



## *Large Scale Unit Battle*

You wanna know what's cooler than slaying a band of orc warriors? Slaying a company of them.

When I was trying to plan the infamous "Escape From Dwarf Mountain" segment in DNDUI I wanted to get the scale of the events across to my players. I felt that having them trod around like normal and just telling them about the armies moving around them would not truly show the enormity of their decision (plus I wanted to let Sweet D work against the party, but that was an added bonus). It was a cool idea, but no matter how many books or compendiums I poured through I never got a good idea on how to handle large battle scenarios like this. I had to come up with my own methods and I'd like to pass them on to you! So, I bet you're dying to know: How do I do that?

The first problem I was faced was how the unit would handle, and how I would generate things like health and rolls. For this I really felt that simplicity would be the key. We had no time to learn entirely new rules in the middle of a session so I decided that I would just take level 1 creature stats and just rename them as large units. There

was no real reason to have higher levelled creatures, because nobody would notice anyways. I personally went with Kolbold warriors, only because they are pretty straight forward and there is enough variety of Kobolds to give you an array of interesting units. Here are some example “Unit stats” examples:

<p><b>Basic Infantry</b> Normal, humanoid</p> <p>Level 1 Skirmisher XP 100 HP 29; Bloodied 14 Initiative +5 AC 15, Fortitude 12, Reflex 14, Will 12 Perception+1 Speed 6</p> <p><b>Standard Actions</b> <b>Short Sword</b> (weapon) At-Will Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +6 vs. AC Hit: 1d6 + 3 damage. The attack deals 2 extra damage per square the kobold has shifted since the start of its turn. Move Actions</p> <p><b>Retreat!</b> (Move; Encounter) Effect: The unit shifts up to 3 squares.</p> <p>Skills Athletics +4, Stealth +8, Thievery +8 Str 8 (-1)            Dex 17 (+3)            Wis 13 (+1) Con 13 (+1)            Int 9 (-1)            Cha 10 (0) Alignment neutral Equipment: leather armor , light shield , short sword .</p>	<p><b>Basic Ranged Units</b> Normal, humanoid</p> <p>Level 1 Artillery XP 100 Initiative +3    HP 24; Bloodied 12 AC 13; Fortitude 12, Reflex 14, Will 12 Speed 6</p> <p><b>Dagger</b> (standard, at-will) Weapon +5 vs AC; 1d6+3 damage. <b>Bow</b> (standard, at-will) Weapon Range 10/20; +6 vs AC; 1d6+3 damage; see also</p> <p><b>Ready! Aim!...</b> (minor; at-will) The unit fortifies itself getting a +2 to ranged attacks while also granting combat advantage. Unit can not move until it uses this ability again to de-fortify</p> <p>Alignment Unaligned Skills Acrobatics +8, Stealth +10, Thievery +10 Str 9 (-1)    Dex 17 (+3)    Wis 12 (+1) Con 12 (+1)    Int 9 (-1)    Cha 10 (0) leather armor , bows , arrows (20) .</p>
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Deciding on the number of units presented a unique decision for me as well. Most PCs are designed to be easily able to wipe an opposing level 1 creature off the board, so I could not use the XP table to generate this encounter like normal. I decided that I would try to make the sides pretty even, with only a few big, slow moving baddies at the tail of the enemies formation just to promote a hasty retreat of my platers as per the scenario I was playing out, otherwise it would have left them out.

Because turn order would also be screwed up a little if we rolled them normally, and I wanted to have the players think tactically I decided that each player would get to move a unit every round. They could just power one unit around like crazy or disperse it out a bit. Sure, it didn't make chronological sense to have one unit zipping around while others stagnated, but that would be the party's tactical decision not mine.

Finally, I wanted to add a little bit of diversity so I decided that when a unit was bloodied, it would do half damage because of the loss of troops. This makes canonical sense, as a unit with half the troops it started with would do half the damage it normally would.

#### TIPS FOR RUNNING THIS ENCOUNTER

- The players won't be as strong! They don't have their abilities so don't chuck enemy units at them like normal
- Let the players know which unit their PCs are in. This will make the battle tangible to them and lets them know that their demise is still possible. You may want to treat this token as a "general" token. With one big power, few health points and instant failure if it is lost.
- Keep the pace brisk. Since the roleplaying becomes a little sparse at this macro scale keep the turn order short and the unit count reasonable to you don't tire your players, unless it's a "Battle of Helms Deep" the players have known was coming for a while
- Really apply yourself into designing the map and some special characters. Grunts clashing on an open field does NOT have the same impact as catapults firing themselves at an elaborate fortress.