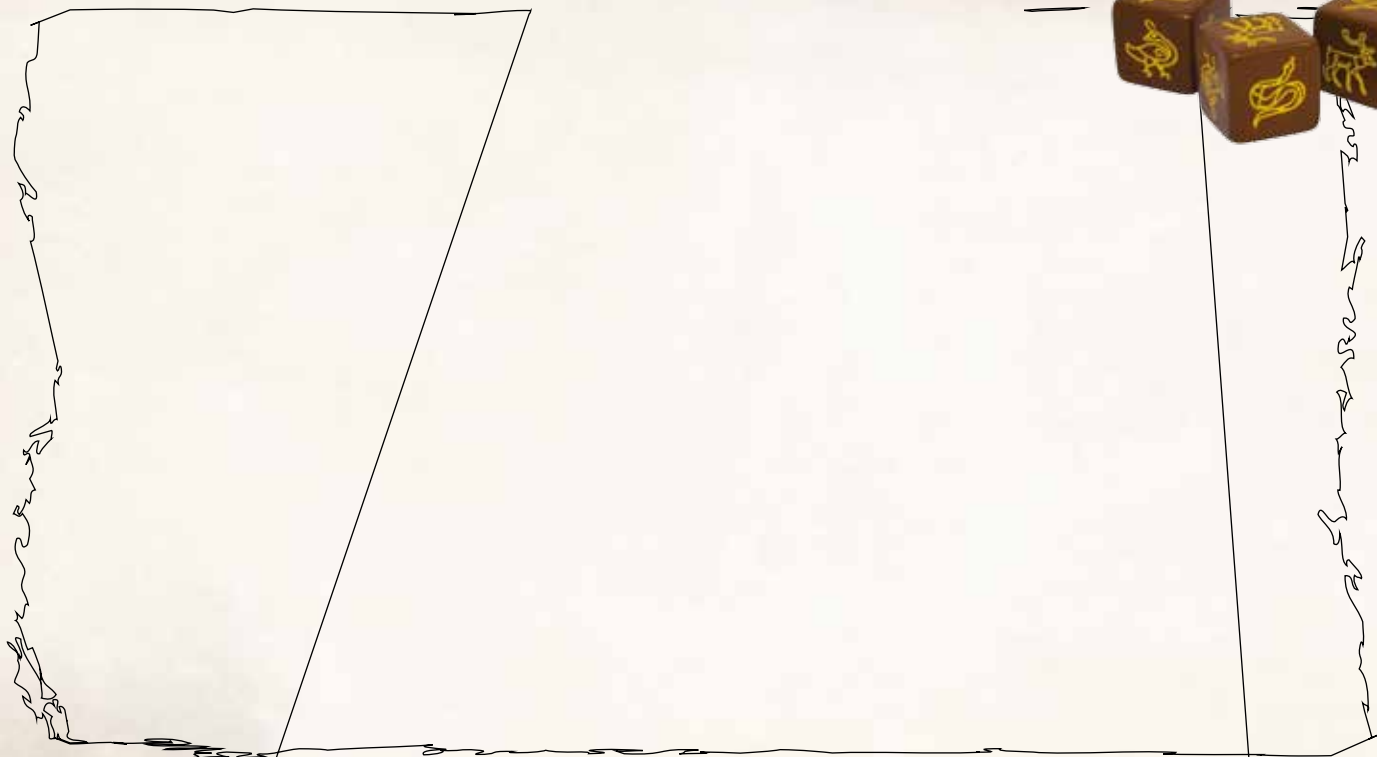


## Faction: Steppes Tribes



Innumerable different tribes occupied the steppes stretching from Hungary to the north of China. Cuman pechenegs, tatars and sabirs are examples of these tribes, more well known groups which carved empires include the Avars, Khazars, Bulgars and Seljuks just to name some of the western ones. Many launched raids or tried to subdue their neighbours and can therefore provide historical opponents for some of the existing or forthcoming Saga factions.

These tribes were led by leaders who often took titles like Kagan or Khan. Your **Warlord** is such a high rank leader.

The richest members of the tribe had access to better equipment. They were the equivalent of Nobles in the western European society and they are the **Hearthguards** of your warband.

Next in social rank in the tribe were the free men. They were mounted on horses and expert archers. They are the **Warriors** of your warband.

The tribe also controlled many slaves, most often captured in previous raids, some of whom were forced to serve in battle as foot soldiers. They were sometimes helped by the women and children of the tribe when desperate measures were called for. They are the **Levy** of your warband.



### FACTION RULES

Some (often most or even all!) of your units are mounted on a horse. They apply the following rules:

- The Movement of mounted units is increased to **IL** but reduced to **S** when moving from, through, or into uneven ground.
  - Mounted units may never enter a building but they can engage in melee any unit occupying a building in the normal manner.
  - The Armour of mounted units is reduced by one when they are the target of a Shooting attack.
- Mounted units may never benefit from any kind of cover, in melee or shooting.

Apart from the restrictions mentioned above, mounted units behave like ordinary units. If a unit starts the game mounted, it must remain mounted for the whole game and may never dismount.

Some of your units are equipped with composite bows. They apply the following rules:

- Composite bows work like javelins, with the addition that shooting can be performed before the unit moves. If the shot is done before movement is resolved then the unit may not engage in melee with the movement. Note that if your movement must end in contact (e.g. if you start less than **VS** away), then you cannot shoot during this movement.

Your Warlord must be mounted on a horse and equipped with a composite bow.

Your Hearthguards are mounted and equipped with composite bows. Their armour in melee is reduced by 1 due to their reluctance to engage in combat.

Your Warriors are mounted and equipped with composite bows. Their armour in melee is reduced by 1 for the same reason as outlined above.

Your Levies are equipped with bows (and not composite bows).

Steppe Tribes may never include any Swords for Hire units in their warband.

### HERO OF THE VIKING AGE

#### DELYAN, the Revolted, Tsar of the Bulgars

In 1018, the Byzantines had crushed the Bulgar empire. In 1040, Delyan escaped from Constantinople and started to organise a large scale Bulgarian revolt, negotiating with other rebel leaders like Tihomir and submitting to Alusian who had better blood right than him. Alusian proved to be a poor war leader, failing to capture Thessalonica. He had Delyan blinded to secure his rights but then betrayed his troops and joined the Byzantines at the start of the last battle in the summer of 1041. Delyan took back command but was defeated by the Varangian guard led by Harald Hardrada.

**Hero of the Viking Age:** Delyan was a great organiser and, if he is leading the warband, generates three Saga dice at the start of each turn and not two as other Warlords.



**Blind:** Delyan went in his last battle riding a warhorse and wielding an enormous sword. Being blind, he generates no Attack Dice in melee or shooting but always get 3 extra Defence dice when he fights or is shot at. If he uses the "Side by Side" rule, each model of the unit he is fighting with generates an extra Attack dice during step 1 of the melee. Delyan is not equipped with a composite bow.

**The Revolted:** Delyan was a great inspirer for the poor people. While he is alive and leading the warband, all Levies of his band have their armour increased by 1, generate 1 Attack die per model in Melee, can be activated with any Saga die and can be chosen to protect Delyan when he uses the Resilience special rule.

**Alusian the traitor:** Delyan recognised the better blood rights of Alusian. If the player chooses, he may include Alusian in his warband.

In that case Delyan and Alusian do not cost any point, and can be taken for free, but as long as Alusian is alive, he will not benefit from any of his special rules except "Blind" nor will he benefit from any of the standard Warlord's special rules.

Alusian behaves as a normal Warlord, except that he generates only one Saga Die at the start of each turn and not two as other Warlords, and does not benefit from the "Determination", and "We obey" special rules.

If Alusian dies, Delyan automatically leads the warband at the start of the next turn, generates Saga Dice as described above and regain the benefits of all his special rules and the special rules of a standard Warlord.

Delyan is always worth 7 VPs when killed while Alusian worth only 3 VPS.

For scenarios requiring the elimination of the enemy warlord, both Alusian and Delyan must be killed to trigger the relevant effects.

### DESCRIPTION OF SAGA ABILITIES

**IMPORTANT :** The first 3 generic abilities of the leftmost column of the Battleboard are traditional and we refer the reader to the Saga rules for explanations.



- Some Saga abilities of the Battleboard are marked with this symbol. These abilities can only be used by or affect units armed with composite bows and composed of 6 models or less.

### THE STEPPES

**Used in step 0 of any melee (if your unit was engaged in melee)**

The description of the Melee/Reaction abilities appears in The Raven's Shadow

This ability can have several dice placed on it during the Orders phase. It can only be used if you do not have FATIGUE and if your unit was engaged in melee. Your





troops use the speed of their horses to run away from the enemy. Not very glamorous some will say, but so typical of your natural way of fighting. Note that since you go straight to the disengagement step, the enemy units engaged do not suffer FATIGUE from the melee. You must comply with all disengagement requirements (end more than VS from all enemy, end as far away as possible from the enemy which engaged you...). If you cannot disengage, this ability is simply cancelled. Since the table edges do not count as impassable obstacles for this disengagement move, you are likely to end off table if you started too near to it. If a single model of the unit crosses the table edge, the whole unit is considered to have run away and is considered as having been eliminated in Melee. Be careful before deciding to run away. Clever Steppe Tribes players will use the Black Arrows ability just before they use this one, adding injury to insult.



### BLACK ARROWS

**Used in step 0 of any melee (if your unit was engaged in melee)**

Like The Steppes, this ability can have several dice placed on it during the Orders phase. However, it can be used only once in a given melee and only if you are the defender (i.e. your opponent initiated the contact). While your enemies were rushing at you, your troops discharged one last salvo of arrows, killing some before they could even reach contact. Simple and effective and very representative of the Steppe Tribes way of fighting.

### DEADLY PLAINS

**Used in your Order phase**

You order your troops to concentrate on shooting and forget their swords and lances. From now on and until the start of your next turn, you will gain 3 Attack dice in step 2 of each shooting. However, fighting in combat with bows is not very effective and you generate only half the number of Attack dice that you would normally get in step 1 of each melee. You'd better make sure that no enemy reaches you (the best way being to shoot them dead before they arrive).

### EMPTYING THE QUIVERS

**Used in step 2 of any shooting**

Your unit delivers a truly devastating barrage of arrows, emptying all their quivers. Being then weaponless, they leave the field of battle and will return only in another battle. That last shot will often prove deadly: You may re roll all Attack dice that failed to hit. Your opponent must re roll all Defence dice that managed to cancel a hit. Remember that you may NEVER re-roll twice a given die. Note that, for victory purpose in scenarios, all models of your unit count as casualties and are removed in step 2 of the shooting (hence if you use it in a Clash of Warlords scenario with your Warlord in an attempt to kill the enemy Warlord, you just have lost the game and will not be allowed to throw your dice since step 3 will never occur).

### THE ARROW KNOWS THE WAY

**Used in step 2 of any shooting**

This ability is effective against units which are too tired to protect themselves with their shields. Discard one FATIGUE from the target. All Defence dice rolled during step 3 with a result of 4 are treated as failures. If a Stag was discarded then the target also get back the FATIGUE marker that you initially took from it.

### RED SKIES

**Used in step 2 of any shooting**

This ability will need you to think a bit but if you choose your value carefully, your opponent will not gain much while you will do.

### WILD CATS

**Used in your Activation phase**

Steppe Tribes often sent troops on wide enveloping movements to take their opponent in the rear or flank. This ability allows you to do just this. When using this ability, designate one of your units that is within S of the table edge but more the M from the enemy. You can then redeploy your models on the table, within S from any table edge and more than M from any enemy



model. Note that if you do not have enough space to redeploy all your models back on the table, you must choose another point of re-entry. The efforts of such manoeuvre means that your unit will take one FATIGUE after its redeployment.

### STEPPE PEOPLE

**Used in your Order phase**

Steppe soldiers were ferociously independent and likely to take many personal initiatives on the battle field. The Khagan therefore kept a close eye on his Nobles, for fear that they could overthrow him. This ability represents this behaviour and allows you benefit from the creative spirit of your Warriors.

The Saga dice won by this ability do not have to used exclusively in favour of Warrior units. Sometimes a warrior would forget hierarchy, shout an order and your other troops will obey it just because it sounded sensible to do so.

### KHAN

**Used in your Activation phase**

Your Warlord utters a loud "SHOOT !". This activates all your levy units within M of him. These activations can only be used to shoot but, being very motivated by the nearness of their leader, your troops enthusiastically darken the skies with arrows, allowing them to gain three extra Attack dice in step 2 of each of these Shootings.

### DIE BY THE BOW

**Used in your opponent's activation phase, after they have activated any unit**

If used carefully, this ability can save many of your troops, preventing your opponent contacting them by reducing the unit movement distance (L becomes M, M becomes S, S becomes VS). You cannot reduce a movement to less than VS.

Note that any bonus movement that your opponent may have is not affected (e.g. a Norman unit with Gallop would be reduced from L+S to M+S).

### GALLOPING GHOSTS

**Used in step 2 of any shooting**

This ability will require careful positioning of your models to be effective. In fact, you have to completely surround the unit with your models. If you manage this, you get so many opportunities to shoot him in the back that his armour is reduced by 2.



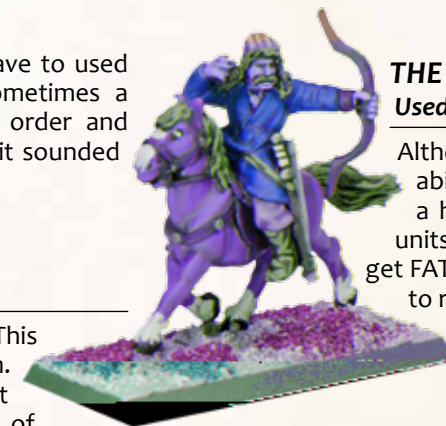
Remember that your models can be up to VS from each other and that the gap between 2 models of the same unit blocks line of sight. Gaps between models of different units can be seen through though. Clever opponents will form wide battle lines to prevent you using this deadly ability.



### THE DARKEST HOUR

**Used in your Activation phase**

Although it is very expensive, this ability should allow you to deliver a huge barrage of arrows. All your units are activated to shoot, do not get FATIGUE and benefit from extra dice to roll. Simple and deadly!



### Ragnar speaks

The Steppe Tribes are much more tricky to use that they appear at first sight. Obviously, they rule the steppes and are the best shooting warband in Saga, but they are also the most fragile. Almost their troops have an Armour reduced in melee, they do not have any Combat

Pool to boost them in melee and worse of all they are very vulnerable to shooting themselves. They will need you to use their mobility to avoid being shot to death or caught in melee.

Most of their abilities need some anticipation. The Steppes is great, but will only be fruitful if you can deliver a lot of ranged attacks during your turn, and be ensured that the enemy won't catch your troop in his turn. Usually, it is more profitable to weaken the different enemy units rather than just try to eliminate one after the others, as you don't want a full strength unit to be able to wreak amongst your precious horsemen. Ruling the steppes is not a job for everyone...