent, Cobra, Scorpion, or Void Spinner)	250 each
Revenant Titans	Two Revenant Titans (maximum one formation per Masque)	650
Nightwings	Three Nightwing fighters (maximum one formation per Masque)	300
Vampire	One Vampire (maximum one formation per Masque)	200

Forces of Indulgence

Formation	Units	Cost
Kabal Syndicate	Six Dark Eldar Warriors, Sybarite, and three optional Raiders	225
Kabal Flotilla	Four Ravagers	250
Scourge Flight	Six Scourges plus one Sybarite	250
Coterie	Four Incubi, Dracon, and two optional Raiders	275
Heavy Barges	Up to two Vessels of Pain or Barges of Pleasure in any combination	250 each
Slavebringer	One Slavebringer (maximum one formation per Masque)	200
Tormentor	One Tormentor Titan (maximum one formation per Masque)	500
Fighter Formation	Two Raven Fighters (maximum one formation per Masque)	200

Harlequin Unit Descriptions

Great Harlequin

Leading the ‘Dance with No End’ is the Great Harlequin, a warrior who represents the Laughing God in both his style and his combat. The privilege of portraying a god is taken quite seriously among the Harlequins. Because of this, when the Grand Masque is put into play, it is a Great Harlequin alone who leads them into battle.

Not much is known of these Eldar – they are even more mysterious than the typical Harlequins (if there were anything typical about them). Accompanied by a retinue of Harlequin warriors, he may also call upon the Laughing God himself to further the cause... Whatever mysterious cause it may be.

The Great Harlequin				
Type	Speed	Armor	Close Combat	Firefight
Character	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a
Weapons	Range	Firepower	Notes	
Harlequin Weapons	(base contact)	N/a	Extra Attacks (+1), MW, <i>First Strike</i>	
Notes: <i>Inspiring, Invulnerable Save, Supreme Commander</i>				

Troupe Leader

The Harlequins practice their deadly dance so often and so intensely that a unit of Troupers rarely needs any leadership at all. Troupe Leaders that join their brethren in battle choreograph the assaults of multiple formations and inspire their people with heroic attacks or impressive psychic displays.

Troupe Leader				
Type	Speed	Armor	Close Combat	Firefight
Character	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a
Weapons	Range	Firepower	Notes	
Harlequin’s Kiss	(base contact)	N/a	Extra Attacks (+1)	
Notes: <i>Leader, Commander</i>				

Master Mime

It is rare that the Mimes join the Harlequin on the battlefield, but rarer still that they do so without the leadership of the Master Mime. He or she moves with a speed that even the quickest of Mimes have trouble perceiving. When a non-Eldar has met the Master Mime, it is almost certainly his last meeting with anyone.

Master Mime				
Type	Speed	Armor	Close Combat	Firefight
Character	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a
Weapons	Range	Firepower	Notes	
Duel Swords	(base contact)	N/a	Extra Attacks (+2)	
Notes: <i>Inspiring, Leader, Invulnerable Save.</i>				

Harlequins

Warrior sages, troubadours, Eldar clowns, Troupers, eccentric performers; all are descriptions of the Harlequin warriors yet none do them justice. They appear before Eldar and Dark Eldar alike. They maintain relationships with the Exodite worlds and provide a constant reminder to all their kin of their history's pitfalls.

As if out of nowhere, the Harlequins appear from the Webway and onto the battlefield. They perform as they kill – each slice of their sword is cut that is not only deadly, but fells the victim in precisely the spot where the warrior wishes. Survivors of a Harlequin attack have reported finding their fallen comrades' bodies laid out in the shape of Eldar symbols, but what these symbols mean is not always known.

Harlequin				
Type	Speed	Armor	Close Combat	Firefight
Infantry	15cm	5+	3+	5+
Weapons	Range	Firepower	Notes	
Riveblades	(base contact)	N/a	Extra Attacks (+1), <i>First Strike</i>	
Shrieker Cannon	(15cm)	N/a	-	
Notes: <i>Reinforced Armor, Infiltrate, Webway Mastery, Teleport.</i>				

Mimes

Sharing the speed and deadliness of the Harlequins, Mimes always appear immediately before an attack. They will sometimes leave calling cards as they pass by, killing one man and leaving another alive, or perhaps simply performing their silent show as they face down a long gun barrel. As quickly as they show up, they disappear back into the webway, returning the next minute- or maybe never again.

Mime				
Type	Speed	Armor	Close Combat	Firefight
Infantry	15cm	5+	3+	-
Weapons	Range	Firepower	Notes	
Harlequin Weapons	(base contact)	N/a	Extra Attacks (+1), <i>First Strike</i>	
Notes: <i>Reinforced Armor, Infiltrate, Webway Mastery, Teleport, Scout.</i>				

Death Jester

The Death Jester is tasked normally with the pyrotechnics of a Harlequin masque. When they join the Grand Masque, however, they become a sinister foe striking out at even the toughest armored vehicle. Appearing typically in threes, the Jesters fire their long ranged Death Dealers, piercing tanks as if they were no more than tissue.

Death Jester				
Type	Speed	Armor	Close Combat	Firefight
Infantry	15cm	5+	5+	3+
Weapons	Range	Firepower	Notes	
Death Dealer Rifles	30cm and (15cm)	2 x AP4+ / AT5+	Lance Lance, Extra Attacks (+1)	
Notes: <i>Reinforced Armor, Webway Mastery, Scout, Sniper, Teleport.</i>				

Shadowseer

Although these Eldar don't have the same powers of the Farseers, the Shadowseers demonstrate their abilities through illusion, hypnotism, and their ability to manipulate the Webway itself. Guarded by both Warlocks and Harlequin warriors, the Shadowseer can quickly turn a fighting enemy into a mesmerized audience, waiting to be cut down.

Their knowledge of the Webway is invaluable to the Harlequin troupes, and the ability to summon larger Webway portals is coveted by the Dark Eldar and Craftworlds alike. The knowledge of such practices is said to be carried from the Black Library itself and the knowledge transferred to the Shadowseers by their troupe's Solitaire.

Shadowseer				
Type	Speed	Armor	Close Combat	Firefight
Infantry	15cm	5+	5+	5+
Weapons	Range	Firepower	Notes	
Psychic Attacks <i>and</i> Veil of Tears	(15cm)	N/a	Extra Attacks (+1), MW	
Veil of Tears	(15cm)		See Notes	
Veil of Tears	(base contact)		See Notes	
Notes: <i>Reinforced Armors, Leader, Invulnerable Save, Veil of Tears, Teleport, Webway Mastery.</i>				

Solitaire

Even among the Harlequin, access to the Black Library is uncommon. But to the Solitaire, this ancient depository of knowledge is the focus of his existence. These elite warriors possess the self-mastery that allows passage through the psychic shielding and into the depths of the library.

The Solitaire are speculated to have no soul, and to see one slice through a company of men like the threshing of wheat, many would believe it to be true. When he is with the Great Masque, he is attached to a formation, but there the relationship ends. This fighter is known to dart ahead of the Harlequins, moving faster than any known living creature. Meeting the enemy head on, the Solitaire pushes aside frontline soldiers, striking deep and causing panic wherever he attacks.

Solitaire				
Type	Speed	Armor	Close Combat	Firefight
Infantry	15cm	4+	3+	5+
Weapons	Range	Firepower	Notes	
Power Blades	(base contact)	N/a	Extra Attacks (+2), Macro-Weapon	
Notes: <i>Reinforced Armor, Fearless, First Strike, Inspiring, Infiltrate, Invulnerable Save, Scout, Teleport, Webway Mastery.</i>				

Harlequin Jet Bikes

There are times that the Harlequins forego their attacks on foot, instead choosing to skim quickly over land with Jet Bikes. These bikes are decorated in vibrant colors and faces of the Laughing God, moving swiftly to meet the enemy. Built on the chasses of Eldar Jet Bikes, Dark Eldar Reavers, and even Shining Spears, the Masque is not picky about where they get their materials from. They attack either with their swords or with their shuriken weapons while cloaked safely within their Daethedi field. The bikes are thought to be the largest vehicles that can be cloaked in such a manner.

Harlequin Jet Bikes				
Type	Speed	Armor	Close Combat	Firefight
Infantry	35cm	5+	4+	5+
Weapons	Range	Firepower	Notes	
Shuriken Weapons	(15cm)	N/a	-	
Harlequin Swords	(base contact)	N/a	Extra Attacks (+1)	
Notes: <i>Reinforced Armor, Mounted, Skimmer, Teleport.</i>				

Harlequin Venom

Skimming along the ground, the Venoms are modified Vypers that have had their main armament removed to allow for a small Holo-field generator and enough room for a unit to ride on its open back. Guide wires and small handles dot the back of these light vehicles providing not only an excellent place to disembark from, but to assault from as well. There are rumors that the Grand Masque has used these to scout potential targets, but they have never been substantiated.

Venom				
Type	Speed	Armor	Close Combat	Firefight
Light Vehicle	35cm	5+	-	5+
Weapons	Range	Firepower	Notes	
Assault Weapons	(15cm)	N/a	N/a	
Notes: <i>Holo-field, Skimmer, Transport</i> (May transport one unit of the following: Harlequins, Mimes, Shadowseers, Solitaires, and Death Jesters). Units being transported may fire with any ranged weapons, and use their firefight value in an assault or to lend supporting fire.				

Vision of the Laughing God

Cegorach, the Laughing God is one of two of the Eldar Gods to survive the Great Fall and the only being that knows every door to the Webway. He is directly involved in the affairs of the Harlequins, regardless of how mysterious those affairs may be.

Legends tell that it was Cegorach who tricked an ultra powerful C'tan into devouring many of its brethren and drove the creature mad. The Vision of the Laughing God prominently appears in Imperial historical records as well when the Grand Masque –without notice- attacked a highly fortified research center deep within the Imperial ecumenopolis, Forlorn. The Harlequins, after destroying the laboratories, found themselves surrounded and outnumbered. The surveillance system corroborates the story of the sole survivor which recorded the appearance of Cegorach. When the Laughing God manifested himself, Storm Troopers and Guardsmen stood motionless, mesmerized by his appearance. The Harlequins eviscerated virtually every soldier and then vanished without a trace. Although it is not known what was being researched within the laboratory, the Imperium never re-opened it.

During battle, the Laughing God may choose a visionary form in which to assist his troubadours in their struggle. He appears unimpeded on the battlefield and sends enemies of the Eldar into utter confusion. His mere presence seems to focus the already deadly precision of the Harlequins into an unstoppable force.

Vision of the Laughing God				
Type	Speed	Armor	Close Combat	Firefight
Special	Special	-	-	-
Weapons	Range	Firepower	Notes	
Mirror of the Great Enemy	30cm	N/a	See below	
Notes: <i>Teleport.</i> The Laughing God is placed on the board during the teleport phase of any turn, and may removed and relocated at the beginning of every turn using the teleport function. At the end of each turn, at least one unbroken Harlequin unit must be within 30cm of the Laughing God or he will not return for the remainder of the game. Cegorach is not a unit; he is a marker only and as such cannot attack or be attacked, block movement or Line-of-Sight, hold or contest objectives, or effect zone of control in any way.				

Special: The Mirror of the Great Enemy. All enemy formations within 30cm of the Avatar suffer a -1 to their initiative (as if they had a blast marker), dazzled by his appearance and hypnotized by his psychic influence. This penalty is in addition to the -1 for blast markers, attempts to retain initiative, and rallying modifiers. Likewise, Harlequin formations that completely fall within 30cm are counted as **Inspired** and given a +1 to their initiative rolls.

