

# GLORY AT THE END

The Strong Reeds have kept a vigilant watch in Bregasland for over a year, reassuring their countryfolk since the territory's liberation from the Jotun and the pretender stewardship, and ensuring that the large warband of Ice Fishers of Ldansk are under continual surveillance. Dutiful, steadfast, and stubborn to the last, they have bidden their time. Without the army's presence, laying low in isolated fens and sleet-driven birch stands, Bregasland would have been utterly overwhelmed by the Jotun's sudden drive out of Ashvale, through Gravenmarch, and out across the open marshes. Had they been elsewhere, then the orcs would be in Ottery already, preparing for a march down the broadened Otterway right into Oddmire and then Mitwold.

Whilst there is much to praise in their commitment and dedication to carrying out their general's orders, it is tough to keep morale up with the arrival of fresh Jotun forces. Soldiers fight for their neighbours' homes, the eel farms of their cousins, and the cattle of their other cousins. It is tireless, it is thankless, and it needs to be done. *"The reward for a good job is more work"* as the Marchers say.

The Jotun now control all of Bregasland except for the town of Ottery, the Otterway into Mitwold and the southbound Sallow Way as far as Sal-Ott Meet, half the distance to Sallow itself. Thwarted by the guerrilla actions, ambushes, and subterfuge of the Strong Reeds, the barbarians have been unable to complete what they had finished before the turning of the seasons. But there are warbands slowly picking their way east out of the North Fens, and most troubling of all, a massive force moving north up the Sallow Way. Without intervention, this mass of elite kirkja warriors will reach Ottery by the end of the equinox, effectively completing the Jotun's conquest of the territory. The western barbarians have such numbers that even the Strong Reeds will be unable to oppose them in the campaigning ahead.

## OBJECTIVE: BLOCK THE SALLOW WAY

- **Stop the Jotun's attack north from Sallow**
- **Hold ground and turn back the assault at Sal-Ott Meet**
- **Success will prevent the Jotun from fully conquering Bregasland before the new campaign season**
- **Failure will see the fall of the territory, allowing the Jotun to advance**

Sal-Ott Meet lies equidistant along the causeway between Sallow and Ottery. Here, the land broadens out into several open pastures and one of the largest woods for many miles. Traditionally, in quieter times, the area has seen frequent use as a place for summer festivals, markets to draw merchants in from across the wide marshes, and foot-the-ball matches between the two settlements. It has also served as a point where new recruits to the Strong Reeds muster.

The field provides as good a place as any to bring the Jotun to battle as they move north. The portal from the Sentinel Gate will deliver forces from Anvil to the gathering field some ten to fifteen minutes before the Jotun arrive. A set of defences hastily erected by locals under direction of the Reeds awaits the arrival of Imperial forces. All that needs to be done is await the barbarian troops, bring them to battle, and blunt their attack. Should the line still hold a full hour after the Sentinel Gate is opened, then prognosticators predict that the Jotun's strength will begin to wane and they will soon relinquish their offensive. It will be forty-five to sixty minutes of hard and relentless work, but *"war is a thrice-ploughed field"* as the saying goes.

## OBJECTIVE: ROUSE THE STRONG REEDS

- **Call out the Pride and Loyalty of the Strong Reeds**
- **Beat the bounds at the three dolmen to raise morale and allow the army to Rise from the Reeds**

Sal-Ott Meet has long been a place where beaters from across the territory convene to share news of criminals or pass words from the Imperial magistrates. Hundreds of years ago, four dolmens were set in the field by Bregas beater gangs, one for each of the marsh-covered regions of the territory. One was lost during the reign of Emperor James, either magicked away on a summer night or swallowed by the fens, the telling differs... Beating the three remaining stones is a potent local tradition whenever gangs gather. Several local beaters from the Strong Reeds ask the Empire to recognise the Pride and Loyalty of their actions in Bregasland to inspire the rank and file.

If the beaters from across the Marches can symbolically ‘beat the bounds’ of the field, and even show the dolmens a bit of rough music, then it will raise morale in the army. If that happens, then the army will be fired up to take the fight back to the Jotun. This will not be an easy undertaking given the nature of the Jotun’s advance, but it could be a risk worth taking.

Should the bounds of the dolmens be beaten successfully, then it will further remind the army what they are fighting for. *“Pride in small things, loyalty to great ones”* as the saying goes. The inspiration will allow the army’s general to issue a new order – Rise from the Reeds – setting the soldiers of the Strong Reeds loose from their hiding places to wreak bloody havoc against their foes. Following the ‘Reeds continued long-term deployment in Bregasland, this offers a potent option to unleash in the coming seasons. This would be a permanent change to the Secretive quality of the Strong Reeds.

### RISE FROM THE REEDS

- **All casualties inflicted by this army are increased by a fifth for each uninterrupted season of laying low**
- **The ability of to capture territory is increased by a fifth for each uninterrupted season of laying low**

The army takes advantage of the seasons of preparation to unleash a surprise assault in an attempt to overwhelm the enemy. The soldiers emerge from hiding to launch the attack, focusing on the weak points in the enemy position identified in previous seasons. For each season that this army has taken the Lay Low order without interruption in the targeted territory, the army gains 20% towards taking territory and inflicting casualties. Taking any order other than Lay Low (including this one) resets the count.

- **Battlefield Opportunity: Capture the Corazon’s pennants**
- **Seize Corazon pennants during the battle**
- **Present five banners to the nation and Marcher egregore**
- **Success will display the Empire’s Loyalty and remove the sullen quality from the Grey Fens**

Following the thwarted raid on Eel’s Landing, the Corazón have struck against winter storehouses and granaries across the territory. Tight belts are tightened further as the armies of the Jotun progress across Bregasland. Those who cannot, or choose not to, flee from the orcs, secrete away what they can and prepare for the hardships of another occupation. Still sour that the Droverbills skirted a harsh punishment for their actions when the Jotun last came east, people start to grumble more. There are many here who remain sullen, making future campaigns costly for the Imperial budget.

*“You don’t own it unless you can defend it.”* as the saying goes. Showing the people that thieves are dealt with quickly, and providing evidence that they have been brought to justice, will always be welcome news. Striking back at the Lasambrian raiders in Bregasland is timely and will make a pointed display to the wider population. If at least five orange pennants born by the units of Lasambrian orcs at Sal-Ott can be taken from the field and presented to the Marcher egregore in front of the nation, then it will send a powerful message across the territory about the actions of the Empire and their Loyalty to those in need. Successfully presenting the pennants will ease the sullen mood of the territory over the next three months.