

March and Counter-March

The army's encampment was damp and grey in the morning fog as the General and his staff made their final inspection. The men had awakened before dawn and were already in their formations, waiting for the fog to burn off and at long last reveal the enemy they had pursued these many weeks. Rarely were troops this eager to engage the foe, but today the General could feel it. It wasn't a hatred of the enemy, per se, or bloodlust that drove them. They just wanted to get this over with and go home.

General von Gottlieb agreed with his men; He was pleased to finally bring the Orc horde to battle. The Baron had fought off Greenskin raiders before, but this time it was different. These were more organized, more focused, and lead by a crafty warrior called Gorbag. Gorbag had first lead his band on a systematic plunder of the towns and villages surrounding the hills to the south. Once the Empire troops had arrived, the Orcs did not disperse and run as before but instead lead von Gottlieb's army on a merry chase through the countryside, pillaging as it went.

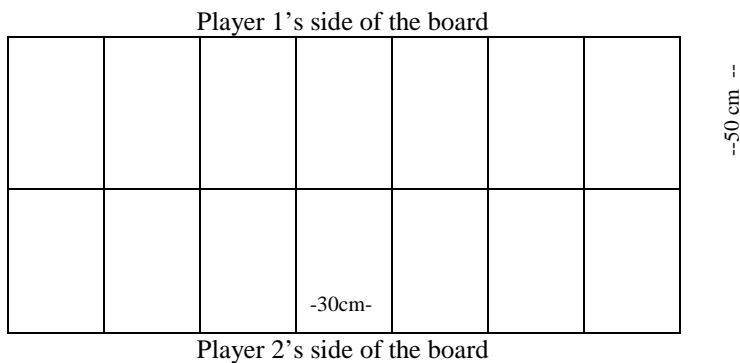
The General was wary in his pursuit, for his scouts reported that the invading horde was larger than his own army. Careful choice of the terrain on his part would assure victory, and he knew the local area well. Several sites would suit his plans perfectly, but the Orcs were refusing to cooperate. Just as it seems he had them where he wanted them, the horde would slip away. Then the rains began, slowing his progress further.

This time, however, he had them. The Greenskins had fled along a tributary of the Reik with few inhabitants and, more importantly, no fordable crossings for miles. Hemmed in by his armies and low on supplies, Gorbag was forced to deploy his forces and fight or break up and flee through the countryside. With the river at his back, Gorbag accepted the General's unspoken invitation to finish it once and for all...

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General von Gottlieb's plight is a familiar one. Although a Commander's job on the day of the battle is what a Warmaster game deals with, often a large amount of maneuvering occurs in the days and weeks before the battle. The following is a method for generating interesting and varied terrain for Warmaster battles. It seeks to simulate in an abstract manner the maneuver that takes place before the battle as the two general try and force their opponent to fight in the ground of their choosing. Players play a quick card game that allows them to manipulate the terrain on the board and the starting locations of both players' forces.

The gaming table is divided into sectors in which terrain and units will be placed. First split the table in half between the two sides. The sectors on each player's side of the board will be "their" sectors. Now each side of the board is split into sectors 30cms wide. This can be easily marked with small dice placed on the board. The sector lines have no bearing on the Warmaster game itself, and will be removed before the game begins. See the example below of a 1m by 2m gaming table split into sectors.



First determine who is the attacker and who is the defender. Each side rolls a die. The general with the higher total is the attacker, the other is the defender.

Now we will place three pieces of terrain on the board. The type of terrain is determined by the Defender. Alternatively, if this battle is in a campaign, the terrain should be of the type present in the campaign map. These are deployed in any sector, one at a time, alternating between the defender and the attacker, beginning with the defender.

Next we create the deck of cards that will be played with. Each player receives a deck of cards. From these each player selects 20 cards. Both player's 20 cards are shuffled together, forming the final deck of 40 cards.

Each player must now designate their Commands and place these Commands in their own sectors, to represent where the units in their Commands will set up. Each Character is a Command, and each Command consists of a Character and at least one unit. You must predetermine which character will have which units in his Command, and record these secretly. There are no other limits to the number of units in a Command. Note however that all the units in a Command will have to deploy in the same sector and will still have to conform to the 80cm No-Man's land for setup, so things can get a little cramped. Wizards are the only exception to this rule. Wizards may be a command, or they may be included in another Character's command. However, an army **MUST** have at least one command per full 1000 points. Thus, for example, a 1000 point Undead army, which has no heroes, could have just one command, the General, with all the units and Liche Priests under him. If it were a 2000 point army, however, at least one of those Liche priests would have to form a second command.

Beginning with defender, each player places one Character, representing that Character's Command, in any of the sectors on their side of the board. You may have more than one Command in one sector. When the battle begins the units in a Character's Command must deploy in the sector the Command was in.

Now deal out three cards to each side. Play begins with the defender drawing a card, and playing a card. Each player **must** draw a card and play a card, and only one card, on their turn.

Terrain and Commands will be moved around or repositioned on the board due to card play. When placing, moving or repositioning terrain, the terrain must be of the type listed on the card. Most of the cards are self-explanatory, but below are a few more specific rules:

- When repositioning terrain, the terrain must stay in the same sector, but can be moved within that sector and/or turned. The terrain piece must stay in its sector, and it may **not** be replaced with a different piece of the same type (i.e. you cannot replace a long hill with a short, fat one. You may only move or reposition the long hill).
- When moving commands or terrain they must be moved to an adjacent sector, but not diagonally. Terrain moved from one sector to another must be in the same relative position and facing in the new sector as it had in the old. Commands may only be moved to a sector on their side of the board. They may not be moved to a sector on the enemy's side of the board.
- Rivers may not be moved, repositioned, or removed until a Bridge or Ford has been placed on the river. Placed rivers may not be in more than 2/3rds of the sectors on the board. Just before the battle begins a d3 worth of Fords are placed on the river if no Fords/Bridges were placed during setup. These are placed by the attacking side.

Sometimes a Command will be Delayed. This means that the units in the Command are not deployed at the start of the game. At the beginning of turn two the Character is placed on the edge of the table in the sector they were in when they were delayed. The Units of that Command are moved onto the table with one full-paced move. They may move further in the Command phase, but they are treated like they have moved once already in this phase, and that the orders were issued by that Character.

A battle occurs when:

- Both sides agree to fight
- One side has received the second Impediment
- The last card has been drawn from the deck, after the drawing player plays one last card

When a battle begins it takes place wherever the terrain and commands are at that time. Roll for random turn length as per usual in Warmaster.

The cards are in the file March and Countermarch Cards.pdf

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