



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

BY RICK PRIESTLEY

This month I've grouped together a series of questions about hand-to-hand combat procedure and Combat Results. I've also taken the opportunity to print a summary of the Combat Results table combining information which is otherwise scattered throughout the Warhammer Fantasy Battle rulebook.

Thanks to everyone who has written in with queries – it really does help me to identify items of explanation and rules which leave room for doubt or ambiguity. If you have any questions regarding the Warhammer Fantasy Battle rules, I will be pleased to provide an answer as long as you include a stamped self-addressed envelope or 2 International Reply Coupons if you live abroad. Please leave enough space on your letter so I can write answers directly on the sheet of paper as this saves time and enables me to get back to you more quickly.

ROUT TESTS

In hand-to-hand combat is it necessary to take a rout test every time a unit is pushed back – or does the unit only test if it also suffers 25% casualties in the combat round?

Generally speaking a unit takes a rout test every time it loses a combat round. However, a unit does not have to take a rout test if it hasn't yet lost at least 25% (ie a quarter) of its original numeric strength during the battle.

For example, a unit which begins the game with 20 models does not have to test for rout until it is reduced to 15 models or less. Thereafter the unit takes a rout test every time it loses a round of hand-to-hand combat. A unit of 10 models tests once it has lost 3 models (as 2 is less than a quarter).

Obviously, this means that larger units have a little more resilience than small units – they can sustain more casualties before they are forced to take a rout test. This is why troops such as Goblins sometimes crowd into very large units – it gives them a bit more clout!

Note that the 25% rule doesn't help you if you're fighting an enemy you fear. If you're beaten in hand-to-hand combat by troops you fear then you are routed automatically without recourse to a

rout test and regardless of the casualties caused. This emphasises just how important it is to avoid combat with Undead and large Monsters unless you are reasonably sure of beating them.

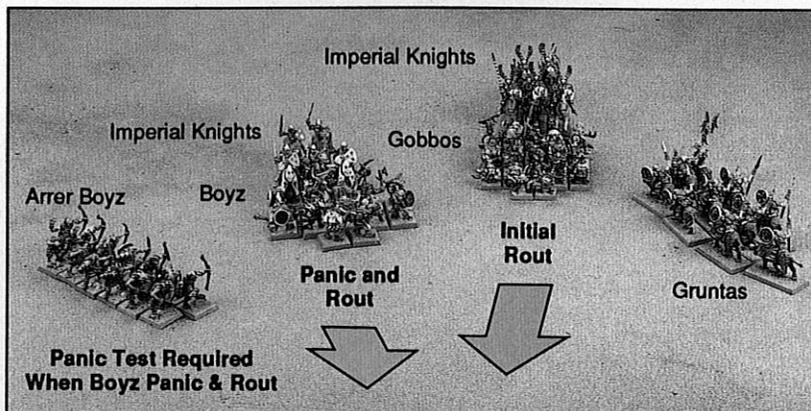
PANIC TESTS

A unit must take a panic test if a friendly unit routs within 12". If units rout because they fail their panic test, do other friendly units within 12" of them have to take a further panic test or not?

If a unit routs from a hand-to-hand combat engagement then friendly units within 12" must take a panic test. The key rule is that the test is made when a unit routs from *hand-to-hand combat* and not under other circumstances. Therefore, units which rout but which are not engaged in combat do not cause other units to take a panic test. Of course if a unit is engaged in hand-to-hand combat when it takes and fails a panic test, then its subsequent rout is also technically a rout from hand-to-hand combat and so will initiate further panic tests (see the example below).

The best and simplest procedure to adopt is to work out all combat results for the hand-to-hand combat round, and take any rout tests necessary. Then, once all routs resulting from combat have been established, take any panic tests required. Then take any further panic tests where appropriate. Only move routing troops once all rout and panic tests have been taken. Note that when hand-to-hand combat opponents rout as a result of a panic test (rather than a rout test) then the enemy units get a free hack as they turn, and pursue just like troops which have beaten their enemy in combat and routed them.

Remember that troops must also take a panic test at the start of their turn if there are already friendly routing units within 4". In this case, units routing for whatever reason cause panic, not just those that were routed from combat. This means it is possible for routers to cause a wave of routs through your army as they run towards the rear. This is a particular problem for commanders of Goblins, Skaven and other troops that have a low Cool value. Such troops are inclined to lose heart and run off at the slightest sign of a setback.



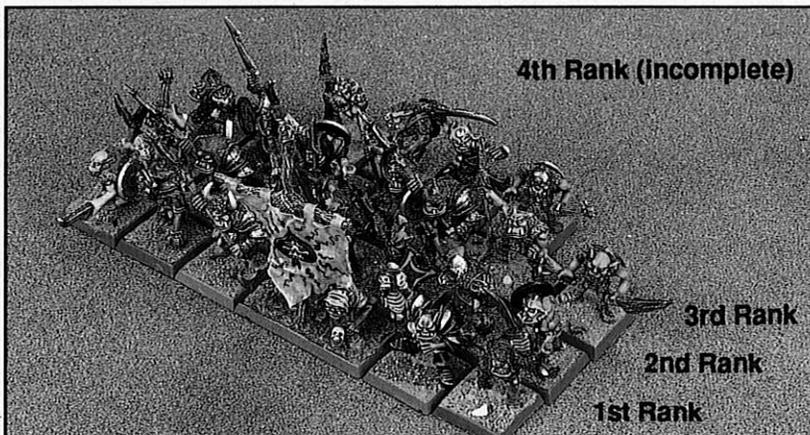
In the example above, the Gobbos rout from hand-to-hand combat obliging the Orc Boyz and the Gruntas to take an immediate panic test (2D6 against Cool). The Arrer Boyz are more than 12" away from the routing Gobbos and don't have to test. The Gruntas pass their test but the Boyz fail and are routed. Because they are themselves engaged in hand-to-hand combat all units within 12" of the Boyz must test for panic – in this case this affects only the Arrer Boyz as the Gobbos are already routing and the Gruntas are too far away.

MAGIC WEAPONS

If a character is carrying a magic weapon with several abilities, can he use all the abilities in the same combat round, or can he only use one ability per round? If only one can be used does he have to declare this when he strikes? If two opposing characters are armed with magic weapons, both of which have Trance or Parry abilities, which model works out the effects of his magic first, or do both work out their magic at the same time?

It is the case that the magic abilities for weapons, standards, and instruments in Warhammer Armies pose problems of interpretation when used in certain combinations and against certain types of troops. Most players are aware of this problem and come to some sort of agreement with their opponent before the game. I suggest you adopt the following policy towards the use of magic weapons.

A character may only use a single magical ability in a single round of hand-to-hand combat. The exception to this rule is if the character has a Frenzied Blade in which case he is automatically subject to frenzy and may continue to use another magic



This unit gets a +2 Combat Result bonus, as the fourth rank is incomplete (see table below).

ability in combat. If you want to use either the Trance or Parry ability these are declared before other combat begins – all Trance and Parry results are worked out immediately and simultaneously, regardless of initiative or previous Trance or Parry results.

The results of other magical abilities are resolved when the character works out his hit, wound, or when the opponent takes his save, whichever is appropriate. Simply announce you are going to use an ability before rolling the dice to hit, wound or save.

COMBAT RESULTS

Do Wounds caused in hand-to-hand combat count towards your total for winning the combat round if they are saved? Also, if a Hero with 2 wounds takes 3 wounds is the extra 1 wound counted towards your total?

In both cases they don't count. Only wounds which are actually suffered count towards your Combat Results total. The Combat Results Table below, which gives a resume of the Combat Result modifiers, may prove useful to many players.

COMBAT RESULTS TABLE

Work out the result of each separate hand-to-hand combat engagement as follows.

Once both sides have fought each counts the number of wounds it has inflicted. Wounds which have been saved aren't counted, only those actually suffered. Each side adds the following bonuses to its total. Once each side has added up its Combat Results the two scores are compared and the highest scoring side wins the combat round.

Charged That Turn +1

This bonus is only applied once regardless of how many units charged into the hand-to-hand combat engagement. If several units are involved, some of which charged that turn and some of which didn't, this bonus applies so long as the charging troops caused at least half the number of wounds inflicted by their side. If no wounds are inflicted at all the charge bonus still applies so long as at least one unit charged that turn.

Followed Up +1

The side which won the previous combat round adds this bonus to represent the impetus gained as enemy troops are pushed back. As with charges the bonus is applied only once regardless of the number of units engaged.

Note that if a side is both charging and following up in the same round (as can happen when a fresh unit charges into an established engagement) then it is possible to get both bonuses – ie +2. This shows what a good idea it is to hit the enemy when he's at a disadvantage and demonstrates the value of keeping a second line of troops just for this purpose.

Standard +1

This bonus is added for each friendly unit in the engagement that has a standard in its front rank. Unlike charges and follow ups this bonus can be added several times if there is more than one unit which has a standard. For example, if two units are engaged and both have standards then you add +2, and so on.

Army Standard +1

If the Army Standard is being carried by a unit in the hand-to-hand combat engagement then a further +1 bonus is gained. This applies in addition to a normal +1 bonus for a unit standard, so the bonus is +2 for a unit which has the Army Standard and its own standard.

2nd, 3rd, or 4th Rank +1 per rank (maximum +3)

If a unit begins the combat round deployed in 2 full ranks it receives a bonus of +1 to its Combat Result. If deployed in 3 full ranks it receives a further +1 making a total of +2. If deployed in 4 or more full ranks it receives a further +1 making a total of +3 (the maximum rank bonus allowed). The rank bonus represents the fact that solid formations of troops are much harder to push back because the rear ranks lend their weight to the troops at the front, shoving them forward and stepping into any gaps left by casualties. Similarly a deep formation can steamroller into the enemy line, knocking aside and scattering the enemy troops.

This bonus only applies to full ranks, not partial ranks, and there must be at least 4 models in the front rank for any rank bonuses to apply. (Formations narrower than this can be so easily overwhelmed that no benefit is conferred. The guys in the rear ranks get swamped by enemy on their flanks.)

Note: Where an engagement involves several units on each side and some are in deeper ranks than others you may count the deeper bonus.