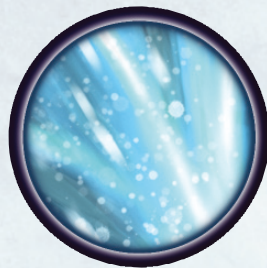


PAUL 'WIGGY' WADE-WILLIAMS

HELLFROST

CLASH OF STEEL





CLASH OF STEEL

BY PAUL “WIGGY” WADE-WILLIAMS & SNOWY

EDITING & PROOFREADING: SCOTT ALAN WOODARD

RULES ASSISTANCE: KLAUS DECKENBACH

GRAPHIC DESIGN & TYPESETTING: ROBIN ELLIOTT

COVER & INTERIOR ART: CARLY SORGE

COVER DESIGN: ROBIN ELLIOTT



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CLASH OF STEEL



THE EASTERN MARCHES

Through Edges and Glory rewards, *Hellfrost* allows the heroes to become leaders of men. The playground for such characters is not the “dungeon” environment, but the open battlefield. They lead companies to death or glory beneath fluttering banners, not skulk in dark shadows searching moldy corpses for a few coins. Instead of standard tabletop adventures, this adventure pack contains three Mass Battles scenarios the GM can slip into his campaign.

While some geographic locations and seasons are mentioned, the GM should change these as necessary to suit his specific campaign. Veteran Rank was chosen because it is the first Rank where the true Mass Battle Edges such as *Cry Havoc* and *Death Before Dishonor* become available to the characters. Those who wish to be war captains and leaders of men have also had the chance to gather Followers through Glory awards.

Finally, there is an alternate set of rules for running very large-scale battles on the tabletop. Now the players can literally control the actions of their troops and watch the battle unfold before their eyes. More importantly, it allows characters to use many of their regular Edges and still play a crucial role in determining the outcome of the encounter.

RULE TWEAKS

Fortifications: Ignore the regular Mass Battles rules on fortifications. Each fortification now has a Siege Bonus. Instead of granting the attacking commander a penalty, it gives the defending commander a bonus to both his Knowledge (Battle) and Morale rolls.

Spirit Rolls: The current rules for Mass Battles lead to a rapid disintegration of armies. This may be semi-realistic (few armies ever fought to the last man), but it is not much fun at the gaming table, especially if you are

on the receiving end. Two small rule changes have been applied to all these adventures:

First, the side with the *greater* number of tokens (after calculating losses for the round) never makes Morale rolls. It may suffer grievous losses, but being the numerically superior force keeps the men fighting. Second, a –1 penalty is imposed for each two tokens lost versus one token.

Example: An orc army has the lesser number of tokens. On the first round, it loses one token. No Morale roll is required. On the next round, the orcs lose two tokens. Total losses are now three tokens, so a –1 penalty applies.

GM'S INTRODUCTION

All is not well in the Eastern Marches of Aspiria. Thirty years ago, King Halgroth IV led a mighty crusade against the fell orcs. Over the course of three years, his army drove the orcs from the Eastern Marches and back into the Granite Mountains. The crusade was hailed as a great victory, and Halgroth was proclaimed “Hammer of the Orcs.” Had he harried the retreating orcs into the mountains, such a title may have been more deserving, but Halgroth’s cessation of hostilities gave him a Pyrrhic victory.

New villages sprang up in the fertile hills once despoiled by orcs. While a few nobles called for increased fortifications and aggressive patrols, their pleas fell on deaf ears. Although the crusade was within living memory, the Aspirians believed their victory was total, that the orc threat had been vanquished forever. Complacency was the watchword of the day.

Three decades without war has given the orcs the chance to rebuild their strength and gather allies. Halgroth IV’s name is spoken among the orcs of the Granite Mountains only in curses and oaths of revenge made to their dark gods. A new tribal leader has arisen, a leader

with a solid grasp of strategy, a leader whose heart is filled with the insatiable desire for bloody and total revenge. His army is small in comparison to that of old, but he expects little resistance—three decades of peace has sapped the Aspirian's desire for war.

Among the few nobles warning against a resurgent orc threat is Baron Kyle Loxlyn, whose lands lie within the Eastern Marshes. Scouts have reported increased orc activity in the foothills of the mountains, and several small villages have been razed to the ground. He knows his meager forces cannot stand forever against the orc tide massing on his borders, but he hopes to bloody their noses just long enough for the king's army to ride to the rescue.

While he musters his army and implores the king, Halgroth V, to send reinforcements, Loxlyn has dispatched a small band of heroes to locate and infiltrate the orc lair. Information will be key to winning the coming conflict.

GATHERING INFORMATION

Read or paraphrase the following text to the players:

You are in the employ of Baron Loxlyn, whose lands lie within the Eastern Marches of Aspiria, an area of rolling hills, deep, wide valleys, and fertile farmland. For weeks, reports have been filtering back of orcs massing on his eastern borders. A man of intelligence and financial means, Loxlyn sent out heralds asking for adventurers of renown to perform a mission of grave importance. The lure of 1000 gold scields per person was enough to attract your attention.

It is now fall, and while the winter snows are still yet to come, the north wind already blows hard. The baron expects an invasion in the coming weeks, timed to coincide with the first snowfalls. Riders have been dispatched to all settlements, calling forth the militia to honor their vows and gather under his banner. While he organizes his army, he has sent you into the Granite Mountains to gather intelligence. Without knowledge of the orcs' strength, the baron cannot arrange his defenses.

For two weeks, you have climbed and hiked through the foreboding peaks. At last, you have reached your goal; an old border fort located along a rocky ledge. Somewhere within lies the information that could save the Eastern Marches and perhaps all of Aspiria. Somewhere within a fortress filled with bloodthirsty orcs, whose anger you dare not rile in case they bring forth their assault. Stealth will rule here, not skill at arms or strength of steel.

SCOUTING THE FORT

The initial phase of the adventure revolves around the party gathering intelligence on the orc plans. Rather than being the true start of the adventure, it is a backdrop to the main events to come. As such, instead of being played out on the tabletop, it is handled abstractly as a series of tasks the heroes must complete. Each task must be played in order, though it is not necessary to complete one task in order to move onto the next one—each task has notes on what happens based on the die rolls. The GM should enhance the die rolls with suitable descriptions.

GAINING ENTRANCE

Cooperative Stealth roll opposed by the orc sentries' d6 Group Notice roll. Heroes with a suitable spell, such as invisibility, may use their arcane skill instead.

With most of the orc warriors encamped elsewhere in preparation for the invasion, the entrance to the fort is only lightly guarded. Unfortunately, the orc commander is taking no chances, and the sentries are alert.

Success: The heroes manage to sneak past the sentries undetected. They gain +2 to their roll in the next stage.

Failure: The characters are spotted and attacked by the sentries. The action is handled abstractly using the Characters in Mass Battles rules. Each adventurer must make a single roll of Fighting, Shooting, Throwing, or, if suitable spells are available, an arcane skill roll, adding +1 for each Rank above Novice to account for various Edges. (At the listed Rank, they thus gain a +2 bonus.) Results are as per the **Characters in Mass Battles** table. Regardless of the individual results, the guards are defeated and the heroes can progress to the next stage.

However, the sounds of battle have alerted the fort's defenders. The roll in the next stage is made at an additional -2 penalty.

LOCATE IMPORTANT AREAS

Cooperative Notice roll at -2.

Now inside the fort, the heroes must locate the central command area, avoiding fights so as not to alert the base and bring down the wrath of the defenders.

Success: Through stealth and cunning the heroes maneuver through the fort undetected. They locate the commander's quarters.

Failure: The characters are spotted and attacked by sentries. The action is handled abstractly using the Characters in Mass Battles rules. Each adventurer must make a single Fighting, Shooting, Throwing, or, if suitable spells are available, arcane skill roll, adding +1 for each Rank above Novice to account for various Edges. (At the listed Rank, they thus gain a +2 bonus). Results are as per the Characters in Mass Battles table. Regardless of the individual results, the guards are defeated and the heroes can progress to the next stage.

I HAVE FOLLOWERS

If the characters have combatant Followers, it makes sense they will want to use them in battle. Here is a simple way a small number of Followers can be represented in a Mass Battle. This works well for up to 50 Followers. Beyond this, any additional Followers should be merged into the army as a whole.

First, divide the Followers into companies of five troops. Ideally, these should be of the same type and skill level.

Each round, the hero to whom the Followers owe allegiance must nominate whom the companies are supporting. This can be their master or any other player character, but it must be a party member. A hero with multiple companies may wish to loan some to his comrades, for instance, and retain some for his own protection.

During the Characters in Mass Battles phase, each company makes a Group Cooperative attack roll. Since Extras do not have a Rank, no bonuses are earned. The Group roll essentially includes that bonus. Under the Cooperative Roll rules, their result gives the character they are supporting a bonus to his Characters in Mass Battle roll.

For each wound taken by a company-supported hero, one company of Followers is eliminated from the battle. Of these, one is slain outright, two are Incapacitated, and two are alive but unable to provide assistance. Wounded Followers are dealt with after the battle ends, as normal. If the battle was lost, the Vigor roll made to determine if they are alive or dead is at -2.

Example: *Ulfgar has 10 buscarls loyal to him. These form two companies of five men. In the first round of battle, he loans one company to the party mage, Algarifex, and retains one as his personal bodyguard. Ulfgar rolls a raise in his Characters in Mass Battle roll and emerges unscathed. Algarifex, even with the company of buscarls at his side, rolls a failure. He suffers 4d6 damage and takes two wounds. His company of buscarls is hammered hard, and is out of the fight.*

ENTERING THE CHAMBER

Lockpicking (made by a single hero). A spellcaster with boost (Lockpicking) may make one arcane skill roll.

Distrustful of his underlings and mindful of intruders, the orc commander has placed many traps around his quarters.

Success: The traps are disabled and the doors unlocked, allowing the characters to progress to the next stage.

Failure: A number of traps are set off. Each hero suffers 3d6 damage.

GATHERING INFORMATION

Cooperative Investigation roll. Notice can be used,

but at a -2 penalty. Any hero unable to read Orcish suffers a -2 penalty to his roll.

The characters have access to the orcs' battle plans. Stealing the plans would alert the commander to the intrusion, potentially forcing him to alter his plans. Such an act would mean the infiltration mission was for naught. As such, the characters must read and copy all relevant information. With time against them, they will only get a single opportunity.

Two Raises: The characters uncover detailed battle plans. The orc army comprises a total of 500 wolf riders, 4000 warriors, and 500 elite warriors, plus assorted priests and support troops. The orcs intend to attack on three fronts simultaneously. A strategic plan to attack the farming villages is uncovered. This attack force numbers 200 riders, 1000 warriors, and 100 elite warriors.

Raise: The characters learn only the makeup of the total orc army—500 wolf riders, 4000 warriors, and 500 elite warriors. The orcs intend to attack on three fronts simultaneously, but details of how the forces will be divided cannot be discerned.

Success: The heroes manage to discern only basic information. The orc force numbers several hundred wolf riders and elite warriors, and between three and five thousand warriors. The attack will occur on anywhere from one to three fronts, though no details are learned.

Failure: The adventurers discover only scant mention of some 3000 warriors and assorted other forces of indeterminate strength. How many fronts they may attack on is unknown.

Critical Failure: The characters discover nothing of any use.

SNEAKING OUT

Cooperative Stealth roll opposed by the orc sentries' d6 Group Notice roll. Heroes with a suitable spell, such as invisibility, may use their arcane skill instead.

Having gathered all the information they can, the heroes must now silently vacate the fort, leaving the orcs none the wiser to the intrusion.

Success: The heroes manage to sneak past the sentries undetected and escape back into the wilderness.

Failure: The characters are spotted and immediately attacked by the sentries. The action is handled abstractly using the Characters in Mass Battles rules. Each adventurer must make a single Fighting, Shooting, Throwing, or, if suitable spells are available, arcane skill roll, adding +1 for each Rank above Novice to account for various Edges. (At the listed Rank, they thus gain a +2 bonus.) Results are as per the Characters in Mass Battles table. Regardless of the individual results, the guards are defeated and the heroes may advance to the next stage.

THE WAR COUNCIL

Regardless of how well the intelligence gathering went, Baron Loxlyn summons his war council once the

party returns. Loxlyn chairs the council. Attending him are his main advisors: Sir Arlent Silver-Mane, an aging but still capable military commander and the baron's war marshal, Agatha Green-Hands, the high priestess of Eostre, and Lord Mayor Orlo Fitzbain, the governor of Loxlyn's main town, along with several lesser members of the court. *One* of the party members is also asked to attend the council. Exactly who attends is up to the adventurers.

This section is purely one of roleplaying—there is no die rolling of any sort. The hero invited to attend is controlled by his player as normal, but the other players need to put away their character sheets for the moment, as each will be taking the role of one of the Baron's advisors. Basic information sheets are provided at the end of the adventure. Distribute the sheets for Sir Arlent, Sower Agatha, and Mayor Orlo randomly among the other players.

If you have more than four players, you can add additional lesser NPCs with their own agendas, use NPCs with no agendas, or let the players control their own characters. Suggested extra NPCs include the headmen of the farming villages, a priestess of Eira, the local senior guildmaster, and so on.

The GM takes the role of Baron Loxlyn. His role is one of mediator, to prevent disputes between his advisors getting out of hand. He must also agree with the decisions made by his council. Because the GM knows the deployment of the orc forces, Loxlyn offers *no* advice on where best to place troops—the future of the Eastern Marches lies firmly in the hands of the players.

There is no right or wrong solution to this section—in times of war, hard decisions must be made. At best, the council knows the strength of one orc regiment and its intended target. Leave one region too lightly defended and it will likely fall to the enemy with the loss of many innocent lives. Spread the forces too thin across all the regions likely to come under attack, and they may all be crushed or left unable to mount an effective counterattack.

Every NPC has certain desires, and he or she should argue to secure what he wishes. No troop numbers are given—what an NPC considers satisfactory is up to the player controlling him.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

Three important subjects must be discussed—which settlements are to be defended, how to divide the army up, and who shall lead them? Whatever information the characters gathered at the orc fort is the only hard facts the council has to go on when making its decisions.

WHERE TO DEFEND?

Three wide valleys lead into Loxlyn's lands. Only along these can the orcs move in any force, and thus any or all of them are likely routes of approach. At the end of the eastern valley lie Loxlyn's major farming vil-

lages, a collection of six settlements surrounded by rich farmland. The main town, Althorpe, is situated along the central valley. In the third valley stand a temple of Eira and its supporting village, known as Eiraham ("the hamlet of Eira"). Unfortunately, the terrain means that by the time outriders spy the orc columns it will be too late to maneuver the defensive companies. Thus, the decision must be taken now on which ones to defend and in what numbers.

HOW TO DIVIDE THE ARMY?

Baron Loxlyn's army comprises 300 mounted knights, 1000 heavy infantry, 400 archers, and 2000 militia. The council must decide where to place these forces and in what strength. For simplicity, each type of soldier must be grouped in multiples of 100 men.

Of course, not all warriors are equal in combat ability and resilience. To help the GM later on, each troop type is worth a number of points. This is detailed as below and is based on 100 men. Once the regiments are formed, list them in terms of total troop numbers *and* points.

Example: *A regiment comprises 100 knights (500 points), 300 heavy infantry (1200 points), 100 archers (400 points), and 700 militia (1400 points), a grand 1200 men totaling 3500 points.*

Troop	Points/100	Total Points Available
Knights	500	1500
Infantry	400	4000
Archers	400	1600
Militia	200	4000

WHO SHALL LEAD?

Loxlyn has only two commanders he trusts in battle. The first is himself, and the second is Sir Arlent, an old campaigning comrade and a proven leader of men. Loxlyn is a capable commander able to get the best from his men and unlikely to flee in the face of overwhelming odds. Sir Arlent is a defensive siege specialist. While not as skilled as his liege, he knows how to get the best out of fortifications.

Given there are likely to be three fielded regiments, Loxlyn asks the heroes to supply the third battlefield commander from their number.

THE DAY OF THREE BATTLES

Once the regiments are formed and the commanders allocated, the heroes must decide in which regiment they wish to serve. While they may wish to fight together, there is some wisdom in separating. Each player character has a chance of modifying their commander's Battle roll, and by dividing the party, they can assist each commander, thus increasing the odds of a successful outcome.

ADDING THE TABLETOP

Although this is a Mass Battle adventure, the GM can break out his miniatures and terrain and use the tabletop to represent pivotal moments in the battle. This system allows the heroes to access their full suite of powers and still affect the battle outcome.

Give each character a token of some description. At any time during the battle in which he is participating, the character may play the token to trigger an event. Only one token may be played per round, regardless of the number of characters involved. When a token is played, pick one of the following entries or roll a d4. Each can be used only once during the adventure. These events replace the regular Characters in Mass Battles roll for the round. The hero who played the token *must* participate while the other heroes have the option of using regular rolls and playing NPCs during the event.

The other advantage to using these events is that it allows *healing* magic to be employed. For ease, assume every battle turn presents one hour. Thus, the characters can heal wounds taken during the encounter, but not injuries suffered in earlier battle rounds.

Unless otherwise stated, the listed enemy has bodyguards equal to one elite orc warrior per player character, plus one orc warrior per two orc army tokens remaining. Each player character has the support of one infantryman (treat as Veteran Infantry Mercenaries). For each hero missing from the party (perhaps because they are involved in another battle), add two infantrymen. The players whose characters are absent should control these.

Characters with active Followers may involve them in the event. In this case, the numbers of the weakest enemy type should be increased by a similar amount to balance the encounter.

In all cases, success is achieved if the party slays the Wild Card before their side suffers 50% losses. Failure occurs if the characters do not achieve this goal, even if they eventually slay the Wild Card.

1) Apothecary: The orcs release their apothecaries to get injured warriors back on their feet. One such apothecary (a Wild Card) crosses paths with the heroes. *Success:* The orcs lose an automatic token as their wounded retire from battle. *Failure:* The orcs recover a token. This cannot occur if the orcs have full tokens, so do not use it before a token is lost.

2) Chieftain: An orc chieftain takes to the field. *Success:* The orcs must make an automatic Morale roll at the end of the round. If they must make a Morale roll due to losses, the roll is made at an additional -1. *Failure:* The orcs gain +2 to their Knowledge (Battle) roll.

3) Drummer: An orc drummer and his bodyguard take to the field to rouse the orc warriors into greater bloodshed. *Success:* The orcs suffer a -2 penalty to their Knowledge (Battle) roll this round because of confused orders. *Failure:* The rallied orcs gain +2 to their Knowledge (Battle) roll.

4) Priest: A priest is sent out to reign down magic. *Success:* The allied commander has +2 to Knowledge (Battle) this round. *Failure:* The allied commander has -2 to his Knowledge (Battle) roll.

In the world of *Hellfrost*, the three battles are fought simultaneously. Around the gaming table, the GM has two options for how he wishes to handle the events. If the party has stayed together, complete each battle in turn. Start with those battles involving only NPCs, as this keeps the players' action to last, thus reducing the odds their attention will waiver once their heroes' fight is out of the way. The allied commanders' dice should be rolled by the players.

If the party has divided their strength among multiple regiments, the GM should run one round of each battle (whether it includes the heroes or not) in turn. This keeps all the players actively participating with few pauses between die rolls.

While the orcs are sending their largest regiment against the town, the orc commander has elected to lead the assault on the temple of Eira. Figuring it to be a rallying point for any defenders, it being a temple of peace and healing, he intends to ensure it is crushed and its priestesses' heads impaled on stakes to shatter the morale of the Aspirian people. He has faith that his

subordinate commanders have the skills and troops to take the other objectives.

IMPORTANT NOTES

The two NPC allied commanders are Baron Loxlyn and Sir Arlent. Their important stats are presented below. The players should have decided where each will be stationed and what men he has at his disposal.

Baron Loxlyn: Battle d8, Spirit d8, A Few Good Men and Death Before Dishonor.

Sir Arlent: Battle d6, Spirit d6, Siege Mentality.

Army Tokens: As noted above, every company of 100 men is worth a certain number of points. The strength and disposition of the orc armies is listed below, along with their total point value. Use these values, not the number of troops involved, to determine tokens for each side. A quick glance will reveal the allies are outnumbered. However, they have the luxury of defensive fortifications to aid them.

Siege Bonus: Whichever position Sir Arlent com-

mands gains +1 to its Siege Bonus thanks to his Siege Mentality Edge. He may also make a Knowledge (Battle) roll before the engagement begins. Success increases the Siege Bonus by another +1 (+2 with a raise).

BATTLE OF THE FARMS

Six farming settlements lie in this region of the Marches. While the citizens have not had time to move their granaries' contents to the main town, they have had the opportunity to transport everything to the largest village. Aside from this village, which is now full to bursting with refugees, the area is deserted. Fortunately, the largest village lies in the orcs' path and will be their first point of call. The basic defenses, a simple ditch, have been strengthened with a series of wooden stakes to break up cavalry charges, and a series of strategically placed earth ramparts have been topped with small palisades.

Orc Commander: Agrash the Unruly (Battle d6, Spirit d8, Cry Havoc)

Orc Army Size: 200 wolf riders, 1000 warriors, and 100 elite warriors. *Total points: 4400*

Siege Bonus: +1

BATTLE OF THE TOWNS

The main town is protected by a wooden wall and gatehouse, but lacks a ditch or moat. The citizens have taken the precaution of dampening the roofs with water to lessen the effects of fire. Barricades made of furniture, similarly wetted, have been strategically placed to funnel invading orcs into killing zones. The children are being sheltered in the temples, while the women are standing by, equipped with buckets of water and bandages.

Orc Commander: Ugrat the Foul (Battle d6, Spirit d8, Siege Breaker)

Orc Army Size: 2000 infantry, and 300 elite warriors. *Total points: 7200*

Siege Bonus: +2 (initial). Ugrat's Siege Breaker Edge lowers this to just +1. The orc commander may also make a Knowledge (Battle) roll before the engagement begins. Success lowers it by another point, two points on a raise. The Siege Bonus cannot drop below zero.

BATTLE OF THE TEMPLE

Surrounded by a wooden palisade, the temple is the best defensive position in the region. The small temple has taken in all the inhabitants of the local village and surrounding areas. Guided by the priests, the women and old men have gathered all the clothes, bedding and any other materials they could find and shredded them into bandages.

Orc Commander: Warlord Grishnâr Axe-Breaker (Battle d10, Spirit d8, Cry Havoc). Grishnâr is a Wild Card.

Orc Army Size: 200 wolf riders, 1000 warriors, and 100 elite warriors. *Total points: 4400*

Siege Bonus: +1

AFTERMATH

Three Allied Victories: The orc survivors hurriedly withdraw back to their lairs. Unfortunately for them, the king and his army arrive. Urged on by Baron Loxlyn's victorious soldiers, the king does not repeat his father's mistake, but drives onward, destroying the remnants of the invading forces. A massive victory is earned.

Two Allied Victories: Two of the three regions are held, but the third has been destroyed. By the time the survivors of the victorious battles are united, the orcs have retreated. The king arrives in time to hunt them down, but many escape. Although seriously weakened, the orcs have enough warriors to plague the lands again come next summer. A major victory has been earned.

One Allied Victory: The defenders have suffered badly. The ragtag army of survivors makes the decision to abandon Loxlyn's lands, escorting the surviving civilians to safety. After fighting off several raiding parties, they reach the safety of the king's army's camp. The king refuses to commit his forces against the orcs immediately, allowing them time to gather reinforcements and secure their supply lines. The Eastern Marches are lost, at least for a year or two.

No Allied Victories: The defense of the Eastern Marches is shattered! With no safe place to which to withdraw, the beleaguered citizens of the Marches attempt to retreat deeper into Aspiria. Harried all the way, the losses are high. Even the king's army is ambushed and forced to pull back to new lines beyond the Marches. The orc commander's victory lures other tribes to his banner. The threat to Aspiria has never been greater, and the lands will be a source of adventure for years to come.

BESTIARY

This is the only Mass Battle for which tabletop action is described. All necessary stat blocks are included below.

MERCENARY

VETERAN INFANTRY

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d10

Skills: Climbing d6, Fighting d10, Guts d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Shooting d10, Stealth d6, Throwing d8

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 9 (2)

Hindrances: Various

Edges: Combat Reflexes

Gear: Chain hauberk (+2), pot helm (+3), long sword or battle axe (Str+d8), medium shield (+1 Parry)

HELLFROST ADVENTURE #20

ORC



CHIEFTAIN

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Boating d8, Fighting d12, Guts d8, Intimidation d10, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Throwing d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 11 (3)

Edges: Block, Combat Reflexes, Command, Fervor, Hold the Line, Sweep

Gear: Plate corselet (+3), chain arms and legs (+2), pot helmet (+3), great axe (Str+d10, -1 Parry, 2 hands)

Special Abilities

- * **Size +1:** Orcs are slightly larger than humans.



PRIEST

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Faith d8, Fighting d6, Guts d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6 (1)

Edges: Arcane Background (Miracles)

Gear: Leather armor (+1), long spear (Str+d6, Parry +1, Reach 1, 2 hands), furs

Special Abilities:

- * **Powers:** Priests typically know *armor* (icy skin), *bolt* (icicles), *fear* (howl), *obscure* (snow cloud), *smite* (jagged icicles form on weapon), and *summon elemental* (ice or slush).



APOTHECARY

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Healing d6, Intimidation d6, Knowledge (Alchemy) d8, Notice d6, 6 Stealth d6, Survival d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7 (1)

Edges: Hedge Magic

Gear: Leather armor (+1), short sword, axe, or mace (Str+d6), 2d4 doses of herbal remedies (normally healing and stimulants)

Special Abilities:

- * **Size +1:** Orcs are slightly larger than humans.



DRUMMER

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Shooting d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 8 (1)

Gear: Leather armor (+1), drum beaters (Str+d6), war drum

Special Abilities:

- * **Level Headed:** Drummers need to react quickly to changing battlefield conditions. They draw two action

cards and use the best.

- * **Size +1:** Orcs are slightly larger than humans.
- * **War Drum:** As an action, the drummer can beat his drum to produce a special effect benefiting all orcs within 10" of the drummer. Only one beat can be used at a time. Once chosen, the same beat sounds until the drummer's next action card, when he may stop, continue with the same beat, or switch to a different beat. All benefits cease immediately if the beat ends early (such as in the event of the drummer's death).
- * **Charge:** Orcs who begin their turn within 10" gain +2 Pace and increase their running die by one step (typically to a d8).
- * **Fearless:** Immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- * **Fervor:** Inflict +1 damage with Fighting attacks.
- * **Frenzy:** Gain the Frenzy Edge (there is no benefit to orcs already possessing the Edge).
- * **Hold the Line:** Gain +1 Toughness.
- * **Rally:** +1 to Spirit rolls to recover from being Shaken.

WARRIOR

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Boating d6, Fighting d6, Guts d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Throwing d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8 (1)

Gear: Leather armor (+1), medium shield (+1 Parry), short sword, axe, or mace (Str+d6)

Special Abilities:

- * **Size +1:** Orcs are slightly larger than humans.

ELITE WARRIOR

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Boating d6, Fighting d8, Guts d8, Intimidation d10, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Throwing d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 9 (2)

Edges: Combat Reflexes

Gear: Chain hauberk (+2), pot helm (+3), medium shield (+1 Parry), long sword or battle axe (Str+d8)

Special Abilities:

- * **Size +1:** Orcs are slightly larger than humans.

THE RESTLESS DEAD

Many reports filter along the trade roads regarding the Liche Lands of Old. Most common is the rumor that the undead are again abroad, perhaps in preparation for the reawakening of their hellish lord, the Liche-Priest. With the undead of the Withered Lands a far more active threat, the cult can spare few clergy to watch over the border of the Liche Lands. Just one major fort and seven watchtowers sit in Seithrby, outposts that must monitor hundreds of miles of border.

The characters are currently at that very fort. Clerics of Scaetha may have been ordered to attend, dragging their adventuring comrades with them. Perhaps the heroes were already in the vicinity, and talk of undead activity has lured them there. Those coming back from the northeast High Winterlands may simply have been staying over when strange reports began to filter in.

According to scouts, a host of undead is moving toward the cult's fort. Retreating into the fort is not an option—a siege benefits the undead, who need no sustenance and who are immune to the ravages of disease so common in siege camps. Instead, the senior paladin has decided battle will occur on the open plains. The plan is to construct a series of fortified lines, through which the undead will have to battle.

RAISING ALLIES

The fort's defenders are scant, barely 20 clerics and just 1000 mercenaries—many of whom have never faced the undead before and serve for love of money, not duty to the endless cause. Although the aethling of Seithrby owes the cult no allegiance, it is his lands that will suffer if the cult fails to hold the line. Unfortunately, Seithrby has a population of fewer than 20000. Even if every able-bodied man could be mustered, its army would equate to only three or four thousand frightened peasants and a few hundred huscarls. Still, that is all the cult can rely on.

The characters are asked to visit the aethling and his jarls in a bid to rally support. There are five centers of power in Seithrby—Murton, Ryhoepe, Seaton, Seithrby, and Wulfcestre. At each one, the heroes must make a Cooperative Persuasion roll. Modifiers and other important notes are shown below. All modifiers within a given settlement are cumulative. The GM can add in roleplaying scenes in each settlement, as he desires. Bonuses for good roleplaying (and penalties for bad) should be awarded where appropriate.

In all cases, the nobles of Seithrby accompany any troops—such is the Saxa way of leadership. Having so many nobles in such a small army could cause more than a few headaches. Each settlement has a specific battle event associated with it. The battle event applies if the noble's support is gained, no matter how many men he sends.

Murton: Thegn Analf is a Saxa noble in the style of his distant ancestors—courageous and ready for battle. With the community centered on livestock rather than farming, Murton and its supporting steads can spare men for war. The Persuasion roll has a +1 modifier.

Battle Event: Analf's impulsiveness gets the better of him and he orders a charge at some point during the battle. The allied commander has -2 to his Knowledge (Battle) roll. However, if the roll is a success, he removes an additional undead token.

Ryhoepe: Thegn Osric is a tried and tested warrior

with a stout heart. The Persuasion roll has no modifier. Unfortunately, Osric is more interested in harming his cousin, the aethling, than truly assisting against the undead.

Battle Event: If his support is gained and Aethling Cuthwulf and his men are present, at some point in the battle the thegn orders his men to withdraw, leaving the aethling's contingent stranded. This gives the allied commander a -2 penalty to his Knowledge (Battle) roll for the round. If the allies lose a token that round, the aethling's men are cut down and the prince wounded. The allied army must make an immediate Morale roll.

Seaton: Thegn Whitburh is an old and skilled warrior, and loyal to his lord. Whitburh drops unsubtle hints about the sheep slaying (see the *Hellfrost Gazetteer*). If the party pledges to investigate, the Persuasion roll is made at +2.

Battle Event: Whitburh is happy to be a subordinate commander, but he offers advice. If the commander accepts, Whitburh makes a Cooperative Battle roll. He has Knowledge (Battle) d8 and is a Wild Card. Whitburh is wounded when the allies lose their fourth token, and can no longer advise the commander.

Seithrby: Aethling Cuthwulf is infatuated with the old tales of Saxa heroes, but lacks the drive and skill to become one himself. Being called upon to aid the clerics is both a clear sign of his rightful position as ruler of Seithrby and an opportunity to prove his worth to his ancestors.

If the heroes make a mistake in etiquette and do not visit Seithrby before recruiting aid from the thegns, Cuthwulf grows petulant at the insult to his station. The Persuasion roll has a -2 penalty.

Regardless of when he is visited, Cuthwulf demands to be made supreme commander, as befits his social position. Alas, his Knowledge (Battle) is just d4, his Spirit d6, and he has no useful Edges. Agreeing gives the heroes a +4 bonus to the Persuasion roll at Seithrby and +2 at every other settlement they visit thereafter, but places the army in mortal danger. Refusal gives a +1 bonus at Seithrby, but only so long as the aethling is made a regimental commander (no effect on the battle). Otherwise, there is a -2 penalty here.

Battle Event: Cuthwulf is an incompetent glory hound. Whether he is supreme commander or not, he acts the role, ignoring the orders of the true commander. Draw a card each round. On a black card, Cuthwulf shouts contradictory orders, confusing the men. The allied commander has -1 to his Knowledge (Battle) roll. Cuthwulf's presence, though, is a major Morale booster. Morale rolls are made at +1.

Wulfcestre: Eager to convince Cuthwulf that the lands of Wulfcestre are safe for bandits, Cenwalch quickly signs up soldiers. The Persuasion roll has a +2 modifier. Unfortunately, the current raids against the thegn's lands will only get worse if the allied army fares badly. Quelling these raids could be used as an adventure seed.

Battle Event: Cenwalch is a craven coward. If the allied commander has Cry Havoc, draw a card from the

USING EVENTS

This sidebar presents an optional way of using events in a Mass Battle, without the need to break out miniatures or terrain.

The GM can use one of two methods to determine when the events occur. First, give each character a token of some description. At any time during the battle in which he is participating, the character *must* play the token to trigger an event. Only one token may be played per round, regardless of the number of characters involved. When a token is played, pick one of the following entries or roll a d4. Each can be used only once during the adventure.

Second, each time three tokens are lost, regardless from which side, pick or roll for an event.

Success or failure is determined by the commander's Battle roll this round. Since the heroes provide modifiers to this, it is also largely dependant on their individual die rolls—the better they fight, the better the army does overall.

1) Awaken the Damned: The undead army is dangerously close to capturing an old battlefield where hundreds of corpses may be buried. If they do, they will be able to summon reinforcements. *Failure:* The undead capture the graveyard and raise a host of the damned. They gain two tokens. *Success:* The undead capture the graveyard but can only muster one additional token before being driven back. *Raise:* The undead advance is driven back and the graveyard is held.

2) Catapults of Doom: The undead drag their deadly and hellish catapults into range. *Failure:* The attack is driven back and the catapults remain intact. The undead retain their +2 modifier to Knowledge (Battle) rolls. *Success:* Half the catapults are destroyed before the attack is repelled. They have just +1 to the Knowledge (Battle) rolls. *Raise:* The catapults are destroyed, and the artillery modifier removed.

3) Sever the Head: The heroes have the opportunity to slay one the priests commanding the undead. *Failure:* The foray slays many undead, but the priest is unharmed. *Success:* The cleric is injured, forcing a subordinate to take over. The subordinate's Battle and Spirit dice are one lower than his superior's Traits. *Raise:* The headquarters is smashed and many priests slain. The new undead commander has Battle d4 and Spirit d6.

4) Rally the Troops: Wave after wave of decaying corpses have broken the morale of the left flank. Unless the heroes act quickly, the entire flank will collapse. *Failure:* The characters' activities are not enough to bolster morale. The commander must make an immediate Spirit roll at -2. If he fails, the allies lose a token as the men flee in panic. *Success:* As above, except the roll is unmodified. *Raise:* The troops not only rally, but they become fearless. All Morale rolls from here on are made at +1.

action deck. On a black Jack through Ace, Cenwalch's men refuse the order. The charge fails and the use of Cry Havoc is wasted.

In each settlement, the result of the Persuasion roll determines the number of troops recruited, as shown below.

Troops	Success	Raise	Two Raises
Huscarls	10	20	30
Militia	200	400	800

CALCULATING THE ARMY SIZE

The main army comprises 400 heavy mercenary infantry and 600 light mercenary infantry. Each heavy infantryman is worth 4 points and each light infantryman, 2 points. This gives a total of 4000 points. The assorted clerics and priests raise this to 4100 points.

Each huscarl the heroes recruit is worth 4 points and each militiaman 2 points. Tally up the troops and work out their points. Add this to the above total to calculate the full size of the allied army.

THE BATTLE OF RATTLING BONES

At dawn, on the second day after the heroes return from their recruitment mission, scouts report the undead host advancing toward the first line of fortifications. Divine Slayer Haakon Guthrunsunu, the head paladin at the fort, calls the men to arms. With fearful glances, a few religious signs, and much boasting about the number of heads they will take today, the soldiers rush to man the defenses. Banners are hoisted and war chants sung, more to rouse morale than to intimidate the relentless, remorseless enemy.

COMMANDERS

Allied Commander: Technically Divine Slayer Haakon Guthrunsunu (Battle d8, Spirit d8, Cry Havoc) commands the army. However, he does not plan to commit all his troops at once. Instead, he keeps archers one line back from the main battle. If a hero has suitable battle skills, he appoints him to command the frontline of the army. By the time the lines collapse (assuming they do) the troops are so used to the hero that Haakon leaves him in full command. He will assume control should the hero fall.

Undead Commander: Death Knight Kalarix Doombringer (Battle d8, Spirit d10, Cry Havoc)

Undead Forces: The undead army totals 8000 points of skeletons, zombies, and armored variants, plus a handful of (thankfully) rarer undead. To determine the tokens each side begins with, compare this to the allies' army point total.

Modifiers: The undead have hellish catapults, crafted from bones, launching balls of inky darkness that crackle with necromantic energy. These grant the undead a +2 bonus to their Knowledge (Battle) rolls.

Siege Bonus: The allies have a series of fortified

lines, each weaker than the one before. The plan is to hold them at the first line, only retreating to the next line back if it is overrun. The first line of defense has a +2 Siege Bonus, the second line +1, and the third line +0. However, heroes with the Siege Mentality Edge have the opportunity to improve each defensive line, bolstering the defenses and strengthening weak points. Without the Edge, the defenders will be sorely pressed to hold the lines.

When the allies lose two tokens, they retreat in orderly fashion to the second line, having lost the defenses to the advancing horde. Another two tokens pushes them to the third line. From here there will be no retreat until the bitter end and the army routs or is destroyed.

Morale: Being essentially mindless, the undead have +2 to Morale rolls. Although there are few clerics of Scaetha in the allied army, their presence gives the allies a +1 bonus.

AFTERMATH

If the undead win, they raze the fort and then withdraw back into the Liche Lands, not even bothering to harass the retreating allies. The attack was not the forerunner to an invasion, as thought, though it has achieved its purpose—the destruction of the cult of Scaetha's outpost. Free of the cult's watch, the undead begin to build up their strength, unopposed by their most-hated foes. It will be many years before the cult of Scaetha can rebuild the fort.

Should the allies win, the undead have lost a few easily replaceable troops and caused some misery to their enemies. Their defeat is a major victory for the cult of Scaetha, but an irrelevant blip in the undead's long-term plans.

RAIDS ON ORCMARK

The war against Orcmark has ground to a stalemate. In the north, the armies of the orcs and those of the men of Vestmark are separated by the River Elverun. Artillery barrages and small-scale raids are waged constantly but achieve little. In the east, the besieged city of Ostersund holds out against dire odds only by the bravery of its defenders. This adventure comprises two Mass Battles set in this war torn region of Rassilon.

Vestmark is a great adventuring opportunity for leaders of men, for it allows ample battlefield encounters, both as tabletop skirmish level and mass battles. Skilled commanders are valuable assets here and greatly prized. They are also a target for orc assassination squads.

SPECIAL RULES

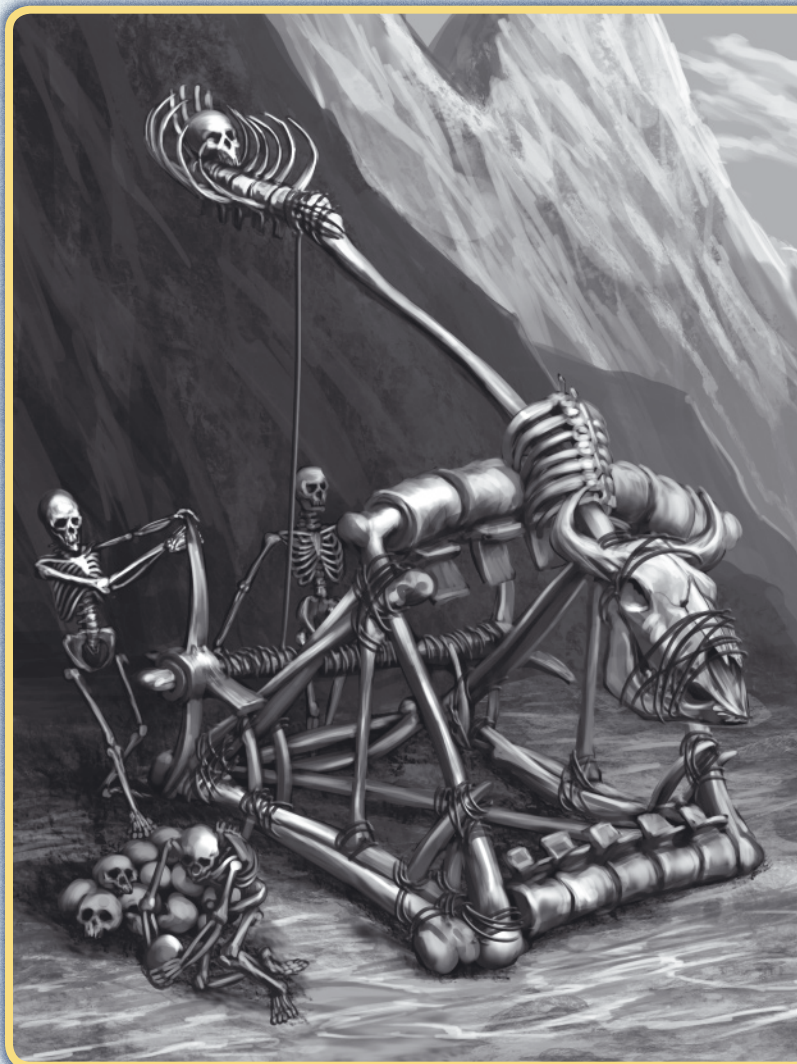
The Mass Battles in this adventure comprise several

stages, which the allies must complete in order to claim victory. Each stage details a small part of the battle, and together they form a logical progression of the unfolding engagement. Each stage details the enemy commander's Traits and Edges, the number of tokens the allies face, and the current objective.

Commander: It is unlikely Spirit rolls will be required, but Spirit is listed just in case. Enemy commanders with Cry Havoc always use it when the heroes first encounter the stage.

Tokens: Unlike other battles, the enemy's tokens are not representative of his entire force. Instead, they represent the military might arrayed against the allies in this stage of the battle.

In early stages, the allies are numerically superior and should have a relatively easy time, what with the bonuses gained from the difference in tokens. As the battle progresses, the allies' tokens will likely be reduced, increasing the threat arrayed against them. Do not run each stage until one side breaks or is destroyed—unless the enemy routs during that round of combat, the heroes'



combined results determine the course of action, as detailed below.

Objective: Each stage has a fixed objective. Completing the objective is determined by the allied commander's Battle roll this round. Since the heroes provide modifiers to this, it is also largely dependant on their individual die rolls—the better they fight, the better the army does overall. Note that the orcs can roll higher than the heroes' commander and still lose the stage.

Each objective lists the outcome dependant on failure and the degree of success. In some instances, the commander may be forced to repeat the stage. Other times he may be presented with a choice, or allowed to continue. Regardless of the victory level, tokens are lost as normal.

Should the allies retreat before completing the main objective, the battle is considered a defeat, no matter how many enemy tokens were destroyed.

Glory: Both battles involve a few hundred combatants, and thus warrant a +1 Glory reward.

Example: *Four heroes crossing the Elverun make their Characters in Mass Battle rolls. Together they provide their commander with a total bonus of +2. The commanders then make their Battle rolls. The allies score a raise, while the orcs get a success. The allied raise means the army powers across the river, raining death and destruction on the orcs. Stage 1 is completed, and during Stage 2, the orcs receive 1 less token. However, the orc commander scored a success, so the allies lose a token, leaving them with 9 tokens for the next stage.*

SILENCE THE CATAPULTS

Orc siege engineers have constructed a pair of ultra heavy catapults. Capable of throwing over half a ton of rocks at a time and to a range far greater than any previously known artillery, the weapons could spell doom for Vestmark. Each barrage forces the defenders to retreat further from the shores, thus opening a landing site for orc battle barges. Should the orcs gain a foothold, Vestmark's captains would be forced to transfer troops from other defensive positions, weakening the entire front.

Theodred Vulfgarsunu, Marshal of the Mark, is planning a large-scale assault against the orc artillery positions on the far bank. The assault is a gamble, and everyone knows it. Should the attack be successful, all that will be achieved is a return to the previous *status quo*. If it fails, valuable men will have sold their lives for nothing, weakening Vestmark's defenses.

Aware of the peril, Theodred has called for volunteers, both to participate in and lead the attack. This is the moment where the characters should volunteer for duty.

The allied army begins with 10 tokens.

1. CROSSING THE ELVERUN

In order to destroy the catapults, the allies must at-

tempt a dangerous waterborne assault in barges. Archers emerge from their positions and fire volley after volley onto the far bank in an attempt to keep enemy archers from targeting the barges. The beat of drums keeps time as the warriors heave at the oars. The sky turns black with arrows in both directions, and great plumes of water erupt as orc artillery smashes into the river.

Orc Commander: Battle d6, Spirit d8

Orc Tokens: 7

Special Notes: The allies come under orc missile fire from the far bank. The characters may only use Boating (to help shorten the journey time), Shooting, Throwing, or arcane skills (if they have tactically useful ranged spells) this round. Attacking heroes (as opposed to ones using Boating) suffer the Unstable Platform penalty.

The orcs are behind fortifications, protecting them from return fire. Their commander adds +1 to his Knowledge (Battle) roll. Artillery fire from catapults situated along the bank smashes down onto the barges, giving the orc an additional +1 bonus.

Objective: Cross the river.

Failure: Progress is hampered by the fierce defenses. The allies' progress to Stage 2, but the orcs have had time to reinforce the lines and have an additional token.

Success: The landing progresses according to plan.

Raise: The crossing is swift and many orcs are slain by accurate fire. The orcs have one less token in the next stage.

2. STORMING THE BANK

As the barges strike the far bank, the allied warriors surge forward, swords and shields glinting in the sun, battle cries roaring from their snarled lips. Despite the advantage of fortifications, the orc commander orders his troops to charge. A host of fierce warriors emerges from their hiding places to drive the invaders back to the river. The orcs have forfeited the protection of their defenses and the catapults have ceased fire.

Orc Commander: Battle d8, Spirit d8, Cry Havoc

Orc Tokens: 6

Special Notes: The orc commander uses his Cry Havoc this round.

Objective: Clear the bank and advance inland.

Failure: The attack stalls on the bank. Unless the orcs rout, repeat this stage next round.

Success: The orcs are driven back, though in orderly fashion.

Raise: The allies surge through the orc lines, routing the enemy. They advance with courage in their hearts. In the next stage, the allied commander adds +1 to his Battle roll.

3. ORC FORTIFICATIONS

The allies storm through the shattered remains of the village the orcs were using as a forward base and advance on the main fortifications, behind which lie the catapults. The orc commander, either wiser or more cowardly, orders his troops to stay behind the palisades.

Orc Commander: Battle d8, Spirit d8

Orc Tokens: 6

Special Notes: The fortifications grant the orcs +2 to their Battle roll.

Objective: Breach the fortifications.

Failure: The attackers have not yet broken the defenses. Unless the orcs rout, repeat this stage next round.

Success: The walls are breached and the orcs scattered.

Raise: The orc line folds like a paper house and the allies surge through toward their objective. The catapult crews are caught off guard. In the next stage, the allied commander adds +1 to his Battle roll.

4. DESTROY THE CATAPULTS

Brandishing axes, the allies charge the catapults, intent on hacking them to pieces. The orc guards are second rate, little match for the ferocious humans. Unfortunately, the battle has attracted orc warriors from nearby camps. Unless the allies are quick, they may find themselves outnumbered and surrounded.

Orc Commander: Battle d6, Spirit d6

Orc Tokens: 4

Special Notes: If the allies score a success in this stage and choose to repeat it, then a second success destroys the remaining catapult.

Main Objective: Destroy the catapults.

Failure: The allies fail to destroy any of the catapults. Repeat this stage next round. Every time this stage is repeated, the orcs gain another token, to a maximum of 10.

Success: One of the catapults is smashed. If this is the first one destroyed, the allied commander may either order a withdrawal now and claim a draw or continue the assault in the hope of destroying the remaining siege engine.

Raise: Both catapults are smashed. The mission is complete! It is time to withdraw to the riverbank before more orc reinforcements arrive.

5. ORDERLY WITHDRAWAL

As the allies pull back to the barges under constant attack from orc warriors, friendly archers let fly volleys of arrows into the enemy ranks. A last desperate holding action is required to allow the bulk of the army to embark.

Orc Commander: Battle d8, Spirit d8 (Wild Card)

Orc Tokens: 4

Special Notes: None.

Objective: Return to the barges.

Failure: The allies are slow to mount the barges, forcing the rearguard to maintain its stance a little while longer. Repeat this round. Every time this stage is repeated, the orcs gain another token, to a maximum of 10.

Success: The allies successfully board and the barges set sail.

Raise: Desperate to claim some degree of success,

the orc commander enters the fray, only to be cut down by the hero who scored the highest on his Characters in Mass Battle roll this round. Use the actual die roll to determine who claims the kill. That character earns +1 Glory.

AFTERMATH

If both catapults are destroyed, the allies claim a huge victory. The devastation on the far bank is not large enough to launch a full invasion of Orcmark, but it has allowed smaller raids a greater chance of success. More importantly, the allies can reuse their old positions nearer the riverbank.

One catapult destroyed results in a draw. The orcs pull the remaining artillery piece further back to prevent a second raid from destroying it, allowing the allies to retake a handful of their old forward positions.

Total failure to destroy the catapults is a disaster—many men have died for naught. Bolstered by their victory, the orcs step up bombardments. They may even plan an attack of their own to capture parts of the near-deserted riverbank.

RESUPPLYING OSTERSUND

Although the Queen of Midmark's fleet is not yet ready (see *Hellfrost Gazetteer*), heralds from Vestmark have successfully petitioned her to send a raiding party to help alleviate the pressure on Ostersund and deliver vital supplies. Her men, lacking the strength of numbers they were expecting when the mission was planned, demand strong leaders lead them into battle. Concerned her own commanders are not yet up to the task, she asks for renowned heroes to answer the call to arms. One such party is prepared to venture onto the orc infested seas to relieve the siege—the player characters.

The allied army begins with 10 tokens.

1. WAR GALLEYS

The orc navy, once considered a joke, now commands the seas between Midmark and Orcmark. Buoyed by recent successes, the orc navy is confident and bloodthirsty. Halfway across the bay, the small fleet is engaged by a number of orc war galleys. Volleys of arrows and spells are unleashed before the ships grapple and the men begin the grisly task of riding the sea of their foes in bloody combat.

Orc Commander: Battle d8, Spirit d8

Orc Tokens: 6

Special Notes: The allies have no choice but to engage in shipboard combat. The characters may only use Boating (to help arrange the fleet), Shooting, Throwing, or arcane skills (if they have tactically useful ranged

spells) this round. Attacking heroes (as opposed to ones using Boating) suffer the Unstable Platform penalty.

Objective: Cross Blackwater Bay.

Failure: The orc war galleys ram several ships, sinking one. The allies lose an extra token this round. This occurs even if the orcs roll a failure on their Battle roll.

Success: The orcs are routed, with several of their galleys put to flame.

Raise: The allies destroy a large part of the orc fleet. Not only have the allies helped clear a sea-lane, but also the men are in a jubilant mood. The commander's next Battle roll is made at +1.

2. OPPOSED LANDING

As part of the defenses, the forces of Ostersund seeded the harbor entrance with submerged sharpened stakes, thus denying the orcs the opportunity to land behind their lines. A thick mist, likely of supernatural origin, prevents the fleet from entering the harbor. Unwilling to remain at sea, where they are at the mercy of sea monsters and roving galleys, the commander has no choice but to land further along the shore and try to penetrate the orc lines.

Orc Commander: Battle d8, Spirit d8

Orc Tokens: 6

Special Notes: The allied commander may make a Battle roll before the stage begins. With success, his landing catches the defenders off guard. The orc tokens are reduced by one for the initial clash of armies. Should the allies be forced to repeat this stage, the token is returned as the orcs wake and take up arms.

Objective: Advance to the city.

Failure: The penetration is stopped by an orc shield-wall. Unless the orcs rout, repeat this stage next round.

Success: The allies crash through the lines, leaving the orcs behind.

Raise: The allies cut a wide swathe through the orc lines, causing widespread panic and confusion. The orcs believe they are under attack from two armies! The allies advance with courage in their hearts. In the next stage, the allied commander adds +1 to his Battle roll.

3. SCALE THE WALLS

Though under near-constant bombardment, the mighty city walls stand strong. Unwilling to risk opening the main gates, the defenders lower siege ladders to the allies. While the bulk of the army makes the climb, a rearguard must stand firm against an orc counterattack.

Orc Commander: Battle d6, Spirit d6

Orc Tokens: 6

Special Notes: None.

Objective: Hold the line while the men enter the city.

Failure: The orc attack forces the commander to pull troops back out of the city to support the rearguard. Unless the orcs rout, repeat this stage next round.

Success: The allies scale the walls, retrieve the ladders, and can breathe a sigh of relief.

Raise: The orc counterattack is driven back with great

losses, allowing the allies easy passage into the city. The besieged defenders cheer wildly.

4. CHARGE!

Jarl Osni Ethelraed, commander of the garrison at Ostersund, praises the allies for their efforts. The jarl explains that their greatest nemesis is a skilled orc commander, whose encampment lies a mile to the west. The jarl proposes the allied commander and his men storm the camp and disrupt orc plans. To aid the battle weary force, the jarl provides reinforcements from among the defenders. He cannot spare many, in case the attack fails, but the allies gain one token (to a maximum of 10).

Orc Commander: Battle d8, Spirit d8, Cry Havoc (Wild Card)

Orc Tokens: 7

Special Notes: The orcs have the benefit of fortifications and have seeded the approach with deadly traps. The orc commander has +2 to his Battle roll.

Main Objective: Destroy the camp.

Failure: The allies fall foul of the traps and are driven back by concentrated missile fire. The commander may choose to withdraw now or continue the assault.

Success: The camp is razed, though many orcs survived the onslaught, including the enemy commander. Drummers had the opportunity to summon reinforcements, forcing the commander to signal a full withdrawal back to Ostersund.

Raise: The orc camp is smashed and the defenders thrown into disarray. The orc commander enters the fray, only to be cut down by the hero who scored the highest on his Characters in Mass Battle roll this round. Use the actual die roll to determine who claims the kill. That character earns +1 Glory.

5. ORDERLY WITHDRAWAL

With the camp torched, the allies must make their way back to the safety of the city before the orcs rally their forces and block the path. Packs of wolf riders, each mounted on a snarling dire wolf, are already thundering down on the retreating army.

Orc Commander: Battle d8, Spirit d6 (Wild Card)

Orc Tokens: 6

Special Notes: None.

Objective: Return to the city.

Failure: A company of wolf riders outflanks the allies while peppering them with arrows. Encircled, the allies must fight their way out. Repeat this stage.

Success: Although harried all the way, the allies manage to reach the city. Archers stationed high on the walls unleash a cloud of arrows, while Ostersund's few remaining catapults unleash a hail of rocks. The orcs wisely choose to retreat.

Raise: The orc counterattack is soundly beaten long before the allies get into range of the city's archers. With the enemy driven from the field in total disarray, the main gates are opened to welcome the triumphant heroes!

AFTERMATH

Slaying the main orc commander (Stage 4) earns the party a victory. Although the siege is far from lifted, it will take the orcs many weeks to appoint a new commander of his caliber, during which time the attacks will lessen considerably. Torching the camp but allowing the commander to escape is a hollow victory, but a victory nonetheless. Infuriated by the audacity of the humans, the general vows bloody revenge.

Their job done, the characters have the option of returning to Midmark along with the bodies of recently slain defenders (fallen soldiers are always buried in a Markland when possible) or remaining in the city and helping with its defense. The latter opens up the whole of Orcmark as a new ground for adventures. Players with Followers who want the excitement of leading them in battle and heroes looking for bloody, brutal combat as a way to earn Glory will find Orcmark an ideal playground. The bulk of the men who accompanied the heroes remain in Ostersund, boosting the defenders' strength.

NEW MASS BATTLE RULES

The Mass Battle rules for *Savage Worlds* work perfectly fine and can easily be used to cover battles from a few hundred souls to tens of thousands. Of course, they are designed to be abstract, which means there is an emphasis on GMs and players to fill in the blanks with their imagination and colorful descriptions. The following rules present alternative ways to play out Mass Battles.

MASS BATTLES IN MINIATURE

Note in advance that these rules are more akin to the regular combat rules, only with companies of troops replacing individual miniatures. Cards are used to represent individual units of men rather than individual troops or abstract tokens. The rules still allow the heroes to be in the thick of the fighting and make a difference to the outcome. This is especially true for those with Leadership Edges.

COMPANY SIZE

Because it is unlikely a Mass Battle will ever be a random encounter, the GM should know the total number of troops involved and their makeup. Regardless of the total army size, all troops are formed into companies. For most battles, the size of an individual company should be set at 200 troops. If you are running a really big battle,

say with 10000 opponents a side, you can shift this up to 1000 or even 2000 per company. We suggest you avoid having more than twenty companies a side, as this slows the game down unnecessarily.

Of course, not all companies are equal in terms of ability. A company of 200 spearmen, for instance, is not equal in terms of the damage it can inflict or absorb compared to a company of 200 frost giants. To help balance things, we use something called the Combat Value (CV).

CALCULATING CV

Each company's CV is based on its Parry, Toughness, attack die, damage die, and suitable Edges or special abilities. To calculate the CV, add together the following numbers for a company:

- * Parry score.
- * Toughness score (including armor).
- * Half best attack die (so a d10 would equal 5).
- * Half best damage dice. If a creature has Strength above d12, add the extra points before halving. An ogre with Strength d12+3 and a d8 club, for example, treats as a total of 23, which is halved down to 11. Add +1 to the final value for each point of Armor Penetration.
- * If the creature has an automatic damage effect, like the frost giants' aura, add in half the damage dice.
- * Add two for each unique Edge or special ability that could have a direct impact in battle and is not already factored in elsewhere. For instance, an orc warrior has Size +1, but this is already included in its Toughness and so is not added separately. The same would apply to Block as it is factored into Parry. "Improved" versions of Edges count double.
- * For cavalry on battle-trained mounts, add half the mount's Fighting die and damage (it can make separate attacks).
- * Round the result to the nearest multiple of five. Check the tally against the table below and record the CV.

Score	CV
15	1
20	2
25	3
30	4
35	5
40	6
45	7
50	8 (and so on)

When the companies engage in battle, the company with the smaller CV suffers a -1 penalty to its attack rolls for each point difference in CV ratings. This artificial balance serves to reduce the odds that a lowly company of inferior troops will destroy a much stronger company without assistance. Failures to hit do not indicate total misses—blows are still landing and minor injuries may be inflicted, but not enough to weaken the company.

Example: A company of basic spearmen totals 19 points (Parry 5, Toughness 5, attack 3, damage 6), which is rounded to 20. This gives CV 2. A company of frost giants has a massive 48 points (Parry 6, Toughness 14, at-

CV AND TOKENS

The Combat Value system provides a quick way to help calculate tokens in the standard Mass Battles rules.

First, work out how many troops of each type an army has. Next, multiply the number of troops by the appropriate CV to calculate its "points" value. Repeat this until the entire army has been calculated. Use these final figures to adjudicate the number of tokens each side receives.

Example: An army of 2000 orc warriors faces down 200 Hearth Knights of the Shield, 1500 spearmen (treat as militia), and 200 frost dwarf warriors. The orcs have 2000×3 , or 6000 points of troops. The Shield Knights are worth 200×4 (800 points), the spearmen 1500×2 (3000), and the frost dwarves 200×5 (1000 points), for a grand total of 4800.

The orc army has the larger force and receives 10 tokens. The allies have 80% of the orc army's strength, and so have 8 tokens.

tack 5, best damage 13, aura damage 6, Edges/abilities 4), or CV 8. If the companies were of equal numeric size, the spearmen would receive a -6 penalty when facing the superior frost giants.

REDUCING CV

A GM planning a battle in advance may wish to balance the forces a little better. For each fifth of the total troop numbers cut from a company, the CV drops by one point. No company can drop below four-fifths its starting strength.

Example: If there were only 40 giants in the company, a four-fifths reduction in troop number, it would have a more modest CV 4. The spearmen still have a -2 disadvantage against the giants, but the companies are more balanced.

PRECALCULATED CVS

This list includes the more common types of troops from the *Hellfrost Bestiary* likely to be involved in a Mass Battle. Armed with this, the GM can quickly build huge, balanced armies.

Troop Type	CV
Bandits	2
City/town watch	2
City/town watch, experienced	5
Elf rangers	3
Engro bludgeoners	3
Frost dwarf warriors	5
Frostreavers	5
Frost giants, greater	8
Frost giants, lesser	5
Goblin warriors	2

Goblin riders	2
Hearth Knights, Shield	4
Huscarls	4
Huscarls, veteran	7
Mercenaries, common, infantry	2
Mercenaries, common, archer	4
Mercenaries, common, cavalry	2
Mercenaries, common, skirmisher	2
Mercenaries, veteran, infantry	4
Mercenaries, veteran, archer	5
Mercenaries, veteran, cavalry + war horse	5
Mercenaries, veteran, skirmisher	4
Militia	2
Ogres	5
Orc, warriors	3
Orc, elite warriors	4
Orc, berserks	6
Orc, wolf riders + dire wolf mounts	5
Orc, runts	1
Sailors	2
Skeletons	3
Skeleton warriors	4
Vendahl warriors	4
Wolves	2
Wolves, dire	3
Zombies, armored	3
Zombies, unarmored	2

BODYGUARD COMPANIES

Some heroes will have Followers or household troops from a Resource, such as men-at-arms and huscarls. Typically, these will number somewhere between five and 20 strong, making their number too small to form a unique company. These bodyguards may be counted as part of a company of similar type, thus disappearing into the faceless masses of soldiers, or kept as the hero's personal bodyguard.

If treated as bodyguards, the hero gains +1 to his roll to aid his company (see page 4) for each whole 10 men in his bodyguard. The bodyguard *never* directly rolls dice during the combat. For each wound the player character suffers, he automatically loses one-quarter of his bodyguard. Of these, half are dead and the other half are incapacitated or routed. Either way, they are out of the fight. If a hero switches company (see below), his surviving bodyguard accompanies him automatically.

COMPANY CARD

Every individual type of company needs a specific company card to represent it on the tabletop. A 3" x 5" index card or something the size of a playing card will suffice for a company comprised of creatures of Size +3 or smaller. Large creatures should use a double-sized card, and companies of Huge creatures a triple-sized card. Player characters should be represented by a unique miniature or token and placed atop the company to which they belong.

While some companies are capable of melee and ranged attacks (and perhaps even magic as well), all troops within a company must be of the exact same type. Thus, you can get a company of heavy spearmen or heavy infantry equipped with long swords, but you cannot combine them. These cards act as both the tabletop playing piece and a record of all the information about the specific company.

Each company card should be titled with the troop type, the number of men in the unit, and its Combat Value. You also need to write down values for Attributes, Fighting die and weapon damage*, Riding die, Shooting and/or Throwing die, Range, and weapon damage*, Arcane skill die, Pace, Parry, Toughness, and any Edges or special abilities which are of use. Values can either be made up as needed, or taken from entries in an adventure or the *Hellfrost Bestiary*.

For cavalry companies riding war trained mounts, use the Parry and Toughness stats for the rider. Because the mount can fight separately, you must list its attack and damage dice.

For example, a company card for veteran huscarls would read:

Veteran Huscarls (200, CV 7)

Ag d8, **Sm** d6, **Sp** d10, **St** d10, **Vi** d10

Skills: Fighting d10 (Str+d8), Throwing d10 (3/6/12, Str+d6)

Pace 6, **Parry** 10, **Toughness** 9 (2)

Edges: Combat Reflexes, Frenzy, Improved Block, Shieldwall, War Cry

* Remember, all companies must be composed of the same troop type. There should only ever be one damage rating for each form of attack (Fighting, Shooting, and Throwing) even if the troops have multiple weapons.

PCS ROLES

Player characters fill one of three roles within an army. Certain Leadership Edges (see page 20) are only of use if a hero fulfills a certain role, so positioning is very important.

Supreme Commander: One hero may be the Supreme Commander, the overall leader of the army. An army can only have a single supreme commander at any given time. The Supreme Commander is responsible for controlling all companies not containing a Wild Card Company Commander. In addition, certain Leadership Edges only work if a hero fills this role.

Company Commander: A hero may be a Company Commander. Multiple characters may be in the same company (and can use their own Leadership Edges to aid the troops), but only one can be titled Company Commander. The Company Commander's action card determines when the company acts. The Supreme Commander can also serve simultaneously as a Company Commander.

Soldier: Finally, a hero may be a common soldier. He can use his Leadership Edges to bolster the warriors, but he does not draw a separate action card for initiative.

INITIATIVE, TIME, AND DISTANCE

INITIATIVE

Each company containing a Wild Card Company Commander, whether player character or NPC, receives an action card. If the Company Commander has Level Headed or Improved Level Headed, his company receives extra cards as normal. It does not matter if multiple heroes in the same company have the Edge—only the Company Commander's Edge applies as he is giving the orders. Being Quick is of little use when you are trying to coordinate the movements of hundreds of soldiers, thus this Edge grants no benefits.

All other companies on a given side share the Supreme Commander's action card. Actual control of these companies on the tabletop may be shared among the players, but they all act at the same time.

Example: Rob and Steve's player characters are each in command of a single company. Dave is the Supreme Commander. He has the Level Headed Edge, and is also commander of a single company. Allied with them are five other companies. The companies controlled by Rob and Steve each receive one action card. Dave draws two cards for his company and the remaining five companies to share.

OUT OF COMMAND

Certain circumstances, such as fog, intervening terrain, bad light, magic, and so on may block the line of sight between a company and the Supreme Commander. Unless the company has a player character Company Commander, such units are deemed to be out of command. In order to issue an out of command company any orders, the Supreme Commander must succeed at a Knowledge (Battle) roll. With success, the company is brought back under control and may act as normal. This might be achieved by sending runners or riders, or using drums or horns to issue commands. On a failure, the company does not move or attack unless it is adjacent to an enemy company, in which case it attacks as normal.

TIME

Each round in combat normally represents six seconds. In these rules, it equates to anywhere from several minutes to an hour. Although this would normally allow for multiple attacks, it is assumed the companies are actually making multiple attacks and that die totals are indicative of overall performance rather than a single attack.

DISTANCE

All distances are measured in inches as normal and burst templates remain unchanged. All distances are measured to and from a company's center point.

MOVEMENT

These rules are intended to add a little tactile fun to mass battles and are not a simulation wargame. Thus, facing is irrelevant. However, for ease of movement and organization, all companies should be positioned square on, rather than at angles.

Areas of the battlefield marked as difficult ground, work as normal, in that movement through them costs double unless a company has an appropriate Edge to avoid the terrain penalty.

ATTACK AND DAMAGE

Each company has attack and damage dice, as well as Parry and Toughness just like a regular character. It may also have Edges (see below). Combat works exactly as normal for the tabletop—the only difference is that each company is treated as a single character. Thus, without certain Edges, a company makes one attack against one adjacent foe. Calculate attack rolls and damage exactly as normal.

CHARACTERS IN MASS COMBAT

These rules should also be used for important enemy commanders and Wild Cards.

Aiding the Men: Under these rules, a hero's individual fighting abilities are less important than those of the men he controls—the hero may be a great warrior, but if he is commanding a bunch of village militia with little training, even his prowess will have little direct impact.

As such, heroes do not make individual rolls for attacks. Instead, a hero adds to his company's attacks with a single Cooperative Arcane, Fighting, Shooting, or Throwing roll (his choice). Characters add +1 to their roll for each Rank above Novice to account for various abilities. The only Combat Maneuver an individual hero may use to aid his men is Wild Attack. The character may use the Defend maneuver, but if he does, he makes no Cooperative roll—he is intent on saving his own skin.

Backlash for spellcasters works as per normal for mass battles (see *Hellfrost Player's Guide*).

A raise or double raise on this roll still earns the character personal Glory as normal for a regular Mass Battle.

Taking Damage: When a character's company is attacked, compare the attack roll to the Parry of the hero and the company separately. The same applies to damage rolls.

Individual characters who suffer a Shaken result automatically unShake at the end of the round, as a hero has plentiful opportunities to throw off the effects. In the meantime, cumulative Shaken results from a physical attack apply as normal. Those with the Combat Reflexes Edge recover from being Shaken immediately after the attack (which caused the injury) is completed.

Example: *Steve's hero, Sven Bullroarer, has Parry 7 and Toughness 8. He is part of a company of spearmen (Parry 6, Toughness 5) being attacked by orc berserkers. The orcs' attack roll is 7, which overcomes both Sven's*

Parry and that of the company. The damage roll is 8. This is applied against the spearmen's Toughness and Sven's Toughness. Sven is Shaken by a blow. Sven will automatically unShake at the end of the round unless he has Combat Reflexes. Until then, though, a second Shaken result will result in a wound as normal.

Switching Companies: A hero may switch to any allied company within 5" at any time as a free action, but may voluntarily undertake this action only once per round. However, if his company is destroyed, he may move to an allied company within range any number of times, though at a price (see above). Unless a hero in a broken company switches, he is considered part of the broken company and is deemed to be running for his life (see page 18).

If a hero's company is destroyed and he switches to a new company, the hero takes an automatic wound in addition to any other injuries suffered that round. If he cannot move to an allied company, he is automatically Incapacitated and left unconscious—a lone hero is largely ineffectual in terms of the greater battle and quickly overrun.

Switching does not allow a hero to perform a new set of actions, however. That is, if his former company has already attacked this round and the hero has aided them, switching to a company that has not yet acted does not allow a second roll by the character.

COMBAT MANEUVERS

The following combat maneuvers and rules may be used unmodified in a tabletop mass battle: Aim, Cover, Darkness, Defend, Finishing Move, Firing into Melee, Full Defense, Ranged Weapons in Close Combat, and Withdrawing from Close Combat.

The following combat maneuver may be used, but with a change from the regular rules.

Ganging Up: In these rules, Ganging Up against stronger companies is vital in helping to offset penalties caused by differences in CV. A company no longer provides a flat +1 bonus if Ganging Up. Instead, the bonus is equal to the difference in CV, with a minimum of +1.

Example: *A company of orc warriors (CV 3) is fighting a company of buscarls (CV 4). The orcs suffer an overall -1 penalty due to the difference in CVs. Aiding the orcs is a company of runts (CV 1) and a company of orc berserkers (CV 6). The runts provide a +1 bonus, since their CV is lower than the buscarls. The berserkers' CV is two points higher, so they provide a +2 bonus. When the warriors attack, their total modifier is now +2.*

Suppressive Fire: Instead of selecting targets, a unit capable of ranged combat may attempt to deny territory to an enemy by filling it with a hail of lethal missiles. The firing company may not move in the round it conducts Suppressive Fire. The company picks a spot within range, places a Medium Burst Template, and makes a Ranged attack roll as normal.

With success, any company already in (or any company that enters the template before the start of the fir-

ing company's next turn) must make a Spirit roll. If the company fails, it is Shaken. Companies that roll a natural 1 on their Spirit die (regardless of any Wild Die) are actually hit by the attack and suffer damage normally.

WOUNDS

Companies represent large numbers of troops and can sustain a lot of damage. Regardless of whether a company comprises Extra or Wild Cards, it can take 3 wounds before being destroyed, incapacitated, broken, or otherwise rendered incapable of continuing the fight. When a company takes its final wound, it is instantly removed from the battlefield. A company composed entirely of Wild Cards (a great rarity) also has a Wild Die and two bennies.

Shaken results that affect an entire company require a little imagination. A Shaken result could indicate the company is momentarily scattered, pushed back a short distance, stunned into action by an enemy assault, waiting for orders, momentarily winded due to the onslaught, and so on. It does not mean that everyone is standing around doing nothing, only that the company, as a cohesive whole, is incapable of any effective action—men are still fighting, but not enough to make any real difference.

MAGIC

When an entire company of spellcasters is fielded (a rarity), all spells work as normal, including those with an area effect. In all cases, the spellcasters are unleashing the same spells. Thus, while a company card can easily represent 200 men, a *blast* spell still affects a regular Medium Burst Template. In this instance, the spellcasters are positioning their attacks to encompass what, in a standard tabletop battle, equates to a much larger area. Similarly, any backlash is suffered by the company as a whole.

Individual heroes with spells cast magic solely through aiding their company.

MORALE

Being surrounded, facing overwhelming odds, and watching your comrades get hacked to death all affect a company's Morale. However, since this is not a wargame, Morale comes into play in only one of three circumstances. (Note: Fearless creatures never make Morale rolls).

TAKING DAMAGE

A company that is Shaken or suffers a wound must make an immediate Spirit roll. With failure, the company immediately falls back half its Pace toward its own side of the battlefield by the most direct route. This does not count as Withdrawing from Combat, but does trigger First Strike from adjacent enemy companies. At the start of the next round, the company rallies and may act as normal.

LEADER SLAIN

A company whose Company Commander is slain suffers a loss of Morale as above. Note that unnamed Company Commanders do not cause this effect—this is reserved for important commanders, such as named Wild Card NPCs and player characters.

WE ARE LOSING

When an army loses one-half of its starting companies, all the surviving companies must make a Spirit roll as above. When the army is reduced to one-quarter of its starting companies, the roll is made at -2.

BROKEN

If the Spirit roll is a 1 (regardless of any Wild Die), the company breaks. Attacks against a broken company are made at +2—the men are fleeing in disorder. A broken company may not make attacks and does not count to-



ward allied Gang Up bonuses. It must continue retreating at its maximum possible Pace (including running) until it reaches its edge of the battlefield. At this point, it is allowed another Spirit roll.

With success, the company rallies and may reenter play next round. It is no longer treated as being broken. On a failure, the company leaves the battlefield and does not return.

EDGES

Not all companies are equal. Even among companies with similar die types, special training plays a vital role. As such, companies may acquire Edges. Note that the *entire* company must have the Edge to take advantage of it in battle—a lone player character may have Sweep, but if his fellow men do not, then they cannot use the Edge.

Available non-Leadership Edges are detailed below. “Improved” versions are automatically included unless a note to the contrary is made. Unless otherwise stated, these Edges work as normal. Leadership Edges have their own section.

Normal Edges: Ambidextrous, Arcane Background, Arcane Resistance, Berserk, Bladedancer, Block, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Double Shot, Favored Foe, First Strike, Fleet-Footed, Frenzy, Giant Killer, Level Headed, Marksman, Mighty Shot, Mighty Throw, Nerves of Steel, Quick, Snow Walker, Sunder, Tough as Nails, Two-Fisted, Weapon Master (Master of Arms).

Racial Qualities: Racial Edges and Hindrances that might affect a battle, i.e., as a company of engros having Luck or elves and their Forest Born ability to negate difficult penalties in woodland, apply as normal.

Altered Edges: Edges that work differently or require clarification are detailed below.

Luck: The company has one benny.

Greater Luck: The company has one additional benny (granting it two in total).

Shieldwall: Shieldwall is a defensive formation. The company has +1 Parry.

Sweep: The company is trained to fight enemies on all sides. The company makes a Fighting attack roll against two adjacent enemy companies. Roll the Fighting die once and compare that total to the enemies’ Parry values. Thus, some companies may be struck and others not. Damage is rolled separately for each enemy company.

Improved Sweep: As above, except the company may attack up to three adjacent enemy companies per round.

War Cry: Using War Cry replaces the company’s attack, but it can be used only once per battle. One adjacent enemy company chosen by the attacking company must make a Spirit roll. A Wild Card player character aids with a Cooperative roll. With failure, the attacking company has +2 to its next roll against the enemy. On a critical failure, the enemy must retreat 3”. If it cannot retreat, it is Shaken instead.

LEADERSHIP EDGES

Companies of troops may be brave, fearless, or highly

trained, but even the most untrained rabble can become better fighters under the command of a skilled leader, and elite troops without a leader can misinterpret orders or become demoralized.

Listed below are the Leadership Edges that are of use in these alternate mass battle rules. While a few exceptional companies may have their own talented commanders, it is normally left to the player characters to provide the necessary leadership. After all, they are the focus of the game.

Edges designated as company types apply only to the allied company of which the hero is a member. He need not be the Company Commander. If the hero switches company during the battle, the new company gains the benefits of his leadership and his former company loses the benefit.

As normal, Leadership Edges are not cumulative from multiple commanders, though they can benefit from two different heroes with two different Edges. For instance, two leaders with Command still provide only a +1 bonus to recover from being Shaken. However, if one hero had Command and another within the same company had Fervor, the company would gain the benefits of both Edges.

A FEW GOOD MEN

Type: Company

Rule: The company hero gains one benny. This may only be spent to aid the company he belongs to at the time. The hero cannot use the benny on his own die rolls, even if aiding his company, or to Soak personal wounds.

COMMAND

Type: Company

Rule: The company has +1 to recover from being Shaken.

COMMAND PRESENCE

Type: Company

Rule: The commander may use company Edges as if he were also part of one adjacent allied company. The hero must nominate which adjacent allied unit he is commanding at the start of a round. He may change this company at the start of each round.

COORDINATED FIREPOWER

Type: Special

Rule: Instead of firing separately, all allied missile troops adjacent to the hero’s company yet to act in the round, can fire as a single company on the hero’s action. This counts as their entire action for the round. The hero nominates one enemy company within range of the most distant company’s weapon. He then makes a Ranged attack roll for his company. Each additional adjacent allied

missile company firing at the same time adds a flat +2 to the attack roll. Damage is calculated as normal for the company, but adds +1d6 per raise (not just for the first raise).

A hero cannot use Double Shot or Giant Killer in conjunction with this Edge unless *all* allied companies firing with the hero have those Edges as well.

CRY HAVOC

Type: Supreme Commander

Rule: Once per battle, the hero may nominate one allied company anywhere on the battlefield. When it next moves, the company may “run” without incurring a multi action penalty.

DEATH BEFORE DISHONOR

Type: Supreme Commander/Company

Rule: All allied companies add +2 to Spirit rolls made for morale purposes. A Company Commander with this Edge grants only his company the bonus.

FANATICISM

Type: Company

Rule: The company adds +2 to its Guts rolls.

FERVOR

Type: Company

Rule: The company adds +1 to its Fighting damage rolls.

HOLD THE LINE

Type: Company

Rule: The company has +1 Toughness.

INSPIRE

Type: Company

Rule: The company has +2 to recover from being Shaken (this already includes the original +1 bonus from the Command Edge).

NATURAL LEADER

Type: Company

Rule: The entire company is assumed to be under the character's command.

TACTICIAN

Type: Special

Rule: At the beginning of a battle, before the GM deals initiative cards, the hero makes a Knowledge (Battle) roll. For each success and raise, he receives one initiative card. Deal these cards facedown—the players may look,

but the GM may not. These are kept separate from regular initiative cards and are not placed back into the deck until used or the battle ends (whichever occurs first).

At the start of any round, the hero may give one or more of these extra cards to any allied company, which then uses it as their initiative card for the round in place of the one they were dealt.

Only one character per battle may use this Edge.

EXPERIENCE

Unless a player character has direct and permanent control over companies, you do not need to worry about tracking experience. Otherwise, roll a d6 for each company which survives the battle and remains in play (broken companies are *not* in play, even if they are still on the battlefield). On a result of 5+, the company gains an advance.

If the hero is the company's permanent master, then he should also have an Ally Sheet for his men detailing their full traits and abilities. Treat “typical” or watch companies as being Novice and “experienced” or “veteran” ones as being Seasoned for the purposes of taking Edges.

MASS BATTLES WITH CARDS

While it is fun to roll dice, it is just as fun to use the action deck to determine the outcome of a battle. These rules are intended to be used when there are no player characters present in the battle, but the outcome still affects them in some manner. One obvious situation is when their Resource is attacked while they are absent.

NUMBER OF CARDS

Note that while the base number of cards represents an army's size, various bonuses can result in the smaller army having a larger hand. This accounts for skill, training, the commander's battlefield prowess, and so on.

Base: Calculate the number of tokens the army would normally have and deal each side one card per two tokens.

Bonuses: An army earns one extra card for each Edge from A Few Good Men, Cry Havoc, and Death Before Dishonor that its commander possesses. Have each army commander make a Knowledge (Battle) roll. Success earns them an additional card, and a raise, two additional cards.

Resource Rules: If you are using the Resource rules from the *Rassilon Expansion*, some additional bonuses apply. In all cases, the bonuses apply only when defending the Resource from attack.

* *Temple to Dargar:* Defenders gain one extra card.

* *Shrine to the Norns:* If the yearly bonus die roll has

not been used, the commander may instead tempt fate. The defender must place his cards facedown on the table and shuffle them around. He then picks up to half his total number of cards at random and discards them. He is then dealt an equal number of replacement cards. This counts as the yearly reroll for this year.

- * *Temple of Rigr*: Grants a +2 bonus to summon the army. This will in turn directly affect the commander's base cards as it determines the size of his army.
- * *Temple of Scaetha*: Grants a bonus card if fighting undead.
- * *Temple of Tiw*: Grants a +2 Knowledge (Battle) bonus to the roll above.

FIGHTING IT OUT

Playing out the battle could not be easier. The engagement is broken down into a number of rounds equal to six or the lowest hand of cards, whichever is smaller.

Each round, both sides place a card facedown on the table. Both the GM and players should then create a small narrative to describe the cut and thrust of the battle that round. The cards are then turned simultaneously. The highest value card wins. Jokers trump all other cards except Jokers. If the loser is a Wild Card, he may spend a benny at this point. This allows him to swap the card he played for one from his hand. However, he may not replace the card he played with a lower value one.

The winner takes both cards and places them to one side. If the values are equal, the round is indecisive and neither side wins the cards.

Whoever won the most hands at the end of the battle is victorious. In the event of a tie, keep fighting one round at a time until someone claims victory. If the smaller army has expended all its cards, then the larger army wins the day by default.

NPC CARDS

These cards represent major and minor players at Baron Loxlyn's court. Cut them out, glue them to an index card, and hand them out at the appropriate time. A spare card is included in the event the GM needs to create extra NPCs.

LORD MAYOR ORLO FITZBAIN

The Lord-Mayor is appointed by the ruling baron. As governor of the largest town, he is a senior advisor to the baron. Orlo has governed since the current baron assumed the title.

Goal: To protect the main town at all costs.

Arguments: The town cannot be evacuated in time. Thousands of lives are at stake if it falls. It is also the seat of industry and commerce—its loss would cripple the baron's lands for a generation.

The town has the strongest defences, making it the most likely target for the orcs' primary assault—they cannot afford to leave a heavily fortified town in their rear should they chose to advance.

Food can be imported from elsewhere if the farming villages fall to the orcs. The loss of lives will be mourned, but the land can be resettled and the crops regrown.

SIR ARLENT SILVER-MANE, KNIGHT OF ASPIRIA

An old campaigner who served Baron Loxlyn's father before swearing allegiance to the new baron, Sir Arlent has seen war firsthand and knows of its misery. He is a specialist in defensive warfare, with an in-depth knowledge of how best to use fortifications.

Goal: Protect the temple of Eira at all costs.

Arguments: Should the battle be lost, holding the temple would at least allow the many casualties to be tended, and it would serve as a rallying point for a second defensive action.

Furthermore, he has already received word that the priestesses, while willing to supply healers to each regiment, will not abandon their temple or the outlying village to the orcs. Unless the temple is heavily defended, the priestesses will be massacred.

HIGH PRIESTESS SOWER AGATHA GREEN-HANDS

Sower Agatha is the high priestess of Eostre in the Eastern Marches. As well as being an advisor to the baron, she is a religious figurehead, and a hands-on farmer, commanding a large estate in her cult's name.

Goal: Protect the farming villages at all costs.

Arguments: The harvest is barely gathered, and there is no time to transport the crops to the granaries in the main town before the invasion begins. If the villages fall, the entire harvest will be lost. With winter only weeks away, famine will strike, making any victory a moot point.

Allowing the orcs to capture the granaries means their supply lines will be extended. With such stores, they could easily extend their attacks further into Aspiria.

All the menfolk have been called to the militia, leaving the settlements near defenseless. Think of the women and children!

LET SLIP THE DOGS OF WAR!

Through Edges and Glory rewards, *Hellfrost* allows the heroes to become leaders of men. The playground for such characters is not the “dungeon” environment, but the open battlefield. They lead companies to death or glory beneath fluttering banners, not skulk in dark shadows searching moldy corpses for a few coins. The call to arms has been issued, but are you ready to engage in the Clash of Steel?

Instead of standard tabletop adventures, this adventure pack contains four Mass Battles scenarios. Although designed as standalone events, the GM can easily work them into an existing campaign. Also included is an alternate set of rules for running very large-scale battles on the tabletop. Now the players can literally control the actions of their troops and watch the battle unfold before their eyes. More importantly, it allows characters to use many of their regular Edges and still play a crucial role in determining the outcome of the encounter.

Hellfrost[™] is an epic fantasy setting for the award winning *Savage Worlds*[™] roleplaying game.



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