

# COMITATUS

## Warfare in the Dark Ages

*“When the traditional signal to engage was sounded on both sides, a violent battle ensued. After a short exchange of missiles the Germans rushed forward, brandishing their weapons... Our men faced them stubbornly, protecting their heads with their shields and trying to strike fear into the foe with drawn swords or the deadly javelins that they brandished.*

*At the very crisis of battle, when our cavalry were bravely regrouping and the infantry were stoutly protecting their flanks with a wall of serried shields, thick clouds of dust arose and the fight swayed this way and that... The hail of darts and javelins and the volleys of iron tipped arrows did not slacken although blade was clashing on blade in hand to hand conflict.*

*Breastplates were split asunder by sword blows and wounded men who still had some blood left rose from the ground to attempt some further exploit,” Ammianus Marcellinus describing the Battle of Strasbourg AD 357.*

### Designer's Notes

Comitatus is a complete set of wargames rules designed to simulate warfare in Europe and the Mediterranean from about AD 200 to 1100. They have been primarily designed with Barbarian Migrations period in mind but the rules cover warfare from Imperial Rome through to the First Crusade. Comitatus is a fast moving game that is relatively easy to master. Full-scale battles representing tens of thousands of troops on each side can easily be fought to a conclusion in 3-4 hours.

My intention has been to develop a game, using miniature figures, which will look and feel like eyewitness accounts of ancient battles. The starting point, therefore, has not been to work out ground and figure scales or to compare the effects of various weapons against certain types of armour and formations, but rather to ensure that the game unfolds in the same way as the historical event it is simulating. I have not designed Comitatus with the competition wargamer in mind, nor with those who wish to recreate the minutiae of small-unit or individual action. I have designed Comitatus for people who are fascinated by the military events of the Dark Ages and who want to bring history to life with a game that represents the clash of armies while still being fun and relatively easy to play.

Ancient battle was, by modern standards, somewhat stylised. Because it is derived from descriptions of actual battles, like the quote from Ammianus Marcellinus above, a Comitatus game will have some of this stylised feel.

The game is played using alternate movement with turns broken down into phases which mirror the actions taken by troops in actual battles. After deployment into battle formation, troops move to within bow range of each other. They then halt and exchange missiles at long range, before closing to within javelin range. After another, more deadly missile exchange, troops will follow their leaders into hand to hand combat. A clear distinction is made between the initial clash of battle lines and the man to man combats that follow. Cavalry fights will be fast and fluid but when two infantry lines clash the combat may be more prolonged.

Dark Age warfare was characterised by bands of warriors attaching themselves to powerful warlords. The title of these wargames rules takes its name from a leader's personal following which was known as the Comitatus. Leadership was direct and personal, and many of the game mechanisms in Comitatus are designed to replicate this. Personal combat, special

rules for a leader's personal following, and the requirement for commanders to lead from the front, being key features. The capabilities of various troop types have been summed up in numerical ratings that make it immediately obvious, even to the first time player, how good they are at certain jobs. The combat factors are a sum of many variables including weapons, armour, cohesion and élan. Thus a unit with high attack but low defence factors reflects troops with aggressive spirit but lacking in staying power. The numerical ratings of the various troop types may be adjusted to reflect personal interpretations or specific scenarios.

Many people have contributed to the design of Comitatus in its current form. I would like to particularly acknowledge the help and advice of Dave and Stephen Allen, Caoimhín Mac Dhíomasaigh, David Blanchard, Perry Gray, Kent Haryett, Ross Macfarlane and the Late Roman Discussion Group (<http://games.groups.yahoo.com/group/laterromanempire/>). I also wish to thank Andy Callan for having first come up with the concept of Disorder Points, which I have adapted for use in Comitatus.

## **Development**

As a concept for re-creating battles of the Dark Ages with miniature figures, Comitatus has been around since the late 1980s. They were the first set of Ancients rules to introduce the 'stand' or 'element' as the basic playing piece instead of individual figures, and the first to classify troops according to battlefield behaviour rather than weapons and armour. These concepts have now become common for wargames set in the ancient period, although the use of two-rank deep infantry formations has not yet been as widely adopted.

The initial version of these wargames rules was first published in *Goths Huns and Romans* (Argus 1990), which was a guide to wargaming in the period from AD 350-450. The limited period covered by the original rules was later expanded by incorporating *Deus le Veult*, wargames rules for the First Crusade, which won the Society of Ancients Alan Nickels Prize in 1989. The resulting expanded version of Comitatus was published in 1992.

This version of Comitatus is essentially the same game but it is written in a more complete form, so as to be more easily understandable, and to have a wider appeal, to newcomers to the hobby. Players already familiar with earlier versions, which have been available on the internet, will notice that there have been some rule refinements based on several years of playing experience. These refinements preserve the flavour and philosophy of the original game but streamline some of the mechanisms.

The most noticeable change from the original version has been to do away with the need to keep track of a unit's status on paper. This has been replaced by the concept of Disorder Points (DPs). These were invented by Andy Callan for his excellent American War of Independence rules (*Loose Files* and *American Scramble*) and have proven to be an enduring and elegant way of reflecting the variable state of unit morale and combat effectiveness. The system is easy to use, does not require any paper work and dispenses with the need for lots of morale checks or dice throws.

Scenarios, tips, photographs and a forum for asking questions and proposing ideas can be found on my website: [www.legio-wargames.com](http://www.legio-wargames.com)

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## **Chapter 8 Definitions**

## **Appendix. Markers**

### 1.1 What You Need to Play:

- **Stands.** These are the game's basic playing pieces. They are pieces of cardboard or similar material cut out to a standard size, mounting a group of miniature figures (see 1.7). Thin card is the most suitable material to use for stands but you should be careful that it is thick enough not to warp when painted or textured. The addition of magnetic strips across the bottom of the card base can be useful for transporting the figures in metal or metal-lined boxes and can also help to stiffen thinner card and prevent warping. It is possible to play the game using the Stands as counters marked with appropriate symbols to distinguish troops types (without figures) and new players might like to do this to experiment with the rules while they raise their armies of miniatures.
- **Figures.** Commercial figures are readily available in metal or plastic in many different scales ranging from 2mm to 54mm, with the scale supposedly the height of an average figure. In practise, the figures from various manufacturers vary considerably in size and proportions, with most figures being 2-3mm larger than their nominal scale. Although several individuals and companies offer painting services, raising and painting an army is one of the great attractions of this hobby and it gives the player a personal connection with the troops he uses.
- **Measuring sticks** or tapes to measure move distances and ranges. These can be cut from card or made from wood. These should be at least 24cm long, and, if using 15mm or 6mm scale, (see 1.7) marked in 4 cm graduations, or in 6 cm graduations for 25 mm scale. These represent javelin range or Javelin Throws (JT) and are the basis for all measurements (see 1.16) and ranges (see 6.1)
- **Dice.** Several normal 6-sided dice (*D6*), and Average dice (*AvD*) marked 2-3-3-4-4-5. If you do not have AvD you can throw a D6 and count 1 as 3, and 6 as 4.
- **Playing Area.** A table top or other playing surface large enough to accommodate the number of units in use. A 6 x 4 foot surface will handle most full scale battles in 10-15mm scale. Games in 25 mm+ scale will require at least 6 x 4 foot tables but 8 x 5 or larger will be better, especially if a lot of cavalry are involved. Dining room tables are usually a bit too small for larger games, (unless using 2-6mm scale) so you will most likely have to get hold of some boards which can be laid on top of a normal table to give a larger playing area.
- **Terrain.** You will need three dimensional terrain features to cover the battlefield. The easiest and most flexible method is to cover the playing surface with a green or brown cloth, creating hills by putting something underneath. Buildings and trees can be scratch built or bought from hobby or model shops. Roads are best represented by masking tape and strips of blue cloth can serve for rivers. For those with the talent, more elaborate terrain can be built and many varieties of beautifully sculpted terrain are available commercially. Terrain features can include anything that would be found on a Dark Age battlefield and for game purposes are classified as one of the following:
  - *hills (which can have steep and gentle slopes);*
  - *linear obstacles* such as streams, hedges, ditches and fortifications;
  - *difficult terrain* such as woods, marshes and towns;
  - *light cover*, such as orchards, vineyards and scrub
  - roads, bridges and fords.

**Disorder Markers** - small pebbles or pieces of gravel (easily obtainable from pet shops) to indicate each disorder points (DP) on a unit (see 4.1). Units will accumulate and lose these points throughout the game. Pieces of gravel make especially good markers for this purpose since they can be easily handled and blend in well with the battlefield terrain. Players may find it useful to use other markers, such as small counters or individual figures to keep track of some other actions such as command point allocation (see 3.10).

## 1.2 Organising Figures

*Comitatus* classifies all troops according to their behaviour on the battlefield. There are 5 major categories of troops:

- Light Infantry (LI)
- Heavy Infantry (HI)
- Light Cavalry (LC)
- Heavy Cavalry (HC)
- Special Troops.

Each category is further broken down into sub-categories, which define the characteristics and abilities of each troop type. These abilities are expressed in Attack (A), Defence (D), Short Range Missile (S) and Long Range Missile (L) factors.

*Attack Factors* represent élan and willingness to close to combat, combined with weaponry and armour; *Defence factors* represent staying power and unit cohesion. The higher the factor, the better that particular category of troops is at either Attack or Defence. Troops with a *Missile Factor* have an ability to shoot at those ranges.

*Under strength (UnS)* heavy infantry stands may be used to represent about half the usual numbers of troops over the same frontage as a full strength stand of the same type. They reduce attack and defence factors by one and halve the number of stands able to shoot. They are most useful to represent dismounted units on a one for one basis though they can also be used to simulate 'depleted' or stretched units.

**Light Infantry.** These are generally lightly armed and equipped men who fight in loose or dispersed formations, primarily with missile weapons. They are most useful supporting heavier troops, delaying and harassing enemy, or operating in difficult terrain.

- **Skirmishers. A2/D1/S.** Light javelinmen and slingers whose job it is to skirmish at a distance, harassing enemy with missiles while avoiding close combat other than to chase off other light infantry.
- **Archers. A0/D1/S/L.** All types of foot archers. They will usually operate in dispersed formations but may form up to support Heavy Infantry.
- **Crossbowmen. A0/D1/S/L.** Early versions of the crossbow were in use at the beginning of the Dark Ages. It was probably only used by very small numbers of specialised troops before the First Crusade. Crossbows do not take a -1 for shooting against armoured targets (see 6.5)
- **Javelinmen. A3/D2/S.** Hillmen and forest dwellers such as the Slavs, Welsh, Irish, Isuarians and Daylamis who fight in denser formation than Skirmishers. Able to operate effectively in difficult terrain while still being able to hold their own in hand to hand combat. Mostly unarmoured, equipped with javelins, sword or axe, and substantial shield. Players may wish to classify some Roman auxiliaries in this category.
- **Armed Rabble. A2/D0/S.** Peasant levies, pilgrims, escaped slaves, bandits etc., fighting with little or no cohesion and a mixture of weapons.

**Heavy Infantry.** These are close formation troops whose primary function is to fight in hand to hand combat and hold ground. They will usually have large shields and may have some form of body armour:

- **Shock Infantry. A4/D2.** Infantry whose main job is to act offensively – a rapidly dwindling troop type in the Dark Ages as most nations employed their infantry defensively. Includes Migration period Germans, some Vikings, Highland Scots, Varangians and early Arabs. They are armed with a mix of close combat weapons such as swords, spears or axes. The effect of hand hurled missile weapons such as javelins and throwing axes are taken into account in the combat factors.
- **Roman Infantry A2/D3/S.** 3rd - 6th C Roman and Byzantine infantry armed with a variety of spears and javelins or darts, together with a good sword, large shield and often body armour. No distinction is made between Legionaries and Auxiliaries as they had the same battlefield role.
- **Shieldwall Infantry. A2/D2/S.** The majority infantry in most post-Roman armies. Primarily unarmoured troops in close order with large shields. Includes most post-migration German infantry; Persians; Roman and sub-Roman militias; some Arabs; and most West European infantry. Weapons are assumed to be a mix of spears, swords and javelins. This category also includes most dismounted Heavy Cavalry.
- **Spearmen. A1/D4/S-/L-** Well equipped, steady, spear-armed infantry such as the Byzantines; Andalusians; later Arabs; some West European mercenaries; Flemish Guild troops etc. Carrying large shields, good swords and many with body armour.
- **Spear & Bow Infantry. A0/D3/S/L.** A representation of a mixed formation of several ranks of spearmen backed up by archers. An increasingly common formation towards the end of this era which could be used by West Europeans, Byzantines, Arabs and Persians. A similar effect can be achieved by deploying Light Infantry Archers behind Spearmen and have them shoot overhead (see 6.9).

**Light Cavalry.** Mounted troops who fight in dispersed formations with missile weapons, usually avoiding combat with heavier troops. Together with Light Infantry they are termed *Light Troops*.

- **Light Javelin Cavalry. A3/D1/S.** Late Roman, Arab, Celtic, Pictish, Gascon and North African skirmishing cavalry carrying several javelins. Usually unarmoured, carrying small shields and swords in addition to their javelins.
- **Light Horse Archers. A2/D0/S/L.** Light mounted archers who fight from a distance, showering their opponents with arrows leaving hand to hand combat to heavier troops. Leaders and veterans might wear armour.
- **Mounted Infantry. A2/D0.** Troops who normally fight on foot who are mounted on horses to speed movement. They will normally try to dismount to fight and only use these factors if caught while still mounted. When dismounted they count as their usual infantry type.

**Heavy Cavalry.** The majority of Dark Age mounted troops who are relatively well equipped, and use a combination of shock and skirmish tactics. They fight in formed bodies of closer formation than light cavalry.

- **Heavy Horse Archers. A2/D2/S/L.** Heavy mounted archers of the Romans, Byzantines, Persians and Turks, including Persian *Clibanarii*, late Roman *Clibanarii Sagittarii*, most 6th Century Romans, and Steppe Nobles. They fight in relatively close formation, wear armour and most carry swords, maces or spears in addition to bows. Their job is to wear down enemy with archery before risking close combat.
- **Heavy Javelin Cavalry. A3/D2/S.** Conventional late Roman Heavy Cavalry and similar armoured mounted troops equipped with light spears and javelins. Includes Celtic cavalry such as 'Arthurian' Britons and Bretons. Earlier German and Visigoth Heavy Cavalry could also be put in this category since they may have used skirmish tactics rather than the straight forward charge favoured by other later Germanic Cavalry.
- **Lance & Bow Cavalry. A3/D2/S/L.** Elite Heavy Horse Archers with higher élan, offensive weaponry and willingness to close to combat than others of the same type.

Includes: Roman/Byzantine Bucellarii, Sarmatians, Avars and Turkish Ghulams. Also mixed formations, such as used by the Byzantines, with front ranks of lancers backed up by archers.

- **Shock Cavalry A4/D1.** Germanic cavalry from the Barbarian Migrations and later; Byzantine, East European, and Arab lance-armed cavalry; Roman and Persian *Catafractarii* or *Contarii* on unarmoured horses; and early medieval sergeants of similar mounted troops more lightly equipped and with less élan than knights. Some Germanic cavalry may have mixed light infantry in with their cavalry. These should be mounted on deeper stands (see 1.10) with infantry and cavalry together and increase factors to: **A4/D2/S.**
- **Knights. A5/D2-** Norman or similar west European shock cavalry in three quarters or better metal armour mounted on well trained war horses and charging with couched lance and kite shield. Rear ranks might be made up of less well equipped sergeants etc.
- **Cataphracts A5/D1.** Completely armoured Persians, Romans or Byzantines riding fully armoured horses who charge at the trot in close formation. Effective in a charge, they were often hampered by the unwieldiness of their formation and heavy armour.

**Special Troops.** Troops and equipment which do not fit into any of the above categories:

- **Artillery. A-/D-/S/L.** Light, portable bolt-throwers. They retain Long Range Factor out to three times Bow Range and are more effective against formed troops. They have no combat factors (see 7.19) They may be mounted on wagons for greater mobility.
- **Elephants. A4/D3.** Indian Elephants employed by the Sassanid Persians with 2-4 crewmen, possibly escorted by light infantry skirmishers.

#### **Armour.**

1.3 Most of the above categories take into account varying degrees of armour in defining the factors. There are, however, a few exceptional cases where certain troops might wear considerably more armour than the norm for their troop type. Such troops count as *Armoured* when shot at or in combat. Classifying troops as Armoured should be considered in a comparative way to give a benefit to troops who are significantly more heavily armoured than the majority of their counterparts. The minimum requirements to count as armoured are:

- *Infantry-* All troops must have at least a helmet, large shield, and relatively complete metal body armour which provides significantly more protection than the norm for that time period. A few Roman/Byzantine infantry could meet this requirement as might dismounted knights or Germanic nobles, and later Saxon/Viking huscarls.
- *Cavalry-* Both riders and horses to have armour. Horse armour could be full or partial metal, horn, fabric or leather, with riders wearing helmets and full body armour. Cataphracts are always armoured. Some other heavy Roman and Persian cavalry as well as a small number of steppe nobles might also meet these requirements.

1.4 **Partial Armour.** Knights and some other exceptionally heavily armoured cavalry, who, although wearing complete body armour are riding unarmoured horses, count as *partially armoured*. They count as armoured in melee (see 7.14) but not when being shot at.

#### **Training and Experience.**

1.5 Troops in the Dark Ages varied greatly in training, experience and discipline. To represent this, all units are given one of the three following experience grades at the start of the game.

- **A Grade:** Exceptionally well trained, drilled and disciplined regular troops in structured units with a high proportion of veterans. They can execute complex unit manoeuvre by word of command and can be expected to closely follow orders. Very few unit in the Dark Ages would be up to this standard, probably only veteran 3<sup>rd</sup> Century Legions, later Roman and Byzantine field army units and possibly some household troops of other nations.



- **B Grade:** Full time soldiers or warriors who lack formal drill; or drilled regulars who are lacking in training or battlefield experience. This would account for the vast majority of troops ranging from veteran knights to average Roman units.
- **C Grade:** Non-professional troops who are called up to serve for a limited time or who are poorly trained with little or no battlefield experience. This includes feudal levies, militias and Roman limitanei. Elephants and Armed Rabble are always C Grade.

### **Morale.**

1.6 Each unit is additionally assigned a *Morale Value*, which reflects its enthusiasm. These are not tied to efficiency grades so it is quite possible to have B Grade troops (especially Knights or Germanic Cavalry) with higher morale than A Grade troops. Even C Grade troops can have exceptional morale, reflecting fanatical confidence and enthusiasm. The following Morale Values are possible:

- *Exceptional Morale:* Special elite and bodyguard units; fanatics; and other troops with complete confidence and an exceptionally high opinion of their abilities, whether justified or not. Also good troops who, in a campaign, have had a string of notable successes. **Morale Value +2**
- *High Morale:* Above average troops inspired to go beyond the call of duty either due to semi-elite status (Roman Palatine troops or Germanic nobility might qualify) or as a result of campaign victories. **Morale Value +1**
- *Average Morale:* Good, solid troops who can be expected to do what is required of them without any acts of suicidal bravery or abject cowardice. Includes elite units who have lost confidence and normally poor quality units whose morale has been boosted by victories. **Morale Value 0**
- *Poor Morale:* Demoralised, disenchanted or unenthusiastic troops, including disaffected mercenaries and conscripts whose hearts are not in the fight. Also includes normally good troops who have suffered a series of defeats. **Morale Value -1**

### **Basing.**

1.7 Individual figures are mounted on bases, according to their troop type and the figure scale. Base size is not critical as long as all frontages are exactly the same in both armies. To conform to most current ancient wargames rules, the following base sizes should be used:

- 6mm scale: 20mm frontage x 20mm depth
- 15 mm scale: 40mm frontage x 30mm depth
- 25mm+ scale: 60mm frontage x 40mm depth

1.8 Players using 20mm figures may opt to use either 15mm or 25mm scale for basing and ranges, reducing or increasing the number of figures per base to fit. For 6mm figures players could alternatively use 15mm scale but increase the number of figures per base. The same is true for 10mm. It is possible to play Comitatus with larger scale individually based figures (up to 54mm) where a singly based figure is considered to be a Stand. Such games, could be suitable for frontier skirmishes and raids.

1.9 The actual number of figures are for visual purposes only. They provide a ready reference as to troop types but do not have any actual effect on the game. In order to give the right visual appearance and to conform to most other commonly used rule sets, the following arrangements are recommended (for 15mm and 25mm, adjusting to fit for other scales):

- Light Infantry: 4-6 figures spaced out irregularly on the base, Javelinmen and Armed Rabble should have 6 rather than 4 figures to differentiate them from other Light Infantry.
- Heavy Infantry: 8-9 figures at least 2 ranks deep. Base depths can be increased to accommodate figures. Shock infantry look better in a deep formation.
- Under strength Infantry (and dismounted cavalry) 4-6 figures primarily in a single rank. Base depth could be halved.

- Light Cavalry: 2 figures spaced out irregularly.
- Heavy Cavalry: 3-4 figures
- Elephants: 1 model & 2-3 (optional) skirmishers
- Artillery: 1 model + crewmen
- 10 and 6mm figures: Depending on the manufacturer, infantry bases could have double or more the number indicated above with Heavy Infantry being in 3 or even 4 ranks.

1.10 The number of figures per base can be adjusted to fit the size and pose of the figures. Base depths can also be increased to 40mm for 15mm scale, or 60mm for 25mm scale to allow for more active poses and more variation in the arrangement of irregular troops on the bases. The deeper, square bases will be necessary for elephants and they are recommended for shock cavalry and shock infantry both for visual effect and to differentiate them from other troops at a glance. Square bases also make formation changes more simple to conduct.

1.11 **Casualties.** There is no need to mount figures on separate individual bases since a 'casualty' will result in a complete stand being eliminated.

1.12 **Alternate basing for Light troops.** Skirmishers and light cavalry who are always unformed (see 5.1) may be mounted individually, or in small groups, on round or irregular-shaped bases. In this case 4 light infantry and 2 light cavalry figures will count as a 'stand' for shooting and numbers in combat.

### Scale

1.13 Battles in the Dark Ages were relatively small affairs, particularly when compared to conflict in the classical era which preceded it, and certainly when compared to more modern battles. This is particularly true in Western Europe where small bands of only a few hundred men could be considered armies. The more individual nature of warfare, combined with relatively small numbers of men, make this period ideal for use with 25mm figures, although conflicts in the East, where lots of horse archers are involved, are probably better in 15mm.

1.14 Since *Comitatus* has no fixed scale, a stand could be taken to represent any number of troops depending on the action being fought. It is quite possible, if re-creating a small raid for example, to have a stand represent only as many men as there are figures mounted on it. It will be more normal, however, for each stand to represent several hundred men.

1.15 For battles of the late Roman Empire, a convenient scale is to have one cavalry or light infantry stand to represent about 100-200 men and one heavy infantry stand to represent 400-600 men. This allows cavalry vexillations (full strength of 300 men) and legions (1000-1200) men to be represented by two or three stand units; and Auxilia (500 men) by one stand. Battles set in post-Roman Western Europe could be set at a much smaller scale with an infantry stand representing maybe only about 100 men.

1.16 All measurements in the game, regardless of the figure-man ratio or theoretical ground scale, are taken in multiples of base frontages, ie: 40 mm for 15mm scale; and 60 mm for 25mm scale. Missile ranges form the basis for all manoeuvre with javelin range being the same as one base frontage (20, 40 or 60 mm) and bow range 5 times base frontage. For convenience, each of these segments of measurement are called *javelin throws*. Players using alternate base sizes should measure distances in multiples of the base frontages they use. Players with **6mm figures on 20mm bases** will find it better to retain 15mm scale for movement purposes (1 javelin throw = 40 mm) in order to produce more sweeping moves and faster action. Individually based figures will require a departure from the usual rule of javelin range being the same as a base frontage. If using 25-40mm individually based figures, the usual 25mm javelin range of 60mm should be retained.



Since ground scale is related to missile ranges, players who are uncomfortable with the concept of flexible scales could consider javelin range to be about 40 metres and effective bow range about 200 metres; or 1cm on the games table = 10 metres in real life for 15mm figures. Although 40 metres is a long way to throw a javelin effectively, this distance is assumed to include a certain amount of running or riding up to a target, throwing, then darting back out of the way.

## Units

1.17 Except for special troops, stands must be organised into *units*. A unit is the smallest group capable of moving and acting independently under the rules and is a tactical rather than administrative grouping. It is possible, for example, to combine two Roman Auxilia, who were often historically brigaded together, into a combined unit which will be treated as a single tactical entity for the duration of the game. All stands in a unit must be of the same troop type with the same efficiency grade and morale value. All stands must remain together for the duration of the game.

1.18 A unit may contain any number of stands but 2-4 are the optimal number. Players should decide on a theoretical scale for their armies (such the one as suggested at 1.9) and try to organise their units along historical lines.

1.19 **Special Troops**, Baggage Animals and Wagons are not formed into units. Instead they operate independently as individual stands.

## Organising the Army

1.20 To prepare for a game, players must organise their units into several *commands*. Each command should consist of a number of units grouped together and under the leadership of a *commander*. These units will act together for the duration of the game, supporting each other and following the same orders.

1.21 A command must normally be either be all infantry or all cavalry, except that:

- Light Infantry may be part of either an infantry, cavalry or elephant command;
- Artillery must be part of an infantry command;
- Elephants may either be on their own, or part of an infantry or cavalry command and
- Command stands and the bodyguards of infantry commanders may be cavalry.

1.22 A large army may be subdivided into 2 or more *contingents*. An army containing foreign allies must have those allies in a separate contingent. A contingent may contain a mix of infantry and cavalry commands but may not be of more than one nationality. For example: a Roman army containing a Gothic allied contingent cannot have Romans placed under the command of the Gothic contingent or visa versa. This, however, does not apply to mercenaries. They are considered to be the same nationality as the nation employing them.

## Points Values.

1.23 It is often useful to have a means of determining the relative strengths of various troop types in order to balance a game scenario. To assist players in doing this, numerical values have been assigned to each stand and unit as follows:

<b>Infantry</b> (points per stand)		<b>Cavalry and Special</b> (points per stand)	
Armed Rabble	4 points	Light Cavalry	7 points
Javelinmen	7 points	Knights	13 points
Other Light Infantry	6 points	Cataphracts	15 points
Shieldwall Infantry	6 points	Other Heavy Cavalry	10 points
Roman Infantry	9 points	Artillery	35 points
Other Heavy Infantry	8 points	Elephants	50 points
Understrength Units    ½ basic points rounded up			
Extra for Infantry integral to a Germanic Cavalry stand			+2 points
Extra to mount an infantry stand on horses			+2 points

Wagon 10 points

**Armour** (points per stand):

Each Armoured cavalry stand +3 points (*n/a for cataphracts as included in basic points*)

Each Armoured infantry or Partially Armoured cavalry stand +2 points

**Morale and Experience** (points per stand):

Extra for A Grade +5 points      Extra for Exceptional Morale +10 points

Extra for B Grade +2 points      Extra for High Morale + 5 points

Reduction for Poor Morale - 3 points

**Unit Costs** 10 points per unit (Elephants, Wagons and Artillery do not pay unit costs)

**Command Points**

Each Commander 50 points

Each Contingent Commander or General 100 points

## II

## Sequence of Play

2.1 All actions are conducted alternately with both players completing each phase in the sequence of play before moving to the next. In an attack on a defended position scenario, the attacker moves first on turn one. Thereafter, and in other circumstances, dice to determine who moves first by rolling one D6 and adding the commanding General's Command Points (see 3.7). The high score decides whether to go first or second. Once this has been resolved the players keep the same order for all phases in the turn. The player moving first is termed the '*player with initiative*'.

2.2 All actions are carried out from right to left except that where unit moves intersect, the lead unit may move first. Combat is resolved simultaneously.

### Turn Sequence

1. **Command Phase.** Allocate Command Points (CPs) for each leader, move messengers and any lone leaders; fight personal combat; take required control tests.
2. **Approach Phase.** Units beyond bow range of enemy may move, change formation or direction, or rally. All movement must stop at bow range from any visible non-broken enemy.
3. **Long Range Missile Exchange.** Stands with a long-range Missile Factor may shoot at any eligible targets beyond javelin range. Artillery may shoot out to three times bow range. No shooting at short range is allowed in this phase.
4. **Tactical Move Phase.** Any units may move, change formation or direction, or rally. All movement must stop at javelin range from any enemy.
5. **Short Range Missile Exchange.** Stands with a Short Range Missile Factor may engage targets at short range. Additionally: light horse archers, and other troops with a Long Range Missile Factor (other than artillery) who remained stationary in the Tactical Move Phase, may also engage targets at long range. Heavy infantry may not shoot in this phase. Their shooting is reserved for the Combat Phase.
6. **Combat Phase.** In the following order:
  - declare charges and determine charge reactions;
  - resolve any shooting prior to combat
  - make charge and charge response moves;
  - resolve combat;
  - make all moves resulting combat.
7. **Morale Phase.** Remove Disorder Points (DPs) from eligible units (see 4.3)



**Tip** Deciding to move first or second can make a critical difference and it is not always immediately obvious which is best. In some cases it is advantageous to move first since the effects of the first player's missile fire will reduce the second player's ability to shoot back. Moving first might also restrict the opposing player's movement options. On the other hand, moving second allows a player to wait until his opponent has moved all his troops before moving himself, thereby exploiting any weaknesses and giving his opponent no opportunity to respond to his moves.

### Chain of Command

3.1 Players take the roles of *Generals* commanding the entire army. In multi-player games, one player on each side will be the General, with other players taking the roles of Contingent Commanders.

3.2 Leaders can only influence units or subordinates who are assigned to them. For example a Commander has no influence over units in another command. On the other hand, a Contingent Commander may influence all units and commands in his contingent, but not those in another contingent. The General influences all units and commands in the army except those in an independent allied contingent. In a large army the chain of command should be clearly established, either by circling units on a sketch map or listing who commands what and whom on a piece of paper.

### The Comitatus

3.3 Each Leader must be represented on-table by a command stand containing the leader's figure and his bodyguards/staff. This stand, called a *Comitatus*, can be of any troop type in the army but will usually be cavalry. To reflect the fact that many Dark Age leaders had large personal followings, each leader may increase the size of his Comitatus by as many stands as he has Command Points (see 3.7). Thus a Commander with 3 Command Points can increase his Comitatus by 3 stands, making a total of 4. Generals, who have a Comitatus of 4 or more stands, may break it up into two or more units, treating it as a small separate command under his direct control. This could, for example, be the case of the large number of *Bucellarii* following Belisarius.

3.4 Individual units of a multi-unit Comitatus may not voluntarily move outside their leader's Command radius (see 3.8).

3.5 The leader is always assumed to be with his Comitatus unless he moves away temporarily in the Command Phase (see 3.10) or is killed. As long as the leader is present it is not necessary for the Comitatus to take any Control Tests (see 3.12). In the case of a multi-unit Comitatus, the same will apply only to all units of the Comitatus who are within the leader's command radius. Units of the Comitatus who find themselves beyond his command reach are treated as any normal unit of that type.

3.6 If the leader temporarily leaves his Comitatus, the unit may move to rejoin him in a subsequent move phase, otherwise, except for A grade, it must remain halted for the entire time he is away. If charged, it may respond normally but may not voluntarily retire from Combat, although it may make other possible After Combat Moves (see 7.16). An A Grade Comitatus may act as a normal unit when the leader is not present.



A leader's personal following played an important role in Dark Age warfare. Such followings went by many names: Comitatus; Bucellarii; Huscarls; Hird; and so on, but they had much in common. They originated from the Germanic tradition of warleaders maintaining armed retainers who swore personal loyalty to the leader, rather than a national authority: a practise that eventually evolved into the feudal system. This tradition even penetrated the Roman system to the point that, by the 5th Century, all generals and important magnates were maintaining private bands of full-time soldiers.

### Command Points (CPs) and Command Radius

3.7 Each leader is allocated 2-5 *Command Points (CPs)* which will allow him to carry out certain actions during the game. All Commanders have 3 CPs; Contingent Commanders and Generals are given 1 CP for each number rolled on an AvD. (+1 for historically exceptional commanders to a maximum of 5 CPs). A leader with only 2 CPs is too uninspiring to personally encourage troops in combat, rally them, or issue or respond to challenges.

3.8 Leaders can only exercise control over troops within their command reach, which is normally one javelin throw. However, Generals and Contingent Commanders have an extended command reach of 1 javelin throw for each CP over 3. A General with 5 CPs, for example, will have a command reach of 3 Javelin Throws.

3.9 To count as being 'within command reach', the distance between the base edge of the command stand and the base edge of the nearest figure in the unit must be equal or less than the command reach. Units outside the command reach but which are part of a continuous battle line or march column (see 5.5) are considered to be 'within command reach' if any part of the line is within the reach.



The command reach is an important game concept. When units are within the commander's reach they will normally do what the player wishes -- although there are exceptions to this. When a unit is outside the command reach, a die roll will determine its actions. This will often result in the unit doing other than what the player would wish. Essentially this rule allows a certain degree of flexibility in the way players manoeuvre the units in each command while keeping the command, rather than the unit, as the basic manoeuvre element.

In the Dark Ages, commanders led from the front, therefore the command reach has been kept deliberately short so as to make it difficult for leaders to exercise control over their troops by hanging around out of harm's way. This means that in order to control troops effectively it will be necessary to keep them together in a command formation so that they may move and act collectively (see 5.5). Furthermore C Grade troops will require leaders to personally lead them into combat, again to reflect the fact that leaders led from the front (see 7.3).

### Command Point Allocation

3.10 A leader's Command Points will determine the number of actions he may make each turn. Leaders may use up to their total number of CPs each turn to complete any combination of the following actions.

- *Control Units* under his command and within command radius (costs 1CP). This allows all those units to move and act as the player wishes. If a leader does not allocate CPs to do this, or if units are outside his command radius, those units must take a *Control Test* (see 3.12) to determine their actions.
- *Move*. (costs 1 CP). This allows the leader to make an additional move in the command phase. To do so he temporarily leaves his Comitatus and may move up to 5 javelin throws. He may move normally again in the movement phases. Lone leaders should be represented on table by a single cavalry figure.
- *Direct Fire*. (costs 1 CP) This allows any unit within 1 JT to engage a target of the player's choice, rather than the usual nearest unit (see 6.3)
- *Rally Troops* (costs 3 CPs). During the Command Phase a Leader may rally a unit under his command within 1 JT. This results in either 2 Disorder Points (see 4.1) being removed or a shaken unit recovering with 3 DPs, regardless of normal rallying limitations (see 4.8). This takes effect immediately in the Command Phase. If a leader assigned 3 CPs to Rally, any of his units within one javelin throw may deduct 1 to the result of any Control Test they may be required to take (see 3.14).
- *Inspire Troops*. (Costs 3 CPs). During the Charge Phase increase the combat score of a unit which is charging by the same value as his CPs or by one in other circumstances. The leader can only help one unit in these circumstances, his Comitatus must be in base-to-base contact with that unit and he counts as being

in the front rank and entering into combat with the unit. If a leader assigned 3 CPs to Inspire, any of his units within one javelin throw may add 1 to the result of any Control Test they may be required to take.

- *Give or Receive Orders* (costs 2 CPs). This will normally only be required in multi-player games involving a degree of role-play with players taking on the characters of Generals and Contingent Commanders. If, however, it becomes necessary to change the orders of an entire command (see 3.17) then the General Issuing the new orders must spend 2 CPs to send a messenger, give a signal, or speak directly to the subordinate himself, it will also require the receiving Commander to spend 2 CPs to listen to the order. This can result in some humorous situations in multi-player games when the subordinate must choose whether or not to bother to allocate the CPs to hear what his boss has to say!
- Issue a challenge to personal combat (costs 3 CPs). See 3.28

3.11 CPs must be allocated in advance in the Command Phase. Unused CPs may not be carried over to the next turn. Players should place markers beside the command figure in the command phase to indicate how his CPs have been allocated (see appendix). If a player forgets to allocate command points or does not specify what they are, it is assumed that commanders will control troops only.

#### Examples of Command Point Allocation:

1. A commander with 3 CPs may elect to control his troops (1 CP), then move to join a missile unit (1CP) and direct their fire (1 CP). He may not control his troops and inspire in combat as this would take a total of 4 CPs.
2. A general with 4 CPs could elect to rally a unit (3CPs) and still control troops (1CP).

#### Control Test

3.12 Units, other than a Comitatus, are required to take a control test, in the Command Phase, in the following circumstances:

- If their leader, or his superior, did not allocate any command points to control them, or they are outside his command radius; or
- If they are in Pursuit, Routing or Looting and the player wishes them to stop (see 5:32 & 7:16). In these circumstances they must take a test whether or not they are being controlled.

3.13 A Comitatus never has to take a control test unless its Commander has left them or has been killed, in which case the Comitatus is treated like any other unit of that type.

#### 3.14 Control Test: Artillery & A Grade units roll one AvD; others roll one D6

##### Results

- 2-** Halt
- 3-4** Act as player wishes
- 5+** B & C Grade in Cuneus formation (see 5.3) or Armed Rabble; **must advance** towards the nearest visible enemy heavy troops and charge as soon as they are within range. Otherwise (and other troops) **repeat last move**

##### Modifiers

- +1** if charging, pursuing or looting
- +1** optional if a leader within 1 javelin throw is inspiring troops (see 3.10).
- 1** optional if a leader within 1 javelin throw is inspiring troops (see 3.10).



3.15 Units with a Halt reaction may shoot and may adjust their facing or formation to face a threat, they may not make other moves, nor may they initiate a charge. They may, however, counter-charge if charged and normally allowed to. There are no restrictions on possible after-combat moves. Troops who are in pursuit, looting or rampaging will cease doing those things if they get a 'halt' or 'act as player wishes' result.



**Tip.** The control test will not bother most units who are halted or intending to remain so, since, with the exception of armed rabble, or B & C Grade troops in Cuneus, all possible results will keep the unit halted. Players should, however, make sure that if they wish to have a B or C Grade unit make a new move that they do not have to take a control test, since they will only have a 2 in 6 chance of getting the desired result. Likewise commanders will need to keep control over rabble and B or C Grade units in cuneus to prevent them going off on an spontaneous advance.



It is possible for any commander in the chain of command to exercise control over troops. For example a Commander might spend 3 CPs to inspire in combat. This leaves him with no CP to 'control troops'. Normally this would result in all units in his command having to take a control test to determine their actions. If, however, any of his units were within the command reach of his superior General and the General spent 1 CP to 'control troops'; the units of the Command would be considered 'under control' and would not need to take a control test. It is not possible, however, for a leader outside the chain of command to control another Commander's troops. Therefore, an adjacent Commander or another Contingent Commander would not have been able to control those troops.

### Orders

3.16 In most simple two-player games it will not be necessary to have written orders. However, complex scenarios or multi-player games may require it. In such cases each Commander should have *Orders* from his superior applicable for all the troops under his command. These orders are best indicated on a sketch map and should be:

1. Defend current position
2. Advance to and defend a specific position
3. Advance to and attack the enemy

3.17 Orders may only be changed by the leader who issued them, or his superior. To do this both the superior and subordinate must allocate 2 CPs to change or listen to orders. If the subordinate elects not to 'listen' he may at a later time opt to do so. This could represent, for example, a signal being made, or a staff officer noting it but being unable to get the commander's attention until greater priorities have been dealt with. Changing orders can be done by the leader:

- being in base to base contact with the subordinate, or
- by sending a messenger who will relay the message once in base to base contact, or
- by pre-arranged signal, as long as the leaders are within bowshot of each other. Maximum 1 signal for each General or Contingent Commander.



The most commonly required order change would be to a command with orders to defend a position (Orders 1 or 2) to change to Order 3 and attack. It is worthwhile, therefore, having this as a pre-arranged signal.

There is flexibility as to how orders are executed. For example a Commander with Order #3 may chose when and how to attack and with which units. Likewise when defending a position, the Commander may re-deploy his units to meet the local tactical situation and counter-attack any enemy who have taken or are threatening the position.

3.18 Units do not require individual orders. All units within the command radius of their Commander, may move and act as the player wishes, within the spirit of their Command orders, as long as the Commander has used 1 CP to *Control Troops* (see 3.10).

3.19 Units beyond command reach; or whose Commander(s) did not spend a CP to control his troops; must take a *control test*, in the Command Phase. The result of the test must then be followed even if the result contradicts their orders.

## Risk to Leaders

3.20 Any time the unit of which the leader is part, takes a DP from shooting or combat; or a casualty in any circumstances; the leader must test to see if he is also hit. He only needs to test once for shooting and once for combat regardless of the number of DPs inflicted on the unit. Any Leader who inspires in a charge must also test, whether his unit takes any DPs or not. The same applies if he rallies a unit within 1 Javelin Throw of enemy.

3.21 Lone Commanders who have temporarily left their Comitatus and are within one javelin throw of a friendly unit which takes a DP from shooting or combat; or a casualty in any circumstances; must also test to see if they are hit. Messengers are treated similarly.

3.22 To test if a commander is hit:

### Risk to Leaders

Roll one D6: 1= Hit. If 'Hit' roll again:

1 = Killed

2/3 = Serious wound, loose 2 CPs;

4/6 = Light wound, loose 1CP;



It is possible to purchase dice that have a skull and crossbones in place of a '1'. This makes a useful 'dice of death' to throw when testing for risk to leaders. The loss of CPs represent bodyguards and staff officers being killed, thereby reducing a commander's ability to exert his influence over his command.

3.23 Lone Commanders and messengers beyond javelin range of any friends may be shot at. If a hit is scored, he must roll again as at 3.22 above. Cavalry who are able to move into contact with a lone commander or messenger will capture him.

3.24 If a leader is killed in combat, other than personal combat, the stand containing his figure is removed from play, it being assumed that his close companions died trying to save his life. Any remaining stands of the Comitatus will remain in Combat and fight to the death. They will not break, fall-back or retire but they will accumulate DPs as usual. Once they become shaken, they will be eliminated. If they win the combat they must pursue, and continue to pursue, any broken opponents.

3.25 If a leader is killed in other circumstances the Comitatus must advance to and charge the enemy who caused his death or the nearest enemy if this is not possible. They will then fight as described at 3.24 above.

3.26 Once the leader's death has been avenged by fulfilling the above conditions, any surviving stands of the Comitatus will retire from the field, bearing their leader's body.

3.27 If the Comitatus stand, of which the leader is part, is eliminated as a casualty:

Roll a D6:

1-3 = The leader is killed

4 = The leader is captured

5-6 = The leader escapes and joins the nearest friendly A or B Grade unit. If this is another unit of the Comitatus, he will take one of those stands as his new command stand. If not, he must rejoin the Comitatus as soon as possible. If there are no surviving stands of the Comitatus, the new unit will become his Comitatus.

## Personal Combat

3.28 Players representing Generals and Contingent Commanders may issue challenges to personal combat to any opposing players. This must be done in the Command Phase, before any troops are within javelin range of the enemy and costs 3 CPs to issue a challenge. It does not require any CPs to accept one.

3.29 If the Challenge is not accepted, the player representing the leader who refused the challenge must roll a D6 with the following result:

1. He loses the respect of his troops and therefore permanently loses 1 CP
- 2-3 A champion (see below) from the nearest B Grade Heavy Infantry or Heavy Cavalry unit accepts the challenge without authorisation. If there are no B Grade units of that type in the army the result is the same as for a 4-6 result.
- 4-6 The army is unimpressed by the challenge and ignores it.


3.30 **Champions.** A leader may appoint a Champion to fight in his place, even if he himself issued the challenge.

3.31 If the Challenge is accepted the following procedures take place immediately during the same Command Phase as the Challenge is issued:

- Place single figures representing the Commanders, at javelin range from each other, half way between the two armies.
- Simultaneously exchange missiles at short range - Roll a D6, 6 = Hit
- Close to contact and simultaneously engage with spears - 5-6 = Hit
- Continue to fight simultaneously with swords - 4-6 = Hit
- Each Hit causes a wound, reducing the ability to fight next time by 1. Three wounds kill. It is quite possible for them to die simultaneously.

3.32 A leader, who wins personal combat, increases his CPs by 1 and adds 1 to the Morale Value of all units under his command. A leader who loses is dead and can no longer influence the battle. The player representing that leader takes on the character of the next most senior leader in the army. If a champion wins, there is no increase of CPs but the Morale Value of the units in his command are still raised by 1

3.33 The Comitatus of a defeated leader must act as described at 3.25, in an attempt to avenge the leader's death, then withdraw from the battle. This does not occur if it was a champion who was defeated.

 Challenges were a common feature of dark age warfare and a ritual of leaders or champions engaging in personal combat in front of the two armies took place in Persian, Arab, Roman and Germanic armies. More often than not champions did the fighting but there were instances of personal combat between leaders. Another common feature of dark age warfare was that leaders would seek each other out once battle was joined, this was particularly true in Germanic armies. A mechanism for this is included in the *melée* rules (see 7.33)

### Visibility

3.34 Commanders and troops can only react to, or shoot at, what they can see. Visibility is restricted to line of sight and is normally unlimited by distance. Light cover, hills, towns, woods and formed units block line of sight except that:

- In woods and towns, visibility is limited to javelin range.
- Units on the edge of woods and towns can see out without restriction but can only be seen from one javelin throw unless they shoot. If they do shoot then they can be seen by anyone in line of sight.
- Units on higher elevation (hill, fortress) can see over intervening units who are at least one javelin throw away. They cannot see over woods or towns.

3.35 Lone Commanders, messengers and markers do not block line of sight and they have the same ability to see things as normal units.

3.36 Unformed troops (see 5.1) only partially block line of sight. Units can see anything that is within one javelin throw of unformed troops.

## IV

## Morale

### Death, Disorder and Desertion Points (DPs)

4.1 During the course of the game units will accumulate *death, disorder and desertion points* (called DPs). These are represented by placing a marker beside the unit for each DP incurred. The recommended marker is a piece of gravel as it can easily be picked up and does not look out of place on the battlefield. DPs can result from manoeuvre, shooting, combat and morale.

4.2 A unit may normally accumulate a maximum of 4 DPs, if a fifth DP is incurred it will result in the unit becoming *shaken* (see 4.6 below). Units with exceptional morale, or containing 5 or more stands only become shaken on the 6<sup>th</sup> DP.

4.3 If a unit has been stationary for the entire turn, and is not still in combat, it may remove DPs in the Morale Phase as the unit tries to re-order itself. The ability to do this is determined by the unit's efficiency grade:

A Grade	1 per turn +1 additional if not shot at and is beyond 1 JT of all enemy
B Grade:	1 per turn
C Grade:	1 per turn if not shot at and is beyond 1 JT of all enemy

4.4 Additional DPs can be removed in the Command Phase by leaders who allocated CPs to Rally (see 3.10). This can be done even if the unit is moving, shot at or in combat.

4.5 If a unit *breaks*, it becomes shaken, regardless of number of DPs on the unit. A unit's good order and morale is further affected, and DPs incurred immediately, by the following events:

- 2 DPs – Horse mounted cavalry within 1 javelin throw of elephants unless there are elephant's in that unit's command. 1 DP if within 1 javelin throw of camels in the same circumstances.
- 1 DP – Surprised by seeing a previously hidden enemy who appears within bow range (includes arriving off table.)
- 2 DPs – For units whose Leader is killed or routing within bow range. The same applies if a leader leaves the table for whatever reason. It only applies to Leaders in the chain of command. 3 DPs if a General or allied Contingent Commander
- 1-2 DPs – For fatigue and disorder when moving, up to a maximum of 3 DPs (see 5.11 and 5.15 - 5:30)
- 1-2 DPs for shooting and combat results
- 1 DP for formed troops moving in difficult terrain.
- 1 DP – For evading (see 7.11)
- 1 DP – Each friendly light or formed lower grade unit, broken or destroyed within bow range. This applies if the friend actually breaks within bow range or makes a rout move that passes by within bow range.
- 2 DPs – Each non-light, friendly, equal or higher grade unit, broken or destroyed within bow range.
- 2 DPs – Formed troops on foot who charged or counter-charged, and are contacted by a mounted charge.
- 2 DPs – If formed troops burst through by rampaging elephants, or pushed back in combat by elephants. If the unit is already shaken, it will break.
- 2 DPs – Formed units contacted by a charge which originated from behind the unit's flank or rear without being able to turn to face the charge in time (see 7.12)  
1 DP if they were charged by light troops only.


### Shaken Units.

4.6 Once a unit becomes shaken it should be marked with a 'shaken marker'. A shaken marker could be a casualty figure or a small counter (see appendix).

4.7 One casualty will be removed for each further DP incurred by a shaken unit due to combat or morale. Shaken units incur no further DPs or casualties for manoeuvre or shooting. A casualty results in the elimination of one complete stand.

### Rallying Shaken Units

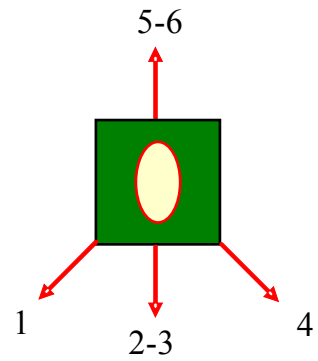
4.8 A shaken unit must rally in order to reform. This normally requires the unit to remain halted for one complete turn, beyond bow range of any non-broken enemy. While rallying, the unit may adopt any normally allowed formation, facing in whichever direction the player chooses. In the Morale Phase after which these conditions have been fulfilled, the shaken marker is removed and replaced with 3 DPs. From the beginning of the next turn the unit may act normally. If enemy move to within bow range of the shaken unit while it is attempting to rally, the shaken unit will have to withdraw the following turn beyond bow range and try again. Shaken units may additionally be rallied in the command phase by the personal intervention of a leader who has expended 3 CPs to Rally (see 3.10).

 **Tips:** Once a unit becomes shaken it will be ineffective. The best tactic is to remove it quickly from the front battle line and have it rally before it starts to lose casualties. If it is allowed to remain where it can be charged it will quickly disintegrate. DPs are only temporary and a shaken unit can be brought back up to full effectiveness. Casualties, however, are permanent and will reduce the unit's effectiveness for the duration of the game.

It is quite important to reduce the number of DPs on a unit as it gets closer to enemy. Carrying several DPs before entering combat can end in disaster. It will often be best to pause for a turn outside bow range to get rid of any accumulated DPs before closing. Of course, the enemy may force circumstances.

### Rampaging Elephants

4.9 Elephants do not accumulate DPs like other troops. Instead, every time an elephant would normally take a DP it must immediately roll a D6. If the result is a 1 it goes on a *Rampage*, while 2 destroys it. Face any rampaging elephant towards the source of the DP and have it make an immediate fast move in a straight line in the direction determined by a die roll as shown in the illustration opposite. The elephant will then continue to move in that direction in every movement phase. Before each following rampage move however, the player throws a D6 and if he rolls a 4-6 then the mahout (or other troops) succeed in killing the elephant and it is eliminated as a casualty +1 for each turn after the first. Elephants that test for a morale DP will break rather than rampage (see 7.19) on a roll of 1.



4.10 Rampaging elephants will burst through any troops, friendly or enemy, in their path. This results in the elephant model moving through and the intervening troops taking 2 DPs if formed.

## Formations

5.1 **Unformed Troops.** Units which move without trying to maintain formation are termed *unformed*. All light troops are normally unformed; others become so through an event or actions. Bases of unformed units should be spaced apart to indicate their state. As unformed units do not attempt to maintain any order, bases are moved individually with no penalties for manoeuvre. They are considered to be facing all-round and therefore have no flanks or rear.

### 5.2 Units are unformed in the following circumstances:

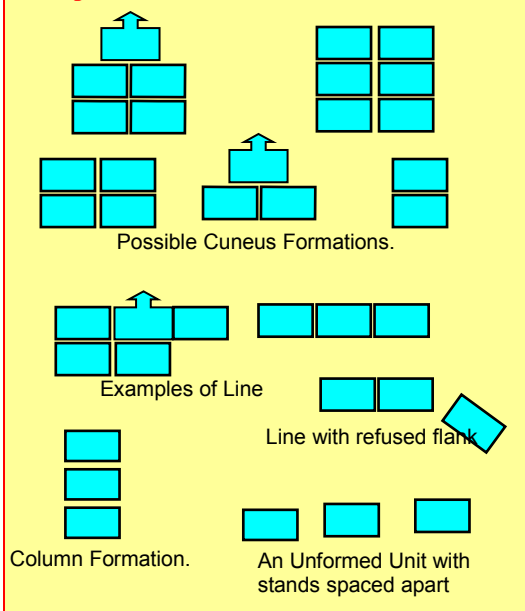
Light troops are normally permanently unformed although some may form-up in the following circumstances only:

- Foot archers and skirmishers may form as part of a *Line* (see 5.3), to support heavy infantry from a rear rank. They may remain formed in Line if they are moving as part of a heavy infantry *Battle Line* (see 5.5), but they will automatically become unformed again if they move on their own. The same applies for light cavalry supporting heavy cavalry.
- Javelinmen, and armed rabble may form Line if stationary. They will automatically become unformed again if they charge or move more than 1 javelin throw

Troops who are making a *fast move* (see 5.9) in order to evade, retire, rout or pursue are also unformed for as long as they are in that state. Other units or units in other circumstances must always maintain unit formation and may not voluntarily become unformed.

5.3 **Unit Formations.** Artillery, elephants, pack animals and wagons operate as single models with no formation. Other formed units must adopt one of the following formations:

#### Examples of Unit Formations:



- *Line:* This is the main combat formation designed to maximise the number of troops able to shoot and fight. The unit is in one or two ranks, as nearly equal as possible with all bases side by side, and in contact with each other. In the case of an odd number, the smaller number of stands should be in the rear rank. Units in Line may bend their formation to conform to irregular terrain features and some (see 5.22) to refuse a flank. Troops manning fortifications can only be deployed in a single rank.

- *Column:* This is a marching formation designed for quick movement but not combat. The unit is in a single file with all bases one behind the other, in contact, and facing the same direction.

- *Cuneus (Attack Column or Wedge):* This is an attack formation designed to

deliver an offensive punch on a narrow frontage. The unit is deployed 2-3 ranks deep with the number of stands in each rank as nearly equal as possible, and no more than 2 stands in each rank. In the case of an odd number, the smaller number of stands should be in the front rank. *Cuneus may only be formed by Shock Cavalry, Cataphracts, Knights, Shock Infantry, Shieldwall Infantry and Roman Infantry.*

5.4 Units of only 1 stand do not have sufficient troops to form Cuneus. When operating independently such units are considered to be in line, otherwise they are assumed to be in the same formation as other troops with whom they are operating.





Cuneus formation is a deep column following the leader who is front and centre. This would have given a wedge-like appearance as the centre surged forward and the flanks held back. The formation has an advantage if attacking as the formation is less susceptible to disruption and more men count in combat over a narrower frontage. The draw backs are that no more than half the number of stands in the unit are able to shoot, the formation has more limited manoeuvre options and suffers more disruption in combat if its initial charge is not successful. Line allows the maximum number of stands to shoot but is unwieldy and suffers more from disorder when moving, especially if B or C Grade.

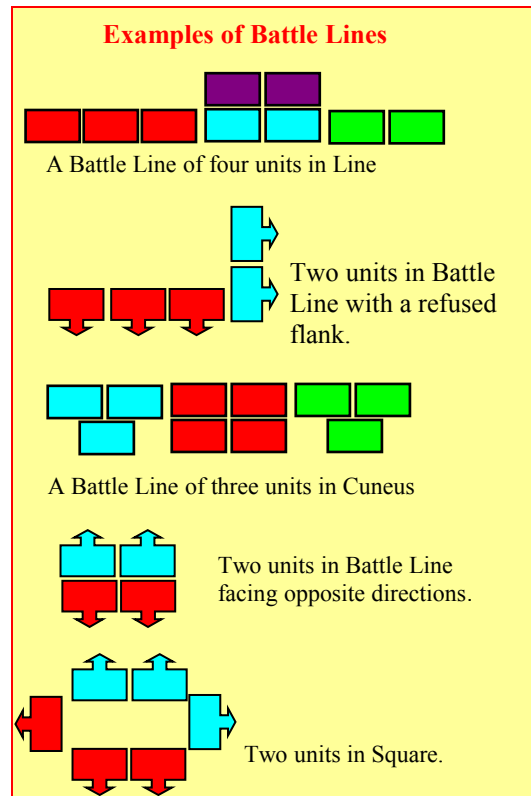
Units of 2 or 4 stands, two ranks deep, look the same in Line or Cuneus. Such a formation is assumed to be Cuneus for Shock Troops, Roman Infantry and Dark Age Infantry unless the player specifies otherwise.

**5.5 Command Formations.** Units of the same command who are in base to base contact with each other may adopt a *command formation*. In this case all movement and actions can be taken collectively as long as their commander spent 1 CP to control units. Unformed units which are within 1 javelin throw of formed units from the same command, are considered to be part of that formation and may move together with it. The same applies to a command made up entirely of light troops as long as they are all within 1 javelin throw of each other. Command Formations take the following form:

- **Battle Line:** A continuous line of several units, all of which are in Line or Cuneus and facing the same, or opposite direction. It may be up to two units deep but must be at least as wide as it is deep. A Battle Line may 'refuse a flank' by turning one or more units on the end of the line to face the flank. By doing so it will not take DPs if charged on that flank or the front (see 4.5 and 7.12).
- **Square:** A single rank heavy infantry formation facing out in all directions to form a closed hollow square, rectangle or circle. Non heavy infantry units from the same command may form up inside the hollow. All stands face the same direction when moving but automatically turn to face outwards when stationary, in the latter case it is considered to have no flanks or rear and all units will count as supported. If they get a retire or fall back result in combat they remain in place and take an extra DP (see 7.19).
- **March Column:** A continuous column of several units, all of which are themselves in column and facing the same direction. It may be no more than one stand wide with all stands one behind the other.

**5.6** To move independent units into or out of a Command Formation they simply move individually the required distance. To change between command formations causes 1 DP on each unit if within bow range of enemy:

- **March Column into Battle Line or Square:** Formed units in a March Column may change their formation into Battle Line or Square (see 5.18) either one after another or all together, facing to the right or left and/or adjusting formation as required for the deployed command formation.
- **Battle Line or Square to March Column:** Change one unit's formation to Column (see 5.18) and move one stand in the facing direction as the head of the column with the





others following on, ensuring there are no gaps in the column. Other troops may then change formation and link up as required to form the March Column.

- *Battle Line to/from Square*: Takes one complete movement phase.

### **Movement**

5.7 Move distances are normally randomly controlled by dice except that units beyond bow range of enemy may make a **March Move** without rolling dice. If making a march move infantry, elephants, and wagons may move up to 4 javelin throws (5 if unformed or in column); cavalry up to 6. Infantry and wagons may increase the move to 6 javelin throws if in column on a road. Units making a march move may not approach closer than bow range to enemy.

For all other moves units must move the full amount indicated by the dice rolled except:

- Units intending to occupy a specific piece of terrain or fortification, or intending to line up with other units, may halt when they reach that place. Such an intention must be declared in advance.
- During the approach phase all units must halt at bow range of enemy to their front. In the tactical phase they must halt at javelin range. Units need to initiate a charge (see 7.2) in order to move in to contact with enemy.
- Units may halt short if their full move would force them to interpenetrate a friendly unit or move into, out of, or across, a terrain feature. In these cases the unit may halt up to one javelin throw before reaching such a position.
- A and B Grade Units in Line may move 1 javelin throw without having to roll the dice. Artillery may only move 1 javelin throw and this does not require dicing for.



Random movement within bow range of the enemy simulates a wide range of physiological factors which may cause individual units to behave in ways that deviate from parade ground manoeuvre. A unit which rolls a very low movement die may be having doubts about its position or its unit commander may be indecisive.

5.8 Units, which are part of a Battle Line or March Column, use the same die roll in all but rough terrain; others roll individually. In the case of a command formation of mixed troop types, use the appropriate die for the slowest and highest grade troops in the formation.

### 5.9 **Random Move Distances:**

**Normal Move.** Move  $\frac{1}{2}$  JT for each number rolled on an AvD + an optional additional die (AvD for A Grade, D6 for others). The player must declare how many dice he will throw before he rolls.

**Cavalry**, other than Cataphracts, may roll another additional optional D6

**Light Troops** optionally add  $\frac{1}{2}$  JT for each die rolled

**Units making a Fast Move** (Evade, Retire, Rout and Pursuit) must roll the maximum possible dice with light troops adding their normally optional extra  $\frac{1}{2}$  JTs.



Cavalry may only change speed by up to 2 dice per movement phase. Therefore a stationary unit which decides to move may only roll a up to two dice. The next time it moves it may (in a subsequent move phase or to charge) roll the additional optional die. Conversely a unit which moved 3 dice may not halt the following turn unless it must due to a control test result, impassable terrain, enemy troops, or if it would force it to interpenetrate formed friendly troops.

5.10 **Minimum and Maximum Moves.** Units may choose to move or not, if they do move, the minimum move distance is one javelin throw which does not have to be diced for. A Command in Square may only move up to 3 javelin throws even if they roll higher on their move dice..

5.11 **Fatigue and Disorder.** Formed units normally incur 1 DP each time the move die result is 5-6. This reflects fatigue from moving fast together with disorder in the ranks caused by the difficulty of maintaining dressing while moving fast. Units in Cuneus do not, however, incur a DP when a 6 is rolled (only on a 5). Unformed units, single models, units making a march move, and units in Column, do not incur DPs for fatigue. **Once a unit has 3 DPs for whatever reason, it incurs no further DPs for fatigue or manoeuvre.**

5.12. **Skirmishing.** Unformed light troops must fall back to maintain desired skirmishing distance in face of an approach by formed enemy or elephants. This is done in the enemy movement phase and has no impact on previous or subsequent movement by the light troops.

#### **Effect of difficult terrain:**

5.13 Difficult terrain is any terrain that hinders movement. It can include woods, heavy scrub, built up areas, soft sand, bogs, steep hill slopes and rocky outcrops. It also includes crossing minor linear obstacles such as streams and gullies.

- Roads negate the effects of all difficult terrain, except steep hill slopes, to troops in column. Infantry in column on a road may move up to 6 javelin throws when making a march move. Mounted troops do not get an increased move on road. Troops in column in a built-up area are assumed to be on a road.
- Difficult terrain is usually impassable to mounted troops unless on a road. However, troops mounted on camels are not affected by soft sand. All mounted troops may cross minor obstacles; they may also negotiate steep hill slopes.
- Light Cover such as scrub, orchards and vineyards does not affect movement for foot, but does cause 1 DP for formed mounted. It also affects visibility (see 3.34) and shooting (see 6.5)
- Any formed units which move in difficult terrain, except in column, receive a DP. This applies even if only part of the unit or part of the unit's move is through the difficult terrain.

5.14 Extreme terrain such as major rivers and sheer cliffs can be designated as impassable to all but unarmoured skirmishers or javelinmen. Troops negotiating such impassable terrain may do so by expending a set number of turns to cross and incurring 1 DP per turn for the effort.

#### **Manoeuvre**

5.15 Normal moves by formed units must be in the direction of the unit's facing with no more than 22 ½° deviation off-centre.

5.16 Unformed troops, and special troops operating as single stand models manoeuvre by each base moving freely and independently without having to maintain alignment or order. Bases of the same unformed unit may not, however, be separated by more than 1 javelin throw from each other. Unformed units, and elephants, do not incur any movement penalties or DPs for any manoeuvre other than crossing major obstacles or mounting and dismounting. Manoeuvre by formed units usually reduces the move and may cause the unit to accumulate DPs.

5.17 **Wheels.** This is the usual method of changing the direction of a unit's facing. It is conducted as a normal move, first rolling dice to determine the move distance. The unit then pivots on one end of the line and the distance moved by the outside base is measured. If any distance remains, the unit may move forwards normally up to the full allowance. Cost: 1 DP for formed units within bow range of enemy. No penalty if in column or if the unit is only one stand wide. A Battle Line of units in line wheel as one long single body. Individual units wheel individually as do units in cuneus.

5.18 **Unit Formation Changes.** These are done by re-arranging the unit's stands, on the spot, into the appropriate formation (Column to Line, Line to Column, Column to Cuneus etc.) This takes ½ move phase and causes 1 DP if within bow range of enemy.

5.19 To **re-form unformed troops** into Line, Cuneus or Column, the unit must first be free of whatever caused it to become unformed in the first place. This means that a shaken unit must *rally* (see 4.8) and other units must have ceased evading, pursuing or routing (see 3.12). If these conditions have been met, the unit's stands may be re-arranged into either Line, Cuneus or Column, taking ½ move. This is either done on the spot or the unit may withdraw (still moving unformed) to a safer location first. No DPs are incurred by this action.

5.20 **Crossing Obstacles.** Crossing a *minor obstacle* such as a stream costs 1 DP for formed troops. Crossing a *major obstacle* such as a river or fortification takes ½ move, regardless of the size of the obstacle. It causes the unit (formed or unformed) to incur 1 DP, or 2 DPs if making a fast move. Elephants incur no penalty if crossing a non-permanent man-made obstacle such as a barricade or field fortification. If an elephant crosses such an obstacle they open up a path one javelin throw wide. **Casualty inflicting defensive obstacles** such as caltrops or concealed pits result in an additional DP to cavalry on any move die result of 4, this is over and above the normal maximum of 3 DPs for movement.

5.21 **About Face.** This involves turning the unit around to face the rear and can only be done by units in Line or Column, *not Cuneus*. C Grade troops and all cavalry, incur 1 DP if in bow range of enemy. No penalty for other formed units. This is the only turn allowed by formed units. Turns to the flank are not allowed, although a unit in line or cuneus could form a column facing the direction of either flank (and visa versa), conducting such a move as a formation change (see 5.18). They could then use the rest of their move to change back into their original formation with a new facing. Such a double formation change takes a complete turn and incurs 1 DP (not 2) if in bow range of enemy.

5.22 **Refusing a Flank.** This is only allowed by A and B Grade Infantry units in Line and involves bending one stand backwards. No dice required. Takes 1 move phase.

5.23 **Doubling and Halving Ranks.** This is only allowed by units in line. They may change the width or depth of the formation by doubling or halving the number or ranks. It takes ½ move and causes 1 DP for C Grade troops. This includes two under strength stands forming into one full strength one and visa versa.

5.24 **Side-step/Step-back.** This is only allowed by A and B Grade Infantry in Line. It is conducted instead of a normal move, by moving up to 1 javelin throw back or sideways (no dice required). Takes 1 move phase.

5.25 **Slow Walk.** A and B Grade formed infantry may move 1 javelin throw forwards without having to dice for movement.

5.26 **Mount/Dismount.** Replace the mounted troops by figures on foot (or visa versa) Takes ½ move and 1 DP for all troops (including unformed). Two mounted stands form one dismounted stand or two under strength dismounted stands. Dismounted troops should have a horse and horse-holder marker placed close to them to indicate their status and the location of their mounts

5.27 **Incline.** This is only allowed by A and B Grade Infantry in Line. It is conducted as a normal move with the unit moving up to ½ its allowance to the side and an equal amount forwards. It is possible to combine an incline with forward movement. For example a unit rolling 6 one 2 dice giving it a movement allowance of 3 javelin throws, may elect to incline 2 javelin throws (1 sideways and 1 forwards) then move the remaining javelin throw forwards. It is not possible, however, to do this the other way around and move more to the side than forwards

5.28 **Interpenetration.** No penalty for units passing through each other if both units are parallel, one unit is stationary, and one is unformed (but not routing) and not more than one stand deep. Otherwise this causes 1DP on each formed unit involved. Formed troops interpenetrated by elephants always take 2 DPs (no penalty for the elephant).

5.29 **Passing a gap.** Formed units wishing to pass through a gap narrower than their frontage, must either:

- Reduce frontage by up to half, pass through, and then expand immediately back to original formation. This incurs 1 DP and reduces Infantry move by  $\frac{1}{2}$ . Cavalry can maintain full speed; or
- Change formation into column or cuneus then pass through.

5.30 DPs are incurred only once for each action. For example a unit which starts crossing a major obstacle on turn 1 then continues the manoeuvre on turn 2 only gets 1 DP for the manoeuvre.

5.31 When  $\frac{1}{2}$  move is specified the unit must roll the dice then divide the total allowance by two and round up.

5.32 **Moving off-table.** Once on the table, units may not normally move off voluntarily. It may happen, however, that a unit is forced off when evading, retiring, routing or pursuing. In order to return, a unit must first pass a control test getting a result of 'act as player wishes' (see 3.14). If a retiring unit was followed off table by pursuers it may not return until after the pursuers have returned. In such a case the pursuing player may choose to remain off table with his unit in order to prevent his opponent from returning. In order to return to the table the units must roll a die (AvD for A Grade, D6 for others) they may return on a roll of 4 or 5 on the first attempt. 4-6 on subsequent attempts.

5.33 **Rout and Pursuit Moves.** Broken Units must continue to make a fast move until destroyed or off-table. Subsequent rout moves (after the initial after combat move (see 7.16)) are made during opponents move phase as long as the opponent is still pursuing in order to keep routers and pursuers moving together. **A routing unit loses one casualty for each such subsequent rout move.** Pursuers must pass a control test in order to cease pursuit.

## Summary of Movement Penalties:

Action	Penalties – Maximum 3 DPs except casualty inflicting obstacles
4 rolled on move die	1 DP for cavalry crossing casualty inflicting obstacle such as caltrops
5 rolled on move die	1 DP for unit in line or Cuneus
6 rolled on move die	1 DP for unit in line only
Move in difficult terrain	1 DP for formed, usually impassable for mounted
Move in light cover	1 DP for formed mounted
Wheel	1 DP if in bow range of enemy
Change Unit Formation	½ move. 1 DP if in bow range of enemy
Change Command Formation	1 DP if in bow range of enemy
Form-up unformed troops	½ move
Cross Minor Obstacle	1 DP if formed
Cross Major Obstacle	½ move. 1 DP. 2 DPs on fast move.
About Face (only line and column)	1 DP if mounted or C Grade
Doubling and Halving Ranks.	Line only. ½ move and 1 DP for C Grade
Mount/Dismount	½ move for all units + 1 DP for all units
Interpenetrate Friends	1 DP unless one unit is stationary and one is unformed and not routing
Pass a Gap	1 DP for formed units + ½ move for infantry



Normal battlefield terrain is never as flat and clear as what appears on the wargames table. Even an open plain will be covered with small folds in the ground, crops, rocks, scrub, trees and a variety of things that will disrupt a unit's parade-ground manoeuvre. The DPs incurred for fatigue and disorder take this into account as well as representing the difficulty in maintaining alignment with a wide frontage, especially for cavalry and undrilled troops. The slower a unit moves and the narrower its frontage, the easier time it will have in keeping its ranks and files together. Unformed troops who are not trying to keep order in the ranks are not bothered by such problems, neither are elephants.

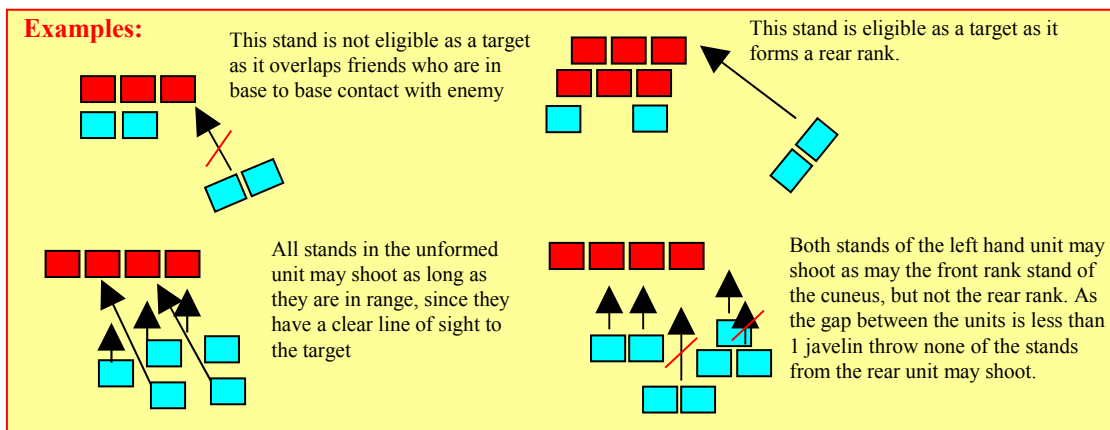
### Ranges and Targets

6.1 Short (or javelin) range is 1 javelin throw (see 1.16). It is this distance that forms the basis of all other measurements. All units with a short-range missile factor (S) may shoot at targets within that range. Long (or bow) range is five times javelin range. Only troops with a long-range missile factor (L) may shoot at targets beyond Javelin range. Bow range is increased by one javelin throw for troops on a hill or high fortifications.

6.2 Artillery Long range is three times bow range. Artillery may shoot through unformed troops to hit a formed target behind them. In this case, only the formed troops are counted as targets.

6.3 Unformed troops may shoot all round, in any direction. In other cases targets must be to the shooter's front, within 45° of centre and in direct line of sight. Where several possible targets are available, troops must shoot at the nearest unless a leader has allocated one CP to *direct fire* (see 3.10) in order to engage a priority target.

6.4 Stands in contact with friends are not eligible as targets. This includes any overlapping stands but not rear ranks. All stands in an unformed unit may shoot as long as they have a clear line of sight, otherwise gaps must be at least one javelin throw wide to shoot through, and only front rank stands may shoot unless allowed to shoot overhead (see 6.9). Only the front rank stands of a unit in cuneus may shoot.



### 6.5 Shooting Procedure

Roll 1 D6 for each stand shooting. Halve the number of dice for UnS stands. Halve again (round down) if the target is in cover. **If the result is 6 or more, a Hit has been scored.** Apply any modifiers which apply from below:

- +2 for artillery shooting at formed troops or elephants;
- +1 for all others shooting at short range, except non-crossbows against targets that count as armoured.
- Reduce the total number of dice by one for each DP on the shooting troops
- Halve number of dice for stands shooting low on ammunition (see 6.11)

**Hit** = 1 DP up to a maximum of 3 in any one shooting phase for non-armoured cavalry, maximum of 2 for others.

6.6 **Long Range Missile Exchange.** This is an exchange of missiles at long range. In this phase, any eligible targets at Javelin Range and beyond may be engaged.

6.7 **Short Range Missile Exchange.** In this phase, stands may engage targets at javelin range, but not normally beyond. The exceptions to this are troops other than artillery

who remained stationary in the Tactical Move Phase, and light horse archers, whether they moved or not. These troops may engage targets at beyond javelin range.

6.8 **Heavy Infantry**, other than Spear and Bow Infantry, may only shoot just prior to close combat with enemy. They are not, therefore, eligible to shoot in either the Long or Short Range Missile phases. Instead they may shoot in the combat phase if standing to receive a charge or if charging themselves (see 7.13). Spear and Bow Infantry may shoot in the normal missile exchange phases as may archers supporting Heavy Infantry in a second rank.

6.9 **Overhead Shooting**. Normally only stands in the front rank of a unit may shoot. However, overhead shooting is allowed in the following circumstances:

- Troops on a higher elevation may shoot and be shot at over the heads of others on lower ground. Elephants and the top of fortifications are considered to be higher elevation.
- Foot archers may shoot overhead of one stand of heavy infantry from the same command, if in line and in base to base contact. Heavy and Light Horse archers may shoot overhead of one stand of other cavalry from the same command, if in line, and in base to base contact.
- Light Cavalry may shoot two stands deep; representing a constantly moving formation despite the fact that for game purposes the unit may be 'stationary'.

6.10 **Shooting Hits**. A maximum of 3 DPs can be inflicted on a non-armoured cavalry unit from shooting in any one missile phase, 2 DPs on other troops, even if the shooters score more Hits. Once a unit is shaken, missile fire has no further effect except against light troops. Elephants must test for their reaction if they receive any hits from shooting. (see 4.7 and 4.9).

#### **Optional Rules - Ammunition Supply (Use if agreed by all players)**

6.11 Units which have shot 3 times roll one die for every two stands normally eligible to shoot. This affects the entire unit no matter how many stands have fired at whatever ranges. In the case of uneven numbers round down the first time, then round up the following time and so on.

Players may wish to record how many times a units shoots on paper but it is probably easier to make small counters with the number 1 on one side and 2 on the other which can be placed beside the unit after it fires for the first and second times. After firing the third time, the marker can be removed and replaced by a 'low ammunition marker' which could either be a single archer figure or another counter. Artillery never becomes low on ammunition, this reflects their static use, allowing storage and re-supply of ammunition.

For certain scenarios players may wish to introduce ammunition re-supply wagons or baggage animals allowing a unit to fire at full effect again if it remains in contact with the re-supply marker for a full turn



The Dark Ages saw increased use of archery both on horse and foot. Swarms of light horse archers could wear down heavier units and then charge home once they showed signs of wavering. The Persians and Turks trained their heavy cavalry to deliver disciplined volleys that could disrupt an enemy formation before it could charge home. Although each heavy infantry stand represents more troops than cavalry or light infantry, it is assumed that they are not as specialised in missile fire and not all in a position to shoot effectively. Therefore heavy infantry shoot with one die per stand, like other troops.

Many first hand accounts of Dark Age battle, describe missile exchanges with arrows, then javelins, followed by hand to hand combat once these missiles had been used up. The ammunition supply rule is partially designed to represent this, forcing players to revert to hand to hand combat as their missile fire loses its effectiveness. The rules on ammunition supply are optional since they can slow down play and may be too cumbersome for the tastes of some players. They do however add something to a game involving lots of horse archers.

The effect of shooting is to disorder a formation so badly that it can be attacked and defeated in hand to hand combat. Shooting alone will not defeat an opponent because it can never cause an enemy to break or suffer casualties.

### Combat Basics

7.1 Combat is sub-divided into *Charges* and *Mêlée*. A charge is an aggressive movement intended to end in hand-to-hand fighting. As a charge is as much governed by psychological factors as actual physical combat, a charge result may simulate one side or the other running out of steam, giving ground or even breaking up completely before the anticipated 'clash of battle lines' can occur. Once troops enter *mêlée* however, they are considered to be locked into a series of confused hand-to-hand combats with each side pushing into each others' ranks. Unit cohesion is essential to winning a charge combat whereas in *mêlée* this is less important.

### Charges

7.2 A charge is the only way that a unit can move to close the distance from javelin range into contact with an opponent. Any number of units in a battle line, who are being controlled by the same leader, may be combined to form a single body for the charge. Otherwise they must charge individually. Each player must declare which of his units will initiate a charge. This is done in turn, starting with the player who has initiative. After both players have made their declarations, determine charge responses and roll dice to determine charge movement. Players may not voluntarily cancel previously declared charges, nor add new ones, based on their opponents charge responses or the result of their movement dice.

7.3 **Restrictions on Charges.** The following troops have restrictions on their ability to initiate a charge:

- Shaken troops and troops in column may not initiate a charge unless forced to do so by a control test (see 3.14);
- Unless in pursuit, or in spontaneous advance from a control test (see 3.14), C Grade troops may only initiate a frontal charge against formed enemy if a leader charges with them, or is already involved in combat, or is inspiring within bow range. C Grade troops may move, however, as part of a battle line in which another unit is charging, and may always charge shaken or unformed troops or an exposed flank or rear.
- Artillery, foot archers and crossbowmen may not initiate a charge.
- Unless in pursuit, foot archers, skirmishers and light cavalry may only initiate a charge against shaken or unformed troops or an *exposed flank or rear*.
- Heavy horse archers and lance & bow cavalry who shot at short range from a front rank that turn, may not initiate a charge. They may however charge if only a rear rank shot, and they may counter-charge if charged by enemy.

The restrictions on heavy horse archers and lance & bow cavalry reflects their more static use of missile fire and relative lack of mobility when compared to light horse archers or skirmishers.

As the number of regular drilled troops declined, leadership became more personal. and troops followed individual leaders rather than acting out of duty or loyalty to the state. Therefore C Grade troops need to see the personal commitment of their leader sharing the same risks as they do before they throw themselves into combat.

7.4 Charges always involve a move to contact even the unit moved in the Move Phases.

7.5 **Charge Moves.** To conduct a charge move, regardless of the distance to be covered, all troops must dice for movement taking any DPs for fatigue that may apply (up to the maximum of 3 DPs for fatigue and manoeuvre. See 5.11). A Battle Line charging together rolls one set of dice for all units, others roll individually.

7.6 The full distance rolled on the dice must be taken until contact is made. The move must be directly to the front if at a target within javelin range or deviating off centre no more than 22 ½° if charging from further away. Other manoeuvre must have been completed in the previous movement phase. Movement dice must be rolled, taking into account DPs for fatigue



as normal. Troops charging from beyond javelin range may choose to roll the additional optional move dice, others will only need to roll the basic 1 AvD. Cavalry need to have moved in the tactical move phase in order to be eligible to roll the third die. Players may choose to how many dice they wish to roll for the charge but must declare so in advance.

**7.7 Failure to Contact.** If the chargers or counter-chargers fail to contact, because their opponent broke or evaded, they must continue their charge move up to the full distance rolled on the dice. Unless they are light troops or A Grade, they will automatically charge into any new opponents who are uncovered by the evading or breaking unit. A new target must react according to the normal charge responses if it is charged in these circumstances. Light and A Grade troops may instead choose to halt 1 javelin throw away from the new target.

**7.8** If the chargers fail to make contact because they did not roll high enough on their movement dice they may move normally next turn. If, however, they need to take a control test next turn, they count as 'charging or pursuing' and if they get a 'repeat last move' result, they must advance to and charge the nearest enemy

**7.9 Charge Responses.** Any unit, which has not itself declared a charge, and is charged by enemy, will react according to their troop type and circumstances. These responses are detailed in the Charge Response Chart below.

<b>Charge Responses:</b>	
<p><b>Armed Rabble.</b> Counter-charge on a D6 roll of 5-6, otherwise stand to receive.</p> <p><b>Other Light Infantry</b> may opt to counter-charge or stand to receive a charge if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formed in Line</li> <li>• in, or separated from the chargers by difficult terrain or obstacle; or</li> <li>• charged by mounted troops (including a combination of mounted and foot), or only by light troops.</li> <li>• In all other circumstances, Light Infantry must evade if charged</li> </ul>	<p><b>Light Cavalry</b> may choose to counter-charge other cavalry or light troops, otherwise they must evade.</p> <p><b>Heavy Cavalry</b> may counter-charge or stand to receive. Heavy Horse Archers and Heavy Javelin Cavalry may also choose to evade</p> <p><b>Shaken units:</b> light or poor morale break. Others respond according to type.</p> <p><b>All other troops, or in other circumstances,</b> must stand to receive. Troops in mêlée from a previous turn must also normally stand to receive, however Shaken Light or Poor Morale units will break</p>

**7.10 Evading a Charge.** Units attempting to evade are trying to move out of the way of the charge. This is done by making a full fast unformed move directly away from the enemy charging them. It causes the unit to receive 1 DP. Evaders may stop short of the full amount rolled on their movement dice if they are separated from the chargers by formed friendly troops or difficult terrain. If evading troops are caught in the back because they failed to move fast or far enough, they will break. The chargers immediately get a *free hack* (see 7.23).

**7.11 Counter-charge.** A unit which wishes (or must) counter-charge, rolls a move die in the same way as a charging unit, it then moves forward contacting the charger half way if of the same type, or if mounted counter-charging infantry. Infantry counter-charging cavalry move up to 1 javelin throw or half way whichever is shortest. A counter-charge may include a wheel of up to 22 ½° without penalty if the charge originated from beyond javelin range. This will not negate the effect of a charge originating from behind the unit's flank or rear (see 4.5). Counter-charging cavalry may not choose to throw the third optional move die. A counter-charge is considered as a charge when it comes to working out combat results.

**7.12 Stand to Receive.** A unit, which wishes (or must) stand to receive a charge, remains in place. It may, if normally allowed (see 5.21 & 5.22) about face any unengaged to face a charge from the rear or to refuse a flank if the charge commenced from beyond javelin range.

The unit being charged will not take DPs for this as it is assumed that it had time to complete the manoeuvre before contact. Unformed Javelinmen and Archers may form up to receive a charge from beyond Javelin Range.

**7.13 Shooting in the Combat Phase.** Units that did not shoot during the Short Range Missile Exchange, and that do not break or counter-charge as a charge response, may shoot at enemy who charge them if they stand to receive. They do this at Short Range (see 7.3 for restrictions on shooting and charging). Light Horse Archers may also shoot under these circumstances if they evade. Heavy Infantry, other than Spear and Bow Infantry, are only allowed to shoot during the charge phase. They may do so if they stand to receive, charge or counter-charge but not if they evade. Charge phase shooting takes effect before actual closing to combat.

### **Mêlée**

**7.14** Troops in contact with each other from previous turns, except pursuers who contacted routing or retiring troops, are considered to be in mêlée. This is close combat with opposing troops fighting hand to hand and becoming intermingled as they push into each other's ranks. This kind of hard fighting emphasises individual man to man combat rather than the clash of battle lines.

**7.15** Prior to mêlée, units in cuneus may move up to two stands from rear ranks to the front as long as there is space for them. This can be thought of as men in rear ranks pushing forward into the mêlée. Front rank stands must be shifted to line up exactly with opposing stands with rear rank stands lining up with a stand to their front so that it is clear which stands derive rear support.

**7.16 Reinforcing a Mêlée.** In the tactical move phase, a new unit may be brought in behind a friendly unit in melee in order to give it greater depth in melee.

**7.17 Charging into a Mêlée.** If a unit charges an opponent which is in mêlée with friends from the previous turn, the combined charge/mêlée is worked out as a single combat. Count those factors which apply to charge combat only on the units which charged or were contacted by the charge, count those factors which apply in mêlée only on the units which are involved in mêlée. At least one unit (the one in mêlée which has been charged) will need to take both into account.

**7.18 Combat Resolution.** Opposing units determine the outcome of combat by comparing their relative strengths from the factors below:

Roll 1 AvD for A Grade, 1 D6 for others. Add the **Attack Factor** of units with forward momentum (charge, pursue, follow-up), **Defence Factor** of others; then add or subtract:

- +/- Morale Value
- +1 Advantage of Ground
- +1 Defending Fortification
- +1 Deeper formation
- +1 Pursuing or following-up
- +1 Mounted in mêlée with foot
- +1 Armoured or partially armoured in mêlée
- +2 Cavalry charging unformed foot
- +CPs of leader inspiring a charge. +1 if a leader is involved in combat in other circumstances
- 1 Spearmen and Spear & Bow infantry in mêlée, who have previously fallen-back
- 1 For each DP (max -4) and casualty\*
- 5 If shaken\*
- 2 If in column or if unformed unless light infantry against elephants or cataphracts\*
- 1 If outnumbered
- 2 Outnumbered at least 2:1 (except elephants)
- 3 Outnumbered 3:1+ (except elephants)

\* These apply in charge combats only, not in mêlée.

**Multiple Unit Combat:** When Battle Lines of multiple units are involved in a charge, roll a die for each unit, total all factors for all units and divide by the number of units. Round up to the nearest whole number. All units which had stands involved in the combat must share the outcome. In mêlée, combat should be unit to unit whenever possible. Where opposing units overlap making this impossible, use the same procedure as for multiple charge combat.

**Advantage of Ground:** This can be applied to units which have a clear advantage due to terrain. This could include being uphill of their opponent, charging downhill, or being behind some form of obstacle or difficult terrain.

**Fortifications.** This should only be applied to troops defending substantial fortifications, and is in addition to advantage of ground.

**Deeper Formation.** Count all ranks of the same general type (eg infantry or cavalry) directly behind, in base to base contact, and facing the enemy up to 2 ranks for cavalry, 4 for infantry. This can include light troops and under strength units. Light infantry can also give depth to cavalry but cavalry may not give depth to infantry.

**Numbers:** All stands (including under strength), except elephants have the same numerical value when determining if troops are outnumbered. Elephant stands count double. Count only stands in base to base contact plus up to one stand over-lapping on each flank. Formed units which have been charged in the flank or rear do not count any overlapping or rear rank stands in a charge. Units which charged in cuneus also count all the second and ½ the third rank.

**Charge Results.** Compare the difference between the total scores of each side:

**5+ Victory.** 0 DPs. Cavalry who chose not to pursue broken opponents take 1 DP

- Any A Grade units, and B Grade Units which did not charge or counter-charge, may choose to *halt*. Otherwise must *pursue* broken opponents.

**+2/4 Success.** 1 DP except Heavy Infantry in Line who take 0 DPs

- Infantry who stood to face a mounted charge must *halt*.
- Cavalry who charged good order infantry frontally must *retire*
- A Grade infantry may choose to *halt, follow-up, or pursue*.
- Others must normally *follow-up* opponents who fall-back and *pursue* those who retire. However, A and B Grade units which did not charge, or were opposed only by light troops, may *halt*.

**+1/-1 Inconclusive.** 2 DPs if charged in cuneus, 1 DP otherwise

- Heavy Infantry choose to *halt or fall-back*; Light Infantry choose to *halt, fall back or retire*;
- Cavalry who charged good order infantry frontally, or who fought a round of mêlée, must *retire*. Elephants may *halt or follow-up*. Other cavalry may *halt, follow-up or retire*.

**-2/-4 Set-Back.** Shaken Troops Break. Others take 2 DPs and:

- Elephants must *halt*; Heavy Infantry who were charged by cavalry only must *halt*.
- Other unformed troops must *retire*; Others must *fall-back*

**-5/-6 Defeat.** Unformed troops and Elephants *Break*; others become shaken and *retire*

**-7 or less Rout.** Take 1 casualty and *break*.

## Movement after Charge Combat

7.19 Combat resolutions are conducted by all the losing units moving first, then the player(s) of the winning units deciding which option(s) they wish to take after the losers have moved. In an inconclusive result, the player with initiative decides his options last. The possible results are:

- *Halt.* Remain in place. May move normally the following turn.
- *Follow-up.* Move forward to remain in combat with an opponent who fell back.
- *Fall-back.* Move back 1 javelin throw facing the enemy. Units unable to fall-back, due to impassable terrain or troops, remain in place and receive 1 DP. All supporting units in rear ranks fall back as well.
- *Retire.* All units involved (including those making up rear ranks) move back a full fast move unformed. Next turn may either continue to retire or halt to reform. Retiring units may stop short of the full amount rolled on their movement dice if they are separated from the chargers by formed friendly troops or difficult terrain. Units unable to retire, due to impassable terrain or troops, remain in place and receive 1 DP. Retiring units break if caught by pursuers and the pursuers get a free hack (see 7.21).
- *Break.* Break into Rout. Make a full fast move, unformed and shaken, until either destroyed or off table. Units unable to make a rout move due to impassable terrain or troops, remain in place and receive 1 casualty. A routing unit takes one casualty for each turn of rout after the first. (See 5.33 for more on Rout and Pursuit moves)
- *Pursue.* Move a full fast move, unformed, in an attempt to remain in contact with opponent who broke or retired. Pursuers encountering new enemy automatically come into combat with them. This is worked out immediately as a new charge.
- *Artillery and Wagons.* If not part of a Command Formation, artillery and wagons are automatically captured by any enemy who come into contact with them, it being assumed that the crews have fled for safety. If fighting in a command formation they will be captured if all the other fighting units of the command fall back, retire or are routed. Captured wagons may be used by the enemy if they remove one stand from the capturing unit to crew them. The same is true for artillery but only if the capturing unit is A or B Grade Roman, Byzantine or Persian Infantry.

7.20 **Breaking off from Combat.** When charge results allow it, units may chose to fall back or retire even if they win, this allows them to break contact with their opponent.



**Tips:** It will often prove more effective to attack with a succession of charges rather than throwing all troops forward at once. When results allow, troops with a high attack but low defence factor should use the option of breaking off from combat to avoid being halted and having to fight a mêlée using their defence factor. However, there is a danger in breaking off that the opponent may be able to follow-up and possibly catch them in the rear.

7.21 **Free Hack.** Routing stands do not fight back. Pursuers who catch routers may immediately take a free hack, rolling one die for every stand in the pursuing body and removing a casualty for each die roll of 4 or more (no modifiers). This will continue each turn they remain in contact. This is the same for evading or retiring units who are caught in the back by chargers or pursuers

7.22 **Seeking out a Leader.** If two opposing leader's command stands are within 1 javelin throw of each other in a mêlée, the leaders of any B Grade Comitatus may seek out the other in personal combat. This is done by fighting a personal combat as under the rules at 3.31 before any mêlée is fought. None of the stands need to be re-arranged, rather it is assumed that the leaders have pushed their way forward (or to the side) to seek each other out. If a leader does not want to engage in personal combat, but his opponent does, it is assumed that his Comitatus has locked shields around him, making it impossible for the opposing leader to reach him. In such a case no personal combat takes place. Champions are not allowed in this form of personal combat.

**7.23** A leader who wins personal combat in this way, immediately increases his CPs by 1 and adds 1 to the Morale Value of all units under his command. A leader who loses is dead and can no longer influence the battle, his command stand, however, is not eliminated. Normal mêlée will follow immediately with the Comitatus of a defeated leader fighting to avenge the leader's death as at 3.33.

## VIII

## Definitions

The following are key terms the meanings of which should be understood in the same way by all players. More information can be found in the indicated paragraphs

**Advantage of Ground.** Troops who are uphill, charged downhill, defending a terrain feature or in some similar situation where the terrain gives them an advantage in combat over their opponents.

**Armoured.** Troops who are all unusually heavily armoured for their type who, as a result, gain extra protection from missile fire and in mêlée.

**AvD .** Average Die marked 2,3,3,4,4,5. A normal 6 sided die could be used, counting a '6' as a '4' and a '1' as a '3'.

**Break.** The total collapse of all internal unit cohesion which causing troops to break and rout (run away in panic).

**Battle Line.** A formation of several units of the same command which are lined up side by side no more than two units deep. Units within the formation are themselves in shieldwall or cuneus.

**Cavalry.** Troops who usually fight on horseback or camels. This term specifically does not include Elephants or mounted infantry.

**Cataphracts.** Completely armoured cavalry on armoured horses who fight in a close formation, charging at the trot.

**Charge.** A deliberate attempt to close to combat with the enemy. Combat resulting from a charge is worked out differently from mêlée as it takes into account the psychological factors involved in two bodies of troops closing with each other rather than man to man fighting.

**Column.** A formation one stand wide in which a unit is formed one stand behind the other.

**Combat Factors.** Numerical values (0-5) which reflect the relative effectiveness of certain troop types in combat. They include:

**Attack Factors** which are used when a unit has forward momentum either from charging, pursuing or following-up; and

**Defence Factors** which are used when a unit is either stationary or moving back.

**Comitatus.** The bodyguard of a leader which acts slightly differently from other units

**Command.** A group of units which operate together under the leadership of a commander

**Commander.** A senior officer or war-leader who leads several units grouped together as a command.

**Command Points (CPs).** A numerical value assigned to each leader which determine how many actions he can make each turn.

**Command Reach.** The distance within which a leader can influence troops under his command. Usually 1 javelin throw.

**Contingent.** A group of several commands operating together under the leadership of a contingent commander.

**Cuneus.** An attack column or wedge formed when a unit is deployed 2-3 ranks deep with the number of stands in each rank as nearly equal as possible, and no more than 2 stands in each rank.

**D6.** A normal six-sided die.

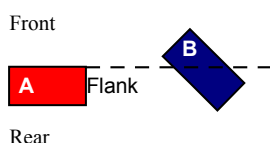
**Difficult Terrain.** Any terrain, other than major obstacles and impassable terrain, which has an impact on the movement of troops. This includes: woods, villages or settlements, marshes or boggy ground, heavy scrub or rocky ground, steep hill slopes, soft sand, and anything else that might hinder movement.

**Disorder Points (DPs).** A means of measuring the cumulative effect of casualties, stress, fatigue and disorder on a unit.

**Evade.** An attempt to avoid being contacted by an enemy charge. It is an unformed fast move and it causes 1DP.

**Fast Move.** Evade, retire, rout, and pursuit moves. They are made unformed, at the run or gallop where speed rather than unit cohesion is most important.

**Flank.** The side of a formed unit. To count as having been '**charged in the flank**' the enemy charge must have originated from *behind* the flank and some of the stands of the charging unit must have started their charge move from behind the flank. In the diagram below unit B unit may charge on to the flank of unit A and unit A will count as having been charged in the flank. An **Exposed Flank** is the flank of an enemy unit which, if charged, would cause that unit to count as having been charged in the flank, thereby receiving 2 DPs (1 DP if charged by unformed)



**Formed.** A unit which is drawn up in an orderly way maintaining alignment between ranks and files. A formed unit may be in either Line, Cuneus or Column formations. Light troops which do not attempt to maintain formation are usually unformed as are units which have lost order due to becoming shaken or making a fast move.

**Free Hack.** This is what pursuers or charges do to routing, retiring or evading units they catch up with. A casualty is removed for a 4-6 rolled on a D6 by each stand in contact.

**General.** The commander in chief of an entire army.

**Good Order.** A unit which is not unformed and not shaken is in Good Order.

**Heavy Cavalry.** Cavalry who fight in close formation and usually (but not always) wear some form of body armour. They will usually fight at close quarters but some who are also armed with missile weapons and are capable of limited skirmishing

**Heavy Infantry.** Infantry who fight in close formation and usually designed best for holding ground or engaging enemy in close combat.

**Hills.** Ground that is high enough to be noticeable. They will give a unit 'advantage of ground' if it is defending the high ground or charging downhill. Missile troops on a hill can shoot overhead of intervening troops. Some hills can have steep slopes. Steep hill slopes count as difficult terrain for movement, gentle hill slopes do not.

**Hit.** A term used to describe a successful result in mêlée or shooting.

**Impassable Terrain.** Very difficult terrain such as wide rivers, cliffs, lakes etc which are impassable to all except light infantry.

**Javelin Throw (JT).** A distance equal to a stand's base frontage (4cm in 15mm scales, 6cm in 25mm scale). This is javelin range and short range for other missile weapons. It also forms the basis for all measurements in the game.

**Leader.** A generic term for officers at any level of command including Commanders, Contingent Commanders, and Generals.

**Linear Obstacle.** Rivers, ditches, palisades, walls and other linear terrain features which impose a movement penalty on troops crossing them.

**Light Cavalry.** Mounted troops who fight in dispersed formations with missile weapons, usually avoiding combat with heavier troops.

**Light Cover.** Terrain features such as orchards, vineyards and light scrub that can provide concealment to troops and block line of sight but do not offer any protection from missiles, do



not provide an advantage in combat and do not adversely effect movement except for mounted troops.

**Light Infantry.** Lightly armed and equipped men on foot who fight in loose or dispersed formations, primarily with missile weapons.

**Light Troops.** Light Cavalry and Light Infantry.

**Line.** A formation in which a unit is formed up in a line no more than two stands deep and at least as wide as it is deep. This is the main combat formation designed to maximise the number of troops able to shoot and fight. Cavalry units in such a formation could be termed to be in 'line'.

**March Column.** A continuous column of several units from the same command, all of which are themselves in column and facing the same direction.

**March Move.** A move by troops beyond bow range of enemy. No dice are required, Infantry, elephants and wagons may move up to 3 and cavalry up to 5 Javelin Throws. The move is increased by one javelin throw for infantry who are unformed or in column and up to 5 javelin throws if infantry or wagons in column on a road. The move must end at bow range of any enemy.

**Mêlée.** Close hand to hand combat between troops who have in contact from the previous turn.

**Missile Factors.** These indicate the ability of units to inflict significant damage on opponents with missile weapons at either short or long range.

**Morale Value (MV).** A numerical value ranging from +2 to -1 quantifying the relative morale strengths of a unit with 0 being good average troops.

**Mounted Troops.** Troops riding on an animal including both cavalry and any other troops riding on horses, camels or elephants.

**Pursue.** An attempt to catch opponents who have broken or retired.

**Rally.** The act of reforming a unit which has been shaken. It involves remaining stationary an entire turn (all movement phases) beyond bow range of enemy.

**Rampage.** A move made by an elephant which has gone berserk due to wounds, casualties or fear.

**Retire.** A fast unformed move away from opponents but without panic

**Rout.** A panic move to get away from enemy made by broken units.

**Shaken.** A state a unit reaches after severe casualties, stress and fatigue when it is no longer capable of fighting.

**Spontaneous advance.** A Control Test result in which troops are obliged to advance towards the nearest enemy and charge as soon as they are in range. This can only happen to Armed Rabble, and any other B and C Grade Troops in Cuneus formation.

**Stand.** A standard sized base mounting a number of figures which forms the basic playing piece of the game.

**Unformed.** A unit which has no ordered formation.

**Unit.** An organised grouping of several stands which must operate together for the entire game. It is the smallest group capable of moving and acting independently under the rules.



The following are suggested markers that could be used to visually keep track of what is going on without having to keep paper records. These are particularly important for keeping track of how leaders have allocated their command points. These markers should be placed when allocated during the command phase and removed as soon as the leader takes the action.

- **Inspiration Marker** - a single foot figure in an advancing or inspiring position, placed beside a commander to show he has allocated 3 command points to inspire a unit in combat.
- **Direct Shooting Marker** - a counter or a single archer placed beside a leader to indicate he has expended 1 CP to direct shooting.
- **Command Marker** - a single mounted figure to act as a messenger and, when placed beside a commander, to indicate that he has allocated command points to give or receive orders. It can also be used to mark the location of a lone commander who has temporarily left his Comitatus.
- **Shaken Marker** - a casualty figure, or small counter painted or textured to stand out, placed beside a unit to indicate that it has reached a severe state of disorder. A red painted counter works well, giving the unit a 'red card'.
- **Disorder Markers** - small pebbles or pieces of gravel (easily obtainable from pet shops) to indicate each *disorder point (DP)* on a unit. Units will accumulate and lose these points throughout the game. Pieces of gravel make especially good markers for this purpose since they can be more easily handled than counters and blend in better with the battlefield terrain. Another option is to use very small dice with each pip representing a DP.
- **Halt Marker** - a counter painted or textured to blend with the battlefield to indicate units which may not move due to a control test.
- **Ammunition Marker** - a counter or a single archer to indicate units which are low on ammunition when using the optional ammunition supply rule. Players may also wish to use counters marked with the number 1 on one side and 2 on the other which can be placed beside the unit after it shoots for the first and second times.
- **Re-Supply Marker** - a single horse, camel or wagon to re-supply horse archers with arrows.
- **Baggage Marker** - Several Wagons and non-combatant figures to mark the location of the army's baggage.
- **Horse-holder Marker** - A dismounted cavalry figure with at least one horse to mark the location of the mounts of a dismounted unit.