

'A GAME OF WHITE QUEEN' - STaB CLUB CAMPAIGN

Final(ish) evolving rules by Gary Mitchell

Thanks for all the input. This is to be a simple RPG campaign system based upon alignment - and shifting alignment - during the WOTR, and incorporating into history the quasi-fiction of the books and TV series *'The White Queen'* which (whatever its accuracy) has turned a lot of people on to studying the era. Yes, fun for all the family... unless, of course, you decide to murder your nephews to seize the throne... Allegedly

Actual loyalties in the WOTR shifted wildly, our system will need to reflect this, yet remain playable. As a club riven by strife over 'The Cousins War' at STaB we have Yorkists, Lancastrians, and those who'd rather not get involved in our arguments. Also essential is a Gamesmaster / Umpire to run things.

I will be gamesmaster. Pete Lowe has volunteered to champion the Lancastrians, and Steve Purbrick the Yorkists.

PRE-GAME PREP

- 1) We will start in March 1461, just before Towton, with two rival kings, Edward IV and Henry VI 'controlled' by the two champions. Lord Grey is dead, BTW, so Lizzie Woodville can marry Edward IV
- 2) Firstly, I shall draw up our list of the characters you wish to use. These can be actual persons (e.g. Elizabeth Woodville, Henry VI, Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick) or fictional (e.g. David Powell, Earl of Tuckton, Lady Olivia Mitchell). I will make a card for each - possibly with a picture on - certainly with current stats on. Portraits of historical characters can be found by using an internet search engine - or you might prefer to use photogenic stills from the TV series *'The White Queen'*.
- 3) Dave Powell wants to be a Burgundian Mercenary, available for hire, which we can do.
- 4) Each character will have an 'alignment' listed, either York, Lancaster, 'neutral' - or combinations thereof. 'Neutral' in this context simply means 'no fixed loyalty', so,

the Stanley brothers will be 'neutral' as they will side with whoever offers them the best deal (at least one brother per 'House'). E.g. Margaret of Anjou will be totally Lancastrian; Warwick 'the Kingmaker' York, Lancaster *and* Neutral as he'll side with whichever he thinks will give him the most power at court - as will his daughter Anne, who was married to Edward of Lancaster and Richard of Gloucester (at different times). You get the idea...

- 5) Each noble character will also need a 'status' rating, to reflect their power and charisma. King Edward IV should be status 5 (the maximum value at start), King Henry VI status 3 (he's crazy, but he's still an anointed king). Important nobles like Warwick, Gloucester etc should have a status of 4. I will also assign each noble a retinue of forces based on this status. This can be randomly generated or based upon historical assumptions. Let's assume for now they're to be based upon 'status'. So, King Edward IV at 'status 5' should have five standard units of foot or two units of horse. Henry VI at 'status 3' three units of foot and one of horse. Formula? 'Status' = an equal number of foot + plus half that of mounted or artillery¹ (round fractions down).
- 6) Each 'lady' will be assigned an 'influence' to represent her family connections - this is the number of dice they will be able to use, to affect the opposition. E.g. Margaret Beaufort - four dice; the 'witch' Elizabeth Woodville three dice (as she engenders so much hatred due to her lowborn status). Note they retain this status whether married or not - Warwick married off his daughters to improve his position (sadly not something the Gamesmaster has yet managed...) Noble daughters will be controlled by their fathers (e.g. Warwick's) until married off. Widows are 'single'
- 7) We will have additional cards drawn up to be NPC² 'neutrals'. These represent 'spoils' land, titles, daughters able to inherit and so forth. These will be awarded to players after battles to reward and improve their standing, and can be invented or actual. These will also be subject to Gamesmaster intervention, *c'est la guerre*.
- 8) These NPC can also be used to 'pay' your mercenaries in a pre-battle bidding war.
- 9) A 'current claimant' will be assigned for both York and Lancaster. This will usually be the current 'King' (if these die the next in line) - although Lancastrian players may wish to have Margaret of Anjou rather than Henry VI pulling the strings? Either way

¹ Ok, recent research as to the location of the 'actual' Bosworth battlefield suggest a larger tactical role for guns that previously thought, and you might like to reflect this. The WOTR are on the cusp of the Renaissance anyway - it's just in England we tend to think of it all kicking off with Henry VII's reign.

² NPC = 'Non player character'.

the 'claimant' will be the leader of that House and will controlled by that House's champion.

THE GAME

- 1) Ready? At the start I'll distribute cards - possibly two 'nobles' and one 'lady' per player or 'hand'. This can be done randomly to players present ONLY, 1 card per player. I guess if we *don't* let your Yorkist friends play out their Ricardian fantasies they'll get the hump ☺ Players will therefore need to tell the GM which side they favour.
- 2) We'll gather around a table and play our cards right, to see who is who. Allow a period of '*Diplomacy*' - as players work out which side(s) they want to support in order to improve and enhance their 'status' and power, depending of offers, how they've been bribed by titles etc. to improve their 'status'.
- 3) Declare allegiance for the coming battle to the Gamesmaster, who will draw up 'force lists'. It's perfectly Ok for neutrals to 'sit on the fence' - but if doing so players should tell the GM in private whether or not they're attending the battle, and if they attend whether they will fight. Remember Bosworth? A lot can happen on the day...
- 4) Prepare tabletop forces for the coming battle - York versus Lancaster with the 'neutrals' siding as per how they've declared in 3) (above). Or not. Please bring your minis along to the meetings
- 5) Meet up to play the same, the GM preparing the terrain. This done each side should play their 'lady' cards. Simply total each side's dice pips and divide by five - this being the number of units *deducted* from the other side's army, to the losers choice. Example? York has to lose three units from play, so as the terrain is wooded decides to lose an artillery and archer unit. These units are not 'lost', just take no part in the battle.
- 6) Play out the battle using '*Hail Caesar*' or other favourite set of rules. Alan is keen to use '*HS*' (see below), so that's what we'll do, but other rules can be used as and when.
- 7) Characters deemed to be 'standing at the back' will not be involved in combat and will always escape.

- 8) AFTER THE BATTLE. Each monarch on the 'winning' side gains a status point - each 'loser' loses one (if killed players are out of the game - or can be replaced by 'sons' who begin at zero status). Destroyed or 'broken' units are gone for good, but those retreating can come back for the next battle. Any killed 'nobles' not represented by players go into the 'spoils' pile.
- 9) Recalculate the number of units each noble has, based upon revised 'status'. This may mean gaining or losing - *c'est la guerre*. Roll a dice for each named married lady - a '6' indicates their death (childbirth - biggest killer of women before c.1900). Note Queen Margaret counts as a 'bloke' for all game purposes
- 10) As we're playing a campaign we then begin the whole sorry process again until all opposition is crushed or has throne in the towel. Sorry 'thrown'.
- 11) Maybe a campaign journal and propaganda sheet would be helpful? *'The Son In Splendour'*? *'Lancaster Today'*? This will be published on Gary's website.

'Hail Caesar' Adaptations.

Thanks to Alan Easton for these.

Gotta say, the WOTR is very 'cuspy' for being 'medieval' or Renaissance. *Hail Caesar* let's you do the army list your way by adding 'options'. It's about agreeing your troop types and getting the balance right. Based on internet consensus knights are treated as 'Heavy Cavalry' with a single 'wild fighters' re-roll. English Knights of the period weren't noted for their skill - preferring to fight on foot - so we opt instead for the straight 'Medium Cavalry' option. Billhooks and bowmen can be treated as combined units of heavy or medium infantry, and experience has shown it helps to extend the bow range and *not* make said 'retinue' longbowmen 'marksmen', assuming those Sunday spent training were down the pub, and they were not as effective as their Hundred Years forebears. 'Handguns' we treat as crossbows, 'Bombards' as light artillery as it was primitive and we didn't want them to dominate. In the spirit of the rules we've come up with 'house conventions' for things not specifically covered - for example, where a unit is enfiladed we count it as 'in column' for its morale test result - and that artillery *can* make traversing shots. That's the hip thing about *Hail Caesar* - local modifications are positively encouraged. Alan's latest deliberations can be summarised below:-

<i>Type</i>	<i>Clash</i>	<i>Sust'd</i>	<i>Short Range</i>	<i>Long Range</i>	<i>Morale Save</i>	<i>Stamina</i>	<i>Useful/Notes</i>	<i>Points</i>
Fully Armoured Mounted Nobles/Knights (1)	9	6	3/0	0	4+	6	Lance Wild Fighters (1)	34 (S) 27
Medium Cavalry Men at Arms	8	5	3	0	5+	6		27 (S) 20
Dismounted Nobles/Knights	8	7	2/0	0	4+	6	Double Handed	27 (S) 20
Retinue Infantry	7	6	2/0	0	5+	6	Double Handed, Drilled,	24 (S) 20
Retinue Archers	5	5	3	3	5+	6	Drilled	24 (S) 16
Levy Infantry	5	5	3	0	6+	6		20 (S) 13
Levy Archers	4	4	3	3	0	6		20 (S) 12
Welsh Spear	6	6	3/0	0	6+	6	Long Spears, Wild Fighters (2)	
Welsh Archers	4	4	3	3	0	6		
Irish Kerns	5	5	3	0	0	6	Wild Fighters (3)	
Irish Gallowglass	7	6	2/0	0	5+	6	Double Handed	
Mercenary Pike	6	6	3/0	0	5+	6	Phalanx, Pike	29
Mercenary Handgunners	4	4	3	0	6+	6	Cross bow (and any casualties cause a break test)	23
Mercenary Crossbow	4	4	3	3	6+	6	Crossbow	24
Artillery	1	1	2	2	0	3		20

Note: – Small units deduct 2 from Clash, Sustained and Stamina.
Small units deduct 1 from Short and Long range.

Knights and Nobles = Denoted by a 'Standard'
Retinue Infantry = Denoted by a 'Two Banners/unit'
Levy Infantry = Denoted by 'One Banner/unit'
Levy Archers = Usually accompany Levy Infantry
Retinue Archers = Usually accompany Retinue Infantry or Nobles

Double Handed = enemy morale capped at 5+
Marksmen = re-roll 1 missed shot
Phalanx = defeats by 2 are treated as a draw
Pike = chargers lose charge bonus
Crossbow = enemy morale capped at 5+. No closing/traversing shots

Alan found that extending the bow range to 24" gives the longbow too much clout. True, the longbow did have a greater range than a simple bow but *HC* rules were written for the simple bow. In his games he has left the range of all bows at 18" but suggests *if* 24" is adopted use the standard rules for shooting, i.e. short range 9" long range 18" BUT, if shooting with a longbow at between 18" and 24" - no morale test is required if a 6 is thrown.

Alan likes the idea of Fully armoured Nobles having the wild fighters (1) ability and I has amended his list accordingly (if I got tricked into charging into a bog by a cleverer opponent I'd be a 'wild fighter' too, calling for my horse etc). Alan's retinue are drilled and stubborn, his retinue archers are drilled. This means that retinue troops can pass through each other without disorder. Also Retinue troops are more likely to stand. Note: He keeps archers and retinue as separate units.

We have included the rule that any casualties from handguns cause a break test, (must have been a bit unnerving!).

Alan has also added Welsh and Irish troops. He gives the Welsh 'wild fighters (2)' and the Irish 'wild fighters(3)' just to annoy Dave P! We're told the Irish were quite fearsome.

Alan has also listed some house rules for artillery and stakes. Hope this helps.

We also have to think carefully about 'Leadership Ratings' for the main protagonists. Even the most Lancastrian of us have to admit Richard was an excellent warrior – so we should opt to give him a Leadership Rating of '9'. Henry Tudor, Earl of Richmond / Henry VII we should give a rating of '7', as his skills lay more in sound fiscal management, healing broken kingdoms, rescuing princess from wicked uncles etc etc. Henry VI? About 5 - 'probably best if you leave it to the wife, Mate?' Sub-commanders we should rate '8' on the basis they've been fighting each other and switching sides for years. For simplicity sake each will be rated at '8' at the start.

Player characters attached to units give 3 extra attacks (with associated risks), non-player characters 1 extra attack (with associated risks)