

Hawkwood : Appendix

This appendix contains useful information not essential to playing the game.

1. Thinking behind the game

Basic intention

Hawkwood is intended to be a simple, enjoyable game. It is a historically based piece of entertainment rather than a strict simulation, though it attempts to catch the flavour of its period. The inspiration is the sort of game we played when I was young, with fairly small armies and often an imaginary back story. The base mechanisms owe much to Neil Thomas' *Ancient and Medieval Warfare* but in detail, the two games are quite different. Hawkwood has numerous changes to get a little closer both to history and to Old School games it is meant to evoke. The game is easy to pick up and quite fast moving, so should suit beginners or casual players.

Arms and armour

Obviously, the arms troops have are important to their battlefield performance. However, the relationship of troop types and weapons are interconnected. Largely, weaponry is subsumed into tactical role. Armour could, however, vary even among troops of similar tactical role. Lack of armour is also considered a significant factor in some medieval battle accounts so that is dealt with separately.

Troop quality

Troop quality in the rules is largely bound up with role and morale. The three morale classes should be seen as indicators of a mixture of confidence, experience and skill, not just of relative courage.

Command and control

The command and control elements of the game are deliberately minimal. Medieval command and control depended largely of commanders leading men according to a plan and using their skill and judgement to adapt when the plan wasn't working or the enemy didn't do what the plan expected of them. How well they did this depended on their skills and experience. A simple yet realistic system of simulating this (rather than an abstract like arbitrary limits on the number of units that can move, or an anachronistic game mechanism like written orders) is hard. So, instead, the player gets to make those decisions within constraints.

Manoeuvre

Medieval armies were not the drilled formation of later times. They mainly plodded forward in straight lines. Yet, clearly, in certain circumstances, troops changed direction, so the game needs to reflect this. So do not view wheels and turns as precise parade ground evolutions but rough and ready ways of achieving the same result.

Casualties

Casualties should not be seen as men killed or even as men rendered *hors de combat*. Rather, each casualty is a cumulative erosion of fighting strength and endurance. Each element removed is a step in the decline of the ability of the unit to go on fighting.

2. Armies and troop types in Hawkwood

Troop Class	Troop Type	Description
Mounted	Knights	Mounted Men-at-arms on good horses. 15 th . Century men-at-arms in full plate riding plate barded horses count as Extra Heavy armoured.
	Heavy Cavalry	Horsemen with poorer equipment or horses e.g. <i>Hobilars, gros varlets, coutilliers</i>
	Light cavalry	Mounted archers and crossbowmen
Infantry	Men-at-Arms	Gentlemen and retainers, with good equipment and motivation, fighting in close order
	Infantry	Close order foot with polearms, including bills, <i>godendag</i> , halberd etc. or using one or two handed spears with or without shields in close formation
	Pikes	15 th . Century and later troops using long pikes in the Swiss manner.
	Ribalds	Lightly armed irregular infantry eg <i>bidowers</i>
	Skirmishers	Loose order missile armed troops, armed with javelins, bows, crossbows, slings or handguns.
	Shot	Missile troops armed with bows, crossbows and handguns. Includes mixed bases of shot and <i>pavisiers</i> or pikemen
	Artillery	Artillery

Using the rules for an earlier period

The rules can be adapted to cover the Earlier Middle Ages. The table below maps earlier types on to the standard troop types and reflects the lighter equipment of the period.

	Abr.	Description	Typical Morale	Typical armour
Knights	Kn	Mounted men-at-arms	Elite	Hvy
Heavy Cavalry	HC	Serjeants, other non-skirmishing cavalry	Elite/Average	Hvy/Med
Light Cavalry	LC	Skirmishing cavalry	Elite/Average	Med/Lt
Men-at-Arms	MAA	Dismounted knights, <i>huscarles</i>	Elite	Hvy
Infantry	Inf	Most infantry	Average/levy	Hvy/Med/Lt
Shot	Sh	Non-skirmishing archers, crossbows etc.	Average/Levy	Med/Lt
Ribalds	Rib	Irregular infantry	Average/levy	Lt
Skirmishers	Sk	other missile troops	Average/levy	Lt

One of the major differences between the earlier and later periods was the use of large round and kite shields. Shields should be considered part of the defensive equipment of the unit, boosting protection especially of poorly armoured men. This was particularly useful in close order fighting e.g. shieldwall. For Infantry class

troops fighting in shieldwall formation, therefore, the minimum armour classification of troops should be medium.

Missile weapons can be seen as roughly equivalent. Composite crossbows were the most common field weapon from 12th – 15th centuries, even if longer-ranged, slower shooting steel bows were available at the end of the period. Longbows as defined in the rules really ought to refer to the weapon of the 14th century onward. However, in period match ups, if there is a need to differentiate Welsh archers from others, they can be longbows.

Element basing

The rules specify that troops should be on bases of similar frontage. The number of figures per base and the depth of bases are left to the player. The rules work on a nominal three figures per base. So, a “standard” 60mm frontage element could contain three 28mm figures. Aesthetically, one might use additional depth to vary the look between close-order and looser order troop types, and space light troops two to a base. Pikes look better in double-depth.

Casualty removal

An element is removed for every three casualties and casualties not divisible by three are carried forward. This can involve markers written notes. If these are not convenient, here are two alternatives.

1. Whole base only : Instead of carrying forward, dice as follows ;

- 1 casualty : on throw of 1-2 remove base
- 2 casualties : on throw of 1-4 remove base.

If no base is removed, disregard the casualty

2. Split bases : If using three figure bases, provide one split base per unit. Either three single figures on 1/3 element width bases, or a two figure, 2/3 width and a single base. Remove the carry forward from the split base, recycling the single and double bases as you remove whole elements. The split base continues to count as a full element for combat purposes.

Using single-based figures in Hawkwood

Single based figures can be used in the rules by constructing unit-sized movement bases (also known as sabots) . The exact dimensions of these will vary according to how figures are based but, because combat is unit on unit, this isn't critical provided players are happy with the aesthetics.

Adapting the rules is a matter of common sense. As units fight one-to-one, the inability of the movement base to change width isn't important. The element equivalent of any base is the number of figures divided by three, with fractions of three being taken as a full element e.g. seven figures is three elements. Remove a figure for every casualty lost and morale check every third figure removed.

3. Choosing armies

Scenarios

The creation of a backstory for a game makes it more enjoyable. If you know what your army represents and how it is supposed to have come to find itself on the battlefield, it adds a dimension. The approach can be taken further into the game itself. The common wargames term for this is a scenario. The scenario sets the scene; who the protagonists are, why they are fighting, what they are trying to achieve. It may also set the terrain, the weather, the time of day and so forth. It will usually give objectives beyond “knock hell out of the other side”. So a bridge may need to be seized, or a position held till nightfall etc.

It follows that a balanced game no longer needs balanced forces, because it may be harder for one side to win than the other. Take this example. A scratch force of local troops has to hold a ford for a certain length of time to delay the enemy, so that their main army, which is in pursuit, can bring the enemy to battle. It’s a realistic scenario for armies of our period – the battle of Boroughbridge or the forcing of Blanchetaque are two examples. It also allows dissimilar forces. The narrow attack front of the ford and the defensive advantages of river banks see to that. Scenarios also allow you to create one-off rules: for example, sticking to our river crossing theme, for the rate of destruction or repair of bridges. The trick is to create a balanced scenario. It needs to be able to go either way for maximum enjoyment. It may be certain the superior force can overwhelm the inferior one but can it do it in time or without suffering too many casualties because, in the scenario, it has another battle to fight tomorrow?

Simple points system

Points are for small units and should be scaled up for medium or large units.

Elite	2
Average	1
Levy	0.5
Weapons and tactics advantages (Knights, MAA, longbow, pike, pavise, mtd infantry)	0.5 per advantage
Armour bonus for EHvy or Hvy	0.5
Stakes or <i>pottes</i> (for 1 unit frontage)	0.5
Field fortification* (for 1 unit frontage)	1
General /caroccio	2
Sub-commander	1

*includes palisade, barricade, wagon laager

Examples:

Small Unit of knights, Elite, Hvy = $2 + 0.5 + 0.5 = 3\text{pts}$

Unit of shot, average, longbow, medium with stakes = $((1+0.5) \times 2) + 0.5 = 3.5\text{pts}$

Large unit of pikes, elite, heavy = $(2+0.5+0.5) \times 3 = 9\text{pts}$

Here’s the example from the morale section :

4 small units of Knights (Elite, Hvy)	= $4 \times 3 = 12$
3 small units of Crossbows (average, med)	= $3 \times 1 = 3$
1 unit of Militia spearmen (average, med, pavise)	= $1 \times 3 = 3$
1 large unit of Peasants (levy, lt)	= $1 \times 2 = 2$
General	= $1 \times 2 = 2$
Sub-commander	= $1 \times 1 = 1$
Total	= 23

Suggested points values for armies between 20-40pts.

Other ways of picking an army

1. By turns

In its simplest form, set a number of units per army and create a pool of at least double that number. Dice (or toss a coin) for who starts and take it in turn to choose units. This works best for armies of similar type e.g. Wars of the Roses. You can couple this technique with an army list but you'll need more units in the original pool to avoid the risk of the players running out of eligible picks. Obviously, you can vary the number of units you choose. For example, each player may come to the table with four core units and select the other four by alternate picks from a pool.

2. By chance

This is a variant of picking by turns. Again, take a pool of units and assign each one a card from a pack of cards. Take the same cards out of second pack of cards, shuffle and deal eight to each player. This is too random for me but, like picking, it can be modified by the idea of each side having a number of core units and dealing cards for the rest. You can get a degree of suspense from this by having more units than the required number, so that players don't know exactly what the other side has before they get to the table. This is especially true if you have some not-so-popular units, so, like a real commander, you sometimes get to use non-ideal armies. Another thing you can do with cards is to mix in a joker or jokers which stand for something other than units. It might give an advantage to the player holding the card; a flank march, some field fortifications, place a unit in an advanced position and so on. It might mean a random event from a list (e.g. weather) but be careful with these as it will have to be worth unbalancing the game for.

Hawkwood-lite

For a formalised, small game akin to DBA, try the following set up.

- Each army is restricted to a maximum of eight separate formations, with an army morale of 7.5 including general.
- The army can have a maximum of three medium units, which can only be Pikes, Infantry or Ribaulds, and no large units
- Additional commanders may be bought within the army morale total but are not compulsory.
- Camps must be off table.

4. Creating the battlefield

The ethos of the rules is that players are expected to operate in a sensible, mutually helpful manner. So terrain can be chosen by any mutually agreeable manner. For a simple encounter game, the following are recommended:

- The armies should start two bowshots (48mu) apart
- There should be a space at least 12 mu wide which is not deployed in on either flank. The exception is where the flank is agreed to rest on an impassable obstacle, like a major river.
- Medieval battlefields were not overly cluttered – space to manoeuvre was more important than cover. Buildings, enclosures, woods and other close terrain were usually peripheral to the main battlefield. The most common difficult terrain features in the central battlefield area involved water; rivers, streams, drainage ditches, marshy patches.
- Terrain layout must make geographical sense. For example, a watercourse must touch at least one table edge, with any on table end meeting a water feature or marsh and shouldn't run up and over a hill. Fields aren't found in the middle of nowhere so will either be on the edges (implying an off table settlement) or there will some sign of a settlement on the table.
- Depending on the scenario, a degree of balance ensures fairness in the game set up. Diagonal symmetry has often been used in the past, either exactly mirroring the terrain or to place a terrain type with similar effect.
- Game interest can be created by thinking in abstract terms of terrain. For example, a river running across a table can have four states; fordable, unfordable, bridged/crossed by a narrow ford, and broad ford. Add a marsh or wood in front of a fordable section and it makes an area crossable by infantry and not cavalry. These can be used to provide varying degrees of barrier, breaking up an otherwise plain area. But don't constrain the front too much, unless you have otherwise decided on an attack/defence scenario.
- In designing the battlefield, consider what lies beyond the table edges. How do those features which touch the edge develop? Are there features just beyond the table edge e.g. a river, a castle wall? In many cases, it won't be that important but it may constrain lines of advance of off table forces, or restrict where troops can leave the table.

A way of choosing terrain

In a game without a scenario something quick and simple may be required.

Players begin by assembling a selection of terrain pieces e.g. stretch of stream, hills, copse, enclosure, each being of a sensible size or length. Each player then throws a d6. The highest scoring player is referred to below as player A.

Player A selects and places a terrain piece. Player B then selects a piece and so on until they have placed as many pieces as player A's score. Terrain pieces can go anywhere on the table but geographical rules must be observed.

After all terrain is placed, the player who would go next chooses a side of the table. On a rectangular table, this must be a long side but on a square table, it can be any side. He/she then deploys. The other player then deploys on the opposite side. Finally, the player who deployed first makes the first move.

5. Weather

The rules assume that most battles are fought in moderate weather, in which weather conditions have little noticeable effect. Not all historical battles were like this, however. Just to take the Wars of the Roses, Northampton was affected by rain, Towton by snow and Barnet by fog.

The table below gives some ideas to take into account in a scenario calling for bad weather.

Weather	Effects on movement	Other effects
Rain	Rivers rise and become more difficult to cross. Fords become unusable Ploughed fields become muddy Water meadows become muddy Wheeled vehicles are restricted to roads.	Gunpowder weapons become unusable. Early gunpowder was very vulnerable to damp because of the way it was made.
Fog	Visibility restricts rapid movement	Reduced visibility reduces shooting ranges
Snow	Can reduce visibility. Wet snow/thaw conditions can cause effects as rain	Reduced visibility reduces shooting ranges Wet snow can affect gunpowder weapons
Wind	None	Reduce/extend shooting ranges for archery, depending on direction and strength