



“LIKE ONE THAT SAW DEATH IN THE EYES”



*"[The Preste Joao] told [the Portuguese] to start a mock fight with sword and shield. The [Portuguese] Ambassador ordered two of his companions to comply with the request. There was skill in their exchange of blows, but not to the standard he wanted to display. So when the Preste requested other men to step forward, the Ambassador told Jorge de Abreu that it was for them to take the ground, swords and shields in hand. They fought as well as it is to be expected from people of their quality, trained and raised in war and weapons." P. Francisco Alvares, 'True Account on the Land of the Preste Joao das Indias', Chapter LXXVI.*

*"... two among the nine of us happened to cross words on which of their respective parentages could find better pension at the house of our lord the King ... such was their anger that one hit the other with a big slap and received in exchange a slash from a dagger that cut down half of his face. To this he responded by reaching for a halberd and maiming the arm of his offender. Eventually we all got involved in this quarrel sparked by such an unfortunate argument, to the point that seven of us were badly wounded when the Chaém arrived with all the Anchacis of the Justice. They took us in their hands and gave us thirty slashes on the spot, thus bleeding us more extensively than from the wounds we inflicted to ourselves." TToMP 115*

*"And [António de Faria de Sousa] charged into Coja Acém with the ardour and zeal of the Faith of one that wished him well. He hit the latter with his two-handed sword, a slash down the head that cut through the chainmail coif of the pirate and knocked him to the ground. Slashing again, he severed both the legs of his enemy so that he could raise no more. Perceiving this, the followers of Coja Acém yelled to the end of their breath. Some five or six charged into António de Faria with such a resolve and daring that, ignoring the thirty Portuguese that surrounded the captain, twice had him stabbed and almost knocked him down. Our men, incited by Our Lord Jesus, hastened in succour and in less than two creeds slew forty-eight enemies, right there on top of Coja Acém. Fourteen were our dead, five of them Portuguese, the remaining slaves." TToMP 59*

*"Noticing that the gun shots ordered by the constable of the junk were completely useless (transfixed and mindless that he was), Diogo de Meireles knocked him down a hatchway before he fired a big gun, saying: "Hide in there, oh useless villain, this shot is for men like me, not for those fancied like you!" And aiming the gun through its sight and according to the rules of geometry that he knew fairly well, he fired a load of ball and grapeshot. The cannon ball traversed the first lorcha – the captainship of the four – from stern to stem sinking it right away, while the grapeshot flew over and hit the second lorcha killing its captain and six or seven men." TToMP 59*

### **The basics of combat**

In the course of the years he spent in Asia Fernão Mendes Pinto witnessed or participated in all types of fighting action, from a couple of men brawling for some pity issue to long lasting sieges involving tens of thousands of soldiers. The following rules are concerned with skirmishes or individual combat. Rules for battles can be found in the Advanced Combat section.

The skirmish is just a specific instance of action resolution hence it follows the same conventions that we identified in Section 4:

- The first step is to identify the *context of combat*, including the identification of external constraints and means that can be used in the confrontation.
- Next the players have to establish the *aims* their characters want to achieve through combat.
- Does the character really want to participate in the fight? How purposefully? This is the character's *combativeness*.
- What the character attempts to do is his *fighting performance*.
- Combat usually means that there will be two or more antagonists fighting each other. Their respective combat performances need to be combined into the *outcome* of the fight.

### Skirmish in context

There are many contextual factors affecting combat the most critical of which are presented next. It is up to the GM to define, based on the setting data and the players' inputs, which are the forces participating in the skirmish, what are their motivations and preparedness, where and when does it take place why is there a fight.

#### How the clash develops through time: Pacing combat

A combat takes time on the course of which there will be many exchanges of blows before one side is defeated. In TToMP combat time is broken into \_ creeds that roughly allow the fighter to:

- Charge against the enemy after a general gun discharge; the enemy will be at around 100 paces.
- The time needed in a normal exchange of blows to hit seriously an enemy.

It normally takes four to eight \_ creeds (2 to 4 creeds) in a skirmish to reach the point where there's a clearly identifiable winner.

#### What do you use in combat: Instruments of war

The basic instruments of war are, of course, the weapons and military gear (both defensive and offensive) carried by the parties. They may also use other type of equipment like carts or boats, animals like horses or elephants, etc.

#### *Offensive weapons*

Anything that you use to do damage to your fellow human being is a weapon in a broad sense. Of course, we are looking here specifically at things purposefully created to be used in combat. Weapons are broken up into different classes according to the way they are to be used, how they do damage, how much damage they do, and whether they require both hands to be used.

Considering the way they are to be used we have hand-to-hand weapons and missiles.

The former include the likes of swords, daggers, spears, maces, axes and, of course, your bare hands. Missiles may be propelled like bow arrows, crossbow bolts, sling balls, arquebus shot; or thrown such as darts, stones or gunpowder pots.

If we concentrate on the way they do damage, we get impaling, cutting, crushing, shoving and burning weapons.

If we look at how much damage they do, we get a modifier to the results BD.

Some weapons require both hands to be operated while others only need one hand, thus allowing the character to use two one-handed weapons or to fight with just one arm.

*"It suited Our Lord that in a little over three creeds 26 of the 40 men [were put to death] while the remaining jumped into the sea"* ch. 46

*"It took less than two creeds to kill them all"* ch. 146

*"all of them very weak and with no weapons other than some burned sticks and short swords plus some shields made of pine boards"* ch. 52

Hand-to-hand weapons require two further qualifications based on their range and their fighting technique.

Range refers to the distance at which they can be used more effectively: Short, medium, long and extra-long.

Fighting technique can be either melee or fencing. Melee requires a swing of the weapon from the back to the front while fencing requires a thrust of the weapon by keeping it in the front.

HAND TO HAND	DAMAGE		HANDS	RANGE	TECHNIQUE
	TYPE (1)	MOD (2)			
<b>Axes</b>					
Hatchet	CUT	2p	1 handed	Short	Melee
Medium axe	CUT	1p	1 handed	Medium	Melee
Medium axe	CUT	1p	2 handed	Medium	Melee
Long axe	CUT	-	2 handed	Medium	Melee
Lucerne axe	CUT, impale	- / 1p	2 handed	Medium	Melee
<b>Blades</b>					
Daggers	IMPALE, cut	1p / 1p	1 handed	Short	Fencing
Rapier	CUT, impale	- / -	1 handed	Medium	Fencing, melee
Long sword	CUT	1b	2 handed	Medium	Melee
War sickle	CUT	1b	2 handed	Long	Melee
<b>Maces (3)</b>					
Small staff	CRUSH	2p	1 handed	Short	Melee
Staff	CRUSH	2p	1 handed	Medium	Melee
Long staff	CRUSH	1p	2 handed	Medium	Melee
Mace	CRUSH	1p	1 handed	Medium	Melee
Mace	CRUSH	-	2 handed	Medium	Melee
Long mace	CRUSH	-	2 handed	Medium	Melee
<b>Spears</b>					
Short spear	IMPALE	-	1 handed	Medium	Melee
Short spear	IMPALE	-	2 handed	Medium	Fencing
Long spear / Pique	IMPALE	-	2 handed	Long	Fencing
<b>Special</b>					
Brawling	CRUSH, wrestle	3p / (4)	1 handed	Short	Fencing, melee
Halberd	Impale, cut, grapple	1b / 1b / (5)	2 handed	Long	Melee

*“He hit the latter with his two-handed sword, a slash down the head that cut through the chainmail coif of the pirate and knocked him to the ground. Slashing again, he severed both the legs of his enemy so that he could raise no more.” ch. 59*

- (1) If one weapon can be used to deliver more than one type of damage, the type capitalized is the primary intended usage of the weapon. Furthermore, all weapons can be used as impromptu weapons (see below) for crushing purposes doing the same damage as a mace of similar size.
- (2) For weapons that can do different types of damage the damage modifiers for each type are separated by a slash.
- (3) Maces can be provided with pikes so that they do their normal crushing damage plus impaling damage at 2p.
- (4) Wrestle allows the fighter to immobilize or throw an enemy.
- (5) Halberds have a hook that can be used to grapple and dismount horsemen.

When looking at missile weapons we have to take into account several concerns that are specific to them: how many hands they need to be operated, their effective range and how long it takes to ready them for usage.

Differently from hand-to-hand weapons, we have to consider two things when we think about the hands needed to operate missile weapons: reading the weapon to be used and attacking with it.

Range is measured in paces and corresponds to the distance at which a volley of missiles is usually shot. The values provided are average and rough estimations.

Preparation is estimated in terms of \_ creeds needed to prepare the weapon to be used. It does not apply to most thrown weapons but is crucial for most propelled weapons.

MISSILES	DAMAGE		HANDS		RANGE	PREPARATION
	TYPE	MOD	READING	USING		
<b>Shot</b>						(1)
Bow arrow	IMPALE (2)	1p	2	2	60	_ round
Longbow arrow	IMPALE (2)	-	2	2	100	Immediate
Crossbow bolt	IMPALE	-	2	2	100	_ round
Sling stone	CRUSH	1p	2	1	40	_ round
Arquebus shot	IMPALE	-	2	2	100	1 round
Musket shot	IMPALE	1b	2	2	100	1 round
<b>Hurled weapons</b>						
Dagger	IMPALE	2p	-	1	10	Immediate
Dart	IMPALE	1p	-	1	20	_ round
Javelin	IMPALE	-	-	1	20	_ round
Stone	CRUSH	1p	-	1	10	Immediate
Big stone	CRUSH	-	2	2	5	_ round
Gunpowder pot	FIRE	-	2	1	10	_ round
Burning oil	FIRE	-	2	1	5	_ round
Chalk powder	BLIND	-	2	1	5	_ round
<b>Artillery</b>						

*“So many were the stones hurled into the boat that all those inside risked being killed. The boat turned back, its sailors severely wounded and the Portuguese that went with them seriously hurt from two stone blows to the head.” ch. 50*

- (1) Preparation refers to the time needed to ready the weapon to shoot. If there is a need to coordinate the fire of several combatants into a simultaneous volley or in the case of snipping that requires attentive aiming, preparation will call for an extra \_ creed.
- (2) Arrows may be used with burning materials to put combustible targets on fire.

Impromptu weapons are things not designed to be specifically used as weapons. The best way to handle them is by choosing the weapon from the above list that most closely relates to the impromptu weapon (usually in terms of type of damage), and next adapting the characteristics based on the description of both the weapon and the object being used as a weapon.

### *Defensive weapons*

In a combat, just as important as offensive weapons are defensive weapons. These include both the usage of hand-held weapons to parry incoming blows and armour.

Parry weapons work either by deflecting the attacking blow – weapons that can be used both to attack and parry – or by blocking it in the case of shields. ...

Armour blocks the incoming blow. Its ability to provide protection depends on the materials used, how it is made and the type of damage of the incoming blow, and it corresponds to a modifier to the BD:

ARMOUR TYPE	INCOMING DAMAGE RESULTS ROLL			
	IMPALE	CUT	CRUSH	FIRE
Heavy cloth	-	-	-	1p (1)
Padding	-	-	1p	1p (1)
Leather	1p	1p	-	1p
Cuirboilli	1p	2p	-	1p
Studded	2p	2p	1p	1p
Chainmail	2p	3p	-	-
Plate	4p	4p	1p	1p

- (1) Provides the protection but can get on fire. If this happens, the penalty is reversed into a bonus of 1b to the fire damage.

Defensive weapons play a major role in skirmishes. In fact, they mark the difference between life and death, victory and defeat more often than not. One of the major advantages of the Portuguese soldier is the fact that he usually carries heavy armour into battle. Because of this, they are usually wounded in less protected parts of the body, like the arms and the legs. It's also frequent to see them being hit in the head in moments where they took out their helmets.

*“a weak bunch, poorly equipped with what their defence required, with no armour and carrying only sticks, ten or twelve spears and a harquebus”, Ch. 146*

### *Other instruments*

Mounts & etc.

### Where does the fight happen and where are the combatants: Positioning in combat

Space plays a major role in combat. The critical issue is how do the different participants place themselves or find themselves placed in space in relation to each other. It refers to the relative distance and direction of the character towards other characters, entities or things. Positioning is important because it affects the usage of weapons and movement. There are basically three types of positioning: Hand-to-hand engagement, missile engagement and disengaged positioning. Notice that positioning is done on a one-to-one basis it defines how two characters are positioned to each other in the course of any given combat round. Notice also that positioning can change in the course of the round if the characters move.

*“On of our arquebusiers that carried a double shot arquebus found himself alone facing three enemies. When they attacked he shot down the first. When the two others closed on him, he fired again and killed a second. The remaining enemy turned back to fly away but our soldier unleashed his sword, charged and put him to rest with a couple of slashes.” CA ch. 25*

The characters are disengaged if none can use effectively a weapon to attack the other in the course of the combat round; there is missile engagement if at least one of them may attack the other with a missile weapon; and there is hand-to-hand engagement if at least one can attack the other with one hand-to-hand weapon.

Basically, you have to determine at what distance are the characters from each other according to the weapon ranges given above: Short, medium, long, extra-long.

If the character is in the range immediately above the range of his enemy's weapon, he is in contact range.

### *Missile engagement*

Missile weapons have different ranges as provided in the weapons' description. There is a difference between individual missile weapons like handguns, bows and crossbows and heavy missiles. The latter are discussed in the battle rules. For now let's restrict our attention to personal weapons. Furthermore there's also a difference between propelled weapons and thrown weapons.

The ranges presented in the description of the missile weapons are for volley fire, their most effective usage. In the case of propelled weapons this corresponds to something between 60 and 120 meters. By default we consider that this is 100m.

In the case of thrown weapons we consider that this range is close to 30 meters.

The volley range is the distance that allows the combatants to optimise several fighting objectives:

It allows for a reasonable level of accuracy without requiring developed marksmanship. That means that an unit of missile users may do enough damage to the enemy to the

point of disrupting its cohesion. Above that range the accuracy of the volley decreases very fast.

It can be followed by a charge into hand-to-hand combat before the enemy has time to recharge and fire a second volley, specially in the case of powerful individual missile weapons like crossbows and arquebuses.

It is not close enough to allow the enemy to maximize the effectiveness of its own missiles, thus minimizing the losses to the enemy's volley.

It is possible to use missiles above volley range but it reduces the effectiveness of the weapons both in terms of precision and power of the shot.

Most often than not shooting above volley range is the works of a marksman and requires good quality weapons, thus compensating for the loss in precision and power of the shot.

Of course, missiles can also be used closer than at volley range. Any missile used at a distance of no more than 1/3 of volley range is considered at point blank (30 to 40 meters for propelled weapons; 10 meters for thrown weapons). Point blank missiles are more precise and do more damage. But using it at this range also means that the soldier may not have the time to ready himself to face an incoming enemy that avoids the missile, thus becoming vulnerable to his hand-to-hand attack.

### *Hand-to-hand engagement*

The basic factor affecting the positioning in terms of hand-to-hand engagements is the size of the weapon since it determines at which distance it can be used effectively to attack. There are three basic hand-to-hand weapon ranges:

- Close range for short weapons like daggers and, well, your hands;
- Medium range for one handed weapons and 2 handed weapons no longer than 2 meters like swords, maces, axes or short spears;
- Long range for two-handed weapons like long spears, halberds, pikes, lances, etc.

*“The enemies were so entangled that they wounded each other with the pommels of the swords” ch. 10*

In principle a weapon can only be used properly at its range but there are some exceptions:

- Daggers can be used both at close and medium range, but they suffer a penalty if used at medium range;
- Most weapons can be used at a lower range than their intended range as if they were a mace.

### What conditions how you fight: Combat constrains

There are many contextual constrains that may affect combat. These may have to do with the nature and characteristics of the place where the fight takes place, the weather, etc.

*example*

Most of the time they will be handled as modifiers to either commitment, performance or outcome.

### *Surprise*

The most critical constrain affecting combat and war is surprise. Readiness to fight is essential at all levels: It impacts on commitment since to enter a fight may mean risking

ones life, so one has to be willing to do it; it affects performance outcome because a surprised character may not be prepared to fight in the best conditions, both in terms of abilities and equipment.

In most situations, if two parties stumble into each other without being ready for it, either they don't engage or it will require some action to bring themselves to start a fight.

On the other hand, if both parties are ready and willing to fight, and there is not an overwhelming gap in forces among them, the encounter may go on and on until it reaches a decision:

*“At this juncture there started a beautiful fight made of slashes from those close by and thrown darts and gunpowder pots from those more afar, while one hundred and more harquebus kept shooting with no rest, so fierce that for almost half-a-hour no side was able to perceive the signs of a victory in the making” Ch. 50*

The ideal situation is the one when your side is ready for battle and is able to completely surprise the enemy. If this happens, even the weakest party may be able to completely defeat a much stronger enemy:

*“And since the enemy felt secure, and was mindless of the presence of a potential attacker, and it was already past midnight, he provisioned the weakest of the watch guards. Our four fustas swiftly converged to the galley with the same impetuous and eagerness and sixty of our men jumped inside the enemy's vessel. Before the enemy was able to figure what was happening and get ready to fight back – for which he would need some two or three creeds – our men put to the sword more than eighty Turks and the remainder jumped into the sea, to the point that in the galley no man remained alive nor person to which life would be spared.” Ch. 146*

Importantly, we can infer from the last excerpt that a sleeping enemy will need from four to six \_ creed turns to recover from the surprise. Of course, this is an extreme case. If the surprised party is not asleep, recovering from surprise may take from one to three \_ creeds.

As has been mentioned, surprise works at several levels. It may affect the formation of the aim, the commitment, the performance or the outcome.

Sometimes the character is not even able to form an aim before suffering the attack. This is what happens if the character is sleeping or in a similar state. In this case the character must first get hold of his senses, get an understanding of the situation, and next form an aim.

In other occasions the character may be able to realize that he is under one attack he didn't expect. In this case surprise affects his commitment.

The surprised fighter may also not be physically prepared to fight because, for instance, he is that he is in the middle of an activity that does not allow him to get into the fight right away. In this case he may either have to carry over his current action into a stop before redirecting his performance too the fight or suffer a penalty to his performance.

Finally, it may happen that the fighter is not equipped both in terms of defensive or offensive weapons. If this happens the character must either fight with whatever is at hand or spend some \_ creeds arming himself – if the enemy allows for it, of course. In this case surprise may affect commitment, performance and outcome.

### Aims in combat

The major objective of combat is to win. But what exactly does the expression “to win” mean in the context of a skirmish? Most of the time victory means one or more of the next: to defeat your direct opponent; to participate in victory of your party; to get the rewards that fighting entails. And what does defeat means? It may mean to abandon combat safely, to be killed or wounded, to lose the goods one is trying to protect.

In fact, combat is not started for combat’s sake. More often than not it is a mean to achieve another objective. This may be of economical (maybe payment or booty), political (gaining honour or calling the attention of the leader) or psychological (The appeasement of fury or revenge) in nature. But it is there.

In any case, after combat starts there are two primary aims that the character will want to achieve through melee:

- To survive the encounter, unwounded if possible;
- To defeat the enemy, either through killing him or seeing him rout.

### Commitment in combat

The primary aims of combat drive the nature of the commitment of the character while fighting. Combat incorporates both attack and defence so these do not count as sub-actions. Yet, how the character balances attack and defence depends on his commitment:

COMMITMENT IN SKIRMISH	
Nature	Impact
All attack (Total)	The character does not use defensive actions, concentrates all his performance in attack.
Offensive (Committed)	The character gives precedence to attack. He has to spend at least 2/3 of his PP in attack.
Adjustable (Ambivalent)	The character decides if he attacks or defends. In any case, he has to spend at least 1/3 of his PP in each of these two performances.
Defensive (Reticent)	The character gives precedence to defence. He has to spend at least 2/3 of his PP in defence.
All defensive (Opposed)	The character does not attack and concentrates his action in defence. If possible he will try to avoid fighting all together by escaping the skirmish.

Notice that this only applies if there’s a confrontation. If the character is trying to attack an adversary that does not defend himself – meaning that the attacker does not need to use defence at all – commitment is handled according to the standard rules for action.

### Factors affecting commitment in combat

Factors affecting commitment ...

#### *Traits*

Personality, Values, Abilities, Goals, Personal equipment (weapons), Physical status, Relationships.

#### *Other factors*

Orders, group pressure, perception of balance of forces, total surprise, limited surprise.

*“With these God forsaken words the devil spirited them to a point that, gone amok, they formed a body and charged back so passionately that it was unbelievable to see*

## What you attempt: your performance

### General description of skirmish performance

When defining the skirmish performance the critical point is to define what your character does to whom. The description has to cover three aspects: movement, attack and defence – either through dodge or parry. Of course, combat is also subject to external constraints and the availability of means.

*Example*

### Movement

Skirmishes are full of movement with fighters going around the fighting field, and closing or turning around or distancing from each other in order to get the best strike range.

	<b>Movement</b>	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Effectiveness</b>
<b>Basic</b>	Hold	Slow	Poor
<b>Intermediate</b>	Fighting manoeuvres / Tactical movement	Standard	Standard
<b>Advanced</b>	Combinations of intermediate	Fast	Excellent

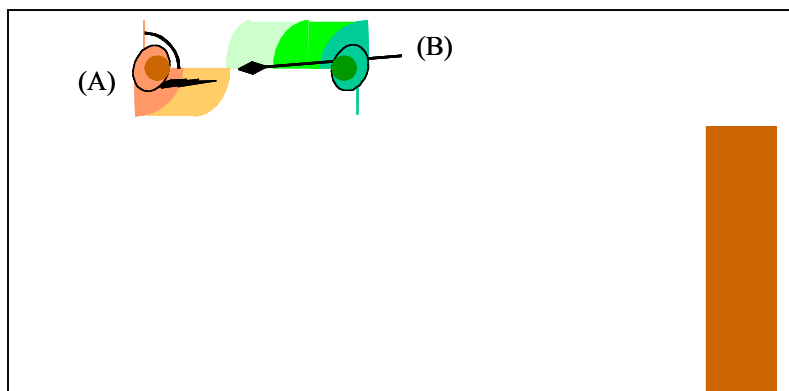
- Hold on to the present relative positioning.
- Fighting manoeuvres attempt to change the relative positioning between two fighters involved in hand-to-hand combat.
- Tactical movement is an attempt to change the position within the fighting field.
- Combinations of intermediate allow the character to combine different manoeuvres or to combine manoeuvres and tactical movement.

### *Fighting manoeuvres*

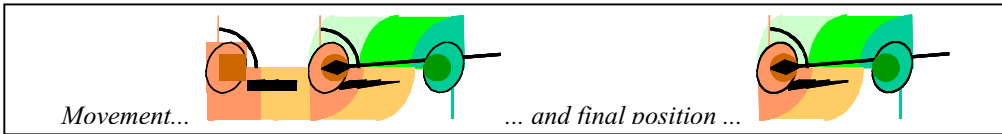
There are three basic fighting manoeuvres:

- Push to a closer weapon range;
- Pull to a more distant weapon range.
- Rotate 45° either left or right of the opponent within the same weapon range.

*A and B are in a training fight using blunt weapons. A carries a medium sword (medium range) and shield and B carries a 2h long spear (long range). The combat starts with both combatants out of reach of each other. A wants to close on B while B waits, relying on the longer reach of his weapon, but he will attack as soon as A gets into X-long range since this gives him the advantage of hitting without being hit. If A presses too much, B will step back to keep distance.*



First round: A makes a double push (advanced manoeuvre). B doesn't move.



At this distance B may attack A but A cannot attack B. All he can do is to hit B's spear.

Second round: A attempts to close on B to get him within the range of his sword. B wants to hold the present distance to his adversary. So, he just pulls back:



In this case timing and effectiveness of the manoeuvres may have an impact on how things unfold, so we need to look at those further aspects of fighting movement. This will be done when we look at tactical movement.

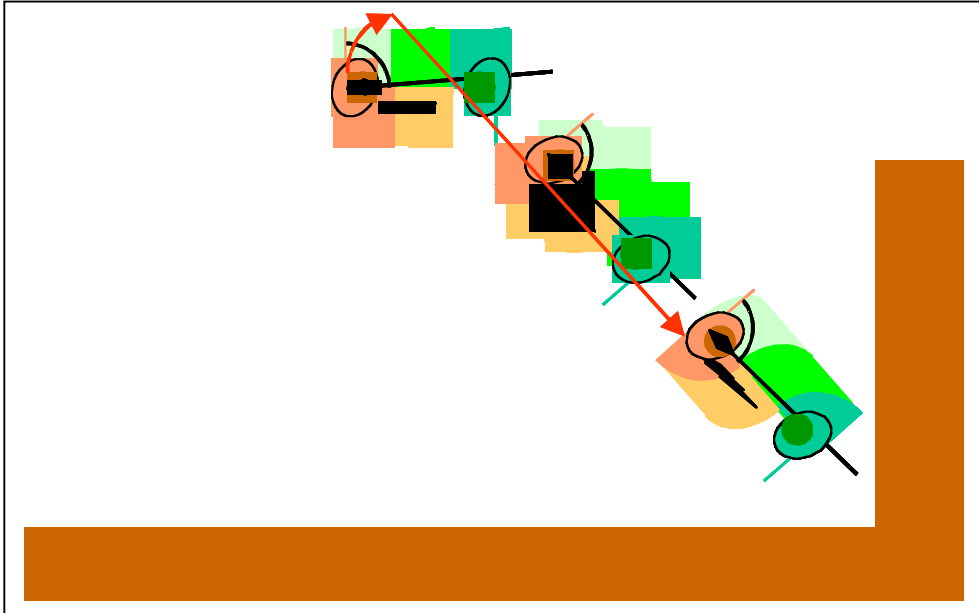
Timing defines who takes precedence in the movement. The faster character moves first. Each level of timing above the adversary allows the character to make a move (pull back; push; rotate) before the adversary. If both characters have the same timing, they move at the same time.

Effectiveness defines which of the combatants achieves his movement intentions. The character with the highest effectiveness is able to get the final positioning.

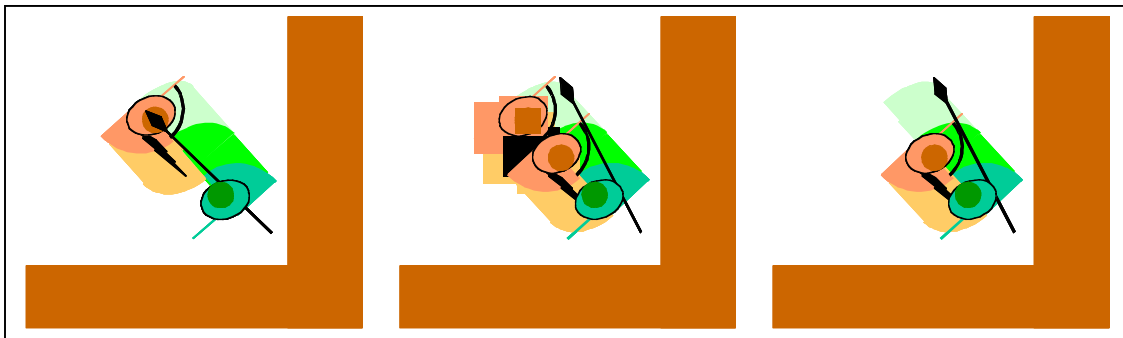
### *Tactical movement*

Engaged movement allows the character to replace himself and his adversary within a range of no more than 10 meters from the starting position at the beginning of the round.

By the end of the second round (see above) A still finds himself within attack range of B while B keeps outside of A's attack range. A decides that he needs to B Against the wall so that B cannot keep stepping back out of his reach. To achieve this he needs to both rotate to the right of B (a fighting manoeuvre) and press his adversary in a tactical movement:



*A was successful. Now B is cornered and cannot step back neither can he attempt to rotate to escape A's pressure. It's time for A to close on his adversary:*



*A was successful. From now on he has the advantage of placement. He can attack B while B cannot attack with his spear. Either B drops the spear and tries to pick another weapon (if he has one), or he is able to escape the delicate position he was driven to, or he will be finished before long.*

Furthermore, disengaged movement allows the characters to:

- Move ready to fight for up to 30m;
- Charge into an enemy placed at no more than 60 meters;
- Run up to 100m with no combat preparation;
- Engage by moving into contact range of an enemy placed between 30 and 60 meters but without entering combat.

In both cases we are assuming that the characters are moving within a plain and free terrain. If there are obstacles that may hinder or slow movement, they will reduce the distance travelled. The fall down into two situations:

- Obstacles that cannot be crossed, like walls, etc. The characters have to move around them.
- Difficult terrain that makes movement harder like shrubs, soaked or irregular terrain, things and bodies laying down, etc. These slow down the characters.

## Attacking

The different types of attack call for different costs for the different components of the description.

Attacks have the same cost in performance ranks than any other action:

	<b>Power</b>	<b>Precision</b>	<b>Timing</b>
<b>Basic</b>		1	
<b>Intermediate</b>	+1	+1	+1
<b>Advanced</b>	+2	+2	+2

The power of an attack corresponds to the modifier to be applied to the results roll.

Precision defines where the attack lands:

- Basic precision allows the attacking character to define a direction for the attack. This direction coupled with the defender's stance provides the final location hit (see below).
- Intermediate precision allows the character to define the body zone he hits.
- Advanced precision allows the character to define a critical point to hit.

Timing allows the character to place his attack before his opponent. If both parties attack at the same timing, the attacks are considered simultaneous.

### *Melee and fencing attacks*

Melee is a form of attack where the fighter swings his weapon from the back of his body to power the blow in a movement of arm and torso. Fencing is an attack technique where the character places his weapon in his front and thrusts forward towards his enemy, using the move of the whole body to power the blow. Melee maximizes the power of the attack while fencing maximizes its timing and precision.

A fencer requires a good deal of free space around him to power his attacks. He needs to have at least a meter free on the opposite side of the direction of the attack. If he lacks that space (if he is cornered), his attack lacks in power, thus suffering a +1p modifier to its results roll.

The attack rules work as stated above in any case where we find either melee vs. melee or fencing vs. fencing. What about melee vs. fencing?

Since melee attacks are slower than fencing attacks, the timing of the attacks has to be adjusted accordingly:

### **TIMING PRIORITY**

		<b>Basic</b>	<b>Fencing</b>	<b>Advanced</b>
	<b>Basic</b>	Fencing	Fencing	Fencing
<b>Melee</b>	<b>Intermediate</b>	Simultaneous	Fencing	Fencing
	<b>Advanced</b>	Melee	Simultaneous	Fencing

In any case, the melee fighter can level things by spending an additional Performance Rank.

Furthermore, since melee is relatively static as compared to fencing it provides better precision of the attacks of the fencer, specially on what concerns advanced precision. Because of this the fencer only needs to spend +1 Performance Rank when doing an advanced precision attack against a melee adversary.

On the other hand, the fencer is limited in its ability to use parrying weapons and attack at the same time. If he uses a parrying weapon he suffers a penalty to the power of his attack of +1p for each size rank of the weapon he is using to parry:

<b>PENALTY</b>	<b>WEAPON</b>
+1p	Small shield, Short weapon
+2p	Medium shield, Medium weapon
+3p	Large shield, Long weapon

This can also be cancelled with the expense of Performance Ranks.

*Brawling*

*Shooting missiles*

*Hurling missiles*

Defending

If there are several different ways to deliver damage, there are also different ways to avoid it.

*Dodge*

- Effectiveness (quality) refers to how effective your parry is in terms of damage it can avoid.
- Nature (complexity) refers to the how you want to avoid damage.
- Timing is the ability to react to the attack fast enough to be able to dodge it.

	<b>Effectiveness</b>	<b>Nature</b>	<b>Timing</b>
<b>Basic</b>	Poor	Keep out	Slow
<b>Intermediate</b>	Serviceable	Evade	Standard
<b>Advanced</b>	Excellent	Avoid and hold	Fast

Nature:

- Keep out – you keep out of the range of the attacking weapon independently of any attack; this is specially useful if your weapon is of a longer range than the one of your enemy;
- Evade – you move out of the range of the attacking weapon if there’s an attack;
- Avoid and hold – you dodge and keep within range of the attacking weapon.

*Parry*

- Effectiveness (quality) refers to how effective your parry is in terms of damage it can absorb.
- Coverage (complexity) refers to the area of your body you are trying to protect with parry.
- Timing is the ability to react to the attack fast enough to be able to parry it

	<b>Effectiveness</b>	<b>Coverage</b>	<b>Timing</b>
<b>Basic</b>	Poor	Static	Slow
<b>Intermediate</b>	Serviceable	Partial	Standard
<b>Advanced</b>	Excellent	Total	Fast

*Example*

Static coverage

Can be used with dodge. Requires a shield. It's simply the act of putting the shield so that it offers coverage for some body locations, blocking attacks directed at these locations. The # of BL depends on the type of shield:

- Small: arm holding the shield;
- Medium: arm holding the shield plus one adjacent body location;
- Large: arm holding the shield plus two adjacent BL.

Partial coverage

Is an action directed at deflecting an incoming attack. Incorporates a limited element of dodge so it cannot be used with dodge. Allows for the coverage of up to 4 BL:

- High: arms, head, torso for high and medium attacks.
- Low: arm holding the shield, legs, torso for low and medium attacks;
- Medium: Arm holding the shield, torso, other arm for attacks from shield side, head for low and medium attacks, legs for high and medium attacks;
- Shield side: arm holding the shield, torso except for opposite side attacks, legs, head;
- Opposite side: arm holding the shield except for attacks from the same side, torso except for attacks from the same side, head, opposite arm, opposite leg, same leg except for attacks from same side.

Total coverage

Blocks attacks from wherever they come.

Shields give a bonus to timing according to their size (Small 0; medium +3; large +6). If the timing is  $\geq$  the incoming attack, there's a full parry. If the timing within five points below the one of the incoming blow, it makes \_ parry (roll parry). If the timing is lower than 5 it misses completely the attack.

Multiple performances within a round

So far the skirmishing rules work on the assumption that the character attempts to deliver as much damage in a single blow as possible, thus maximizing the damage he can do to his enemy. Under this assumption the character will be moving around his enemy, trying to get a good opportunity to hit. Yet, the character may opt for a different tactic where he attempts to place several weaker blows expecting that by chance one of them will do enough damage to place his enemy out of action. Furthermore, the character may have to deal with several enemies, thus needing to split his action by them. In both these cases he will need to resort to multiple performances.

Multiple performances work just as in any other type of action. The player splits his performance points by the different targets. The increasing costs for multiple performances still apply.

### *From intended performance to actual performance in skirmish*

[os cavaleiros] começaram a **escaramuçar** de uma parte para outra, e o fizeram tão bem e tão despejadamente que as mais das vezes se concentravam uns com os outros, e em muitas delas caíam três, quatro no chão, por onde se entendeu que devia de ser gente do termo, que era ali vinda mais força que por sua vontade 65

#### **How things unfold: the outcome**

Combat outcome is directed at the results of the attacks in terms of (by this order) timing, precision, quality and positioning.

#### *Timing attacks and defences*

The development of the events depends on the timing of both attack and defence. The next factors may be involved:

Timing [attacker and defender] + relative positioning + [weapon lead time]

...

#### *Where the blow lands: precision*

...

#### *Combat is a confrontation*

In the case of clashing performances, the players need to account for and balance the factors implied in both performances to determinate the result. First, the passive party arbitrates the result of his counter-action. This result is incorporated into the principal action as a modifier to the result factors:

<b>Counter-action's result</b>	<b>Modifier to principal action's result roll</b>
Critical	3p
Major	2p
Minor	1p
No result	–
Fumble	1b

There are other factors that must be taken into consideration, though:

(Location + power + weapon) – (weapon parry + dodge + armour)

#### *Result*

The balance of the different factors is rolled. The result produces the next effects:

<b>SKIRMISH RESULTS</b>	
Critical	Character is dead or dying
Major	Incapacitating wound
Minor	Non-incapacitating wound
No result	Scratch or bruise with no functional impact
Fumble	Penalty to subsequent action from attacker (1p)

o Tomé Lobo escapou com seis cutiladas, de uma das quais lhe derrubaram a face direita até o pescoço, de que esteve à morte 35 com três zargunchadas e uma pedrada na cabeça, de que esteve à morte por três ou quatro vezes 38