

LION OF THE NORTH

Fastplay Rules for Combat during the Thirty Years War

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2nd Edition

1. INTRODUCTION

Lion of the North try to reflect the tactical combat of the Thirty years war, but can easily be expanded to cover other conflicts around the mid-17th century. The rules aim to give a quick game with simple mechanics, that can be easily memorised. (Long lists of die roll modifiers are therefore avoided, instead different dies are used.) They have evolved during some time, and use some crucial ideas borrowed from other rule sets, among others the ubiquitous DBA.

2. BASING

All figures are put on bases or stands, standardized according to type:

<i>Type</i>	<i>Base Frontage x Depth</i>	<i>Number of Figures</i>
Infantry	40mm x 20mm	4
Cavalry	40mm x 30mm	3 (2 if light)
Artillery	30mm x 35mm	1 gun + 3 crew (2 if light or regimental)
General	20mm x 20mm	1
Baggage	90mm x 60mm	2 wagons + 2 or 3 or more

This is a suggestion for 15mm figures, but neither the base size nor the number of figures are crucial, as long as the players use identical sets, as combat is by stands.

B. In a tabletop game, scales can only be flexible approximations, and in these rules 1cm equals some 8-12 meters and 1 turn equals some 15-20 minutes. One stand with infantry or cavalry represents between 200 and 500 men, and one artillery stand represents a full battery.

3. GAME SEQUENCE

At the start of the game the players determine who will be the First and the Second Player. The actual Game Play Sequence is determined by drawing Cards from the Gameplay Deck. (See 13. *The Gameplay Deck*.) At the start of each game turn, the gameplay deck is shuffled, and when all cards have been drawn, the deck is reshuffled, and another turn starts.

4. COMMAND CONTROL

A. To move a single stand or a group of stands the player must expend Control Points (Cpts). When the gameplay card calls for the player to move his stands, he must first roll a die, to see how many CPTs he gets to use this turn. Movement of the general, however, is always free.

B. A group is any number of stands, of the same type (only foot or horse or artillery or only foot and artillery: note that foot and artillery are the only types that can be combined in one single group), whose bases form a single, unbroken frontage, and whose edge/s are in full

contact with the next stand or stands. Each stand in a group must move parallel to or follow the first stand in the group that moves, and move the same distance or make the same wheeling motion. (A group moving by road, through a gap or across a bridge or a ford must off course move in column.)

C. It costs 1 Cpt to move one stand or group, unless the general is either dead or in base contact with an enemy stand, or the moving stand is over 40 cm from the general, in which case it costs 2 Cpts. The general alone always move without any Cpt cost.

D. Force March. If a Player spends 1 extra Cpt on a unit, that single unit may move double its normal movement. (Triple moves or force marching whole groups for extra Cpts is not allowed.)

E. Discipline levels. Armies have Discipline levels: they are either Steady, Regular or Unruly. The discipline level influence the rallying of disordered stands and the effects of losing the baggage train. It also determines what type of die the player uses when rolling for Cpts: if the army is steady he gets a D8, if army is regular a D6, if army is unruly a D4.

5. MOVEMENT OF FOOT, HORSE AND GENERALS

A. The distance the different type of stands may move is given in the *Movement Table*.

B. **Terrain effects.** Stands starting and ending on roads double their movement. Stands entering woods must immediately stop, and in each following movement phase they start in woods the player must roll, 1d6 if foot or general, and 2d6 if horse, and subtract the result from the stands movement allowance. Only foot stands or generals may enter a marsh, with the procedure being the same as for woods. Stands entering a ford must stop, and in the next movement phase they roll 1d6 and subtract the result from the stands movement allowance. No stand may cross water except by a bridge or ford.

C. **Moving through stands.** Stands may move through friendly stands, disordering, but never destroying them in the process. Generals may move freely through friendly stands, without disordering them. Stands may never move through enemy stands.

6. MOVEMENT OF ARTILLERY

A. Regimental Guns move 8 cm, and can fire the same turn they move. Light and Medium Guns also move 8 cm, but can only fire when emplaced. Light and Medium Guns can start the Game either emplaced or moving, but can only change that status once, i.e. if they started the game moving, they cannot move again once emplaced, and vice versa. Guns can never move into contact with an enemy, or move off-road in woods or marsh.

B. Heavy guns, Organ guns and Mortars may never move.

7. FIRE COMBAT

A. Fire is only possible if the target is in range and there is a line-of-sight (LOS) between the firing stand and the target. Close range is less than 5 cm, Normal range is between 5 and 10 cm (inclusive), and long range is 11 cm or more. (The maximum range for the different stands are given in the *Capability Table*.) The LOS may not pass through woods or own stands. Only stands at the edge of woods may fire out of the woods, but at the same time they also may be fired at. A stand in a wood may fire at an enemy stand in the same wood, but only if that stand is within 5 cm range. Hills block the LOS unless either the firing stand or the target is on the top. Only mortars doesn't need any LOS.

B. Different stands use different types of dice when they fire. (See the *Capability Table*.) In order to fire, the appropriate die is rolled, and this the Fire Value is compared to the Range Value. The Range Value is 5 on short range, 6 on normal range and 7 on long range. If the

Fire Value is *higher* than the Range Value the target is disordered.

C. **Targets in cover**, i.e. in woods, behind walls, hedge or gabions, are given a saving throw with 1D6 when disordered by fire: if the result is 4, 5 or 6, the stand is not disordered.

B. **Adjacent fire**. When the gameplay card says that stands are allowed to fire "against enemy stands adjacent", it means that stands may only fire at enemies that are in base contact with them (regardless when they moved into contact). Note that this means that stands may be allowed twice during a game turn.

C. **Exploding guns**. Whenever a "1" is rolled by an artillery stand, roll 1d6. If the result is another "1", the gun has exploded, and is removed from play.

D. **Grapeshot**. When artillery stands (except Mortars) fire against stands adjacent, 1d3 is added to the die roll.

8. MELEE COMBAT

A. A stand may melee attack enemies that they are in base contact with. A single stand may only melee attack once per phase, but a stand may be attacked by up to four enemies, one on each base edge. Attacks are always one on one. Different stands use different type of dice in melee combat. (See the *Capability Table*.) In Melee Combat both sides roll one die of the appropriate type: the one that rolls the lowest number is disordered. A tie means No effect.

B. **Terrain obstacles**. If attacking uphill or if Horse or Pike are attacking in woods then a tie means that the attacker is disordered.

C. **Flank attacks**. A Flank attack is when a stand is melee attacked on two opposite base edges or more. When performing a flank attack 1d3 is added to the original die roll.

D. **Supported pike**. If pikes have another pike stand standing directly adjacent and behind it, facing the same direction, then the pike is Supported, and 1d3 is added to the original die roll.

E. **Generals**. Generals (and artillery) may never melee attack. They defend with 1d4. Generals who themselves are not in base contact with enemies, but who are in base contact with a friendly stand performing melee combat, may add 1d3 to that friendly stands die roll. This can only be done once per melee phase.

F. **Retreats**. Whenever a stand is disordered after being melee attacked, it must retreat backwards 5 cm. If the attacker was a foot stand the stand may elect to advance fully into the vacated space, if the attacker was a horse stand the stand *must* advance fully.

9. DISORDERED STANDS

A. Disordered stands may not melee attack. When disordered stands fire or defend against melee attacks they use one die type lower than normal - e.g. a disordered hussar stand defends with d10 instead of d12 - but never less than 1d3. (Note that this can mean that fire sometimes become ineffectual.) If they are disordered again as a result of melee or fire they are destroyed.

B. **Capturing Artillery**. The above applies to artillery as well, with this exception: if a disordered Artillery stand is disordered again as a result of melee, roll 1d6. If the result is 1-3 the gun is spiked, i.e. destroyed, 4-6: The gun is captured. Captured guns functions as normal, with one exception: they may never be moved.

C. **Disordering generals**. Whenever generals suffer a disordered result, they are not disordered *per se* (and they subsequently never need to rally etc), instead the owning player rolls 1d8. A result of 1-5 means *No effect*; a result of 6-7 means that the *General is Wounded*:

from now on his movement allowance is 10cm per turn (and if wounded again he is killed); a result of 8 means that the *General is killed* (and removed from play).

10. RALLYING

A. During the Rally Phase both players may attempt to rally their disordered stands, but only those that are not in base contact with enemies. Roll 1d8 for each stand: if army is unruly disordered stands are rallied on a roll of 7-8, if army is regular on a roll of 6-8, and if army is steady on a roll of 5-8. If their own general is in base contact with the stand the die roll is modified by 1d3. Rallied stands function normally again.

11. DEMORALIZATION

A. When an army has lost 40% (fractions rounded upwards) of its total number of stands, it is demoralized. Disordered stands in a demoralized army rally on a roll of 8 if army is unruly, on a roll of 7-8 if regular, and on a roll of 6-8 if steady. If an army is demoralized it costs 2 Cpt to move one stand or group; unless the general is eliminated or adjacent to an enemy stand, or the mover is over 40 cm from the general, in which case it costs 3 Cpts. There is one exception to this: if the moving stand or group moves straight towards their own table edge, without ending adjacent to an enemy stand, it just costs 1 Cpt.

B. For purposes of demoralization and winning the general counts as 2 stands, regardless if army is steady, regular or unruly. Once an army is demoralized it cannot be un-demoralized.

12. SPECIAL TYPES

A. **Baggage Train.** Each army has its own baggage train, which is immobile, has no intrinsic combat ability, but can be garrisoned - and captured - by one stand. For purposes of demoralization and winning the baggage train counts as 2 stands at the moment of elimination if army is steady, 3 if regular and 5 if unruly. Recapturing the baggage train will have no effect on demoralization, but it will count against the total losses when calculating the victory.

B. **Reinforcements.** Previously eliminated stands brought into play again as reinforcements still counts as eliminated for purposes as winning, but not for purposes of demoralization.

C. **Dragoons.** Dragoons may "dismount". To do this, the stand may not be in base contact with enemies and may not move the turn in question. At the end of their movement phase they are then simply replaced by a musketeer stand. Once dismounted, the stand may not change back again. Dismounting does not require Cpts.

D. **Mortars.** Mortars may never move, never need a LOS and may *only* fire on long range. Stands fired upon by mortars are never allowed a saving throw.

13. THE GAMEPLAY DECK

The gameplay deck contains 9 cards:

1 x "Player 1 melees"

1 x "Player 2 melees"

1 x "Player 1 tries to rally"

1 x "Player 2 tries to rally"

1 x "Player 1 fires"

1 x "Player 2 fires"

1 x "Player 1 rolls for Cpts and then moves. Player 2 then fires against enemy stands adjacent."

1 x "Player rolls for Cpts and then moves. Player 1 then fires against enemy stands adjacent."

1 x "Roll 1d6. 1-4=The turn continues: draw another card. 5=Consult the random events table, then draw another card. 6=The turn ends. Reshuffle the deck, and start over again."

14. VICTORY CONDITIONS

A. The side that first eliminates 60% of his opponents total number of stands wins. The level of victory depends on the winning force losses: if his own losses are less than 30% it is a *Major victory*; if his losses are 30% or more, but less than 40% it is a *Minor victory*; if his losses are 40% or more it is a *Pyrrhic victory*.

B. If the game ends because of sunset, without any side inflicting 60% casualties on the other, and both or none of the armies are demoralized, then the battle is a draw. If one of the armies were demoralized at sunset, the opposing player has scored a *Minor victory*.

15. RANDOM EVENTS

When called upon by the gameplay deck the random events table is consulted:

Die Effect

1 *Bad visibility*: Only fire on short range allowed. All Control Points die rolls are modified by -1. At the start of next turn roll 1d6: 1-3 = Bad visibility continues, test again next turn; 4-6 = Normal visibility restored, no more tests needed.

2 *Sunset*: The game will end in as many turns as shown on 2d6. The first time this occurs, it can be ignored, but only at the mutual consent of both players.

3 *Surprise march*: First determine which player that will benefit from the event. Both roll 1d6, highest roll gets it, both in case of a tie. Benefiting player rolls 1d4. That number of single stands may triple their movement this or the next turn.

4 *Reinforcements*: First determine which player that will benefit from the event. Both roll 1d6, highest roll gets it, both in case of a tie. Benefiting player take 1d4 stands (no artillery or generals) from the pile of destroyed stands and return it to play, placing it within 10cm of his own table edge.

5 *Good omens*: First determine which player that will benefit from event. Both roll 1d6, highest roll gets it, neither in case of a tie. In the next own rallying phase all disordered stands of the benefiting player are automatically rallied.

6 *Fanaticism*: First determine which player that will benefit from the event. Both roll 1d6, highest roll gets it, both in case of a tie. Benefiting player rolls 1d3. That number of single stands may double their melee die roll (in attack or defense) this or the next turn.

LION OF THE NORTH SUMMARIES

Movement

24cm Generals, Croats (Light Cavalry)

22cm Regular Cavalry, Reiter

20cm Dragoons

10cm Musketeer

8cm Pike, Militia, Movable Guns (regardless of calibre)

Fire die

d6 Dragoon, Reiter
d8 Musketeer, Organ Gun
d10 Regimental Gun, Light Gun, Medium Gun
d12 Heavy Gun, Mortar

Melee die

d3 All Guns and Mortars
d4 General, Militia
d6 Musketeer, Dragoon, Croats
d8 Reiter
d10 Regular Cavalry
d12 Pike

Maximum Range

5cm Dragoon, Reiter
15cm Musketeer, Organ Gun
30cm Regimental Gun, Light Gun
60cm Medium Gun, Mortar
Unlimited Heavy Gun

3. SIMPLE DIE SUMMARY

Command Points Roll: Steady army use 1d8, regular 1d6, unruly 1d4.

Range Values: Short range 5, normal range 6, long range 7. If above = target disordered.

Ranges: Short range is less than 5 cm, Normal is between 5 and 10 cm, Long is 11 cm or more.

Stands in cover: Are allowed a saving throw of 1d6. If 4-6 stand it is not disordered.

Flank attack: Attacking stands add 1d3 to melee roll.

Grape shot: Artillery (except Mortars) add 1d3 when firing upon adjacent stands.

Terrain: If attacking uphill or Horse or Pike attacking in woods: tie = attacker disordered.

Supported pike: Stands add 1d3 to melee roll.

General adjacent: Stands add 1d3 to melee roll.

General disordered: Roll 1d8: 1-5=No Effect; 6-7= General Wounded ; 8= General Killed.

Rallying: All use 1d8. Steady army stands rally on 5-8, regular on 6-8, unruly on 7-8.

CAPABILITY TABLE

<i>Type</i>	<i>Melee Die</i>	<i>Fire Die</i>	<i>Max Range</i>	<i>Movement</i>	<i>Notes</i>
General	d4	-	-	24cm	May not melee attack
Militia	d4	-	-	8cm	
Musketeer	d6	d8	15cm	10cm	

Pike	d12	-	-	8cm	
Reiter	d8	d6	5cm	22cm	
Regular Cavalry	d10	-	-	22cm	
Dragoon	d6	d6	5cm	20cm	
Croats	d6	-	-	24cm	
Organ Gun	d3	d8	15cm	-	May not melee attack, may not move
Regimental Gun	d3	d10	30cm	8cm	May not melee attack
Light Gun	d3	d10	30cm	8cm	May not melee attack; special move
Medium Gun	d3	d10	60cm	8cm	May not melee attack; special move
Heavy Gun	d3	d12	Unlimited	-	May not melee attack, may not move
Mortar	d3	d12	60cm	-	May not melee attack, may not move

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