

Samurai Warband

by Mark "rinku" Dewis,
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'Military action is important to the nation — it is the ground of death and life, the path of survival and destruction, so it is imperative to examine it.'
— Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*

'There is a time and place for the use of weapons.'
- Miyamoto Musashi, *The Book of Five Rings, The Ground Book*

Maximum number =15, 500gc

Heroes

1 Nipponese Noble 70gc,

Nipponese Nobles are Samurai who come from one of the Noble houses. Other samurai call them lord and pledge to serve them. A Noble must follow the constraints of honour as much as his samurai, and is subject to the same rules regarding seppuku.

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Noble	4	4	4	3	3	1	4	1	9

Special Rule

Leader

Skills: Combat, Shooting, Academic, Strength, Speed, Special. Samurai Equipment

0-3 Samurai 50gc

Meaning “one-who-serves”, the samurai is the Nipponese equivalent of a household knight. They fight with the keen-edged Nipponese swords, powerful Nipponese longbow and elegant and deadly Nipponese polearms with equal ability. A samurai is bound by

such strong ties of honour to his lord that he would rather end his life than bring shame to him.

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Samurai	4	4	4	3	3	1	3	1	8

Skills

Combat, Strength, Speed, Special. Samurai Equipment

Henchmen

0-5 Warrior Monks 35gc

Sohei, or warrior-monks developed from simple temple guards into powerful martial orders. Armed and armoured as well as any other soldier, Sohei can be hired as mercenaries from their temple, or may be found in the retinue of allied lords on occasion. Their spiritual training makes them formidable foes to supernatural as well as mundane foes. Sohei may not be equipped with two swords, as these are reserved as the badge of rank for the samurai.

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Monks	4	4	3	3	3	1	3	1	7

Special Ability

Holy Warriors

Warrior Monks get a 4+ save vs spells. Warrior Monk Equipment

Any # of Ashigaru 25gc

Rather than the despised peasant rabble of Cathay and the west, the Nipponese peasant soldier is considered a worthy retainer (though not of the same class as his betters). Usually well armoured and equipped, they provide valuable support for the less numerous Samurai, particularly with the recently introduced teppo (handgun). Ashigaru may never be equipped with two swords, as this is reserved as a badge of rank for the samurai themselves.

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Ashigaru	4	3	3	3	3	1	1	1	7

Ashigaru Equipment

Samurai Equipment

Hand Weapons	Missile Weapons	Armour
Dagger (1st free) 2gc	Longbow 15gc	
Dai-sho 30gc (Samurai only)		Light Armour 20gc
Naginata (same as Halberd) 10gc		Heavy Armour 50gc
Spear 10gc		
Nodachi (same as 2 handed sword) 15gc	Miscellaneous	
Tetsubo (same as 2 handed club) 15gc	Horse 40gc, (rare 8)	

Warrior Monk Equipment

Hand Weapons	Missile Weapons	Armour
Dagger (1st free) 2gc	Longbow 15gc	Light Armour 20gc
Wakizashi 10gc		
Naginata (same as Halberd) 10gc		
Spear 10gc	Miscellaneous	

Ashigaru Equipment

Hand Weapons	Missile Weapons	Armour
Dagger (1st free) 2gc	Longbow 15gc	Helmet 10gc
Wakizashi 10gc	Handgun 35gc, (rare 8)	Light Armour 20gc
Naginata (same as Halberd) 10gc		
Spear 10gc	Miscellaneous	

Samurai Special Skills

Kenshi

Trained in one of the prestigious fencing schools of Nippon, the warrior is a master of the sword. When using a Katana or Wakizashi he may parry blows if he rolls equal to or higher than his opponent's roll. Additionally, if he is using both swords in the Dai-sho at once he is allowed to parry two attacks instead of the normal maximum of one. (Note this is a basically the Dwarf skill "Master of Blades" restricted to these weapons)

Iaijutsu

The warrior has mastered the skill of drawing and striking with the sword in one fluid motion. He strikes first in the first round of a combat, regardless of initiative, when using a Katana or Wakizashi. Spears will still strike first as normal. If two warriors with Iaijutsu fight each other, use the normal rules to determine who strikes first.

Kyujutsu

The warrior has mastered the technique of firing a bow without aiming. If he does not move, he adds +1 to his roll to hit with a longbow.

Kiai

The warrior has learned to focus his inner Chi to let out a terrifying shout that can demoralise opponents and fortify his own courage. When he charges an enemy, he causes fear for that round. In addition, he is immune to all alone tests for the duration of a combat into which he charged.

Sumai

The warrior has studied the art of Sumo wrestling. If he chooses to attack bare-handed he

can attempt to grapple and throw his opponent. If he hits, he and his opponent roll 1D6 and add their Strength. If his roll is better than his opponent's, that opponent is automatically knocked down, as well as any other result from the bare handed attack. The Mighty Blow skill can be used in conjunction with this skill to add a +1 bonus to the warrior's strength.

Special Rules

Seppuku

A Samurai or Noble who has disgraced himself may seek to atone by committing suicide. If one of the situations listed below occur, he must make a Leadership test after the battle is over. Failure means the warrior is overcome with shame and ends his life. Success does not erase the shame; the warrior will now seek honorable death in combat. The warrior gains a Deathwish, the same as a Dwarf Slayer: The warrior becomes immune to Psychology and never needs to test for being alone. In addition, he must always attempt to charge an enemy within charge range (if there are more than one, he may choose which).

Events which cause disgrace are: Being captured, Fleeing combat or Attacking your own Noble (such as if under the influence of Lure of Chaos). Losing a battle, or successfully withdrawing from a combat (provided the warrior does not flee at any point) is not sufficient to trigger Seppuku, but if the player feels the circumstances warrant it, he may choose to make the leadership test and accept the consequences for a Noble or Samurai.

The Dai-sho

The paired Katana (long sword) and Wakizashi (short sword) is the symbol of the Nipponese warrior class. All Nipponese Nobles and Samurai must purchase this (it counts as one hand weapon selection) but others may not. Nipponese swords are masterpieces of the swordsmith's art, and are treated as having the cutting edge ability of axes. They are never available as Gromril or Ithilmar weapons. If for some reason one sword or the other is lost, a new Katana costs 20gc and a new Wakizashi costs 15gc (the cost on the Samurai equipment list for the pair is discounted slightly).

Wakizashi

Designed for one-hand use, the Wakizashi is treated as a normal sword. It has the Parry ability, as well as the Cutting Edge ability as mentioned above.

Katana

Designed for one or two handed use, the Katana is treated as a normal sword when used one handed, but when used two handed the user strikes with +1 Strength in the first round of combat. If the user chooses this style of attack, he may not change to two swords during subsequent rounds of the same combat. It has the Parry ability, as well as the Cutting Edge ability as mentioned above.

Design Notes

Yes, I know. Nipponese in Mordheim are pretty unlikely. However, the idea got into my head and I had to write them up. Feel free to use the band to play my Defend the Village! Scenario with for a real Seven Samurai flavour J

Some people may ask "where are the Ninjas?" I did consider adding 0-1 Ninja as a hero, but realised that he would never be a real member of the warband, always an outsider. I will be working on a Ninja Assassin hired sword, and that would be the appropriate way to add one to this warband. I think there may be other Ninja hired swords/dramatis personae around; feel free to use them with this warband.

Like Knights, the Samurai are primarily mounted warriors (although more pragmatic about dismounting) so I have included horses as a starting option. Some people may object to treating the Dai-sho as a single weapons choice, but Samurai have to have the two swords, and it was common for them to also carry a spear or naginata. Full war equipment would be: Dai-sho, Horse, Helmet, Heavy Armour, Longbow, Spear.

I hope you have fun with this warband, and as usual, please give me feedback on m_rinku@hotmail.com if you actually use it.