

Wars of the Roses Strategy Battle Game

This is an adaptation of the popular Middle Earth Strategy Battle Game (MESBG) rules from Games Workshop for use in playing skirmish games set in the Wars of the Roses (the civil wars that took place in England between 1455 and 1487). They're completely free.

The rules are inspired by other adaptations of MESBG for the Medieval period: [Age of Trebuchet](#) and [Legends of the Middle Ages](#).

The rules are not an exhaustive rules set, just enough content to allow players to recreate Wars of the Roses scenarios using the Middle Earth Strategy Battle Game rulebook. They also don't cover everything. So far, they focused on some of the most distinctive troop types found in the Wars of the Roses, such as billmen, longbow archers and men-at-arms. Rules for cavalry, European mercenaries, Irish kerns etc maybe added at a future date.

These rules additions include the following:

- Profiles for troop types commonly found in the Wars of the Roses
- Special Rules that these troops might have
- New Rules for Weapons and Armour

Also included at the end are some notes on the types of scenarios that these rules might be used for and also some sample warbands that could be used for a Battle Companies size game.

Profiles

Knight/Man-at-Arms

Points: 17

F	S	D	A	W	C
4	3	6	1	1	5

Wargear

Full Plate

Pole-Axe

Options

Replace Pole-Axe with Longsword

Special Rules

Trained for War

Household Retainer

Points: 10

F	S	D	A	W	C
4/3+	3	5	1	1	4

Wargear

Partial Plate

Hand weapon

Options

Halberd 1 point

Longsword 2 point

Buckler 1 point

Longbow 1 point

Special Rules

Trained for War 5 points

Expert Shot 5 points

Retinue Billman**Points: 10**

F	S	D	A	W	C
4	3	4	1	1	4

Wargear*Jack and Helm**Bill***Options***Partial Plate, +1 Defence 1 point***Special Rules**

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Shire Levy Billman**Points: 7**

F	S	D	A	W	C
3	3	4	1	1	3

Wargear*Jack and Helm**Bill***Options**

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Special Rules

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Retinue Archer**Points: 17**

F	S	D	A	W	C
4/3+	3	4	1	1	4

Wargear

Longbow

Padded Jack and Helmet

Buckler

Hand weapon

Options*Partial Plate, +1 Defence 1 point***Special Rules**

Expert Shot

Shire Levy Archer

Points: 7

F	S	D	A	W	C
3/4+	3	3	1	1	3

Wargear

Longbow

Hand weapon

Options

Jack, +1 Defence *1 point*

Buckler *1 point*

Special Rules

Expert Shot *5 points*

Peasant/Lowly Foot

Points: 4

F	S	D	A	W	C
2/5+	3	3	1	1	2

Wargear

Hand weapon

Options

Spear *1 point*

Bill *1 point*

Bow *1 point*

Jack & Helm *1 point*

Special Rules

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Special Rules

A fairly brief section so far! But that's not a bad thing. All other special rules are as in the main Middle Earth Strategy Battle Game rulebook.

From MESBG Rules:

Bodyguard - pass courage tests if near the hero

Expert Shot - shoot twice

New Special Rules:

Trained for War

If using a pole-ax or halberd (i.e. knightly two-handed-weapon) ignore -1 penalty to Duel rolls.

Weapons and Armour

Longbow

Strength 4 at Short Range (12")

Strength 3 at Medium Range (24")

Strength 2 and -1 to Hit at Long Range (36")

Billhook

Two-handed weapon and Hook Special Strike

Hook

Billman can opt to Hook before Duel roll. If win the Duel then can hook their opponent.

If mounted the rider is thrown and rolls on the thrown rider table.

If opponent is infantry, then treat as Bash - opposed d6 + Strength rolls - no bonus for two-handed. If opponent loses they are knocked prone.

Longsword

Treat as hand-and-a-half sword

Can use parry and feint special strikes

Poleax/Halberd

Two-handed. If Trained for War ignore -1 penalty to Duel roll.

Buckler

+1 to Duel Roll

No additional defense.

Seems that it makes it fighting with a sword more effective, so more likely to win the duel.

Scenario Ideas for War of the Roses Strategy Battle Game

Types of scenarios:

- Raids
- Scouting/foraging parties - attacked by other parties from opposing army. Objective to take prisoners and prevent anyone getting away.
- Brawls between retainers of opposing factions
- Attempted murders
- Refuge sought in manor or church - mini-siege
- Larger skirmishes - two lords and retinues conduct a private war.

Sample Warbands for Battle Companies

The Knightly Retinue

Knight with Pole-Axe (17)

2 Household Retainers with Halberds (11)

3 Retinue Billmen (10)

3 Retinue Archers (17)

Total = 9, Break point 4

Points = 120

The Shire Levy

6 Shire Levy Billman (7) 42

4 Shire Levy Archers (7) 28

4 Shire Levy Archers with Expert Shot (12) 48

Total = 14, Break: 7

Points: 118

The Yorkist Foraging Party

2 Retinue Billman (10) = 20

2 Retinue Archer (17) = 34

2 Shire Levy Billman (7) = 14

4 Shire Levy Archer (7) = 28

4 Lowly Footman with Spear (5) = 20

Total = 14, Break: 7

Points: 116