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# WARMASTER ANCIENTS FAQ

**The following FAQ will take the form of a ‘living document’ and will be added to as new questions and situations arise and are answered. The FAQ has been compiled from discussions on the historical warmaster yahoo group, PEWC (Ponders End Wargames Club) experiences and ‘questions’ to the author. They are not ‘official’ in any way and are not intended to infringe on any copyright or IP of anyone concerned with Games Workshop or their sister companies.**

### *What is Warmaster Ancients all about?*

Warmaster Ancients (from now on written as WMA) is a set of rules which allow players to research, develop and play with armies of their choice from the ‘ancient’ era. It is aimed at being played with 10mm or 6mm figures on a 6’x4’ plus table. It fits the criteria of being a ‘quick play’ set of rules with most small to medium (1000-2000 points) games lasting between 1 1/2 to 3 hours (although this depends on the players familiarity with the rules of course).

It is a broadly IGO UGO system where one army moves and then the other although the innovative initiative, evade and combat rules sees interaction between the players at most stages of the game. The rules use only six sided dice, although I would recommend that a large number of these are present. Micro dice (5mm d6) are useful for keeping track of hits on units although normal dice or memory can be used. There is no formal bookkeeping and after a couple of games most players will be able to play solely with the QRS and their army list.

### *Can I use other size figures?*

Although aimed at using 10 or 6mm figures there is no reason that other scales can’t be used. Players are successfully playing with 15mm and 20mm figures and even 28mm. The bases are 40mm frontage with some ‘shock’ troops being based on a 20mm frontage. This accommodates 15mm figures based for rules such as DBA and DBM and there are suggestions in the rules for using ‘shock’ rated troops that are based on a 40mm frontage.

There are also suggested basing suggestions contained in the rules for the other figure scales which are not as easily accommodated on a 40mm frontage.

### *Do I have to use any specific models?*

Any manufacturers models may be used. As the bases are ‘representational’ it is up to the player how the troop type is represented on the base. However there are suggested figure amounts in the rules.

### *Is it just a revamped Warmaster?*

On the face of it is easy to see WMA as just a revamped Warmaster (written from now as WMF/Warmaster fantasy). However after a number of games I now consider it as a completely different set of rules which just share a few game mechanic concepts. This may seem a bold statement, however the changes that have been made to the mechanics while looking like ‘little tweaks’ actually have a far reaching effect on the game play of the rules and how the armies ‘act’ on the table. All of the mechanisms that ‘put off’ the more traditional ‘historical’ players when they tried out WMF have been changed to make WMA act and feel more ‘historical’.

While it is outside of this brief FAQ to list all the changes and their effects the following is a short list of the major changes to WMF:

- Command roles per ‘unit/brigade’ limited to 3. This takes away the WMF charge across the board and beyond. Also subtle changes to the command modifiers (such as a negative for enemy to flank and rear) curtails the ability to make continuous command roles.
- Visibility and fire arcs have been tweaked and clarified.
- Terrain features and effects have been clarified and expanded.
- Units classed as skirmishers can now have a chance to evade in the charge and fire phases. This ability for light skirmish troops was non existent in WMF and now you can actually deploy and use effective skirmish screens. Also non armoured skirmish units do not count towards your break point

(so long as your army doesn't consist mainly of those troops).

- Individual Combat is now limited to 2 rounds of combat in any one combat phase. After this it becomes 'unresolved' and continues in the next player's turn. This means that the massive holes that appeared in lines in WMF and the ability to win the game in one 'flank roll' will not happen. Also supporting troops are now counted as being in combat which effectively cuts down the push back distance in combat and keeps the lines of engagement 'straighter'. This has the effect of giving a far more 'historical' feel to the combat.
- New troop types – there are a number of new troop categories to accommodate the troops types found in historical ancient warfare.
- Cavalry types – cavalry are now based on a 40mm frontage except for some types that are classed as 'shock' to simulate the fact they relied mainly by 'shock of impact'. This takes away the 'super cavalry' syndrome found in WMF.

### ***Are elephants like 'monsters' in WMF?***

Basically no ... while still being strong elephants in WMA are deployed in units of 3.

### ***Is the point system and number of units used in a typical game the same as in Warmaster?***

WMA has a points system similar to WMF. However on the whole you get more units for your points so to speak, plus there are of course no monsters or magic items to purchase. So a 1000pt WMA army will have broadly the same number of units as a Orc and Goblin 1500pt WMF army. This means that playing 1000pt games is viable in WMA (most experienced players will agree 1000pt clashes in WMF give poor games) and indeed are the norm for club and throw together games. However you will find that 1500-2000 points are ideal for longer games.

**For further broad information on the game please refer to the review found in [www.wargamesjournal.com](http://www.wargamesjournal.com)**

### ***How many shots do skirmishers and archers get?***

This has caught a few players out, it is in the rules but has been passed over by players, especially I suspect WMF players 'skimming' the rules. Ranged firing for ANY troops except some artillery is at 1 attack per stand. The attack number in the stat line is for close combat. Thus even troops that have 2 attacks on the stat line will only fire one per stand in ranged combat. A unit of archers will fire 3 dice only.

### ***Do my archers have 360 degree vision and fire arc?***

NO ... only skirmish troops have 360 vision. Unless skirmishers the fire arc is now either 45 degree off the corner edge for most troops or straight ahead for some shock cavalry which also have a ranged attack.

### ***My Parthian Army doesn't appear to have a break point as all of its troops are unarmoured skirmishers which do not count towards a break point... is this correct.***

While there were different interpretations of this rule it was finally cleared up by Rick Priestley when he informed us that there was a paragraph which got edited out by mistake:

*“The missing rule is that armies consisting of more than half unarmoured skirmishing units should count such skirmishers as core. It was there when the rules were played - so it's not the fault of the playtesters - it just got edited out by mistake - almost certainly by me.”*

### ***Some of the army descriptions and photos describe troop types that are not present in the army lists, for example cavalry being talked of as 'shock' are not designated as shock on the lists ... which is correct?***

Again I refer to Rick's answer on the list:

*“There are some mistakes in the notes for the army lists - the army lists themselves are correct (at least I haven't found any mistakes*

*other than the slipped brackets on the Assyrian upgrades). We continued to take feedback and develop the army lists right up until the final day (ask Rob Broom!) but some of the commentaries didn't get changed to reflect the late developments in the lists themselves."*

***The rules state that you can initiative charge an enemy within 20cm, the command modifiers talk about an enemy being within 20cm. So if you are exactly 20cm away can you react on initiative and do you suffer the within 20cm command modifier. Or is within 20cm meaning you have to be 199mm or closer? Sometimes I feel that Rick underestimates just how 'cheesey' us wargamers can be! 20cm counts as being within 20cm for all purposes!***

***If supporting units are now counted as being 'in combat' does this mean they can now take casualties, especially in the case of 'excess' hits on the front unit. Also what happens to supporting units if the front unit is destroyed. Does the attacking unit pursue them or do they have to 'advance' into them?***

Having supporting units count as being in combat does have effects on how the combat works. Firstly you can no longer shoot them out of support like you could in WMF as you can't shoot into combat. Secondly as they count as being in combat, if there is a supporting unit you include these in the number of units fighting to determine push-backs. In most cases this will mean dividing the distance by at least 2. This keeps the line of engagement more intact.

Supporting units DO NOT take hits (of course a stand from the same unit can be supporting and be removed due to hits etc) even if there are excess hits from the front unit being destroyed. The excess hits are discounted and do not count towards the combat resolution.

If the front unit is destroyed then the combat resolution is determined as normal and the supporting unit is still pushed back and may be pursued as normal. The victorious unit CAN'T advance into another combat as they have NOT destroyed all the enemy involved in the present combat.

***If a skirmish unit is charged can it always evade?***

Skirmishers are perhaps the hardest unit to come to terms with and use properly. There was nothing like it in WMF. The important thing to remember is that the skirmishers can only evade ONCE in any phase. So if they are charged and evade and then charged again in the same phase they may not evade again. However they are as Rick puts it 'pesky' and can be used as 'ablative' armour for your core troops. If they are charged by non skirmish units they can shoot at them, maybe causing a drive back, then evade through your troops (remembering to test for confusion) and then the attacking unit are 'stuck in place' and could be charged in your initiative phase. The best way to deal with skirmishers is with skirmishers!

***What happens if I charge into a unit and also corner to corner contact a skirmish unit?***

In this case the non skirmish unit is contacted and combat will take place. The skirmishers can shoot and then evade or stay in combat. Note however the hits will not cause drive-back to the charging unit but will count towards combat resolution.

***Can skirmishers always evade from shooting drive-backs?***

In theory they can evade once per shooting phase. So if they have already evaded and then end up being the closest target to another unit then they can not evade from this shooting (your evade would be poor in the first place if you let this happen). Also you must roll the drive back dice first anyway and if any of these are sixes then the unit is confused and can't decide to evade anyway!

***The last ditch dice, does it mean per stand or per unit?***

A UNIT always gets to throw one attack die no matter what. So say your 1 attack skirmishers are hit in the flank – the stand would normally get one dice but it is flanked so loses one – down to zero – in this case the unit gets one die to throw. However if it was also contacted from the front the stand which is flanked would get no dice and the ones fighting to the front would get one each.

***When a unit 'advances' after destroying all its enemy does the support advance with it or does it have to stay put?***

This is direct from Rick P. It slipped through the final edit - as the advance is treated as a new charge the advancing unit can carry support with it into the new combat.

***If a unit is confused can it be supported or support, also can it use its ranged attack if confused.***

Again slightly different from WMF – confused units can support and be supported as well as shoot.

***I'm a bit confused over the 'enemy to flank or rear' command penalty.***

If an enemy unit is in your flank or rear zone and is not covered by a friendly unit then you suffer the penalty. The easiest way we have figured to gauge this is to see if you can draw a line from any part of the enemy unit to the flank or rear edge of your unit. It is 'covered' if any friendly unit blocks this line.

***Elephants are way too strong, they get extra charge bonuses and cause fear, how can this be countered.***

On the face of it elephants are very strong but expensive foe! But they can be countered by using tactics that are close to how armies in the ancient world countered them. Without giving too much away you can use skirmish screens to harass and drive them back and to cover your main infantry. Also well supported blocks of infantry can limit the amount of damage and drive back caused. On the face of it they are awesome but often a well supported infantry line will see the first unit disintegrate but limit the push back. Then the elephants attacks drop in the second round and chances are they will not be able to destroy the second unit. Then the other infantry can swarm in on initiative. Even if you have lost a couple of 40-70 point units the enemy will be looking at a 150-200pt loss. Sometimes though this goes 'pear shaped'. SO top tips are, use your skirmishers, if you get hit make sure it is a solid supported line and NEVER get hit in the flank by Nelly!!!

***Is a fall back worked out like a drive back?***

No it is worked out like a normal move with the proviso that the stands only move up to the distance rolled on the dice. There is no minimum distance although you have to end up 1cm away from enemy stands. In the rule book they suggest you work out the movement of the first stand you choose and then arrange the others around it.

***Are there any alternatives to using the suggested modifiers for phalanx mounted on 40mm frontage?***

There is a draft ammendment to those suggestions by Rick P - they read as follows and are to be discussed on the yahoo group:  
Phalanx in 40mm basing.

A number of players have requested that the rules take fuller account of pike or sarissa armed phalangites based to the 40mm edge, mostly because this is a more amenable basing for 15mm models. The following new rules section has therefore been devised to meet this need.

The rules given here give a comparable result to the usual basing – there is a slight reduction in total attacks over the same base area when charging and pursuing (because the bonuses only apply to the stands in contact) but formations are less vulnerable generally because casualties can be removed from the rear of a 'fighting column' without affecting the phalanx's formation. The intent is purely to mimic the effectiveness of the narrow based units – and in principle it should be possible to employ both standards on the same tabletop.

Phalanx

If the phalanx is based to the 40mm edge then ignore the standard phalanx rules, including those cited throughout the rulebook, and apply the following rules instead.

1. The phalanx is a cumbersome and relatively inflexible formation. To represent this, a phalanx

moves at normal infantry pace of 20cm in the Command phase only if it is in either a line or column formation **and** if the unit moves either directly forward or charges. In all other formations or situations, including during evades, the phalanx moves at half pace (10cm).

2. None-measured and fixed moves that take place outside the Command phase – such as advances, drive backs, pursuits, and fall backs are worked out exactly like other troops.
3. A phalanx that is in a column formation at the start of a charge move can remain in column as it moves into combat. The first stand is moved in the usual way and remaining stands are placed directly behind. The unit does not have to form a conventional battleline and stands do not have to maximize frontage as they normally would. This is up to the player – such units can form a conventional battleline if the player prefers. This enables the phalanx to fight in a deep formation as befitting its armament.
4. A phalanx stand can be supported by any infantry stand from the side in the same way as any other infantry stand. A phalanx stand cannot be supported from behind at all – instead a phalanx stand that would otherwise support from behind adds its basic Attack value to the stand in front. The rearward stand can be from the same or a different unit – it does not matter. Thus a charging phalanx stand with a rear ‘supporting’ phalanx stand charges with 3 Attacks + 1 Attack for charging + 3 Attacks for ‘supporting phalanx’. Note that the modifier is the stand’s basic Attacks value and no further Attack modifiers are applied to this bonus.
5. A phalanx stand can support other infantry stands placed alongside it, but can neither support such stands from behind nor add Attacks to non-phalanx infantry stands when placed behind.
6. A phalanx stand striking to its side or rear has an Attacks value of ‘0’. Rearward ‘supporting’ stands cannot add their Attacks to such stands. Note that units which would otherwise not strike at all are still entitled to a single ‘Last Ditch’ dice roll on behalf of the whole unit.
7. Phalanx units treat all dense terrain as impenetrable – woods, broken/marshy ground, steep hills/slopes, woods/tall scrub, and villages/built up areas.
8. Phalanx troops cannot be given ladders to facilitate attacks upon fortified units on ramparts. Note that phalanx stands based to the long edge can be placed on ramparts (as they will fit!) but they cannot benefit from a rearward ‘supporting’ phalanx as described above.

Note. I have taken the principle of a second rank fighting and applied it as a modifier to the stand in contact. The reason for this is simply that the rules define contact as the criteria for attacking – i.e. if you touch you fight – so resolving all the attacks as a bonus through the usual stand doesn’t throw up so many exceptions. This gives you slightly different maths – a very slightly lower average ‘hit’ rate over the same base length in most situations. The advantages are it makes the phalanx less vulnerable to flanking when retreating as rear ranks can be removed rather than edge stands – the advantage of this depends upon the overall size of the formation – it gives a slightly different dynamic. I’ve added a rule to the effect that a phalanx cannot support or support bonus other infantry from the rear – this is simply to encourage the phalanx to fight as a block rather than hide behind other units – there are some fall outs from this that affect pursuit/advances and incidental contacts where phalanx’s are placed behind other units – however this is also true of the short edge based phalanx where such stands cannot support other kinds of infantry to their own front.

