

WARMASTER HOUSE RULES: 10/22/02

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While Warmaster is an excellent fantasy game, some gamers inclined toward historical simulations find some of the mechanisms to be unsatisfactory. These house rules are intended to address some of the perceived problems, & to convince my local buddies, who are primarily historical gamers, to play Warmaster, or whatever one might call this variant.

Among the issues addressed here are: a more complete definition of formations, formation changes, movement arcs, & movement through gaps & a change in the command system which is intended to allow more coherent control of an army, though it is not less restrictive than the prior system. Armies prior to the Napoleonic Wars, tended to form distinct battlelines which advanced more or less in unison. The command system now is more accommodating to these grand tactics while remaining restrictive. The combat modifiers have been changed to allow for the effects of countercharges by troops whose doctrine it was not to accept a charge at the halt, to increase the effect of combined arms, to better reflect the melee capabilities of infantry primarily armed with missile weapons, & to improve the likelihood of steady infantry to withstand a frontal charge from cavalry. There is also a redoing of the pursuit rules, which require units to maintain their formation & prevent them from swarming around the flanks of a pursued unit. A provision has been made for light cavalry units to evade heavier cavalry (pretty essential if you happen to have a Parthian army like myself!) Optional rules are included for infantry skirmishers.

Note that some of the regular game rules are simply restated for emphasis. The standard Warmaster rules apply except where changed by these house rules.

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SEQUENCE OF PLAY

The sequence of play is unchanged. Players will alternate moving & shooting. Each player's turn is as follows:

- I. Command Phase
 Roll for Order Points for each Leader. Assign orders & execute each order as it is received.
- II. Shooting Phase
 The Moving player performs all shooting. Units involved in a melee maybe targeted.
- III. Melee Combat Phase
 Resolve combats one at a time with the active player deciding the order.

FORMATIONS

These rules are intended to fully define what should be the obvious importance of common formations on the gaming table & to redefine a formation change.

- * All of the stands of a single unit must always remain in contact with another stand of the unit.
- * Units in a line or column count as being in a *regular formation*. All other formations are *irregular*. To be in a proper column or line stands that are in contact must have their corners line up as exactly as possible. Any other arrangement is an irregular formation. Skirmisher stands may be placed in any fashion. Their positioning is not considered when determining if a formation is regular.
- * Any formation that is at least 2 stands wide is considered to be a line. A line may have more than one rank of stands. A column may only be one stand wide.
- * Stands of a 3 stand unit may be placed so as to form a triangle. This will be referred to as a *hedgehog*. Stands of a 2 stand unit may be placed back-to-back to create a hedgehog. A hedgehog is an irregular formation. A unit in a hedgehog has no flanks. Each stand in a hedgehog may sight & fire to its front. A unit in a hedgehog formation that moves may not end its move in a hedgehog formation.
- * Any unit may be set up in a "*Refused Flank*." To do so the stands of the unit are arranged in an "L." The "bent side" may not be subjected to a flank attack. It will still be vulnerable to either a rear attack or to an attack from the other flank. The "L" must form as perfect a 90 degree angle as is possible. This is an irregular formation.
- * Any unit may be set up in a "U" in order to refuse both flanks. It will still be vulnerable to a rear attack. Angles must be as close to 90 degrees as possible. This is an irregular formation.
- * Units must make any *formation changes* before making any movement. A formation change is defined as the following: changing from/to an irregular formation to/from a regular formation, changing from/to a regular line to/from a regular column. A formation change cost 10 cm of movement.
- * If a unit is in an irregular formation then a rearrangement of its stands is not defined as a formation change. Each stand will be moved separately & no stand may exceed its allowed movement.

MOVEMENT

Before cadenced marching (18th Century) any movement by large bodies of troops across the battlefield was a slow process. Units would have to severely "open up" their ranks in order to move or change their facing. In simulating reality one can hardly restrict movement too much. The following rules provide a further modest restriction over the standard rules.

- * All stands have a *frontal movement arc* of 180 degrees. The frontal movement arc is established at the beginning of each move executed by the stand, but before the stand is touched by the player. If a unit is given more than one command in a turn then the frontal movement arc is established prior to enacting each command. Any facing changes by the unit will not change its frontal movement arc for this move. This is a slightly different, but an ultimately simplifying & important game mechanic. Stands that move into their frontal movement arc may make a *Full Pace* move (if other restrictions do not slow them down.) Stands that move out of their frontal movement arc may never make more than a *Half Pace* move. Stands that move directly to their side are considered to be moving out of their frontal movement arc.
- * Units that are in an irregular formation have their stands moved one at a time. All of the stands of a unit in a regular formation are moved at once. If a unit is in an irregular formation then it may only make a half pace move in any direction.
- * Stands that are moved individually may end their move facing in any direction. A regular column may also end its move facing in any direction. A unit in a regular line may only change its facing by *wheeling* or by performing an *about-face*. A unit in regular line may perform an about face by expending $\frac{1}{4}$ of its movement allowance. To perform an about face rotate all stands of the unit 180 degrees.
- * Stands that move at a Full Pace are considered to be moving in their frontal movement arc perpendicular to the front edge of the stand. This means that in order for a stand making a Full Pace move to move between two other units then there must be a gap equal to the width of the moving stand. A stand may move through a smaller gap if it limits itself to a Half Pace move.
- * A unit in a regular line must have a gap large enough to move through that will accommodate the entire width of all of the stands forming the line (the full frontal "Monty" so to speak.) If such a gap does not exist then the line may move through the gap but it is limited to making a Half Pace move. The minimum gap necessary for any stand to move through is 2 cm.
- * Units moving along a road in a regular column may always make a Full Pace move. They may ignore all other restrictions (i.e., gap size, irregular formation, etc.)

* Example: To perform a move forward with a unit the sequence is as follows, First make any formation changes, then move the unit to its destination in its frontal movement arc, finally adjust its facing. If the unit wheels then measure the movement during the wheel.

TERRAIN

* Units will move at $\frac{1}{2}$ speed through non-clear terrain. Each cm moved will cost 2 cm of movement allowance.

* Visibility extends 2 cm into woods & out of woods. All units in woods must take a Command Test to receive an order unless they are receiving the order from an attached Leader. They will also receive an adverse modifier for their Command Test.

* Leaders located in woods have a Command Range of 0 cm. Leaders located on a hill of any height have their *Command Range* increased by 10cm.

* All non-flyers must stop before crossing a river/stream. They will move up to the edge of the stream & then stop. A unit may cross a river/stream on any turn that it begins adjacent to the stream/river.

* Impassable terrain may not be crossed when measuring command ranges. The measurement must be made around the impassable terrain (such as over a bridge.)

COMMAND

When troops approach the enemy & enter the battle zone then it becomes more difficult for leaders to maintain control. Leaders will have difficulty controlling all of the units of their army.

* All units must be issued an order before they may take any action. The only exception is units that are required to use their initiative to charge. Different types of orders exist, each clearly defining what a unit can do. For complex maneuvers it may be necessary to issue a unit more than one order.

* A unit may only receive orders from one leader per turn.

* Units may not use initiative to evade or to charge, but instead they must be issued an order. Units that are required to use initiative to charge are the only exception to this rule. They will charge unless they are issued an order.

* All leaders have a Command Range of 20 cm, which may be modified by terrain. They may issue orders to units or brigades within their command range without taking a Command Test. If the unit receiving the order is beyond the leader's command range away from the leader then a Command Test must be taken. Roll 1D6 & modify the die roll as needed. The order will be successfully executed on a die roll of >2. If the Command Test is failed, then another order may not be issued to the same unit for the remainder of the turn. Any unit that is issued an order by an attached leader need not take a Command Test.

Command Test Die Roll Modifiers

| | |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| >40 cm away -1 | Night -1 |
| Leader in Woods -1 | Poor Weather -1 |
| Unit in Woods -1 | |

ORDER POINTS

* At the beginning of the Command Phase each leader will roll 1D6 on the Command Table to determine how many order points that he will receive for the turn. Place either a die or chit next to each leader with the number indicating the Order Points received.

| Die Roll | COMMAND TABLE | | | |
|-------------|----------------|----------|----------|-----------|
| | Command Rating | | | |
| | <u>7</u> | <u>8</u> | <u>9</u> | <u>10</u> |
| 1 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 6 |
| 2 | 1 | 2 | 5 | 7 |
| 3 | 2 | 3 | 6 | 8 |
| 4 | 2 | 3 | 6 | 8 |
| 5 | 3 | 4 | 7 | 9 |
| 6 | 3 | 4 | 8 | 10 |

* An army general may transfer any portion of his order points to leader that is within 30 cm. Other leaders may not transfer order points. The general may transfer order points to leaders over 30 cm at a 50% efficiency. That is, if he transfers 2 order points then only 1 order point will be received.

* Leaders may issue orders to units & brigades. A unit or brigade issued an order will perform an action. Actions may cost 1 or more order points.

ORDER POINT COST

| <u>Action</u> | <u>Cost</u> | <u>Definition</u> |
|-----------------------|-------------|--|
| Charge | 1 or 2 | May move into contact with an enemy unit |
| Advance | 1 | Must move forward |
| Deploy | 1 | May change facing & formation |
| Withdraw | 1 | Must move backward |
| Rally | 2 | May recover 1 lost stand |
| 2 nd Order | +1 | May be issued a second order |

Any unit that receives a -1 modifier in the regular rules to its command roll (“dumb” units like trolls) will incur a cost of +1 order points for any order issued to it.

ORDERS

* Units may not charge an enemy unit unless they are issued a *Charge order*. The charging unit must then charge the nearest enemy unit in its frontal arc. The unit may not change its facing or formation before charging. If a unit is issued a 2 point Charge order, then it may select its target, which need not be the nearest enemy unit, though it still must be in its frontal arc. Charge orders must be issued to individual units, not to brigades.

* Units that are issued an *Advance order* must advance at least ½ of their allowed movement. They are not allowed to change formation. No stand may change its facing by more than 45 degrees. A unit with this order may not approach to within 4 cm of an enemy unit. Only units with a *Charge order* may approach to within 4 cm of an enemy unit.

* A *Deploy order* allows a unit to change its facing & formation. At least one stand in the unit may make no move other than to change it’s facing.

* A unit with a *Withdraw order* must move at least ½ of its allowed movement backwards. It may not move into its frontal arc. It may maintain it’s facing as it moves & no stand may change it’s facing by more than 45 degrees. A unit with this order may not approach to within 4 cm of an enemy unit.

* Units may only be issued a *Rally order* if they are either: located at least 40 cm away from the nearest enemy unit, located at least 20 cm away from & out of sight of the nearest enemy unit. For this purpose units do not block line of sight. A unit that rallies may recover 1 lost stand. A unit may only recover a stand if it has lost more than 1 stand. Two stand units will be eliminated when they lose their second stand & hence may never Rally. A unit may only be issued one Rally order per turn. A unit that Rallies may not be issued a second order, may not move, change facing or formation, & may not fire.

* A unit or brigade may be issued more than one order each Order Phase. Each order issued after the first will cost an additional 1 or 2 order points.

* Orders may be issued to brigades if they are greater than 20 cm from the nearest enemy. If there is an enemy within 20 cm then orders must be issued to individual units. A brigade may not contain both infantry & cavalry/chariots. Artillery may be brigaded with either infantry or cavalry.

* Example: If a player wishes to change the facing of a unit by a large amount (say 90 degrees) & then to charge a nearby enemy unit then he will first need to issue a Deploy order (1 point) & then a charge order (2 points if charging the nearest enemy unit or 3 points if not.)

TARGET SELECTION FOR SHOOTING

* Artillery may select the closest target of a given class (infantry, cavalry, artillery, etc.)

* Units other than artillery must fire either at the nearest enemy unit or at the nearest charging enemy unit.

FIRE ON CHARGING UNITS

Artillery & other long range weapons do more than merely bombard the enemy at a distance. They makes any approach of one’s line by the enemy a hazardous occurrence.

* The target of a charge may fire at the charging unit. Any friendly units that are within 4 cm of any of the stands being charged may also fire their eligible stands at the charging unit. Stands that are in contact with enemy stands may not fire. Not stand may fire at more than one charging unit.

SHOOTING

Shooting may now be used to disorder a unit before charging it.

* During the Shooting Phase units may fire at units that are involved in melee. It is assumed that the fire occurred just before the troops closed for melee. If the charged unit is hit then it is assumed to be disordered & unable to respond properly to the charge. The charging unit will receive +1 attack die per stand. Units that are hit under these circumstances will not be driven back.

CHARGE MOVEMENT

* Only units in a regular formation may charge. The charging unit is moved in a straight line to the target without changing its facing or formation. It will impact on only one edge of the target (front, flank, or rear.) The charging units facing & final position will then be adjusted so as to place as many of its stands as possible flush against stands of the target unit.

MELEE COMBAT

Countercharges are not represented in the original rules. In addition it was generally possible for cavalry to run down steady, well trained infantry with a frontal charge. These changes allow increase the importance of combined arms tactics. Units will receive all of the listed modifiers that they are eligible for.

MELEE COMBAT MODIFIERS

| | |
|--|----|
| Charging unit hit by Shooting | +1 |
| Charging a Confused unit | +1 |
| Charging flank or rear | +1 |
| Charging Missile armed Infantry | +1 |
| Chariot/Monster Charging enemy in open | +1 |
| Pursuit against same unit | +1 |
| Extra Pursuit (per 3 cm) | +1 |
| Fighting Terrifying enemy | -1 |
| Fighting to flank or rear | -1 |
| Confused | -1 |

* All units will receive a charge bonus when charging a confused unit or a unit that was hit back by shooting.

* All units will receive a charge bonus when charging the flank or rear of any type of enemy unit or when charging any enemy unit that simultaneously has its flank or rear charged.

* All units, except for missile armed infantry units, will receive a charge bonus when charging missile armed infantry from any aspect.

* Chariots & monsters will receive a charge bonus when charging an enemy that is in the open except when they are charging the front of other chariots & monsters. They will never receive this bonus when charging defended or fortified unit.

* Any unit that wins a combat & pursues will always receive the +1 die pursuit bonus even if it did not receive any other charge bonuses.

* Example: A chariot unit charging the flank of an infantry unit in the open that is armed with bows would receive +3 die per stand.

SUPPORTING TROOPS IN COMBAT

* Support is counted before any stands are removed.

FALLBACKS

Victors may stand, pursue, or advance. If they fallback then they must move away from the enemy.

* A victor in a combat that chooses to fallback must fallback in the direction that they charged from or toward their baseline.

PURSUIT: Formations

Units are now required to attempt to maintain their formation while pursuing. They may not break up their formation into a mob & swarm about a retreating foe.

* A unit in a regular formation that wins a combat & then elects to either pursue or advance & fight another combat must maintain a regular column or line formation. The only formation change allowed is to expand or to contract its frontage by one stand.

* A unit that is in an irregular formation that wins a combat & that then elects to pursue may not increase the number of stands in contact with the enemy. For example, if it won a combat & had 2 stands in contact with the enemy, then it could not have more than 2 stands in contact with the enemy in any pursuit combat.

* When a unit Advances as part of a pursuit into melee against a new unit then it must charge the nearest enemy unit in its frontal movement arc. It may not move out of its frontal movement arc. The arc is defined at the beginning of the Pursuit move.

PURSUIT: Test

* Whenever a unit wins a combat then it must take a *Pursuit Test* by rolling 1D6. On a result of 1 then it must Fallback. On a result of 6 then it must either pursue the defeated enemy or advance toward the nearest enemy in its frontal arc. If there is no enemy in its frontal arc then it must stand. On any result other than a 1 or a 6 then the player may choose an option as in the standard rules.

* This Test has the following modifiers which are applied to the die roll:

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Each Stand Lost -1 | Cavalry/Chariots/Monster +1 |
| Missile Infantry -1 | Leader Attached \pm 1 |
| Not in clear terrain -1 | Irregular formation -1 |

The Leader Attached modifier may be added or subtracted as the player desires. Infantry may never pursue cavalry, chariots, or monsters. Fortified units may never pursue though defended units may.

NINETY DEGREE FLANK RULE

The Warmaster annual contains a new flank rule that is approximated by the following.

* Flanks will be defined largely as in Warhammer. There are four zones with an arc of ninety degrees each. One faces directly forward, one backward, & one to each flank. A unit must begin its charge move in the flank zone of its target in order to contact an enemy flank. Ditto for the front & rear zones.

PIKEMEN

Pikes were very effective against cavalry. They were harder to use as offensive weapons.

* Non-missile infantry may be armed with pikes. The infantry will retain its same statistics but it will cost an extra 20 points per unit.

* In the first round of a combat the first two stands of pike armed infantry in a column may fight to the front. If there is a third stand in the column then it may provide support. In later rounds of combat pike units fight normally.

* When fighting to the flank or rear then pikes will take a -2 modifier, instead of a -1 modifier.

LIGHT CAVALRY

The standard Warmaster rules do not make any provision for light cavalry. Here are a few basic rules to define this class of troops.

* Light cavalry is defined as cavalry that has an armor save of 6+ or none. Examples include Wolf Riders, Reavers, Kislevite Horse Archers, & Bretonnian Squires.

* When light cavalry is charged by any unit type other than light cavalry or flyers, then it may choose to evade. If it is armed with a missile weapon then it may fire the missile weapon at the charging unit. The sequence is as follows. First the charging unit announces the charge. Then the light cavalry unit must announce that it is evading. It fires at the charger & it is then moved a full move (30 cm) directly away from the charging unit & it is left facing away from the charger.. The charging unit must now move.

It may either stop at the location that the light cavalry fled from or it may move a full move in pursuit in the light cavalry. It must then stop its movement. It may not contact another unit.

SKIRMISHERS: OPTIONAL

While the Empire has a troop type that is identified as skirmishers, it has very limited skirmish functions. These rules allow armies to deploy true skirmishers. Examples of infantry units that can skirmish are: Handgunners, crossbowmen, skeleton bowmen, goblins, Kislevite bowmen, & Bretonnian bowmen.

- * Any missile armed infantry unit that has no armor save may be deployed as skirmishers.
- * A unit is placed into or removed from skirmish order with a Deploy order. One stand of the unit remains in place while the other stands of the unit are then moved. All of the stands of a unit skirmish formation must be placed so that they are 2 to 4 cm away from another stand in their unit.
- * Skirmishers may move through & may be moved through by other friendly units with no penalty.
- * Skirmishers may never charge or move into contact with an enemy unit. Skirmishers may capture enemy leaders.
- * Skirmishers have a movement rate of 25 cm.
- * If skirmishers are approached by an enemy infantry or monster unit, then they will automatically fallback out of the reach of the enemy unit. They will be moved so that they remain 4 to 6 cm away from the enemy unit.
- * If a skirmish unit is charged by an enemy infantry unit then, they will automatically fallback out of the reach of the enemy unit. They will be moved so that they remain 4 to 6 cm away from the charging unit.
- * If a skirmish unit is charged by cavalry, chariots, or flyers then it may flee up to 25 cm directly away from the charger. The skirmisher may flee no further, even if the cavalry is given a second charge order. If the skirmish unit is contacted by the charger, then it is automatically destroyed.
- * Skirmishes will not fallback before enemy skirmishers. The approaching enemy skirmishers must stop at least 4 cm away.
- * Skirmishers are spread out & do not present a very good target for most of the long range weapons available in these rules. Therefore one should count all skirmishers that are subject to enemy fire as fortified.

MODIFIED WARMMASTER PLAYSHEET

SEQUENCE OF PLAY

1. Command Phase 2. Shooting Phase 3. Melee Combat

COMMAND TABLE

| Die | Command Rating | | | | <u>Die Roll Modifiers</u> | |
|-------------|----------------|----------|----------|-----------|---------------------------|----------|
| <u>Roll</u> | <u>7</u> | <u>8</u> | <u>9</u> | <u>10</u> | >40 cm away -1 | Night -1 |
| 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 6 | Poor Weather -1 | |
| 2 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 8 | | |
| 3 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 10 | | |
| 4 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 10 | | |
| 5 | 3 | 4 | 6 | 12 | | |
| 6 | 3 | 4 | 7 | 14 | | |

ORDER POINT COST

| <u>Action</u> | <u>Cost</u> | <u>Definition</u> |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|---|
| Charge | 1 or 2 | May move into contact with an enemy unit |
| Advance | 1 | Must move forward, 45 degree facing change |
| Deploy | 1 | May change facing & formation, One stand remains stationary |
| Withdraw | 1 | Must move backward, 45 degree facing change |
| Rally | 2 | May recover 1 lost stand, No movement or firing |
| 2 nd Order | +1 | May be issued a second order |
| "Dumb" units cost +1 order points | | |

COMMAND TEST

Must be taken if out of Command Range. Roll 1D6. Order is not received on a 1, 2, or 3.

Die Roll Modifiers

| | |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| >40 cm away -1 | Night -1 |
| Leader in Woods -1 | Poor Weather -1 |
| Unit in Woods -1 | |

MOVEMENT

| | | | |
|----------------------|--------|------------|--------|
| Infantry | 20 cm | Characters | 60 cm |
| Cavalry | 30 cm | Monsters | 20 cm |
| Chariots | 30 cm | Flyers | 100 cm |
| Artillery | 10 cm | Machines | Varies |
| Irregular Formations | Move ½ | | |
| Line About Face | ¼ move | | |

SHOOTING

| <u>Range</u> | |
|-------------------------|-------|
| Pistoliers/Goblins | 15 cm |
| Bows/Crossbows/Handguns | 30 cm |
| Bolt Throwers | 40 cm |
| Cannons/Stone Throwers | 60 cm |

MELEE COMBAT

| | <u>Attacks</u> | | <u>per Stand</u> |
|--|----------------|---------------------------|------------------|
| Charging a Confused unit | +1 | Pursuit against same unit | +1 |
| Charging a unit hit by shooting | +1 | Extra Pursuit (per 3 cm) | +1 |
| Charging flank or rear | +1 | Fighting Terrifying enemy | -1 |
| Charging Missile armed Infantry | +1 | Fighting to flank or rear | -1 |
| Chariot/Monster Charging enemy in open | +1 | Confused | -1 |

PURSUIT TEST Roll 1D6

| | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Each Stand Lost -1 | Cavalry/Chariots/Monster +1 |
| Missile Infantry -1 | Leader Attached ± 1 |
| Not in clear terrain -1 | Irregular formation -1 |
| 2nd Pursuit -1 | |
| Must Fallback on a 1, Must Pursue/Advance on a 6+. | |