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Holy War, The Boros Legion

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Taste the Magic
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PRODUCTS

PRO TOUR-VALENCIA

As I looked again at the art on Boros cards, and as I read the flavor text and bits from the *Ravnica* novel, I could not help but hear it. I heard a pulse, a heartbeat almost. It was echoing from my past. I heard it and I continue to hear it, appropriately accompanying my thoughts and visions of the great and mighty Boros Legion. "What is this anthem, this Boros soundtrack you speak of?" It is a song from 1987 called "Holy War," by Manowar, and it rocks with all the might, pride, and glory of the Boros Legion. I encourage all of you who can to play it as you read this. I predict you will find yourself singing along and shaking your fist and burning in your belly for righteous war!

Fists Like Hammers Fill The Air

The Boros Legion is a guild in name and civic function. But in reality it is a righteous army. It is unified, like the fingers of a fist. It burns with passion, like the blazing sun. Its signet embodies its essence, and all who see it on shield and standard know what power marches before them. It is the red's explosive fire focused by White's righteous aim. It is White's holy steel wielded by Red's raging hand. Whichever way you look at it, this fist packs a mean punch.



Hold True, Ye Sacred Army

In Vorthosian fashion, I am going to address the cardboard ranks of the Legion by way of their own military structure. This guild, unlike the others, has a top to bottom chain of command. Most other guilds have a distinct top dog (or dogs, in the case of the Conclave), and perhaps some other notables. But then it's just a jumble of the rest of 'em. This is not the case with the Boros. From the tips of the wings on Razia's helm to the armored foot of the Boros Recruit, there is a power structure. This structure is an element of White that the Legion absolutely needs to contain and focus the passion and fire of its Red side. It is a lot like Razia's sword, crackling and dancing with chaotic flame, but held straight and true by her sharpened blade.

Let's take a look at the Boros chain of command, starting at the top and working our way down. Not only will we be looking at those who fill out the ranks, but also at the different levels of Boros ordnance. A Boros can only employ the spells of an equal or lesser power band. Firepower is a sacred thing, and is not to be used by those who cannot control it (another little piece of Boros Whiteness.)

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RULES

RULES



Angels exist in a separate echelon that supersedes all Boros or Wojek hierarchy. Though they do not involve themselves in the day-to-day doings of the guild, the angels are there as inspiration, direction, and occasional righteous muscle. Any angel of any status outranks all mortal Boros members and may utilize any Boros magical ordnance.

They reside in a great aerial hall called the Parhelion. During times of crisis and war on the Ravnican surface, the Parhelion docks itself upon the flattened roof of Sunhome.

1. Razia, the Heart of the Legion, Archangel and Parun of the Boros

Razia has been the heart and soul of the Boros guild since the signing of the guildpact. She is more like a demi-god to the army than a military leader, inspiring greatness and giving hope, meaning, and destiny to her Boros devout. Just to keep the black-hearted honest, she does, on occasion, rip the battlefield with holy fire.

Her sword burns with such brightness that foes avert their eyes and arrows divert their paths.

2. Angelic Warleaders and Spiritual Advisors

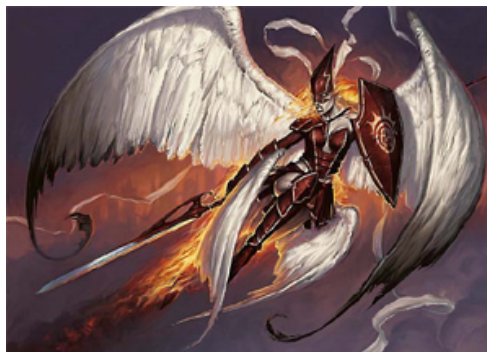
These wise and ancient angels are the grand tacticians of the guild. They do not plan the strategies of battles. Instead, they chart the spiritual campaigns that span hundreds of years. They set the ethos for the guild and make sure it reflects the command of their Archangel leader. They are the advisors to the Archangel and the executors of her commands.

3. Firemane Angels

Firemane Angels are the holy warriors of the Angelic Eschelon. They are not involved in any strategy or politics, or any real thinking of any kind. They are the totems of spirit and war to the guild, and the true military might of the guild. Though they have authority over all mortal Boros, they rarely give orders or do much of anything other than inspire morale as they blaze across the field of war, cutting down foes and shrieking war cries of the guild.

4. Warrior Angels

These are the soldiers of the Angelic Eschelon. They are strong and loyal and many.



5. Boros Guildmage

The highest power band among Boros mortals is that of the **guildmage**. The **guildmage** is the only Boros rank that can initiate contact with the Angelic Eschelon. All others must wait to be contacted by angels. The **guildmage** receives word from above and passes it along to the commanders of the Boros Army and the League of Wojek. (They are not otherwise involved in the affairs of the Wojek.) Guildmages have access to all Boros spells and equipment, though combat magic is their mainstay.

1-5. Magical Ordnance, Power Band 5 and higher.

Razia's Purification

Searing Meditation

Lightning Helix



At this point, the power structure splits in half. Below the angels and below the guildmage, the League of Wojek is formed. The League is the official law enforcement arm of the ten districts of Rav, the Manhattan of the city-plane of Ravnica. Ranks within the Boros Legion and the League of Wojek may be on the same power band, but a Wojek (often referred to as a 'Jek) cannot issue orders to the lower ranks of the Boros. The Boros can issue orders to outranked Wojek.

League of Wojek

6. Commander-General

The Ravnica novel mentions the Commander-General of the Wojek many times. In case you have not read it, or are in the middle of it, I will only say that CG Vict Gharti is in command at the start of the story (hmmm... I wonder what happens to him ;)

Boros Legion

6. Commander-General

The CG of the Boros Legion is not mentioned on cards or in the novel. She does exist, and is likely off ordering a strafing of an Orzhov reclamation zone gone zombie-wild.

1-6. Magical Ordnance

Master Warcraft

Battle tactics and war strategy are the bread and butter of the CGs. **Master Warcraft** is fare too rich and hearty for the unskilled minds of lower ranks.



7. Section Commander

There are 10 section commanders, one for each of the districts of Rav.

Each of Ravnica's ten districts is guarded by a Sentinel Titan, a colossal statue that can be "activated" by a Boros or Wojek of power band 7 or higher. A Sentinel Titan can be seen in action in [the Ravnica trailer](#) as well as on the promo poster below. (note, Characters are not depicted to scale in the poster; the Titans are over 50' tall.)



8. Shift Captain

The Wojek shift captain is the stereotypical cop's boss that you see in the movies threatening to give the rogue cop a desk job. The Shift Captain is in the trenches, unlike the officers of higher rank who mostly stick to Centerfort and plan strategies and work politics.

SC Phaskin gives Agrus Kos the ol' hard time in the novel.

8. Skyknight Captain

Skyknight Captains are not only captains of their Skyknight legions, but also of the rest of the Boros rank and file. They get a great strategic overview of situations from the skies above. Unlike their Skyknight subordinates, the captains are on the ground almost as often as they are in the air. It's hard to give orders swooping by on a screeching roc.

9. Wojek Embermage

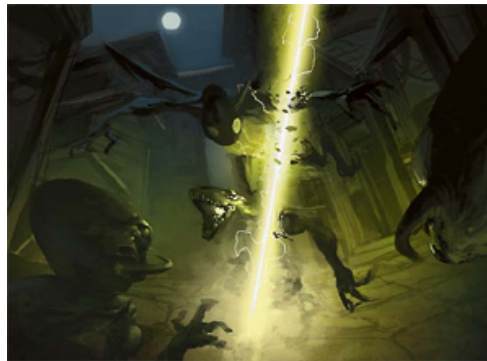
The **Embermages** are the main magical muscle of the League of Wojek. Without the sorcerous firepower of the Guildmages at their disposal, the Wojek rely on Embermages to tip the scales their way when boiling blood and cold steel are not enough.

1-9. Magical Ordnance

Cleansing Beam

"Justice is toothless without punishment. Righteousness cannot succeed without the suffering of the guilty."

—Razia





10. Lieutenant

Agrus Kos, **Wojek Veteran** holds the rank of Lieutenant. The **Wojek lieutenant** is the “officer” of the beat. Though they hold official power, they’re really just the sharpest and most experienced patrollers of the streets.

10. Skyknight Legionnaire

Skyknight Legionnaires are the Boros Top Gun fighter pilots. They are as high up as a Boros can get before being viewed by the grunts as a barker and not a biter. Skyknights are respected by their own and by the citizenry. (They are the rock stars and astronauts to the children of Ravnica.)

1-10. Magical Ordinance

Flash Conscription

One must be able to give orders to have the power to conscript subordinates.

11. Sergeant

Kos’s partner, **Bel Borca**, is a **Wojek Sergeant**. They are the standard street patrollers, but with just enough clout to order some guys around.

11. Sunhome Enforcer

The **Sunhome Enforcers** are distinguished soldiers who have proven themselves mighty enough for the prestigious and important post of **Sunhome guard**.

1-11. Magical Ordinance

Sunforger

A weapon like this cannot be put in just anyone’s hands, that would be all too Gruul. Ordinance with **Sunforger’s** potential must be available only to those with enough discipline.

12. Wojek Apothecary

“Where the Boros guild goes, the blood flows.” Though the ‘Jeks might tell you otherwise, the blood is often their own. This is when the **Wojek Apothecary** steps in.

12. Flame-Kin

Flame-Kin are a naturally volatile race (if you can call these bipedal elementals natural.) **Flame-Kin Zealots** are the ones that have been touched by the Boros angels, and contained just enough to be effective. Where explosiveness used to be there is now crackling zealotry and passion for the Boros cause.

1-12. Magical Ordinance

Wojek Siren

This magical call is available to both branches, but is rarely used by the Boros. A little healthy competitive pride keeps the Boros from asking for “help.”

Rally the Righteous

Surge of Zeal



13. Constable

The Wojek constable is the donut-dinker, the speed-trapper, and the meter maid. They're the bottom of the Wojek barrel. Their seemingly insignificant and often annoying duties are crucial in maintaining the relative order and peace that Ravnican citizens currently enjoy.

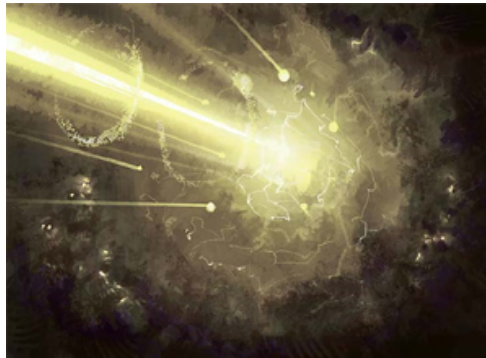
13. Commando

The Ordrun are a strong and sturdy race of Minotaurs on Ravnica. They fit the mold perfectly for a Boros commando. Their size and resilience are perfect for what the Legion affectionately calls "Hammer Duty" While the commandos are not all minotaurs, the **Ordrun Commandos** are the most numerous and the most often called-upon.

1-13. Magical Ordnance

Leave No Trace

Bathe in Light



"Hear that? Those notes mean we've arrived at Sunhome! Let our allies' hearts soar and our enemies' hearts shatter at the sound!"

—Klatic, Boros legionnaire

14. Thundersong Trumpeter

The **Trumpeters** occupy a strange station in the Legion. They outrank the vast number of low level soldiers in the guild, but they receive little respect from them because they do not get down and dirty in the trenches. The **Trumpeters** are not skilled in combat, but they are an important part of the Boros intimidation scheme. When the Legion's enemies hear the Thundersong (A tune similar to Manowar's "Holy War" I am sure), they cower and lose heart.

1-14. Magical Ordnance

Incite Hysteria

This magical tactic is rarely, if ever, used by the Wojek. It is counterproductive for those charged with keeping the peace to incite chaos. The Boros, however, find it useful on the battlefield, as a chaotic enemy is an ineffective one. It is quite common for the Boros to have the **Trumpeters** spread this spell via the Thundersong. A chaotic, heartless coward puts up little resistance.

The Grunts



The lowest ranks of the Legion are collectively referred to as "The Grunts." The Grunts outnumber the rest of the legion's ranks put together. What they lack in might and skill they make up for in heart and numbers. These are the expendable, the freshly recruited, and the few beasts that the Legion trains. Grunts do not have the wisdom or skill to handle any magical ordnance.

Boros Swiftblade

Boros Recruit

Screaching Griffin

(The roc mounts that are ridden by Skyknights are not considered separate from their riders. The rocs hatchlings and those without riders are considered Grunts.)

The Boros are a matter-of-fact bunch. They do not use many words that you would hear at a competitive spelling bee. But, there are some names that I can clear up for you, starting with the big picture:

Boros- BOHR•ose "Bor," as in wild boar, and "os" as in cosmos. Pretty simple stuff. You might have noticed that Magic has a new artist whose name is that very same word, Boros. No, they did not name the guild after the artist, though he does hail from the same Eastern European area that inspires many of Ravnica's names.

Razia- RAH•zee•ah. Don't mispronounce it, or one of her fiery devout might slap you around.

Orduun- OHR•droon is the common pronunciation. But, if you want to butter up a minotaur, pronounce it: OHR•DROO•UHN, all syllables accented, stretching it out like Michael Buffer. The "oo" part is held longer to show respect.

In case you don't have access to "Holy War", here are the lyrics, peppered with Boros goodness:

*Damnation, Religion
Salvation, Fire
And STEEL*

*I have seen the fire
Of a thousand suns pass by
While blasphemers spread their gospel
Bearing false witness
Now we rise
All ye children of the wild
Fists like hammers fill the air
Vast legions all immortal
Smash the stillness everywhere*

Holy, Holy War

*Holy
We are fighting, fighting a Holy War
Holy War
See us fly on winds of doom
Holy War
Baptized in fire and steel
Holy War
For the end we bring is soon
Holy War
Now we face the storm
A Holy War*

*Brothers of metal know no masters
Metal's our religion
Take it to the grave
Rulers of the earth
Our dawn of glory
All Reborn, we live again.
Hold true, ye sacred army
Our last battle is at hand
Sweep these dogs from our kingdom
Bless this ground, our holy land.*



Holy, Holy War

Holy

We are fighting, fighting a Holy War

Holy War

See us fly on winds of doom

Holy War

Baptized in fire and steel

Holy War

For the end we bring is soon

Holy War

Now we face the storm

A Holy War

Before I leave you all to continue your day shaking your fists and crying "War!" I must make an addendum to last week's [Mythbashing](#) article. In an interesting twist of irony, I wrote an article meant to dispel untruths and, in doing so, created a brand new one!

Myth #6. This Is A Sketch Of A Guildpact Card

Um...it is not. In my post-turkey tryptophan funk I got my Magic sets confused. Anyway, this is Magic art, but is definitely NOT in *Guildpact*. I apologize for my bone-headed blunder. I doubly apologize to all of those who spent any time trying to justify this beast as Gruul or Izzet or Orzhov. While you may think you have wasted your time and energy, I will have you know that she, the lovely lady to the left, has truly enjoyed the attention. Anyways...let's hope I did not create any other dingbat falsehoods in this article. I don't think the Boros will go lightly on me if I did. I'll be busted down to grunt,

no doubt about it.



*Matt Cavotta has always been a fantasy goober. At various points in his gooberhood, he has used his nerdy knowledge to become a professional goober. He went from scribbling pictures of his own **D&D** characters to illustrating books and cards for his two favorite games; **D&D** and **Magic**. Then he channeled his inner 7th level Illusionist/3rd level Bard and landed himself a job at Wizards as a writer. He continues to cast his illusion spells each morning, lest they find out he's just another goober.*



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