

For the Greater Good

A Warhammer 40,000 Winning Army



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Nick Davis, Games Workshop's U.S. White Dwarf chap, is collecting a Tau army for *Warhammer 40,000*. The army he's using right now is at 1,007 points, but he hopes to take it up to 1,500 points by adding another squad of XV8 battlesuits, a Devilfish transports for the Fire warriors, a Hammerhead tank, at least one more Broadside, and an Ethereal.

THE ARMY HQ (106 PTS.)

Commander (106 pts.)

- 1 "Tau Kais Kauyon," Shas'el (50 pts.) with:
 - Burst Cannon (10 pts.)
 - Plasma Rifle (16 pts.)
 - Shield Generator (20 pts.)
 - Hardwired Multi-tracker (10 pts.)

ELITE (302 PTS.)

XV8 Crisis Battlesuit Team (132 pts.)

- 2 Shas'ui (30 pts. each) with:
 - Burst Cannon (10 pts. each)
 - Plasma Rifle (16 pts. each)
 - Multi-tracker (5 pts. each)
 - Bonded (10 pts.)

Technologically advanced, open-minded, and optimistic, the Tau is a unique race in the grim *Warhammer 40,000* universe.

They combine the technological sophistication of the Eldar with modern-day methods of warfare. Tau also have a very strong anime theme about them, which gives them a certain appeal to mecha fans too. You don't have to look too deeply to see influences such as *Robotech*, especially in the Tau's main war machine: the XV8 battlesuit.

How does a race like the Tau fair on the nightmare battlefields of the 41st Millennium? The Tau Fire warriors (or Shas'la) view combat as a clean, long-range, and honorable affair. This is almost the complete opposite of the blood-and-guts philosophy of most other *Warhammer 40,000* armies. Does this young, energetic race stand a chance, or is it doomed to be swept away by the guns of the older and more aggressive races? To keep foes at arm's length, the Tau rely on some very impressive firepower to compensate for their distressing lack of vigor in assaults.

COMMAND DECISIONS

As army commanders go, Tau has two decent choices: the battlesuit-wearing Shas'o or Shas'el and the inspiring (for Tau at least) Ethereal. Each HQ choice has a distinct role on the battlefield. Shas'o and Shas'el are great at leading an aggressive advance. Ethereals are perfect for defensive players who value their morale-boosting effect. Ironically, Ethereals are the best Tau assault fighters as well.

For this army I felt more aggressive and chose a Shas'el (whom I've named Tau Kais Kauyon, or "Skilled Hunter") to lead my Tau into battle. His XV8 weapons are the fire-tastic Burst Cannon and a Plasma Rifle for added punch. These weapons are linked to a Multi-tracker, so he can use both in the most efficient manner possible. Shas'el Kais's role is to lead the other battlesuits in support of the main forces. Tactics include firing on the move and intelligent use of cover. Thanks to the special Tau jetpack move in the assault phase, he becomes a fearsome opponent and a distraction for enemy forces.

Sending Shas'el Kais out alone into a battle could prove to be very perilous, so this force includes two XV8-equipped Shas'ui. Both suits are armed identically to the Shas'el and support their commander. Most of the time, they will fire at his target to ensure its eradication. It was tempting to give one of the Shas'ui a Target Lock so that he could shoot at a target separate from his wingman's. However, with BS 3 it's not worth the cost without also having twin-linked weapons.

WATCH THE SHADOWS

The XV15 Stealth Team has performed so admirably for me that I recommend it to other Tau Commanders. If I could, I'd equip my commander the same way. The Stealth Team operates in a unit of five and is **bonded** to survive as long as possible.

In *Warhammer 40,000*, **assault** is the game term used to describe hand-to-hand combat.



XV15 STEALTH TEAM

ble. It is normally deployed on an extreme flank to chew into the opponent's flanks with 15 dice of Burst Cannon fury. Don't worry about isolating it; a Stealth Team is one of the few Tau units that can look after itself, and the individuals make excellent shock troops.

TROOP SELECTION

Tau can field a well-armed and armored front-line trooper for 10 points. This version of the army has two teams, each led by a Shas'ui, but could stand to have more. Two Fire Warrior Teams form the center of the battle line; they're just as able to fight defensively as offensively. Each team is set up to support the other: Team One is equipped with the maximum amount of Pulse Carbines possible in order to close with the enemy. Team Two is armed with Pulse Rifles and uses their 30" range to cover Team One's advance.

Kroot, while not many Tau players' most favored of troops, do have their uses. They're utterly devastating when instigating a counterassault. The best use of Kroot is in cover on a flank to discourage adventurism from your opponent. Or position them just behind your main battle line so they can charge any enemy assault troops that engage your front line.

To this end, the Kroot Squad is fairly large. It has twelve warriors, including a Shaper—the best and cheapest 3-Wound character you can get. Added to the mix are three Kroot Hounds (especially useful for their automatic Strength-4 hit against fleeing opponents), and a Krootox (whose Strength-6 hits are more useful than the Kroot gun strapped to its back). On a charge, this Kroot Squad generates 51 attacks that are Strength 4 or better. Not too bad for a culture that the Tau considers backward.

If the leader of a unit carries a ceremonial Bonding Knife or his armor is decorated with the image of one, the unit is considered **bonded**: it can attempt to regroup even if under half strength. (Normally, a unit must have at least half its original number remaining to regroup.)

*BATTERIES NOT INCLUDED

Gun Drones, lovingly nicknamed "flying garbage can lids," are the closest a Tau player has to expendable troops. Use them to shield advancing battlesuits and warriors. Gun Drone Pulse Carbines can strike deep and cause some serious disruption if you target the right spot in your enemy's battle line.

BROADSIDE

The final component of this Tau army is an XV-88 Broadside battlesuit. It's heavily armored with a 2+ save and carries the heaviest guns in the Tau army: Railgun and Smart Missiles. This is one battlesuit worth equipping with a Multi-tracker in order to get the most out of its awesome firepower.

A Shas'v're pilots the Broadside, and has a hard-wired shield drone controller with one drone—a very useful thing to have, as you'll find that the Broadside will be a big target in this army. This suit is not as mobile as its XV8 brethren, so set it up to make the most of its weapons. Put it just behind the main battle line with a building or terrain feature guarding one its flanks.

TACTICS

No matter what size force you field, setting them up in a concave formation works best for Tau. Put your Fire warriors on the front line with the Kroot lurking just behind them. On one extreme flank, deploy your Stealth Squad. The outer edge of your main line should be where the XV8 suits hang out. Put your Broadside next to a solid terrain feature to complete what should be a fairly decent firing line. This concave formation allows you to bring the maximum amount of guns to bear when your enemy advances. Use the Drone and Stealth squads to disrupt your opponent's battle line. Single out one area of his army to eradicate at a time.

Now you have the Fire power, Shas. Become the Kauyon, spread the Mont'au upon your enemy, and strike the Mont'ka in the name of the Tau'va! Oh, and have fun. ☺



TAU KAIS KAUYON AND SHAS'V'RE

XV15 Stealth Team (170 pts.)

- 1 Shas'v're (40 pts.)
- Bonded (10 pts.)
- 4 Shas'ui (30 pts. each)

TROOPS (374 PTS.)

Fire Warrior Team One (130 pts.)

- 1 Shas'ui (20 pts.) with:
 - Pulse Carbine
 - Photon Grenades (1 pt.)
 - Bonded (10 pts.)
- 4 Shas'la (10 pts. each) with:
 - Pulse Carbine
 - Photon Grenades (1 pt. each)
- 5 Shas'la (10 pts. each) with:
 - Pulse Rifle
 - Photon Grenades (1 pt. each)

Fire Warrior Team Two (120 pts.)

- 1 Shas'ui (20 pts.) with:
 - Pulse Carbine
 - Photon Grenades (1 pt.)
- 9 Shas'la (10 pts. each) with:
 - Pulse Rifle
 - Photon Grenades (1 pt. each)

Kroot Carnivore Squad (124 pts.)

- 1 "P'tech," Shaper (28 pts.)
- 12 Kroot (8 pts. each)
 - Kroot Hound Pack attached
 - Krootox Herd attached

FAST ATTACK (90 PTS.)

Gun Drone Squadron (72 pts.)

- 6 Gun Drone (12 pts. each)

Kroot Hound Pack (18 pts.)

- 3 Kroot Hound (6 pts. each)
 - Attached to Kroot Carnivore Squad

HEAVY SUPPORT (145 PTS.)

XV-88 Broadside Battlesuit Team (95 pts.)

- 1 Shas'v're (80 pts.) with:
 - Drone Controller plus 1 Shield Drone (15 pts.)

Krootox Herd (50 pts.)

- 1 Krootox (50 pts.)
 - Attached to Kroot Carnivore Squad