Flash in the Pan

Troop Combat in the Flintlock Era

Based on the Black Spot & Saddle Bum rules by David Bezio, Flash in the Pan rules with permission by Rich Brown © 2025

Flash in the Pan is a fast playing miniatures game designed for fast and fun tournament play or small pick-up games (1-4 players). The goal here is not to simulate realism, but rather to allow you to play out cinematic battles in the Flintlock Era using smart tactics and no small bit of luck.

The rules are kept concise and to the point. They coalesce, so some confusing things will be made clear later. If you still have any questions, or to get any of the figures shown, or print copies of the rules, visit us at rrbmins.com.

To play you will need troop miniatures (these rules are designed for 25mm, but use what you like by mounting additional smaller figures to the same size base), some 6-sided dice (1D6 indicates that you roll one 6-sided die, 2d6 that you roll two, etc.), a ruler/ tape-measure (1 per player is best), and the full sized versions of the tokens/templates included with this document. Having a 3'x6' battlefield area and 10d6 per player is recommended. Unless otherwise specified by a scenario, the players place 2d6 small terrain pieces randomly (hills, woods, fences, etc.). Each player rolls a die with highest deciding on where to enter, others in turn enter opposite and/or as evenly spaced out as possible.

Assemble the Forces

Bases: For speed and ease of play, individual miniature figures are mounted to movement stands called Bases. Recommended Base size and figure mountings are:
Infantry of the Line (Troops standing shoulder to shoulder) -- 2" wide x 1" deep; 2 figures for militia, 3 for regulars/elites.
Light Infantry (Skirmishers) -- 2" wide x 1" deep; 2 figures.
Cavalry -- 2" wide by 2" deep; 2 figures.
Artillery -- 2" wide by 3" deep; 1 gun model, 2-3 crew.
Commander -- 2" diameter; multiple figures as desired.
Note that the figures on a Base simply reflect the look of the soldiers there, but represent many more actual combatants.

Units: These are made up of 1-6 Bases. If not using a scenario, players determine the units they want using the table below. The cost shown is per Base. In a random encounter game each player has 50 Muster Points (PM) to assemble their force (more or less can be used depending on the players' experience). The units' leaders are included in the base and do not need to be represented separately.

Quality: There are 3 levels of troop/crew quality that can affect their ability to dole out damage and their response to taking damage. This therefore, affects the cost per Base.
Green/Militia -- Either actual Militia or new untested troops including Minutemen, Loyalists, and Indians.
Regular -- Infantry of the Line, Rangers, Jägers, and veteran troops from the Green/Militia list.
Elite -- Grenadiers and veteran troops from the Regular list.

Quality	Inf.* MP	Cav.* MP	Art. MP	Battleworth
Green/Militia	1	2	3	1D6
Regular	2	3	4	2D6
Elite	3	4	5	3D6

* Infantry cost is for either Infantry of the Line or Light Infantry. Light Infantry shoot at +1D Battleworth. Light Infantry and Dismounted Cavalry fight Hand-to-Hand at -1D Battleworth.

Leaders: These individuals might affect their Units (negatively/ not-at-all/positively) by modifying the units' Battleworth depending on their rating (Poor/Average/Exceptional).

Commander: One additional leader is the Commander of the Force. If this leader is killed or captured, the rest of the Force may lose heart and stop fighting. Immediately roll 1D6 for each Unit in the Force within line of sight. On a roll of 1, the unit loses morale and flees (see Rout). The Commander can attach itself to any Unit under his command; his Battleworth will superseded the other Leader's.

Quality	Leader MP	Commander MP	Battleworth
Poor	0	0	- 1D6
Average	1	3	+/- 0D6
Exceptional	3	6	+ 1D6

Game Scale

What Forces, Units, Leaders, and Commander are, can vary based on the time/place of a battle. For example, in the Revolutionary War, a Force is a Brigade with its Commander being a Brigadier General. The Units are Regiments with their Leaders being Colonels for infantry/cavalry. Though Artillery had a regimental organizational grouping, the units deployed together in battle were called Batteries, which were led by Captains. For the purposes of these rules, we will use the generic labels Force, Units, Leaders, and Commander.

Rolling Dice Pools

Whenever you roll a die pool, you read the result of the **highest die rolled only**. For example: If you roll 2D6 and get a 3 and 5, the result of the roll is 5. A rare exception to the above rule is when you need to roll 0D6, -1D6, etc. In those cases, you roll 2D6, 3D6, etc. respectively, and take the **lowest die rolled only**.

Battle Dice

Each force starts with a number of Battle Dice equal to 1D6 +/- the Commander's Battleworth.

These are one time use dice that can be used to instantly reroll any die roll result that you don't like. You must take the result of the reroll, but can choose to expend as many available Battle Dice on a single roll as you like. You can keep track of the available Battle Dice by keeping then as a physical pile of extra dice and discard them as you use them, or keep track on a scrap of paper.

The Game Round

A game of Flash in the Pan takes place over a series of **Rounds**. During a Round each Unit in the Force will get to take a single **Turn**. Mark Units with a blue "Order" token (or something similar) to indicate it has taken its Turn.

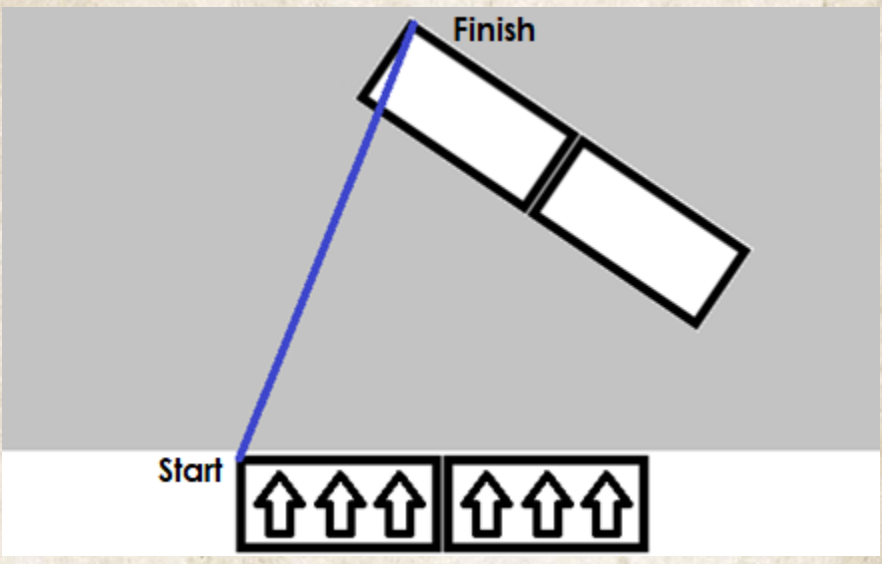
On a turn: Once ordered a model may take 2 of the following actions: Charge, Move, Shoot (if Loaded), Reload, Fight in Hand-to-Hand.

Initiative Order: At the beginning of a round, roll off 1D6 +/- the Commander's Battleworth to see who (highest roll) orders a Unit first, with sides alternating after that. For a **Tie Breaker**, look at the next highest pair of dice; treat not having another die as a zero. First resolve all **Units Currently Involved in Hand-to-Hand**. Continue alternating between sides until all wanting to, have gone. Then activate all **Units Wanting to Charge** (move into Hand-to-Hand) as their first action until all wanting to, have gone. Then finally to **All Others**. Note: **Commanders wanting to move** (either one that is unattached or one wanting to detach from a Unit), may make a move with All Others as long as it did not already move while attached to a unit this round. This may include attaching to a new Unit which may still move this round.

Movement

Speed is the maximum number of inches a thing can move on its turn. Speed varies each turn and is equal to the units Battleworth for Infantry, that +2 for limbered Artillery, and that +6 for Cavalry or a Leader/Commander moving separately from a Unit. Unlimbered Artillery may only move 1" max.

A unit that wishes to move ahead (into the gray shaded area shown below), including any variation from straight ahead such as wheeling, must simply measure the part of the unit that moves the farthest. Moves to the side or rear (in the white area), including an about face and moving, are at - ½ the total speed for that turn.



Skirmish troops may interpenetrate with other friendly troops.

Speed Modifiers: Moving up hill or across a wall/hedge is at -1" of speed for each occurrence. Moving though rough terrain or woods is at ½ speed (every 1" traveled counts as 2"). Moving in Column Formation, or making a Charge, is at +2". Moving in Column Formation along a road is at 2x speed(every 2" counts as 1"). Mounting or dismounting is -2". For mixed mounted/dismounted moves, prorate for each.

Formations

The formations use by Infantry and Cavalry are Line, Reinforced Line, Column, Skirmish (not available to all troop types; check scenario for details). Those used by Artillery are Line (when unlimbered) and Column (when limbered).

Below is an example of Infantry in Line, Reinforced Line, Column, and Skirmish formation.

Changing formation requires a full turn (i.e. both actions). Mounting/dismounting is -2" speed without the formation changing.

You can never shoot over top of your own troops, including a second Base rank. Troops in this period did kneel, so those behind them could shoot; this is all handled automatically within a Base. A second base is behind too many friendly soldier to safely shoot.

Units my conform to terrain as naturally makes sense.

Shooting

You may choose to shoot with some, or all, of your Bases in the Unit. In either case, the entire Unit will be considered as Unloaded; marked with a "Shot" token as a reminder. A Unit may fire only once per turn, but it can fire them at any time during its movement. I.e. You cannot shoot with one Base, move and then shoot with another Base. No pre-measuring is allowed. Roll to hit each target Unit separately per Base shooting. Leader Bases of Artillery only shoot as Infantry.

To select targets for **Musket or Artillery** Bases, lay the **Shooting Template** starting at the front edge of the Base and pivoting it side to side as desired up to the angle on the template. Once an angle is chosen, any Units that fall under the template are targets. An example template is on page 12; the full size is in the Flash in the Pan Game Components File. The Shooting Template shows both short and long range on one side, and extreme range on the other.

To select a target for **Rifle** Bases, there simply needs to be an unobstructed line of sight between the shooting Base and the target. Then use a ruler/ tape-measure to determine the shortest distance with a line of sight between the Base shooting to the chosen target Base. This is to represent the increased accuracy of Rifles over Muskets or Artillery.

Range: Short range is 0" to 5"; you must roll (Battleworth) 4+ to hit. Long range is 5+" to 10"; you need a 5+ to hit. Extreme range is 10" to 20"; you need a 6 to hit.

Cover/Skirmishers/Artillery: For targets that are in woods, or are behind a wall or another Unit, or are Skirmisher/Artillery; shooting is at -1 to the shooting roll for each occurrence.

Damage: Shooting hits from Skirmishers/Cavalry adds 1 DM (Disorder Marker) on a Unit; from Infantry of the Line, 2 DMs; from Artillery, 3 DMs. (DMs are provided on the Token sheet.) A unit receiving >3 DMs in one turn, loses its leader on a roll of zero or less (-1 to the die roll per DM).

Morale Check: A Unit receiving any DMs from a unit shooting, must do a morale check. Roll the Battleworth of the Unit. On a **roll greater than** the current number of DMs + 1 for (Line, Skirmish, or Dismounted Cavalry) +2 for Unloaded Artillery the unit holds fast; **that number or less**, the unit flees (see Rout).

Charging & Hand-to-Hand Fighting (H-t-H)

If opposing Units are touching, they may fight in H-t-H combat. It was difficult in this period to get into close action, but it did happen. This begins with a Unit receiving a Charge order and/or making a move toward an intended target. The advancing Unit does not get to fire. If their Speed does not get them all the way to the target unit, they simply stop at the maximum distance allowable. If they have a sufficient speed to get within 2", pause the movement there for the next step.

If the Charge was paused at 2", the target Unit must pass a Morale Check. If passed, or was not needed, it may shoot (if Loaded). If hit, apply DMs and perform a Morale Check. If both Units have passed their Morale Checks, the two close and enter Hand-to-Hand combat. The target unit decides if it wants to hold its position, or to counter-charge and meet them where they are currently paused. Square up Bases as evenly as possible (wheeling, Skirmishers forming Line, etc.).

Sides roll Battleworth per Base; the highest winning their battle and causing 1 DM. The Charging Unit gets +1 on the first Turn only. All units get +1 per base overlap, if in/behind defenses, or if attacking the flank; +2 if multiple Bases deep, have the high ground, or if attacking the rear. Apply the Tie Breaker rule from Initiative Order; if still tied, it is a stalemate.

Aftermath: When each Base pairing in a melee has fought, any Unit that took at least 1 DM must test its morale. If neither Unit routs, the melee continues next round. If one Unit routs, that player rolls 1D6 for a possible terrible event:
1 = Leader Killed, 2 = Leader Captured, 3 = Colors Captured, 4-6 = Nothing. The victor may occupy the vacated space.

Rout

Any time a Unit routs, it makes a full move; no need to roll Battleworth for speed; assume they rolled a 6. They make an about face at no speed penalty, if needed. Their intention is to move away from danger and toward safety. This is commonly thought of as being toward the players original entry point, but may be toward cover, friendly troops, etc. as the player wishes.

The Unit's formation remains the same, but the Bases can be separated or misaligned slightly to show they are in a routed condition vs. well ordered.

Redress the Ranks

At the end of the round (after every unit has had the opportunity to take their turn), Units not in H-t-H, with one or more DMs, may attempt to recover some/all of their DMs; and those which failed a morale test, may attempt to rally. These 3 steps may only be performed in this order: Automatically Recover DM(s), Attempt to Rally, Attempt to Recover.

Automatically Recover DM(s): If the player wishes, up to 3 DMs may be removed from a Unit in exchange for the removal of 1 Base from the Unit. This can include removal of an attached Commander Base.

Attempt to Rally: Roll for a morale check as listed in H-t-H Fighting. A unit getting a Rout result will make another rout move. A unit that passes will rally and be able to operate normally next round.

Attempt to Recover DM(s): Roll the units Battleworth, and add +1 for any attached Commander. On a 4 recover 1 DM, a 5 recover 2 DMs, and a 6 recover 3 DMs.

Solo Rules

Sometimes you want to play a game of Flash in the Pan…but, you don't have a friend handy. The simplest way to play solo is to just play both sides neutrally (although we all tend to pick a favorite side). The following rules provide a simple AI (artificial Intelligence), with an element of randomness, for the opposing army. While this can't possibly simulate the scheming, forethought, and devious plans of a friend, it can give you a battle that isn't totally predictable. First, choose the scenario desired.

Mustering the opposing army is done by a series of die rolls...

First roll for the army Commander: 1 Poor, 2-4 Average, 5-6 Exceptional.

Then roll for Units as available figures and point cost allow (reroll if needed, and hand pick the last few as needed to fit).
Leader is: 1 Poor, 2-4 Average, 5-6 Exceptional.
Unit Type is: 1-5 Infantry, 6 roll again (1-5 Cavalry, 6 Artillery).
Unit Quality is: 1-2 Militia, 3-5 Regular, 6 Elite.
Unit Size (number of Bases) is: 1 One, 2-3 Two, 4-5 Three, 5 Four, 6 roll again (1-4 Five, 5-6 Six).

Use the following rules on the opponent's turns…

Units Currently Involved in H-t-H: If you have a Unit in melee, attack with that unit. If more than one, roll 1d6 for each Unit with the highest roll being the one that activates.

Units Wanting to Charge: If a Unit is within estimated charge reach, roll to see if it wants to charge. If more than one can charge, test for each Unit with the closest to an enemy going first. A Unit will charge on a Battleworth roll of 5+. On any other score, it does not want to charge, which does not count as activating. If a unit does want to charge, choose the closest enemy and charge it.

Units in Column Formation: If no known enemy are within long rang, will double move to an area that grants Line-of-Sight (LoS) to the closest viable target while still being outside of Long Range. If no such move is possible, they will change formation to Skirmish (if allowed and are the closest unit to the enemy), Line (facing the closest enemy), or Reinforced Line if the unit contains more than 3 Bases.

All Others: If a known enemy is within long rang, a Unit will either Change Formation, Move, Shoot. If more than one unit is in this category, roll 1d6 for each Unit with the highest roll being the one that activates.

Leaders or Commanders Wanting to Move: Commanders always move to a Unit in order to add their Battleworth. Their priority order for choosing which Unit to move to is a Unit that is: Routing, has the most DMs, in H-t-H, going to Charge, going to Shoot, and lastly, going to Move. Among any of those items, the nearest Unit is the tie breaker.

Activation Logic Order:
Change Formation: A Unit will change formation to Skirmish (if allowed and it is the closest unit to the enemy).
Reload: Unloaded Units will Reload.
Shoot/Reload: A Unit with an enemy in Short/Long Range will shoot at the closest target then Reload.
Move/Shoot: A Unit will move to an area that grants LoS to the closest viable target at the closest range, and then shoot. If no target is available after the move (due to a slow Speed roll for example), they double move directly to the best position for shooting (a hill, stronghold, battlement) in a direction towards the closest enemy unit.

Redressing the Ranks: The opposing army will only choose to Automatically Recover DM(s) if a unit has 3 or more DMs and 3 or more Bases.

Optional Rules:

Opportunity Fire: Units that have already activated may employ opportunity fire if their guns are loaded. Simply interrupt the enemy movement at the point you wish to fire, and conduct the shooting as normal.

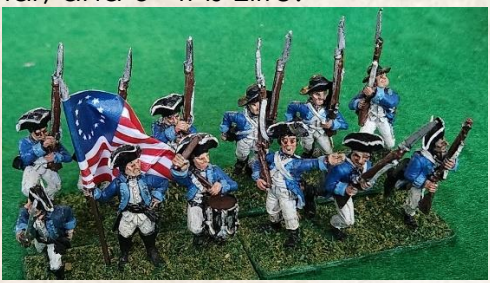
Risk to Unattached Commanders: These may be targeted for Shooting or Charging as any other Unit. This is particularly useful when used along with the Opportunity Fire optional rule.

Alternate Markers: To improve the appearance of the battlefield, free use better looking markers than those included in these rules. Some examples are:

- Cotton balls to mark units that have shot and are unloaded.
- Small silicone rings or rubber bands to indicate the units' status (i.e. red for DMs, white for Order)

Merging remnants of multiple units: During Redress the Ranks, after the Attempt to Recover DM(s) step is complete, the remnants of 2 or more unit that are within 1 inch of each other may initiate a merging action to form one new Unit. This will occur as a Formation change on the following turn.

Campaigning: All Units begin with a 0 Elitness Rating. After a battle is over (one side is killed or some other victory condition is accomplished), the winning side's survivors get tougher. Each such Unit adds 1 to their Elitness Rating: 0-1 is a Green Unit; 2-5 is Regular, and 6+ it is Elite.



Note: For illustration only... NOT full Size.
Use the Flash in the Pan Game Components file to print pieces for game use! Available for free at rrbminis.com

Flash in the Pan Game Tokens and Templates

Glue this sheet to some thing cardboard and then cut the items out.

DM	DM	DM	DM	DM	DM
DM	DM	DM	DM	DM	DM
DM	DM	DM	DM	DM	DM
DM	DM	DM	DM	DM	DM
DM	DM	DM	DM	DM	DM
DM	DM	DM	DM	DM	DM
DM	DM	DM	DM	DM	DM
Order	Order	Order	Order	Order	Order
Order	Order	Order	Order	Order	Order
Order	Order	Order	Order	Order	Order
Shot	Shot	Shot	Shot	Shot	Shot
Shot	Shot	Shot	Shot	Shot	Shot
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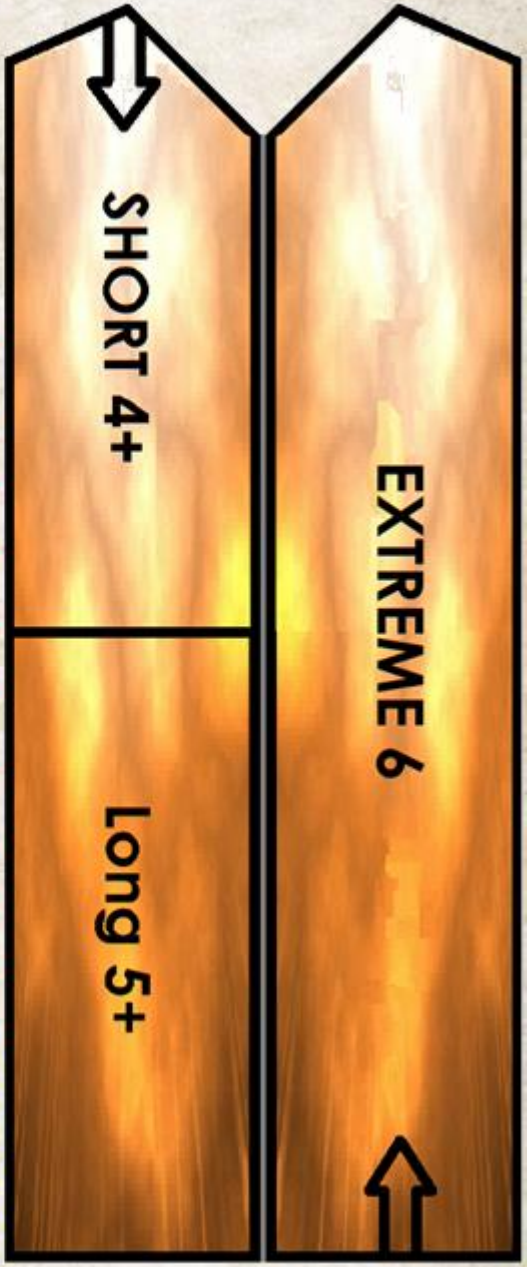

Command (Cmd) Roster

Flash in the Pan

Cmd Name:_____ # Battle Dice:_____
Cmdr's Name:_____ Quality:_____
Battleworth:_____ MP:_____

Unit #1, Unit Name:_____ Type:_Inf/Cav/Art
Ldr Name:_____ Ldr Quality:_____
Ldr Battle Worth:_____ Ldr MP:_____
Unit # of Bases:_____ Unit Quality:_____ Unit Battleworth:_____ Unit MP:_____

Unit #2, Unit Name:_____ Type:_Inf/Cav/Art
Ldr Name:_____ Ldr Quality:_____
Ldr Battle Worth:_____ Ldr MP:_____
Unit # of Bases:_____ Unit Quality:_____ Unit Battleworth:_____ Unit MP:_____

Unit #3, Unit Name:_____ Type:_Inf/Cav/Art
Ldr Name:_____ Ldr Quality:_____
Ldr Battle Worth:_____ Ldr MP:_____
Unit # of Bases:_____ Unit Quality:_____ Unit Battleworth:_____ Unit MP:_____

Unit #4, Unit Name:_____ Type:_Inf/Cav/Art
Ldr Name:_____ Ldr Quality:_____
Ldr Battle Worth:_____ Ldr MP:_____
Unit # of Bases:_____ Unit Quality:_____ Unit Battleworth:_____ Unit MP:_____

Unit #5, Unit Name:_____ Type:_Inf/Cav/Art
Ldr Name:_____ Ldr Quality:_____
Ldr Battle Worth:_____ Ldr MP:_____
Unit # of Bases:_____ Unit Quality:_____ Unit Battleworth:_____ Unit MP:_____

Unit #6, Unit Name:_____ Type:_Inf/Cav/Art
Ldr Name:_____ Ldr Quality:_____
Ldr Battle Worth:_____ Ldr MP:_____
Unit # of Bases:_____ Unit Quality:_____ Unit Battleworth:_____ Unit MP:_____

Quick Reference Sheet

Flash in the Pan

Activation Order: In H-t-H, wanting to charge, all others. May do 2: Charge, Move, Shoot (if Loaded), Reload, H-t-H.

Speed Modifiers: Moving up hill or across a wall/hedge is at -1" of speed for each occurrence. Moving though rough terrain or woods is at ½ speed. I.e. for every 1" traveling through, count as 2". Moving in Column Formation, or making a Charge, is at +2". Moving in Column Formation along a road is at 2x speed. Mounting or dismounting is -2". For mixed mounted/dismounted moves, prorate for each.

Shooting (roll Battleworth per Base): For targets that are in woods, or are behind a wall or another Unit, or are Skirmisher/Artillery; shooting is at -1 to the shooting roll for each occurrence.

Damage: Shooting hits from Skirmishers/Cavalry adds 1 DM on a Unit; from Infantry of the Line, 2 DMs; from Artillery, 3 DMs. A unit receiving >3 DMs in one turn, loses its leader on a roll of zero or less (-1 to the die roll per DM).

Morale Check: A Unit receiving any DMs from a unit shooting, must do a morale check. Roll the Battleworth of the Unit. On a **roll greater than** the current number of DMs + 1 for (Line, Skirmish, or Dismounted Cavalry) +2 for Unloaded Artillery the unit holds fast; **that number or less**, the unit flees (see Rout).

H-t-H: Roll Battleworth/Base; the highest winning their battle and causing 1 DM. Charging Unit gets +1 on first Turn only. +1/base overlap, in/behind defenses, or attacking the flank; +2 if multiple Bases deep, have the high ground, or attacking the rear. Apply the Tie Breaker rule from Initiative Order; if tied, it is a stalemate. If Unit routs, roll 1D6: 1 = Leader Killed, 2 = Leader Captured, 3 = Colors Captured, 4-6 = Nothing. The victor may occupy the vacated space.

Attempt to Recover DM(s): Roll Battleworth, +1 for an attached Commander: 4 = 1 DM, 5 = 2 DMs, 6 = 3 DMs.