

# Skirmisher Doctrine

Mark Stone, August 2004

## Table of Contents

- [Top](#)
- [Introduction](#)
  - [Skirmisher Functions](#)
  - [Key Skirmisher Rules](#)
  - [General Principles](#)
- [Simple Interactions](#)
  - [LC vs. LI](#)
  - [LC vs. LC](#)
  - [LI vs. LI](#)
- [Combined Arms Tactics](#)
  - [Heterogeneous Mixes of Light Troops](#)
  - [Using Other Shooters on the Skirmish Line](#)
  - [Using Other Foot on the Skirmish Line](#)
  - [Using Other Cavalry on the Skirmish Line](#)
- [Transitioning to Shock Troops](#)
  - [Setting Up the Transition: Interpenetration](#)
  - [The Light Infantry Disaster: Allowing a Converted Charge](#)
  - [The Light Cavalry Disaster: No Room to Evade](#)
  - [Spacing](#)
  - [Replacing in Combat](#)
- [Bringing It All Together](#)
  - [Preamble](#)
  - [Summary](#)
  - [A Personal Reflection](#)

One of the great chess theorists of the 20th Century, Aron Nimzowitsch, wrote an [entire treatise](#) centered around the idea of pawn structure. At the time his idea was a radical one: that the lowly pawn was the most important piece in chess, and that it was through careful positioning of the pawns that opportunities opened up for the major pieces. Today, Nimzowitsch's work is considered a classic, one of the must-read books for every serious student of chess.

There are more ways to win -- and lose -- a game of Warrior than there are army lists to choose from. The school of thought I was raised in, however, maintains that Warrior battles, like chess, are primarily won and lost through the interaction between the lowly troops on the front line. Success in Warrior comes from winning the skirmisher stage of the game.

## Introduction

### [Back to Table of Contents](#)

The importance of skirmishers derives from the "paper-scissors-rock" nature of Warrior. Warrior has this character in a very broad sense between types of armies: Romans beat elephants who beat knights who beat Romans. It also has this character in a very tactical sense: my shock troops can beat some of your troops, and are

vulnerable to others, hence my challenge is to get my shock troops into the right melee before you get your shock troops where you want them. Having good shock troops is essential to success on the battlefield, but having good skirmishers is essential to creating the opportunity for shock troop success.

## Skirmisher Functions

### [Back to Table of Contents](#)

"Skirmishers" broadly means any troop type capable of performing an evade, but generally refers to Light Infantry (LI) and Light Cavalry (LC). Skirmishers basically serve one of four purposes:

- Seize or hold a position on the field of battle
- Pin enemy troops not screened by skirmishers, or provide a screen to prevent non-skirmishers from being pinned
- Envelope an opponent on the flanks, or prevent envelopment by enemy skirmishers
- Soften up unscreened non-skirmishing enemy with missile fire

Let's explain these a bit.

**Seize or hold a position.** Light troops are the fastest troops on the field, and can generally get to a position sooner than anyone else. LC get 5 march moves segments, and LI get 4. LC have a tactical move of 200p (the fastest of any cav), and LI have a tactical move of 120p (as fast as any foot). Often these troops will be force marched to speed their advance.

Positional advantages can play as big an advantage in Warrior as in chess. Getting LI into rough terrain may make them a very difficult force for the enemy to drive out, particularly an enemy with lots of elephants or cavalry. If the rough terrain is in a critical place on the field, a small unit of LI can successfully anchor an important part of the line, freeing up shock troops to concentrate elsewhere. Similarly, a central hill may be a vital position for forming a battle line, that LC can get to quickly, thus buying time for slower moving line troops to reach the position.

**Pin enemy troops.** Every opponent has troop types you'd prefer to avoid. Before those troops can reach you, they have to clear your skirmishers out of the way. Even a small skirmisher unit can often tie down more significant forces for many bounds, freeing you from the threat of those enemy units. At a minimum you can use your skirmishers to deny the enemy the more rapid movement of march moves. With careful play, you can prevent an enemy unit from any effective maneuvering other than an approach straight ahead.

Consider an 8 stand block of Reg C MI P,Sh opposed by your 4 stand unit of Irr C LI JLS, Sh. Unassisted, the pikes have no chance of eliminating this LI unit, since the pikes' maximum charge distance is equal to the LI's minimum evade distance. Nor can the pikes simply ignore the LI. An impetuous charge by even one element's frontage of the LI into an unshielded flank or rear of the pikes would be enough to do 1 CPF, thus disordering the pikes. If the pikes and LI were both force marched to the center line opposite each other at the start of the game, it will take (assuming 25mm) at least 8 bounds for the pikes to drive the LI off the table by plowing straight ahead.

A two stand unit of Reg B LC can often pin down several enemy units, even enemy who are missile-armed, through a careful series of counters and retirements.

**Envelope an opponent on the flanks.** Armies that are weak in skirmishers often have difficulty covering enough frontage to secure their flanks. By their nature, denser units (3 or 4 figures per stand) occupy less space, often meaning a choice between exposed flanks at the end of the battle line, or a battle line so thinly stretched that units within the line are not supporting each other.

A common situation is for an opponent with a dense, but short battle line to anchor one flank against a terrain feature (woods, hill), and bend the line back in response to advancing skirmishers until the other flank is against his rear zone table edge. This creates a "hinge" in the opponent's line that can often be a vulnerable point. At the hinge you should have the ability to concentrate several units against a single hinge unit, often gaining an advantage against a unit you could not beat one on one. The hinge, for example, creates an ideal point to concentrate missile fire.

**Soften up the enemy with missile fire.** CPF from prep shooting can often change the balance of power between shock troops.

For example, when EHK and SHK collide, the SHK have the advantage by a factor of 1. Yet 1 CPF from prep shooting can change this: knights charging impetuously automatically take 4 CPF (2 for mounted charge, 1 for charging impetuous, 1 for knights charging). Add just 1 CPF to this and they hit tired.

Elephants can pose a major threat to many armies, until they take 2 CPF in prep shooting. Then they face the choice of standing halted until the end of next bound, or taking a waver test. Halted elephants cease to be an immediate threat, and often become much more vulnerable since they can be charged at the halt or shot up by missile troops that for the moment need not be in skirmish. 2 stands of LI for each elephant model should be able to dispense 2 CPF at close range, unless the elephants have LI on the base, in which case you'll need 3 stands for each model, still a very attainable number.

Dense enemy missile fire, such as 4 to a stand English longbowmen, can be devastating. Reduce the enemy to shooting tired, however, and the threat drops substantially. Over two bounds, for example, with equal stands of bow-armed LI opposing longbowmen, the LI have good chances of reducing the longbowmen to tired for shooting before being driven off.

## Key Skirmisher Rules

### [Back to Table of Contents](#)

Against a skilled opponent, you must assume that he will have good skirmishers in good quantity. Getting your shock troops into him advantageously, then, will depend on winning skirmisher vs. skirmisher engagements. There are seven rules in Warrior that determine the dynamics of interaction between LI and LC:

- 5.131, Support: "Light Infantry and elephants are supported if there is a steady friendly body within 240 paces and directly to their rear.... Other troops are supported if there is a steady friendly body anywhere within 240 paces." In other words, LC are supported by any steady friends nearby, whereas LI require someone behind them to be supported.
- 5.52, Waver Test Causes: "(ROUTING FRIENDS). For each friendly body within 120 paces seen in rout and/or destroyed (exceptions: bodies entirely of LI or E class troops, expendables)." In other words, routing LI do not cause friendly bodies to take a waver test.

- 6.166, Charge Responses: "Troops already in hand-to-hand combat cannot evade. As an exception to this, non-impetuous pursuers still in contact with broken enemy may make charge responses." In other words, light troops in pursuit of routers, and in particular light cavalry in pursuit of routers, may still make an evade move if opposing troops charge through the routers to replace them in combat, provided the pursuers are not impetuous.
- 6.36, Recall Moves: "Bodies MAY make a recall move if LI entirely in non-difficult terrain which are within 40p of any steady close or loose order foot enemy body (and not behind its flank). In this case the LI must either take a waver test or make a recall move (unless charged first and then must evade). The choice to do this is made at the end of preparatory shooting, but the recall move is executed in the END PHASE." In other words, one way to drive back LI is to move steady close or loose formation foot up to 40p, forcing the LI to either waver test or commit to a recall move.
- 6.52, Interpenetration: "Troops can voluntarily interpenetrate another body to their front or rear in any of the following circumstances: Any mounted troops through any light troops. LI through any troops...." In other words, LI can evade back through anybody, and any mounted can advance forward through (or charge through) LI.
- 11.1 Results of Preparatory Shooting: "A body that receives 2 CPF from preparatory shooting may choose to do one of the following. If it cannot or chooses not to, it must take an immediate waver test... If troops in skirmish formation or light troops, make a recall move unless charged first, when evade instead." In other words, another way to drive back light troops is with at least 2 CPF in prep shooting, forcing them to waver test or commit to a recall move.
- 11.224 Who May (or Must) Break-off: "Light troops, that are not LI fighting mounted, must break-off if they took at least 1 CPF and inflicted less hand-to-hand casualties than their opponents." In other words, when LI fight LI, or LC fight LC, the loser does not simply recoil, but must break off. This opens up new possibilities for routing lights: pursuing and catching an opponent in a break-off move.

## General Principles

### [Back to Table of Contents](#)

Overall, LI are the safest kind of skirmisher to use, while LC are the most powerful. Bow is the preferred weapon, though B,JLS is a great combination for LC. Shields are desirable, and worth the point cost when buying the army. Bow-armed troops are best if regular; with JLS- or dual-armed troops, the choice between regulars and irregulars is more complicated. Few armies have all these choices, so you must learn to get the most out of what your army does have.

What makes LI safe? First, nobody has to waver test for a routing LI unit. If you make a mistake with your LC, you not only have a hole in your skirmisher line, you also have a routing unit heading towards your battle line at high speed that everyone nearby will have to waver test for.

Second, LI are safe because they may interpenetrate anyone in an evade. Because they have a shorter evade distance than LC, and because of this unrestricted interpenetration, it is much easier to position your battle line behind LI. You can be as close or as far back as you like, and need not worry about gaps between units. LC are much more difficult to set up spacing for. They cannot interpenetrate battle line troops on an evade, and may evade as far as 280 paces depending on circumstances. Your battle line must be stepped further back to leave room for LC, or must have carefully

managed gaps between battle line units to leave room for LC to evade through.

Third, LI are less vulnerable to shooting. Bow against LI is a 1; against LC it is a 3. That means that LI are difficult to drive back with shooting alone, and can indeed often go toe to toe in missile fire exchanges with denser missile troops.

LC are more powerful because they are faster, and generally do more damage in hand to hand combat. Speed enables LC to successfully evade in situations where LI would be caught, and to successfully pursue in situations where other troops would fail to contact evaders.

Damage delivered in hand to hand combat matters immediately in skirmisher exchanges: LI count as other foot against cav fighting LC, a factor of 2; LC count as other cav fighting LI against LI, a factor of 4. Hand to hand damage also matters when using skirmishers to exploit a vulnerability. LC can be impetuous in more situations than LI can, and LC get a +2 against disordered foot even if they are not impetuous.

Finally, LC threaten a much larger space than LI. Here's a simple exercise to illustrate the point: take a 6 stand unit of Regular LC with bow, and put it on the table in column. Assume you're at the start of approach moves. Now draw a boundary around the region on the table that the LC could potentially charge to or shoot to that bound. The possibilities are many, and the region is vast: they could move up 200 and then charge another 200, reaching more than 1/4 the way across a 25mm table. They could move up 200, expand 2 elements to one side or the other, and shoot another 160. They could hold position and then counter back in skirmish formation. Your opponent must plan for all these contingencies.

## Simple Interactions

### [Back to Table of Contents](#)

The power and flexibility of LC makes it tempting to select them as the skirmisher type of choice. Do not, however, underestimate LI. They can be surprisingly tough, and difficult to eradicate.

## LC vs. LI

### [Back to Table of Contents](#)

To start, let's look at the interactions between two opposing units: one on one side, 6 stands of Reg C LI B,Sh. On the other side, 6 stands of Irr C LC JLS,B,Sh. Let's keep it simple; assume these two units are both in the open, and have, on the previous bound, marched to 240p of each other. In approach moves of the current bound, the LI boldly move forward 120p and do not go into skirmish.

The LC face an immediate dilemma. They can move up enough (40p) to have reasonable confidence of catching the LI should they charge the LI and the LI evade, but to do so the LC must put themselves in close range of the LI for prep shooting, and risk taking 2CPF in prep shooting, which would force the LC to waver test or recall. Should they face this dilemma and recall, they have essentially ceded the skirmisher initiative to the LI by yielding ground and absorbing significant casualties. Alternatively the LC can remain at long range for prep shooting, but then have less than a 50/50 chance of catching the LI in an evade.

Let's assume the LC take the aggressive approach to eliminating the LI: the LC move up 40p and assume skirmish formation. In prep shooting, on even die rolls, the LI would inflict 12@3 (bow vs. LC), +1 (shieldless), -2 (LC in skirmish) = 24. The LC would inflict 9@1 (bow vs. LI), +2 (shieldless) = 23. Not an auspicious start for the LC. They need the LI to roll down in prep shooting in order to avoid 2 CPF, and need to roll up themselves to deal 2 CPF.

Let's assume they get a break, and the LI roll down doing only 1 CPF in prep shooting. The LC should now charge the LI impetuously to assure breaking them, right? Barring some big die rolls by the LI in support shooting, or some very poor rolls by the LC in hand-to-hand, the LI should rout.

Here's the problem: the LC charged impetuously, depriving them of charge responses in the event that they are charged while still in pursuit of routing LI. A worthy opponent will have backed up his LI with a supporting unit of mounted, such as lance-armed HC. Next bound the HC will charge through the LI, replacing them in combat, and rout the LC. The end result of this exchange is that a cheaper LI unit that nobody waver tests for is routing back through your opponent, while a more expensive LC unit that everybody waver tests for is routing back through you.

This problem can be avoided by charging normally rather than impetuously. In the event that the LI fail their waver test, you're still fighting disordered foot, which is equivalent to being impetuous (the same +2 in hand to hand). If the LI don't fail, let's see what happens.

The LI will do 1 CPF in support shooting, and 12 hand to hand casualties. The LC will do 6@6 instead of 6@8, meaning only 30 casualties. Twice as many, and just barely 3 CPF when you throw in support shooting (in fact the LC can afford to roll down 1 in support shooting and still come up with the needed 36 total).

The upshot is that with ideally armed LC (JLS,B,Sh) against ideally armed LI (B,Sh) the LC have a decisive enough advantage if they can charge the LI in the open. The LC may charge without having to be impetuous, and still be likely to rout the LI at contact should the LI elect to stand and receive. The LI will thus likely opt to evade if they have a reasonable chance of getting away. The challenge for the LC is to get close enough to catch the LI in an evade without getting shot up for 2 CPF in prep shooting.

Note that being at more than 80p but within 120p is actually a good distance for the LC. They avoid the close range shot, meaning they likely won't take 2 CPF. They have a 5/12 chance of catching the LI if the LI evade, and even if they don't catch the LI, the LI may simply fail their waver. In other words, charging from this distance gives the LC a better than 50% chance of either shaking or routing the LI.

So that's the basic dynamic between LI and LC in isolation: the LI want to put 2 CPF on the LC if possible, and the LC want to be able to charge nonimpetuously with a reasonable chance of catching the LI in an evade, and a likely chance of routing the LI if they don't evade.

Let's look at some of the permutations here. Being irregular hurts the LI, since they

#### Orders

*Being able to go long in a pursuit can be key to using LC successfully. The problem is, many people get their orders wrong with LC. The tendency is, since they are skirmishers, to put LC in a command that is going to be under Probe orders. However, under Probe chargers and pursuers cannot add any optional distance unless impetuous. Thus LC charging LI nonimpetuously can never go long. Don't make this mistake (and don't overlook an opponent who makes this mistake). If you plan to use LC aggressively, then give them aggressive orders: put them under Attack.*

are more likely to roll short on an evade (foot can never go long). Being regular helps the LC slightly with getting into skirmish and closing at the same time, but doesn't really help in other ways against LI, and does up the cost of the LC significantly. So if you have a choice between regular and irregular LC that are both bow and javelin armed, the irregulars are probably a more efficient use of points. The reverse is true if your LC are single armed; the increased maneuverability is worth the additional cost for regulars.

Taking shields away from the LI hurts them dramatically against LC. This is equivalent to making LC impetuous (a +2 in hand-to-hand). The problem is it dramatically broadens who can rout the LI at contact without having to be impetuous:

- LC with JLS,B,Sh: already are likely to, now becomes a near certainty: 6@4, +2 (shieldless), +2 (JLS), +1 (charging), -1 (support shooting) = 45. Even rolling down 1 they still do 3 CPF, and that's not counting the support shooting. With support shooting, even a down 2 roll will suffice for 3 CPF.
- LC with just JLS: as above, but without the benefit of support shooting. Routs the LI on anything better than a down 2 roll.
- LC with just bow: 6@4, +2 (shieldless), +1 (charging), -1 (support shooting) = 30. With support shooting, 39, which is 3 CPF. If the LC are themselves shieldless, then the LI actually do 2 CPF in support shooting on an even roll, which means the LC do not rout the LI on an even roll at contact. Note, however, that an up one roll in either hand to hand or support shooting by the LC will be enough to move this back to 3 CPF, and the odds are greater than 50% that the LC will roll up in one of those two rolls. Further, if the LI fail their waver test for being charged by mounted in the open, then this charge will almost certainly result in a rout.

The lesson: shieldless LI are dramatically more vulnerable to LC, in just the ways needed for LC to safely charge and rout the LI. If your opponent has a skirmish line made up of shieldless LI, you should be able to arrange the engagement such that your LC pick them off. Remember, LC move after LI in approaches, giving you an opportunity to respond to whatever his LI do, and thus get your LC lined up correctly at the correct distance (more than 80, less than 120).

Many players respond to the perceived vulnerability of the LI by putting them in the brush, so that they avoid taking a waver test for being charged in the open by mounted. This is often a mistake.

First of all, foot moving in the brush are slower, in ways that slow down the whole game. If you are on a flank where you are at a disadvantage and fighting a delaying action, this may be fine. But if you are looking to win the skirmisher engagement and use that to open up a decisive advantage, you'll want to win the skirmisher engagement quickly. Slowing down your skirmishers only hurts them. For example, having marched to 240p, LI in the open can move 120p and charge 120p next bound. In the brush, they can only move 80p, leaving them short of charge range unless your opponent obliges by throwing something in your path.

Second, foot moving in the brush evade a shorter

#### *Unit Sizes*

*It's worth mentioning here that players with shieldless LI should think carefully about unit sizes, and probably opt for larger units of LI. You'll seldom see LC in more than 12 figure units, and opposing one of these with a 16 figure LI unit can tip the balance in favor of LI: the LC need to do more total casualties to get the needed 3 CPF for a rout, and the LI will do more in both prep and support shooting.*

*Think also about using nonstandard unit sizes. The casualty table is based on multiples of 3 and multiples of 4. 14 figure and 18 figure units of LI, with the extra element alone in a third rank, can really throw off an opponent's numbers. If your army has an abundance of Irr D LI B, then the this tactic makes even more sense. The*

distance. This can often be fatal against LC. In the brush, LC can sit at long range for prep shooting against LI, and still catch the LI in an evade unless the LC go short and the LI do not. The LI will fare somewhat better in hand to hand combat if the LI elect not to evade, since the LC will be disordered for charging in the brush. However, the -1 for disorder doesn't change the odds very much. Shieldless LI will still mostly rout on an element for element matchup with LC. On a weak flank where you are using LI for a delaying action this can be a recipe for disaster.

*difference in cost between a 16 and an 18 figure unit is only 2 points.*

Most of the discussion so far reflects LI on the defensive against aggressor LC. If that were all one had to worry about in the interaction between these troop types, then LC would be the preferred skirmisher type. Let's look more closely, though, at LC's vulnerability to prep shooting, and the consequences.

Again, let's look at our 6 stand vs. 6 stand matchup, the LI with bow, and the LC with JLS,B,Sh. Let's assume three things have happened:

- The LC are in skirmish
- The LI are within 80 of the LC
- The LI are able to pull in an additional 6 figures of shooting from a nearby friendly unit

This turn of events is not all that unlikely. The additional 6 figures could be an LMI bow unit nearby, some HC L,B,Sh, or even another LI unit otherwise unopposed. Since LI are cheaper than LC, all other things being equal it should be possible to put more LI on the table than LC.

In prep shooting the LI take 2 CPF only if the LC roll up. The LC, however, are now facing 18@3 (bow vs. LC), -2 (skirmishing), +1 (shieldless) = 36. That's 3 CPF. The LC must now recall or waver test, having taken at least 2 CPF. Let's assume they recall. This now puts the LC in a mandatory rally, which they will not complete until the end of the next bound (because they are disordered). Here's why that's important: if the LI can move up and put 2 CPF on the LC next bound, then the LC must take a waver test. They no longer have the option of waver test or recall, because they are in a mandatory rally. They must waver test. This occurs in the prep shooting phase. If they fail, then in the charge phase the LI or some other friendly body can charge the LC and produce another waver test (shaken charged), which the LC might well fail (uneasy C's would be a likely morale classification at this point).

So two skirmishing units faced off can easily turn into a rout for the LC if the LI can get a little help in prep shooting. To understand the full impact of this you must think about the spacing and interpenetration problems of LC. LC have a long recall move: typically 200p. If they then rout from that recalled position, they are very likely to be near other friendly bodies, unless they are far, far in advance of the rest of the line. Further, unless an opponent has planned very carefully for spacing, there may simply not be room (as much as 560p could be required) for the LC to both recall and make a full rout move; LC do not interpenetrate very many other troop types.

This, then, is the big offensive gambit for LI against LC: put enough shooting on the LC to leave them disordered in a must rally situation, and then pile on more shooting to produce a waver test. While the LI do require some extra help to pull this off, this situation comes about on the battlefield far more often than most players realize with LC.

So far we've focused only on how LI with bow, either shielded or unshielded, fare against LC. Let's quickly look at some other LI types, and then move on to other

interactions.

Javelin-armed LI can actually present a big problem for LC. LI with JLS typically also has shields, and the 1 1/2 ranks fighting prevents the LC from easily doing twice as many; remember, against well supported LI, the LC want to avoid an impetuous charge, but also want to be reasonably assured of routing LI at contact. Assuming a pair of 6 stand units, JLS-armed LC will do 6@4 (other mounted vs. LI), +1 (charging), +2 (JLS) = 36. The LI will do 9@2 (other foot vs. LC) +1 (JLS) = 23. Thus the LI must roll down 1 or the LC must roll up 2 to do twice as many.

While the LI may, of course, fail a waver test, JLS-armed LI have another advantage: they can, if irregular, charge the LC impetuously, provided they can close to 120p within the LC. If both units are in the open, and march to 240p, then the LI can approach 120p and charge impetuously 120p. They now don't take a waver test, and against LC armed only with bow they start out winning: 9@5 = 36 vs. 6@5 = 24.

Sling-armed, crossbow-armed, and longbow-armed LI are the most vulnerable to LC. The armor-penetrating factor of sling or longbow is irrelevant against LC, and each fires in only 1 1/2 ranks, making it harder to do the needed 2 CPF in preparatory shooting. Sling-armed LI have other uses, however, as we'll see. CB suffer from a reduced factor, again making it harder to do 2 CPF in prep shooting. The bottom line: if you're facing LC you want bow-armed LI, though you can make use of JLS-armed LI if you're careful.

#### *Impetuous LI*

*Use this option with care. Impetuous troops cannot be replaced in combat, even a combat they are losing (unless they rout). The goal for the LI is either to drive the LC back with shooting, or to leave the LC stuck to the LI in combat in such a way that the LI can be charged through by shock troops intent on routing the LC.*

## LC vs. LC

### [Back to Table of Contents](#)

We've covered LC vs. LI pretty thoroughly; let's look at some of the other matchups. LC vs. LC matchups tend to be volatile and unpredictable. In hand to hand combat, there will be no recoil with follow-up. The loser must break off, and is thus likely to be caught. Breakers off caught are considered routed. Even with opposing LC that start off even against each other, the odds are that the results of hand to hand will be a rout. Irregulars roll even 1/6 of the time; regulars 1/4 of the time. Odds are, somebody is rolling up and/or somebody is rolling down.

LC are also more vulnerable to shooting, making it easier for a couple of opposing LC units to do at least 2 CPF to each other in prep shooting. Two non-skirmishing, bow-armed LC units of equal size shooting at each other at close range will do 3 CPF to each other, putting them in the precarious situation of recalling disordered to a must rally situation, or else taking a waver test.

Given these constraints -- volatility of hand to hand combat, and vulnerability to shooting -- keep a couple of guidelines in mind. First, if you must oppose enemy LC with only your own LC, get your javelin-armed LC lined up against enemy LC. A slight advantage in hand to hand combat can easily turn into enough to generate a rout when LC fight LC. If your LC are only JLS, Sh and are opposing bow-armed LC, be prepared to charge him off. Ideally you want to get your javelin-armed LC into skirmish, enabling you to get to close range without taking 2 CPF in prep shooting and thus have a chance of catching him in an evade when you charge. If you can't pull this off (initiative roles may conspire against you) plan on charging him off from

outside 80p, so that you at least drive him off before getting shot up.

If you have JLS,B,Sh for your LC, and are facing only bow-armed LC, then again you want to work to charge the enemy, but only if you can get to 40p. Get into skirmish as quickly as you can, and trade shooting until you get a chance to close to 40p.

Regular LC with only bow must win against LC with shooting. Take advantage of your ability to move up to within 80p and go into skirmish. Be prepared also to wait for counters and counter away in skirmish if you don't have enough figures shooting to likely do 2 CPF. Irregular LC with bow only must approach a bit more cautiously, since they can only move 40p when going into skirmish.

In LC vs. LC matchups, much depends on the outcome of initiative rolls. Let's look at one example: 6 stands of Reg C LC LC B opposed, 240p away, by 6 stands of Irr C LC JLS,B,Sh.

If the javelin-armed LC must move first, then they can immediately go into skirmish (since the opposing LC could, theoretically, move to javelin range) and move up 40p. The bow-armed LC, moving second, could safely move to outside 40p but within 80p and forgo skirmish. They get to shoot at close range at full effect, are out of range of the javelins, and in the event that they are charged they are still likely to escape in an evade.

### *3rd Rank Shooting*

*and third ranks. A 6 stand unit of LC with bow, for example, can still put out 8 figures of shooting on 2 elements of frontage when in skirmish, if it is 3 ranks deep. If you have local superiority in numbers then the 3 rank skirmish formation may be the right way to concentrate shooting while minimizing your exposure to enemy shooting.*

If the bow-armed LC must move first, then a low risk option would be to wait for a counter, and attempt to counter back in skirmish if the javelin-armed LC approach to within 40p. If the bow-armed LC want to make a more aggressive move, they should still only close to within 120p, not within 80p, since they don't want to allow the javelin-armed LC to both get into skirmish and get off a shot. They should not assume skirmish formation: 9@3 is only 23, not 2 CPF against a 12 figure unit, whereas 12@3 does 2 CPF even rolling down 1. The javelin-armed LC must then decide whether to avoid a close range shot or get off a javelin shot of their own and get to a better charge range. Prudence is probably the better part of valor this bound, and they should simply hold position and wait for better options next bound.

Obviously the tempo established is very different in these two situations. In any LC vs. LC situation the change in tempo will be equally dramatic depending on who has the initiative. So know what your Plan A and Plan B are, depending on the initiative roll.

There's a more subtle theme that runs through these kinds of deliberations: have the courage of your convictions. If you start off with a plan for your LC vs. your opponent's LC on a given flank, then stick to the plan. All too often players change course -- typically to something more conservative -- in midstream. If your plan is to move up aggressively with your bow-armed LC and look for good results from close range shooting, then stick with that plan. Don't counter back in the face of opposing light cav as you suddenly start to worry about getting caught in an evade. Presumably you built other parts of your battle plan on the assumption that your LC would move up aggressively; don't inadvertently foul up the rest of your plan by suddenly turning cautious.

The general idea in LC vs. LC engagements, then is twofold, and not so very different from LC vs. LI engagements. You must decide whether it is shooting or hand-to-hand combat that you will try to turn to your advantage. If it is hand-to-hand, then you must

find a way to get to 40p and get off a charge. If it is shooting, then you must find a way to inflict at least 2 CPF in prep shooting without taking equal or greater damage yourself.

The hand-to-hand tactic is much more difficult in LC vs. LC engagements, because if you are doing the charging you can't create a situation in which you are likely to catch an evader. You must rely on rolling long or your opponent rolling short for distance. Further, LC face a high cost for initiating a charge: 2 CPF normally, 3 CPF if impetuous. You just aren't going to get off very many fresh charges with LC at that rate.

Shooting is a more effective way of disposing of enemy LC, but only if you can preserve your own LC. Remember, the great vulnerability of LC is recalling disordered from shooting, and then being stuck in a must rally situation while disordered. Any time you can get your LC to have numerical shooting superiority on your opponent's LC without other skirmishers intervening, you have put your opponent in a very precarious situation. If you execute carefully in this situation, your opponent should have waver-testing LC that have been driven back to his main battle line.

## **LI vs. LI**

### [Back to Table of Contents](#)

When LI face off against LI, the results are far less volatile than LC vs. LC. First of all, LI are less vulnerable to shooting, and thus less likely to be driven back simply by shooting from opposing LI. Second, LI cannot go long in a pursuit, meaning that generally the only way LI get caught by other LI in an evade is when the two bodies start within 40p, the evader rolls short, and the pursuer doesn't.

Consider two 6 stand bodies of opposing LI with bow, facing each other in skirmish at 40p. In prep shooting, each will do  $9 @ 1 = 14$ , or 1 CPF. To get to even 2 CPF they'd have to roll up 3, a  $1/36$  chance. If they're both regular, and one charges while the other evades, the chance of the evader getting caught is  $5/36$ . If they're both irregular, and one charges while the other evades, the chance of the evader getting caught is  $2/9$ .

LI are most likely to irradiate other LI through hand-to-hand combat. There are two reasons for this. First, the "cost" of charging for LI is less than for LC; second, the benefits of having a hand-to-hand advantage are magnified with LI. LI do not take fatigue for simply charging, and take 1 CPF for an impetuous charge. This contrasts with 2 CPF for a mounted charge, and 3 CPF for an impetuous mounted charge. Because charging can tire them so quickly, LC are generally looking for one ideal charge opportunity in a game. LI can charge repeatedly with little penalty. With LI, the bonus for fighting a shieldless opponent is +2, compared to +1 for shieldless LC. The bonus for using JLS against LI is +2, compared to +1 for LC. Thus if you have a hand-to-hand advantage in an LI vs. LI matchup, the odds that it will be reversed by die rolls are fairly low.

Thus while bow is the ideal LI weapon when facing LC, or indeed most other troop types, against other LI the ideal weapon is JLS. JLS-armed LI are typically shielded, meaning that these troops should have at least a +2 hand-to-hand advantage against other LI, and often a +4 (since many LI are shieldless). JLS-armed troops can also shoot shielded, meaning that in skirmish formation they are relatively impervious to enemy shooting. Thus a small (say, 4 stand) unit of JLS-armed LI can typically defeat a much larger (say, 6 or 8 stand) unit of bow-armed LI.

For similar reasons, sling-armed LI can be very effective against other LI. While they don't have the hand-to-hand benefit of JLS, they typically are shielded, and shoot shielded, making them very resistant to shooting damage. Against shieldless LI they can be quite deadly in hand-to-hand.

The other decisive factor in LI combat is the impetuous charge. Since LI incur only 1 CPF for an impetuous charge, and since LI combat will likely result in someone routing the first bound, the impetuous charge has little downside and a lot of upside. A timely impetuous charge can often catch your opponent off guard, as well. If your LI are armed only with bow, then charging is an option for them your opponent may easily overlook. Further, there are many situations on the battlefield where two opposing and otherwise equivalent LI units differ in this important respect: one is uneasy, and the other is not.

LI require rear support to be supported, meaning that LI on a flank often lack support. As skirmishers, LI are often extending the front line as far as possible, and thus often have enemy behind the flank. If your opponent has inadvertently left his LI uneasy, you can turn the tables with an impetuous charge. Here's an example:

Two six stand units of Irr C LI oppose each other, one with bow, the other with bow and shield. The shielded LI would seem to have the advantage, though in a shooting exchange the shields matter little. The player with the shielded LI confidently ignores the possibility of hand-to-hand combat, as he has the advantage of shields. What he hasn't factored in is the lack of support as his HC unit backing the LI gets pulled off to deal with action elsewhere on the field. The player with the shieldless LI, having moved to 40p, declares an impetuous charge.

If the shielded LI happened not to be in skirmish that turn, then they can take the charge at the halt, with the odds being about even. They'll likely do a CPF in support shooting to the charging LI, with this result:

- Chargers: LI vs. LI = 4 + 1 (charging) +2 (impetuous) -1 (support shooting) = 6
- Receivers: LI vs. LI = 4 + 2 (shieldless) = 6

If the unfortunate shielded LI happened to be in skirmish, then they have no choice but to evade, and face the chance of being caught and immediately routed. The lesson: impetuous LI can sometimes turn a disadvantage into an advantage.

In summary: when fighting LI with LI, the winning outcome is most often determined by hand-to-hand action, and the winning outcome typically takes longer to achieve than in an LC vs. LC engagement. Given that LI are so difficult to shoot up, and given that they can be dismantled by LC only with care, LI make excellent defensive skirmishers, best suited for a flank where you want to slow the enemy down and delay

#### *Pinning with Slingers*

*Shielded LI with sling have another virtue worth mentioning. If you have a numerical advantage in skirmishers, you have an opportunity to thwart your opponent's line troops with your LI. One or two LI units can pin down a large number of line troops, enabling you to concentrate your winning attack elsewhere. This is commonly seen when a non-shooting line unit like pikemen confronts LI that it can neither catch in an evade nor eradicate in any other way.*

*But what if your opponent's line troops are themselves shooters, such as English longbowmen? Here is where slingers show their virtue. 4 stands of LI with bow up against 6 stands of LHI with LB are in for a tough time. Longbow counts close range at 120p, so the LI will almost certainly face 18 figures shooting. Even in skirmish, the bow-armed LI will be quickly driven back disordered. Slingers, on the other hand, count shielded when in skirmish, meaning that those 18 figures would be at a factor of -1. That's not even 2 CPF without an up roll.*

*So remember, any LI can pin non-shooting line troops, but only slingers are really effective at pinning enemy shooters.*

a decisive outcome. LI used in this role, however, really need shields. They are most vulnerable to hand-to-hand combat, and the +2 for being shieldless is just too big an advantage to concede to an opponent.

## Combined Arms Tactics

### [Back to Table of Contents](#)

A handful of wargames offer a complex but playable sense of combined arms interaction in game play. Warrior is one of those rare games. The moment you stop thinking about what beats what straight up, and start thinking about how the interaction of your units can create a whole greater than its parts is the moment you see what's really beautiful about Warrior, and the moment you see its most important simulation aspect. There is an enormous difference between imitating and simulating warfare. Many games imitate a particular period of warfare in minute detail. Few games succeed in offering any kind of meaningful simulation. Combined arms is the backbone of successful simulation: all great commanders in history had the vision to see how different troops interacted with each other, how they complimented each other, and when they interfered with each other. Get those interactions wrong, and you go down to disastrous defeat. Get those interactions right, and your tactics will unfold with the elegance of a symphony orchestra.

## Heterogeneous Mixes of Light Troops

### [Back to Table of Contents](#)

Few of your skirmisher interactions will be, or should be just one troop type against another. Any single troop type has vulnerabilities, and with careful use of supporting troop types you can get the benefits of a given troop type while using supporting troops to shield its vulnerabilities. Let's look at one obvious example.

We looked initially at a matchup between 6 stands of LI and 6 stands of LC, and quickly ran up against the vulnerability of LC to shooting. Let's change the setup slightly: faced off against 6 stands of Irr C LI B,Sh we'll now put 2 stands of Irr C LI B,Sh and 4 stands of Irr C LC JLS,B,Sh.

What the player with the LC will try to achieve is a situation in which his LI soaks off prep shooting from the LC, enabling the LC to close within 80p of the enemy LI without taking 2 CPF in prep shooting. The player with the 6 stands of LI will endeavor to avoid this. Who will succeed is likely to depend on initiative roles.

Let's assume the opposing lines are outside 80p, but within 120p, and that the LI player must make the first approach move this bound. He must first decide whether or not to go into skirmish. If he does not, looking to maximize shooting, then the LC player can do this: move his LI forward to 40p, not in skirmish, and in front of 4 of the 6 stands of the opposing LI. He then moves his LC forward, not in skirmish, outside 40p but within 80p. The likely result: the LI player will see his 6 stands take 2 CPF in prep shooting, and have to waver test or recall. If he recalls, he will likely be caught and routed by the LC charging nonimpetuously, although he will disorder the 2 stand LI unit in prep shooting. This is a clear win for the LC player.

Alternatively, the LI player can go into skirmish, preventing him from taking 2 CFP in prep shooting, but diminishing his own chances of dishing out 2 CPF to either enemy body. What happens next depends on whether or not the 6 stands of LI can

charge impetuously. If they cannot, then the situation is essentially the same: the LC player uses his 2 stands of LI to soak off prep shooting, moves up his LC to assure catching the evading LI, and does catch and rout them since skirmishers not charging who are charged must evade. If the 6 stands of LI can charge impetuously, then the LC player must be more careful. His LC can still rout the impetuously charging LI, but he's going to need an up roll on hand-to-hand combat or a down roll by the LI on support shooting to pull it off.

The general point holds though: replacing 2 stands of LC with 2 stands of LI dramatically improves your chances of taking out opposing LI. That's the power of combined arms.

Let's look at a different use of combined arms. We've already discussed interactions between JLS-armed LC and bow-armed LC. Let's now substitute some JLS-armed LI for some of that bow-armed LC. So on one side we have 6 stands of Irr C LC JLS,Sh. Opposing we have one unit of 4 stands of Irr C LC B,Sh and one unit of 2 stands of Irr C LI JLS,Sh.

The presence of even a small unit of LI gives the bow-armed LC many more options for how to drive off the JLS-armed LC, and overall gives the bow-armed LC an advantage.

The JLS-armed LC would prefer to deal with the opposing units by charging them off, and hopefully even routing one or both of them. The dilemma is what kind of charge to initiate? If they charge nonimpetuously, one of two things could happen:

- The bow-armed LC could have had an impetuous charge declared, and the LI could evade. Though the bow-armed LC lack javelins, this is more than offset by the +2 for being impetuous. The likely outcome is that the JLS-armed LC would lose, have to break off, be caught in the break off, and thus rout.
- The LI could have an impetuous charge declared, and the bow-armed LC could evade. The JLS-armed LC would likely win, but not by enough to rout the LI, leaving them effectively "pinned" to the LI and thus in a position to be charged and beaten, if not routed, by the bow-armed LC or by a heavier cavalry unit brought up next bound.

#### *Number of Units*

*Some of the combined arms advantage described here comes from being able to leverage the differing strengths of LI and LC. Some of it, however, comes from simply having more units in play; not more figures, but more units. The two examples described here pit two units against one, even though the number of figures is equal. Thus being able to get numerical superiority in units matters a lot.*

*The command factor per unit of regulars is only 10, compared to 25 for irregulars. Thus the incremental cost for turning a given number of stands into more units is modest, if those stands are of regular troops. This is a less obvious advantage of armies with a lot of regulars, and one of the ways you can turn a troop type your opponent may not regard as aggressive -- regular lights -- into a powerful attacking force.*

Alternatively, the JLS-armed LC could try an impetuous charge. If neither the bow-armed LC nor the LI have a charge declared, the LI could take the charge at the halt, and the bow-armed LC could evade. The LI would likely rout, but could be replaced in combat next bound by the bow-armed LC or a heavier cavalry unit brought up. Since the JLS-armed LC charged impetuously, they would be unable to respond and evade. Again, they are effectively pinned.

These fates await the JLS-armed LC only if they can close to a reasonable distance to charge. Prep shooting or a preemptive charge by the LI may prevent that. Thus, as in the earlier example, combined arms serves to turn a tactical standoff, or even a tactical

disadvantage, into an advantage.

In general, using LI and LC in combination against an entirely LI or LC force can accomplish one of several goals:

- Soak off enemy shooting onto to one unit in order to preserve another
- Attack the enemy to pin them with one unit, freeing the other to follow up
- Sacrificing one unit of LI to draw off and/or tire out an enemy unit, putting your remaining unit into an advantageous position

The real power of combined arms, however, comes from judiciously bringing troops other than lights into the skirmisher interaction.

## Using Other Shooters on the Skirmish Line

### [Back to Table of Contents](#)

Bringing loose order foot skirmishers into the skirmisher line has its risks. These troops don't have the movement to necessarily outdistance shock cavalry in an evade, and generally lose to shock cavalry in hand to hand combat. They take waver tests for being charged by mounted in the open, and if they rout, everyone tests for the rout.

The advantages of loose order archers in the skirmish line are significant, however. If your opponent cannot confidently reach and rout your loose order troops in one bound, he runs the risk of leaving his shock troops in a position of extreme vulnerability. So if you bring your loose order troops into the line carefully, well supported by your own shock troops, then your opponent's shock troops should not be an immediate threat.

We've already discussed the advantages of concentrated missile fire against enemy light cavalry, but those points are worth re-emphasizing. Look at just 2 stands of Reg C LMI B,Sh in tandem with 4 stands of Irr C LC JLS,B,Sh against 6 stands of Irr C LC JLS,B,Sh. With both the LMI and LC skirmishing in close range of the enemy LC, they should do the needed 2CPF to force a recall, even if the enemy LC is in skirmish ( $12@2 = 24$ ).

A more aggressive tactic is possible with the advantage of initiative. Assuming the 6 stand LC must move first in mounted approaches, the player with the LMI and LC can put neither unit in skirmish, both in close range, but with his 4 stand LC positioned slightly closer and so as to draw all the enemy missile fire. If the 6 stand LC has failed to be in skirmish, or if the LMI and LC roll up 1 in prep shooting, then the 6 stand LC unit faces the disastrous outcome of waver testing or recalling disordered.

The potency of this combination is all the greater if the player with the LMI can bring any additional shooting to bear (his LMI is 4 stands instead of 2, or his LC is 6 stands instead of 4). The bottom line is that LC do not want to face concentrated foot missile fire in any quantity, and if you can bring such foot to bear against enemy LC in combination with the long charge reach of your own LC, you should win the skirmisher engagement in that part of the battlefield.

In fact, LMI are equally dangerous to enemy LI, when used in combination with LC. Let's look at a variation of the scenario just described: the same 2 stand LMI and 4 stand LC unit are now opposed by 6 stands of Irr C LI B, Sh.

In this situation, the LMI want to close to 40p from the LI, in skirmish, ideally

straddling the frontage of 2 of the LI stands. If the LMI can achieve this (again, initiative is key), then the LC can close to within 80p of the LI.

The LI will put enough shooting on the LMI to do at least 2 CPF, forcing them to recall. That's acceptable; the LMI will have done their job. They will have soaked off shooting from the LC, and more importantly, under 6.36, the LI must waver test or recall because they have a steady close or loose enemy foot body within 40p to their front. Assuming the LI opt to recall, the LC can then charge the LI nonimpetuously knowing they are highly likely to catch the LI evading. This should produce a rout.

Thus loose order archers in the skirmish line can be used to enhance the natural strengths of light troops. For enemy light cavalry, they make light cavalry's vulnerability to shooting a more acute problem. For enemy light infantry, they can both draw shooting away from your other light troops, and force enemy light infantry into recall moves that enable your light cavalry to safely run down the light infantry.

#### *Non-bow shooters*

*The situation described here is one in which longbow, or the ever-mediocre crossbow would not be inferior to bow. Nothing much depends on the amount of shooting put out by the LMI; the key is to be a shooter drawing fire off of the light cavalry. In fact, if your opponent has cavalry as his main shock troop type, there can even be some advantage to CB or LB over bow, since they have better factors than bow against several types of cavalry.*

## Using Other Foot on the Skirmish Line

### [Back to Table of Contents](#)

Shielded, non-shooting foot on the skirmish line can serve drive off enemy light troops, while being relatively impervious to shooting from enemy light troops. If carefully orchestrated, this can enable your own light troops to quickly eliminate the enemy skirmish line at a key position. Let's look at a couple of choices for foot:

- Close order vs. loose order
- Regular vs. irregular

Let's talk about close vs. loose order first. Close order foot have a couple of big advantages. At 4 figures to a stand, they have a density that is likely to make them quite durable in the face of enemy missile fire. Light troops, especially, lack the density of fire to halt close order foot. Close order foot also do not take a waver test for being charged by mounted, meaning they are often less vulnerable to enemy shock cavalry coming through the enemy skirmish line.

Close order foot have several disadvantages, however. They are disordered by any bad terrain, even brush. They are slow, moving a maximum of 80p. This puts them out of step with your own light troops, and gives them no chance in pursuit of catching enemy light troops. Finally, close order have no capability to evade, making it almost impossible to pull them back in the face of superior enemy shock troops.

#### *What's Your Opponent's Threat?*

*Before putting foot troops (other than shooters) into the skirmish line, think carefully about your opponent's shock troops. If his shock troops are cavalry, then careful use of foot troops may be appropriate. If his shock troops are foot, however, then they are probably eager to come to grips with any foot in your army other than light troops. Don't heedlessly give him the opportunity by putting your foot on the front line. If your opponent's shock troops are elephants, you'll have to do the math and figure it out. You don't want to expose foot that are easily beaten and in danger of being outright routed by elephants. However, there are many types of foot that can either go head to head with elephants, or at least stand up to them for several bounds without serious risk of rout. Figure out for yourself how you match*

Contrast a couple of examples: a 6 stand unit of Scots spearmen, Irr C MI LTS,Sh and a 6 stand unit of Greek peltasts, Reg C LMI LTS,JLS,Sh.

*up, and if you can safely integrate your foot into the skirmish line.*

The Scots are quite tough against enemy cavalry. A single 2-stand unit of lance armed cavalry won't generally do a CPF to them, and against many cavalry types the Scots will just win. The peltasts must waver test if charged by mounted in the open, though they will prove as tough as the Scots against mounted if they pass that waver test. They can go into skirmish in some circumstances, giving them the opportunity to evade and making them almost impervious to shooting (bow shoots at skirmishing peltasts at a factor of 0). The peltasts can also enter brush, woods, or other bad terrain without becoming disordered.

This is not to say that one is better than the other, only that you should make your choice clearly understanding what the benefits and disadvantages of your choice are.

What about regular vs. irregular? Regular foot are more durable. They don't double hand to hand casualties received as irregulars do. They also have the option, in the event that they do receive 2 CPF in prep shooting, of standing halted rather than taking a waver test. Irregular loose order foot must always test. Since irregular loose order are only 3 to a stand, they're all the more likely to take 2 CPF, even from light troops.

Irregulars' single advantage is that they can charge impetuously. We'll see shortly why that can be a decisive difference in skirmisher conflicts.

Again, the lesson is not that one choice is better than the other, but that you should make the choice that fits with the tactics you intend to employ.

If your intent is simply to drive off opposing skirmishers, then any reasonably durable type of foot will suffice. Once you've closed to 40p, enemy light infantry must evade or waver, whether you charge them or not. Often this can spare precious prompt points needed elsewhere.

If your goal, however, is to decisively win the skirmisher engagement, then you want not just to drive off your opponent's light troops, but to then catch and rout them. This requires more planning, and it requires combined arms.

#### *Supporting Your Foot*

*Close and loose order foot require nearby (within 120p laterally) flanking units that are themselves close or loose order in order to be supported. On the skirmish line, this is not easy to achieve. Adjacent units on the line are likely to be light troops. Supporting close or loose order foot on the line thus means putting other supporting units close behind your light troops. In the case of light cav, this can be disastrous. In the case of light infantry, you may find your lights evading back through to expose your supporters at a moment when you can least afford it. Because they take no waver test for a mounted charge, close order foot tend to operate without support more effectively than loose order foot.*

Here's the complication. Your best troop type for chasing down and routing enemy light troops is light cavalry. However, non-impetuous foot cannot charge together with mounted. Thus to get your light cavalry working in tandem with your foot requires care.

Against light infantry, you'll want to approach your foot to 40p and your light cavalry within 80p. You also want to position these such that enemy LI cannot concentrate enough shooting on your light cavalry to do 2 CPF in prep shooting. If you can orchestrate these circumstances, then you will force the enemy LI to either waver test or face getting run down by your light cavalry while making an evade move.

Against enemy light cavalry, you'll need a different tactic. You want irregular foot working side by side with your own light cavalry. Then you'll want to approach

within charge reach for the foot, and as close as you can get with the light cavalry without significant risk of taking 2 CPF in preparatory shooting. You will also likely need to have your foot supported. If you can orchestrate these circumstances, then your foot can charge the enemy light cavalry impetuously, while your light cavalry charges nonimpetuously.

Your opponent will have little recourse but to evade, as just about any impetuous loose or close order foot that makes contact with light cavalry will rout it. Then, given a fortuitous combination of your opponent rolling short on evade and/or you rolling long on pursuit, you can catch and rout the enemy light cavalry.

As always, much depends on initiative. To get your units lined up properly, and to properly shield your light cavalry from shooting, the bound in which you make this joint charge will have to be a bound in which your opponent moves first. You want to respond to his light cavalry's approach move, rather than commit and allow him to respond to yours.

## Using Other Cavalry on the Skirmish Line

### [Back to Table of Contents](#)

Bringing heavier cavalry into the skirmish line adds volatility to the mix. On the one hand, cavalry move faster than infantry, enabling you to close and strike more quickly. On the other hand, cavalry are more vulnerable to missile fire, making it difficult to bring cavalry to bear effectively.

Cavalry also enjoy an important advantage in initiative. All of your opponent's light infantry will move before any of your cavalry, meaning you always have the advantage or responding while his light infantry always has the disadvantage of committing. Finally, heavier cavalry and light cavalry can charge together, impetuous or not. This gives heavier cavalry significantly more flexibility than regular foot on the skirmish line.

Cavalry must be careful, though, of their vulnerability to shooting. Bow against EHC is a factor of 2 (compared to only a 1 against LI), and bow against HC is a factor of 4 (compared to only a 3 against LC). The key here is that HC and EHC want to engage in actions that do not result in becoming disordered. Having disordered heavier cavalry rallying on the skirmish line is a recipe for disaster.

Let's look at the two general cases: HC and EHC.

HC have difficulty operating within 80p of enemy skirmishers. At close range, they are likely to take 2 CPF from prep shooting, or even 3 CPF if overlapping skirmishers get to shoot at them. This gives HC little value in drawing off enemy fire from other friendly skirmishers, and little value in catching evaders in pursuit.

Against LI, the HC function in one of two ways: either forcing a waver test on skirmishing LI, or --

#### *What About Knights?*

*Knights make poor troops as a supplement to the skirmish line. They aren't much more resistant to missile fire (bow against EHK is a 2, same as against EHC), and any time they charge they incur an extra fatigue just for being knights. Knights are overkill for simply chasing off or chasing down skirmishers, and are best held in reserve for their proper role as shock troops.*

*Super heavy cataphracts, on the other hand, make for some fascinating possibilities as part of the front line. Unlike all other mounted, SHC have an extreme resistance to bowfire, meaning they can often function as front line shock troops rather than the usual shock troops held in reserve. Sadly, their tactical move is only 120p, making them poorly equipped for chasing down evaders. They can,*

against a savvy opponent -- preempting the LI from going into skirmish. Let's look at these interactions more closely.

*however, deliver unrelenting pressure to any point on the line where they make an appearance.*

Suppose the opponent has 6 stands of LI, to your 4 stands of LC and 2 stands of Irr B HC L,Sh. The opposing LI must move first, since they're facing mounted. If they go into skirmish, then the HC can position itself within 160p but outside of 120p (and preferably under probe orders). The HC can then charge the LI, forcing a waver test and forcing the LI to evade, with no chance of catching and thus getting stuck to the LI. This is important: the HC don't want to catch the LI. Presumably the LI are backed up by some sort of shock troop (enemy HC or knights) that would happily charge through routing LI to beat and quite possibly rout the pursuing HC. So charging from a distance to simply force the waver test is ideal. Only good can come from this. The HC are not shooters to front, and not nearest in arc, so they won't take prep shooting. At a minimum they force the LI back, and if the LI shake then the HC have created a vulnerability that the LC can potentially exploit next bound. The problem for the LC, of course, is that all the enemy LI fire will be concentrated on them. Thus they should stay outside of 80p, but closer than the HC, avoiding 2 CPF. If the LI indeed shake, then the LC can close for the kill next bound.

A savvy opponent will anticipate this threat and not put his LI into skirmish. Thus he has the option of standing to receive rather than evading from a charge. Closing to 80p with the LC will likely result in them receiving 2 CPF or more from the LI, so keep the LC back between 80-120p and charge, not impetuously, only with the LC.

Pairing your HC with LI only makes sense if you are opposed by enemy LC, or if you are opposed by enemy LI that your LI can beat in hand to hand. Against LC, your HC can charge -- again, from a distance -- forcing the LC to evade and thus preventing them from charging your LI. Against LI that your LI can beat (for example, your LI has shields and the enemy LI does not), your HC can help keep the enemy LI out of skirmish, increasing the chances that your LI will be able to close to 40p and then charge.

EHC on the line open up many more possibilities than HC because of their greater resistance to shooting. With EHC there is a risk, though: they cannot skirmish, and thus have no choice but charge or waver test upon receiving 2 CPF. EHC will work best if armed with L,B,Sh and when working in conjunction with your own LC.

Let's look at the matchup against enemy LI: 6 stands of Reg C LI B,Sh facing 2 stands of Irr B EHC L,B,Sh and 4 stands of Irr C LC JLS,B,Sh.

Again, the big advantage is that the LI must approach before both cavalry units. If the LI go into skirmish, then approach the EHC to within 80p but outside 40p, staggered to overlap two elements' of LI frontage. The LC then approach to within 80p but farther back than the EHC, also staggered to overlap two elements' of LI frontage. Neither cav unit shoots in prep shooting. The LI will count as 6 figures shooting against the EHC, and 3 figures against the LC. If the LI roll down 1, they'll fail to do 2 CPF to the EHC, and they'd need to roll up 2 to do 3 CPF to the EHC. They have no chance of doing 2 CPF to the LC. Likely result: both your cav units will charge, the LI will evade, and only the LC will catch (and most likely rout) the LI.

If your opponent declines to go into skirmish, you have a choice. If your EHC is genuinely safe where it is -- no enemy line or shock troops could reach it this bound or next -- then approach to close range with both cav units and prep shoot, again staggering your approach to have the EHC absorb most of the shooting. You'll most likely be disordered and have to charge with the EHC, but you'll get to put 14@3 in

prep shooting on the LI, meaning even if you roll down 1 the LI will take 2 CPF and have to recall or waver test. Once recalling, your LC can charge, catch, and rout them. If, on the other hand, your EHC would be vulnerable rallying disordered in its present position, then hold both cav units back outside of 80p, and charge from long range hoping that the LI will either roll short on an evade or that your LC roll long.

Against enemy LC, your EHC will bolster your LC much as your HC would. They become a charger against enemy LC that forces the LC to evade, giving your LC a chance to catch and break them.

Aligned with your own LI, EHC function much as HC would. Use them to charge off enemy LC that otherwise would threaten to charge your LI. Against enemy LI, the EHC provide enough density of shooting that enemy LI really have to live in skirmish or face the threat of receiving 2 or 3 CPF in prep shooting. If your LI have the hand to hand advantage against enemy LI, you can then charge with your LI.

Cavalry on the skirmish line are a risk. If you're careless, they can get shot up to the point of disorder, leaving them vulnerable to fresh shock or line troops the enemy has positioned nearby. If used with care, however, and positioned correctly, they can greatly limit the options of enemy skirmishers, assuring that you will almost certainly drive enemy skirmishers back, and may well catch and rout enemy skirmishers. Given that cavalry always approach after infantry, you should be able to position your cavalry correctly, especially against enemy light infantry.

## Transitioning to Shock Troops

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

You've won the skirmisher engagement. All your opponent's light troops are routed, shaken, or recalled behind the line. It's time to bring your shock troops into the game, but how? Executing this transition well can turn an advantage into a decisive victory; executing this transition poorly can snatch defeat from the jaws of victory.

### Setting Up the Transition: Interpenetration

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Principles for transition are governed by three key facts:

- Any loose order troops may interpenetrate light infantry
- Light infantry may interpenetrate any troops
- Light cavalry may only interpenetrate other light troops

Transitioning to shock troops means moving your shock troops into the line in positions where they can make an unobstructed attack on the enemy. This means getting your skirmishers out of the way. Given the rules governing interpenetration, this transition follows one of two general patterns:

- Shock troops may move up behind light infantry, and either charge through them or have the light infantry evade or counter back behind them
- Shock troops must move up next to light cavalry, leaving light cavalry a gap to counter or evade back into

Spacing is critical to making each of these transitions work. To illustrate just how

critical spacing is, let's look at some example disasters.

## **The Light Infantry Disaster: Allowing a Converted Charge**

### [Back to Table of Contents](#)

You've won the skirmisher engagement in the center, and last bound his light infantry made a disordered recall back behind the line, meaning his SHK are now exposed to your light infantry. By this time your light infantry is tired for shooting, but you'll still get an unimpeded prep shot on his SHK as you move your own fresh SHK up behind your LI, getting ready to close for the kill.

With some irritation you lose the initiative roll, and must move your SHK before your opponent's SHK. No matter; you're still screened, and he is exposed. You move your SHK up as far as possible, and they end up directly behind your LI. Your LI are 120p from the enemy SHK.

In prep shooting you roll up 1 and do 6@1 -2 (tired) +1 (up 1) for 6 casualties on his SHK. Not a lot, but enough. Now if he charges impetuously, he'll hit tired, meaning in a charge of SHK vs. SHK you'll have the edge.

Then in charges, he declares an impetuous charge on your LI by his SHK. Too late you realize the folly of your move. If you evade with the LI, and he rolls long in pursuit, he'll uncover a charge on your SHK, who can at most counter charge (and thus not be impetuous). You opt to take the charge at the halt, hoping not to rout. Your LI fail their waver test for lights charged in the open by mounted, receive at least 1 CPF in hand to hand and more, and must recoil disordered. The LI fail their waver test again (second cause of disorder and a combat cause of disorder), and rout. His SHK convert into your SHK, and your SHK take it at the halt (since converted charges do not permit charge responses). Next bound your SHK have a real risk of routing.

The moral of the story: watch the spacing of shock troops behind your light infantry. Had your SHK been 40p further back, they would have been outside 240p of the enemy SHK, and thus could not have become the target of an uncovered charge. They would also have been within 320p, putting them close enough to move up in next bound's approaches and end with 160p of the enemy SHK.

## **The Light Cavalry Disaster: No Room to Evade**

### [Back to Table of Contents](#)

Your opponent has quality light cavalry, Irr C LC JLS,B,Sh. You've opted for the cheaper but more plentiful Irr D LC B. Now, after several bounds, your strategy is paying off. You have an 8 stand unit of LC bearing down on a 6 stand unit of his LC that is now tired for shooting. Once that unit is cleared out, the shieldless flank of a unit of MI will be exposed. Eager to exploit this opportunity, you bring up a unit of SHK behind your LC.

In approaches your opponent must go first, and puts his light cavalry into skirmish. You approach your light cavalry to within 80p of his, and to get your SHK within 320p of the MI they are approached to 160p from the back of your light cavalry unit.

In prep shooting you do 16@2=32, or 2 CPF, to the opposing LC. Being tired, his

return fire is negligible. Realizing he is about to hang the flank of his MI, he opts to waver test with his light cavalry rather than commit to the recall move. He passes the waver test, and in charge declarations declares a charge with his light cavalry against yours.

In your haste, you've blundered. You dare not counter charge him, because you are Ds without shields or JLS. You make your evade move, and roll normal for distance, but haven't left yourself enough room to get past the SHK. You must contract to pass the gap, going from a 4 wide 2 deep unit to a 2 wide 4 deep unit. He makes his pursuit move, rolls normal for pursuit, and catches you. He doesn't quite do 3 CPF in the resulting hand to hand combat, so you break off, are caught (as you both roll normal again), and as breakers off caught you are considered routed. Your light cavalry is now 400p back from its position at the end of approach moves, putting it even with your main battle line where four units, including a general, must test for the routing unit.

Moral of the story: As you move shock troops into the line where light cavalry have operated, leave a gap next to the light cavalry for the shock troops to approach, so that your light cavalry may evade or counter straight back unimpeded.

## Spacing

### [Back to Table of Contents](#)

Once you understand the interpenetration rules, you see that proper spacing really is the key to moving your shock troops forward to replace and/or supplement your skirmishers on the line. Further, the most common mistake is to crowd your skirmishers, for fear that your shock troops won't get there quickly enough.

With mounted or loose order foot shock in the open, you can often hang back farther than you might think. Cavalry can approach 160p and charge 160p for a total reach of 320p. Elephants, cataphracts, and loose order foot can approach 120p and charge 120p for a total of 240p. Remember that you can march to within 240p.

Often, then, the key is to keep your shock troops back somewhere between 240p and 480p, but to recognize a bound ahead of time when they will be needed on the line. That bound they can march to 240p, putting them in a position to approach and charge next bound.

And remember, shock troops should approach behind light infantry, but next to light cavalry. Mind those gaps, and keep the spacing right.

## Replacing in Combat

Often shock troops will enter the fray not along side of skirmishers, but by directly replacing them in combat already under way. This can happen in one of several situations, but should ideally result in your shock troops charging something that they can beat (and ideally rout) that will cause enemy units to waver test when it routs.

Here the only skirmishers we are talking about are light infantry. Light cavalry who engage and win are best left to their own. Light cavalry who engage in combat and lose are required to break off. If they break off and get away, then this is no longer a "replace in combat" situation. If they break off and fail to get away, then they are routed. While there are times you have to take a waver test to charge through routing

light cavalry, you should not build a plan around expecting to do so.

There are two general cases: light cavalry have charged your light infantry and caught them, or something heavier has charged your light infantry and caught them. The situation you absolutely want to avoid is one in which the light cavalry has charged not impetuously and routed your light infantry. Here you have essentially lost the engagement, as any attempt to charge the light cavalry will result in them evading away. Let's look at the other possibilities, though.

Let's look first at enemy light cavalry that charged, whether impetuous or not, and failed to rout your light infantry. You charge through, replacing at least some of the light infantry in combat. The key here is that you know that beating, but not routing the light cavalry will cause them to break off. If you charged through with HC or the equivalent, then he will likely get away in the break off move. So you must charge through with enough force to rout him. This means doing enough casualties yourself (doing 3 CPF), and preventing him from doing too many casualties to the light infantry (enabling you to do twice as many).

Consider this situation: you have 6 stands of LI B,Sh that have been beaten by 4 stands of Irr C LC JLS,Sh who are now following up on 2 elements' frontage against your LI. The LC are tired, but not disordered. Backing up the LI you have 2 stands of Irr B HC L,Sh. Look at the difference between charging through 1 element wide and 2 deep vs. charging through 2 wide and 1 deep.

In the first case, the enemy light cavalry fights 1 element's frontage against HC, and 1 against LI. Assuming even die rolls:

- Other cav vs. HC = 3 +1 (JLS) +1 (following up) -1 (tired) = 4. 2@4 = 6
- Other cav vs. LI = 4 +2 (JLS) +1 (following up) +2 (mounted vs. disordered foot) -1 tired = 8. 2@8 = 15.
- Total: 6 + 15 = 21.

You have HC fighting on 1 element's frontage, and LI fighting on 1 element's frontage:

- Lance charging LC = 5 +1 (charging) +2 (impetuous) -1 (disordered) = 7. 5@7 = 30.
- Other foot vs. LC = 3 -1 (disordered) = 2. 2@2 = 4.
- Total: 30 + 2 = 32.

In the end you do at least 3 CPF to the light cavalry, but not twice as many because of the casualties they are able to put out on the light infantry. The light cavalry will break off, and likely get away. You'll be left with a disordered body of heavy cavalry rallying forward in front of your light infantry; not a good outcome.

By contrast, if you charge through 2 elements' wide and only 1 deep, you'll put out 36 casualties (6@7), which is less than 42 but still at least 3 CPF. In return, the light

#### *Using LC as Backup*

*Light cavalry will almost always be on the skirmisher line side by side with your light infantry. In rare situations, however, you may want to consider keeping your light cavalry behind the line as backup for your light infantry. This might be the case if (a) you have relatively little available to you in the way of light troops on the list, (b) the only light cavalry available to you is Irr C LC JLS,Sh and these troops are required, and (c) your opponent has superior skirmishers.*

*In this situation there is little to be gained by exposing your light cavalry on the line. Putting it behind your LI, however, can serve as an adequate backup, and can free up a heavier troop type that would otherwise back up the LI for some other function. One clever wrinkle on this approach is that your opponent must be extremely careful about using his light cavalry to charge your light infantry. Because your light cavalry's pursuit move can match his light cavalry's break off move, even a break off move becomes risky for him.*

cavalry put out only 12 (4@4). Now you twice as many, thus routing the light cavalry.

The moral of the story is this: backing up your light infantry does no good unless you're prepared to charge through with sufficient force. Against enemy light cavalry, that must be sufficient force to induce a rout.

Suppose we change our previous example slightly. This time the enemy is heavy cavalry that charged impetuously and routed the light infantry. If we replace the LI with our own charging cavalry, coming up with a rout of the enemy HC at contact is difficult. They count as tired, but we count as disordered. We need a heavier troop type (EHC or some sort of knights) to have an advantage at all.

Any advantage will do, however. The enemy HC cannot evade or break off, and an initial advantage should ultimately produce a rout.

There is an alternative; whether this alternative is viable will depend on other circumstances on the battlefield. Circumstances permitting, however, you may be able to allow the enemy HC to rout your LI into exhaustion, and then charge it next bound. Because troops destroying all hand to hand opponents must rally, and must rally forward, you'll be facing a tired, rallying target ready to be hit and likely routed by some sort of fresh, impetuous support troop that had been backing up the LI.

In either of these situations a combination of well supported LI together with a careless charge against the LI by the enemy can result in a quick and decisive transition as your bring your shock troops into the line.

## Bringing It All Together

### [Back to Table of Contents](#)

Seeing the dominating advantage superior skirmishers provide can be difficult. It's easy to look at the lowly light infantryman in your own army, a troop type routed by just about everyone he comes into contact with, and see at best a waste of points. Before recapping the principles we've covered here, let's look at an example to show the power of light troops.

### Preamble

### [Back to Table of Contents](#)

Suppose your opponent has no light troops, and no significant shooting. His front line consists of four units, and your front line consists of four units. His four units are each an 8 stand body of Reg C MI P,Sh, total cost: 512 points. Your four units are 6 stands each of Reg C LI B,Sh, total cost: 232 points.

Who has the superior front line?

The pikes are effective only in clear terrain. The light infantry are effective in any terrain. The pikes must operate within 2 elements of each other in order to cover flanks and prevent a flank charge. Thus the pike units cover a total frontage of 22 elements (4 elements for each unit plus the three 2 element gaps between them). A 25mm table has 40 elements frontage to cover.

The light infantry cover frontage effectively provided that they force an opponent to

drop from march moves to approach moves. At the extreme, then, they only need to be within 480p of each other, or -- assuming 25mm -- a gap of 8 elements between them. Stretched to the max, these four units could cover 44 elements' frontage (3 elements for each unit, the three 8 element gaps between them, and an additional 240p on either side of the outside units). That's enough to cover the whole table.

The pikes can drive back the light infantry, but cannot get rid of them. Bringing cavalry out from behind the pikes to get rid of them is problematic because that exposes the cavalry to bow fire from the light infantry, and places them in a position no longer screened from your own shock troops. Bringing out loose order infantry doesn't help either. They have only a small chance of catching evading light infantry, and are vulnerable to mounted in the open because they must waver test if charged.

Further, since the light infantry take four march segments per bound, while the pikes take only two, from the very first bound the light infantry will take the initiative in determining where lines of battle form up, and where on the table the battle will be fought. Given that you've spent less than half the points on front line troops as your opponent, you should be able to achieve a decisive result by bringing more points to bear on a point of your choosing.

Let's modify the example slightly. Instead of four units of light infantry, suppose you remove one of those units and add instead three 2 stand units of Reg C LC B. You've still spent less than 300 points on your skirmisher line. Assume you outscout your pike-armed opponent.

You may force march units -- the light cavalry would be a good choice -- all the way to the center line. Your opponent may force march no nearer than 240p from the center line and place no units in ambush. Your light cavalry get a full three march segments before his pikes get their first march segment.

In this situation your opponent is completely pinned into his side of the table. He has no initiative, and no means of recovering the initiative. You have complete freedom of movement behind your skirmisher line, and should be able to line up exactly the attacks you want, exactly where you want them.

All of this is possible because of the lowly skirmisher. It's starts with the simple light infantryman. The best counter to light infantry is light infantry or light cavalry. Once you see the advantages and the need for light troops, you're into the skirmisher game. And if you're going to play it, then it pays to play it well.

## Summary

### [Back to Table of Contents](#)

The advantages described in the preceding example may not come to you on Bound 1. Your opponent most likely will have skirmishers of his own in some quantity. But if you play your skirmishers better than he plays his, and you have at least as many, then the advantage will swing to you, and decisively so, at some point. It may be Bound 3 or Bound 4 before you have won the skirmisher engagement and seized the initiative, but once you have done so the battle overall is yours to control.

In fact many battles are decided decisively on the basis of skirmishers alone. We have seen already the kind of disaster that can befall a misplaced light cavalry unit, or a light infantry unit that allows an inadvertent converted charge. To these risks we can add also the inadvertent exposure of the flank of a line or shock unit. If your opponent

is using his light troops to cover these, and his light troops are driven back or even routed, then the odds are that shock or line troops have become dangerously exposed.

The challenge is to draw the individual principles of skirmisher doctrine into an organized, strategic whole. Fortunately, Warrior's rules encourage skirmishers to be played in a very historical manner. So let's look at some of the broad themes.

Generally you want your light infantry in the middle and your light cavalry on the wings. Light infantry need troops to their rear for support, whereas light cavalry need space to their rear in which to evade. So the overall formation is a main line of light infantry in the middle, with smaller lines of light cavalry thrown forward on either flank.

Keep in mind a couple of caveats here: heterogeneous troops enable combined arms tactics, where a homogeneous mix of troops does not. So putting at least one light infantry unit on a flank, particularly if that flank is where you intend to be aggressive, makes sense. Similarly, you may be able to bolster light infantry in the middle with the inclusion of a small unit of light cavalry. This is hard to set up because of the space requirements of light cavalry. Such a unit should be regular, and probably no more than 2 stands. And overall it may be better to bolster your light infantry in the middle with a solid loose order foot unit rather than a light cavalry unit.

Keep your lights properly supported. With light cavalry this is apt to mean don't cramp them with supporting units too close by. With light infantry it means backing them up with shock troops that genuinely deter your opponent from charging the light infantry.

Beyond these basic principles, you have to recognize what kind of a battle you'll be fighting.

If you're at a disadvantage in skirmishers, then you'll likely be trying to cut down the frontage of the battle and minimize the threat of enemy skirmishers to your flanks. This likely means using rough terrain to anchor one or both flanks, and using your skirmishers to occupy the terrain and delay the enemy.

Beware of assuming the light infantry can effectively hold brush. Their reduced movement makes them more likely to be caught in an evade, and brush does nothing to protect them from enemy shooting. Brush can be effective as a holding ground for light cavalry, as any mounted charging it become disordered. Light infantry are happier defending a woods or a steep hill.

If you have parity, or close to it, in skirmishers, then you want to find a place on the battlefield to take the initiative. Most games follow a general pattern with a few variations.

We want to concentrate superior force on a point of weakness in the enemy line. Often a point of weakness can be created by forcing an opponent to bend back his line, thus creating a hinge in his line that becomes a target of concentration. The surest way to force an opponent to bend back his line is to attack on that wing with a superior force of skirmishers.

This aim tends to result in one of three patterns:

- The bow: one side has skirmisher superiority on both wings, and bends back the opponent's line in both places
- The angle: one flank is a deadlock, and one side has skirmisher superiority on the other flank, bending back the opponent's line

- The pinwheel: each side has advantage on one flank, pushing back the opponent on that side; consequently, the entire battle line slowly rotates like a giant pinwheel

By far the most common occurrence, and the one you want most to avoid, is the pinwheel. In this situation, because you are losing as rapidly on one flank as you are gaining on the other, you fail to achieve your aim: concentrating superior force on a hinge in your opponent's line. With the pinwheel, no real hinge ever emerges.

If you expect to have skirmisher superiority on one flank, but not the other, you need to bolster that flank with appropriate loose or close order troops. Pick these troops carefully, as you have little to screen off your opponent's shock troops. If you can put this flank in the brush, then loose order troops may enable you to anchor the flank successfully. Mounted will be disordered charging against them, they won't take a waver test for mounted charging, and close order troops (including elephants) really don't want to go into the brush after them.

If forced to anchor your weak flank in the open, then careful use of close order troops may buy you enough time. A large body of LTS-armed foot, for example, is going to be vulnerable to some cavalry and all elephants, but will probably last several bounds once combat has been initiated. If what skirmishers you do have on that flank can forestall combat by several bounds, then you may have bought enough time to achieve your aims on the winning flank.

The key is to have at least one flank on which you've forced a hinge in your opponent's line. A successful transition to shock troops then enables you to concentrate on and break the hinge unit. Realize that in this context dense missile troops may constitute your "shock" troops (consider the impact of concentrating two 4 stand units of LMI archers on a 3 model elephant unit, for example). Because this is a hinge unit it will be very difficult for your opponent to support its flanks, or to bring up countering units when you do finally charge the hinge unit. Finally, a hinge unit when broken should both generate several waver tests (along both lines leading to the hinge) as well as expose the flanks of neighboring units to exploitation.

## A Personal Reflection

### [Back to Table of Contents](#)

My first miniatures tournaments were Point Con in the Fall of 1988 and Cold Wars in the Spring of 1989. The game system then was the very first incarnation of WRG 7th edition. I played six games during those two tournaments, and lost five of them.

#### *Interior Lines*

*Being on the inside of "the bow" isn't always a bad thing. Such a formation enables what military historians recognize as effective interior lines of communication. In other words, the shortest path outside of enemy influence from any point on your line to any other point on your line is much shorter than the shortest path for your opponent on the outside of the bow.*

*In Warrior interior lines of communication matter less and are harder to make use of. They matter less because march moves, particularly mounted march moves, often alleviate the problems of distance for exterior lines. They are harder to make use of because, in Warrior, units once committed to the line are often difficult to withdraw and redeploy.*

*Small units of regular light cavalry, however, can be effective in this role. Imagine, for example, a 2 stand light cavalry unit that on one bound charges off evaders and then recalls; the next bound does a retirement move to the rear; and the following bound marches to redeploy on the opposite end of the line. This kind of tactic is a fine art. You'll know you're a skirmishing expert when you can handle interior lines with success.*

At the time the army I was playing was Theodoran Byzantine. I played it because it represented a period of history I loved (the twilight of the Byzantine Empire), and my friends told me it had great light cavalry and that this was very important. I also played it because I was too inexperienced to realize that the required Varangian Guard -- 24 figures of Reg A HI 2HCW,Sh -- was a huge liability both in points consumed and in vulnerability on the table.

The army did have good light infantry, and a mix of regular and irregular light cavalry in just about any quantity desired with just about any weapon combination desired.

My second game at Cold Wars I was up against a Seleucid player. Having just bungled a game against an opponent I felt I could handle (Magyars), I was in no mood to face one of WRG's alleged "killer" armies. He, as it turned out, was more experienced than I, but not by much. With our figures deployed on the table, and ready to commence Bound 1, he viewed my army with a clear "where's the beef" look of disdain. He had a point. My shock troops were 12 figures of Irr B EHK and 12 figures of Reg A HC, none of whom could fight in wedge (required at the time to get a rank and a half of lance fighting).

However, his scythed chariots petered out against my light infantry, and his Tarantine light cavalry was forced to counter back in the face of superior fire power from my lights. He realized that next bound this would leave the flank of a pike unit exposed, and hurried up some companion HC to fill the gap. He had made his approaches first, and forgotten that one of my nearby light cavalry units was regular. I moved up 200p behind his flank, and turned to face. 4 figures of Reg B LC JLS,B,Sh routed his companions (with general), the pikes shook and then routed.... we've all seen -- and been on the receiving end -- of this kind of domino effect.

Afterwards his more experienced friend stopped by and asked what had happened. "The knights?" he offered. My opponent was speechless, a look of incredulity on his face. All he could do was point to my light cavalry.

From that moment on I was hooked. The lessons my friends had been trying to drum into me for months suddenly seemed clear. I had used light troops, and indeed combined arms among light troops, to expose and exploit a flank. The battle was over before any of my heavier troops even arrived on the scene. The fact that the system that has now evolved into Warrior reveals and enables such tactics delighted me.

More than fifteen years have passed since that day, and I have yet to completely master the tactical doctrine that early encounter gave me a taste of. But I am convinced that mastery of skirmisher doctrine can and does win battles. I am also convinced that, like queening a pawn in chess, no victory is so sweet in Warrior as one won by lowly light troops.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)