

Wars of the Roses — the No-Pain Campaign

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The No-Pain Campaign is a supplement to Steve Schifani's Wars of the Roses army list for *Warhammer Ancient Battles*. However, it can be used for just about any period in which armies have more-or-less identical composition and no uniforms.

The purpose of this campaign system is to enhance tabletop battles by providing a context of dynastic intrigue set in a time when loyalty, politics, self-preservation, and expediency were often at odds. It does so without any of the usual paperwork, politicking, and map work of wargames campaigns. It is a battle campaign emphasizing tabletop encounters. Players are under no obligation to participate in every game or keep extensive records. In fact, they can drop out, start late, or play only infrequently without affecting the progress of the campaign. The player's only object is to be on the winning side at the end of each battle he plays. The rewards for victory link the fortunes of war and the luck of the draw to the tides of prestige and influence. In the course of a few games, Generals can be demoted to minor nobles, while humble retainers can enhance their leadership abilities, attract retainers, and rise to the command of an entire faction.

the factions

Two players field core armies representing two opposing factions. Each core army starts with 2500 points and must include a General and the General's party (consisting of the Army Standard Bearer and two Battle Leaders). Any other player is a Lord with a starting retinue of 750 points (including the cost of the Lord). Before each battle, players determine randomly whether a Lord is *loyal*, *neutral*, or *wavering*. (See "Choosing Sides" on page 3.) The faction a Lord supports can change with every game, or even in the middle of a battle.

The game follows the standard rules for *Warhammer Ancient Battles* with Steve Schifani's emendations for the Wars of the Roses. The only departures from these rules are:

- Army composition restrictions are eased for Lord's retinues.
- An additional phase is introduced for each turn. The *Commitment Phase* takes place before charges are declared and provides the optimal time for *neutral* or *wavering* Lords to commit themselves to a faction.
- During his army's movement phase, the General may determine the order in which he or his Lords move their units.
- Artillery cannot wound or kill characters.
- Bill and Polearm rules apply for halberds.

For setup, this game assumes 12” no-deployment zones on each flank and 24” between each army’s deployment area. This leaves room enough for maneuver but is close enough to get things going immediately.

army composition

Any unit may upgrade figures to leader, standard bearer, or musician for 5 points per figure. Minimum unit size is five figures. Units under five figures cannot rally if they fail a leadership test.

The point sizes of starting armies and retinues are arbitrary and may be changed to suit the forces, gaming space, and time available. Penalties and rewards can also be adjusted to levels suitable to larger or smaller armies.

The core armies must abide by the restrictions on army composition outlined by Schifani in his section on “Army Selection Limits.” In addition, the number of units comprised of knights, men-at-arms, and certain Special troops is limited. Any Lord’s retinue that reaches 1200 points due to rewards granted for victory must also abide by the standard restrictions.

These restrictions are eased somewhat for retinues under 1200 points. It is assumed that a small force reflecting local idiosyncrasies would likely be more specialized than a large army. In addition to a Lord at 60 points, each small retinue is restricted to:

- No more than one unit of knights, mounted or dismounted.
- No more than one unit of men-at-arms, mounted or dismounted
- No more than 40% of the point value can be mounted.
- No more than one unit can be designated *veteran*.

Between battles, Lords and Generals may make adjustments in their armies by reallocating their points. However, if they wish to change their army’s composition by adding new troop types, these can total no more than 25% of the points available for the next battle.

For command purposes, a Lord’s retinue is assumed to be a single tactical unit, with two exceptions:

- As a loyal Lord deploys, the General may assign additional figures to his units or additional units to his retinue.
- The General has the option of taking any knights or men-at-arms from his loyal Lord’s retinue and brigade them with like units under his personal command.
- The General may delegate a member of his party (either the Army Standard Bearer or a Battle Leader) to a loyal Lord. This figure becomes part of the Lord’s forces in all respects for the duration of the battle, but returns to the General’s party immediately when the battle ends.

Since the General sets up his forces before he knows who will be supporting his faction, it is important that he keep in mind the deployment needs of his allies. Lords can be assigned a position on either flank or, if room for deployment is reserved for them, placed in front of, behind, or in the middle of the main battle line.

choosing sides

After the core armies are set up and deployed according to the scenario (but before the first turn), the Lords must determine which faction they will support.

Prepare a deck of cards which includes distinctive cards for each of the two factions. For each Lord, you will need one card for each faction. Add one additional pair of cards to the deck (one for each faction), shuffle, and deal two to each Lord.

Players who receive two cards for a single faction must immediately declare their support for that faction by handing their cards to the General. These Lords are loyal to the General's faction and will obey his orders (at least in spirit). The General may assign additional units to their command or incorporate their knights and men-at-arms into his units. Loyal Lords may not switch sides.

Players who receive one card for each faction are unsure of their loyalties and uncertain about which side to support. Each unsure player rolls a die and, in order from the highest score to the lowest, may choose to:

- *Stay Neutral.* A *neutral* Lord deploys at one of the ends of the table (terrain permitting), perpendicular to and halfway between the Lancastrian and Yorkist deployment areas. There he may remain aloof from the battle until he decides to commit his forces to one of the factions or circumstances force him take sides. No more than two Lords may exercise this option (only one at each table end).
- *Waver.* A *wavering* Lord must join one faction, handing over the appropriate faction card and deploying his troops at the General's discretion. He retains the other card. It is understood by all other players that he is wavering and may change sides.

Neutral and wavering Lords are anxious about the tactical situation in which they find themselves. They may be nervous about their status and unsure of their immediate future. Consequently, for neutral and wavering Lords and their units, all Leadership, Ballistic Skill, and Weapon Skill statistics are reduced by 1 until the Lord commits his troops to a particular faction during the Commitment Phase.

the commitment phase

The main goal of a Lord is to be on the winning side. Wavering and neutral Lords are at an obvious disadvantage until they commit themselves to the support of a faction. It is in their best interest to do so as soon as possible.

The Commitment Phase takes place before charges are declared. To commit his forces to a particular faction, the player simply hands over his remaining faction card or cards and declares his loyalty. He may not switch sides again.

A neutral Lord may declare his loyalty in the Commitment Phase of the faction he decides to support. Although not required to change sides, a wavering Lord may do so in the Commitment Phase of the faction he is deployed with. Once a Lord declares his support for a faction in the appropriate Commitment Phase, the -1 penalties to Leadership, Ballistic Skill, and Weapon Skill are immediately removed.

Units may not charge on the turn in which they commit. They may otherwise move and shoot normally. This prevents last-minute turncoats from raising too much havoc behind a betrayed General's battle line.

Note that the wavering Lord will have two consecutive turns. He may complete his turn with the faction he betrayed (although subject to that General's discretion for order of movement). In the next faction's turn, he may charge, move, or shoot normally.

involuntary commitment

A wavering or neutral Lord whose unit declares a charge, is charged, shoots, or is shot at, is considered engaged by an enemy and immediately commits to the other faction. The -1 penalties to his and his units' Leadership, Ballistic Skill, and Weapon Skill remain in play until the next Commitment Phase of the faction he joined.

victory

Victory goes to the General who achieved the scenario objectives or whose faction caused the most enemy casualties in terms of points killed or units dispersed or forced off the table. As a reward for his victory, he may do one of the following:

- Replace any single Battle Leader or Standard Bearer lost due to casualties or due to a previous defeat (see below).
- Upgrade any one characteristic of his or one of his party's current profile (statistics) by +1. Profiles can be upgraded to the following maximums:

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
4	6	6	4	4	3	7	4	10

This upgrade is permanent and remains in effect as long as the character survives all subsequent battles, even if fortune reduces the General to a lowly retainer. A General who is killed during battle, however, has all of his statistics reset to the starting values for the next battle.

The winning Lord is the supporter of the winning faction who achieved the scenario objectives or caused the most casualties in terms of points killed or units dispersed or forced off the table. He may do one of the following:

- Upgrade his profile as detailed above.
- Add 100 points to his retinue.
- Make another Lord his Retainer for the next battle.

Retainers are chosen randomly from among the other Lords before determining their loyalty for the pending battle. Retainers do not participate in the faction process. They are effectively part of the retinue of their Lord for the duration of the battle. Retainers share the rewards of victory and receive benefits equal to those received by their Lord.

The winning General may also elect one Lord from his supporters (including the winning Lord) for additional reward. This is the supporter selected by the General for distinguished service during the battle. The General need not make such an award. The Lord so distinguished may upgrade his current profile (statistics) as detailed above.

The losing General forfeits a member of his party (plus the points they are worth) and loses an additional 200 points from his army list for the next battle. If he has no Battle Leader or Standard Bearer left alive, he loses yet another 100 points, is demoted to Lord, and cannot serve as General in the next battle. Prior to the next battle, select the Lord with the largest retinue (determined by point count and not including retainers) to be the new General. He receives an Army Standard Bearer and two Battle Leaders at no

additional cost and remains General as long as he can survive his battles and avoid being demoted to Lord.

Losing Lords suffer no penalties and begin the next game at their original strength.