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SKIRMISH

Warmaster Skirmish is a set of rules to play much smaller games of Warmaster without losing too much of the feel of large Warmaster battles. This small scale, fast paced setting makes the games ideal for beginners or those who want to squeeze more games into their limit time. The game itself allows you to play battles with armies closer to the size of those more commonly seen in games of Warhammer while keeping the command and tactics of the Warmaster system.

The basic idea behind Warmaster Skirmish is unit sizes are always reduced to a single stand. This practice simplifies a lot of the rules as well as changing some tactics used. As units are reduced to a single stand, this cuts down hugely on the amount of miniatures required and due to the fast paced combats reduces the length of the game. For simplicity army lists remain the same, a single stand of Chaos Warriors will still cost you 150pts With the new unit sizes suddenly some units such as large monsters or exotic war machines become much more powerful. To deal with this units that started off at less than three stands have price increases to help balance them among their weakened brethren. Wizards are the only character to have a point increase, this is due to the extra influence their spells can have on the battlefield.

Unit Type	Unit Changes	Cost	
General	None	Same	
Hero	None	Same	
Wizard	None	X 1.5	
Infantry	Reduced to a single stand	Same	
Cavalry	Reduced to a single stand	Same	
Monsters (3 stand unit)	Reduced to a single stand	Same	
Monsters (1 stand unit)	None	X 3	A lone stand of Galloping Guns
War machine (2 stand unit)	Reduced to a single stand	X 1.5	
War machine (1 stand unit)	None	X 1.5	

E.g. An Orc and Goblin Giant, originally a single stand unit cannot be reduced. As all other units are being reduced to a third of their power and the Giants is unable to be reduced to a third of its power its cost is multiplies by three to 450pts!

Similarly a two stand unit of war machines is reduced to one stand but at a fifty percent cost increase. The thought is that a two stand 80pts unit of cannons buys an additional stand , half of their unit cost 40pts bringing it up to a three stand unit. This way when all other units are reduced to one stand it will still be fairly costed.

This is an example of a 1500pts Chaos army for Warmaster skirmish. It is based off a normal Warmaster army list only slightly changed to deal with the points increase of the Wizard. One less unit of Hounds and a few new shiny magic swords.

Warmaster skirmish really lends itself to scenario based games. Mostly to do with the more manageable forces and quickened game speed but also the flexibility of miniatures people will suddenly have available for army composition. We have found it very easy to come up with scenario ideas inspired by other war games examples or even great bits of fluff. We have taken great influence from the Epic Armageddon objective system and have adapted it for Warmaster Skirmish. These games have a real different feel to them compared to the pitched battles you may be used to.

Playing for objectives

Each player is trying to complete objectives for strategic gain on the battlefield. You win if you have completed two of the possible five objectives by the end of turn 4 and have more objectives than your opponent.

Placing objective markers

Roll a dice to decide who places first the first marker. The first marker to go down is placed on that players table edge. The next player then places their first marker. The second two markers for each player are placed in their opponents half of the table and at least 30cms away from their table edge and 30cms away from a marker already placed. Take turns to keep placing markers until all six are down on the table.

Objective markers can be anything you feel may be of strategic advantage to your army. This could be a mine or dependable building even a sacred shrine or heavily laden caravan. Its a nice opportunity to try building some themed objectives for your army and it looks a lot better than cardboard tokens.

Weighing in at a modest 450pts the Giant is a strong candidate for an opponents most expensive unit. It may seem steep but wait until you see this enraged behemoth smashing your opponents breakpoint single handedly.

The five objectives are:

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| Occupy: | Take control of opponents objective marker set up on opponent's table edge. |
| Giant Slayer: | Destroy your opponents most expensive unit. |
| Hold the line: | Control all three objectives markers on your table half. |
| Take and hold: | Control a total of two objectives markers in your opponent's half of the table. |
| None shall pass: | There are no enemy units in your table half.
(Confused enemy units do not count) |

A few quick points from the author...

- There are a few units that cause minor disturbances in the pricing systems such as Empire Skirmishers or Lizardmen Salamanders. For these we have been playing them at triple their cost and you can buy a single stand for each of the appropriate parent unit you have. So if you have bought a stand of Skinks for 35pts you can then buy a stand of Salamanders for 75pts (3x25pts). These units act independently from each other on the battlefield as completely separate units and you can ignore their normal 'parent unit rules'.
- Magic is unbalanced or obsolete in places. There are some spells that become very powerful due to the small size of units and there are others that no longer can take effect. We have not even tried to play test all the possible lists and rewrite new magic tables for each of them. If you are having problems with certain spells then try to come up with more appropriate rules for your games.
- I would recommend double the amount of terrain you would use in a regular game. Your units do not require as much space to manoeuvre and your battle line will be a lot smaller. This also helps to relieve the problem of how easy it is for some units to now flank each other.
- Due to the single stand unit sizes it is a lot easier to suffer from bad luck. The system is a lot less forgiving than regular Warmaster in which bigger combats allow for more average performances by units over all. It is far more common to see powerful units get a few unlucky rolls and perform uncharacteristically badly and lose combats you think they should win. Take care.
- These small scale armies allow excellent modelling opportunities especially in converting more characterful lone stands. Objective making is also a lot of fun and I am sure everyone can create some interesting objectives specific to their army
- These rules are great for beginners due to the small amount of miniatures needed to play large battles. Also it is very cheap to put together a new army, just a few starting blisters to have a playable force.
- This modification was designed to be a refreshing alternative to try out new ways of playing Warmaster. Not to try and replace it.
- These rules are by no means perfect I will not pretend that awkward situations will not arise during your games or there being imbalances in the rules. I leave these to you to perfect to your own personal tastes.
- Other rules we are working out is a simple experience system for characters and units as well as a campaign system to help tie together games. A list of 'fun' scenarios ranging from impossible defences, huge monster hunts and pillage and looting.

And rat swarms looked puny before...

Article written by and all models painted by Tom Clark, with special thanks to all the play testers.
If you have any interest in contributing to the Warmaster Skirmish project, Have any photos of your own Warmaster Skirmish force or have any comments or criticism please feel free to contact me.

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