

Credits

Pocket Battles Game Design

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POCKET BATTLES

ANCIENTS #1

CELTS vs ROMANS

GAME OVERVIEW

Pocket Battles is a fast game of field battles between two armies. Before each game, players choose which army they will use and then agree on the size of the battle. Then each player will build their army from among the available units, up to the battle size. Once the armies are built, the units will be deployed onto the three sectors of the battlefield.

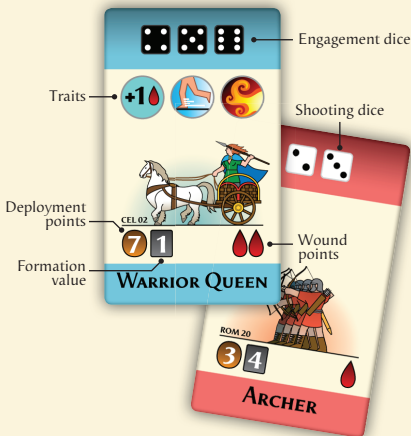
During the battle, players alternate in issuing orders to their units, moving them and engaging or shooting the enemy army. The first player to destroy half of the enemy army will be the winner.

COMPONENTS

- 60 troop tiles
- 24 double sided Order/Wound tokens
- 2 player aids
- 6 dice
- This ruleset

TROOP TILES

Each tile represents a Troop. A group of Troop tiles forms a Unit. A Troop is specified by a number of values and characteristics, shown in the image below.



ORDER/WOUND TOKENS

Each player during the battle will have a number of double sided tokens available, that


will be used to mark both issued orders and sustained wounds. One side of the token is used for the Orders, while the other is used for marking Wounds on the Units. The result is that when one or more Units of a player's army are wounded, there will be less Orders available to issue for performing actions.



THE BATTLEFIELD

The Battlefield is divided in 15 zones, with an ideal grid of 3 columns (named Sectors) and 5 rows (named Zones), according to the figure below.

PLAYER A		
Left Rear	Center Rear	Right Rear
Left Front	Center Front	Right Front
Engagement Zone	Engagement Zone	Engagement Zone
<u>Left Front</u>	<u>Center Front</u>	<u>Right Front</u>
<u>Left Rear</u>	<u>Center Rear</u>	<u>Right Rear</u>
PLAYER B		



The Left Sector of each player is opposed with the Right Sector of the opposing player, and vice versa. Please note that the zones of the Battlefield don't represent the exact position of the Units on the Battlefield, but rather "situations" in which the Units are involved: so a Unit in the Rear is being protected and usually does not take part in the battle; a Unit in the Front is ready to battle (either for melee or ranged attacks); a Unit in the Engagement Zone is involved in a melee with a Unit of the opposing player.

GAME SETUP

ARMY BUILDING

1. Before the battle, players agree on the armies they want to use, and take all the available Troops from those armies.
2. Players then agree on the Size of the battle; that is the number of Deployment Points that can be spent on each army.
3. Each player now builds up his army choosing any Troop, so that the total Deployment Points do not exceed the agreed Size of the battle.
4. Each player now uses the chosen Troops to compose Units. A Unit is a group of one or more Troops adjacent to each other, with at least 1

Wound Point, that are issued orders as a whole on the Battlefield. The number of Troops in a Unit cannot exceed the lowest Formation Value shown on the Troops that compose the Unit.

Example: no more than 3 Troops can form a Unit where a Troop with a Formation Value of 3 is present. Troops with Formation Value of 1 must stay alone on the battlefield (the Units are formed by a single Troop).



This is a valid Unit, for it does not exceed the minimum Formation Value of the Troops (3 for the Light Cavalry).

5. Units formed in this way are placed in stacks, with just the upper Troop of each stack being visible to the opponent.

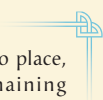
6. Each player now receives a number of Order/Wound Tokens equal to 1/10 of the Deployment Points previously agreed. This number should be a multiple of 10. Any number between 60 and 100 is fine to start with.

Example: if players agree on a 60 Deployment points battle, each player gets $60/10=6$ Order/Wound Tokens.

ARMY DEPLOYMENT

1. Four Troop tiles, not used for the deployed army, are placed face down to mark the borders between the Sectors, both for the Front and for the Rear Zone.
2. Each player rolls a die. The higher roller is the Attacker, the lower is the Defender.
3. Starting with the Attacker, players alternate in placing one Unit at a time on their side of the Battlefield. Units are placed as stacks, showing only the upper Troop. Units can be deployed in any Sector, either in the Front or in the Rear Zone.





4. When a player has no more Units to place, the other player places all of his remaining Units. When both players have finished placing their Units, both players reveal the Troops that compose their Units by breaking up the stacks and placing the Troops in each stack adjacent to each other.

BATTLE ROUNDS AND TURNS

- Each Battle consists of a number of Battle Rounds, until – at the end of a Battle Round – one of the players is declared as winner.

- In each Battle Round, players alternate in taking their Turn.

- The player that is taking his turn is called the Active Player.


- The Battle Turn is composed of two moments:

1. *An optional Unit Redeployment, that doesn't cost any Order Tokens.*

2. *A mandatory Action, in which the Active Player spends Order Tokens to perform one Action with one of his Units.*

- When both players run out of Order Tokens, the Battle Round is over.

- If one player runs out of Order Tokens, the opposing Player will take Turns one after the other until he also runs out of Order Tokens: then the



Battle Round is over.

- At the end of a Battle Round, each player recovers the used Order Tokens and the Wound Tokens of his Units that have been killed during the Round. He can also decide to eliminate some of his wounded Troops in order to recover the Wound Tokens used on them.

- In the first Battle Round the Attacker takes the first Turn. In the following Battle Rounds, the first Turn alternates between the players: in the 2nd Battle Round the Defender takes the first Turn, in the 3rd the Attacker goes first again, and so on.

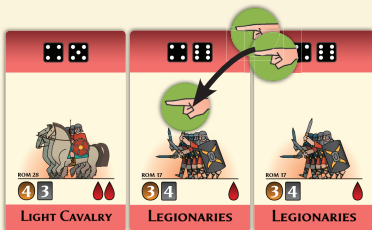
UNIT REDEPLOYMENT


At the beginning of his turn, a player has the option to move, without using any Order Tokens, one of his Units from a Zone in his half of the Battlefield to another adjacent Zone. A Unit can thus move from the Rear of a Sector to the Rear of an adjacent Sector, or to the Front of the same sector. A Unit in the Front of a Sector can move to the Front of an adjacent Sector, or to the Rear of the same Sector. Engagement Zones cannot be entered or left with a Unit Redeployment.

ACTIONS

Whether an Unit Redeployment has been performed or not, a player must then spend one or more Order Tokens to perform one Action with one of his Units, excluding the Unit that has performed the Unit Redeployment in the current turn. To issue orders to a Unit, the player must place on the Unit a number of Order Tokens equal to the number of Order Tokens currently on the Unit plus one.

Example: if no Order Tokens are present on a Unit, it costs just 1 Order Token to issue orders to that Unit. Issuing it orders again in the same Battle Round would cost $(1+1)=2$ further Order Tokens. Issuing orders a 3rd time to the same Unit (now there will be 3 tokens on that Unit) would cost $(1+2+1)=4$ further Order Tokens (and now there will be 7 tokens on that Unit).





A Unit can use Order Tokens to perform one of the following Actions (not all Actions are allowed to all the Units):

1. *Tactical Move*
2. *Charge*
3. *Carrying on an Engagement*
4. *Leaving an Engagement*
5. *Shooting*
6. *Using a Special Trait*

1. TACTICAL MOVE

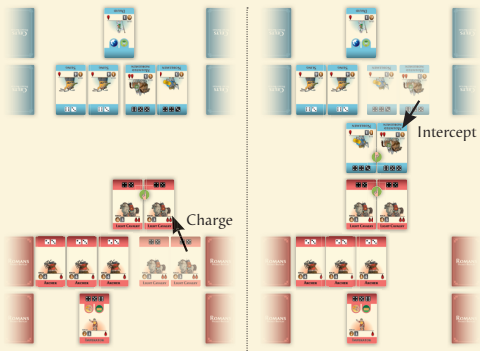
A Tactical Move works exactly as the Unit Redeployment described above. It is performed in order to move a Unit from a Zone to an adjacent Zone. Remember: Engagement Zones cannot be entered or left with a Tactical Move.

2. CHARGE

If a Unit in the Front of a Sector has Engagement Dice (black) showing on any of his Troops, this means the Unit can Charge. A Charge is performed in order to engage an enemy Unit in the Front of the same Sector. When a Unit Charges, it is simply moved from the Front of a Sector to the Engagement Zone of the same

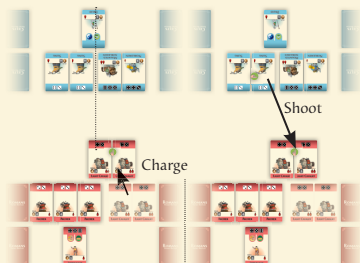
Sector. When a Unit Charges, the opposing player can choose one of the following reactions:

A. Intercept the charging Unit, issuing orders to one of his Units with Engagement Dice showing in the Front of the same Sector to move in the Engagement Zone and come in contact with it. An Engagement between these two Units follows. (see “Engagement”, below)



B. Shoot against the charging Unit, issuing orders to one of his Units with Shooting dice (white) showing in the Front of the same Sector to target the charging Unit. Shooting is resolved following the normal rules (see “Shooting”, below). If, after the shooting, the charging Unit has surviving Troops, the Active Player can choose any enemy Unit in the Front or in the Engagement Zone of that Sector to move in contact with. An Engagement between the two Units follows (see “Engagement”, below).

C. Wait, not issuing any order to his Units. The Active player can thus choose any enemy Unit in the Front or in the Engagement Zone of that Sector to move in contact with. An Engagement between the two Units follows (see “Engagement”, below).

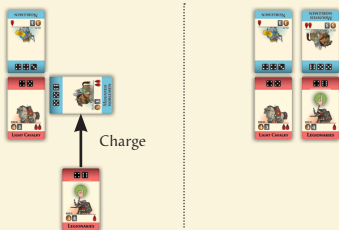


Note: if the opponent decides either to Intercept or to Shoot against the charging Unit, this is not considered the action of his Turn. After the Active Player performs the

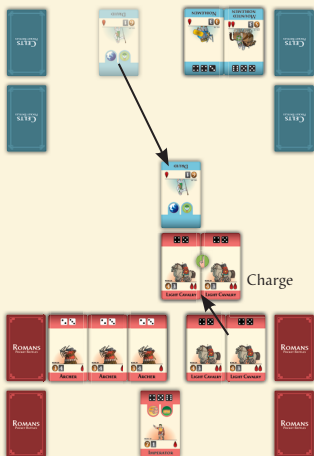
action of his turn (the Charge), the opponent will become the Active Player and will take his turn (Unit Redeployment and Action).

CHARGING UNITS INVOLVED IN AN ENGAGEMENT:

A Unit can Charge and move in contact with a Unit already involved in an Engagement, thus outnumbering it. You can place the other Charging Units on the side of the attacked Unit, but this placement has no specific meaning. When this happens, resolve the Engagement following the normal rules. Only one Unit strikes each time, and hits are always inflicted on a single Unit. In the same way, the Strike Back (see below) is performed by a single Unit, the one that was actually attacked. If a Unit Charges and moves in contact with a Unit that was outnumbering a friendly Unit, two Engagements are created, each one involving only one Unit for each player. (See illustration)

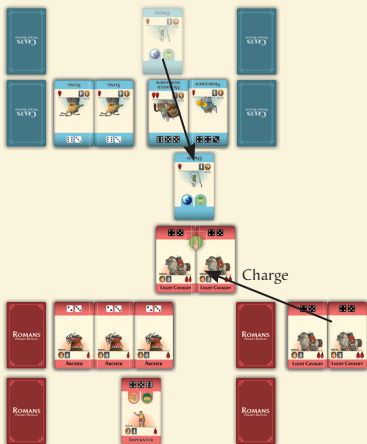


CHARACTER ENGAGEMENT



CHARGING WITH NO ENEMY UNITS IN THE SECTOR:

If a Unit Charges but there are no enemy Units present in any Zone of that Sector, that Unit can “flank”, that is choose to Charge **any** Unit in the Engagement Zone, Front or Rear of an adjacent Sector. Even in this case, the opponent is not allowed to Intercept or Shoot against the Charging Unit. When the resulting Engagement is over, the surviving Unit is moved in the Front Zone of the Sector where it was actually engaged (see: “Engagement”).



ENGAGEMENT

The result of a Charge – unless a Shooting has completely destroyed the Charging Unit – is the creation of Engagement between two Units, that are now in contact with each other. An Engagement is resolved as follows:

- 1. The Active Player rolls 1 die for his Unit, plus 1 further die if his Unit Charged in this turn.*
- 2. He compares the rolled dice with the Engagement Dice shown on the Troops of his Unit (the black dice printed on the tile). For each 'match' between an Engagement Die and a result of a die, a hit is scored.*

Example: a Unit that shows Engagement Dice of 3,3,4,4,5 rolls a die and obtains a 4. This results in 2 hits (1 die x 2 Engagement Dice);

Example: the same Unit as above (Engagement Dice 3,3,4,4,5) rolls two dice (due to a Trait) and obtains a 5 and a 4. This results in 1+2=3 hits.


3. The opponent immediately assigns Wounds to his Unit, one Wound per hit. Each Troop can absorb damage equal to the number of its Wound points (WP): once a Troop accumulates Wound tokens equaling the number of its Wound icons, it must be removed.

Example: A Unit with 2 Cavalry (2 WP each) and 1 Infantry (1 WP) is inflicted 1 hit. The player can choose to remove the Infantry, to remove the Cavalry (thus ‘wasting’ 1 WP), or to place 1 Wound token on a Cavalry.

Example: The same Unit has a Cavalry with 1 Wound token on it. Later in the battle it receives another hit. The player can remove the wounded Cavalry, decide to wound the other Cavalry or to remove the Infantry.

Example: The Roman player rolls one die for his Unit and obtains a 4, resulting in 2 hits. The Celt player removes the Noblemen (for 1 wound), and places a Wound token on the Mounted Noblemen (for the 2nd wound). (See illustration below)





If possible, Wound tokens must be taken from the tokens that haven't been used during the current Battle Round. If all the tokens have been used as Order or Wound Tokens, the player can choose tokens used as Orders on any of his Units. If there are no Order tokens available, (all the tokens have been used as Wounds) no Wound tokens can be placed, and Troops must be removed instead.

- 4. Removed Troops are given to the other player, so that he can keep count of the value of the eliminated Troops.*
- 5. Now the opponent can Strike Back with the surviving Troops of his Unit, if there are any. Striking Back works exactly as the procedure for Engagement (a die is thrown and compared with the Engagement Dice, Wounds are inflicted, casualties removed, etc.), with the exception that there is no need to issue orders to that Unit, so no Order tokens must be spent.*
- 6. If, at the end of the Engagement, both Units still have surviving Troops, they remain in contact in the Engagement Zone. If one of the two Units has been completely destroyed, the other Unit is moved back in his Front zone of the Sector where the Engagement has been carried out.*



3. CARRYING ON AN ENGAGEMENT

If two or more opposing Units are already in contact in the Engagement Zone at the beginning of his Turn, the player can issue orders to one of his involved Units to carry on the Engagement. This works exactly as an Engagement following a Charge (except that the Unit doesn't roll the additional die due to the Charge), with the Unit that has been issued orders striking first, and the enemy Unit that can Strike Back after assigning his Wounds and removing any casualties.

4. LEAVING AN ENGAGEMENT

If two or more opposing Units are already in contact in the Engagement Zone at the beginning of his Turn, the player can also issue orders to one of his involved Units to leave the Engagement Zone and move back to the Front zone of the same sector. If he decides to do so, the opponent has a chance of striking the disengaging Unit, with all of his Units involved in the Engagement. This works as the Striking Back described above, for it needs no Orders. After any Wounds have been inflicted, and casualties removed, the surviving Troops of the disengaging Unit can move back to his Front zone of the Sector, and so does the opponent's Unit(s) that was in contact with it.

5. SHOOTING

If a Unit on the Front of a Sector has Shooting Dice (white) shown on any of his Troops, this means it can Shoot (i.e. has a ranged attack). Shooting works in a similar way to Engagement (see “Engagement” above for clarifications):

1. *The Active player targets any enemy Unit deployed in the Front or in the Engagement Zone (see below) of the same Sector of the shooting Unit.*

2. *He rolls 1 die and compares the result with the Shooting Dice shown on the Troops of his Unit. For each match between the Shooting Dice and the results of the rolled dice, a hit is scored.*

3. *The opponent immediately assigns Wounds to his Unit, one Wound per hit, and removes any casualties. Each Troop can absorb damage equal to its Wound Points: once a Troop accumulates Wound tokens equaling the number of its Wound Points, it must be removed.*

If possible, Wound tokens must be taken from Order tokens that haven't been used yet. If all the Order tokens have been used, the player can choose Order tokens used on any of his Units. If there are no Order tokens available, (all the tokens

have been used as Wounds), no Wound tokens can be placed, and Troops must be removed instead. Removed Troops are given to the other player, so that he can keep count of the value of the killed Troops.

SHOOTING ON AN ENGAGEMENT:

A player can decide to Shoot on a enemy Unit involved in an Engagement. If he does so, he throws dice for hitting as normal, but the hits are divided (rounded up) on all the Units involved in the Engagement.



SHOOTING WITH NO ENEMY UNITS IN FRONT OR ENGAGEMENT ZONE:

If a Unit decides to Shoot, but there are no enemy Units in the Front or the Engagement Zone of that Sector, it can Shoot on any Unit in the Rear of that Sector.



SHOOTING WITH NO ENEMY UNITS IN THE SECTOR:

If there are no enemy Units in the Front, Rear, or Engagement Zone of the shooting Unit's Sector, the Unit can shoot on any Unit in the Front or in the Engagement Zone of an adjacent Sector.



6. USING A SPECIAL TRAIT

Traits are specific abilities of some Troops that allow them to tweak the normal rules of the game. Some of them – listed as Special actions - require an order to be issued. This specific action cannot be used in the very first turn of the battle, taken by the Attacker.



7. PASS

If a player doesn't want to perform any action during his turn, he can decide to Pass. The player must set aside an Order token on the table and it is considered used, just like it was spent on a Unit. Then the turn passes to the other player. Passing could be a useful tactic, whereby you do not wish to order a Unit to do something dangerous, like combating a stronger enemy Unit.



END OF THE BATTLE AND WINNER

The battle ends when one of the players concedes, or at the end of a Battle Round in which one of the players has destroyed half or more of the enemy army (counting up the Deployment Points of the eliminated Troops). That Player is considered the Winner. If both players have destroyed half or more of the enemy army, the Winner is whoever has destroyed the higher total of Troops (always counting up their Deployment Points). In case of a tie, the Defender is the Winner.