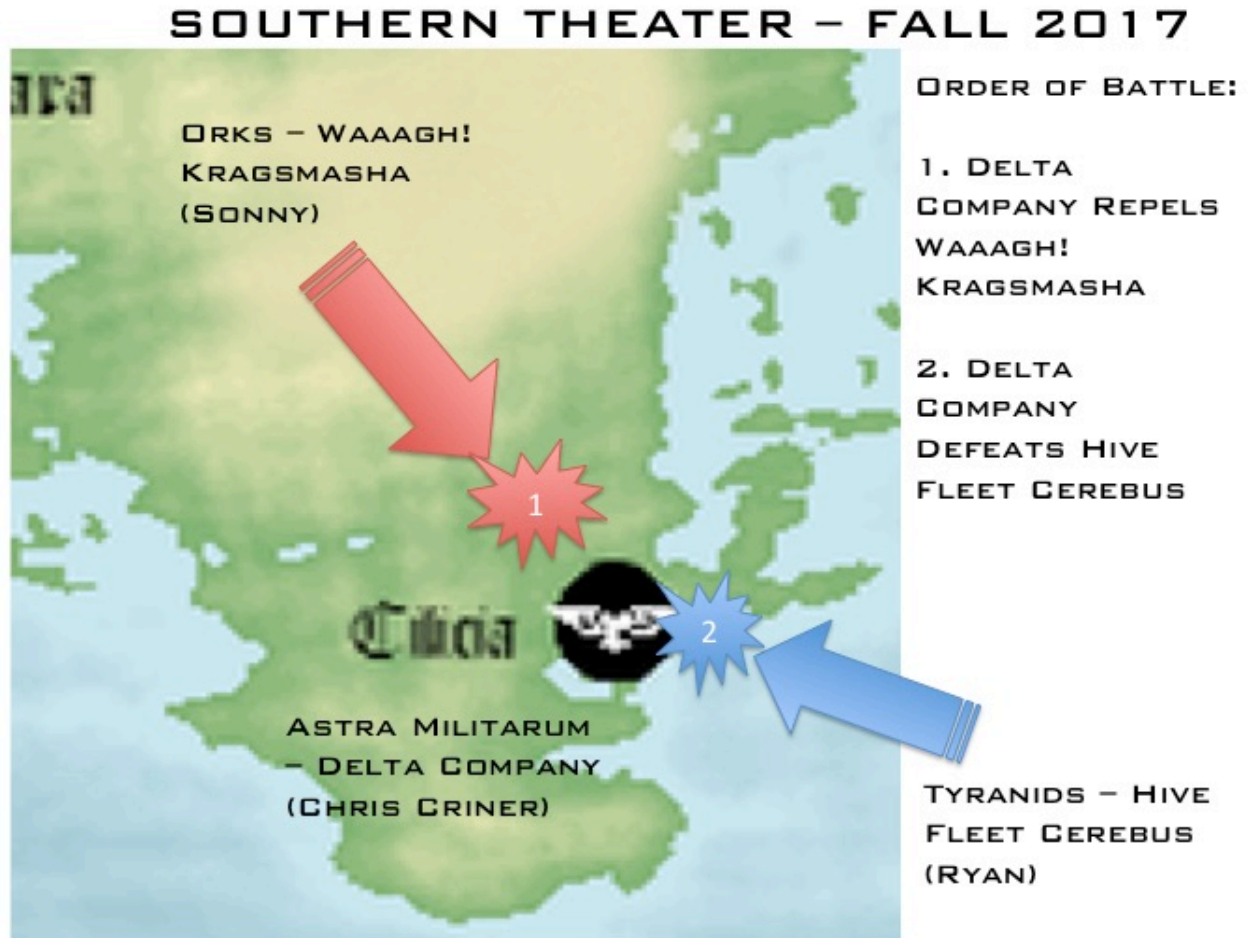


PYRRIAH CAMPAIGN - FALL 2017 SOUTHERN THEATER



(Red = October mission; Blue = November mission)

The Delta Company of the 318th Taurian Marines did not expect to be heroes. Truthfully, Commander Luke Bonilla did not know what to expect during his company's deployment to Pyrriah after serving in the front lines on Astaramis and Loebos during the Konor campaign. In Pyrriah, they were directed to the port city of Cilicia in the south and again found a world in flame. The flames had burned since Pyrriah felt the triple blow of Chaos, Orks and Tyranids almost two terran months before Delta Company's arrival. The initial wave of Tyranid had plunged into the central regions of the continent, presenting the local planetary defense forces (PDF) with a foe they had never imagined. They soon, however, discovered what destruction a Hive fleet could unleash. The PDF of Pyrriah ceased to exist as a unified force after the first 24 hours of the Tyranid planetfall.

Despite the pleas of the Hive City Patriarch to remain, the majority of Cilicia's defense forces were redeployed to rallying points elsewhere on Pyrriah. Only a fraction of the normal PDF remained to protect the city and its frightened population. It was little surprise then that Delta Company's arrival was met with cheers and gratitude from a people that had little else to cling to but hope.

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Delta Company quickly deployed to the northern perimeter of the city, just as the massed forces of the Ork warboss Kragmasha approached. The initial battle was short but bloody, with the primary Delta Company casualties being a unit of ratling snipers who got on the wrong end of a Deff Dread. The armor of the Company's Leman Russ battle tanks and the veterans of the Company managed to bring down the Ork mech and much of the Ork initial advance. But Kragmasha had sent only a scouting party. Sure, they had suffered a defeat at the hands of those

dirty tricky humies, but they had fought and in that they had won a victory. There would be more fighting to be had. More killing to do. More rampaging to have. What more could any proper greenskin hope for?

Commander Bonilla and Delta Company had barely caught their breath before Kragmasha sent his second wave. Despite pleas from the City Patriarch to retreat to more defensible positions, Commander Bonilla ordered his forces to engage the Orks on the same spot as before. The Orks fought with more cunning this time, but it was not enough to overcome the mass of missiles, lasguns, gattling fire, and promethium flares that Delta Company unleashed. After having had another go, Kragmasha decided that he had enough fun and pulled his forces back to fight another day.

Delta Company returned to the center of Cilicia to the warm embrace of the City Patriarch and the Hive City's population. The Patriarch ordered rations to be relaxed and showered Commander Bonilla with accolades - some deserved, some exaggerated no doubt to flatter. The flattery of the Patriarch left Delta Company cold, but the honest adulation of the local population was harder to ignore, even if it engendered a certain amount of resentment from the few units of PDF that had been left to garrison Cilicia.

None of this lasted long, however, as barely a week after the second battle of Cilicia, a third battle ensued. Not greenskins this time. The skies blazed with sickly light as Tyranid pods descended in great numbers from orbit and plunged into the sea a few kilometers off the coast of Cilicia. Again Commander Bonilla rallied Delta Company to the aid of Cilicia and manned whatever rudimentary coastal defenses that existed. Soon the seas churned as myriad Tyranid creatures of Hive Fleet Cerberus - small and large - swam to their prey in the Hive City. Previously, in low orbit above Pyrriah, they had failed to claim their prey, as Inquisitor Eruden Vah and his make shift retinue of Black Shield Astartes had managed to escape from the Tyranids boarding assault upon Vah's freighter transport "Sanctum". Vah's escape to Pyrriah had greatly frustrated the Hive Mind, and now it extended its reach to consume prey upon the surface of the planet.



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Soon the frothing water soon turned black with the blood and gore of slain Tyranid beasts. They threw themselves again and again against Delta Company, but again and again they were repelled. Soon none but the tired members of Bonilla's company remained.



Cilicia erupted with joy at the demise of the monsters that were nightmares made real, and then dispelled. The populace turned out en masse to cheer as Delta Company re-entered the hive. The City Patriarch accorded Commander Bonilla with the Order of the Most Blessed Protector and arranged a celebration ceremony for all members of Delta Company – both the living and the dead.

But not all cheered. Occasionally, Commander Bonilla would receive an insult dressed in praise from the lips of a senior officer of the remaining PDF units. More commonly, furtive glances and shadows appeared and as quickly disappeared whenever Delta Company passed through the Hive corridors. Commander Bonilla was beginning to wonder whether the greater threat to Cilicia, and his men, came from without the walls of the city, or within.

