



DRAGON RAMPANT

Fantasy Wargaming Rules

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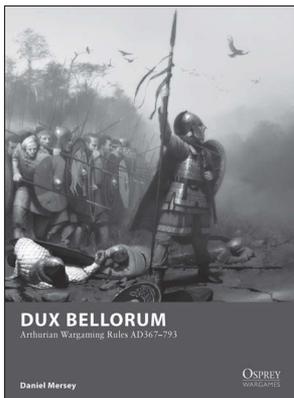
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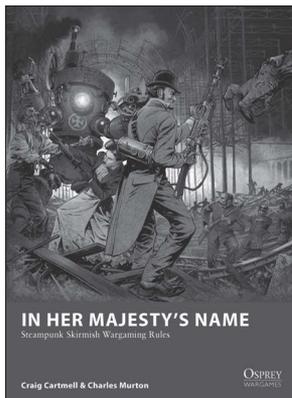
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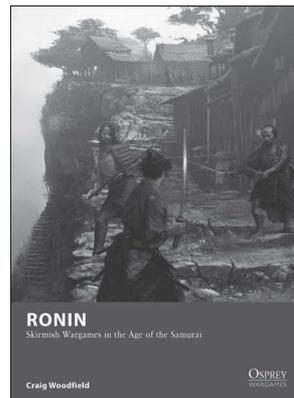
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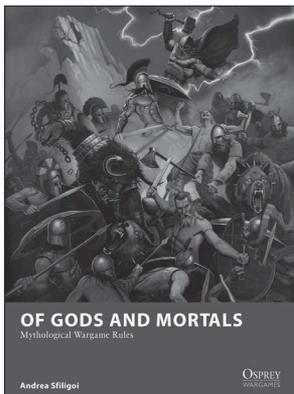
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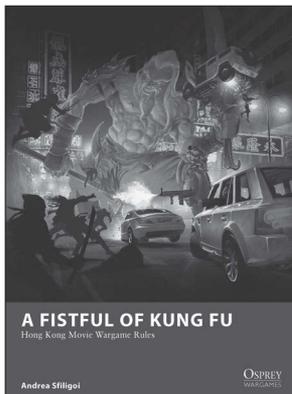
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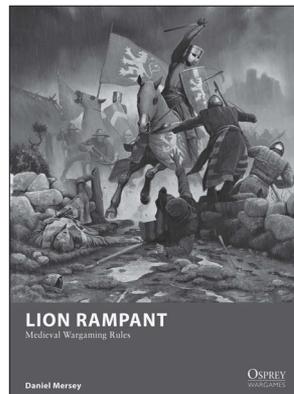
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FANTASY WARGAMING RULES



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Copyright holders are identified in the photograph captions. One thousand blessings to everyone who submitted photos, and I'm sorry I could not use them all.

As a reward for those people who bother to read the small print, here's a secret spell I'm especially fond of that doesn't quite fit into the canonical ten. Feel free to use this when you're playing at someone else's house.

Spell name	Difficulty	Target	Duration	Effect
Replenish me!	8+	One opposing player	Immediate action	Nominate the target player before testing for success. If successful, that player must go and get you a drink and selection of nibbles of your choice. No arguments, it's written right here in the rules.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *Dragon Rampant*, a set of simple miniature wargaming rules for fighting fantasy battles for fun: free from official miniature ranges, never-ending supplements, and irritating army list revisions. The rules are model scale-neutral, although many gamers choose 28mm armies; 15mm is more cost effective and better suited to the storage of large creatures such as dragons and giants, so is welcomed with equally open arms/tentacles. You may play using individually based models or communal bases holding several models (which means that 10mm and 6mm armies may also be used).

In a magical, fairy-tale world long ago – known to some as the 1980s – I was a fantasy gamer. I'd discovered *Dungeons & Dragons* from adverts in my Dad's old *Military Modelling* magazines and the TV cartoon. It was amazing! I was introduced to roleplaying at school, as a natural progression from *Fighting Fantasy* game-books, and dabbled with historical wargaming. And then the two worlds met: around 1990 I played my first fantasy miniatures wargame (Dwarves versus green Orcs and Goblins). Fantasy worlds were soon left behind as I headed off to the historical Dark Ages and medieval periods, but I continued to flirt with fantasy armies using historical rules. When I realized that my *Lion Rampant* medieval rules could also work for small fantasy battles, I included a brace of fantasy armies in the *Lion Rampant* rulebook, but *Dragon Rampant* fleshes out what I started with those two lists.

I favour abstraction and stylization to facilitate quick and streamlined play. Battlefield confusion and chaos means that you might not get to use every one of your units in every turn of the game, so start thinking about your unit's priorities during the game even before you've taken your first move of the game. Troop types and units are defined by their fighting characteristics rather than by race, weaponry, or individual prowess.

A number of pages in this book include sections of *Lion Rampant* verbatim; this is especially true of the Battle Rules section, so that players already familiar with the rules can easily see what remains the same and what is different. I hope that readers will see this as a positive, intended to make the transition from medieval to fantasy gaming (and vice versa) as smooth as possible. My design goals for *Dragon Rampant* tell you how I approached reworking the *Lion Rampant* rules for this new setting:

- Keep it *fun*. The emphasis is on a playable fantasy-themed game rather than an over-detailed simulation of battle.
- Create a modern day *throwback* to 1970s and 1980s fantasy wargaming (in a positive way!): allow players breathing space to create their own worlds rather than forcing them to be tied to a line of miniatures.
- Use no unusual dice, cards, or supplements... make it *accessible* for gamers new to the hobby.
- Keep the rules *simple*, streamlined and abstracted where appropriate: don't make players continually thumb through the rulebook.
- *Quick play* and minimal record-keeping to allow multiple games in a session.
- *Don't reinvent the wheel*: use *Lion Rampant* core rules as much as possible to represent different types of monsters and attacks.
- Let scenarios drive the game and make the victory conditions interesting and feel like a *narrative story*. Give players extra goals in each scenario to allow different ways to win.
- Offer *malleable* army selection: no hard and fast army lists tied to manufacturers' ranges.

- Don't allow magic or monsters to *overpower* gameplay: all troop types are equally valid in the right circumstances.
- Embrace classic fantasy *stereotypes*: baby-eating ogres are fierce, elves are excellent archers, and goblins cackle as they ride their wolves over your corpse.

My overall goal was to design a fantasy miniatures game that is simple to learn, easy to adapt to your own preferred fantasy setting, and that gives me the same excitement I had when I discovered fantasy gaming in the 1980s. As a consequence, this book is dedicated to Richard Halliwell, Rick Priestley, and Bryan Ansell, whose fault it all is.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED TO PLAY DRAGON RAMPANT

To play a game of *Dragon Rampant* you'll need to read through the section on Battle Rules first, and keep the book handy through your first few games. Most players will be familiar with the basics after a couple of games. To play, you'll need to bring together the following:

- This book.
- Your imagination... be creative with troop types: why ride a horse when you could ride a giant chicken?
- A list of unit profiles.
- A friendly opponent.
- An army of fantasy miniatures for each player; each player will usually field 60 or fewer models in the standard game.
- A good handful of dice: 12 per player should do it.
- A tape measure showing inches.
- A table to play on and some model terrain.
- Some markers to indicate Battered units (gaming gems or dead/wounded models are great for this) and some way to track each unit's Strength Points (small dice or a paper record work just fine).

Design note: I'm deliberately vague about table sizes in Dragon Rampant, but for good reason! Most scenarios will play out nicely on a 6x4' table with full strength 28mm units. A good game can be had on a table no more than 4x4' or even smaller, if you're fielding plenty of Reduced or Single Model Units or are playing with scaled down movement and 15mm models. Some scenarios benefit from a larger table, especially those requiring manoeuvre more than combat.



A 24 army point Sea Elf Warband: Prince and Bannermen (Elite Foot, Leader, Reduced Model Unit) @ 6pts, Guardsmen (Elite Foot) @ 6pts, Archers (Light Missiles, Sharpshooter, Invisibility) @ 9pts, Spearmen (Light Foot) @ 3pts. 28mm Vendel Elves from the author's collection. (Henry Hyde)