The Macro

How to win 3 games at an event

* Have played this army list at least 5 times
* Have played most missions at some point
* Have developed or utilize some sort of cheat sheet to have reminders at the table
* Thoroughly read and understand the core rules, battletome, and FAQ associated with your army
* Able to play a game without opening your battletome no more than 10 times
* Have a passing understanding of your opponents list prior to the game (you’ve heard of this kind of list)

How to win 4 games at an event

* Have played this army at least 15 times
* Have played every mission in their current state
* Have tokens for tracking every meaningful effect/condition you can inflict
* Have read battletomes of the top armies (or listened to podcasts that discuss armies/events) and read the FAQ for every battletome
* Able to play a game without opening your battletome no more than 5 times
* Know the top lists and be familiar with the methodology of how they work
* Have read the pack

How to be in a position to win 5 games at an event

* Have played this army at least 30 times
* Have played every mission in their current state with this army specifically
* Have a means of tracking opponent’s abilities and resources
* Have a thorough understanding of the battletomes and FAQs of armies of which you expect to see at the event
* Able to play most games without opening your battletome
* Know how the top lists interact with yours, their goals within specific missions, and how your plans change as a result of that
* Understand the pack and the potential circumstances that may arise at the event
* At the event once you have resolved your game, begin looking to the next round and start considering your plan based on what you also know in the room

The Micro

* There are several philosophies around secondary’s/side objectives. I am of the mind that you should save the easiest secondaries for your hardest missions/matchups
* Ask your opponent about their rules and what their units do, even if you think you know them at list swap. First, it’s more polite than telling and second it gives you the opportunity to resolve any disagreements early. You should offer your opponent this same opportunity of yours.
  + This game has very few explicitly secret things, it’s ok to share. The only thing you are not obligated to share is what your game mission
  + Aos Coach has an excellent episode on this subject matter specifically
* Don’t make any more decisions than are absolutely necessary. Force your opponent to make more decisions than you, and ideally make them all bad options. Capitalize on the mistakes you have set up.
  + If you have control of an objective, do not give your opponent the possibility to control it through your own decision making (ie charging a unit you cannot defeat on an objective you hold giving them the opportunity to pile in more models into the capture zone)
* You can win and lose games in deployment. This is where executing your plan starts and is the most likely part of your plan to be modified based on your opponent’s list
  + Use the fear of deployment shenanigans to your benefit. Some players are terrified of the prospect of a 10 man unit of battleline popping in behind them to the determent of their own plan

Recommended Steps to Upping Your Game

* Find an opponent where you can play slow games with
  + It’s ok to make mistakes in practice. Be forgiving with each other
  + Talk through each other’s decisions, be honest about your plans
  + Be willing to replace extremely bad rolls with average ones, you won’t become a better player if all your practice is against unlucky players
* Keep a notebook and write down a plan at the start of the game, what happened at the end of each battle round and your plan from there, an analysis of the game at close, and lessons learned/next steps
  + The important step here is taking meaningful action off of the lessons learned
* Pick one battletome, play that battletome for one whole year and a minimum of an average of 1 game/week (ideally against different opponents and or/lists)
  + This is to teach the fundamentals. Repeated exposure to the same rules in different situations will over time expose you to possibilities you had not considered
  + This should also teach you what your comfort style of playing games is
* Play every mission with the same list against the same opponent with the same list
  + This is to teach flexibility. You may find you have an advantage in certain missions and are on the back foot in others versus the exact same list and understand where your strengths and weaknesses lie

Philosophies

* This game is fundamentally about risk mitigation. It’s okay to make risky decisions but don’t be surprised when the bad odds catch up to you.
* Winning events starts at list building, is established in preparation, and is executed in the details at the event
* Understand that in many instances good enough is better than perfect
* At tournaments, play all 5 rounds unless your opponent concedes. It is just as necessary to learn to play with the lead as it is to play from behind. Never give up and try and steal a win from a game that feels away from you
* Every problem has a solution, sometimes it’s not the solution you like, and sometimes your army doesn’t have a regular meaningful solution, that’s part of this game. Your army forces the same issues to other players too