

WARRIORS OF VIRTUE



Siege Tactics

LARGE SCALE BATTLES ON ONIN

CREATED BY DAVID GIFFIN AND ERIC BRIGHT

© 2005 Eric Bright, Danny Brown and Nathan Tolbert

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without written permission from an author.

There has long been a need for rules for large scale battles in WOV. There have been many times when large armies have been attacking and defending areas that involve players. While commanding many large military units may be better suited for a miniature-type game, characters will rarely actually be in the role of Commander in Chief of the armies and will more likely be an individual in the defending or attacking squadron. Thus, a weird hybrid exists between the individual and whole group perspective which calls for some new equipment and attack rules.

Catapults, trebuchets, ballistae, siege towers, and siege ladders will have different functions depending on the type of structure being attacked. Earth, wood, or stone compose the majority of structures used to protect areas. These may be walls, castles, towers, or fortresses. Each type of structure has a specific use as well as unique strengths and weaknesses.

At the beginning of a siege, characters may not be able to participate in hand-to-hand combat and may not be in range for magic. (Most magic spells only have a range of 24 feet.) Characters may take part in arrow volleys, artillery attacks, breach point defending, or structural repairs all before a hand-to-hand combat situation may occur. After a structure is fully breached and enemy troops are pouring in, then the regular WOV attack rules will take over.

Arrow Volleys

Any character who has a proficiency in a bow may join a group of archers and take part in arrow volleys. An arrow volley is when the group of archers all fire at the same time in a concentrated target area (approximately a 10 person by 10 person block of troops or 30 feet by 30 feet) to deal as much damage as possible before engaging in hand-to-hand combat. These arrow volleys may be fired from defenders or attackers and the range of the attacks will change based on how tall the structure is that arrows are fired from and the type of bow being used.

There must be a defined commander of the archer group giving out calls for arrow volleys. There also must be sub-commanders to relay the commanders orders for every 100 archers in the group.

Long bows have a range of 300 feet, short bows 100 feet, compound bows 150 feet, and crossbows 200 feet. For every 10 feet of height a group of archers is higher than their target, they gain 10 feet in range. For every 10 feet of height a group of archers is below their target, they lose 10 feet in range. The crossbow loses twice the amount of range when attacking from below their target because crossbows do not fire vertically as well as regular bows. Arrow volleys have a minimum range of 25 feet. If archers are under 25 feet they must shoot at individual targets.

To determine how many attacks an arrow volley group gets the speed of the advancing army needs to be known. An advancing army moves at the pace of 50 feet per round if marching and 100 feet per round if

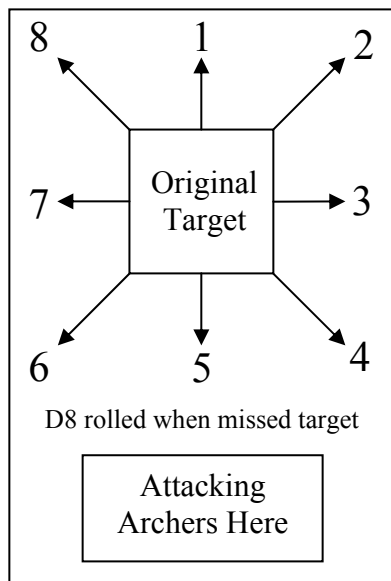
charging. Thus a defending group of archers armed with long bows on a 30 foot wall would get 6 volleys in before the advancing army was close enough for individual shots. An advancing group of archers may only go 25 feet per round and still fire an arrow volley.

When a group of archers fire a volley at targets without shields, roll 1d6-1 for the to-hit die. If the targets have shields in defense formation, then roll 1d6-3. If the archers are firing up they should take an additional minus 1. (So 1d6-2 for unshielded and 1d6-4 for shielded.) Take this number times 10 and this is the percentage of your archers that hit. If the number is 0 or less, then none of the archers hit the intended target.

For example, 50 archers fire a volley at an unshielded advancing army and roll a 3 on the d6. Minus 1 equals 2 which means that 20% of the archers hit, or 10 archers in the group of 50.

If the attack was unsuccessful, then roll 1d8 to determine which direction the arrow volley veered off. When the volley misses, it does so by 30 feet according to the following directions:

- 1 Behind
- 2 Back Right
- 3 Right
- 4 Front Right
- 5 Front
- 6 Front Left
- 7 Left
- 8 Back Left



Then re-roll the to-hit die for any target in that new area. Notice that there is not a reduction when re-rolling the to-hit die for the new target. This gives incentive for firing at the middle of a target so if the middle is not hit, then the volley is just as likely to hit some other troops on any side of the middle block of troops. However if the new to-hit die shows a 0 or less again, then the arrows are considered to have missed or have been blocked completely.

If a target is hit by some archers, roll another d6 for the damage. Rolling a 5 or 6 means the same number of the targets died as archers hit, 3 or 4 means that amount of targets are severely wounded and cannot continue with the battle, 1 or 2 means that amount of targets are wounded (-5 HP straight) but are continuing to advance and fight.

In the previous example 10 archers hit their target area. So if on the damage die a 4 was rolled, then 10 troops from the target army would be wounded to the point that they could not continue to fight.

Another full example would probably be helpful. 100 archers with short bows are attacking 100 shielded troops on top of a wall from a height disadvantage of 20 feet. This means that they have only a range of 80 feet, since normal short bows will only go 100 feet. So they will probably get 3 volleys in while they advance before they are within individual range.

Their first attack they are 80 feet away and they roll a 5 on the to-hit die. $5 - 4$ (minus four because the troops are shielded and are above the archers), meaning that 10% of the archers hit. 10% of 100 is 10 archers. On the damage roll a 5 is rolled, so 10 of the shielded troops on the wall die.

The archers advance 25 feet to 55 feet away and volley again. This time they roll a 3 on the to-hit die which means $3 - 4 = -1$ so it is a miss. Therefore a d8 is rolled to see which direction the miss is in. Assuming the wall that the troops are on runs left to right and a 1 is rolled on the d8, then the arrows go beyond the troops falling on a block of troops behind the wall.

Now the second to-hit die is rolled and it is a 4. $4 - 4 = 0$ so it is a complete miss. No damage is dealt.

The archers advance 25 feet to 30 feet away and volley again. This time they roll a 1 on the to-hit die which means that $1 - 4 = -3$ so it is a miss again.

Rolling the d8, a 7 comes up. There is another block of troops to the left of the target block, so they are under fire.

Rolling the second to-hit die leads to a 6. $6 - 4 = 2$ so they hit with 20% of their archers, or 20 archers. The damage die is a 3, so 20 of the troops in the second block are wounded to the point where they cannot fight.

The archers advance again 25 feet leaving them 5 feet from the wall. This is too close for a volley so the archers will have to either scale the walls or stay back approximately 10 feet from the wall and fire at individual people.

This does make arrow volleys very effective for thinning out troops, but remember that the archers will more than likely take damage as well from enemy archers, catapults, ballista or other long range weapons. As the archer units lose troops they deal less damage.

Artillery Attacks

Artillery units of ballistae, catapults, or trebuchets should be fired by a group of people that has at least one person trained as an artilleryman. The weapon may still be fired if no one in the group is trained, but has a +20% chance to misfire. Each weapon also requires a different amount of people to load or fire.

Just a quick thought for all GMs. Know ahead of time how many bolts, rocks, or whatever ammunition is being used, each artillery unit has available. There is a limited supply since the ammunition must be made ahead of time.

Ballistae

A ballista is designed to deal significant damage to a small area. A ballista shoots a large bolt, similar to a crossbow, but much larger. The bolt is usually around 6 to 8 feet in length and approximately 1 to 2 feet in diameter. The shaft of the bolt can be metal or wood, but the head of the bolt is almost always a very hard metal to help it break away the stone on walls. The ballista bolt is fired at an angle and will shoot over its own troops.

A ballista can be fired once a round with four people working it. It takes two to load the bolt, one in the aiming chair, and one on the firing rod. For every person less than four operating the ballista it takes an extra round between firing.

A ballista may be moved by groups of horses or oxen, but must be anchored before firing. It takes one round for a ballista to be anchored or un-anchored and has a firing range of

100 to 600 feet. Below 100 feet the ballista has a +50% chance to misfire.

Normally a ballista has 60% chance to hit its target. For each round that the ballista is firing at the same target it gains a +10% to a maximum of 90% chance to hit.

Roll 1d10 for hit and a 1-6 will hit the target. Rolling above that will miss the target. Notice that the number to hit will increase with each additional firing at the same target, but regardless, any time a 0 (or 10 on some d10) is rolled the ballista misfires. If the ballista is being fired by untrained artillerymen, then 8, 9, or 0 will misfire because of the additional 20% chance to misfire.

If the ballista misfires, roll 1d6 to determine where the bolt landed. If a 1 is rolled, the bolt landed within 100 feet of the ballista, possibly doing damage to friendly troops. If a 2 is rolled, the bolt landed between 100 and 200 feet of the ballista. A 3 means between 200 and 300 feet and so forth.

When a target is missed, roll 1d8 just like the arrow volley to see which direction the target missed. However, when the ballista misses it will miss by approximately 50 feet. Find the new target then deal damage accordingly to the new target.

These to-hit numbers are assuming a target like a wall or castle. However, when aiming for troops, the troops have a chance to get out of the way of the bolt. For every 100 feet away the ballista is there is a 10% chance for the troops to evade. For example, a ballista at 500 feet away will give the troops in the firing zone a 50% chance to get out of the way.

The ballista will only affect a single person and two people directly behind them. It will deal full damage to the first person, half damage to the

next person, and quarter damage to the last person. The ballista will basically hit and skid a little way. Roll for each person to evade.

A ballista will deal $30 + 1d20$ damage. This damage is not straight, so AC must be figured in.

A ballista itself has approximately 60 HP and -20 AC. Anytime a ballista takes a hit, the same amount of damage after figuring in the ballista's AC is divided between the troops working the ballista (rounded up). Notice the troops will take the damage straight.

For example, a ballista is hit for 35 damage. 20 of this is knocked off for AC, so the remaining damage is 15. The ballista itself takes 15 damage and each troop manning the ballista will each take 4 damage straight since there are four of them.

Catapults

Catapults work more like a lever than a crossbow. They fire large stones or specially made fire bombs. The large stones are designed for dealing damage to structures and the fire bombs are designed to deal damage to a larger spread of troops.

A catapult can be fired once a round with three people. Two people load ammo and the third runs the firing lever and winding wench. For every person less than three firing the catapult it takes an additional round to fire.

A catapult has a range of 300 to 900 feet after being anchored. They take one round to anchor or un-anchor and can be moved by a team of horses or oxen like the ballista. Catapults also fire at an angle and therefore can fire over their own troops.

Catapults has a 50% chance to hit its target and also gains a +10% chance to hit for every subsequent fire at the same target to a maximum of 90% chance to hit. They also misfire with a roll of a 0 (or 10).

If a catapult misfires, roll 1d10. If a 1 is rolled the catapult hit within 100 feet. 2 means between 100 and 200 feet and so forth like the ballista. Rolling a 0 means it just did not fire.

If the catapult misses the target, not misfires, then roll the d8 for direction and deal damage accordingly. The catapult will also miss by approximately 50 feet when it misses.

Again firing at troops, they have a 10% chance to evade for every 100 feet away the catapult is firing from. Please note that if the troops are all crammed on a wall they may not be able to evade the fire because people are in the way.

When a stone is used the catapult will deal $20 + 1d20$ damage to everything within a four space target zone making up a square target of 6 feet by 6 feet. When a fire bomb is used it will deal $10 + 1d10$ damage to the target space and everything within a two space radius. AC of the target must be figured in.

The fire from the fire bomb has a 70% chance of catching anything flammable on fire and will burn for 1d4 rounds unless put out. For each subsequent round of burning, anyone within the fire will take an additional 1d6 damage straight.

A catapult has approximately 75 HP and -15 AC. Again, the damage after AC of the catapult is dealt to the catapult when it is attacked and the same amount of damage is divided between the troops operating the catapult (rounded up). This is straight damage.

Trebuchets

Trebuchets are a cross between a sling shot and a catapult. They fire large stones designed to deal structural damage from long distances.

A trebuchet can be fired once a round by a group of 2 people. One person loads the ammo and the second runs the firing lever and winding wench. If only one person is operating the trebuchet, it can only fire every other round.

Trebuchets have a range of 600 to 1500 feet. They can be moved by animal teams but take 2 rounds to anchor or un-anchor. They also fire at an angle over their own troops.

Trebuchets have a 30% chance to hit their target and gain a +10% chance to hit for every subsequent fire at the same target to a maximum of a 90% chance to hit. They also misfire with a roll of a 0 (or 10).

If a trebuchet misfires, roll 1d20. If a 1 is rolled the catapult hit within 100 feet. 2 means between 100 and 200 feet and so forth like the ballista. Rolling between 16 and 20 means it just did not fire.

If the trebuchet misses the target, not misfires, then roll the d8 for direction and deal damage accordingly. The trebuchet will also miss by approximately 50 feet when it misses.

Again firing at troops, they have a 10% chance to evade for every 100 feet away the trebuchet is firing from. This means that if it is over 1000 feet away the troops will evade unless they are blocked from evading by other troops or obstacles.

A trebuchet stone will deal $10 + 1d20$ damage to everything in a four space square target zone.

Trebuchets have approximately 50 HP and -10 AC. The damage after AC of the trebuchet is dealt to the trebuchet itself and the same amount of damage is divided between the troops operating the trebuchet (rounded up) and dealt straight.

Breach Points

Siege Towers

Siege Ladders

Boiling Oil

Arrow Slits

Portcullis

Battering Rams

Structural Repairs

Structure Types