

TRIMARIS

MANUAL OF WAR

A

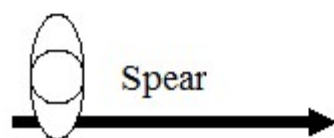
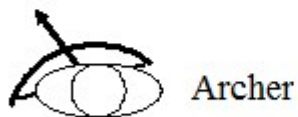
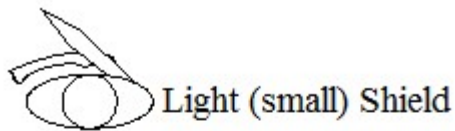
2025 Edition

Compiled by Sir Seosaidh, Earl Black Sword 2007
Edited by Jarl Ari Tyrbrandr of Trimaris 2017
Questions and corrections to: arityrbrandr@yahoo.com

Contents:

- Units, Individual ranks, and types of units.
- Command Intervals.
- Formations.
- Command List Movements.
- Training for War.
- An Introduction to Tactics.
- Formation Tactics.
- Restricted Front Tactics.
- Skirmish Tactics.
- Archery Tactics.
- Basic Field Tactics.
- Basic Bride and Portal Tactics.
- Pulse Charges and Column Charges.
- Receiving and making charges.
- The Bubble.

Figures used in illustrations:



Units:
Size

Army (Entirety of one Allied Force) **Individuals:**

Section (A Kingdom's Unified Force) **Ranks**

King/Queen

Platoon (A sizable household/s,
usually 2 or more squads)

Warlord/General
Section Captain (Section)

Squad (2 or more Triads)

Unit Commander
(Household unit/10+ person unit)

Triad (3 people)

Squad Leader (3-9 persons unit)

Formations

Line

Column

Left/Right Wing

Wedge

COMMAND-INTERVAL:

Normal order: Shields are just touching. Shoulder to shoulder for those without shields.

Close order: Pressed close against each other, shields locked.

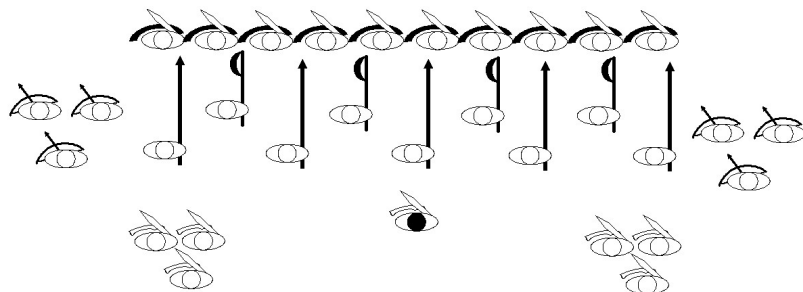
Open order/crenelated/loose: About one foot between shields. Gives room to maneuver.

Dress: Shield wall formed in the commanded order(Open/close/normal). Shields spaced and fronted evenly. No wavy lines! This also means while in motion not moving faster the Driver or Pusher.

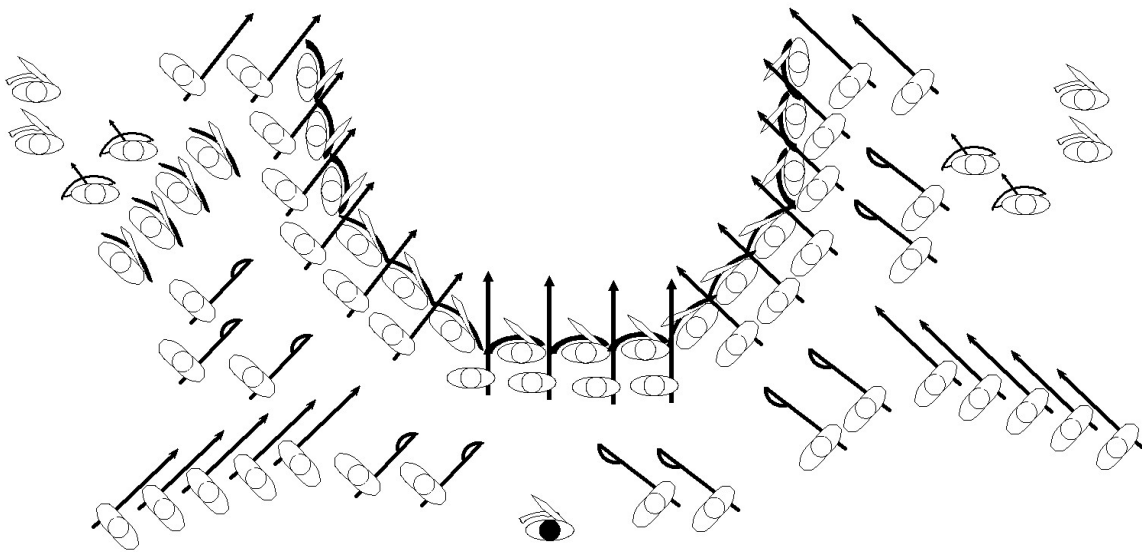


-FORMATIONS:

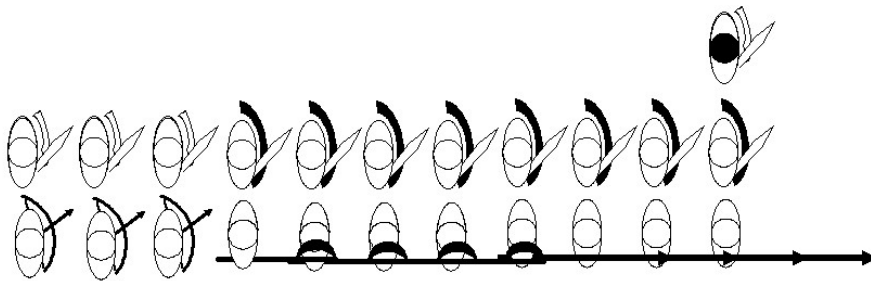
Line: Individuals side by side, shields in front, poles, spears directly behind, archers and skirmishers to the left and right of rear.



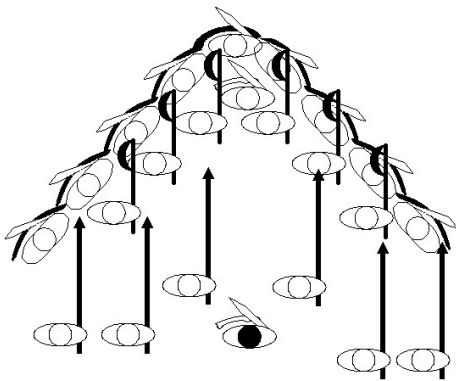
Cup: The fighters at the end of the line stand in place while the center of the line moves back to form a cup shape (generally used on bridges or gates)



File: Marching formation, individuals one behind the other, generally two lines wide, shields on the left, poles on the right

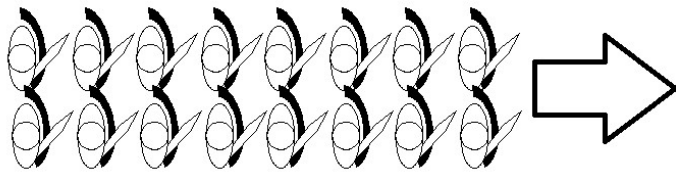


Wedge: Line forms and moves in a “v” formation. Unlike a normal line the driver is the point person with the far left and right persons being Pushers. Dressing in this formation is to the center/the Driver. Optimally lefties form to the right side of center and righties to the left. Maximizing shield coverage of the line.



Column: Battle movement formation, individuals one behind the other, generally three or four wide, shields crusting the front and front portions of the sides.

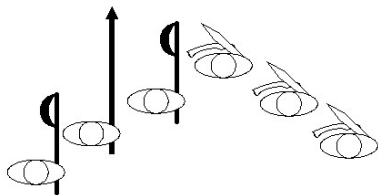
Verbal Order: "Form a Column of (Desired width)" Example showing a column of 2



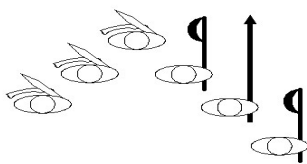
Reform: Verbal order "Reform"

Rally to the person calling for reformation. If first few to respond for a ring around the person giving the order. Usually once a triad or more has gathered further orders will be given to direct the movement and formation to reform to. "Form a line facing this direction."

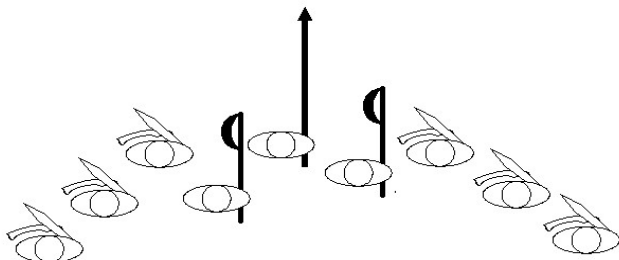
Wing Right Wing formations are open interval formations Primarily used for skirmishing units. Wing Right means that the fastest most aggressive shields and swords are on the right and the poles are on the left. Used for flanking the right side of an enemy formation.



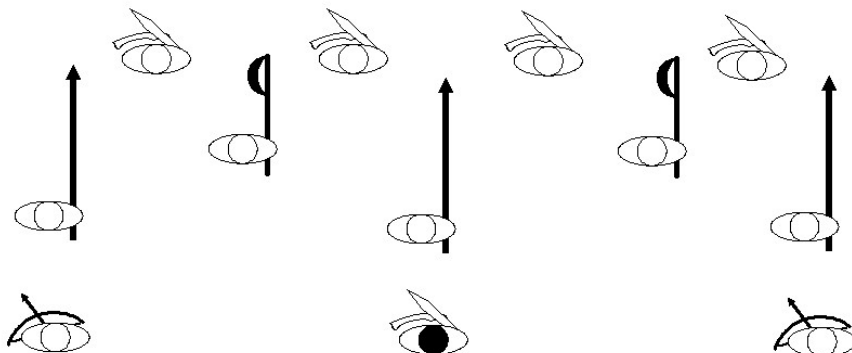
Wing Left: Shields and swords on the left, poles on the right. Used for flanking the left side of an enemy formation.



Double Wing: Shields and swords on the left and the right, poles in the center.

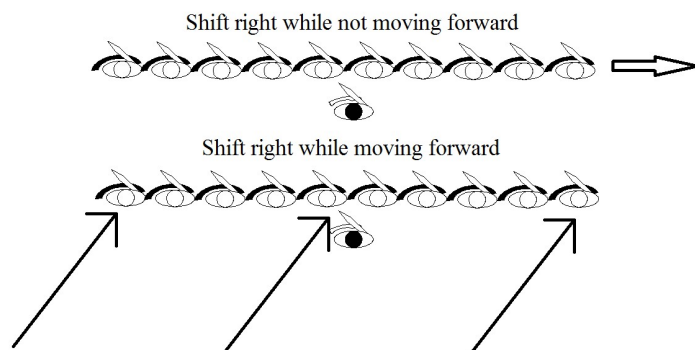


Skirmish: Open formation with Skirmish Shields widely spaced with Spears, Polearms and Archers layer between.

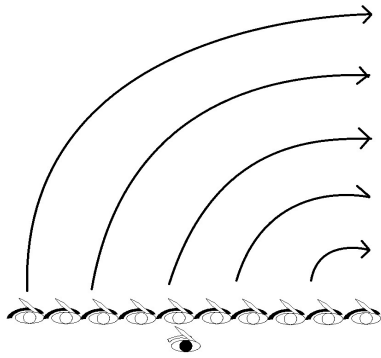


COMMAND LIST-*MOVEMENTS*:

<u>Command</u>	<u>Execute</u>	<u>Action</u>
Dress the line	Dress!	Standard dress is to the right
Dress to the Left	Dress Left!	Same but different.
Forward at a Walk	Walk!	Move forward at a walk while dressing to the right.
Forward at a Jog	Move!	Move forward at a jog while dressing to the right.
Face right	Move!	Turn <u>individually</u> in place to face to the right or left, shields to the front of the facing. (Fighters will change from a line to a column)
Face rear	Move!	Change the facing of the unit to it's rear by the front rank facing <u>individually</u> to the rear and the shield ranks passing thru and then facing to the rear.
Shift right (or left)	Shift!	Change from moving straight forward to moving forward at a 45o angle- maintain formation Shift without changing formation or heading (may be done while moving) (Sidestepping when not moving forward.)

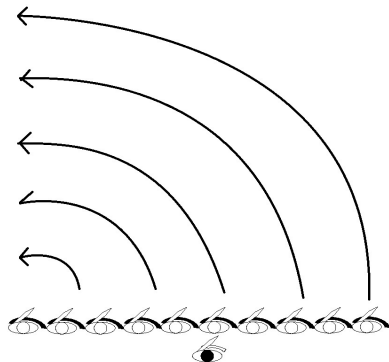


Wheel right Move!



Turn formation forward to the right,
man on far right is pivot point.

Wheel left Move!



Turn formation forward to the left,
man on far left is pivot point.

Back Wheel Right Move!

Turn formation backwards to the right
(unit facing changes to the left),
man on far right is the pivot point.
(everyone backs up in formation at a walk)

Prepare to charge Charge!

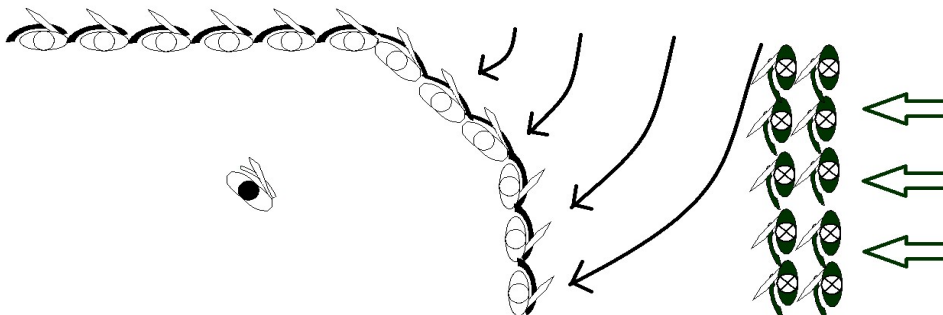
Forward at a run (10 feet)
drive through the enemy formation
do NOT stop to fight, run through.
(stay covered)

Form (formation), Move!

Move into specified formation
in front of the commander facing
in the direction he points.

Refuse right/Left Move!

Curl back the right third of
the unit to meet enemy that
is trying to flank.



Regroup	Regroup!	Form on the person calling the command.
Stop!	Stop!	Stop in place. <u>But don't drop your guard or stop fighting.</u> DO NOT USE HALT OR HOLD FOR ANY COMMAND.
Ground Shields	Ground!	Front rank of shields (or other designated group) drop to  knees
One Step Forward	Step!	Take one step forward while maintaining formation (can be done while kneeling on a bridge)
Fall Back	Move!	<u>Walk</u> backward while maintaining formation.

TRAINING FOR WAR

Training for war includes training for individual combat, so help your local marshal train the new people. As a leader your job goes beyond that to the special skills needed for war. First is training with the special weapons of war. The war shield and thrusting weapon (sword, axe, or mace) calls for different techniques than the small heater or round shield. This training should include one-on-one fighting, one-on-two, and in triads(3s) as well as shield wall use of the war shield. Small practices are no excuse to neglect melee training.

The fighters should be taught to be conservative when fighting with the war shield as their number one priority should be to survive. In a shield wall they should concentrate on hooking and pressing with their weapon to give the polearms an opening without exposing themselves or fellow shields. Every fighter should be trained to use and defend against glaives and spears. They should be taught individual techniques including close in defense against shorter weapons. They must be trained to fight over, and around the shield of their shield men. Special thrusting practice at the Pell to learn to hit small targets of opportunity is very important.

Once the individuals are trained, war training becomes the forging of a group of individuals into a unit. This should start on the level of the triad or small group. Fighters should be shown how to use their unit of three to cut off individual enemy warriors and split around them causing them to turn their back on one member of the group and thereby die. From there, two or three triads can be trained to work together to cut off, surround, and destroy smaller groups of the enemy. Basically, the idea is to defend and survive when facing a superior force, occupying them until help can arrive; attack and immediately destroy when facing an inferior force. Of course, the object of most maneuvers is to create these two situations in such a manner as to give your side the advantage. When the two or three small groups are working well together you should begin training them in the maneuvers listed elsewhere in this book. Familiarity with these commands and skill and discipline in performing these maneuvers will enable us to create advantages for ourselves and will make us effective as an Army, superior to those who trust in their individual combat abilities.

The logistics of moving the Army to the war may be the most important link. One hundred of the best troops in the Known World will lose to a rabble of fifty if 78 of the 100 are left sitting at home. Starting at least a month before the war Unit Commanders should work closely with his Second in command and Squad Leaders to make certain that every warrior in the unit knows when and where the war is.

Society combat has been, is, and shall be primarily individualistic. This is because most Society combat takes place on the Tourney field. As we fight more war/melee events many fighters will find that wars are more fun and more of an adrenalin "high" than tourneys. Those who find that this is true for them will want to improve in the arts of war because winning is more fun than losing. In order to be successful, it will be necessary to promote a feeling of "team" within the Army. An undisciplined group of skilled individuals will generally lose to a highly disciplined team of fighters trained in the tactics of war, even if the "team" is smaller or has less individual skill than the group. This was demonstrated over and over during the Middle Ages, most notably by the Swiss and the Romans. So, the leader should do all in his power to promote a team spirit, much like a football coach. After all this is a sport, not actual warfare and a strong "Esprit de Corps" will bring out more troops than obligatory cries of "Trimaris Needs You!" So, encourage your Company to not only train with each other but camp and eat together at wars, wear a special badge, whatever you can think of to develop morale.

It is the personal responsibility of the Unit Commanders and their seconds to attend all Section Command meetings to get their Unit's assignments. Unit Commanders are responsible for the communication of these orders to their unit before the start of each battle. During combat the leader must lead his unit to carry out its assignments in the Army's plan. Once his assignment is completed the leader should exercise his initiative in taking his unit where it will cause the enemy the most harm. So, the leader must keep himself familiar with tactics, his unit's capabilities and skills, and those of the enemy.

AN INTRODUCTION TO TACTICS

In SCA Warfare

Warfare in the Society for Creative Anachronism is one of the ways that we recreate the Medieval period. In many ways we are very successful in our attempt because there are many very close similarities--some are good, some are not. We fight our battles because we enjoy it, but the object is to win when we fight, just as in the Middle Ages. Although the consequences of losing today are not nearly as severe as then, the joy of winning is greater because all of us can celebrate-even the "dead" and "wounded".

What is it that hurts our chances of winning? We are hindered by many of the factors that hurt Medieval armies. We are untrained for warfare, we learn our combat individually on the list field. We have little discipline; each warrior seeks individual glory charging to the attack regardless of orders. We are disorganized, we never know how many troops will show up for a battle or how they will be armed, or who will fight with which group under who's command. These are a few of the major problems, and until they are overcome wars will be won by the side with the largest number of good individual "Heroes". What can we do to make the Army of Trimaris better? The first step is to train ourselves for war and the first step in that training is this introduction and practice of tactics. The following lesson is in outline form to make it easier to understand and remember.

I. Restricted Front Tactics: Bridge, Portal, Causeway, etc.

(Below is a Basic overview, we constantly change and experiment with new details)

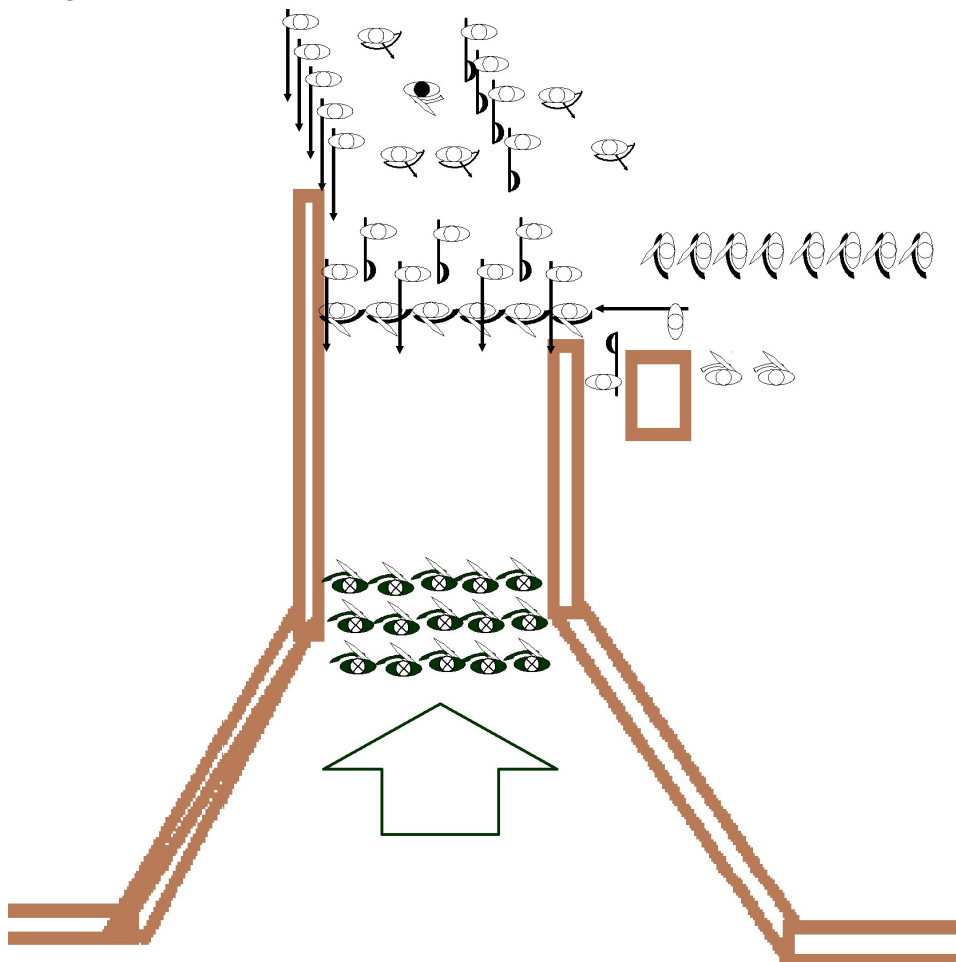
A. Initial Set-up

Reserve shields on the left(facing)

Reserve spears on the right(facing)

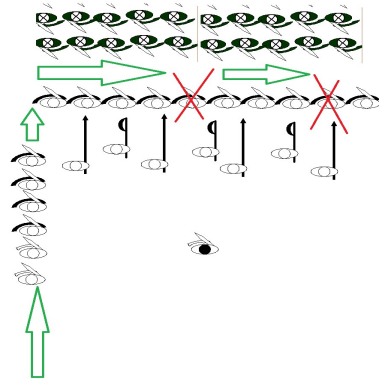
Glaives and Great swords- middle

Reserves must stay in organized columns well back from shield wall to give spears room to work and give the Commander visibility.



B. Shield Wall

1. Kneel with your side toward the shield so that if you are pushed over you will land in defensive posture under your shield, curled into a fetal position.
2. Overlap your shield over the shield to your right.
3. Keep your head down. If you raise it to look or strike, someone will kill you.
4. When you die, get out of the way of your army, out of the shield wall.
5. Stay in line with the people on each side of you, move to your right to close the gaps.



6. Don't try to kill, that is the polearm's job. You might try to thrust between your shield and the one next to you or you might try to hook the enemy's polearms if you have an axe.
7. Listen to your leaders for information and instructions. Repeat commands throughout the ranks to insure everyone hears the commands.
8. Left handed shields line up on the left end and STAY there.
9. Right handed shield man shift right as gaps open. (skipping lefties)
10. Reserve shield men feed into shield wall on the left. If there is a left-handed shield man on the far left, leave him there and fill the gap in the line next to him, between him and the righthanders.

C. Creeping shield wall: Shield men slide or "creep" forward or back a little at a time. It is a slow maneuver. The command for this will be "Shift Forward, Shift."

1. Keep your heads down, protect yourself.
2. Listen to the polearms behind you so you know when to start and stop and if you are leaving yourself open or drifting and causing a gap.
3. Maintain your line and interval (distance to the man on your right).

D. Polearms -the spears, glaives, and great swords are the killing machines of the Army.

1. Keep your shield men informed.
 - a. Tell them about their line and interval (where to go).
 - b. Repeat the orders that you hear.
 - c. Tell them if they are open.
 - d. Tell them how things are going.
2. Protect your shield men.
3. Learn to work in teams. An axe and shield can hook shields pulling them down or open for the polearms to strike. If face thrusts are available it is very effective for the polearms to knock the enemy's shields or weapons down or aside while the spears kill with a thrust to the face. If face thrusts are not available the spears can press, hook, or knock the shields aside while the Great weapons chop heads. It is also effective for the Great weapons (particularly poleaxes) to hook or punch the shields/weapons aside while the spears body thrust.
4. The shoulder/armpit area is an excellent target for body thrusts because there is little or no armor there so the thrust tends to stick rather than slide off and the "victim" is more likely to feel (call) the blow.
5. Cross strike- don't attack only the person directly in front of you- strike at those at an angle to either side; they may not be looking and everyone in a line is fair game. You don't need eye contact.
6. Beware of the enemy cross striking.
7. Steal spears- If you have a fully gauntleted hand grab the shaft and haul them in. Don't let yours get stolen. But don't wrestle with them till they break. Don't be a dick!
8. Put one foot between the shields for greater reach.

E. GLAIVES FORWARD!

At this command the spears pull back and glaives, great swords, and shield men with small shields rush forward to stop the enemy charge. **SPEARS FORWARD!** = Spears move forward behind shield wall and all others return to their positions behind the Captain in the center.

F. Squad Leaders and Spears

1. Maintain your line's position.
2. Listen for orders and pass them on.
3. Pick targets for your troops.
4. Keep your Commanders informed of your group's status- casualties, if you cannot fill a gap and need reserves, if your shield men are too tired to hold, if your pikemen are too tired to fight hard and fast.
5. Keep your Commanders informed of enemy actions- if they are getting ready to charge, if they have a weak spot.

G. Captains, Seconds

1. Maintain your unit's position. Keep each unit in place, watch for gaps and weak spots.
2. Keep your reserves back. Give the line room to work, don't let anyone crowd the pikes and glaives.
3. Send in reserves as they are needed, a few at a time.
4. Maintain unity of command. Try to keep people together if they train together.
5. Keep the line shifting shields to the right to fill gaps and fill in your reserves on the left flank. (everyone shifts right when the man on their right dies.)
6. Keep the Army Commander informed of your status.
7. Keep the Army Commander informed of enemy actions.
8. Stay aware of the whole battle and adjust your actions appropriately.

II. Formation Tactics- Field situations where there are sufficient troops to form a shield wall and a reason for doing so. At Gulf Wars the field is narrow, and the shield wall can go from border to border of the field, at Pennsic the field is usually too large for such complete coverage.

A. Maintaining Formation: it is just as important to maintain formation in the field as it is to maintain formation (dress the line) on a bridge, and it is more difficult because there are no bridge sides to prevent drifting.

1. Concentrate on everything. Do not get tunnel vision. You must be aware of your position, those enemies in position to strike you, those enemies maneuvering to a position to strike you, your own troops' positions around you, where your commanders are, what your orders are, your own defense, the defense of the Trimarians around you, and your offense.
2. Position
 - a. Know the various formations and your place.
 - b. Know who should be on each side of you and keep them there; move yourself or them as needed.
 - c. The person on the right end must be certain not to drift to his right, out of position. This is a natural tendency. Right flank leader- this is primarily your responsibility.
3. Shields - In a shield wall your purpose is to SURVIVE. You must live to protect your polearms. If you die, they die. A shield who is not alive at the end of a battle probably did not do his job. Shields usually die because they are trying (usually without success) to kill someone while in the wall. This is not because the shield is a poor fighter, but because they are up front in a very exposed position and so must concentrate on defense of his person. The unity and formations of your unit depend entirely on you. The success or failure of the unit depends on the integrity of its formations. So, use your weapon to defend 90% of the time, to hook or press the shields of your enemy 9% of the time, and to kill with the rest of the time. If all the Infantry shields fought "two-shield" the Army would probably be more effective, but I just can't bring myself to recommend that. I hope you see the point.

B. Maneuvers

1. Know the maneuvers, how to perform the movements and what the commands are for each.
2. Practice the maneuvers from different positions in the line and from different formations.
3. The purpose of most maneuvers is to move you into a better position to kill the enemy. Most maneuvers are not designed for you to kill during the maneuver.
4. You must stay alive through the maneuver to be able to kill at the end of it. To stay alive, you must maintain your formation/position and concentrate on defense.
 - a. Squad and other leaders: concentrate on the position of your unit during the maneuver.
 - b. Soldiers concentrate on defending yourselves and your leaders.
5. Don't try to kill during the maneuver.
 - a. You will neglect your defense and die, or
 - b. You will get out of position and your unit will die.
6. Charges--Purpose: to intimidate, drive back, or penetrate the enemy.
 - a. To stop a charge--compress laterally to prevent penetration. (Move closer together side to side). Second and third ranks must press forward to keep the formation from being driven back. Spears in the third and fourth ranks should try to kill as many as possible. Don't be intimidated, charges can be stopped, and the enemy will often expose themselves to killing blows when charging.
 - b. To perform a charge-- (charges are limited to a jog or an approximate 10' run)
 - c. Pushing Charge-- Drive the enemy back and back! Compress laterally, second and third ranks press forward in support (poles of the second rank should be held across the backs or over the heads of the first rank). Concentrate on the push and protecting yourself. Your purpose at this point is to move the enemy, not necessarily to kill him now. Only the third rank should be actively looking for kills.
 - d. Penetrating Charge--Keep your column tight. If you leave a gap some defender will penetrate your formation, disrupt it and destroy your charge. The second rank must push forward and in toward the center of the column (never forward and out). Their poles should be across the backs or over the heads of the front rank. The third rank should do the same. When charging to penetrate, protect yourself. Do not attempt to kill during the charge. Your entire purpose is to penetrate the enemy's formation to reach his rear. The killing can start after you are completely through their lines.

C. Killing in the Shield wall

1. In combined arms companies of shields and polearms the shields should concentrate on defense while the polearms do the killing, much like restricted front.
2. The shield should not attempt to kill in most formations, but should contain their blood lust for the right moment (i.e. When our shield has charged through or flanked the enemy shields and are in among the enemy pikemen or when the unit splits into skirmish units.

D. Reforming or Regrouping - It is easier for 3 people to kill one person than it is for one person to kill 3 people. It is easier for 20 people to kill 6 people than it is... I think you get the idea. If your unit breaks up for any reason, planned or accidental, you must immediately (within 3 to 5 seconds) move to regroup. This is most easily accomplished by a leader waving his weapon in the air and bellowing his company battle cry in words similar to these: "Trimaris, regroup!" or "Blue, Regroup!". Other members of the company should immediately repeat the battle cry and move to the leader. You should automatically "form hedgehog" around the rallying leader. From this formation it is easy to hear commands and move immediately into another formation or maneuver.

III Skirmish Tactics - Fluid Tactics for Field or Woods battles where we do not have sufficient troops or do not desire to face the enemy in shield wall formation.

- A. Objective is to harass, confuse, and disorganize the enemy without ever engaging a unit that is larger or even equal in strength to your own. (Much like the Saracen Light Calvary of the Crusader Period.)
- B. Armament for your unit should consist of long narrow shields, and pole arms (spears or polearms work surprisingly well even without a shield wall). Soldiers should be ready to run- fast and far.
- C. Formations will generally consist of small groups of 3 to 12 fighters in Wing or Skirmish Formation.

D. Maneuvers and killing

- 1. Strike or threaten enemy flanks or rear and run away (don't engage larger units).
- 2. Envelope and swarm smaller units of the enemy. This must be done by hitting the smaller enemy unit in unison, hard and simultaneously. Your unit should "swarm" the smaller unit or individual, wrapping around both flanks and attacking from side and rear (this is legal once you have engaged him). If you hesitate or move slowly they will escape or be reinforced. DO NOT HESITATE! DO NOT STOP AT THE POINT OF THE SPEARS! Run at them until your shield contacts their shield or weapon and then maintain that contact until they are dead.

E. Regrouping (see REGROUPING under formation tactics)

- 1. It is imperative that you regroup immediately (3-5 seconds) after engaging so that you do not get separated from your unit.
- 2. If your unit gets down to a strength of less than four you should immediately combine with another unit.

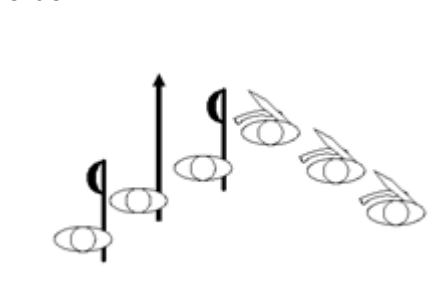
F. Commanders of units

- 1. Keep your unit together and moving. (It is very difficult for the enemy to flank you if you are moving.)
- 2. Keep track of other units: Ours and Theirs.
- 3. Don't get trapped by superior enemy units.
- 4. Run from larger units- refuse to engage and run, they will not chase you far. Lead them away from the fighting or into an ambush. (Run away to disengage, if you retreat slowly they will follow you)
- 5. Look for individual stragglers or small units that you can pick off.
- 6. Stick to the overall plan for as long as possible.

G. Skirmisher formations:

1. WING RIGHT:

This formation is used when a high degree of mobility is desired, and it is most likely that you will be flanking your opponent's left flank (right end from the Wing's point of view) using your right. This formation places your fastest most aggressive shields and swords on your right flank and supports them with your polearms and spears on your left flank. The basic shape of the formation is an open order "V".

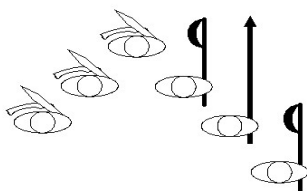


- a. **COMMANDER:** The Commander can be armed with any weapon of choice. The best position for the Commander for command purposes is inside of the formation, just behind the Point man. From here the Commander can guide the Point by extending the tip of the Commander's weapon out in front of the Point and pointing in the direction that the Commander wants to go, or by pushing or pulling the Point in the direction that the Commander wants to go (braille commands). This position also is best for giving verbal orders to the formation. When running in the open and not in close proximity to any enemy units, the Commander can run in front(outside) of the wing.

- b. DRIVER:** The Driver is the person at the very front of the formation--the point of the "V" or the far right of a shield wall. The Driver should probably be the slowest person so that they do not leave the unit behind. The Driver should be armed with a long shield if possible because they are in the most exposed position. The Driver leads the Wing where the Leader directs. When ordered to attack in Wing Right Formation, the Driver must engage the individual on the extreme left flank (extreme right as the Driver views them) of the enemy formation that the Leader directs him to attack. The Driver should be in his best defensive guard and should attack the enemy with blows to the head but concentrate on staying alive.
- c. FLANKER:** Those to the right of the Driver in the Wing Right Formation are Flankers. Flankers should be armed for aggressive infighting: sword and shield. The individual on the extreme right is the End Flanker. The Flanker's responsibility is to attack the end of the enemy formation and "roll it up". The Flanker must be very aggressive. They should use wraps to the legs and head of the individuals that they encounter and should leave those that they wound in the leg. The Flankers must stay close to the Driver and the Commander and not get separated from the formation.
- d. END FLANKER:** The individual on the extreme right end of the Wing Right Formation is the End Flanker. The primary responsibility of the End Flanker is to attack any enemy polearms or spears that are present behind the end of the enemy formation that is being attacked. The End Flanker should be very aggressive and kill or drive off any polearms. If the polearms run away, the End Flanker must follow a short distance to make sure that they are out of the fight but must not go so far as to become separated from his Wing. If there are no polearms present, the End Flanker's responsibilities are the same as the Flanker.
- e. SCREEN:** Those to the left of the Driver in the Wing Right Formation are Screen. Individuals in the screen should be armed with long shields, polearms, or spears. The shorter weapons should be closest to the Driver and the longer weapons on the extreme left end. The primary responsibility of the Screen is to protect the Wing from the enemy formation that the Wing is attacking. To do this the screen should give ground in a counter-clockwise direction as the enemy advances on them. This means that the Screen will be retreating using the Driver as a pivot. It is essential that the Screen stay close to the Driver at all times, and never get separated. This means at least close enough to touch the Driver with their weapons. While retreating (or if the enemy does not press forward) the Screen should attack the enemy with their long weapons, using range to the Screen's advantage.

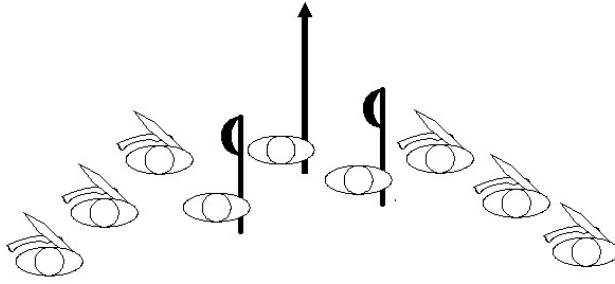
2. WING LEFT:

This formation is a mirror image of Wing Right. Wing Left has the Flankers on the left and the Screen on the right. Wing left is used to attack the enemy's right flank (left end from the Wing's point of view).



3. DOUBLE WING:

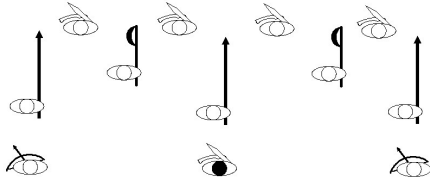
This formation is used when you are attacking units that are much smaller than yours and you wish to double envelope them (attack both flanks at once). During movement and maneuver the shape of the formation will be an open interval "V".



- a. **POINT:** One of the polearms, probably a spear will now be designated as Point. The Point will actually be part of the Screen because the center of the formation will be the Screen. The Point will follow the Leader's directions and attack where directed. When attacking the Point will advance to just within the range that he can attack the enemy with his long weapon and then use range to his advantage.
- b. **SCREEN:** The Screen is in the center of the formation on either side of the Point and should attack with the Point in the same manner.
- c. **FLANKER:** The Flankers will be on both ends of the Double Wing and will attack each flank of the enemy in the same manner as they would in a Wing Right or Left.
- d. **END FLANKER:** The End Flankers will be on both ends of the Wing Double Wing and will attack each flank of the enemy in the same manner as they would in a Wing Right or Left, concentrating on any polearms that are present.

4. SKIRMISH FORMATION:

This formation is used when a high degree of mobility is desired, and you do not wish to close with the enemy by engaging your shield men. This formation puts your polearms and spears in front with your shields and swords escorting them from a trailing position.



- a. **LEADER/POINT:** The best place for the leader is on the point of the formation regardless of the weapon used.
- b. **POLES:** The spears and polearms form on either side of the leader at a distance of one half to one full weapons length. They must be careful to maintain station on the leader and not get ahead or behind enough to lose sight of the leader.
- c. **SHIELDS/SWORDS:** Those armed with shields should attach themselves to one of the spears or polearms as escort. They should run a pace behind and to the side of their polearms so that they can follow without crowding the polearms while they run or fight. They should only engage those enemies who actually chase their polearms. It will take practice for the shield to learn when to engage and when to stay back, and to learn the best escort distance. The shield escort will always attack immediately if the polearms shouts "Shields Up".

ARCHERY TACTICS AND HELPFUL HINTS (Thanks to Sir Erika and Subadai for this section)

GENERAL

- Fire at groups of people when possible.
- Save your last arrow to threaten and distract enemy warriors so your friends can kill him. If you shot your last arrow, pretend you have one. Try standing just behind and to the side of one of your warriors. Distract the enemy with your last or non-existent arrow so he can kill the distracted enemy.
- Die loudly to warn your fellow archers of impending doom.
- After melees gather all the arrows you can find and take them to a central location. There the archers can sort out their own WELL MARKED arrows.
- If you do not want to be touched by a fighter because you are afraid they will hit you too hard: Fall down and die just before they touch you yelling, "I'm dead! I'm dead!" They won't waste their time with you anymore.
- Once killed get off the field as fast as possible. If you have to run through people yell, "I'm dead!". If you must fall to the ground because there are too many people around die defensively. Curl up into a fetal position, lie down on your side, put your bow and arrows ON THE GROUND in front of you and hold onto them. Get out of there ASAP.
- Mark your arrows to identify them.
- Learn to reload quickly. Learn to reload without looking at your arrow. You can reload faster by keeping a spare arrow or two in your bow hand. This takes a little practice.
- If your arrows keep falling off the bow, keep your bow tilted. 90 degrees if you like.
- Novice archers get more kills than novice fighters.
- If you get wounded in the arm, be a 'shield' and 'lookout' for another archer. Feed him the arrows, his and yours.
- Use trees and fighters for cover.

FIELD BATTLES

- In field battles, a good place for archers is on the left side of the line as you face the enemy. After the battle begins it will probably 'swirl'. Hold your position until the sides and backs of the enemy are toward you, then shoot their sides and backs. Make sure you or your army are not placed too close to the boundary. If your instructions are to run a right flank, make sure you have room to run.
- IF you can reload quickly, fire an arrow immediately when the marshals yell "Lay on!". Fire at the second rank of fighters, those behind the shield men.
- In a field battle a motionless archer at the edge of the field is often ignored. They get distracted by warriors directly in their face. Wait patiently for that clear shot.
- If an enemy, especially a shield man, starts running toward you, **IMMEDIATELY** run away in the straightest possible line. Don't bother to try to knock an arrow and shoot him on the run. You are taking that warrior out of the fight by forcing him to chase you. Hopefully your fellow archers will shoot him while he is chasing you. Yell loudly to let your fellow warriors know you are being chased. Another option is to run by a group of fighters not currently engaged in fighting. They will take care of single fighters.
- Three archers make up a triad. Stay in a triangular formation, leader in front during field battles. If one of the archers is chased, he should run as fast and as straight as possible. The other archers of the formation should kill the enemy as he chases the one running archer.
- When your troops are in a column formation. Stay at the end of the line. If they are in a column formation in order to break through the enemy line, stay at the rear of the column until your troops start to break through the enemy line. Immediately as they break through

the line, step out from behind the column and start shooting the enemy line. The enemy will then have fighters at their backs and archers shooting at their fronts.

- Know the boundary of the fighting field. You will probably be running along it quite often.
- If you have a quiver, GRAB IT before you run, or you'll leave a trail of arrows. A quiver slows me down. I find that during melees I need 4 or 5 arrows maximum. I keep a couple stuck in my belt and a couple in my bow hand.

BRIDGE BATTLES (or Gates and Castles)

- Use the 'spare shield man', those not in the initial shield wall but waiting along the outside edges, as your shields. Shoot then duck behind them. Talk to them. Tell them that you've killed somebody. Thank them for deflecting away arrows.
- Move into the second or third rank behind the main shield wall and shoot the polearms. Tell your warriors to deflect arrows away from you. Shoot one or two arrows, then move back out. The polearms around you will jostle you a lot.
- Just before the bridge battle, pair up with another archer. During the battle shoot at the same target, one after the other.
- Keep a box of spare arrows on the end of the bridge (if the rules allow).
- When you come up behind a shield man, tell him you are there. Put your hand on his shoulder and say something like, "Archer behind you. Guard me from arrows. I'm shooting over your left shoulder. "If a pike man's point is in the way of a clear shot tell him, "Lord Pikesalot, move your point 6 inches left."
- Point at your target with your finger to make him nervous. Point at your target with an arrow to distract him from the pikes that are aiming at him. This is especially good for your fighters on the other side of your bridge.

SOME NOTES FROM KINGDOM LAWS (Always check current Rules)

- Get your arrows inspected by an archery marshal between battles.
- Do not pick up arrows off the field and re-shoot them.
- Be aware of where the boundaries are and don't shoot towards them. Be aware of what is behind your target if you miss.
- Make sure you know whom and where your archery marshals will be, and get re-inspected between battles. Particularly at out-Kingdom wars, it is best to have archery marshals from your own kingdom present, not all kingdoms use the same ammo and may not be familiar with yours.

Basic field Tactics:

Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for After Contact: As a general guideline, once first contact is made for each unit all plans are forgotten/lost. The idea behind statements like this one is that once a unit has engaged they tend to splinter and lose focus on the objective at hand. Several things to remember for After Contact.

- **Commanders disengage:** One of the hardest parts of being in command is not getting neck deep into a fight. As a Unit Commander your first priority in every scenario is communication. You can't communicate as efficient as possible while fighting/dead.
- **Reform ASAP:** Commander, did you survive first contact? Good, now get that unit organized and moving. Fighter, did you survive? Good, rally to your Unit Commander.
- **Who is in charge here?** Fighter: "But wait...I don't see my Unit Commander!" Never fear, your Unit Commander told you the game plan before the fight, right? (If they didn't ask before Lay-on is called.) Good, now you are in charge. Reform that unit and get it moving.
- **Objectives:** Now that you have reformed the Unit Commander/Newly Self-Appointed Unit Commander feel free to recommunicate those pesky scenario objectives as you are moving that unit out.
- **Action:** As a general rule: **Any action is better than No action.** This simply means that even if you are not sure of what the objectives are, doing nothing is the worst possible thing. Make a call/decision, and do it. This could be the game winning call.

Below is a list of several basic tactics that are commonly used in the SCA. These diagrams and explanations are to provide some familiarity with the maneuvers and terminology involved with them.

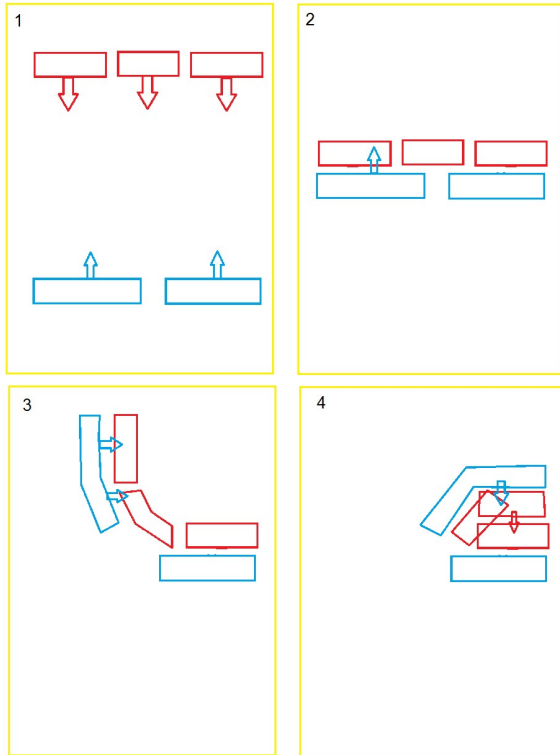
- Hammer and Anvil
- Horns of the Bull
- Echelon Left/Right

*Most all field scenarios end in what we lovingly refer to as "The Toilet Bowl". This is where each Army has broken through different sides of the battlefield and begin swirling around each other until one overcomes the other. The best way to overcome this is to reform quickly after breaking a unit and redirecting your movement to the best location. Stragglers are then picked off by large organized units and large units that are still engaged are flanked. See SOP.

Hammer and Anvil

Also known as envelopment left or right depending on to which side the hammer swings the Hammer and Anvil tactic splits a section of the army into two. One part of the Section being the Anvil and the other the Hammer. The purpose for this maneuver is to set one part "the Anvil" of the Section as a stable and defensive barrier that prevents the enemy forces from passing. Usually the Anvil is not aggressive but close enough to the enemy that they cannot leave it unattended for fear of it turning into a flanking unit. As the Anvil all units are focused on surviving and maintaining the units position.

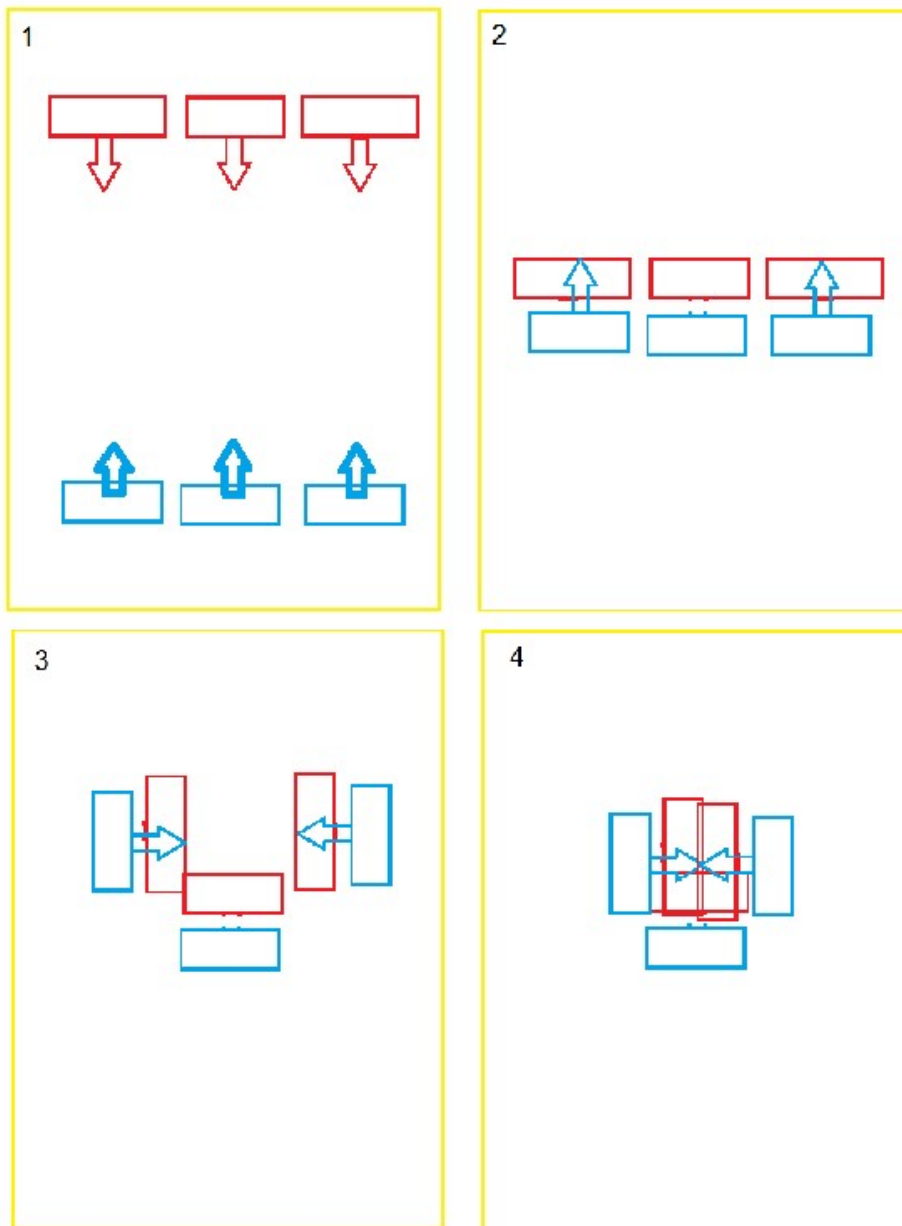
The Hammer in this tactic is a more mobile unit designed to crush through and push the rest of the enemy forces around the battlefield back into the Anvil. Driven properly the Hammer will not allow enemy forces to slip through their ranks and into our back field all while keeping a steady forward pace.



The order of these formations (Open/closed/normal) will be determined upon the field as determined by Section Commanders based upon enemy load-out and formations.

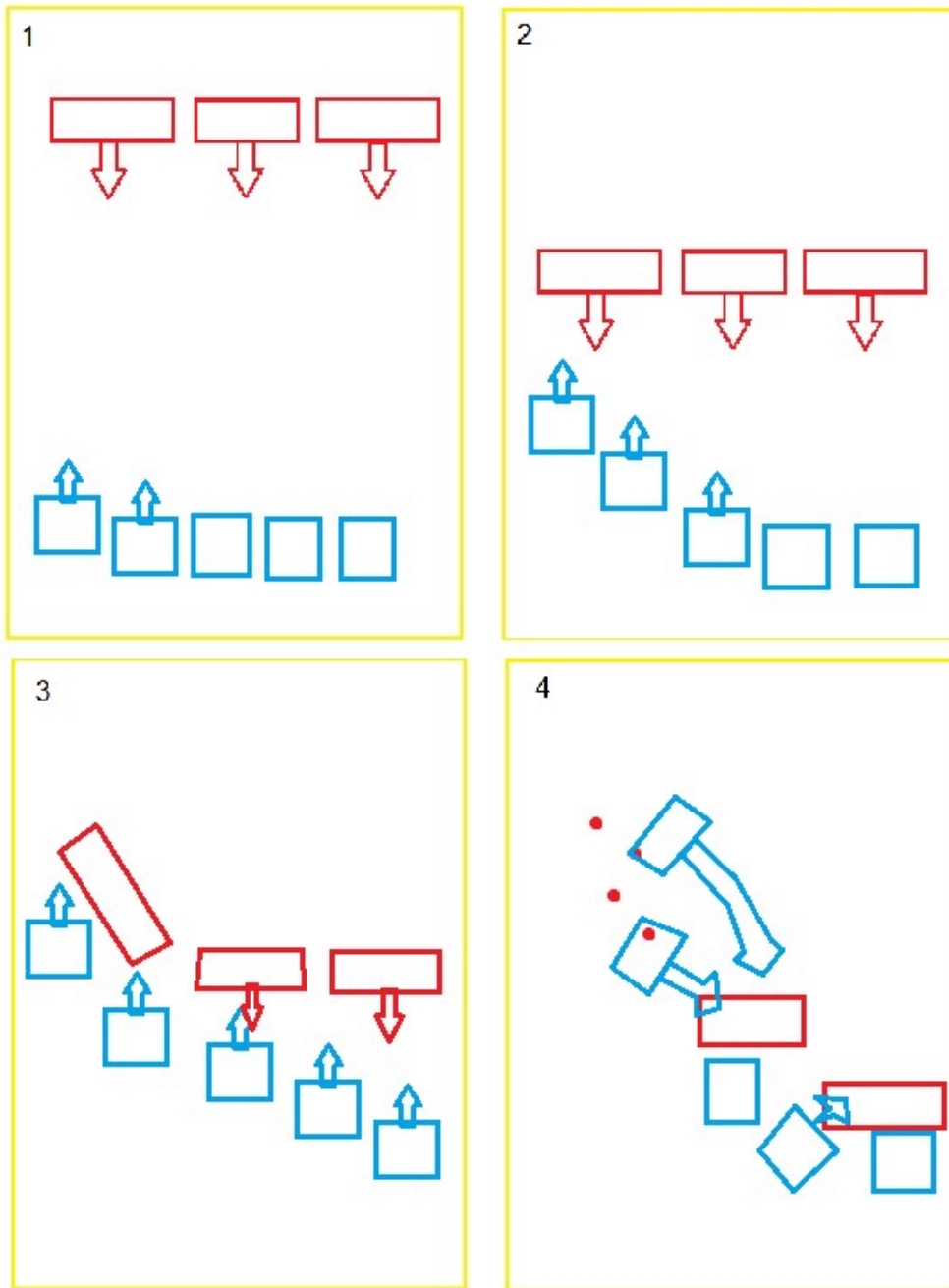
Horns of the Bull (aka double envelopment)

Much like the Hammer and Anvil with the exception of the Section being divided into 3 units. The Anvil (head of the bull) being in the center of the battlefield and 2 units acting as the hammers and curling around each side of the Anvil, flanking the enemy from both sides.



Echelon Left/right (Slant left/right)

With this maneuver the Army is generally broken up into more than 2 sections. Each section progresses forward at different intervals. Occasionally Sections will be weighted for different functions (skirmishing, heavy shield wall, etc..) to exploit opportunities as they arise. Unit and Section Commanders are more highly relied upon with this tactic to be reactive and in good communication with their units.

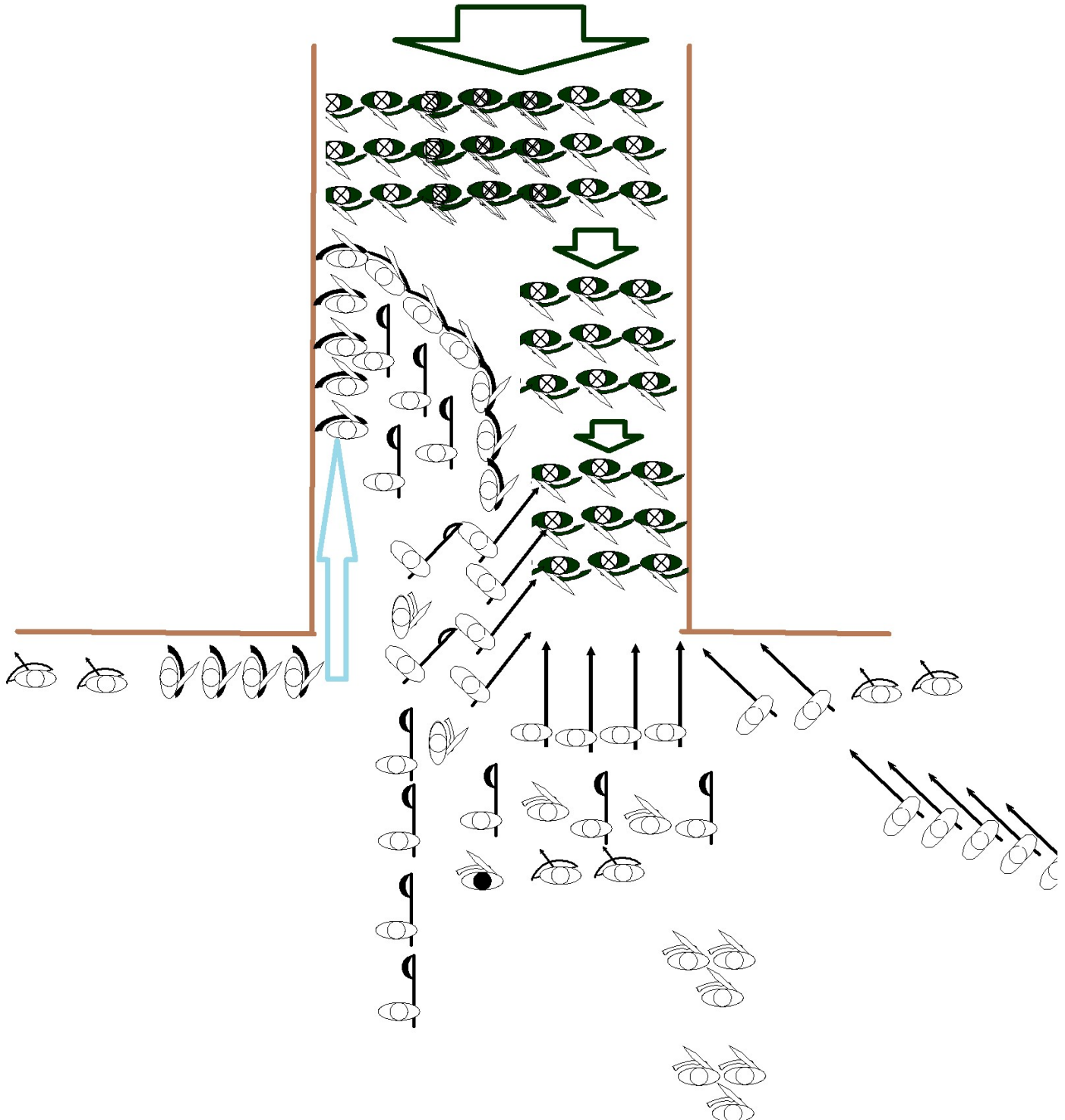


In this example the blue unit to the left has raced out ahead and forced the enemy unit to turn exposing its flank to the second unit from the left. The center blue unit stops the center red allowing the right red to progress past the center red unit exposing its flank to the second from the right blue unit. Once the remainder of the two left blue units clear out the left red they immediately flank the strong center red unit.

Basic Bridge and Portal Tactics

Wall and Post

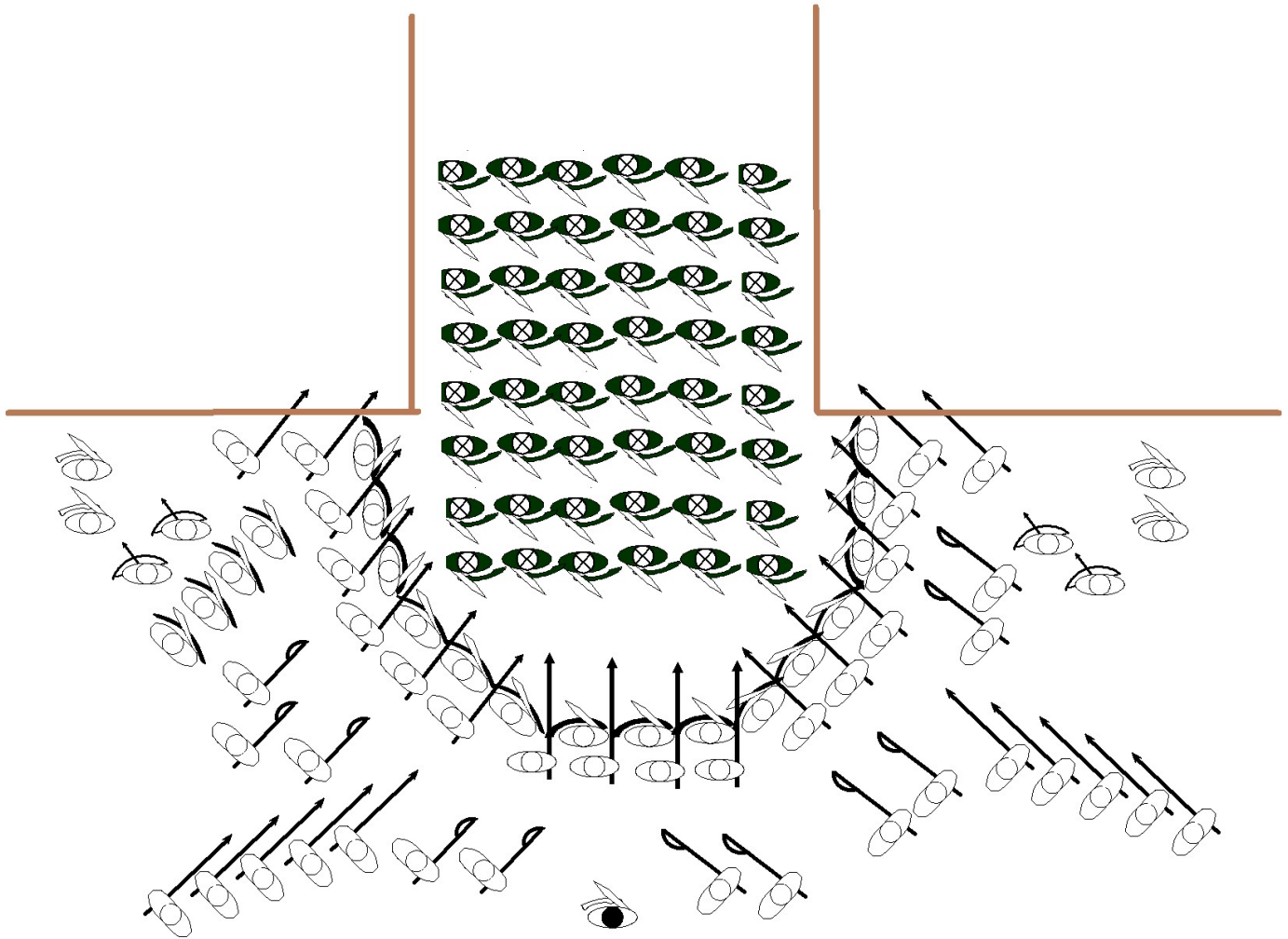
This tactic sets a usually slanted line off of one side of the corridor that opens up to the other allowing for troops to pass into a kill pocket.



In this figure the wall is to the left. It is made up of heavy war shields in Close Order. Reserve Shields to the left rear filing into to the right as shields fall in the front. A small Cup has been made at the end of the wall maximizing the number of poles that can engage the unit passing through.

THE CUP OF DEATH

As mentioned earlier the cup of death is utilized in both breach and bridge scenarios. It is a highly defensive tactic that, if the enemy should bite, will cause catastrophic losses to any unit that attacks it.



Important notes for a proper cup of death:

Note reserve shields to the left, ready to feed in when necessary. This is accomplished by the grounded shield wall shifting to the right to fill the gaps created by fallen shields. Secondly the reserve spears to the right. It is important for spears on the line to cycle themselves out with fresh spears as necessary. The killing in this cup can be long and tiresome, best to not burn yourself out. Lastly is that the shield wall is not at the edge of the opening but rather back off of it a few feet. This allows for better protection from your spears and forces the enemy to stick their head deep in the cup causing them more exposure to more spears.

***Always remember your scenario objectives. Most bridge scenarios are timed, to the last person standing, and determined by who controls the center of the bridge. The cup of death is only effective on an overly aggressive enemy. Always drink from your cup of death with a pinky out!**

Rock, Paper, Scissors!

Lovingly referred to as such due to the ever-changing tactic utilized. This is primarily for bridge scenarios.

- Rock=Shield Wall.
- Paper=crenelated spears and shields
- Scissors=Spear Wall

Just like the game each has their advantages and disadvantages. The key to success with this tactic is to have constant communication on all levels of command.

The Units involved must be arranged to allow for 2 different changes.

Usually at the beginning of the fight with rock. Heavy shield wall in close Order at a walk to point of contact. What happens from here all depends on the enemy's tactics and loadout.

If they stop at contact and try to maintain a heavy shield wall we change to paper. Pulling out half of our shields out and inserting spears in their place picking apart their shield wall while their spears are out of range.

If they present a crenelated wall we present a full spear wall freeing out spears to tag-team their spears and shields at range.

If they present a full spear line, then we form a shield wall and run then down.

***Always remember your scenario objectives. Most bridge scenarios are timed, to the last person standing, and determined by who controls the center of the bridge. The cup of death is only effective on an overly aggressive enemy. Always drink from your cup of death with a pinky out!**

The Meat Grinder

Named such due to the high body count generated within the first minute of fighting. This is not a defensive tactic. The Meat Grinder utilizes a Closed Order war shield front backed by great weapons for the initial assault. The Heavy wall progresses across the bridge at a walk knowing that at point of contact that they will ground their shields and lean back a bit. What this accomplishes against an opposing shield wall is that at the moment just before contact everyone raises their shields a bit. By grounding our shields this firstly makes them harder and nearly impossible to force backwards. Secondly their shield wall will still be trying to move forward, but with a higher center of gravity, forcing their shields to lean forward over our shield wall exposing their heads and shoulders. At this time our great weapons attack from above the shields devastating their shield wall. As their wall begins to weaken and get thin our wall will be commanded to shift forward and change out our great weapons for spears. In doing so they compress the remaining shields into the enemy polearms men restricting their room to maneuver and giving our spears opportunities to kill remaining shields and cluttered polearms. Generally, by this time a hold has to be called by the marshals to clear the dead. At Lay On Shields will be commanded to rise, spears swap out with great weapons, and walk forward to contact, this time pushing into the unit one rank, and grounding again, thus starting the second wave. This is repeated until the end of the bride is reached. **DO NOT LET YOUR UNIT GET DRAWN INTO A CUP OF DEATH AT THIS POINT.** Once this has been achieved the command staff will assess the battlefield and command the unit accordingly.

As with RPS, the Meat Grinder relies HEAVILY upon critical timing of the changes and the communications of commands be relayed throughout the unit.

***Always remember your scenario objectives. Most bridge scenarios are timed, to the last person standing, and determined by who controls the center of the bridge. The cup of death is only effective on an overly aggressive enemy. Always drink from your cup of death with a pinky out!**

ON GROUNDED SHIELDS

It is important to closely control the gaps in a grounded shield wall. To help control this a proper grounded position is a must. As mentioned earlier having your shield shoulder, if possible, into the shield with a sideways stance, toes curled under. Overlap the shield to your right 3-6 inches and brace against the shield to your right with your pommel with your sword draped down your back.



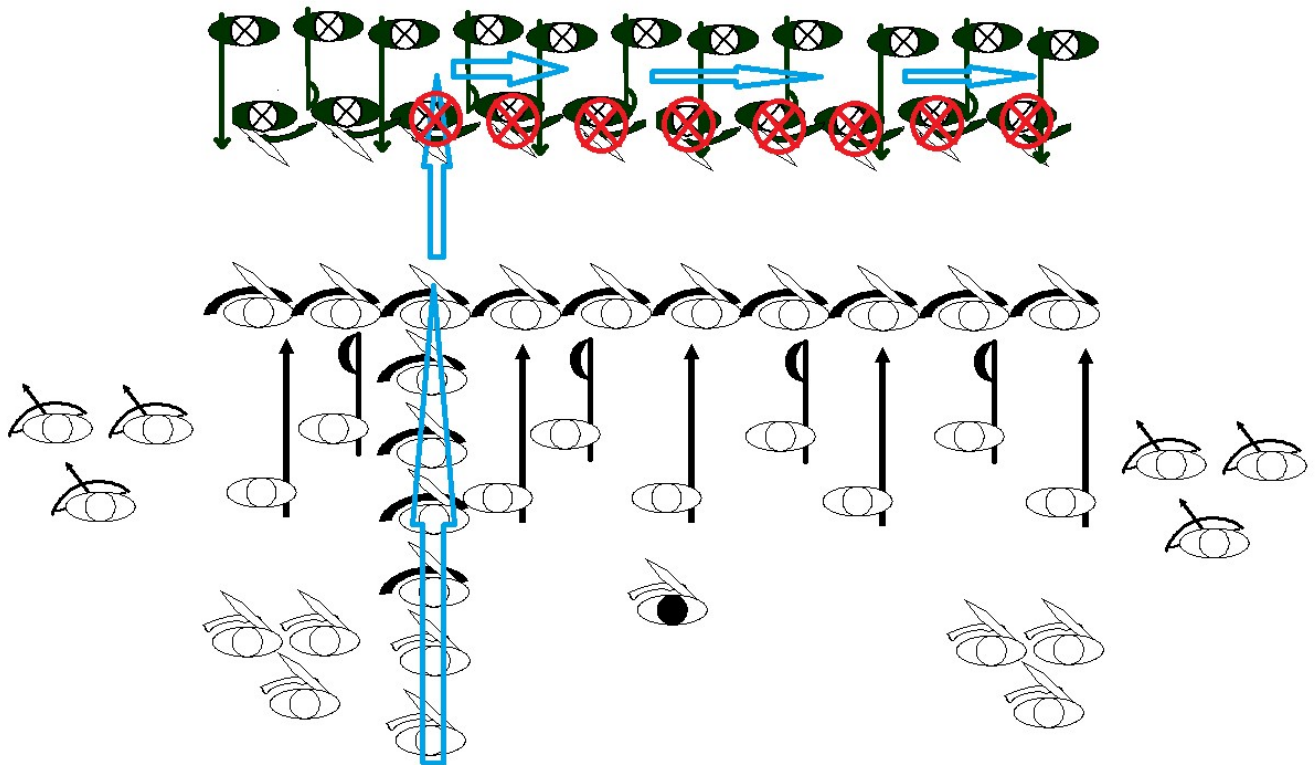
Spears will push on the back side of your shields to force a gap and stab the shield behind you. This interlocking will help prevent this. Don't forget to use your hilt to knock spear hooks off of you and the shield to your right.

Pulse Charges and Column Charges

These 2 types of charges are utilized in a variety of battles. Both have very specific and direct goals.

Pulse charges are done by a triad or squad. It is called a pulse charge because it is the only charge that isn't intended to be a one-way trip. The small unit is sent to harass and kill spears that have been left a bit too unattended. The unit, at a run, bolts out from the shield wall or kill pocket, engages the immediate polearms and spears for 2-3 seconds, and returns defensively.

A Column charge, unlike a regular unit charge, is also directional. Usually used to soften a unit before a full unit push, it can also be used to break fortified houses, break cups of death, and claim points of contention. When utilized to soften a major unit the column should be assembled of either all righties or all lefties. The reason for this is so that all of their shields are on the same side. The column should hit the intended point of entry, penetrate 1-2 ranks, and turn to their weapon side and continue down the length of the ranks. Lefties turn left, righties turn right. This is so that as the column breaches the shield ranks and turns their shields are facing the polearms in the back field and swords to the backs of the front ranks. The key to this maneuver is to move fast and only swinging your weapon at easy targets, and with your enemy's backs to you, there are a lot of those.



In this example the purpose of the column charge is to soften a shield wall. The column breaks through the front rank of shields and immediately turns right in between the shield wall and polearms. This puts their shields towards the attacking polearms and frees their weapon arms for strikes against the front facing shields.

A column charge is also utilized in one of our breach breaking tactics. This is called the Bubble.

Receiving a charge

Shields

- Drop/lower your center of gravity. Whoever has the lowest center of gravity usually wins. The hardest shield to move is the grounded shield. Brace for impact by turning your shield shoulder into the oncoming charge. Bend your knees as much as comfortably possible and widen your foot placement. Do not turn your front/lead leg toward the charge. Often this leads to hyperextended knees or torn ligaments.
- Lower your head. This helps keep your center of gravity lower. Often a charging shield is backed by polearms and spears. Keeping your head down will help you keep it from getting hit.
- Brace the shield with your weapon hand. Using your cup hilt or gauntleted hand place your hand against your shield between your shield hand and your head. (on traditional strapped shields) Drape your weapon over your head and diagonally across your back to help block any overhead shots that may be thrown over your shield. With overlapping war shields you may also press your weapon hand on the shield that you are overlapping. This will help small gaps from being made on impact. These 2-3inch gaps afford for kills from short thrusting weapons from the enemy shields.

Polearms and spears

1) If you are behind a shield wall there are a few options.

- a) Turn your weapon diagonally or horizontally and brace it against the shield(s) in front of you. Placing the weapon across the mid to lower back of the shield person. Occasionally you can brace more than one shield this way.
- b) Place the tip of your weapon on the rear top corner of the shield (not the shield's hand side). Use this technique to brace the shield's weaker corner on impact.
- c) Turn your back to the shield in front of you and lean into then. Use polearm to brace yourself from the ground.

2) If you are receiving the charge WITHOUT a shield in front of you.

- a) Drop/lower your center of gravity. Whoever has the lowest center of gravity usually wins.
- b) Turn to face oncoming charge, extend weapon till the point contacts the shield charging you and push to redirect the charging shields motion away from you directly.
- c) Contact charging shield with polearm diagonally across surface of shield and turn lower hand shoulder into shield.

Charging

Shields

- 1) Whoever has the lowest center of gravity usually wins.
- 2) Set a pace so that just before impact your weapon-side foot is on the ground.
- 3) Drop your shield shoulder and head.
- 4) Brace your shield with your weapon hand while draping it down your back if possible.
- 5) Hit low and push through. At a minimum you are expected to push the enemy front rank back one rank.
- 6) If your charge is intended to break through the enemy unit you may find yourself needing to make slight shifts left and right to find a weaker spot in the enemy line to push through.

Polearms and spears

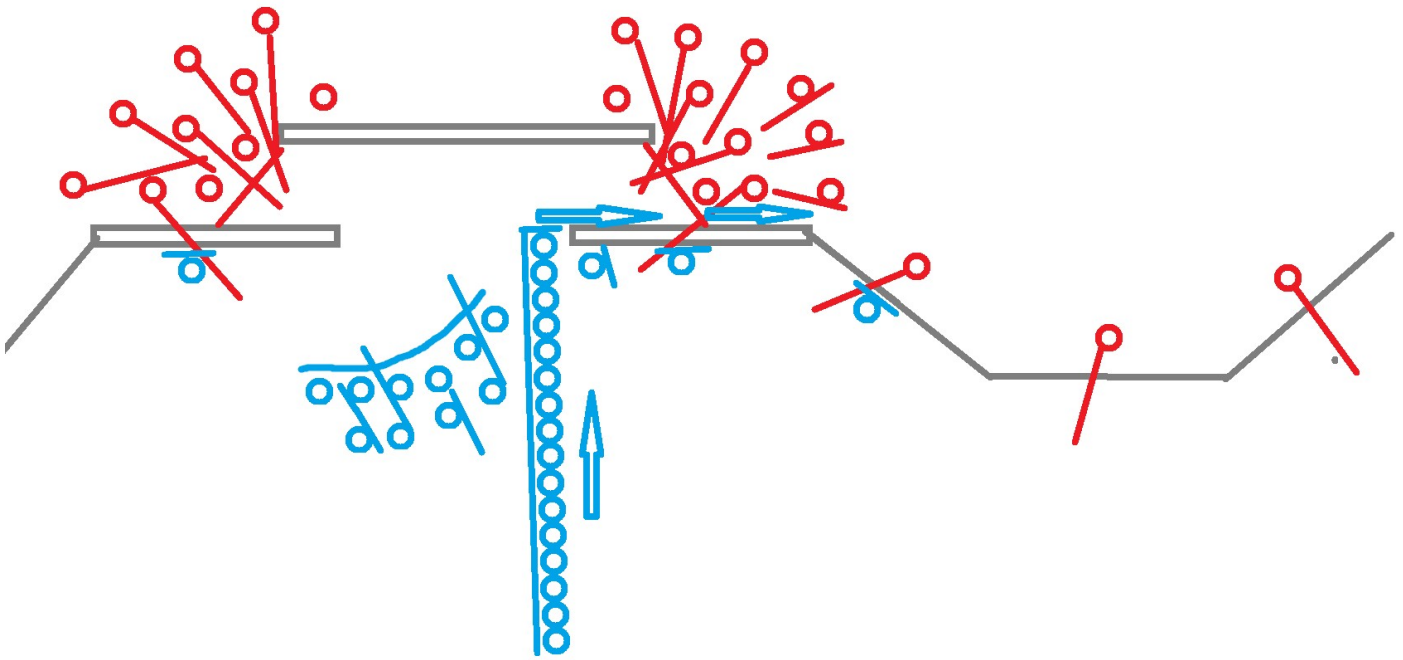
- 1) Place weapon diagonally across the shield blades of shield in front of you with your higher hand behind the shield shoulder of your shield person. Or...
- 2) Place the tip of your weapon in the center of your shield person's inner shield and push the shield at moment of impact. This adds a little more force to the charge and places your weapon in perfect position to thrust between your shields in the event that they separate the shields that they impact.

THE BUBBLE

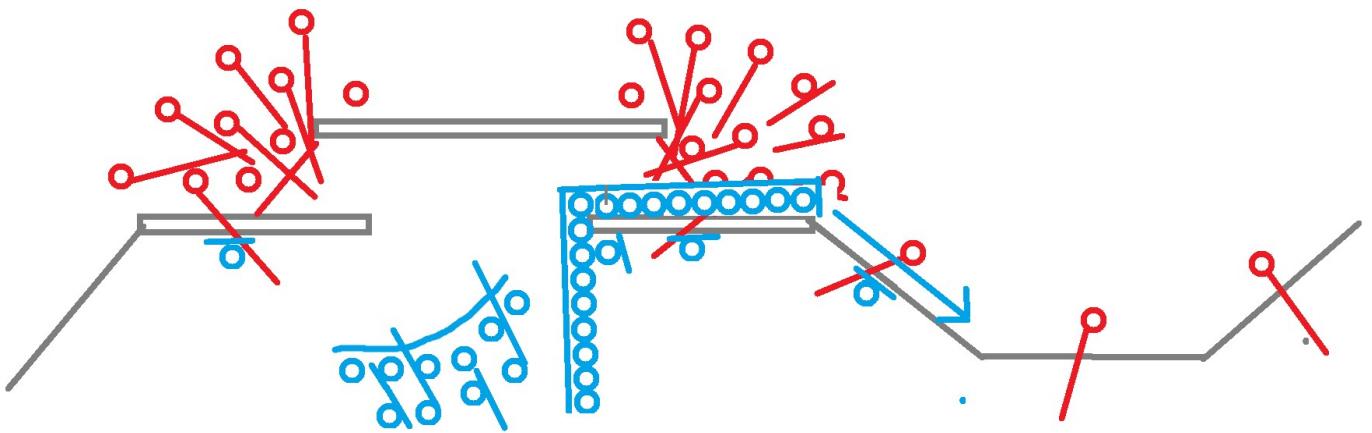
The bubble is used to break a small part of a defended breach. It is accomplished by a single column of war shields at half charge hitting the defending cup or line at the shield to the immediate left side, our right, of the breach. Using the force of an entire unit pushing on a single person to force their way past the outer line. The column proceeds down the interior wall with their right shoulders on the wall and shields to the left at a creep or as fast of a walk as the Driver can maintain without leaving any gaps in the formation. This is crucial to the maneuver to prevent any breaks in the line. The charge is not meant to kill, but to push their way in. Once the column has gone as far as necessary a command is given to push out from the wall creating a pocket, or bubble, with a narrow opening at the breach and a larger opening to feed troops into inside. As the following units feed in the bubble expands to accommodate until they have taken enough ground to engage the enemy.

The formation of breaching column is a bit different from other columns. The shields in this column are extremely overlapped. To the point that the shield persons are literally pelvis to pelvis and covering almost half of the shield of the person in front of them. The entire column takes a low squatting stance, heads down, weapons resting on the top/back of their helmets with the remainder of the weapon angled to the side. The column should move in step with one another. A cadence may be necessary. When done properly there should be no legal targets exposed on anyone in the column.

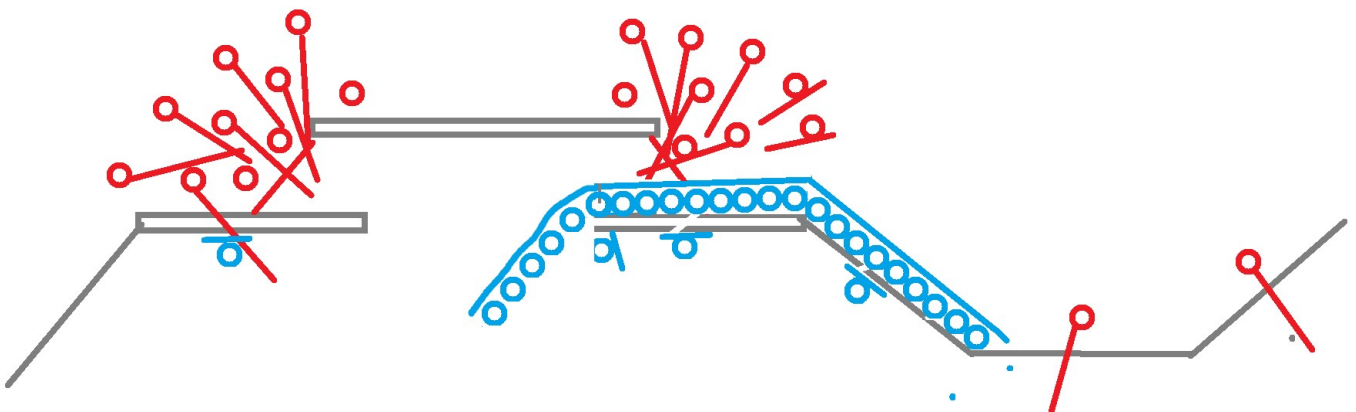
(illustrations on next page)



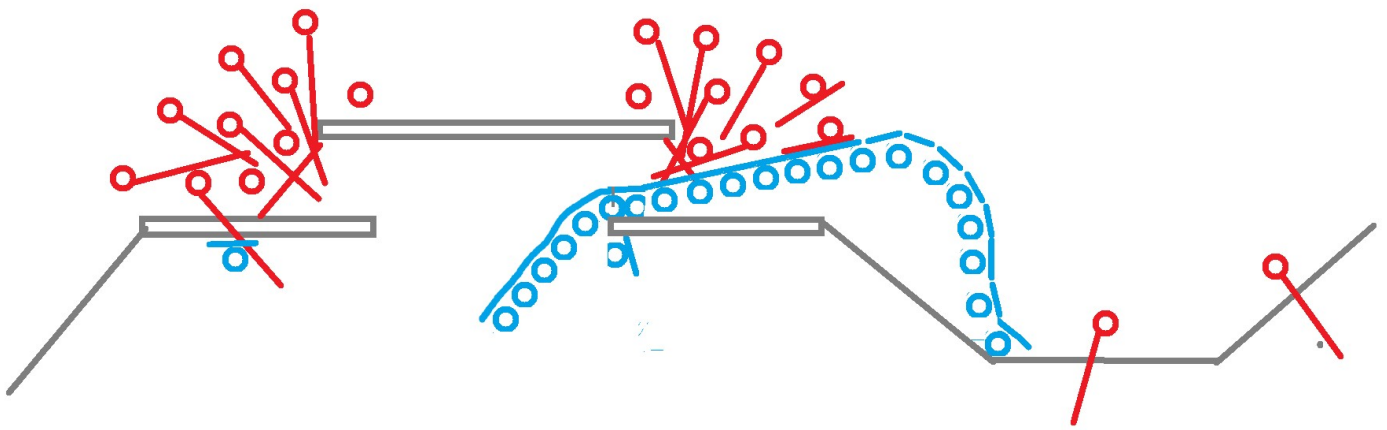
The Driver with the support of the column forces their way past/through the shield to the extreme right of the enemy line.



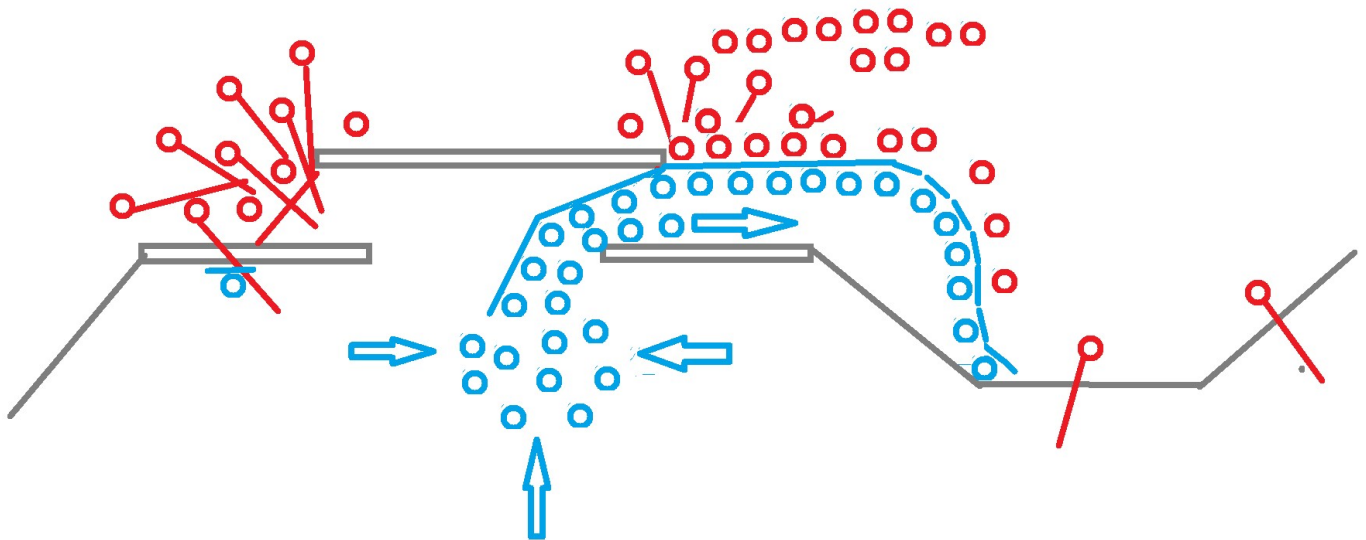
At a steady and slow walk the line as a whole pushes past the front ranks staying up against the inside of the fort wall.



The Driver progresses until sufficient length of line is inside of the enemy ranks and commands a stop.



Upon command from either the Unit commander or Driver the wall, as one, pushes off of the wall forward creating a separation between the wall and the line.



This separation allows for reserve units and polearms to fill in to the gap between the wall and the line. Commanders begin commanding the line forward as necessary to accommodate the needs of the forces filing in. Eventually a break in the enemy lines will form.