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GameSpot Game Guide: Total Annihilation: Kingdoms

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ISBN 1-58422-037-6





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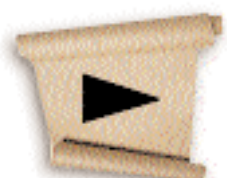
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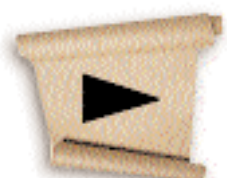




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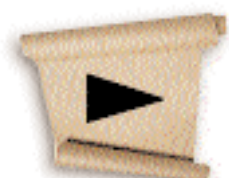


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Introduction





Cavedog's Total Annihilation: Kingdoms, the follow-up to the award-winning real-time strategy game Total Annihilation, puts the player in control of four unique races. The Kingdom of Aramon controls the elements of earth with a superior land-based force and devastating long-range weaponry. The Kingdom of Veruna controls the elements of water with an unmatched naval force. The Kingdom of Zhon controls the elements of wind, producing units swiftly and birthing a flying monarch who can set up camp anywhere she desires. The Kingdom of Taros controls the elements of fire and magic, fielding an army of nefarious spell casters, demons, and undead creatures.

In this Total Annihilation: Kingdoms guide, you'll discover the strengths and weaknesses of each side, including a complete breakdown of the units and structures that compose all four races. You'll get extensive statistics for all the units, including sight distance, radar coverage, hit points, damage potential, and build cost. A full walk-through for all 48 campaign missions, featuring interface, resource management, and combat tips, will help you survive and complete even the toughest of situations. Finally, a rundown of Total Annihilation: Kingdoms multiplayer strategies provides the necessary edge to best the competition you'll face on Boneyards, Cavedog's free online gaming service. Prepare yourself! The battle for the land of Darien awaits!



Chapter One:

The Armed Forces of Aramon





Commanding the element of earth, Elsin, the mage king and leader of the Aramon race, battles the forces of Veruna, Zhon, and Taros. Because the Aramon center around earthen elements, their naval units (only one vessel) and air force (besides the Gold Dragon) are mostly nonexistent. Instead, the Aramon rely on long-range warfare (with its Trebuchet and Cannoneer) and durable melee and range units.

Aramon Structures

Two defensive towers and two unit-creating structures make up the bulk of the Aramon buildings. Use the towers to protect choke points, mana spots, and your important long-range artillery units; build the keep as soon as possible to gain the benefit of mage archers (excellent anti-air units) and the knight (one of the deadliest melee units).

Watch Tower

Build Cost: 2,751

Build Time: 300

Hit Points: 4,700

Weapon Damage: 225

Weapon Range: 500

Weapon Reload Time: 2.5

Radar Coverage: 1,000

Sight Distance: 250

Built by: Elsin and mage builder

The watch tower is the basic defensive structure of the Aramon and should be built as soon as possible. Not only do the archers positioned high atop the





tower protect you in early skirmishes, the radar and sight coverage provided by the tower provide a moderate warning system against early rushes. Like other towers, especially the Veruna guard tower that the watch tower most resembles, you should always position a guard just outside the structure in case enemy melee units engage at close range.

Towers are excellent lodestone guards as well as providing radar coverage for the Aramon's most devastating offensive and defensive weapon, the fixed emplacement trebuchet. A wise Aramon player will also stick several watch towers around the perimeter of his base to guard against rushes and other offensive maneuvers.

Barracks

Build Cost: 1,955

Build Time: 600

Hit Points: 17,162

Built by: Elsin and mage builder

Builds: Swordsman, horseman, archer, catapult, spycrow, mage builder

Like the Veruna enclave or the Taros cabal, the Aramon barracks trains tier 1 combat units as well as providing the step into tier 2 and 3 by summoning the mage builder. To speed up construction of these combat units, use the monarch or build multiple barracks structures to really unleash loads of combat ready swordsman or horseman. As you might expect, erecting a barracks as soon as possible is important, especially against players who enjoy sending hordes of warriors or goblins quickly to disrupt your base construction. Once you've erected construction structures like the barracks and keep, be sure to protect them against attack, as it takes quite awhile to bring another one into action.





Stronghold

Build Cost: 7,258

Build Time: 695

Hit Points: 18,500

Weapon Damage: 1,125

Weapon Range: 600

Weapon Reload Time: 4

Radar Coverage: 1,000

Sight Distance: 500

Built by: Mage builder

Providing equal radar coverage but greater sight (just inside its weapon range), the stronghold serves well as the second level of base and lodestone defense. Like most large towers, the stronghold's firing rate is sluggish, meaning speedy air and ground units could quickly overwhelm its exterior. Guard the stronghold (especially if it's remote and near a lodestone) with several ground troops. Because the life of a stronghold could be vital to maintaining a solid defense, use Elsin or any builder to repair any damage inflicted. Use walls and other land obstacles to make it difficult for your enemy to reach the tower.

Keep

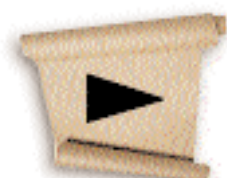
Build Cost: 9,204

Build Time: 1,522

Hit Points: 25,116

Built by: Mage builder

Builds: Barbarian, cannoneer, knight, titan, mage archer, assassin, acolyte





Much like the Veruna citadel or the Taros abyss and temple, the Aramon keep trains higher-level combat units as well as the final builder, the acolyte. Erecting a keep early is wise, as the second-level combat units (which, on the surface, are similar to their tier 1 counterparts) are much more durable and effective than the lesser units. Mage archers, for instance, use tracking arrows, making them a more effective anti-air unit than the archer.

Aramon Builders

With their lack of air and sea power, most Aramon players try to summon a mage builder as soon as possible. Not only does the mage builder provide access to the keep (and, thus, the powerful melee and ranged units), he also constructs the trebuchet, Aramon's potent long-distance threat. Also, the acolyte, much like the dark priest of the Taros race, boasts powerful spells and is an effective combat unit.

Elsin of Aramon, the Mage King

Hit Points: 16,000

Weapon Damage: 950, 2,000, 5,000

Max Mana: 1,000

Mana per Shot: 0, 200, 900

Weapon Range: 250, 400, 120

Weapon Reload Time: 2.5, 1.5, 1.5

Radar Coverage: 650

Sight Distance: 232

Builds: Wall, lodestone, watch tower, barracks





Elsin, the monarch leader of the Aramon, constructs tier 1 buildings such as walls, lodestones, and the gateway into the combat arena, the barracks. To protect himself (and to dish out damage to others), Elsin is armed with lightning, meteor, and earthen wave spells. Like other monarchs, Elsin can annihilate clumps of units with his most powerful spell (earthen wave), but once his mana is expended (which one shot of earthen wave will do), he's quite vulnerable, especially to a surrounding melee attack.

Mage Builder

Build Cost: 443

Build Time: 140

Hit Points: 1,703

Weapon Damage: 216

Weapon Range: 200

Weapon Reload Time: 2

Radar Coverage: 350

Sight Distance: 180

Built by: Barracks

Builds: Wall, gate, lodestone, watch tower, barracks, stronghold, keep, war galley, trebuchet

To reach the Aramon's best units and structures, you must crank out some mage builders as soon as possible. Like other tier 2 builders, having more than one is vital to long term success. A few mage builders should venture out on lodestone duty (or tower construction), while others remain in home to expand bases and heal units.





Perhaps the greatest use of the mage builder, however, is constructing the Aramon's awesome trebuchet, a fixed emplacement, boasting both impressive range and damage. Although the mage builder can protect himself in an attack, he's quite weak and typically won't last long even against the weakest of enemy units. Protect him with a small band of tier 1 or 2 melee or ranged units.

Acolyte

Build Cost: 5,917

Build Time: 1,108

Hit Points: 2,300

Weapon Damage: 750, 70, special

Max Mana: 1,000

Mana per Shot: 250, 600, 750

Weapon Range: 250, 400, 300

Weapon Reload Time: 5, 5, 5

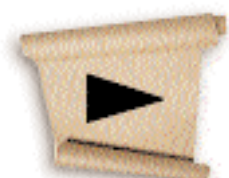
Radar Coverage: 550

Sight Distance: 212

Built by: Keep

Builds: Divine lodestone, gold dragon

Similar to the Taros dark priest, the acolyte is an expensive unit that builds divine lodestones and the Aramon dragon, but can also be a formidable combat unit. Possessing earthquake, meteor, and flesh-turned-stone (as it suggests, it turns enemy units to stone) spells, the acolyte should be positioned safely among the ranged units. Protect him well; the acolyte is expensive to generate and doesn't have many hit points.





Aramon Units

Besides the two horsed units (horseman and knight), most of the Aramon unit selections are made up of slow, but sturdy, units. With decent towers, such as the cannoneer and the trebuchet, the Aramon player should have little trouble walling himself inside a nearly impenetrable fortress. The Aramon player, though, must use anti-air and scouts well; combating the superior air force and ships of the other races is a difficult task.

Swordsman

Build Cost: 285

Build Time: 99

Hit Points: 2,500

Weapon Damage: 360

Weapon Range: 30

Weapon Reload Time: 1.7

Radar Coverage: 0

Sight Distance: 135

Built by: Barracks

Easy to produce, yet quick to perish, the basic foot soldier of the Aramon army is effective in early game battles but is too slow and weak to stand up against the more powerful units of the other races. Still, the Swordsman can dish out decent damage and are adequate protection for lodestones and ranged armies. Like most foot soldiers, the Aramon Swordsmen include no anti-air weapons making them highly vulnerable to air assaults. Keep Archers or Mage Archers close by to assist or your entire legion of Swordsmen will be decimated before you've even begun to fight.





Horseman

Build Cost: 665

Build Time: 188

Hit Points: 4,050

Weapon Damage: 333

Weapon Range: 100

Weapon Reload Time: 1.9

Radar Coverage: 0

Sight Distance: 195

Built by: Barracks

Fast and durable, Aramon horsemen make excellent quick-strike or hit and run units early in the game, especially against unprotected lodestones left by careless players. Whip out some horsemen early in the game and go hunting. Most Aramon units are too slow for this sort of tactic, leaving only the horsemen and the knights as fast, quick strike units.

Construct a spyhawk before you begin a horsemen unit so you can get a fix on the enemy location; once two or three horsemen units are ready (get Elsin to assist construction if necessary), send them out as raiding parties to enemy lodestones. Because it's faster than nearly every tier 1 unit out there, the horseman can usually retreat unscathed.

Archer

Build Cost: 325

Build Time: 125

Hit Points: 1,100

Weapon Damage: 213





Weapon Range: 450
Weapon Reload Time: 3
Radar Coverage: 0
Sight Distance: 180
Built by: Barracks

Although weaker than the Veruna counterpart, the crossbowman, the archer's reload time is superior, making it more effective in early game battles. As an anti-air unit, however, the archer's weak and relatively slow arrows can't match faster flying targets, so you should opt for the mage archer (and his tracking arrow) to fend off air assaults. Don't forget - always escort range units such as the archers with a band of melee forces. Because archers can fire farther than they can see, you should use spotters and other units that provide radar coverage to maximum their effectiveness. If you aren't firing an archer at maximum range, you're wasting its abilities.

Catapult

Build Cost: 751
Build Time: 165
Hit Points: 1,400
Weapon Damage: 1,250
Weapon Range: 750
Weapon Reload Time: 6.5
Radar Coverage: 0
Sight Distance: 160
Built by: Barracks

Though not as strong as the Veruna catapult, the Aramon version is still effective at both base assaults and base defense. Still, the Aramon feature better defenses and siege weapons, so the catapult probably won't be as





useful as time goes by. Still, an attack force filled with melee, range, and siege units like the catapult (which is sluggish, but more maneuverable than the cannoneer) is tough to beat, particularly when the player is maximizing the range of each by providing radar and sight coverage with a spyhawk or towers.

Spyhawk

Build Cost: 266

Build Time: 260

Hit Points: 20

Radar Coverage: 500

Sight Distance: 225

Built by: Barracks

Like the scouts of other races, the Aramon spyhawk can't withstand much punishment, but is a vital unit for long-term success - especially with the Aramon long-range siege weapons like the cannoneer and the trebuchet. Get a spyhawk airborne early and investigate what your enemies are doing. Seek out unguarded lodestones and locate weak spots in the enemy's base construction. Most of all, though, use the spyhawk to find the location of enemy base structures, then use the trebuchet (if within range) to force an attack at the location. A wise player should always have several spyhawks resting around the map, providing radar coverage and sight to gain early knowledge of troop movement and location.

War Galley

Build Cost: 2,319

Build Time: 338

Hit Points: 4,527





Weapon Damage: 1,088
Weapon Range: 485
Weapon Reload Time: 2.4
Radar Coverage: 720
Sight Distance: 302
Built by: Mage builder

The sole vessel of the Aramon fleet matches up admirably against the stronger Veruna vessels, but don't expect it to win consistent battles, especially against a mixed fleet. Thankfully, the war galley in the Aramon fleet can also transport units across the water onto other islands and shores, providing much needed base expansion once you're using all the available lodestones.

Most Aramon players will likely opt against the war galley and almost concede the waterways, particularly against the obviously superior Veruna race. Against the other two sides, however, the war galley can hold its own - at least in ship to ship (or kraken) encounters. If the enemy opts for a ship and air assault, the war galley will be at a significant disadvantage, especially considering the Aramon's lack of air power.

Trebuchet

Build Cost: 11,194
Build Time: 675
Hit Points: 2,975
Weapon Damage: 2,001
Weapon Range: 2,700
Weapon Reload Time: 7
Radar Coverage: 0
Sight Distance: 200
Built by: Mage builder





The granddaddy of all Aramon structures, the trebuchet is like the Big Bertha of Total Annihilation: Kingdoms. Though the Veruna possess a near equivalent (a mobile trebuchet no less), the Aramon variety is equally as devastating, particularly on smaller maps where the enemy base is likely within range from the very start. Expensive and weak, don't construct a trebuchet outside the protection of your base, towers, and walls without ample defense. Don't fail to defend it inside your own base either; surround it with towers, mage archers, and walls to keep the enemy out. Once the cannonballs - with their more than 2,000 damage - pound the enemy, he won't waste much time seeking destroy the powerful trebuchet. Air units overwhelm the trebuchet easily, so you must protect it (use mage archers and their tracking arrows).

Like the Veruna trebuchet ship, the Aramon variety doesn't target mobile units effectively and will continue to rotate, trying to gain a lock on the target. Instead, aim for fixed emplacements, towers, lodestones, and structures. Use a spyhawk to get a fix on the enemy location; then, use the attack button to engage the trebuchet. Fire on enemy lodestones (which the trebuchet destroys quickly) to completely disrupt your adversary's mana and unit production.

Barbarian

Build Cost: 695

Build Time: 125

Hit Points: 3,471

Weapon Damage: 640

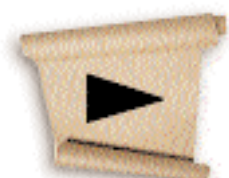
Weapon Range: 55

Weapon Reload Time: 1.65

Radar Coverage: 0

Sight Distance: 190

Built by: Keep





Like many Aramon combat units, the barbarian is sluggish but durable and can pound enemy foot soldiers with his two-handed broadsword. One challenge of the Aramon player will be to keep all the melee units together. The more powerful melee units, the knight and the barbarian, have greatly varied speeds. If you aren't careful, the knights could reach the battle before the barbarians, which would leave your forces split and outnumbered, leaving your attack force in ruins.

For the cost-effective Aramon player, barbarians are a wiser choice than the pricey titans, but you should have at least one titan in your army, as his presence alone provides an armor bonus to surrounding units.

Cannoneer

Build Cost: 2,009

Build Time: 285

Hit Points: 2,200

Weapon Damage: 2,000

Weapon Range: 600

Weapon Reload Time: 4.5

Radar Coverage: 0

Sight Distance: 180

Built by: Keep

Very slow moving, but possessing the damage potential equivalent of the trebuchet, the cannoneer makes an excellent base defense, ripping through hordes of advancing enemy troops in little time. Reload time is adequate and range is just under a catapult. Position your cannoneers near watch towers, and you'll have plenty of radar coverage in which to put these virtually stationary devices to good use (the cannoneer needs radar support as it pos-





esses none). Perhaps the most difficult thing about the cannons is just moving them around your base effectively; these devices are very sluggish and tough to turn, making them troublesome to maneuver through cramped spaces.

Still, the cannon is mobile, which means you can take it into an offensive assault if you wish. Used much like the catapult, the cannon can wipe out the opposition quickly, but you must protect it from close-quarters attack, as the armor just isn't strong enough to withstand more than a few hits from a medium melee unit.

Knight

Build Cost: 1,142

Build Time: 185

Hit Points: 5,911

Weapon Damage: 750

Weapon Range: 100

Weapon Reload Time: 2

Radar Coverage: 0

Sight Distance: 215

Built by: Keep

Arguably the most effective melee unit in the Aramon army, the knight possesses excellent speed, durability, and damage potential, creating one of the best all-around fighters in the game. Support the knight with mage archers (especially to counter air assaults) and siege units for optimum effectiveness. Use knights to disrupt enemy lodestone construction and expansion, as they can quickly traverse the map and escape if needed. If needed, mix in the knights with the less-expensive horsemen for a larger assault force.





Titan

Build Cost: 1,344

Build Time: 215

Hit Points: 3,999

Weapon Damage: 500

Weapon Range: 55

Weapon Reload Time: 1.2

Radar Coverage: 0

Sight Distance: 190

Built by: Keep

Though twice as expensive (and taking nearly twice as long to build) as the barbarian, the titan does have a few advantages. First, the titan strikes at the opponent more often, but doesn't do as much damage. Second, and more important, the presence of the titan in an assault force increases the armor of all surrounding units (about its sight distance).

Your force shouldn't consist solely of titans; it's wise to include a few, particularly for the armor bonus). But, titans do strike at their opponent more rapidly than the other tier 3 melee unit, the barbarian. Like most melee units, the titan features no anti-air ability, so support him with mage archers.

Mage Archer

Build Cost: 977

Build Time: 170

Hit Points: 1,350

Weapon Damage: 476, 576, 500

Max Mana: 1,000





Mana per Shot: 0, 100, 500

Weapon Range: 550, 550, 550

Weapon Reload Time: 2.65, 3.65, 3.65

Radar Coverage: 0

Sight Distance: 250

Built by: Keep

One of the best anti-air units in Total Annihilation: Kingdoms (especially for the Aramon), keep mage archers around your base structures at all times. Because the Aramon lack air units, your only hope to defeat enemy air power is with ample anti-air defenses. Set the mage archers arrow setting to tracking for your best shot at taking out air units (though each shot will cost a mage archer about 10 percent of his personal mana reserves). Position mage archers around cannons and trebuchet to protect them and use them in conjunction with knights and other melee units for a well-rounded attack force.

Like most archer-type units, the mage archer's range is greater than that of his sight; use scouts and spotters to look ahead, so you can knock out enemy units before they get close enough to inflict damage. Experiment with the mage archer's final arrow type, the paralyze arrow, and use it against tougher living foes. Keep in mind you can only fire two before the mage archer's mana depletes.

Assassin

Build Cost: 2,509

Build Time: 377

Hit Points: 500

Weapon Damage: 710





Weapon Range: 175

Weapon Reload Time: 4.1

Radar Coverage: 450

Sight Distance: 200

Built by: Keep

Primarily a scout, the assassin is pricey and shouldn't be wasted as an offensive or defensive unit. Of all the Aramon forces, the assassin is the most specialized and should primarily be used for one thing: scouting behind enemy lines. For this, the assassin is armed with the ability to cloak.

Coupled with the long-range firepower of the trebuchet, the assassin can sneak behind enemy lines and gain sight of enemy structures, towers, and even a stationary monarch. Keep in mind that the assassin's cloak doesn't last forever; once his personal mana supply runs out, he must reveal himself and wait until the mana regenerates.

Gold Dragon

Build Cost: 43,944

Build Time: 8,755

Hit Points: 23,999

Weapon Damage: 845, 845, 1,500

Max Mana: 1,000

Mana per Shot: 0, 300, 900

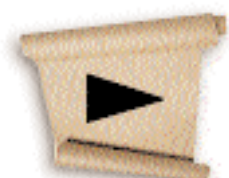
Weapon Range: 600, 700, 450

Weapon Reload Time: 3, 2.5, 5

Radar Coverage: 2,000

Sight Distance: 230

Built by: Acolyte





Armed with three spells, Aramon's fierce gold dragon, created by the acolyte, boasts enough hit points and firepower to turn an enemy army into ruins. The gold dragon compares favorably to the others and is controlled in a similar fashion. Use his largest spell against clumps of enemy units (as it drains nearly all the gold dragon's mana supply). Use the dragon to assist battle situations and keep him away from engaging enemy structures (leave that to the trebuchet).

One of the best abilities of the gold dragon (and all other dragons) is his extreme radar distance. Once the Aramon player has acquired the gold dragon, using powerful long-range weapons like the trebuchet and cannoner prove much easier.



Chapter Two:

The Armed Forces of Veruna





Commanding the element of water, Kirena, the sea mage and monarch of the Verunans, dominates the seas with her wealth of powerful ships, including the long-range menace, the trebuchet ship. Don't underestimate the Veruna on land, however; with durable melee units and powerful ranged units, the Veruna side can be equally as powerful on land as on sea.

Veruna Structures

Much like the Aramon, the Verunan feature two defensive towers (though Veruna can build the sea-worthy floating tower) and two main unit-creating structures. On sea maps, the Veruna player's goal should be erecting, and protecting the mighty sea fort as soon as possible.

Guard Tower

Build Cost: 2,598

Build Time: 287

Hit Points: 4,200

Weapon Damage: 200

Weapon Range: 480

Weapon Reload Time: 2.2

Radar Coverage: 1,000

Sight Distance: 350

Built by: Kirena or Priestess

Serving the same function as the Aramon's watch tower, the Veruna guard tower is also manned by archer units and possesses solid radar and sight distance. Constructing a few guard towers at your base perimeter sets up an adequate tier 1 defense and also provides a good spotter for more powerful defenses like the mortar, which lacks radar coverage. Against more powerful





enemy units, though, the guard tower's relatively weak hit points and damage potential mean it won't survive for very long.

Like most towers, the guard tower is more effective against enemies at a range. If enemy melee units surround the tower, the guard tower will have a nearly impossible time fending off the attack. Therefore, especially early in the game, select some friendly melee units such as the Veruna warriors and have them guard the tower. If any enemy attacks the tower, the warriors will assist. Another way to protect the tower would be to construct a series of walls around the tower, forcing enemy melee units to destroy the walls before they can reach the tower. Finally, guard towers are also excellent for guarding precious mana spots early in the game.

Enclave

Build Cost: 2,116

Build Time: 499

Hit Points: 16,516

Built by: Kirenna, flagship, or priestess

Builds: Parrot, warrior, crossbowman, catapult, priestess

Similar to the Aramon barracks and the Taros cabal, the Veruna enclave produces tier 1 combat units and also the Veruna second-level builder, the priestess. It goes without saying that the Veruna player should be knocking out an enclave as soon as possible, if not for combat units at least for the priestess, who opens the door to much more powerful creations. To churn out units more quickly (especially if you've secured many mana spots), create multiple enclaves or use the monarch to guard the enclave. Keep in mind that the Veruna flagship can also build this tier 1 structure; send the flagship across the waterway, build the enclave, and begin expansion into a new territory.





Sea Fort

Build Cost: 2,340

Build Time: 585

Hit Points: 19,064

Built by: Kirenna or priestess

Builds: Skiff, harpoon ship, flagship, transport ship, man of war, trebuchet ship

Because the Veruna side is so heavily ship-oriented, constructing a sea fort quickly can maximize your efforts in controlling the waterways - though with your powerful ships, you shouldn't have much of a problem. Most players will make an effort to prevent your expansion onto the sea, primarily to hinder the construction of the trebuchet ship. Protect your sea fort with units, floating towers, and even a few guard boats.

Citadel

Build Cost: 8,192

Build Time: 1,655

Hit Points: 28,852

Built by: Priestess

Builds: Musketeer, berserker, amazon knight, dirigible, crusader, priest of Lihr

The citadel is similar to the Aramon keep or the taros abyss and produces tier 3 combat units and the final Veruna builder, the priest of Lihr. While tier 1 units should serve you well during the early part of the game, you must construct the citadel as soon as possible to fend off the superior land forces of your enemies. Once you've built the citadel, though, the odds increase, even with the arrival of the powerful melee units the berserker and crusader and Veruna's excellent range weapon, the musketeer.





Bastion

Build Cost: 7,255

Build Time: 655

Hit Points: 17,975

Weapon Damage: 1,150

Weapon Range: 580

Weapon Reload Time: 3.2

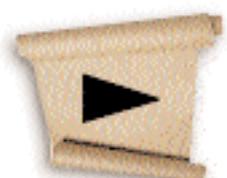
Radar Coverage: 1,000

Sight Distance: 500

Built by: Priestess

A much more effective tower for the mana, the bastion serves as the primary tower defense for your land structures. With a greater sight distance (nearly equally its weapon range) to the guard tower - but an equal radar distance - the bastion's cannon rips through enemy ground and air units. Like the guard tower, protect the bastion well from ground forces; however, with more than 17,000 hit points, the bastion can take quite a beating before succumbing to enemy melee.

Place the bastion around the perimeter of your main base and use them to also guard key mana spots. Construct walls around this powerful tower to further protect it from enemy ground troops. Also, the bastion has a minimum range and could have trouble against enemy air units in concentration around the tower. Keep some anti-air units, such as the musketeer, crossbowman, or amazon knight on guard around the tower.





Floating Tower

Build Cost: 3,608

Build Time: 374

Hit Points: 9,147

Weapon Damage: 1,089

Weapon Range: 710

Weapon Reload Time: 3

Radar Coverage: 1,000

Sight Distance: 500

Built by: Flagship

The most cost-effective tower in the game, the floating tower's only downside is that, well, it floats and can only be constructed on water. Still, dishing out almost as much damage as the bastion at only half the cost is certainly something (though the floating tower can only take half the punishment). The floating tower boasts excellent radar and sight coverage and works well against the air units that are likely to terrorize your sea fort. If a waterway cuts between you and your enemy's structures, construct some floating towers in the areas the enemy is likely to cross. When the enemy attempts to make a run for your base, the floating towers can knock out some units and damage many others before the bulk of your force even engages.

Pillar of Light

Build Cost: 3,008

Build Time: 1,899

Hit Points: 1,800

Radar Coverage: 0

Sight Distance: 125

Built by: Priest of Lihhr





It takes time to heal units with builders like Kireenna and the priestess; you can save time by using the priest of Lihr to construct the pillar of light in an area that's convenient to return wounded troops. Though it doesn't cost much mana, the pillar of light takes awhile to build and possesses low hit points, making it an easy target against enemy air patrols. To heal your units, just place the Veruna soldiers near the pillar of light (it has a much greater radius of effect than the similar structure, the Zhon sacred fire).

Veruna Builders

The Veruna builders aren't particularly special in anyway. Keep the priestess working on mortar defenses, especially if you feel your base is highly susceptible to a melee rush attack.

The Sea Mage, Kireenna

Hit Points: 14,800

Weapon Damage: 1,500, 2,001, 5,000

Weapon Range: 400, 600, 120

Max Mana: 1,000

Mana per Shot: 0, 200, 900

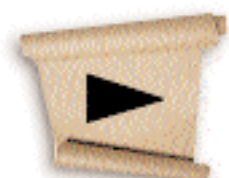
Weapon Reload Time: 4, 2.5, 1.5

Radar Coverage: 650

Sight Distance: 215

Builds: Wall, gate, lodestone, guard tower, enclave, sea fort

The monarch of the Veruna civilization, Kireenna constructs tier 1 structures, including walls, lodestones, and gates, and serves to protect against early game rushes and other invasion. Kireenna uses three spells to attack, water





ball, water burst, and water blast. Like other monarchs, Kirenna possesses enough hit points and firepower to survive many battles. If you decide to drag your monarch into the fray, be careful, as many multiplayer games (and single-player missions) end with you leader dead. Also, because Veruna commands the seas, Kirenna can morph a fish fin and swim across the waterways.

Priestess

Build Cost: 505

Build Time: 145

Hit Points: 2,300

Radar Coverage: 425

Sight Distance: 169

Built by: Enclave

Builds: Wall, lodestone, guard tower, enclave, sea fort, citadel, bastion, mortar

A good Veruna player puts the priestess to work as soon as possible, constructing important tier 2 structures such as the sea fort and citadel as well as the key defensive emplacements, the bastion and the mortar. Keep in mind, like several builders in the game, the priestess carries no weapon, making her vulnerable against any enemy unit. If you set her out building lodestones, escort her around the map with a few melee and range units to protect her from attack (even animal attack). Don't construct just one priestess; you should have several roaming your base, with two or more building and a few that work solely as healers.





Priest of Lihr

Build Cost: 5,292

Build Time: 75

Hit Points: 2,755

Weapon Damage: 799

Weapon Range: 355

Weapon Reload Time: 2.1

Radar Coverage: 550

Sight Distance: 220

Built by: Citadel

Builds: Dragon of Lihr, divine lodestone, pillar of light

The highest builder in the Veruna side, the priest of Lihr can also walk on water. The main purpose of the priest, though, will be to replace lodestones with divine lodestones (to extract the mana much faster) and begin construction of the sea dragon. The priest of Lihr carries one powerful range weapon (the water ball), but slow movement and lack of hit points makes him an easy target in battles.

Veruna Units

With a mighty fleet, the Veruna side usually has little trouble controlling the seas. However, don't underestimate its land power as well. Berserkers and amazon knights are powerful land units when used in combination, and the musketeer and crusader aren't too shabby either. First tier units closely resemble the Aramon race, but as you climb the Veruna hierarchy, you'll witness more diversity and power.





Parrot

Build Cost: 251

Build Time: 246

Hit Points: 20

Radar Coverage: 500

Sight Distance: 225

Built by: Enclave

Like other scouts, the Veruna parrot lacks hit points, but is highly mobile and can evade anti-air shots when micromanaged (or when guarding a tower or structure). Use the parrot to spot for long-range weapons like the mortar, bastion, and especially the trebuchet ship. Gaining reconnaissance on your opponent is one of the main keys to eventual success.

Use the parrot to see what your enemy is up to and adjust your unit construction accordingly. If you scout and see that many enemy lodestones lack defenses, mount an attack. If you scout and see your enemy heading to your base or lodestones, you can move your defenses to protect vital areas. Naturally, the parrot should also be used to seek out new lodestones, learn the layout of the map, and discover choke points and waterways.

Warrior

Build Cost: 265

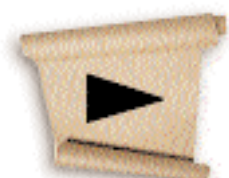
Build Time: 85

Hit Points: 2,617

Weapon Damage: 380

Weapon Range: 30

Weapon Reload Time: 1.8





Radar Coverage: 0

Sight Distance: 135

Built by: Enclave

The basic melee unit of the Veruna, the warrior matches up pretty well against the Aramon swordsman and Taros executioner, but is overmatched by the Zhon troll (though has little trouble with the hunter or goblin). Like most melee units, you should strive to support the warrior with artillery and range units like the crossbowman or even the musketeers. Because the warriors have no anti-air attack, any air-unit can wipe out an entire legion of warriors without even breaking a sweat. Further, as the warrior is engaged in melee battle, the ranged units can stand back from a distance, taking shots at enemy melee giving the warriors an advantage in battle.

Early in the game, use warriors to protect lodestones and roaming builders. The further into the game you get, the less effective the warrior will be. Still, with a short build time and an inexpensive cost, you can churn out plenty of Warriors against an enemy second or third tier force. Don't rely on warriors or any melee-only unit solely, though; the fastest way to achieve defeat in Total Annihilation: Kingdoms is to only construct one unit type.

Crossbowman

Build Cost: 300

Build Time: 104

Hit Points: 1,600

Weapon Damage: 293

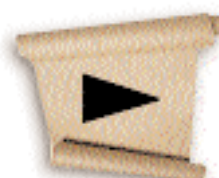
Weapon Range: 431

Weapon Reload Time: 4.7

Radar Coverage: 0

Sight Distance: 180

Built by: Enclave





Less expensive and causing more damage than the Aramon archer, the crossbowman's primary weakness is that he fires so slowly; after every shot of his powerful crossbow, this ranged unit must reload the bolt. In a hectic battle, this extra reload time can prove costly, even against the weaker Aramon archer, who can fire off arrows at a greater rate. Crossbowmen provide no radar coverage, and their weapon range is much greater than their sight distance; therefore, you should use spotters when using your crossbowmen army or at least have towers and other radar units available nearby.

Use the crossbowmen in combination with a band of melee units for greater effectiveness - you must protect the crossbowmen from melee attack (the slow fire rate means they'll get annihilated very quickly). Position some crossbowmen near lodestones, structures, or towers to provide anti-air coverage, especially when air units are engaged with the tower at close-range.

Catapult

Build Cost: 667

Build Time: 159

Hit Points: 2,289

Weapon Damage: 1,513

Weapon Range: 800

Weapon Reload Time: 5.5

Radar Coverage: 0

Sight Distance: 160

Built by: Enclave

Superior in every way to the Aramon equivalent, the Veruna catapult is excellent for both offensive and defensive engagements. Stick your catapults behind your fort walls and towers so they can do their work from a safe dis-





tance (melee units will eat up a defenseless catapult in no time). Working in conjunction with a tower, the catapult can prove quite deadly; the tower works to gain radar coverage while the catapult works on long-range shots.

In offensive maneuvers, keep the catapult well behind the front lines, just behind the ranged units like the crossbowman or musketeers. Use a few melee units on guard just in case an enemy unit flanks or otherwise sneaks past your force. An attack consisting of melee, ranged, and siege weapons, such as the catapult, is a devastating move, but one that takes micromanagement and precision to pull off with regularity. When moving your catapult into battle, it's wise to keep your units in formation (ALT-#); the catapult is quite slow, and your other units will leave it behind if you aren't paying attention. A catapult slowly chugging along well behind the battle is a complete waste of time and mana.

Skiff

Build Cost: 384

Build Time: 225

Hit Points: 2,750

Weapon Damage: 214

Weapon Range: 580

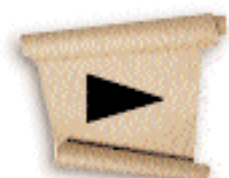
Weapon Reload Time: 1.8

Radar Coverage: 800

Sight Distance: 320

Built by: Sea Fort

The smallest Veruna ship, the skiff, is primarily used as a cheap scout, although it does feature a simple arrow weapon. While other ships feature equal or greater radar coverage (and certainly superior weaponry), it's difficult





to pass up on the skiff's inexpensive cost. Because they're so cheap, crank out some skiffs and send them in such a fashion that they provide maximum sight and radar coverage, especially for your most mighty of ships, the trebuchet. Also, skiffs placed at various points can give you an idea about what the enemy is up to, especially troop movement, which can be spotted on the radar screen.

Harpoon Ship

Build Cost: 1,711

Build Time: 156

Hit Points: 5,254

Weapon Damage: 1,089

Weapon Range: 710

Weapon Reload Time: 3

Radar Coverage: 800

Sight Distance: 320

Built by: Sea Fort

Featuring a much more powerful ballista weapon than the skiff, the harpoon ship can serve both as a scout and offensive ship, though it's best used as an anti-aircraft platform in support of the man of war and trebuchet, which are very vulnerable to air attacks. Use the harpoon ship to guard your mobile ship fleet consisting of man of wars and trebuchets as you advance toward the enemy stronghold. With enough skiffs and harpoon ships, you shouldn't have much trouble knocking out air units and keeping your more powerful vessels safe.





Flagship

Build Cost: 1,237

Build Time: 440

Hit Points: 6,112

Weapon Damage: 413

Weapon Range: 450

Weapon Reload Time: 3

Radar Coverage: 700

Sight Distance: 230

Built by: Sea fort

Builds: Enclave, lodestone, floating tower

Relatively inexpensive and fairly durable, the flagship isn't as much a fighter as it is a builder. As the Veruna side, you'll want a flagship as soon as possible, mainly to construct the cost-effective floating tower, an excellent defense for your sea fort and base perimeter. The flagship can also be used to construct lodestones and enclaves on other islands (at least close to the shoreline), thus expanding your empire without using the time it takes to summon builders and use transports. Although the flagship could serve as an offensive ship (as well as anti-air protection for the man of war and trebuchet), the harpoon ship is better equipped at nearly the same cost.

Transport Ship

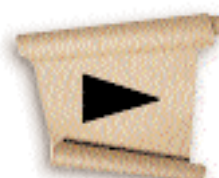
Build Cost: 2,333

Build Time: 230

Hit Points: 8,650

Weapon Damage: 282

Weapon Range: 580





Weapon Reload Time: 1.8

Radar Coverage: 851

Sight Distance: 270

Built by: Sea fort

Though other Veruna ships (such as the man of war) can hold ground forces, the transport ship can carry the most and venture into shallow water where other ships can't hope to travel. The transport ship is durable, sometimes a necessity when trying to reach the far shores, but can't fend off many attackers with its measly damage potential. The transport ship needs support, and because you'll likely be carrying many troops, the loss of a transport ship could prove costly indeed. Don't take risks; instead, use other ships such as the anti-air harpoon ship and the ship-to-ship powerhouse the man of war to fend off enemy attacks.

Man of War

Build Cost: 2,656

Build Time: 185

Hit Points: 7,630

Weapon Damage: 1,332

Weapon Range: 800

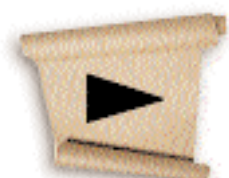
Weapon Reload Time: 3.9

Radar Coverage: 800

Sight Distance: 278

Built by: Sea Fort

The most impressive ship in the game, at least in close-quarters ship-to-ship (or ship-to-Kraken... well, you get the idea) battles, the man of war can overwhelm enemy forces quickly and is durable enough to withstand the punish-





ment of air attack while assisting support ships in their work. With ample cannon range, the man of war can also take out land targets positioned near the shorelines; however, the trebuchet ship is the way to go if you're interested in punishing land forces.

Like the trebuchet, the man of war needs support to be most effective. Sending in a fleet of man of war ships will only lead to disaster, as enemy air units will blow you to pieces in a matter of minutes. The harpoon ship provides the best escort for the man of war, boasting a relatively inexpensive cost and an effective weapon. If power in numbers is what you desire, opt for the inexpensive skiff instead, just keep those skiffs guarding these bigger ships at all times.

Trebuchet Ship

Build Cost: 5,843

Build Time: 374

Hit Points: 3,288

Weapon Damage: 1,845

Weapon Range: 2,537

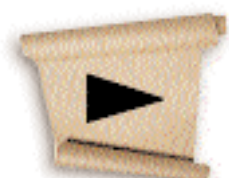
Weapon Reload Time: 5

Radar Coverage: 600

Sight Distance: 237

Built by: Sea fort

A must-have for any Veruna player (except, of course, on all-land maps), the trebuchet ship's range (twice the mortar and three times the catapult) means this vessel can sit back from a safe distance and pound enemy units, emplacements, and structures. The trebuchet ship needs two things to be most effective, however. First, you need radar coverage and lots of it. If





you've constructed the trebuchet ship with no current long-range radar coverage (and no thought about how to achieve some), you've wasted valuable mana and build time on a ship that is basically useless.

Before constructing the trebuchet ship, acquire radar coverage by sending out skiff scouts, a parrot, a dirigible, or a few towers so you can get an eye on some enemy structures and emplacements. Even if you don't have radar coverage on the enemy base, you can also force-attack the ground at mana spots (which are likely holding enemy lodestones) to cripple your foe's unit production and mana intake. The trebuchet, because it has such a slow firing rate and firing speed, is best used against fixed emplacements like towers, lodestones, or structures and isn't as effective against mobile units. If, though, you can engage enemy ground forces with your own melee units, the trebuchet can turn the tide of the battle quickly with just one lobbed cannon ball. Second, above all else, protect this highly vulnerable ship from attack, especially from air units.

Mortar

Build Cost: 5,546

Build Time: 712

Hit Points: 2,050

Weapon Damage: 1,587

Weapon Range: 1,450

Weapon Reload Time: 5

Radar Coverage: 0

Sight Distance: 175

Built by: Priestess





Because it's immobile, the mortar is more like a tower than an actual unit. Unlike a tower, the mortar provides no radar coverage and will be useless without the support of a scout (such as a parrot) or, better, a guard tower or bastion. Still, the mortar's weapon range is greater than that of both the guard tower and bastion's radar coverage, making it even more imperative that you use parrots or other scouts to assist. Used effectively, the mortar can provide excellent base defense (just be sure to scout ahead and annihilate those attackers from afar) as well as on offense.

Send out a little army filled with a few melee units, a priestess, and some anti-air units and construct a mortar near the enemy base. You should scout with a parrot beforehand to locate the best location for your little plan, primarily a blind spot in the enemy's defenses and radar coverage. Once the mortar is complete, use the parrot to gain sight on enemy structures and begin pounding with the mortar. Though they fire slowly, mortars are accurate against fixed emplacements and dish out lots of damage. Don't expect your little maneuver to last very long, however; sometimes, though, any setback you can give your enemy is enough for you to gain the upper hand.

Musketeer

Build Cost: 745

Build Time: 122

Hit Points: 1,420

Weapon Damage: 693

Weapon Range: 550

Weapon Reload Time: 6.2

Radar Coverage: 0

Sight Distance: 180

Built by: Citadel





Much like the crossbowman of tier 1, the musketeer's powerful range weapon should be used to support your melee forces and assist in guarding valuable structures against air attack. Although he's not especially durable, the musketeer possesses excellent weapon damage and range, but needs spotters and scouts for maximum efficiency. The musketeer features no radar coverage alone, and his sight distance is well under his maximum weapon range.

Keep your musketeers back from the battle, organized in a line formation (so they all have shots on the target within range), while your units in the battle provide sight and radar coverage for their muskets. Unlike archery weapons, the musketeer's weapon almost never misses, an especially effective tool against fast-moving land and air targets.

Berserker

Build Cost: 682

Build Time: 115

Hit Points: 2,884

Weapon Damage: 760

Weapon Range: 40

Weapon Reload Time: 1.2

Radar Coverage: 0

Sight Distance: 90

Built by: Citadel

One of the fastest units in the game, the maniac Veruna berserkers are quick to build, provide ample damage, and are durable enough to withstand most encounters (though many upper-level melee units of other races can best the berserker in a fight). Although they're fast, it's dangerous to blindly roam the berserkers around the map. Their sight distance is extremely small, and they





possess no radar coverage to speak of; thus, enemy units can virtually appear out of the mist, likely a bad situation for the berserkers. With their speed, though, they make effective hit-and-run melee units, especially against lightly guarded enemy lodestones. Keeping them bunched up during melee attacks could prove hazardous; the crazy 'zerks have a tendency to wound others around them.

Amazon Knight

Build Cost: 1,136

Build Time: 159

Hit Points: 2,200

Weapon Damage: 301

Weapon Range: 320

Weapon Reload Time: 1.2

Radar Coverage: 0

Sight Distance: 185

Built by: Citadel

Like the berserker, the amazon knight further solidifies the Veruna speed advantage, especially against the slow-moving Aramon race. Another inexpensive unit, the amazon knight helps the Veruna player churn out relatively powerful ground forces in the late game with little time or mana required. Like other range units, the amazon knight's armor is pretty weak, so don't leave her unguarded without a few melee supporters. Keep radar coverage solid, so you can use the weapon range (a moderate 320) to optimum effect. Amazon knights, with their fast reload time, are also good for anti-air protection of lodestones and structures.





Dirigible

Build Cost: 1,611

Build Time: 185

Hit Points: 4,079

Weapon Damage: 1,270, 161

Weapon Range: 200, 450

Weapon Reload Time: 2, 3.2

Radar Coverage: 1,000

Sight Distance: 350

Built by: Citadel

The dirigible is more effective against ground targets than other air units (especially against many enemy air units). Its primary use is to annihilate ground targets (although the range is close, the damage is very high) and to provide radar coverage for Veruna's more devastating weapons, the trebuchet ship and mortar.

Slow moving and an extremely large target, try to keep the dirigible out of enemy sight, or it won't last too long as an effective scout. Most players don't like spies in their territory and won't waste time in eliminating pesky dirigibles and parrots from the skies. Don't underestimate the dirigible's ability to pound ground targets, however; with a high damage potential, the slow-moving but fast-firing dirigible can waste towers and clumps of units in quick fashion. In large numbers, the dirigible can wipe out an enemy assault force or base in no time. Inexpensive and fast to produce, the Veruna player should never underestimate these slow-moving bomber. Combine your dirigible force with plenty of anti-air and ground support units for a powerful force.





Crusader

Build Cost: 1,069

Build Time: 196

Hit Points: 4,325

Weapon Damage: 615

Weapon Range: 80

Weapon Reload Time: 1.8

Radar Coverage: 0

Sight Distance: 79

Built by: Citadel

Basically a pumped-up warrior, the Veruna crusader provides a solid melee force along side the quicker, but less durable berserkers. Like most of the Veruna ground force, the crusader isn't extremely expensive nor does it take very long to train. Damage and speed are both adequate, making the crusader a solid unit to take into battle.

Coupled with the musketeers, crusaders are Veruna's primary front line unit - just be sure to provide adequate support in the form of range, siege, and even air (dirigible) attacks. Also, like the berserker, the crusader has an extremely tight sight radius; watch out for surprise attacks if you decide to venture out with a force made up only of crusaders.

Dragon of Lihr (Sea Dragon)

Build Cost: 49,287

Build Time: 9,654

Hit Points: 23,988

Weapon Damage: 795, 795, 3,150





Max Mana: 1,000

Mana per Shot: 0, 300, 900

Weapon Range: 525, 800, 450

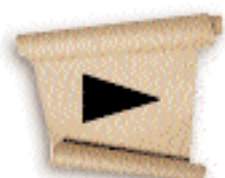
Weapon Reload Time: 3, 2.5, 5

Radar Coverage: 2,000

Sight Distance: 210

Built by: Priest of Lih

The sea dragon, the Veruna's special flying unit, includes three powerful magic attacks, fire breath, water ball, and the tsunami. Once you've summoned this powerful beast (like all dragons, the dragon of Lih costs loads of mana and takes forever to build, though multiple priests can assist in its construction), choose your targets wisely. It's most powerful magic attack, the tsunami, takes 90 percent of its mana reserves, but it can completely wipe out a clump of enemy units. Don't waste the shot on just one or two units; instead, save it for a legion of tightly packed enemy forces. Like other dragons, the sea dragon is best used against enemy units and isn't quite as effective against structures or towers.



Chapter Three:

The Armed Forces of Zhon





Commanding the element of wind, Thirsha, the huntress and leader of the Zhon, forgoes structures in favor of roaming unit builders. Without structures, the Zhon are virtually a nomadic race that can set up camp wherever Thirsha desires. The allure of the Zhon side is that it produces loads of units quickly and has powerful third tier units, the lumbering stone giant and the mighty drake.

Zhon Structures

With no barracks-type structure to speak of, the Zhon are only left with two structures (besides lodestones for mana collection), the sacred fire and the death totem. Though there's only two, both are vital to the long-term success of the Zhon.

Sacred Fire

Build Cost: 214

Build Time: 100

Hit Points: 845

Conjured by: Huntress and beast handler

Much like the Veruna pillar of light (but much less expensive), the Zhon sacred fire heals any units in its vicinity. Though it doesn't heal quite as quickly as the pillar of light, the inexpensive cost and quick build time means you can place a few in different spots. With the quantity of units produced by the Zhon side, constructing sacred fires around the map assists in quickly healing your units before returning them to battle. Because they're so inexpensive, don't be concerned about guarding each one with units or a death totem. Place them where your units are likely to congregate and use the sacred fire as necessary.





Sticking stone giants, a Zhon unit and one of the most powerful in the game, around a sacred fire works almost like a durable tower. The giant, with a range of 900, can hurl boulders quite the distance, and if he takes damage, the sacred fire should regenerate his health before he's completely wiped out.

Death Totem

Build Cost: 5582

Build Time: 610

Hit Points: 13432

Weapon Damage: 492

Weapon Range: 607

Weapon Reload Time: 2.2

Radar Coverage: 750

Sight Distance: 300

Conjured by: Beast Tamer

Though the Zhon side really has no central base (because they lack the structures that construct units), building the expensive Death Totem might prove a waste to some. Still, most Zhon players will still centralize their unit construction in one area of the map and will require protection from outside forces. With excellent range, damage and hit points, the Death Totem provides ample protection for Zhon lodestones, the only real structure the side possesses. Place a few Death Totems at choke points and around heavily traveled areas to put the shock into your foe.





Zhon Builders

Though Thirsha is quick and can traverse terrain the other monarchs can't, she's a bit weaker and can't withstand as much punishment. Keep the builders - the beast handler, tamer, and lord - safe and healthy; these are Zhon's gateway to creating a huge army, and each takes awhile to create.

The Huntress, Thirsha

Hit Points: 9,244

Weapon Damage: 1,031, 1,455, 5,000

Max Mana: 1,000

Mana per Shot: 0, 300, 900

Weapon Range: 500, 500, 150

Weapon Reload Time: 4, 1.5, 1.5

Radar Coverage: 700

Sight Distance: 275

Conjures: Lodestone, death totem, beast handler, sacred fire, shaman

Unlike the other monarchs, Thirsha, the huntress and leader of the Zhon race, can hover and fly over otherwise impassable terrain. Additionally, Thirsha is faster than the other monarchs, making her more useful in battle situations than the others (though, remember, in most Total Annihilation: Kingdoms games, if you lose your monarch, the game is over). Like other monarchs, Thirsha carries three spells: lightning blast, lightning ball, and wind wave.

Because the Zhon lack traditional structures like the barracks or enclave, Thirsha can fly anywhere on the map and create a beast handler (tier 1 unit creator), which in turn can begin pumping out units and better builders.





Thirsha's quick strike ability also makes her the most effective hit-and-run monarch (though remember, after her mana is depleted from her most powerful spell, she's quite vulnerable to overwhelming attack).

Beast Handler

Build Cost: 1,685

Build Time: 455

Hit Points: 1,401

Weapon Damage: 180

Weapon Range: 100

Weapon Reload Time: 2

Radar Coverage: 420

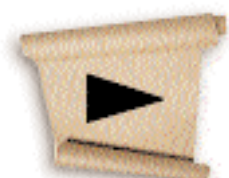
Sight Distance: 175

Conjured by: Huntress

Conjures: Lodestone, sacred fire, hunter, bat, goblin, troll, beast tamer

Without structures, the Zhon race depends on three main builders to construct its collection of land, air, and sea units. The first of these, the beast handler, can protect itself in a battle, but don't expect its simple whip to fend off many attackers. Protect these builders well; they're much easier to destroy than a structure like the Aramon barracks. Further, their slow build time can put a Zhon player at a significant unit disadvantage if he is careless with builders.

Protect these builders well and certainly summon more than one, just in case the need arises. Use builders to guard death totems for quick repair. For lodestone construction, you're probably better off using Thirsha. She can traverse the map more quickly, and you don't really put her in significant danger as you would the much more vulnerable builder. Create two builders in a





flanking position around an enemy base. Churn out goblins and trolls as quickly as your mana supply will allow and enter the enemy stronghold from multiple sides. With any luck, the enemy's monarch will be occupied with one force while the other is rampaging through structures and units.

Beast Tamer

Build Cost: 3,450

Build Time: 789

Hit Points: 1,751

Radar Coverage: 520

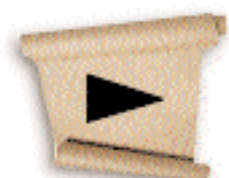
Sight Distance: 200

Conjured by: Beast handler and beast lord

Conjures: Lodestone, death totem, harpies, gryphon, basilisk, kraken, beast lord

This second-level builder for the Zhon race creates its most valuable contribution, the harpie and, certainly, the third-level builder the beast lord. Unlike the beast handler, the beast tamer possesses no defensive attack, making him even more vulnerable than his predecessor.

Protect these builders; they take nearly as long to construct as Aramon, Veruna, and Taros structures, but are significantly weaker. With the amount of units the Zhon can generate, it's sometimes easy to lose track of your builders. Don't let these units wander off and get killed; you'll have a much tougher time against other races if you're constantly rebuilding the beast handler and beast tamer.





Beast Lord

Build Cost: 5,887

Build Time: 585

Hit Points: 4,300

Weapon Damage: 200

Weapon Range: 500

Weapon Reload Time: 1.6

Radar Coverage: 600

Sight Distance: 200

Conjured by: Beast tamer

Conjures: Lodestone, beast tamer, drake, shaman, stone giant, roc, jungle orc, wisp

Most Zhon players will strike to reach beast lord as soon as possible; the Zhon third-level units, such as the stone giant, drake, wisp, and jungle orc are much more powerful than their second-level cousins. Though the beast lord carries a moderately powerful defensive weapon, don't even think about using him in battle - of all the builders, the beast lord is arguably the most valuable. Not only can he retro-build all the other builders, the creatures he can summon are indeed the most powerful the Zhon have to offer.

Shaman

Build Cost: 6,899

Build Time: 905

Hit Points: 2,341

Weapon Damage: 626

Weapon Range: 407

Weapon Reload Time: 3.2





Radar Coverage: 756

Sight Distance: 200

Conjured by: Beast lord

Conjures: Divine lodestone, ancient dragon

The purpose of the Zhon shaman is simply to construct the ancient dragon (and be around in case the Zhon deity decides to make an appearance). Unless you've reached the point where your mana input can take on the heavy build time and expense of the ancient dragon, you should probably hold off on the shaman unless you've secured enough mana spots to where the divine lodestone would be effective and protected. If your mana intake is plentiful, build the shaman and begin construction on the Zhon winged beast. To speed up the construction process, use two or more shamans.

The presence of the shaman also moderately boosts the armor of units around him. He's costly, though, so if you decide to take him out into battle, be sure to stick a few anti-air or melee guard units by his side.

Zhon Units

The Zhon's lower-level units are easy to produce and extremely fast, but not that strong. However, the higher you go up their unit hierarchy, the more powerful and useful the units become. The combination of stone giant, jungle orc, and drake could be one of the more formidable forces in Total Annihilation: Kingdoms.





Hunter

Build Cost: 311

Build Time: 115

Hit Points: 1,254

Weapon Damage: 270

Weapon Range: 422

Weapon Reload Time: 2.9

Radar Coverage: 0

Sight Distance: 188

Conjured by: Beast handler

Roughly equivalent to the Aramon's archer, the Zhon hunter is a ranged unit (it tosses a spear) and serves well to protect the most powerful Zhon tier 1 unit, the troll. Zhon has no shortage of anti-air units, so the hunter's role certainly decreases as the Zhon player escalates through the build hierarchy. Coupled with the easy-to-produce (and easy to destroy) goblin unit, the hunter can be quite an effective early rush unit, causing problems for players who prefer to build structures peacefully before worrying about cranking out defensive structures and units. Like other range units, the hunter doesn't fare well against melee units, so protect him with a troll or goblin.

Bat

Build Cost: 292

Build Time: 290

Hit Points: 142

Radar Coverage: 800

Sight Distance: 200

Conjured by: Beast handler





Unlike other races, which possess long-range killing machines like the trebuchet, cannoner, or trebuchet ship, the Zhon units feature no significant long-range device (besides the stone giant). Therefore, the bat, Zhon's scout unit, is basically just that - a scout. While others serve as spotters and radar coverage for higher-powered siege weaponry, the bat's main purpose is to gain knowledge of enemy troops, movement, and especially weak areas in base design.

With the Zhon ability to conquer loads of units, especially tier 1, at an alarming rate, the importance of scouting could mean an early game advantage, whether it be complete annihilation or the destruction of several key lode-stones. It's still wise, however, to use a bat to guard a death totem or stone giant, two of Zhon's best range structures and units respectively. Both of these Zhon creations can fire at maximum range with the assistance of a patrolling bat.

Troll

Build Cost: 354

Build Time: 89

Hit Points: 3,514

Weapon Damage: 450

Weapon Range: 34

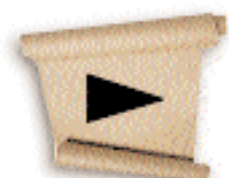
Weapon Reload Time: 1.6

Radar Coverage: 0

Sight Distance: 170

Conjured by: Beast tamer

Quick to build and more powerful than Aramon horseman, the troll emerges as a significant tier 1 force. Though many Zhon players will likely opt for the hunter and goblin combination, the troll really doesn't take much longer to





build, and the payoff is worth the extra wait (and mana). Support your troll force with hunters in tier 1, then other range, anti-air, and air units as you progress through the Zhon hierarchy. Later in the game, trolls can serve as inexpensive guards for your death totems and lodestones while you worry about constructing more powerful melee and range units such as the jungle orc and stone giant.

Goblin

Build Cost: 173

Build Time: 78

Hit Points: 1,211

Weapon Damage: 181

Weapon Range: 50

Weapon Reload Time: 1.15

Radar Coverage: 0

Sight Distance: 110

Conjured by: Beast handler

Extremely agile, inexpensive, and quick to produce, the Zhon side can have a legion of goblins constructed before most players have even finished their main unit-producing structure. But, don't blindly toss your goblins at the enemy base; you'll only get these weak creatures destroyed by the enemy monarch. Instead, use the goblins as ground scouts and seekers of unguarded lodestones. Because they're so fast, you can flee from other races while searching for a new target.

Gryphon

Build Cost: 859

Build Time: 169

Hit Points: 1,911





Weapon Damage: 340
Weapon Range: 510
Weapon Reload Time: 3.4
Radar Coverage: 1,000
Sight Distance: 200
Conjured by: Beast tamer

While fast and inexpensive to produce (at least relative to other air units), the gryphon lacks a powerful weapon and must take passes at enemy targets to get off shots. This makes the gryphon an extremely slow worker when it comes to assaulting enemy units or structures. Against certain units, though, this ability becomes an advantage. The gryphon doesn't hover in place like the drake and can dodge enemy fire, especially that of Veruna ships, which can't keep up with the gryphon's speed.

The gryphon also provides about 20 percent more radar coverage than the Zhon's chief scout, the bat; however, two bats are much easier to produce, and the mana and build time could be put to better use in either additional ground forces or builders. Use the gryphon to find and attack unguarded lodestones and other structures. As a primary air assault unit, especially against heavily defended areas and bases, the gryphon just doesn't measure up to the more powerful drake.

Harpy

Build Cost: 2,562
Build Time: 333
Hit Points: 913
Max Mana: 1,000
Mana per Shot: 300





Radar Coverage: 1,000

Sight Distance: 190

Conjured by: Beast tamer

One of the more unique units in Total Annihilation: Kingdoms, the goal of the harpy isn't to kill the enemy unit, but to "alter its mind" and convince it to fight for the side of Zhon! The ability to capture enemy units provides several interesting options. For instance, use harpies to capture enemy builders, and you can construct enemy buildings and units. Also, a swarm of harpies assisting in a ground melee war can turn the tide quickly. Fire the harpies on the enemy units (preferably the enemy siege units); then, after a few moments, the enemy will realize his own units have turned against him. Best of all, you retain control and can continue the battle.

Because the harpies' mind-altering ability uses mana (they carry 1,000 when full), it's best to engage the enemy with about four or five if you hope to quickly gain control of the enemy unit. In lower numbers, the harpies just aren't as effective because these flyers run out of valuable mana so quickly. Don't attempt to use harpies against structures, as they are much more effective against units. When the harpy runs out of mana, remove it from the battle, as it will likely get taken out easily by whatever anti-air unit the enemy is using. Finally, harpies are also good on defense. Keep several in your base for when your opponent decides to send over a fleet of air assault units (for example, sky knights). When the enemy arrives, sweep in your harpy force and begin some conversions.

Basilisk

Build Cost: 1,784

Build Time: 271

Hit Points: 900





Max Mana: 1,000

Mana per Shot: 999

Radar Coverage: 0

Sight Distance: 180

Conjured by: Beast tamer

Though the basilisk looks menacing, it doesn't possess a traditional attack. Instead, the basilisk can turn enemies into stone by just facing the target and firing the stone stare. Working much like the harpies, basilisks are more effective in numbers. Plus, their stone stare depletes their personal mana reserves almost completely; once the basilisk has fired, it'll be vulnerable until it recharges.

Because it's a land unit (that virtually everything can attack), the basilisk is much more susceptible to attack, and its relatively low armor (900 hit points) creates a very weak creature in the face of stronger enemy units. To prevent them from being destroyed quickly in battle, don't use the basilisk as your front line unit. Instead, send in other units to engage the enemy melee and follow with the basilisk, letting the creature work its vicious stone stare without fear of being destroyed.

Kraken

Build Cost: 768

Build Time: 145

Hit Points: 4,101

Weapon Damage: 790

Weapon Range: 400

Weapon Reload Time: 2.1

Radar Coverage: 750

Sight Distance: 145

Conjured by: Beast tamer





Zhon's lone sea unit, the kraken, can hold off several ships in numbers, but like the Aramon, the Zhon have a difficult time competing with the massive sea fleet of the Veruna. Kraken also do not perform well against the floating tower, Veruna's primary water defense. Against the Veruna side, attempting to win the sea war proves quite difficult, and you're probably better off waiting until you can create powerful air units such as the drake and wisp and use those against the enemy ships.

The kraken is quite inexpensive, however, and if you can get a few of them over into the Veruna camp before significant ships and towers have been constructed, you could keep Veruna from ever controlling the seas - but you must take initiative before a large fleet is created. Keep in mind that the kraken can attack land, sea, and air units.

Drake

Build Cost: 3,004

Build Time: 379

Hit Points: 2,786

Weapon Damage: 721

Weapon Range: 500

Weapon Reload Time: 4.5

Radar Coverage: 800

Sight Distance: 144

Conjured by: Beast lord

One of the most powerful air units in Total Annihilation: Kingdoms (though second to the Taros sky knight), the drake resembles a small, agile dragon, pounding units and structures alike with its fire breath. Unlike the gryphon, though, the drake hovers when attacking its target, making it an easier target for anti-air units, towers, and ships. Like most of Zhon's army, drakes work best in numbers, overwhelming the opposition by sheer force.





Patrol drakes around the map, seeking out weak areas in the enemy's defense and taking out valuable lodestones and scouts. Combine the drake with the stone giant for an effective base assault; the drake provides sight and radar coverage for the long-range stone giant, while the boulder-tossing behemoth knocks out the towers and anti-air units harming the drake.

Stone Giant

Build Cost: 2,951

Build Time: 425

Hit Points: 10,310

Weapon Damage: 1,269

Weapon Range: 900

Weapon Reload Time: 3.8

Radar Coverage: 600

Sight Distance: 230

Conjured by: Beast lord

A necessary element to any well-rounded Zhon force, the lumbering stone giant carries immense armor, excellent range, and a powerful boulder-tossing weapon. Further, they aren't that expensive, though they take longer to build than most units. The stone giant's primary weakness is its slow weapon reload time, which puts it at a disadvantage if it's swarmed by enemy melee or air units. Therefore, use a few hunters (anti-air) or trolls (melee) to protect stone giants from attack. In fact, treat the stone giant much like you would an Aramon or Verunan catapult.

Possessing no radar and a shorter-than-weapon-range line of sight, the stone giant needs a spotter to be most effective. Either use a scout bat to guard the stone giant or combine the force with air units (primarily the drake) for optimum effectiveness. For defense, place stone giants next to sacred fires for an effective tower defense.





Roc

Build Cost: 819

Build Time: 126

Hit Points: 2,100

Radar Coverage: 1,000

Sight Distance: 200

Conjured by: Beast lord

With no sea transport to speak of, the Zhon require the roc to transport builders and other units to otherwise unreachable areas of the map. The number of units the roc can transport depends on the type of unit being carried. Typically, the larger the unit (and the more powerful), the less the roc can hold.

Because the Zhon possess no real structures, send builders in rocs to weak sides of the enemy base. Unlike other races, the Zhon won't need to spend mana and time constructing an enclave, barracks, or cabal. Instead, the builder can quickly begin churning out combat units. This ability, combined with the roc, can easily create an attack force from multiple sides, a powerful combat maneuver, especially considering Zhon's usual unit number advantage.

Jungle Orc

Build Cost: 1,397

Build Time: 195

Hit Points: 4,612

Weapon Damage: 999

Weapon Range: 45





Weapon Reload Time: 1.75

Radar Coverage: 0

Sight Distance: 200

Conjured by: Beast lord

Zhon's most beastly melee unit, the jungle orc rounds out a nice triple threat of the Zhon race: drakes for air power, stone giants for range and siege warfare, and jungle orcs for melee wars. Combine these three units for an effective attack force. Jungle orcs are also excellent guards when positioned around key lodestones, defensive towers, and stone giants. The jungle orc's effectiveness is somewhere between the Aramon's barbarian and knight; the orc's fast weapon reload time and pounding damage is offset by its higher mana cost and weaker armor.

Wisp

Build Cost: 1,300

Build Time: 245

Hit Points: 1,375

Weapon Damage: 520

Weapon Range: 500

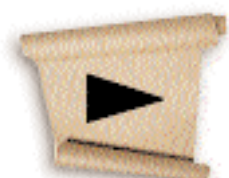
Weapon Reload Time: 3

Radar Coverage: 600

Sight Distance: 151

Conjured by: Beast lord

Cheap, tough, and fast, the wisp provides quick air support for the Zhon forces. While not as effective as the drake when it comes to air assaults, the wisp's speed (faster than a bat) creates an effective hit-and-run air unit and one that can evade many ground anti-air units (although the wisp does hover





when attacking). Many players will choose the drake, sometimes simply for its resemblance to the powerful ancient dragon, but for the mana, the wisp is almost a better choice. Just remember that although most of the statistics are identical, the wisp's armor is much weaker than the drake's and won't last long against significant defensive opposition.

Ancient Dragon

Build Cost: 47,114

Build Time: 9,355

Hit Points: 23,759

Weapon Damage: 851, 774, 2,400

Max Mana: 1,000

Mana per Shot: 0, 300, 900

Weapon Range: 600, 750, 450

Weapon Reload Time: 3, 3, 5

Radar Coverage: 2,000

Sight Distance: 180

Conjured by: Shaman

Using the three spells fire breath, lightning ball, and shock wave, Zhon's ancient dragon measures up well against the other races' flying beast (the shock wave does more damage than the Aramon and Taros dragons' most powerful spell, but less than Veruna's).

Like other dragons, you should use this durable creature against enemy units and not waste its high cost and long build time against structures and tough defensive emplacements. Because the cost is so great, make sure to get your dragon out of the battle before it dies; return it to your monarch and builders to provide a healing touch. Keep your dragon alive as long as possible, racking up kills and experience points and turn the flying monstrosity into a high-powered veteran.



Chapter Four:

The Armed Forces of Taros





Commanding the elements of fire and magic, Lokken the necromancer leads the armed forces of Taros against Aramon, Verunda, and Zhon. Many Taros units contain special features like cloaking and magical abilities. While their ground forces may seem lacking, a player who takes the time to master the Taros art of magic should see good results against the other races.

Taros Structures

With two defensive towers (a caged demon and the more powerful mage tower) and three different barracks-style structures, the Taros appear on the surface to resemble the Aramon and Veruna. The units those structures can produce, however, end up looking much different.

Mage Tower

Build Cost: 7,951

Build Time: 705

Hit Points: 17,189

Weapon Damage: 1,350

Weapon Range: 500

Weapon Reload Time: 3.8

Radar Coverage: 1,000

Sight Distance: 500

Built by: Dark mason

Taros' second-level defensive tower compares respectably to the fixed emplacements of the other races. As with all towers, stick a few executioners or skeleton archers on guard to fend off any enemy units that get too close to the mage tower. Use a gargoyle to guard the tower providing additional radar coverage and line of sight.





For the most part, the Taros lack long-range weaponry (other than its air power), so bottling yourself inside a base full of mage towers probably won't be the best strategy. However, you'll need defenses against an invasion and a few strategically placed mage towers should do the job nicely.

Caged Demon

Build Cost: 2,695

Build Time: 285

Hit Points: 4,608

Weapon Damage: 245

Weapon Range: 490

Weapon Reload Time: 2.3

Radar Coverage: 1,000

Sight Distance: 250

Built by: Lokken, dark mason

Setting this caged beast against your most vital structures will protect them from early attacks and rushes, but don't expect the caged demon to survive long against the longer-ranged siege weapons of the Aramon or Veruna. Against the Zhon, however, the caged demon can work well to keep hordes of small goblins and hunters out, but you're better off concentrating on mage towers once you've summoned the dark mason.

Cabal

Build Cost: 1,688

Build Time: 512

Hit Points: 16,588

Built by: Lokken, dark mason

Builds: Zombie, gargoyle, executioner, black knight, dark mason





The basic combat unit-producing structure for the Taros, the cabal unleashes inexpensive zombies, tough executioners, and the speedy range unit, the black knight, onto the land.

One of the most unique aspects of the Taros race is the ability for the monarch, Lokken, to construct the temple, the tier 3 producing structure, immediately. However, in most games, you won't be well-funded and must think about defensive units before worrying about the high-powered attack units that come forth from the temple. Erect a cabal as soon as possible and create black knights and executioners (more cost effective than zombies) to guard your base foundation and lodestones.

Abyss

Build Cost: 5,687

Build Time: 1,411

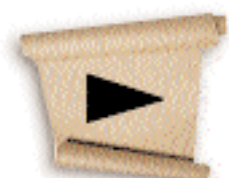
Hit Points: 23,020

Built by: Lokken, dark mason

Builds: Dark mason, weather witch, fire demon, iron beak, skeleton archer, mind mage

Though it's tempting to move straight to the temple, the abyss features several valuable units for the Taros side. The iron beak with its powerful egg bomb is Taros' primary wall and structure crusher. The skeleton archer can provide decent anti-air and rage support, and the mind mage possesses the unique ability, like the Zhon harpy, of turning an enemy unit to your side.

Like all structures, protect them well from attack (Taros structures will likely be more vulnerable to long-range assaults from the more long-range equipped races like the Aramon and Veruna) and guard them with a few anti-air and melee units if necessary.





Temple

Build Cost: 8,251

Build Time: 1,844

Hit Points: 29,941

Built by: Lokken, dark mason

Builds: Dark mason, blade demon, fire spouts, sky knight, fire mage, lich, dark priest

The temple, available to Lokken from the beginning, produces the Taros most significant melee units, the blade demon (fast and durable) and the lich (slow, but powerful). Further, the sky knight alone is worth the cost of erecting the temple. This powerful flying creature is one of the most dominant air forces in the game.

Taros Builders

The Taros race features the dark priest, one of the few builders with a significant attack. Don't waste his abilities by hiding him deep inside your base; bring him to the front lines and turn the enemy side to rubble. Protect Lokken, the Taros monarch well, he's powerful, but quite slow and an easy target in a frantic battle.

Necromancer, Lokken

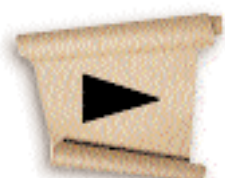
Hit Points: 16,000

Weapon Damage: 790, 1,020, 5,000

Max Mana: 1,000

Mana per Shot: 0, 200, 900

Weapon Range: 420, 400, 120





Weapon Reload Time: 2.5, 1.5, 1.5

Radar Coverage: 650

Sight Distance: 225

Builds: Wall, gate, lodestone, caged demon, cabal, abyss, temple

Lokken is one of the slowest-moving monarchs, but packs equal punch with his three spells, fireball, tracking fireball, and fire wave. However, Lokken's lack of speed is offset by his ability to cloak. When stationary, Lokken can remain cloaked for extended periods of time; once moved, though, the cloak drains his personal mana supply, and it must be replenished for him to use weaponry and to reengage the cloak. Like other monarchs, protect Lokken from attack, especially once his mana has been depleted. Use his fire wave against clumps of enemy units, especially against Zhon rushes.

Dark Mason

Build Cost: 615

Build Time: 175

Hit Points: 1,200

Radar Coverage: 475

Sight Distance: 185

Built by: Cabal, abyss, temple

Builds: Wall, lodestone, mage tower, caged demon, cabal, abyss, temple

Taros' second-level builder is generated mostly for the powerful defensive structure, the mage tower. Lokken can already erect the temple and abyss, leaving the dark mason to perform other tasks, such as heal friendly units, build lodestones, and make sure the appropriate defenses are constructed. Like most builders, the dark mason carries no weaponry and is extremely vulnerable to attack.





Dark Priest

Build Cost: 6,552

Build Time: 1,282

Hit Points: 4,000

Weapon Damage: 750, 925, 825

Max Mana: 1,000

Mana per Shot: 0, 300, 500

Weapon Range: 275, 600, 600

Weapon Reload Time: 3.5, 1.5, 1.5

Radar Coverage: 550

Sight Distance: 145

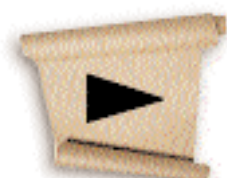
Built by: Temple

Builds: Divine lodestone, black dragon

Like to the Aramon's acolyte, the Taros dark priest can hold his own in battle. Equipped with lightning, lightning ball, and the area-effect fire bomb, the dark priest is a speedy flying unit that should definitely be used in battle situations. Make an effort to protect him, however, as he's the most expensive Taros unit besides the black dragon.

Taros Units

Because so many Taros units involve magic and special skills (unit conversion, cloaking), controlling your forces, especially to optimum effect, could take quite awhile. If you wish to eschew the special magic units, you're better off playing one of the other races, which feature more traditional melee and ranged creatures.





Zombie

Build Cost: 156

Build Time: 75

Hit Points: 1,111

Weapon Damage: 350

Weapon Range: 50

Weapon Reload Time: 1.65

Radar Coverage: 0

Sight Distance: 101

Built by: Cabal

Like the Zhon goblins, the Taros zombie's effectiveness is rather limited, especially against the more powerful units. For the early game, the zombie's slow speed reduces it to mostly a defensive unit, as it takes too long to traverse the map to go after unguarded lodestones or weak areas of the enemy base.

As you gain more powerful units, however, the inexpensive cost of the zombie could be of some use. For instance, send the zombies as your front line and follow the force with more powerful units and the mind mage. While the enemy units are engaged with the zombie fodder, convert the more useful enemy units with the mind mage's conversion ability and send in the rest of your powerful troops to clean up.

Gargoyle

Build Cost: 185

Build Time: 102

Hit Points: 143





Radar Coverage: 800

Sight Distance: 214

Built by: Cabal

Because the Taros are so weak against long-range weaponry (at least until significant sky knight power develops), the gargoyle must be used to gain knowledge about what the enemy troops are up to. If you're playing against the Veruna, you must be aware of its current ship-building habits (especially, if it's moving toward a well-protected trebuchet ship). If you're playing against the Aramon, you should be concerned about an advancing force of cannons and trebuchet emplacements. If you're going against the Zhon, you should be looking for flanking maneuvers and a massive collection of units.

Use the gargoyle to guard mage towers and to provide additional line-of-sight and radar coverage. Also, scout with the gargoyles to look for the best route for your assault force, whether it be sky knights and blade demons or cloaked fire spouts.

Executioner

Build Cost: 296

Build Time: 105

Hit Points: 2,611

Weapon Damage: 420

Weapon Range: 85

Weapon Reload Time: 1.5

Radar Coverage: 0

Sight Distance: 145

Built by: Cabal





Much more effective than the zombie, the executioner and its pike staff can go toe-to-toe with most other tier 1 melee units (except for the more expensive Zhon troll and Aramon horseman). Although it's faster than the zombie (but what isn't?), most other tier 1 units can run circles around these Taros ground forces; further, the slower units leave the Taros without as many hit-and-run and quick-strike options in the early game. Combine executioner forces with black knight range units for a better combination.

Black Knight

Build Cost: 722

Build Time: 203

Hit Points: 1,700

Weapon Damage: 189

Weapon Range: 300

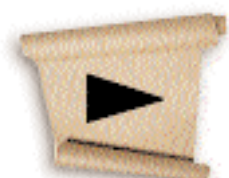
Weapon Reload Time: 2.8

Radar Coverage: 0

Sight Distance: 200

Built by: Cabal

A cross between a horseman and an archer, the black knight rides atop a yak-like steed and fires arrows from a safe distance. Black knights are fairly mobile, but like most ranged units, they need melee support to protect them from close encounters. Because their sight distance is just under their maximum weapon range (and because they have no radar coverage), they need spotters to be most effective. Send out a zombie with your combined force of black knights and executioners. Use the zombie as the front line, spotting for your army of black knights and preparing the way for your executioners.





Ghost Ship

Build Cost: 804

Build Time: 179

Hit Points: 2,300

Weapon Damage: 311

Weapon Range: 485

Weapon Reload Time: 3.5

Radar Coverage: 666

Sight Distance: 200

Built by: Temple

Taros' ship fleet is unique. This apparition can travel on both sea and land and can even pass through buildings, walls, and enemy units! An player who counts on walls keeping the enemy out might be quite surprised when a fleet of ghost ships sneaks through unharmed.

Against the powerful Veruna fleet, the ghost ship, the like vessels of other races, has a tough time holding its own. But, with a bit more maneuverability and the ability to escape onto the land at any time, the ghost ship can be moderately effective when micromanaged. An added benefit of the ghost ship is its onboard radar, making its long-range energy weapon more effective.

Weather Witch

Build Cost: 1,403

Build Time: 232

Hit Points: 1,000

Weapon Damage: 50, 492, 555

Max Mana: 1,000





Mana per Shot: 100, 100, 900
Weapon Range: 150, 225, 300
Weapon Reload Time: 4, 2.2, 4
Radar Coverage: 0
Sight Distance: 200
Built by: Abyss

Featuring three spells, tornado, thunderbolt, and ice storm, the weather witch is a good choice to accompany attack forces. Her most powerful spell, the ice storm, can significantly weaken groups of units. Her first spell, tornado, doesn't cost much mana, but is unpredictable and causes more confusion than damage. Thunderbolt, on the other hand, is good against single targets (unlike the ice storm, the thunderbolt isn't a group effect spell). Aim for the most powerful enemies if you choose to use the thunderbolt; knock down the unit's health, providing a small advantage to your band of combat units.

Like most specialty units, the weather witch is weak and doesn't perform well under duress (in other words, don't let enemy melee units overwhelm her). Keep one or two melee guards near her at all times. If you're bringing her into battle, it likely means your melee force isn't strong enough to defeat your opposition, and you're counting on her thunderbolt and ice storm spells to turn the tide. Don't lose her.

Fire Demon

Build Cost: 1,189
Build Time: 204
Hit Points: 3,000
Weapon Damage: 600
Weapon Range: 900





Weapon Reload Time: 3.2

Radar Coverage: 0

Sight Distance: 156

Built by: Abyss

With excellent range and damage potential, the fire demon makes up the Taros higher-level range units with a tracking fireball. The weakest part of the fire demon, however, is its extremely short sight range and lack of radar coverage. The fire demon must have an escort if he's to be at all useful. Use gargoyles on guard to provide ample sight and radar coverage and send melee units in first to give the fire demons the distance they need to be effective.

Iron Beak

Build Cost: 1,863

Build Time: 352

Hit Points: 920

Weapon Damage: 807

Weapon Range: 200

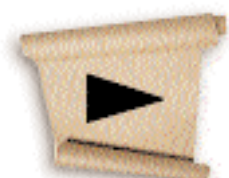
Weapon Reload Time: 3.2

Radar Coverage: 500

Sight Distance: 200

Built by: Abyss

Nothing in the Taros army can match the iron beak for basic base and structure assault. Against mobile units, the iron beak is next to useless. The explosive eggs dropped from its claws are just too slow and don't lead moving enemies well enough to be effective. Stationary targets, however, are a different story.





A fleet of five or more iron beaks can pummel towers, structures, and other emplacements in no time. Iron beaks are also effective against the slower-moving ships, especially those that provide no anti-air support. Keep in mind that the iron beak is a bomber and won't last long against enemy air-to-air units. Hit-and-run tactics against unguarded lodestones are a primary function of the iron beaks, as is softening the way for Taros more powerful ground and air forces.

Skeleton Archers

Build Cost: 677

Build Time: 125

Hit Points: 900

Weapon Damage: 355

Weapon Range: 450

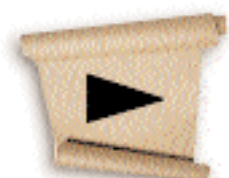
Weapon Reload Time: 2.7

Radar Coverage: 0

Sight Distance: 240

Built by: Abyss

Weaker than the Aramon mage archer, the Taros skeleton archers serve blade demons, the Taros super-melee unit, well and also provide solid anti-air support when scattered around the Taros base structures. With a solid reload time and decent range, the skeleton archer is a must-have for any offensive and defensive stance and is excellent at protecting the slower, more powerful Taros units, like the weather witch, lich, and mind mage. Use spotters to get the most out of their range (their sight is decent but well inside their maximum range) and combine them with the excellent melee abilities of the blade demon for a solid ground force.





Blade Demon

Build Cost: 1,644

Build Time: 254

Hit Points: 6,500

Weapon Damage: 570

Weapon Range: 100

Weapon Reload Time: 1.333

Radar Coverage: 0

Sight Distance: 130

Built by: Temple

Agile and a quick-hitter, the blade demon is durable and powerful and will make up most of the ground force of the offensive-minded Taros player. Like most melee units, don't send out a horde of blade demons without support. Coupled with anti-air units like skeleton archers or, even better, sky knights, the blade demons can be a fierce ground force. Even better, use magic casters like the mind mage, weather witch, or the cloaking ability of the fire spouts to turn melee battles to the blade demons' favor.

Fire Spout

Build Cost: 944

Build Time: 175

Hit Points: 3,000

Weapon Damage: 610

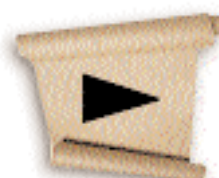
Weapon Range: 255

Weapon Reload Time: 3

Radar Coverage: 500

Sight Distance: 169

Built by: Temple





With the ability to cloak for extended periods of time (the cloaking ability reduces the creatures mana supply and decreases faster when the fire spout is moving), ambushing your enemy can be quite effective, if you can get the fire spouts close enough before their cloaking ability wears off. Surprise your enemy in large battles by escorting these spider-like creatures into the fray while cloaked. The enemy will think he's outnumbered you; but, all of the sudden, here come a horde of uncloaked fire spouts.

Send out fire spouts on seek-and-destroy missions. Keep them cloaked and approach unguarded lodestones (or lightly defended lodestones). Uncloak and give your enemy quite the surprise. Once you're detected, cloak again (hopefully, you'll have some mana remaining) and escape.

Sky Knight

Build Cost: 3,221

Build Time: 331

Hit Points: 4,400

Weapon Damage: 790

Weapon Range: 600

Weapon Reload Time: 3

Radar Coverage: 666

Sight Distance: 200

Built by: Temple

An intimidating air force, the Taros sky knights match up well against the air power of other races, including the Zhon drake. Send in a fleet of iron beaks to target and weaken enemy anti-air units such as towers, then throw the sky knights at them and target structures and vital units. Keep some sky knights as base defense for those times when the enemy sends over an air assault. Target the air units with the sky knights to assist your anti-air ground forces in towers in eliminating the threat.





Couple the sky knights with iron beaks and blade demon ground forces for a base assault. sky knights also include decent radar coverage and are quick enough to make good hit-and-run scouts.

Fire Mage

Build Cost: 2,308

Build Time: 328

Hit Points: 3,500

Weapon Damage: 469, 800, 300

Max Mana: 1,000

Mana per Shot: 0, 300, 750

Weapon Range: 200, 1,200, 447

Weapon Reload Time: 1.9, 4, 5

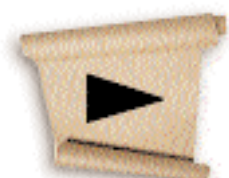
Radar Coverage: 0

Sight Distance: 200

Built by: Temple

Carrying three spells, death breath, fire swirl, and fire storm (group effect), the fire mage can be both an effective long- and short-range troop. When a large battle ensues, keep the fire mage (or better, group of fire mages) at a distance and launch the fire swirl spell, a long-range, high-damage spell that affects single units, and target the more powerful enemy forces. Though the reload time is short, the fire mage can only launch three shots before he must recharge mana.

For short-range encounters, the group-effect fire storm is the spell of choice - although it'll eat up 75 percent of the fire mage's mana after casting. Like the weather witch, the fire mage is best kept back from the battle, raining down fire spells from a far and turning the melee war to your advantage.





Mind Mage

Build Cost: 2,947

Build Time: 419

Hit Points: 3,800

Max Mana: 1,000

Mana per Shot: 300, 500

Radar Coverage: 420

Sight Distance: 200

Built by: Abyss

Like the Zhon harpy, the mind mage possesses the ability to alter the mind of the enemy troops, convincing them to fight for the side of Taros. While most players will opt for the mind mage on offense, he's equally as effective inside your base, waiting for an assault either on the ground or the air. Keep several mind mages inside your base and, especially if your enemy is prone to large air attacks, wait for the assault to begin. Once it does, use your mind mages to begin converting the air units. More than likely, you'll snag a few and quickly turn the enemy's air assault into a win for your side.

Like the fire mage and weather witch, it's best to keep the mind mage back from the battle. He's relatively weak and has no defenses except for his mind-altering ability. Use him behind the front lines and convert the more powerful enemy units to your side (siege units work well). His conversion ability range is just greater than his sight range; the mind mage also includes radar coverage, making it easier to convert troops from afar.





Lich

Build Cost: 744

Build Time: 139

Hit Points: 3,600

Weapon Damage: 800

Max Mana: 1,000

Mana per Shot: 250

Weapon Range: 60

Weapon Reload Time: 2.7

Radar Coverage: 0

Sight Distance: 99

Built by: Temple

Though the lich fights his enemies at close-range, his life-draining energy weapon has a large radius of effect. Also, the lich's weapon drains his personal mana supply, which means that, after about four or five blows, he must recharge. Thankfully, the Lich can take a lot of punishment from melee troops.

The lich is quite slow, however, and must be micromanaged to position him at the front lines and ahead of the Taros' faster units like the blade demon. The lich should be used to wear down enemy defenses before the bulk of your force, filled with blade demons, sky knights, and specialty units, arrives. Try to keep your own units out of the area-effect weapon.

A lesser-known characteristic of the lich is the ability to swim! Send liches across rivers and streams to engage enemy forces from other directions or gain a foothold on a new area of the map. Further, use a band of liches against enemy ships, though don't expect the vulnerable creature to last long against Verunan man of war units.





Black Dragon

Build Cost: 44,587

Build Time: 8,888

Hit Points: 23,946

Weapon Damage: 796, 796, 2,025

Max Mana: 1,000

Mana per Shot: 0, 300, 900

Weapon Range: 625, 675, 450

Weapon Reload Time: 2.5, 2.5, 5

Radar Coverage: 2,000

Sight Distance: 224

Built by: Dark priest

Built for destruction, the Taros black dragon features three fire spells with the third, like other dragons, dishing out significant area-attack damage.

Combining the black dragon with sky knights can be a powerful combination. Both flying units look quite similar and could potentially confuse the enemy in which one to target. Keep the black dragon safe from attack and retreat once his hit points have reached a danger zone.



Chapter Five:

Total Annihilation: Kingdoms
Walk-through





This walk-through section does not assume familiarity with real-time strategy games such as Total Annihilation: Kingdoms. Kingdoms does not come with a tutorial section, but the first few chapters are designed to give new players a chance to learn the game a little at a time. In this spirit, these walk-throughs pay special attention during the first chapters to keyboard hints and tactics. Later chapters also contain such gameplay hints as well, but focus more strongly on overall strategy.

Chapter 1 - All Hell Broken Loose

Realm: Aramon

Difficulty: Simple

Objectives: As the messenger Emen and his protectors approach the town of Abiad, they find the town besieged by zombies. Your goal is to move Emen into Abiad (the grey rectangle on the overhead map) and east to the town well.

Tips: The best approach is straight north up the paved road into Abiad, as the thick forest surrounding the road will block your archers' arrows. Don't attack the blue-shirted men walking around Abiad, unless you have a mean streak - they are serfs. The red zombies are your only foes, and your escort is plenty strong enough to handle them all.

Emen is tough enough to kill four or five zombies all by himself and fast enough to win the level alone. Emen easily outpaces the zombies without having to engage in a single fight while his escorts whittle and sing campfire songs at the start.





Emen's goal is this well, on the east end of town.

Of course, just scurrying around with one unit isn't as fun as learning how to maneuver an army, so here are some beginning tips. Select one swordsman, then hit Ctrl-Z. This selects all your swordsmen. Assign them to a squad by hitting Ctrl-1. Do the same for the archers (Ctrl-2), and for Emen himself (Ctrl-3). With your fingers on the number keys, you can now move your army around the map without dragging boxes around your men.





The range of your archers is well beyond the visual range indicated by the fog of war. If your archers are moving, they won't fire, so if you want to proceed carefully, let the swordsmen lead the way step by step, with the archers stationary behind them. In the tips for the next chapter, we'll tell you a faster way to accomplish the same thing.

Chapter 2 - Victims, Not Victors

Realm: Aramon

Difficulty: Simple

Objectives: Emen, shaken by the appearance of undead walking about in broad daylight, travels to a nearby garrison to spread the word. Your goal is to move him into the garrison through woods crawling with zombies and executioners.

Tips: As in chapter 1, Emen is fast enough to wind his way through the trees to the garrison all by himself. Assuming again that this method doesn't float your boat, here are some tips for helping Emen reach his goal.

Executioners, like zombies, have no ranged attack, so keeping your group together and on the fairly clear road to the garrison will surely work. Select all your units with Ctrl-A and set them to "offensive." (Emen's tough, and doesn't mind a fight, but if you worry for his health, set him to "defensive.") Move your group up the road to the garrison (the grey square on the overhead map in the northeast). Once near it, you will gain control of the garrison's watch towers, and the enemies near the watch tower will appear as red dots on the overhead map. Simply cross from the grass onto the stone floor of the garrison, and you will be victorious.





Only one step separates Emen from the safety of the garrison.

You may have noticed by now that if your group is moving, it will continue to do so even if a zombie is in the middle of the group raking its claws down your fighters' backs. To avoid this problem, move your army with "patrol" instead of "move". With your group selected, hit the P key for "patrol" and click your destination on either the overhead map or the landscape. Now, any





enemy they encounter will be dealt with right away. Left to patrol, your group will circle back to the spot where you first hit the P key, but you'll be paying attention to the group's progress and will set them to patrol further toward your goal.

Chapter 3 - Order Overturned

Realm: Aramon

Difficulty: Simple

Objectives: The knight Jorath is dispatched to the seas to bring news to other lands, but first he must get to the shoreline. Between him and the pick-up point are zombies and executioners... and behind him is a new threat.

Tips: Jorath must make his way to the watch tower that sits in the north on the beach. Jorath on his horse is faster than any of his foes, so you can win this mission by threading him straight north to the boat. Being gallant, however, Jorath would frown upon such a strategy (he'd also have no one to play cards with during the boat ride).

After a few moments, the garrison you start in will be assailed by zombies and then by two waves of fire spouts. You needn't defend the garrison, as it can defend itself - and its survival does not affect the victory conditions. Move as many units as you'd like in a group up to the beach watch tower, and a waiting transport boat will make itself available to you. To load your group quickly, select the boat, hit the T key, and drag a box around the units you'd like to load. They will all fit. Then, shove off for the northeast corner of the map for the win.





The zombies will be none to pleased if you haven't left the garrison yet.

Here's a tip for moving a mixed group of fast and slow units. If you group both horsemen and archers into a squad and then ask them to move to a distant location, the horsemen will arrive much sooner, leaving the archers undefended. Using formations will keep a group like this together. Select your group and then hit Alt-1. From that point on, group 1 will stick together. Combine this with the patrol trick from the last chapter, and you'll have very little baby-sitting to do.





Chapter 4 - The Wedge

Realm: Zhon

Difficulty: Easy

Objectives: In a move designed to split the allied Aramon and Veruna forces, the Zhon have sent a group of drakes to wipe out a Veruna coastal village. Your goal is to carry out this nefarious task.

Tips: Exhausted by the long flight from Zhon, your drakes are sunning themselves on a rock just off the coast. Shake off the jet lag and group them into a formation, so they stick together. Target the transport boat to the south, and hit the T key (with your group selected) so you don't have to constantly follow your flying drakes manually. If you don't like tracking the drake that was automatically selected for you, hit T repeatedly and cycle through the group until you see what you want.

The only enemy units that can hurt you are the transport boats and crossbowmen. Move along the coastline, specifically targeting the boats with your entire group. Then seek out crossbowmen and remove that menace. For a headache-free conclusion, set multiple patrol points for your formation, so that it sweeps the town clean of threats. Do this by hitting the P key, then holding down Shift as you click once on the northwest and once on the southwest of the overhead map.

A single drake will not likely defeat a boat or a crossbowman on its own - thus, the need for the formation. Targeting the boats and crossbowmen first is helpful because of the warriors wandering the town, who are no threat unless they distract your drakes before the skies are clear of arrows.





Sweep the shoreline and target the transport boats first.





Chapter 5 - Black Peace

Realm: Taros

Difficulty: Easy

Objectives: A peaceful village will no longer be so once you've cleared it of its protective archers and swordsmen - and perhaps its pumpkins as well.

Tips: This mission introduces you to the arts of building lodestones and producing units. Resistance in the town to your south is just stiff enough to require that you learn these skills. Start by summoning a dark mason and have him create a lodestone on the mana source to the northeast. Your mana income is shown in the lower right corner of the display.

Summon a gargoyle and patrol it through multiple waypoints around the town. Its speed will help it avoid arrows as it reveals the town's defenses to you. Summon a few executioners to mix in with the zombies and black knights you started the chapter with. Note that clicking several times on the picture of the units you'd like to summon will queue those units up.

The town is defended not only by archers and swordsmen, but also a mage builder. Given enough time, he will create watch towers to hamper your efforts. If this annoys you, circle some of your army around the west of the town and destroy the lodestone you find there.

You will quickly have a force large enough to destroy all resistance, but it's fun to experiment. Select some undead, hit the G key for "guard," and then select the dark mason. Send him toward the town and instruct him to build a





caged demon. The guards will trail behind him and attack any threats that approach him. Unfortunately, they tend to ignore threats made to themselves. Avoid this annoyance by putting the guards and the dark mason into a formation and have the dark mason patrol his way toward the town.



Just northeast of your cabal is another lodestone you can use.





Chapter 6 - Jungle Screams

Realm: Veruna

Difficulty: Easy

Objectives: The Veruna send a few ships to Zhon as payback for chapter 4's destruction of a coastal village. Your goal is to set up a beachhead in the form of four guard towers, in the face of goblin resistance.

Tips: Assigning your ships to a formation not only helps them defend against the enemy drakes that wander by, but provides concentrated covering fire for the units you land on the beach. Unload your boats on the northern shore's large beach. To unload, select boats, hit the U key, and click on any spot on the sand. Your boats need not be near the unloading point for you to do this. Each boat contains passengers.

After you've built an enclave with either your flagship or priestess, and your army has driven off the first goblin wave, order the priestess to build a series of walls and guard towers around the enclave (see screenshot). Rather than building these structures one at a time, use the Shift key to queue the structures. Select the priestess, click the wall picture, and drag a few wall sections across the beach. Now hold down the Shift key, click the guard tower picture, and place a guard tower at the end of your prelaid walls. Continuing in this manner, you can lay out an entire fort, as seen in the screenshot, with one series of clicks.





Setups like this are most easily accomplished by queuing.

The walls are not crucial to the success of this chapter, but learning to queue is good practice for later chapters. The objective is to build four guard towers, and if you are in a hurry, that is all you must do. Building them anywhere on the northern beach will suffice, but building them in the forest off the beach will not contribute to the victory conditions.





If you'd like to wipe out an additional goblin village, you might summon reinforcements with your enclave, then put a small force onto your transport boat and bring them to the southern beach. There is also another goblin village in the far north of the map to practice on. It's wise to include a priestess with your attackers, as she can heal your units. Look for more on the function of priestess-type units next chapter!

Chapter 7 - Cleansing

Realm: Zhon

Difficulty: Easy

Objectives: Zhon has no interest in having Veruna encampments on its shores. Your mission is to use your beast handler to create an army large enough to wipe out a Verunan beachhead - in particular the guard towers.

Tips: Send a few of your starting units to guard the lodestones you possess, or Verunan scouts might discover and destroy them. Set your drakes patrolling the forest, but don't let them wander over the beach - guard towers and crossbowmen will make short work of them.

Your beast handler can build lodestones, and he can summon hunters and trolls. There is no way to queue units to be summoned, so you must select the kind of unit you want and, holding down the Shift key, color an open spot of ground in with the number of units you want to summon. Continuing to hold down the Shift key; you can order the beast handler to create a batch of hunters and then a batch of trolls, or vice versa.





This beast handler has been ordered to summon a line of hunters and another line of trolls.

Be careful not to put the beast handler in your front lines, as he is the only such unit you will get during this chapter. By now, you may have noticed that both units and structures will, if left alone, heal themselves slowly. Units like the priestess from the last chapter and the beast handler in this chapter can speed the process. To heal a particular unit, select the beast handler and





click on the unit you wish to heal. To heal an entire group of units, you can set the beast handler to patrol through the middle of the group - the handler will pause and heal any wounded creatures (or structures) he encounters.

Alternatively, you can put a group in formation and include a beast handler. As the group moves around the map, the beast handler will do his best to heal units he walks near. Be sure to set your beast handler to passive, or he will lead the charge against the enemy units rather than fulfill his role as healer. The priestess of the previous chapter, having no offensive talents, does not need to be set to passive in this way.

Chapter 8 - Without Mercy

Realm: Taros

Difficulty: Easy

Objectives: Finally, you get your hands on one of the big guys: Lokken. His mission, through you, is to wipe out an enemy garrison in the southwest. Unlike other chapters, this one starts with just one unit and will give you a good feel for what multiplayer games will be like.

Tips: Aramon units do not attack for a little while, especially if you don't violate their air space, so have Lokken build a lodestone on the nearby mana source and then instruct him to build a cabal. The cabal lets you summon an army, and this is what you should do next.

Here are a few tips for summoning an army quickly but painlessly. Select the cabal; now, if you hold down the Shift key while clicking on the unit's picture,





you will instruct it to build units in increments of +5, rather than the usual +1. Further, if you right-click on a unit's picture, you will decrease the number of queued units by one (or by five, if you hold down Shift). Instruct the cabal to summon an army of zombies, executioners, and black knights, along with a few dark masons and gargoyles. Don't worry about mana - there will be plenty, especially if you build another lodestone on the mana source just to your west.



Setting Lokken or dark masons on patrol near the cabal speeds up summoning.





To speed the construction of your army, set Lokken to guard the cabal - not the magical spot where the units appear, but the cabal itself. He will automatically assist the cabal in its summonings, and your army will be produced more quickly. Your army will crowd the surrounding area unless you instruct the units to gather somewhere else after they are summoned. To accomplish this, select the cabal, hit the M key for "move," and choose the spot on the battle map (or the overhead map) where you'd like newly summoned units to gather.

You can issue more complicated orders to your cabal by using the Shift key. For example, if you'd like five gargoyles to patrol the nearby cliffsides, select the cabal, order it to summon five gargoyles using the shortcut described above, hit the M key, click on the overhead map at one end of the cliffs, hold down Shift and hit the P key for "patrol," and click on the overhead map at the other end of the cliffs. The summoned gargoyles will move and then patrol as ordered. (Remember that any other units summoned will attempt to perform the same maneuvers unless you change those orders!)

This chapter is a good one for learning and practicing such tricks. The battle is easily won once you have created an army and marched it to the southwest corner of the map. Lokken must survive the mission, but it's a shame to leave him at home when his spells are so cool to see. He can also be cloaked by hitting the K key while he is selected. The red and blue bars at the bottom of the screen indicate his personal mana for spells (red) and cloaking (blue). Note that while he is cloaked and moving, the blue bar diminishes. Once it is down to nothing, he can no longer cloak, and it will not replenish unless he remains still and uncloaked.





Chapter 9 - Unseen Hands

Realm: Taros

Difficulty: Easy

Objectives: Although a later chapter will prove otherwise, the king of Taros believes that killing the Aramon alchemist responsible for its work on gunpowder will stop that work. Your mission is to bring the assassin Mirazi Heket into a city and kill him.

Tips: Mirazi, like Lokken from the last chapter, has the ability to cloak. His cloaking ability is not as powerful as Lokken's, as his cloaking mana runs out even if he is sitting still. Thus, creating a safe spot inside the city for Mirazi is crucial. Mirazi is a tough cookie, possessing both an up-close knife attack and a ranged dagger throw attack. His initial setting is passive, but if you get in trouble, set him to offensive, so he won't rely on you to choose his targets.

Hit the T key, so the camera tracks Mirazi. Step immediately onto the road to your left and change Mirazi's status to offensive. Creep up the road until Mirazi takes out the two warriors who are guarding the entrance to the city. Now, set Mirazi's status to passive, cloak by hitting the K key, and enter the city. (For later: note that if Mirazi has just been uncloaked, he may not recloak immediately.) If you run near a watch tower or enemy soldier, your cloaking ability will be lost. You can run into as many sailors, vagrants, and other townspeople that you want - they can't spot you.





Ah, ha! There's the bugger now.

Walk just inside the city to the left of the opening and uncloak. Set Mirazi to offensive and clear out any opposition you find there. This spot will be your safe spot, a place to heal and regenerate cloaking mana. Bookmark the spot by hitting Ctrl-F5. Hitting F5 in the future will return the battle map to this spot. If Mirazi is besieged at some point by watch towers, hit F5 and return him quickly to this refuge. While you are healing and regenerating your mana, hit the plus (+) and minus (-) keys to speed and slow the game.





The alchemist tends to be straight north from the opening you first entered. Walk north, cloaked, until you see him. Hover your mouse over any odd-looking characters you see until you've identified them. Still set to passive, attack. Mirazi will kill any enemies with a single dagger toss. Now, retreat to your refuge spot, setting Mirazi to offensive, and beat any soldiers who chase you.

Wait for the cloaking mana and health to regenerate, then cloak, set Mirazi to passive, and maneuver to the northeast of the city. A road exiting the city will lead you to victory. Remember that Mirazi is full of mojo and can, with patience, rid the entire city of Aramon people. Don't hesitate to advance the cause of Taros in this manner! In fact, while hanging out in any quiet spots, turn Mirazi into a veteran by preying on sailors, drunks, and deer.

Chapter 10 - Nightmare Legions

Realm: Taros

Difficulty: Easy

Objectives: The Taros invasion proceeds apace, assaulting a well-defended Aramon fort. You lead Lokken and whatever army you create for him against the Aramon menace. Destroying the gates, structures, and soldiers will seal the victory... as long as Lokken is there to see it.

Tips: This chapter provides lots of new toys to play with, including a new building: the temple. The Aramon fort is protected with gates and walls, and the unit best suited for breaking through is the iron beak. The iron beak is summoned by the abyss, which Lokken could build right away. Instead, have Lokken build a lodestone on the two visible mana sources and then a cabal to provide you with an army of tier 1 units to provide some defense.





The Aramon forces include barbarians, which both take and dish out some serious abuse. Fortunately, there are more lodestones available in the far northeast as well as an easily defended one just below your starting point. If you aren't comfortable with your mana income, extend your borders to encompass these new lodestones.

Before you mount an assault on the fort, patrol the forests north of it with gargoyles and create an army large enough to handle the wandering enemies you see. One new unit you are provided with is the lich. Like Lokken's fire wave spell, the lich's attack does damage to a wide area and hurts friends and foes alike - including other liches! It is thus unwise to group a lich in with any formations you create. Send a lich in ahead of your main army to soften up any grouped enemies you are about to fight.

Your attack on the fort itself will go quite well if you summon five or more iron beaks, fly them to the east of the fort, and come into the fort at the midpoint of the east wall. For the most part, the iron beaks will fly out of range of enemy towers, and you can wreak havoc on any enemy buildings you see. Attacking moving units with iron beaks is fruitless. Concentrate on structures and archers. Once it has demolished the front gate, an army sent through the hole will quickly win the game for you. For fun, try an army of liches!





Iron beaks are the weapon of choice against stationary targets.





Chapter 11 - Unholy Quest

Realm: Taros

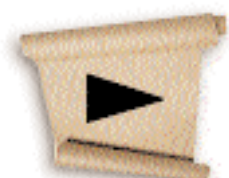
Difficulty: Easy

Objectives: The Taros believe that building an unholy temple on Aramon's holy ground will bring a swift end to the war. Your goal is to use Lokken to establish a home base in the northwest, create an army, and use it to clear a path to the plateau for your dark priest.

Tips: Your scouting party, shown in the middle of the map as the chapter opens, has a bad feeling about this. Grab it immediately and click on the northwest corner of the map, where Lokken is. Be sure to click in an open spot on the map, even if it's not exactly where you want the group, because it's truly a pain to choose a unit who is sitting in the northwest corner, when all you want to do is save your scouting party!

Once the party is moving, grab the rest of your army in the northwest and send it in support of the fleeing scouts. You will have a little battle with some archers and barbarians, but you will win if you have performed bravely. Now, you have a few minutes before more Aramon units arrive to harass you.

There are five mana sources in the northwest corner, which will be plenty for you to achieve your goals. The trouble is, they are spread out a bit, and if you build lodestones without guards, Aramon patrols will be quick to remove them. Take it slow; build two lodestones on the nearest mana sources and then a cabal. Your dark priest is not capable of helping build structures or units, but he can heal, so set him on patrol just behind your army.





Victory! The temple of Belial now befouls the Aramon countryside.

Summon a gargoyle or two and patrol them between you and the plateau, so that your army can shift to face incoming Aramon groups. Summon a dark mason and set him to guard your cabal. Crank out a mix of zombies, executioners, and black knights, about 20 units altogether. Use elements of this army to accompany your dark mason to the other nearby mana sources,





where he should build lodestones and a caged demon by each one. Leave a few zombies at each lodestone site, near the caged demon, so that you won't have to worry yourself about defending these sites yourself.

Now that your mana income is through the roof, have Lokken build an abyss and then summon 20 skeleton archers. From the cabal, summon more executioners. Your army will probably be larger now than during any previous chapter. Here are some tips for controlling such a force!

Scout the enemy (using gargoyles, in this chapter). See what faces you. In this case, you will face archers, swordsmen, and barbarians. A counterforce composed of executioners and skeleton archers will make short work of such foes. Once you decide what units will work best on offense, send all such units on offense and leave all other kinds of units on defense. Why? Hitting Ctrl-Z while units are selected will select all such units from all points on the map. When controlling a large army, it's often easiest to use this method to give orders, and you don't want to be calling units from their defensive roles.

Use Ctrl-Z to gather your executioners and skeleton archers in some open spot. Select the entire group and create a formation. Send them to the plateau and patrol them across it. Once you are fairly sure that the opposition is gone, call in your dark priest to build the temple of Belial on the plateau.

Chapter 12 - The Ether's Fury

Realm: Aramon

Difficulty: Simple





Objectives: Taros, imagining that victory will be assured now that the Temple of Belial is established in the heart of Aramon, attacks an Aramon stronghold. Your mission is to repel the invaders, and it is made simple by the newly invented Cannon!

Tips: The smartest thing you can do with your Cannons is leave them right where they are. The most fun thing you can do is set them to passive, and try to achieve victory without them!



Putting Archers (and Cannons?) on the flanks makes this Chapter a walk in the park.





The small enemy flanks have their minds set on one thing only: taking our your Cannons. Place Archers and Mage Archers at the flank's chokepoints, and you won't have to worry about winning this Chapter. The enemy pays the Archers no mind as they plod mindlessly toward their goal. The units attacking frontally have no chance against your four Cannons. Patrol your melee units at the entrances of the fort, in case a Taros unit beats the odds and gets past your artillery.

Cannons will not hesitate to cause friendly fire damage, even to Watch Towers that are sitting right in front of them. They can move, but they are in very nice spots right where they stand.

Chapter 13 - Madness and Disease

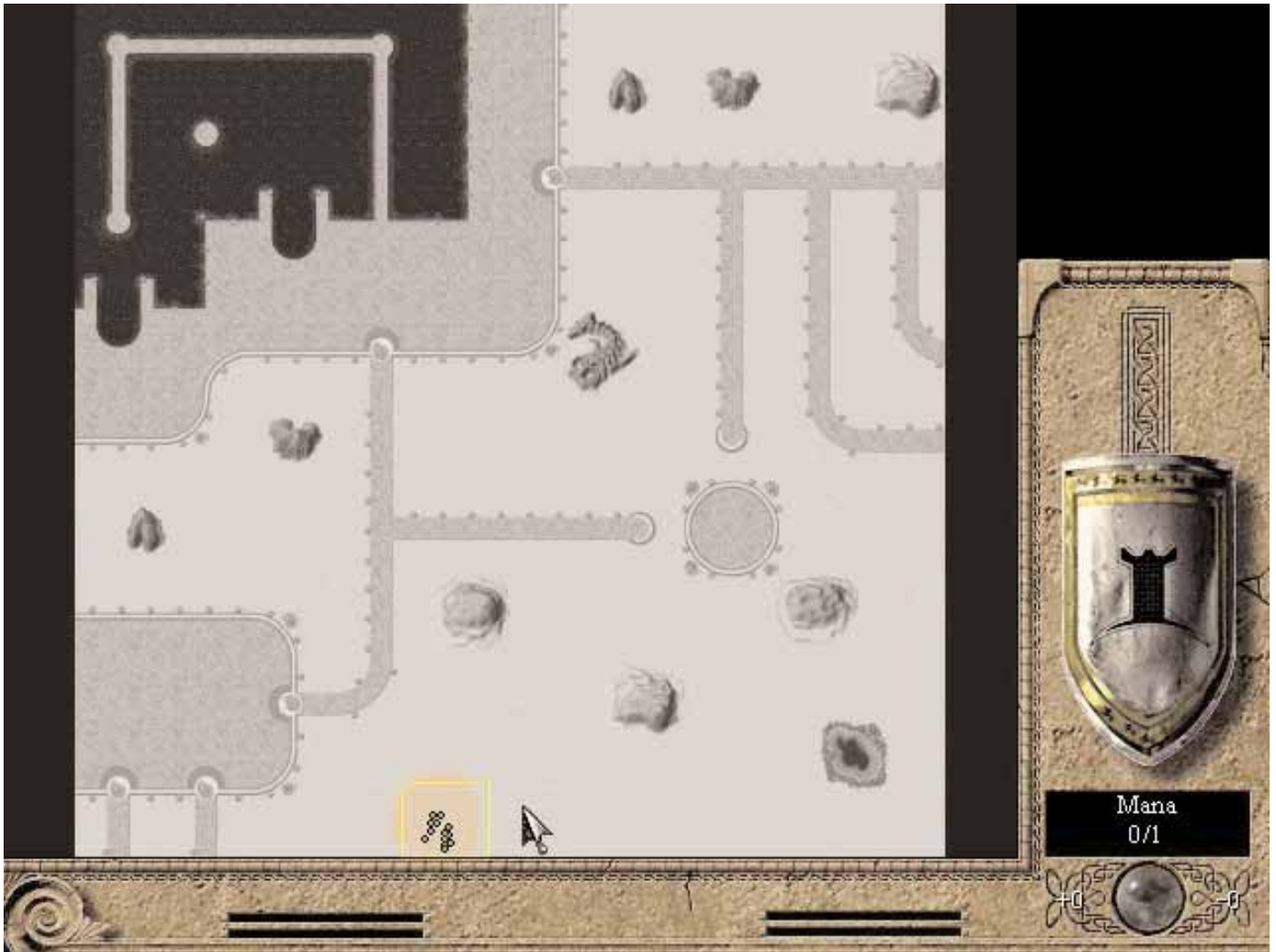
Realm: Aramon

Difficulty: Simple

Objectives: Aramon's continuing quest for the Heart of Thesh encounters trouble when the Verunan port it attempts to enter is besieged by all manner of enemies. Your goal is to guide Jorath and his party to the docks in the northwest corner of the map.

Tips: Create a formation of all the units and patrol them straight west, hugging the south edge of the map. Set them to offensive. When you draw parallel with the road that leads straight north to the docks (see screenshot), head toward that road and follow it. Stay just to the right of the road, lest you come within range of the mage towers and fire demons populating the southwest corner of the map.





Once you've reached this point, go straight north.

You will soon reach the relative safety of the Verunan guard towers and Amazon knights. Help them destroy any blade demons and zombies you see, then guide Jorath through the hole blasted in the wall to the left of the town's gate. Move him toward the docks for victory.





For fun, leave Jorath just inside the walls of the town and follow the Verunan army with your own. Support the Verunan catapults and let the Verunan soldiers do the hand-to-hand combat. See how many mage towers and fire demons you can take out before you are out of soldiers! Then scamper Jorath toward the docks.

Chapter 14 - Unwelcome Guests

Realm: Veruna

Difficulty: Easy

Objectives: Solan Rixx, a Verunan leader, decides to rid some of the Verunan islands of the Zhon menace. Together with Kirena, the sea mage, he requests your help in this task. The two must survive the mission.

Tips: Use Kirena to build lodestones on the island she starts on, along with a guard tower beside each one. There is no room for an enclave on this island, so you cannot add to your foot soldiers until you claim another island. Create a shipyard and a handful of skiffs with a harpoon boat in support. Load the harpoon boat with your starting troops and, along with the Skiffs, invade the small island to your west.

Once the island is cleared, swim Kirena over to the island and build a lodestone, an enclave, and a pair of guard towers. Return her to the safety of her home island and have the enclave summon priestesses to do the rest of the dirty work. Summon a small army of crossbowmen and warriors and load them onto the harpoon boat along with a pair of priestesses. Invade the





island in the east with this army. Fortify your position with guard towers when you land and then clear the island. Build a lodestone and guard it with guard towers.

Now, you are ready to tackle the largest island, the one in the northwest. Land on the peninsula that juts out from the largest island's eastern shore. Fortify it immediately with guard towers and keep your ships close to shore for support. Build an enclave and generate an army. Send your army in waves of 20 into the heart of the island until you have overcome your foes.



For relief of minor headaches, guard every lodestone with guard towers.





Chapter 15 - Roiling Oceans

Realm: Veruna

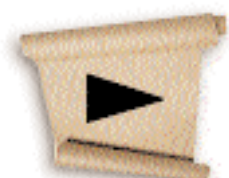
Difficulty: Moderate

Objectives: Zhon is not done with Veruna, despite the Verunan advances. A large force of mixed units, including never-before-seen rocs and krakens, is bent on wiping the Verunan presence off the map. Starting with just a flagship, you must survive for 30 minutes.

Tips: To make this chapter more difficult, you can try to save your Lodestones on the big islands. If you play more conservatively, focus your attention on defending the small islands you begin near. Immediately, build an enclave beside your flagship. Summon two priestesses and have them build lodestones and three guard towers on that island. Set them to patrol near the guard towers, and they will automatically repair them.

There is another lodestone on a nearby island, but you must transport a priestess to its shores to accomplish this. Build a shipyard with your flagship while the priestesses are building your defenses. Create five skiffs and another priestess. Load the priestess onto a skiff and hop her over to the tiny island. On that island, build a lodestone and three guard towers (see screenshot).

Your economy will now support a larger navy, which you should build. For every one harpoon boat and flagship you build, build five skiffs. Set the flagships about the task of creating a half a dozen floating towers near your





shores. Your skiffs should stay in groups of five near your shores. By now, you'll have been attacked by krakens, drakes, and gryphons. Your towers will have made short work of these attacks.



Build clusters of guard towers and patrol a priestess near them.

Sitting back on your heels at this point is dangerous, as the enemy attacks grow in number as time progresses. Mount an offensive on the eastern island (try the western island if you want a bigger challenge). The same way you





invaded islands in chapter 14, do the same here. Bring priestesses along with your invasion force and fortify your beachhead with guard towers. For each lodestone you capture, build guard towers by it and move on. If there's time, build a citadel with your priestesses and load amazon knights and crusaders onto your harpoon boats for the final assault on the largest island.

Chapter 16 - A New Fleet

Realm: Veruna

Difficulty: Moderate

Objectives: Aramon has given Veruna the secret of gunpowder, and Veruna's navy wastes no time in creating new ships that use this technology. As master of such a fleet, your objective is to establish a beachhead on the western mainland and clean the entire map of enemies.

Tips: The tough part is transferring operations from your small island to the mainland. Throughout the mission, the small island will come under attack by krakens, gryphons, and drakes. An adequate defense will let you focus your attention on the mainland.

Immediately grab your ships and put them a little below the island. Set the flagship to patrol, so it will heal your ships as they are attacked. Build two more guard towers with Kirena and set her to patrol among them. When you have enough mana, build two floating towers off the northwest corner of the island. Put your skiffs by them and patrol your flagship behind them (see screenshot). When you can, add a couple of skiffs to this defense, and it will hold throughout the rest of the game. The skiffs will work well on drakes, and the floating towers will take down krakens.





This setup will adequately defend your little island.

Build a shipyard with Kirena and summon a flagship and five skiffs. Load your war galley (if it is still alive) with the troops standing on the shore. There is no room to create an enclave on the island, so you must clear a spot for it on the mainland. Once your navy is ready, transport your army to the southernmost shore of the mainland. Set your flagship to patrol behind your line of ships (this tactic will be assumed from now on). Keep your ships near the shore to help defend against incoming goblins.





Once the southern shore is yours, swim Kirena over and create an enclave. When she's done, swim her back and have her patrol your island defenses. Summon a few priestesses and set them to work building guard towers near the enclave. Once they are done, patrol your priestesses behind the guard towers and among your army. Your beachhead is secure.

Just to your west is a mana source, with an enemy lodestone on it. Destroying it and putting your own lodestone there is your primary goal. Do this and defend it with guard towers. Another lodestone is available on the forested southwest plateau, but it is well defended by basilisks, hunters, and trolls. You will require a force larger than you have to conquer it, and it may take several attempts, as the approaches are narrow. Your mana intake by this point will be sufficient to let you take the plateau.

Now that you have three lodestones working, it would be wise to build a wall across the narrowest part of the southern mainland and defend it with guard towers. Also, build a stronger navy, including another man of war. Protect your navy's resting place with floating towers. Your strength on the map will now be sufficient to let you sweep the map of enemies.

Chapter 17 - Walking Towers

Realm: Zhon

Difficulty: Simple

Objectives: The Zhon, beleaguered by the Veruna counterattack, enlist the help of the stone giants. Playing the role of a clever hunter, your task is to find the hidden stone giants and use them to eradicate a Verunan outpost.

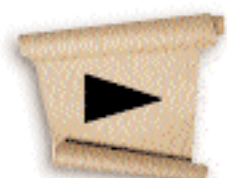




Tips: The stone giants are in the southern part of the map, and your hunter will have no trouble tracking them down after a little exploring. Use the + key to speed the game while you search; you won't come under attack if you avoid the outskirts of the Verunan outpost.



Stone giants make things go boom.





Once you've located the stone giants, march them toward a corner of the outpost. Take out the guard tower as soon as you have dealt with the soldiers who meet you. Once inside the outpost, go to each corner and destroy the guard towers. Once they are gone, mop up. If you have any sympathy for your hunter, let him stay outside while the big boys do the manual labor.

Chapter 18 - War

Realm: Zhon

Difficulty: Hard

Objectives: You caught a break in the last chapter. In this chapter, more Verunans than you imagined existed are going to charge at you, and your job is not only to survive, but to cross to their side of the muddy river and remove them completely.

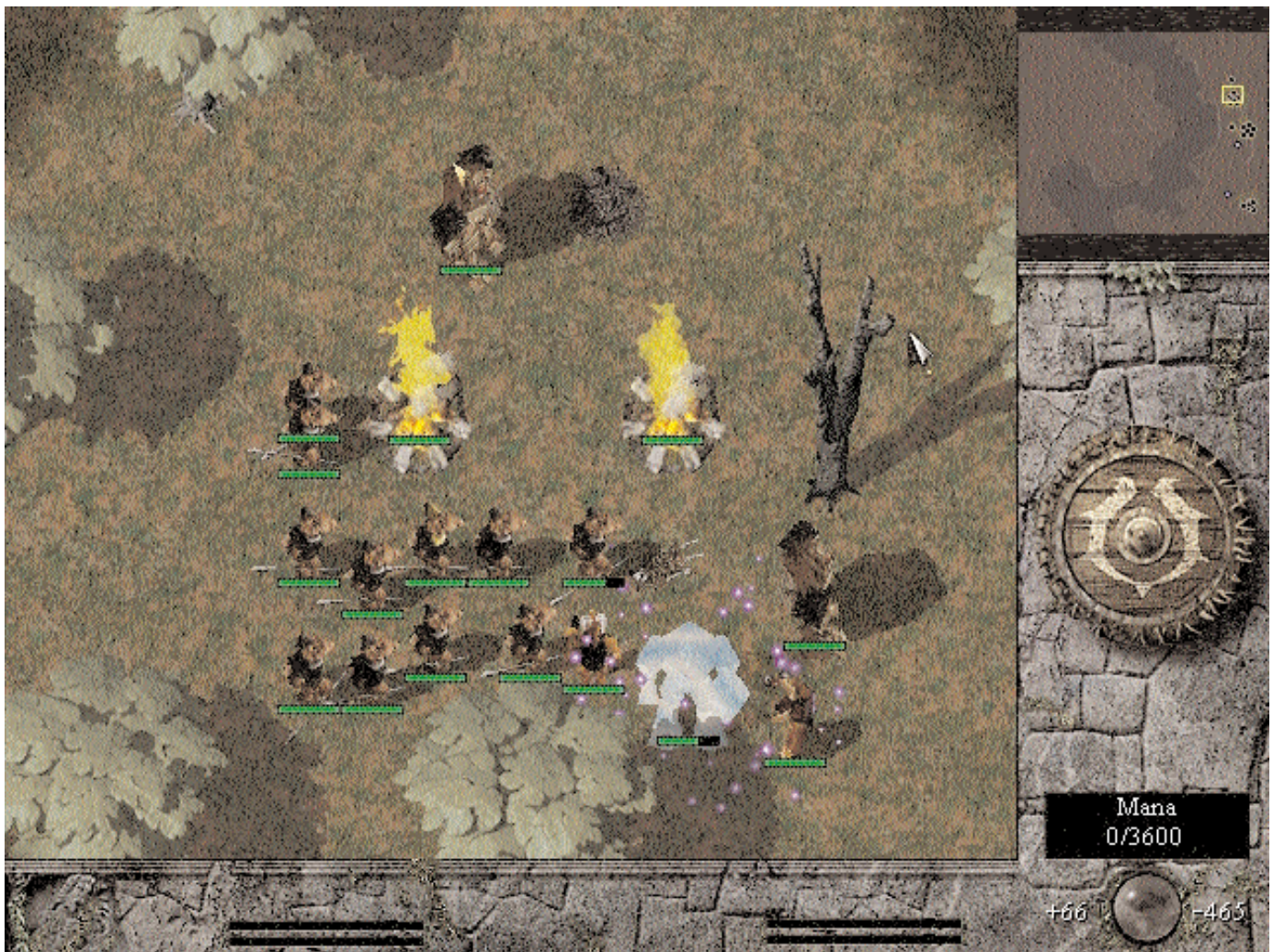
Tips: This is no time to let your trolls and hunters sit around the fire - the Verunans will soon be on their way. There are five lodestone sites on your side of the river, and your short-term goal is to claim and protect them. Start by trying to protect three of them: the one just to your west and the two that are already built.

You start with three stone giants. Send one to the northern lodestone and assign some hunters to guard him. Send another to the southern lodestone with some trolls. Gather the rest of your troops at the middle lodestone, which you should build as soon as you can. Use your beast handler to build two sacred fires a little to the east of the middle lodestone. (Sacred fires heal your nearby troops, and it is wise to build them in pairs in case one is destroyed during a wild fight.)

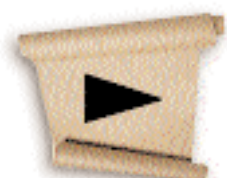




If you lose all your beast handlers, beast tamers, and beast lords during the first ten minutes of this chapter, you might as well start again. Therefore, as soon as your lodestones are defended, create more beast handlers and beast tamers, enough so that there are at least two at all three lodestones. Build pairs of sacred fires at all lodestones and gather all your defenses around them. Now, reinforce the northern and middle lodestones with five to ten hunters each. Keep them a little behind your stone giants.



A setup like this will hold off any Verunan attacks.





Note that while all this sounds reasonable, in the actual game, huge groups of Verunan berserkers, crossbowmen, and warriors will be slamming themselves against you while you perform these tasks. Trust your stone giants and hunters to defend you.

Your primary goal now should be to create more stone giants. Use your beast tamers to create beast lords at the northern and middle lodestones and then use them to create stone giants. Watch your mana supply, as it can't handle the simultaneous generation of three stone giants. Also watch your flanks, as the Verunans enjoy flanking to your east with catapults.

Slowly but surely, add to your stone giant and hunter supply at all three lodestones, especially the northern and middle stones. Now, advance on the unused northern and southern lodestones by traveling in stages. Put your armies ahead of the sacred fires, let them clear a path, and then use your beast handlers to build new sacred fires closer to the mana sources.

Once you have all five lodestones under control, the game is yours. Advance your sacred fires until they are right on the shoreline, with three or four stone giants standing by each set. Guard them with hunters and patrol the river with bats. Here's a tip for patrolling with flying creatures: set their patrol waypoints in safe areas. Flying creatures are most vulnerable to arrows when they make a turn. If your bats make a sharp turn where there is danger, they will die more frequently.

The middle section of the river is passable by hunters, but not by stone giants. Further, rocs cannot carry stone giants. Thus, your final assault on the western side should begin by establishing an outpost in the deep southwest. Scout with bats, and if Verunan ships are in the southern river, distract them with bats and drakes while a roc or two loaded with beast handlers, beast tamers, beast lords, and hunters slips past. Unload in the south, build sacred fires and stone giants, and the rest is war.





Chapter 19 - One Sword

Realm: Zhon

Difficulty: Moderate

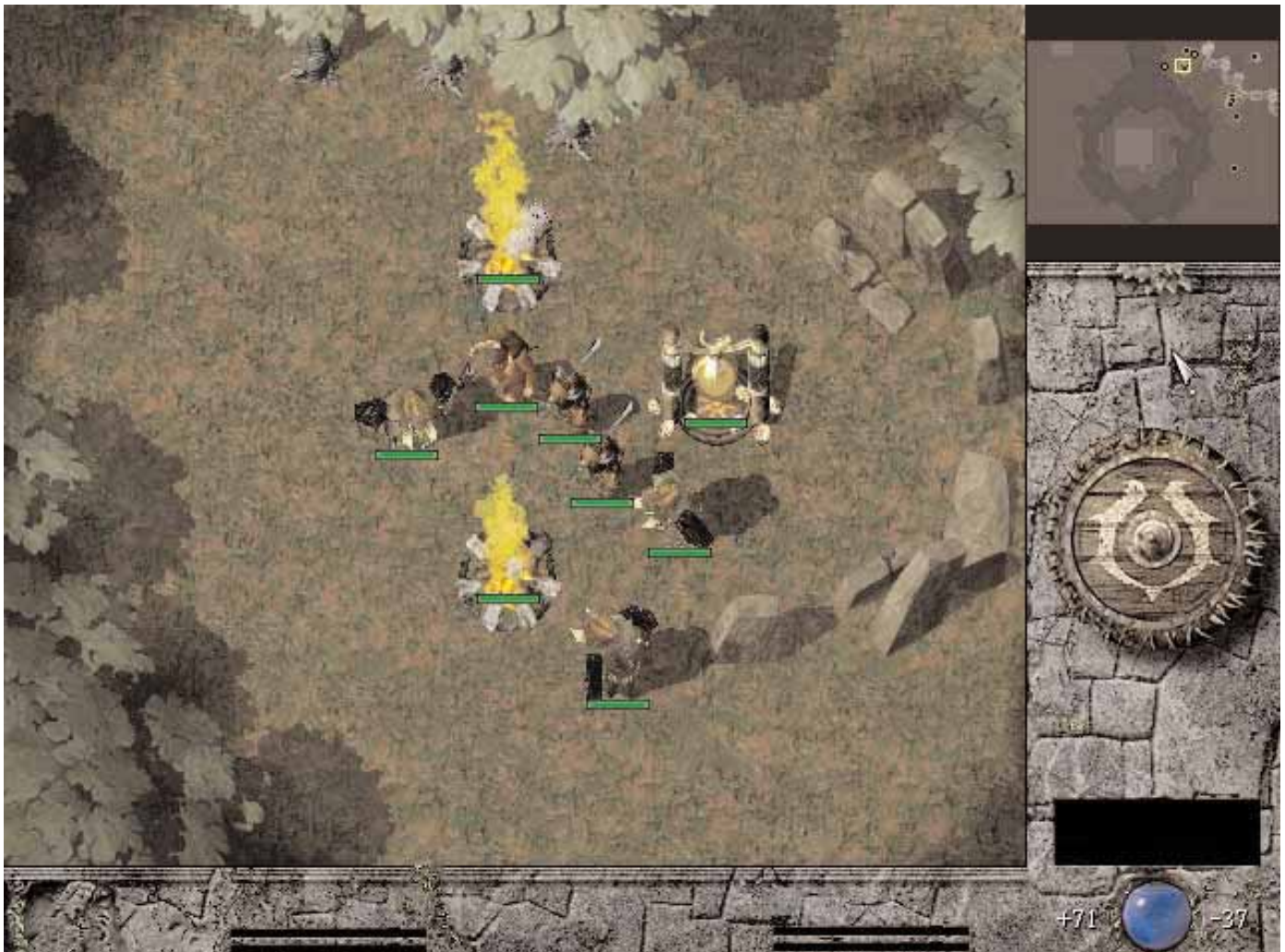
Objectives: A strong Verunan fort occupies the central island, and a small outpost sits in the southwest. The opposition is not only well established, but expansionist. Your mission is to contain their patrols, then mount a final assault on the center island.

Tips: If you like to go for the jugular, split your initial army into small groups and patrol them all over the eastern part of the island. Send Thirsha across the river to the west mainland and establish a foothold there. The following walk-through, however, will outline a more conservative approach.

Two lodestones are near your starting position; one is straight west, and the other is to the southwest. Both are a little ways from the plateau you start on. Send a mix of units to each spot, being sure to leave a handful at your starting lodestone. Order Thirsha to set up lodestones and sacred fires at each site (see screenshot). Send the beast lord to either lodestone and begin to summon a few stone giants... but not until Thirsha has finished her tasks and created some beast handlers.

The Veruna will attack before you can safely send Thirsha south to claim the two mana sites down there. Once you have a stone giant and some hunters, send them along with her. Claim those sites and leave some guards. Summon bats and patrol every square inch of the eastern mainland, as Verunan priestesses will build structures in the most unlikely places.





For each lodestone you take, leave behind a guard setup like this.

Once you have established yourself on the eastern mainland, fly Thirsha across the northern river and create beast handlers. Use them to summon an army large enough to clear the western side of the map. You must eventually capture the southwest outpost. By now, your mana supply will be sufficient to let you build any kind of army you want - we suggest a mix of drakes and stone giants. Experiment with harpies, which can be used to capture enemy units (but not structures).





The most difficult task still awaits. The fort on the middle island is very well defended by guard towers, which will cut apart any (reasonably sized) aerial assault you send against it. A spit of land pokes out of the northeast corner of the island; this is a spot safe from the fort's towers. It is not, however, safe from floating towers, which you must remove from the river. Post stone giants along the eastern banks and target as many floating towers as you can. Use krakens and gryphons to remove the rest that are in your path. Fill rocs with jungle orcs, hunters, and beast lords, and land them on the spit of land. Build stone giants and, when ready, attack the fort's guard towers first. Break through a gate, and the mission is yours after you mop up.

Chapter 20 - Landfall

Realm: Veruna

Difficulty: Moderate

Objectives: Driven from the Zhon mainland, the Veruna is intent on reestablishing itself. Your mission is to complete an assault on two Zhon villages, building four guard towers in each one.

Tips: You begin in the northwest, near an already built lodestone. Right next to that lodestone is another mana source. Come back for it later - your ships do not carry a priestess. Sail straight east to the far northeast, then south until you reach a very side, shallow cove (see screenshot). On your way, you will likely discover another small island that has a mana site. At the eastern cove, unload. Put your ships near the shore and order your flagship to build an enclave at the edge of the beach.





Build three priestesses, load two onto your harpoon boat, and bring them to the two mana sites you left behind to build lodestones. Later, post a few skiffs near each site. Meanwhile, order your enclave to summon at least 15 cross-bowmen and warriors each. Then build walls around your position to funnel the imminent Zhon attack. Without the walls, the sheer weight of the Zhon ground attack may prove too much. The Zhon come equipped with stone giants, and the walls will block their boulder tosses.



This beachhead can withstand the Zhon ground attack.





With the beach secured, fortify with floating towers, skiffs, and patrolling flagships right off the coastline. Patrol the nearby area with parrots. Your next goal is the lodestone just south of your beach position. The Zhon will make liberal use of harpies, which can convert your units to the Zhon side - so build generous amounts of anti-air.

Build a citadel and make a force of half amazon knights and half berserkers and crusaders, at least 20 strong. Add your crossbowmen to this army and advance on the lodestone to your south. Once this is taken and held, push into the Zhon village just south of you. Build your four guard towers, leave a few crossbowmen as guards, and the Zhon village to your west will fall to you in due time.

Chapter 21 - Ships of Doom

Realm: Veruna

Difficulty: Easy

Objectives: New additions to the Verunan fleet will make life difficult for the Zhon. Your goal is to invade the Zhon coast and get Kirena into the interior. Stone giants and harpies are the main threats that stand in your way.

Tips: What makes this chapter easy is the nice, wide cove in the middle of the map, the amazing range of the trebuchet ship, and the power of the rest of the Verunan fleet. In addition, the muddy river that passes through the Zhon lands is navigable by all but your trebuchet ships. This hardly matters, since trebuchet ships stationed at the shoreline can hit targets in the deep southeast.





Kirena is aboard a man of war. Unload her onto the nearby beach and build lodestones. Now create the skiffs, two harpoon boats, and two flagships. Set up shop in the wide cove to your south. As mana allows, create another man of war and a pair of trebuchet ships. Bring them to the south as well. Build an enclave on the island with Kirena and crank out the parrots. Let your parrots do the spotting for your big ships.



Kirena arrives on a cleaned-out beach with her escort.





There is no need to establish a base on the beach, since your ships can travel the muddy river. As mana allows, create a man of war or two, some protective skiffs, harpoon boats, and flagships, and invade the river. Use parrots to spot for you. Build a floating tower or two in the river and bring Kirena from the island to your secured river location (see screenshot). Bring a priestess and build a citadel down there. A handful of amazon knights and berserkers should clear the way for you easily. Kirena's goal is the road in the southeastern corner of the map.

Chapter 22 - Target Practice

Realm: Veruna

Difficulty: Moderate

Objectives: Taros holds captive some 30 or so prisoners. Your task is to storm the prison island and save at least 20 of them, transporting them to the starting point by ship.

Tips: The island is well suited to be a prison. It is surrounded by high cliffs, and defended by mage towers and skeleton archers. What the Taros don't realize is that the Verunan ships can toss Kirena up on the cliffs, where you can take the high ground and rule over the little beach.

Before you head for the mid-south, where the landing site is, use your dirigible to take out the enemy lodestones on the little island you start next to. Be careful not to let it drift too far east, where skeleton archers on the cliffs will take it out. Unload Kirena onto the little island (she's riding in the main flagship). Build your own lodestones; there's no need to build defenses for them.





Load Kirena up again and head southeast until you see a little beach. Unload her and build an Enclave. Build a catapult and some parrots, then use them to remove the mage towers and caged demons that overlook your beach. Summon two priestesses and, while one of them builds two bastions directly south of the beach entrance, have the other build lodestones. The lodestone on the east end of the beach will likely not survive long, but we'll deal with that threat in a moment.

Build another enclave and create an infinite supply of parrots by holding down the Ctrl key while you click on the parrot's picture. Build a shipyard with your flagship and make a trebuchet ship. Station it near the shore and set the parrot enclave to send the parrots in a wide patrol over the area you intend to take over. Once the nearby mage towers and caged demons are taken out, the trebuchet ship can be turned off, as it will mainly just hit the cliffsides from then on.

Now, the main goal is to occupy the bluffs on either side of the opening onto the beach (see screenshot). Unload priestesses onto these bluffs and have them build bastions overlooking the approaches to the beach. Fortified with a few crossbowmen, this defense will secure your beach for the rest of the game.

The eastern bluff is patrolled by skeleton archers, so a few guard towers on the bluff will protect your bastions. Build an army of amazon knights and crusaders, and use them to clear the wide open area west of the prison. Bring catapults up and, by hitting the A key and targeting the wooden walls of the prison, break through. Get Kirena near the prisoners, and you will control them. As you retreat them toward the beach, watch for a wave of iron beaks intent on killing your prisoners - use amazon knights to protect them.

Load at least 20 prisoners onto a transport boat and head back to your starting point for the victory.





Priestesses can be unloaded by ships onto the surrounding bluffs.

Chapter 23 - The Butcher of Zakum

Realm: Veruna

Difficulty: Easy





Objectives: The prisoners want revenge on the man who was in charge of their misery, a man they call the Butcher of Zakum. He is holed up in a fort, and your mission is to get the prisoners into the fort to exact revenge. At least one prisoner must survive the final fight.

Tips: Unload the transport ship right away; it contains more prisoners and a dozen or so musketeers. Group the musketeers with Ctrl-1, the prisoners with Ctrl-2, and the parrots with Ctrl-3. Assign the parrots to guard the musketeers - now they will automatically provide a line of sight. Advance the musketeers toward the fort, hitting the S key for stop as soon as red dots appear on the radar.



The prisoners need not return to the ships to be victorious.





When you reach the fort, ignore the mage towers and attack the gate with your prisoners. Once inside, circle clockwise around the fort until you spot the baron. Go right for him and attack. Order the parrots to cheer loudly!

Chapter 24 - Terrible Discovery

Realm: Aramon

Difficulty: Moderate

Objectives: The quest for the Heart of Thesh continues. Your mission is to guide Joreth into a semi-abandoned temple to where the Heart of Thesh is said to lie.

Tips: Head slightly northeast and climb the ramp onto the wide grassy wall. Head up it to the catapult- you'll encounter a goblin along the way.

The interior of the temple is guarded by wandering trolls and the occasional jungle orc. Joreth must survive the mission, but he must still assist your efforts, as you have a very small group of swordsmen and archers. Group the swordsmen and archers and assign Joreth to guard one of the swordsmen. Now, he will stay behind the group as you advance, and he won't be the first one surrounded by enemies.

You will recognize the middle of the temple by its crumbly walls. The catapult is not required to break through - your swordsmen can do it as well. Hit the A key and target a section of wall until it collapses. Walk Joreth onto the grassy platform in the dead center of the map for the victory.





The catapult is on the grassy wall to your northeast.

Chapter 25 - Betrayal

Realm: Aramon

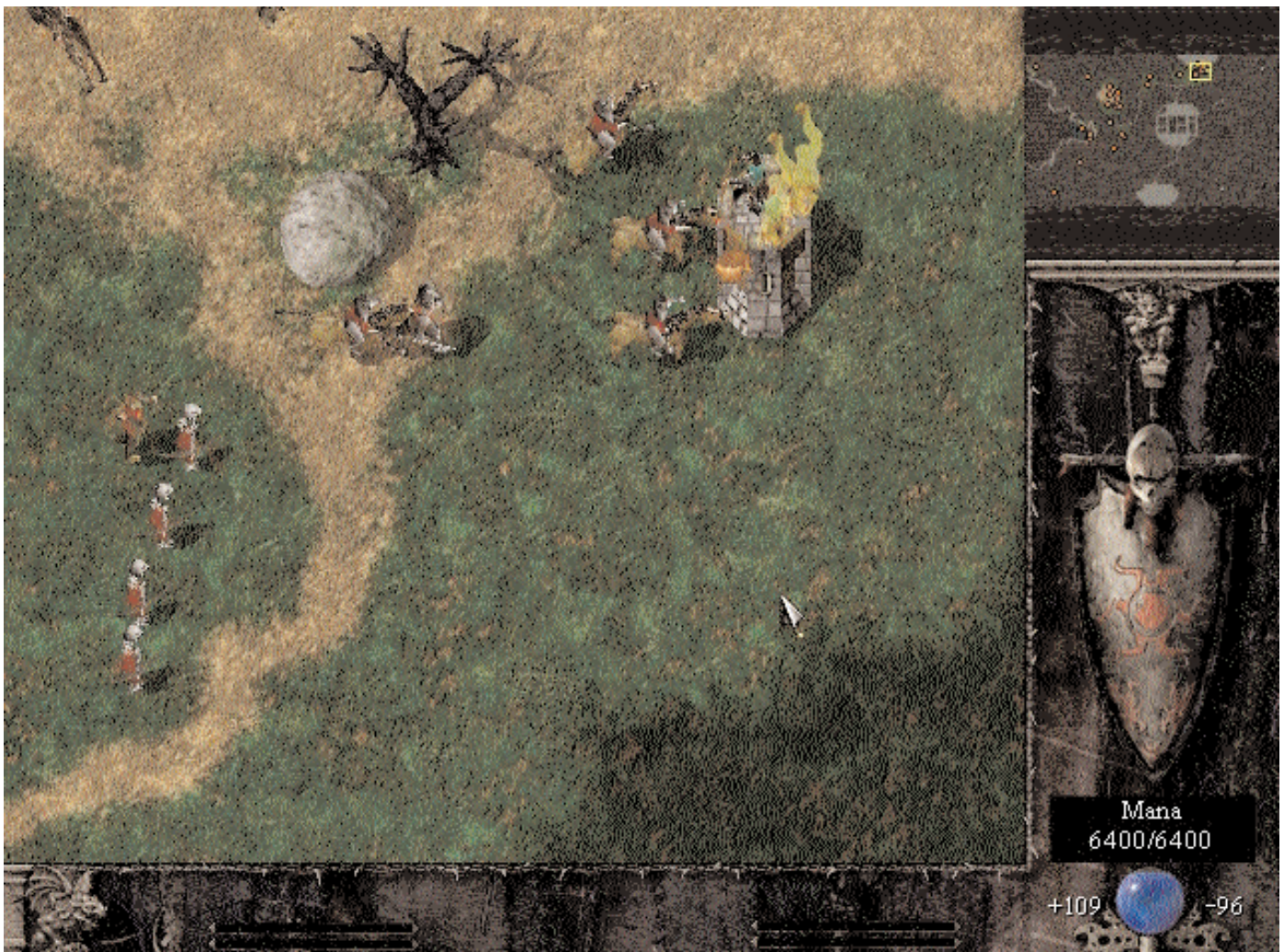
Difficulty: Easy





Objectives: An Aramon leader, Buriash, has formed an alliance with the enemy in return for the promise of kingship. Guide a mix of forces in the removal of loyal Aramon troops from a village.

Tips: The Taros drop off a dark mason, and you're already equipped with a mage builder. Use them to claim all the lodestones on the western side of the map. There is no need to defend them.



Skeleton archers and horsemen fight side by side.





Create formation of around 15 to 20 units, a mix of melee and ranged, and send them on patrol through the paved sections of the map (the large middle section and the north and south outposts). When you have time, focus some attention on removing the watch towers from the corners of the town. Your victory should be swift.

Chapter 26 - We Are The Future

Realm: Aramon/Taros

Difficulty: Easy

Objectives: Defiling the enemy's holy places is once again the goal. A temple to Anu sits in the eastern part of the castle, and your goal is to replace it with a temple to Belial.

Tips: You start with only one mage builder and one dark mason, so before you send them to claim the surrounding lodestone sites, have them build a barracks and a cabal. Create several more mage builders and dark masons and build lodestones everywhere you can. There are plenty, and they don't need to be immediately defended.

This is a good level to experiment with units like cannoneers, blade demons, and iron beaks. With just these units and skeleton archers, you will find it a simple task to break into the town and destroy the defenders. Bear in mind that the castle walls can be destroyed - cannoneers do an especially quick job of this. Once inside, patrol in all directions and send iron beaks to take out first the watch towers surrounding the temple to Anu and then the temple itself. The dark priest should then come in and finish the job by building a temple to Belial.





The temple to Anu can take only one salvo from six iron beaks.





Chapter 27 - A Land Not Fit For Humans

Realm: Aramon

Difficulty: Easy

Objectives: Over on the wretched landscapes of Taros, the Aramon invasion proceeds under the command of Lordling Dernhest. His mission, and yours, is to clear away two Taros outposts.

Tips: You begin inside half a fort on the eastern edge of the map. There is no reason to finish off the fort, as a couple of cannons and some patrolling knights will make short work of the skeleton archers and executioners who advance across the wide-open plains.

Scout with skyhawks to find the nearby lodestones. One is immediately to your south. Create two cannons, guard them with archers, and post them at the outside of your fort. Patrol the air with skyhawks to give your cannons maximum line of sight. Set your keep to begin summoning knights and patrol them across the plains in groups of five.

Build a trebuchet at the crossroads (see screenshot). Bring your cannons to this location and push your knight patrols farther and farther west. The trebuchet will clear out mage towers and lodestones, and your knights will finish the job easily.





The crossroads is a nice spot for a trebuchet guarded by cannoneers.

Chapter 28 - Bury the Dead

Realm: Aramon

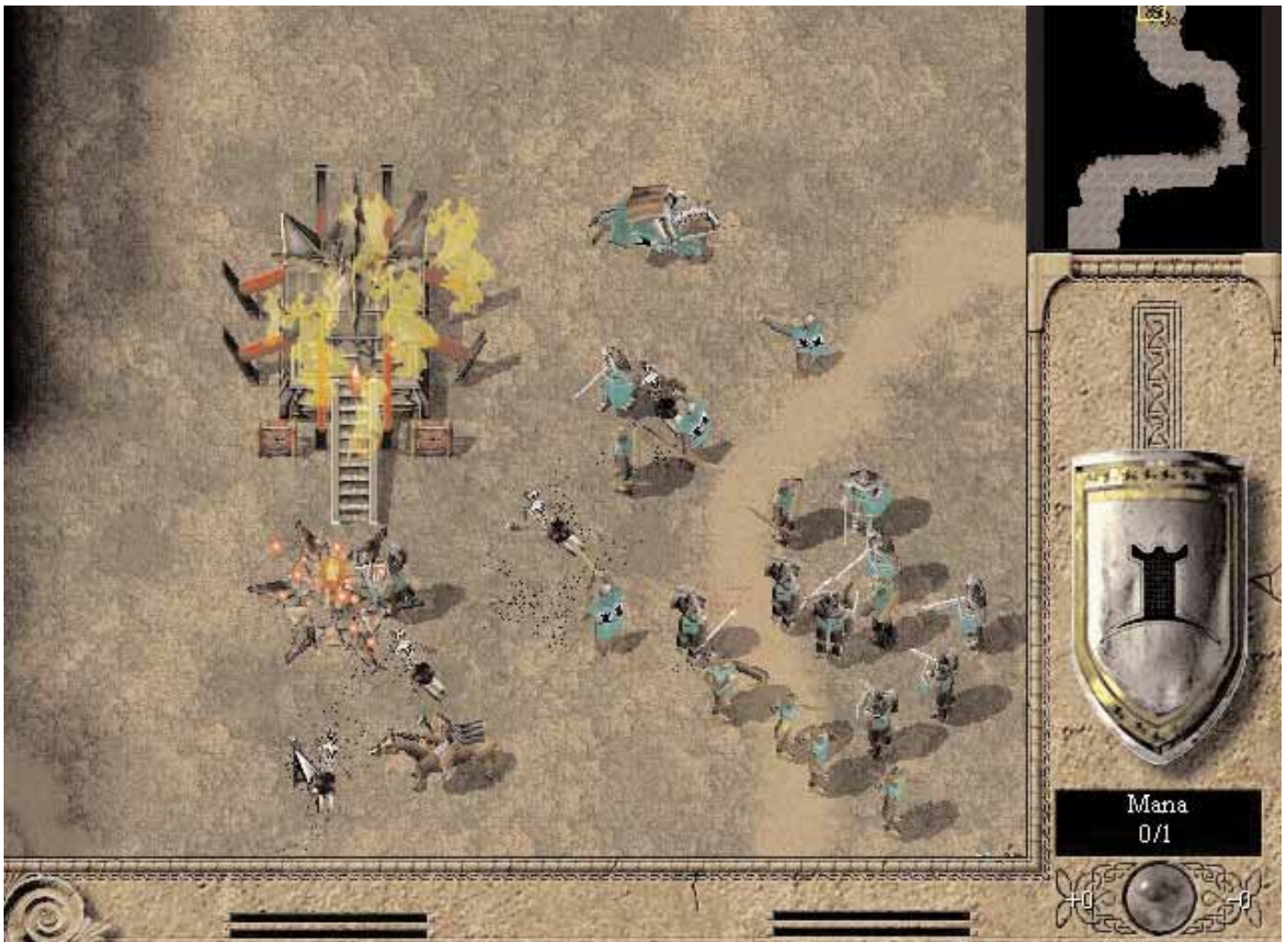
Difficulty: Simple





Objectives: Lordling Dernhest complains that his conquest of Taros is too easy. Your mission is to maneuver him through a valley so lightly defended that you'll be tempted to agree with him.

Tips: Group everyone except Dernhest into a formation. Have Dernhest guard an archer so that he trails behind. Follow the path revealed in the screenshot (see the overhead map).



Ah, the source of all the zombies!





As you move, keep your finger ready to hit the S key for stop, so that your archers will stop and fire at incoming enemies. Alternatively, use patrol instead of move. Dernhest must be positioned at the northern edge of the map to achieve victory.

Chapter 29 - Empty Streets

Realm: Aramon

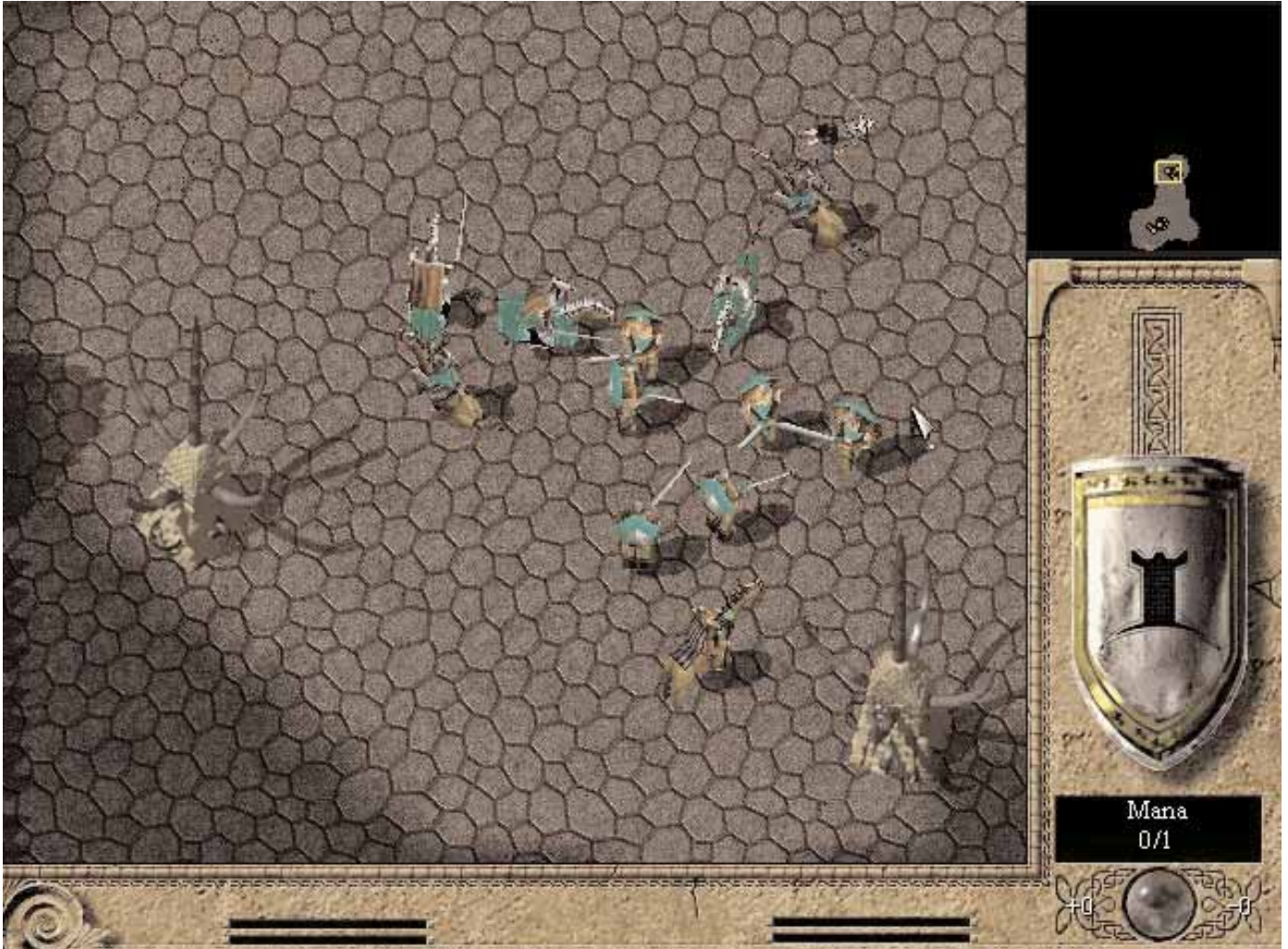
Difficulty: Simple

Objectives: Lordling Dernhest enters the empty city of Shekelesh. Your goal is to get him to the middle of the city.

Tips: Just bring your knights, horsemen, and barbarians with Dernhest to the center of town. The ranged units are unnecessary, and the passageways are narrow.

Group your units, but omit Dernhest. Have him guard a barbarian. Proceed to the center of the city by patrolling or hitting the S key when you see enemies. Some of the enemies you face are brand-new units, but you will advance through them with no trouble.





Keep things simple by only taking along your melee.

Chapter 30 - Death Squads

Realm: Taros

Difficulty: Simple





Objectives: The easy invasion of Taros was a trap. Inside the city, Aramon's officers celebrate, but outside, a pair of blade demons quietly removes the patrols...

Tips: The only thing that might stop you is a pair of paralyze arrows from the bow of the lone mage archer you will encounter. The simplest way to win this level is to patrol your two blade demons straight to the west to the spot, where the walls leave an opening to the north.



This is all you have to work with. It's plenty.



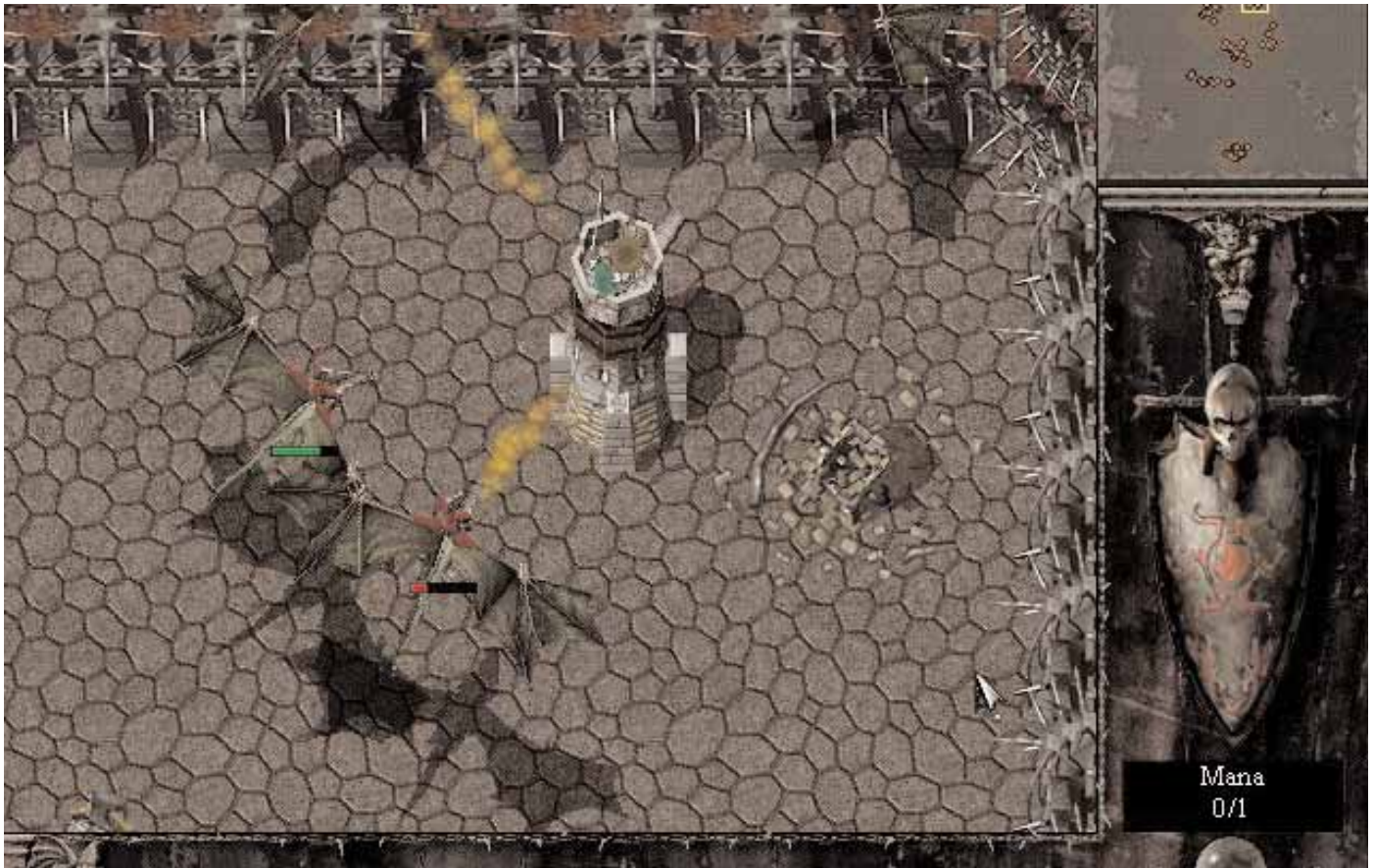


Chapter 31 - Slaughter of Shekelesh

Realm: Taros

Difficulty: Easy

Objectives: Now that the patrols are gone, Taros moves in for the kill. You guide a constant stream of reinforcements in the ambush.



Now that's a lot of red dots - and not many green ones.





Tips: True, the Aramon do have a heap of units inside the city - but your constant stream of reinforcements makes this mostly a bookkeeping chore. The first wave or two may go Aramon's way, but soon you can simply wait for reinforcements to arrive, send the drakes on patrol across the middle, and send the other units patrolling toward the middle. The battle can be won more carefully, but this will get you through.

Chapter 32 - Bait

Realm: Zhon

Difficulty: Simple

Objectives: A lone Zhon hunter lures a heap of Verunans into a trap. You are the runner.

Tips: This map is simply a foot race, which can only be lost if you get stuck on the hills. Take the first narrow pass way over on the right-hand side. From then on, simply stay in the middle of the light part of the map, avoiding the dark brown hills. When you get to the death totems in the northeast, you've won. Fortunately, the Verunan warriors don't learn quickly.





It hurt the last bunch of guys. Don't you think it might hurt you?

Chapter 33 - One Quiet Man

Realm: Zhon

Difficulty: Simple





Objectives: Zhon desires information about the Verunan outposts and decides to get it via stealth. You control a lone hunter again, this time as a scout.

Tips: Right off the bat, turn your hunter to passive, or he'll get antsy and start shooting things he's supposed to be simply spying on. You can get away with forgetting, if you're lucky. You can even get away with taking cannonballs to the chest. But you can't get away with dying.



From the vantage point of the middle plateau,
five of the six outposts are visible.





Move onto the small X-shaped hill to your southeast. When you see the Verunans, you will hear an audio clue. Your goal is to hear that five more times. To do so, head straight to the east edge of the map and then south, until you are on the large middle plateau. Run around the edges of the plateau until you have spotted the other five Verunan outposts, and heard the audio clue at each.

Chapter 34 - Vengeance

Realm: Zhon

Difficulty: Hard

Objectives: A Venunan fort on the Zhon coast is defended to the teeth. Your mission, as Zhon commander, is to lurk in the jungle until you have built a force large enough to take the fort... and then do so.

Tips: Create another beast handler with your beast tamer and then send the two of them through the southern jungle, building lodestones. Assign your army to guard these lodestones. Meanwhile, send your other beast handler straight north to the mana site sitting in the sand. Once he has built a lodestone, use him to create a beast tamer.

Your primary goal now is to control the seas. If the Veruna gets big ships (man of war, trebuchet ship) in the cove that extends south, guarded by skiffs, your headache will know no limit. Use your northern beast tamer to create a beast lord, and while he makes you a stone giant, make a half-dozen krakens with your beast tamer (see screenshot). Keep all this activity south of the lodestone, so you don't attract the attention of the dirigible floating just to your north.





This is a nice deep spot for a beast tamer to create krakens.

Post the stone giant at the shoreline, facing the castle, so he overlooks a narrow spot of the cove. Build a sacred fire right beside him and guard him with a few hunters and a bat. Leave this setup for now, until the Verunans are alerted to your presence.





Build a line of five or six death totems along the border between the sandy area and the jungle. Put a couple more at the southern tip of the cove (see the overhead map in the screenshot). Guard each death totem with a bat and a hunter or jungle orc. Post a couple of stone giants at the ends of your death totem line and patrol beast handlers or beast tamers behind the death totems.

At some point, Verunans will have launched a few attacks against your jungle position. When they do, use your krakens to take out the man of war sitting in the cove as well as any other ships that have wandered to the south. With the help of a bat, patrol the krakens up into the northern sea, looking for trebuchet ships in particular. Take the Verunan navy out entirely and leave the krakens and bat patrolling the north.

Now that you have the Verunans contained, the rest is a matter of grinding them down. You may proceed in several ways. We suggest summoning a shaman and converting a few of your lodestones to divine lodestones. Create a large force of drakes and jungle orcs and load the jungle orcs (and some beast lords) onto rocs. Use the krakens and drakes to clear the back entrance to the fort (on the small beach in the far north). Unload your rocs onto this island and storm the fort. It will take several waves of jungle orcs before the Verunan fort is softened up enough to let your drakes patrol over it to mop up.

Chapter 35 - Emen's Message

Realm: Aramon

Difficulty: Easy





Objectives: Lord Buriash has set up camp just outside Aramon's capital city. The messenger Emen, sent to surrender, instead will assassinate Lord Buriash and run back to town. You are Emen.



Can we have a moment alone, please?

Tips: The mission is straightforward: proceed to Lord Buriash, attack him, and run for your life. One successful escape route is immediately northeast around the small building (see screenshot). Don't stop running because,





while you might outpace the executioners, you will not outpace the blade demons. Victory is had as soon as you touch the paved streets of the city again.

Chapter 36 - Common Folk

Realm: Aramon

Difficulty: Easy

Objectives: Ayla, an Aramon peasant, leads a rebellion against the Tarosian oppressors. Guide her to the trebuchet and use it to soften up the enemy base.

Tips: Ayla must first collect a band of supporters. They are located in each of the five light portions of the eastern map. Rather than wander the map as an ever-growing band, just move Ayla into each of these places and have her draw near enough to the peasants and farmers to sway them to your cause.

Put all the farmers and peasants into formation and have Ayla guard each formation, so that she stays in the back. Take the whole band to the trebuchet (see screenshot). Clear out the enemies and assign most of the group to guard the watch tower. Use the trebuchet to take out all the nonmoving red dots on the overhead map.

When things seem to calm down, set the trebuchet to defensive and move your farmer army into the fort. If you encounter towers or structures, back the army off and use the trebuchet to remove the threat. Enemy soldiers must be cleared out of the south, and a lodestone just to the north of the enemy fort must be destroyed. Just be careful not to fire trebuchet shots into the middle of your melee fights.





The trebuchet is located on the small square fort.

Chapter 37 - The Heart of Thesh

Realm: Aramon

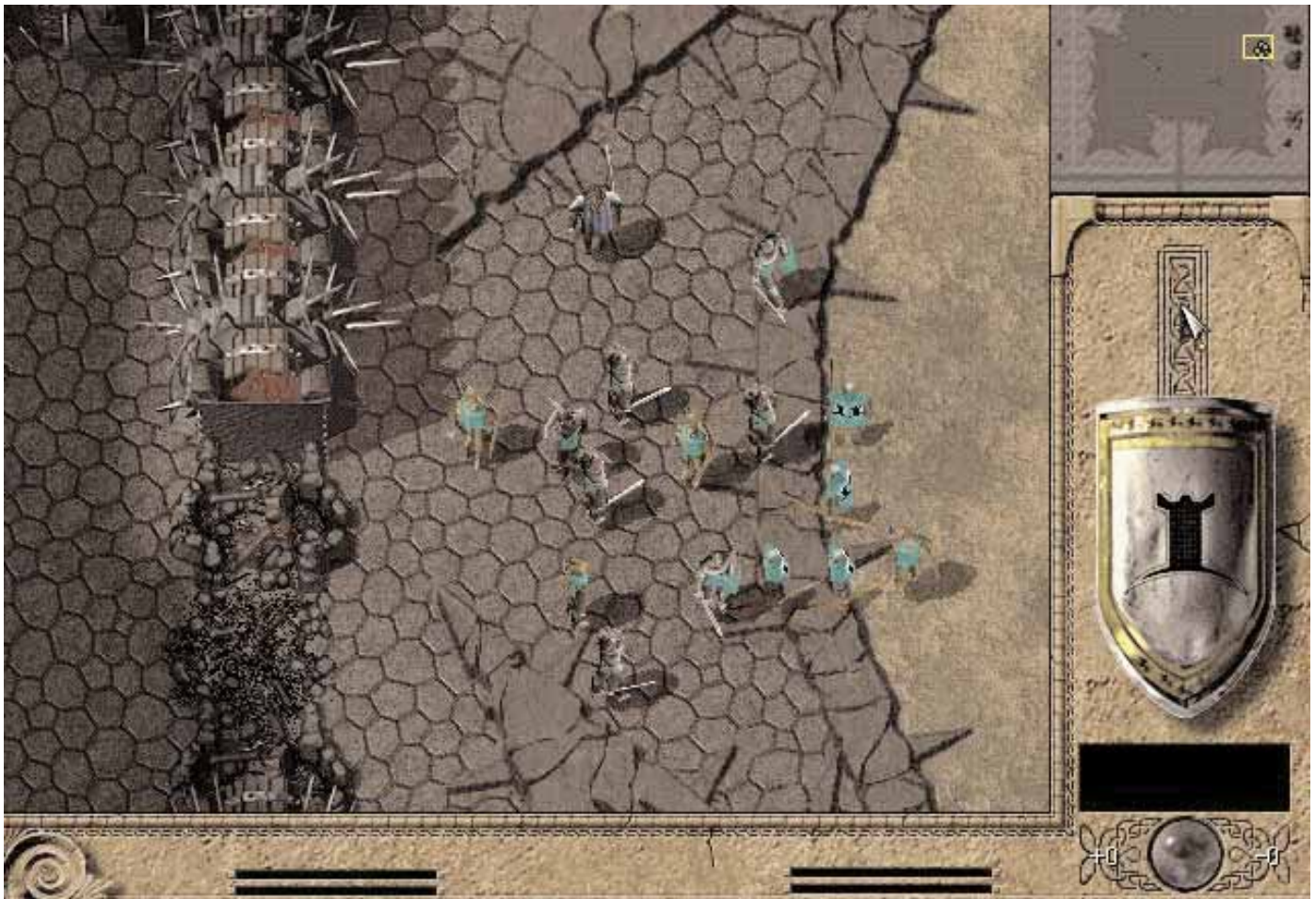
Difficulty: Easy





Objectives: The quest for the Heart of Thesh is almost at an end. The temple to Belial that contains it is the last thing standing between Jorath and his prize. Your goal is to guide him to the place where the heart is kept.

Tips: Create a formation of everyone except Jorath and then assign Jorath to guard one of the other units. Set everyone to offensive and get under way. Ignore the game's hint that says you should sneak in the south entrance. Instead, go clockwise around the temple and enter through the hole blasted in the temple's eastern wall (see screenshot).



Ignore the game's hints and go clockwise around the temple to this hole.





Once inside, don't worry yourself with the temple you see there. Take a right, heading north. Kill the skeleton archers, executioners, and blade demons you find. Inside this room is the Heart of Thesh. And this time, it's really here.

Chapter 38 - A Weaving of Forces

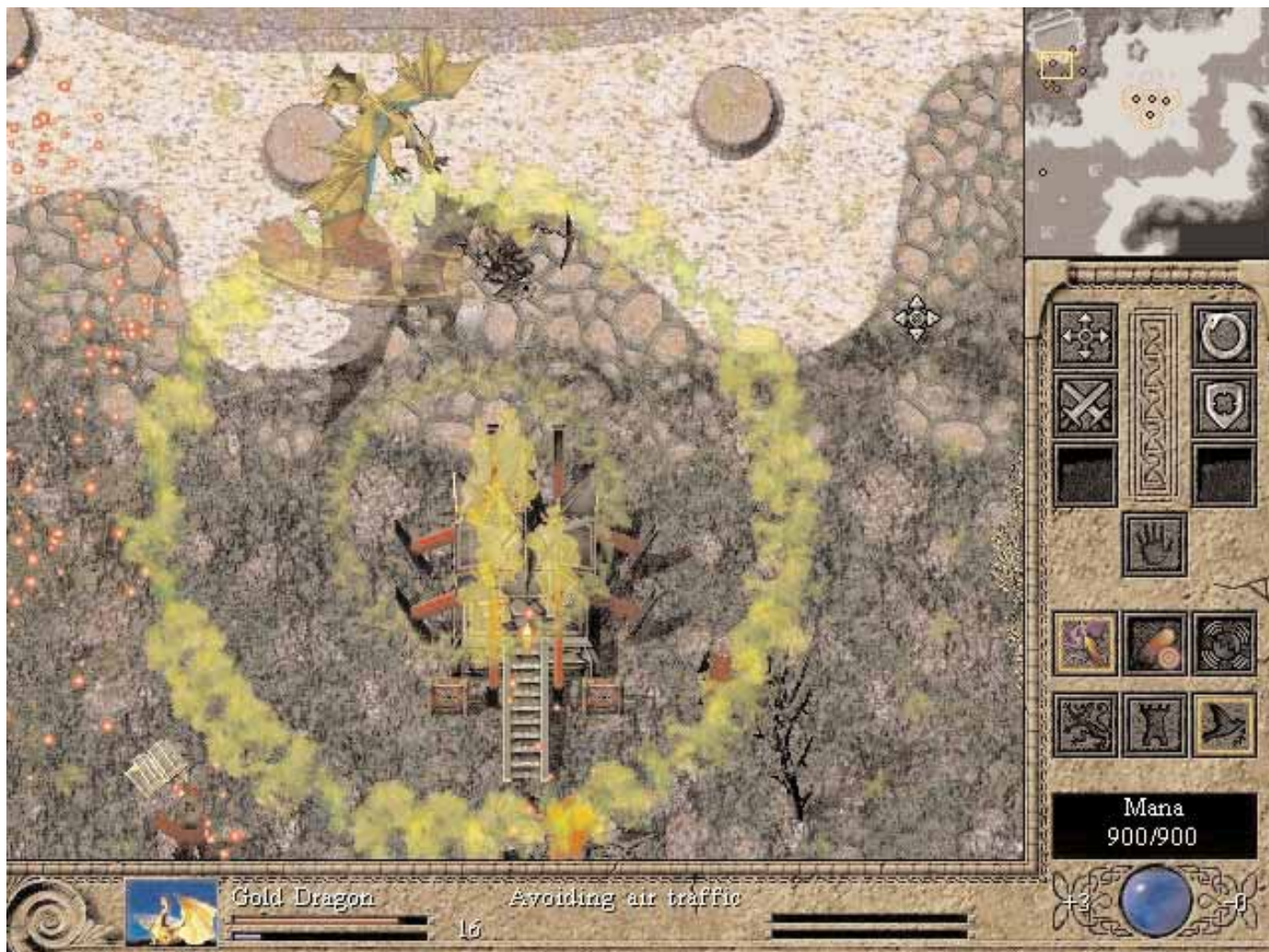
Realm: Aramon

Difficulty: Simple

Objectives: The Heart of Thesh unlocks the secret to summoning the golden Dragon of Anu. The price of admission is just three deer.

Tips: Send an acolyte south and, as you pass by deer, send the deer back to the standing stones. Once you have collected three deer in this way, sacrifice them with your swordsman. This will summon the gold dragon, which you should use to clear the northwest of red dots.





Earthquake spell is the dragon's level-three attack.

Chapter 39 - Splendorous Wings

Realm: Aramon

Difficulty: Simple





Objectives: Aramon sweeps the country clean of Taros soldiers with its new prize. You control the golden dragon as it does just that.



The Taros forces are in clumps. Lead with the earthquake spell.

Tips: There is no need to move the supporting soldiers. Just take the dragon, hit the T key to track him, and fly around the map using the overhead map for guidance. Wait for the dragon's mana to be full, select the earthquake spell, and attack the middle of a Taros group. Then, let the dragon mop up the survivors - targeting fire drakes, skeleton archers, and fire demons first.





Chapter 40 - Burning Into History

Realm: Aramon

Difficulty: Simple

Objectives: The dragon arrives on the shores of Zhon to assist the Verunans. Use the dragon to clear the area of Zhon resistance.



It was too late to save these Verunan soldiers, who are now stone.





Tips: The only unit needed in this chapter is the dragon. Set him to use the earthquake spell and patrol him through the melee, focusing on concentrations of black dots on the overhead map.

Chapter 41 - Collapse

Realm: Zhon

Difficulty: Easy

Objectives: Thirsha retreats into the jungle with her Zhon guards. Your goal is to see her to the eastern edge of the map safely.

Tips: Set two hunters to guard Thirsha and send her immediately to the eastern edge of the map. The only enemies you'll encounter on the way are wolves, which Thirsha can easily handle. Form up the rest of your army right in the path of the Verunans, who come from directly west. Use your goblins to block any Verunan units that skirt around your main force. Once Thirsha reaches the eastern edge of the map, you've won.





You actually can duke it out with the pursuing Verunans in the middle.

Chapter 42 - Escape

Realm: Zhon

Difficulty: Easy



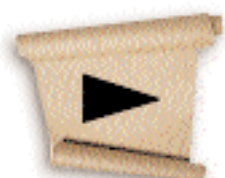


Objectives: Thirsha, still injured, isn't out of the woods yet. That is to say, she's not in the woods yet - your goal is to get her there.



Head straight for the southern plateau and stay north of the Verunan patrols.

Tips: Set Thirsha to passive. Group the hunters and Thirsha and send them south (see screenshot). The stone giant can be sent on patrol through the middle of the map to see what you've avoided. Stay near the edge of the





plateau and only fight if the enemy stops to engage you. Following the edge of the plateau, run your group east and then north to the death totems. A group of berserkers will rush you as you reach that area, and this is why you set Thirsha to passive: keep her running! Ignore everything else, and you will win.

Chapter 43 - Precious Cargo

Realm: Taros

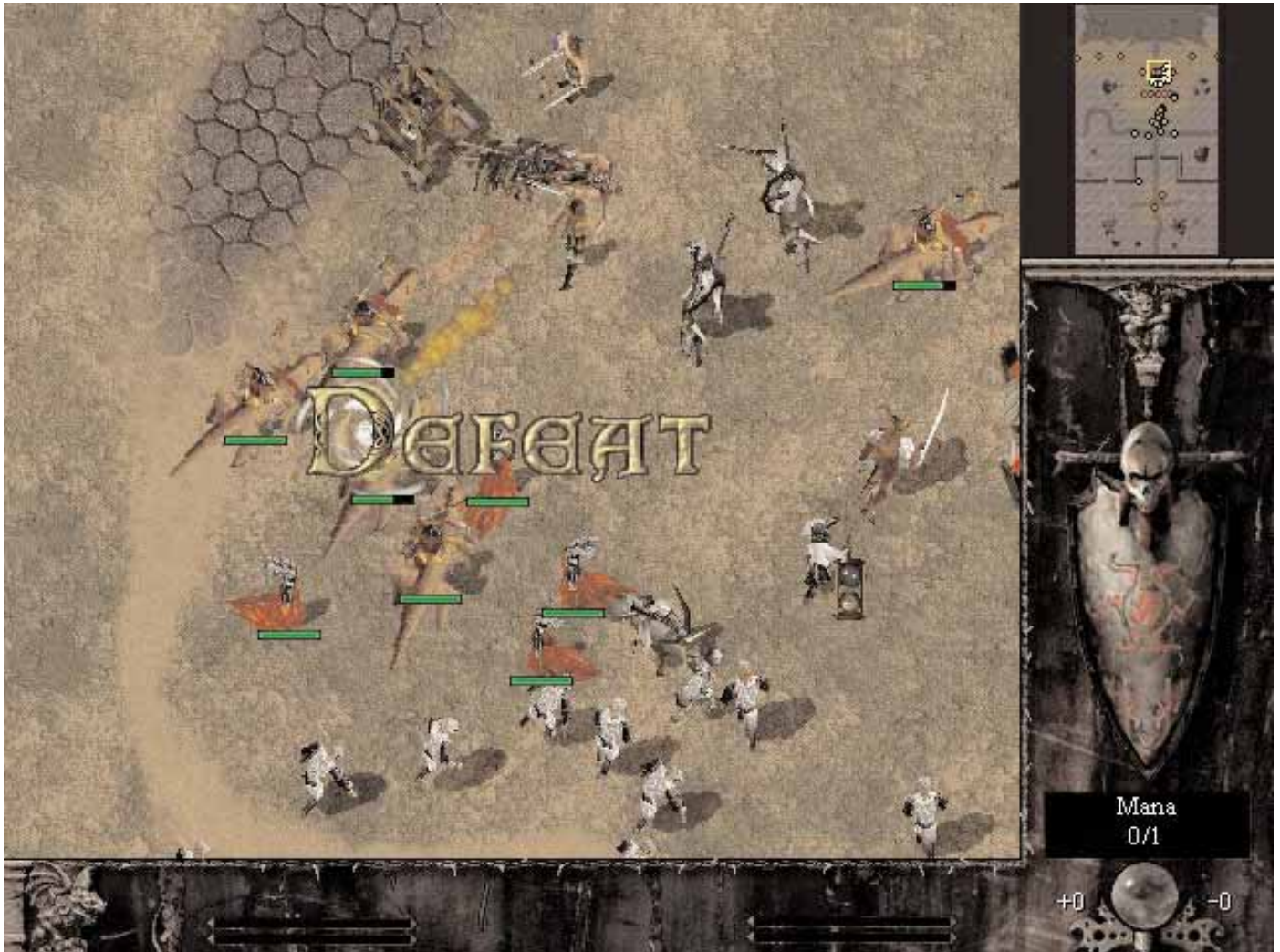
Difficulty: Moderate

Objectives: A wagon bearing a special bottle must be brought out of the fort and to the southern road. Verunans aplenty are bent on stopping you.

Tips: You are given two sky knights, four weather witches, and five fire mages with which to accomplish your task. A group of friendly units, under control by the computer, will help you. Fortunately, you control the opening and closing of the gates.

The Verunan attackers first target the front gates, and they are almost always repelled without breaching the walls. The second wave is a long time coming, which lets you get in position. Future attackers will target the wagon, so placing it in a good spot will bring the attackers to your strong points. If you want to play simply, bring the wagon near the front gates. This is where your mage towers are concentrated.





What happens when your weather witch breaks down your own walls?

If you want a more complicated strategy, leave the wagon right where it is and position a pair of weather witches by the wall south of it. When the Verunans attack the wall, use the ice storm spell to wipe them out. This will knock a hole in your wall, but you can quickly bring the wagon to the relative safety of the gate area.





Don't open the gates until the enemy cannons are gone. Use your two sky knights to make hit-and-run raids on the cannon positions directly south of the gates. Meanwhile, let the enemy open your gates. They will attack your walls, all the while coming under mage tower fire, which will whittle them down. Once they breach your fort, the computer-controlled units will drive the attackers back. Be careful not to unleash your level-three spells on your own units.

Moving down the road to the south may cost you most of your units, but as long as the cannons are gone, it is possible. Use your units one at a time with your level-three spells or keep them in a group and go with your level-two spells. Move the wagon to the middle bottom of the map for the victory.

Chapter 44 - The Noose Draws Tighter

Realm: Aramon / Veruna

Difficulty: Moderate

Objectives: The Aramon and Verunans join together to attack the well-defended city wherein dwells Lokken. As commander of both Elsin and Kirena, your mission is to move 20 cannon into the far corner of the map.

Tips: This is a chapter won by brute force, patience, and mage archers - way heavy on the mage archers. The enemy attacks mainly involve iron beaks, fire mages, and weather witches, all of which deal massive damage if allowed too close. The ice storms released by the weather witches pose the





gravest threat. Groups of ten mage archers, guarded by pairs of dirigibles, eliminate that threat.



The gold dragon isn't essential, but it's lots of fun.

Build lodestones on the two sites nearby. Build a citadel and a keep. Build a half-dozen dirigibles and have them guard the units you've posted in the front lines. Make sure they don't wander too close to the nearby mage towers. For the rest of this chapter, maintain dirigible coverage the entire way across your front lines.





Your point of attack should be the wall immediately north of your position. Behind it lies a vast courtyard full of burned buildings. Only one mage tower blocks your way, and it should be taken out with catapults from a distance. Be sure that at least 15 mage archers and a few cannons cover the whole area created by the tower's destruction. All manner of nasties will come out of the hole once it is open.

Once you've beaten back the first waves of Zhon counterattack, move through the hole, build a divine lodestone on the mana site there, and defend as you wish with large groups of mage archers, guarded by dirigibles and cannons. Once you have secured this position, there are numerous ways to proceed. You can extend your reach into the middle of the courtyard and build a trebuchet there. You can also create a large melee army and storm through the earthworks entrance farthest to the right, in the north.

What you can't do is break through the earthworks or win the mission with a dragon alone. The mage towers are very resistant to dragon attacks and have great success in lowering the dragon's hitpoints. The dragon makes a very useful guard for your advance, however.

Once you've worn down the enemy, create 20 cannons and move them to the extreme northwest corner of the map for the victory.

Chapter 45 - Beset With Danger

Realm: Taros

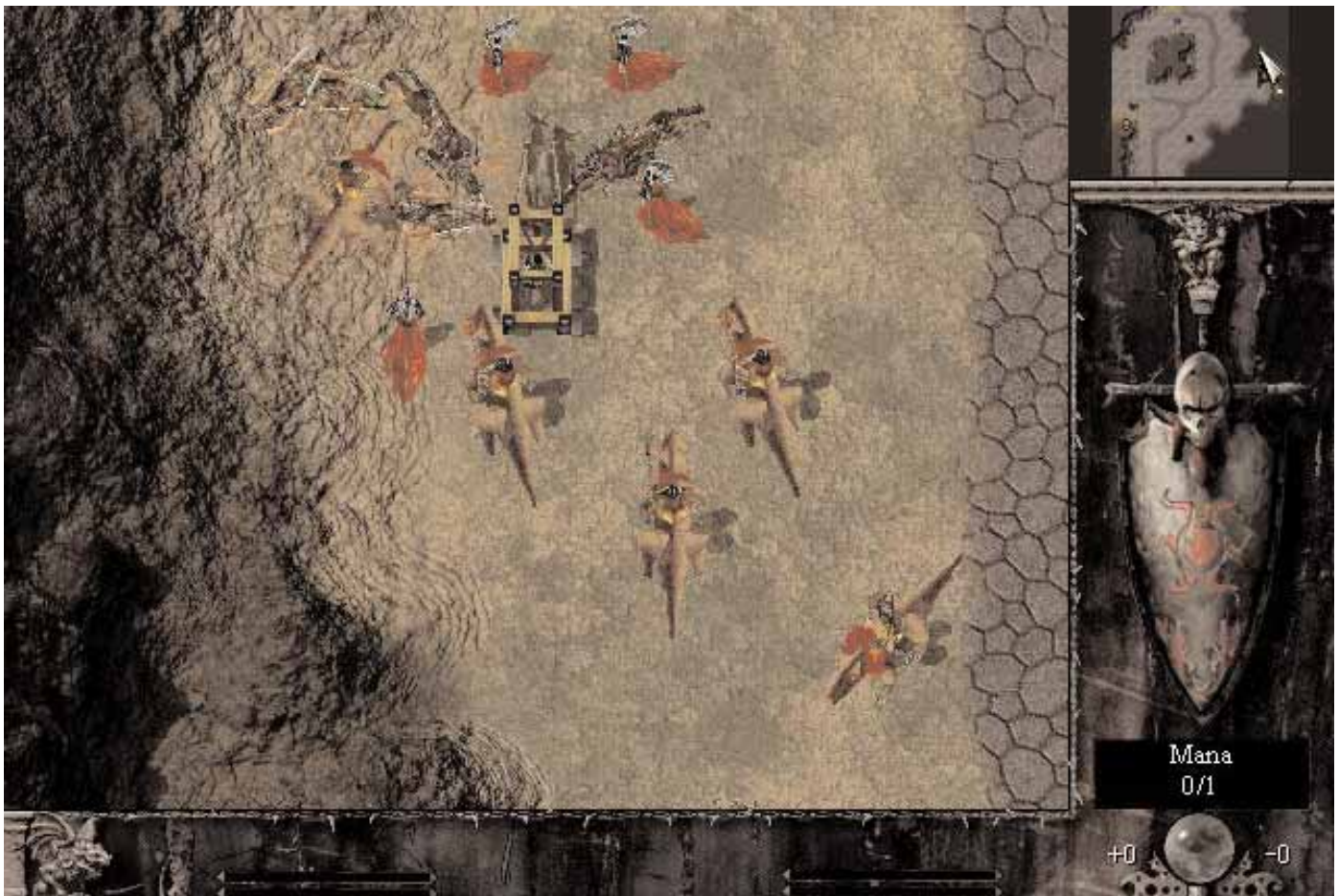
Difficulty: Moderate





Objectives: The bottle of mysterious fluid, in its bottle wagon, is still making its way south. Your goal is to cross a dangerous stretch of land, under bombardment by ships and under attack by foot soldiers.

Tips: The enemy has one thing on its mind: kill the wagon. You can use this to your advantage by posting your fire mages and weather witches in front of the wagon. They will zap everything that tries to pass them. Set the witches to use their level-two spells, as you really don't want tornadoes whipping around randomly near your wagon.



The enemy is single-minded, and you can use this to your advantage.





The truly dangerous wave of enemies comes when your wagon proceeds a third of the way down the map and includes Berserkers. They appear where the two southern red dots appear on the overhead map in the screenshot. Weather witches can climb the cliffs to the west, and you may have luck ambushing the charging enemy with ice storm spells in the narrow part of the canyon. A safer bet is to lure the enemies with the wagon and then surround them completely with your witches and fire mages. The enemy will try its best to reach the wagon, while you take them out. Remember: no tornadoes!

Chapter 46 - The Heart of Elam

Realm: Aramon / Veruna

Difficulty: Moderate

Objectives: Aramon and Veruna alliance forces continue their push into Lokken's territory. Use the waterways to your advantage and eliminate Tarosian forces.

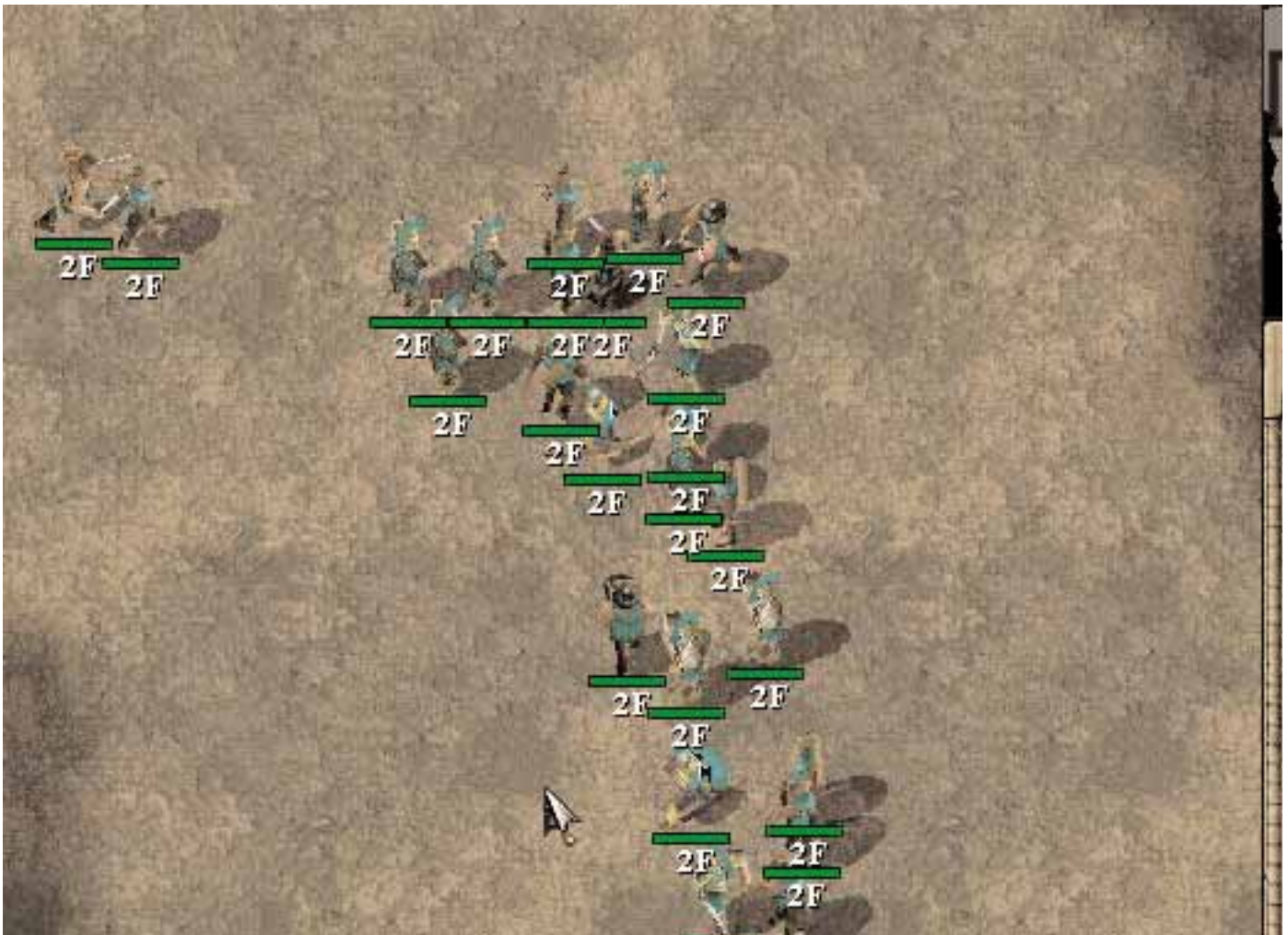
Tips: Tarosian bases lie to the west (about the middle of the map), southwest, and the middle of the map south. The two bases south are protected by plenty of mage towers and sky knights; the base to the west is fairly unprotected. As soon as the level begins, use your available mana to construct barracks, enclave, keep, and citadel.

Soon after the level begins, you'll be faced with many attack waves. One of the first waves comes from the west and is filled with zombies and skeleton archers. A southern wave soon follows with fire spouts and fire mages. Build a few defenses, including strongholds, and patrol spyhawks or parrots to get an idea of when the enemy is bringing an attack force.





Three mana sites are relatively close by, one straight west, another south, and another southwest - each relative to your starting location. Once you've fortified your main base, head out and construct lodestones. The enemy will send ghost ships and other units to eliminate your mana production. Begin cranking out an assortment of units, anti-air, range, and melee. Keep defending against the waves of attacks and proceed west to knock out the smaller of the three bases.



Keep your units in formation when you've got a large clump like this.





The hint for the mission indicated that the waterways could be useful. Although you could beat the mission without ever having tested those waters, building a sea fort and guarding it with plenty of units and floating towers can get you close enough to bombard the enemy with a trebuchet ship. Build in the waterway just north of the southern most point.

After you knock out the west fort, the enemy waves will calm down. Keep churning out units and send them at the southern base until you've knocked it out. Go for the towers first, as the Taros' dark masons will likely not rebuild them. Once you've secured south, head to the southwest base (lots of mage towers here) and take down the base by sending wave after wave of forces. Once that's accomplished, patrol with spyhawks or parrots to find any stragglers.

Chapter 47 - Sea Shadow

Realm: Taros

Difficulty: Moderate

Objectives: The magic bottle continues its journey. Your goal is to move it south to a waiting ship and use that ship's cloakable powers to maneuver it to safety.

Tips: Your first task is to weather the waves of barbarians, warriors, and mage archers that rush in to attack the wagon. Stick the wagon as far north-east as you can (see screenshot) and surround it completely with your fire mages and weather witches. Set the witches to use their level-two spell, not their tornado spell. Guard the wagon with your sky knights. Finally, set Mirazi Heket to offensive. He will get some good shots in on incoming units, which is especially nice when the mage archers show up.





A safe place to wait out the initial battle...

Once the incoming mage archers are dead, things will calm down. In the south, a big battle has died down, and many Verunan units are waiting between you and your target. Send Mirazi down the eastern side of the land, cloaked. Set him to passive and scout the enemy position.





Bring the fire mages down now. Set them to use their level-two spell, which hits from a distance. Set them to defensive, so they will not rush in when they spot a target. Use them and the cloaked Mirazi to systematically remove the Verunans. Once a path wide enough is clear, send the wagon down the same way you sent Mirazi and circle it behind the Verunans into the fort in the south.

The cloakable ship will appear. Load the wagon. Guard the ship with your sky knights and cloak the ship. With the sky knights as scouts, it will be a simple task to run through the Verunan fleet to the northeast corner of the map.

Chapter 48 - The Heavens Will Quake

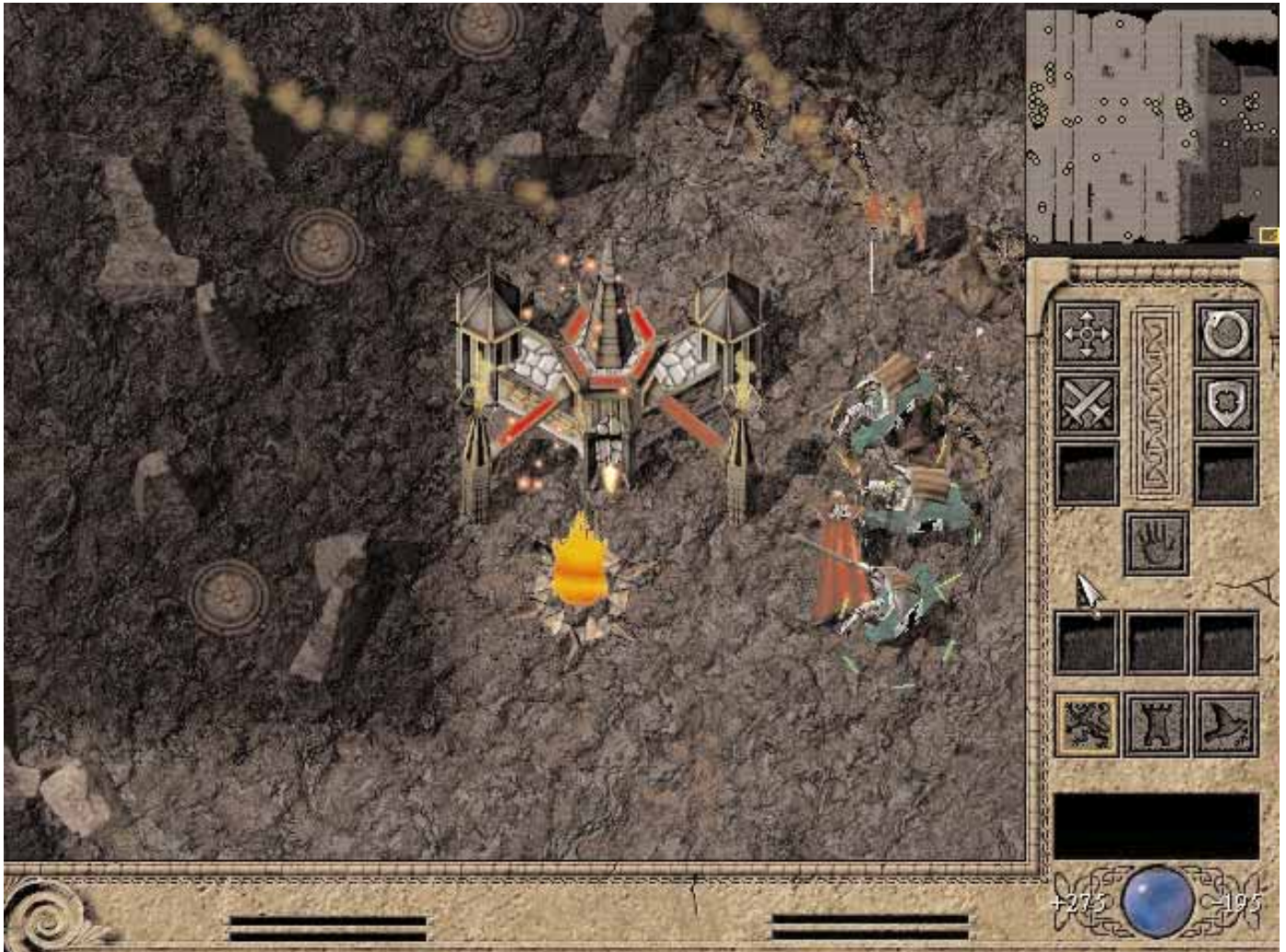
Realm: Aramon / Veruna

Difficulty: Moderate

Objectives: The final battle rages at Lokken's own city. Your mission is to beat his ever-oncoming forces back and slay him.

Tips: The first wave of attack comes from straight north and straight south simultaneously - and quickly. Put half of your army facing north and half south, opening up room to build a few watch towers and a stronghold facing east. Put your monarchs on patrol behind your front lines, and you will easily defeat the first waves.





Lokken hides behind his sky knights, but these ground knights are onto his tricks.

Decide on a defense for the lodestones you now spread out and find (there are three nearby). For example, if you use mage archers and barbarians on defense, stick with those units. Your army will likely max out and will be spread all over the map. Selecting all of one kind of unit (with Ctrl-Z) will be





the easiest way to organize your attacks, and you don't want to be choosing your defensive units. For attack, choose one or two melee and one anti-air unit (for example, knights and amazon knights).

Most of the mana sites are in the middle of the map. Clear your side of the map by putting your offensive units into large groups and patrolling them up and down the map. Don't worry about losing any - soon you will have more mana than you know what to do with. Send a group of cannons and supporting melee to the east when the middle is clear.

Lokken's fort is in the east, guarded by a ramp that most slow units cannot climb. Just north of his fort is an open space that will likely be occupied by an abyss or temple. Destroy it so units from the north can't flank.

Once the map is yours, assault the main ramp. Trebuchets can help, but the main force should be wave after wave of your offensive units. The cannons will protect against stragglers that manage to get off the ramp where you've built your trebuchets. Once you have taken the outer courtyard, bring a priestess and mage builder up the ramp and establish yourself.

There is a slender corridor running south to the inner sanctum. At the other end of the narrow corridor is a gate guarded by mage towers and many sky knights. Use mortars or a trebuchet, along with dirigibles for sighting, to knock through the gate. Send assassins in, cloaked, and target mind mages. If you don't take them out, they will convert your assaulting units easily, as they struggle down the narrow corridor.

Once the mind mages are gone, send in waves of amazon knights mixed with knights and wear down the enemy. Eventually, send in the same group, but have the knights ignore all targets but Lokken (scout his position with an





assassin). He will kill the first knights that reach him, but he will run out of mana, and the remaining knights can kill him. Only about six knights must reach him for the battle to go your way.



Chapter Six:

Multiplayer Strategies





Defeating the Total Annihilation: Kingdoms single-player missions is one thing - taking down human multiplayer opponents is another. While many single-player tricks and tactics (especially interface knowledge, formations, and build queuing) will serve you well, you must still think a little differently when facing a human foe. In this chapter, you'll find the basics to good multiplayer play; also take your time learning unit abilities (in other sections of this guide) before testing the battlegrounds against the tougher opponents on Cavedog's free online service, Boneyards.

Scout

The first units you create should be scouts (for example, bats, parrots, and so on). Patrol a few scouting units all across the map, using the Shift key and the overhead map to set multiple waypoints. Revealing mana sites is the immediate benefit. Set your offensive front as far toward your opponents as you can, based on the scouting information (more on this later). Follow your scouts with units that can build lodestones (for example, mage builders, beast handlers, and so on) and defensive towers.

Scouting will also let you know how aggressive your opponents are. You'll know the extent of their lodestone building, what kinds of units they are producing, and when they are attacking you. Be sure to set the waypoints for your scouts in neutral or friendly territory, if you can. Aerial scouts are most vulnerable when they are making a sharp turn.

Aggressive Play

Once you can see the surrounding area, send units that can build lodestones out to your frontiers. Build lodestones from the frontiers inward and fortify the





outer lodestones as soon as possible. Assign scouting units to guard your lodestones to provide line of sight for your defensive units. As mana allows, send more defensive units to the frontiers. Keep the pressure on your opponents, and you'll not only rake in more mana, but you'll keep them flustered.

Create a few melee units (for example, warriors, trolls, and so on) and set them to patrol through the enemy territory. Don't let your opponents build unprotected lodestones. Force them to defend every lodestone. If you can circle behind their front lines and patrol near the enemy home, do so.

Walls

Don't build many walls at first. Concentrating on defense will generally get you killed in the long run. It's better to extend your front lines as far as you can right off the bat and keep your opponents on their heels.

Defending Lodestones

Leave a few units to guard your lodestones as you push your front lines forward. A good mix will include both melee and ranged units in approximately equal amounts, along with a tower, a scouting unit defending that tower, and a pair of units which can heal on patrol. For example, a Verunan defense could consist of five warriors, five crossbowmen, a guard tower, two patrolling priestesses, and a dirigible guarding the tower.





Choosing Attack/Defend Units

We suggest that you decide what units you'd like to use for defense and what units you'd like to use for offense. This has two benefits, both involving the use of Ctrl-Z, which selects all units of the types already selected.

First, if you have a rampaging army that is moving around the map, and you are building the same kinds of units back at home, you can bring those units easily to the front by selecting your army, hitting Ctrl-Z, and continuing to attack. Your home units will come and join the fray without you switching your view back to home.

Second, in a big battle, it's often easiest to cope with new situations by using Ctrl-Z. For example, if in a big fight a group of enemy air units suddenly arrive, and you'd like your ranged units to target them, find one of those units, select it, hit Ctrl-Z, and target. Incidentally, this points out another reason for splitting offensive and defensive duties; this method won't remove units from defensive duties.

Generally, tier 1 units should be left on defense, while tier 2 and 3 units go on offense. For example, a Taros player might choose executioners and black knights to defend lodestones, while skeleton archers and blade demons go on offense.

Patrolling vs. Moving

Quite a few ranged units (and some melee units) will not fire while moving. If you want to send a group that includes such units to fire on enemies as they



move, put the group into a formation (using the Alt key) and then patrol them to their destination. Set them to offensive. The formation will keep them together, and patrol will make them stop and fire. Alternatively, if you are watching the group, you can keep your finger on the S key for stop and stop the group as soon as they encounter enemies.

Good Mixtures

Ranged units support melee units as well as air units. Don't construct all of one type, or you're surely in for a quick game. Use a mixture of different units, one melee type, one ranged type, and one air type, to get the most out of your attack forces. Keep the ranged units back and make sure they have line of sight against the enemy forces ahead of them. Siege units should be placed in the rear and guarded with a few melee units to keep them safe from flank attacks.

Specialty units, such as Taros magic-users, are expensive and typically quite vulnerable to attack. Learn to use their abilities effectively before you rely on them in heated multiplayer battles.

Protect Against Rushes

Many players like to get the game over quickly with an overwhelming force of early attack units. The Zhon side is especially easy for this because of its ability to churn out inexpensive units (such as goblins) at blazing speeds. All monarchs feature an area effect spell, which can rid the land of an early rush quite quick. Erect a tower or two and make sure you're scouting well, so you know where the rush will be coming from. Don't venture too far out of your





confined base if you believe you're facing a player who rushes. If you can hold out against the early attacks, you'll have more mana and better units in the long run.



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