

Campaigns of Ozz House Rules

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These are house rules that clear up ambiguities in the Campaigns of Ozz rules and make battles a little more satisfying to play. Clarifications are in normal type, while options are in red. *Commentary is in italics.* Comments are welcome.

Map erratum

The Winkie and Gillikin map colors are reversed from their counter colors. Winkie map points are purple; Gillikin map points are yellow.

Strategic map movement

A moving stack may drop off units in the first point it enters and then continue movement. The dropped-off units may not move again in the same turn. Similarly, a stack may pick up units or heroes in a point that it moves through. These units may not continue moving once the stack has reached its destination.

If a stack ends its movement in a point that contains friendly units that have not yet moved, the player must take care to keep the stacks separate if he wants the units to move later in the turn. This also applies to dropping off units in a point that contains friendly units.

Stacks consisting of only flying units and leaders may move to any point within 8.5 inches (the width of a sheet of paper), regardless of connections. They pay attrition as if moving by trail. (*Rationale: Give flying units more to do.*)

Fast Combat Resolution

Each army multiplies the total the **combat strengths** of all its units by a single die roll treated as 1/10ths to determine the loss of **combat strength** inflicted on the enemy force. Use the large of the two combat strengths for each unit. If the rolling side has no magic, the enemy must eliminate **strength as close as possible to the result, but no more** (but at least one unit). If the rolling side has magic, the enemy must eliminate **at least as much strength** as the result. Heroes and witches are eliminated if no other units remain. (*Rationale: considers how strong the army is, instead of just how numerous.*)

The Battleboard

Note that the word "force" means either a group led by a Hero or an independent unit.

Imitative

After assigning "move order" counters, the players roll for initiative, using the same modifiers as for strategic turns. Count only those heroes present in the battle. The side with initiative

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may choose to move first or second. (*Rationale: Sometimes you want the enemy to come to you.*)

Battleboard Groups

Players may reorganize the groups in a space at the beginning of each turn.

Assigning Spells

Spells cast on a unit (friendly or enemy) are persistent. They continue to be in effect until the magic user decides to cast it on some other unit or the unit is destroyed. (*See optional alternative below.*)

The Quadling Hero Rolf Guuf is a magic user. He gets one random spell, the same as witches.

Heroes cannot have spells cast on them.

If a unit has both Good Luck and Poor Luck cast on it, the spells cancel out. (*Not likely, since only Zoraster and Glenda have the luck spells. It could happen with mercenary witches.*)

Units subject to Poppies or Confusion **and** Fleet Feet may move 1 space per turn. If using the optional rules for artillery and the Bell described below, these units may not fire or create skeletons, respectively, when moving under this condition.

Spell Dissipation: At the beginning of the Spell Assignment step, roll a die for each spell currently in effect. On a roll of 1-3, it dissipates. The marker is removed from the battleboard. If using this rule, the players should agree on one of these suboptions with respect to the Fireball and Healing spells.

1. These spells are exempt from dissipation.
2. The spells dissipate, and they may be cast again if they do so.
3. The spells dissipate, and they may **not** be cast again.

(*Rationale: Under the current rules, a crucial unit can be kept out of the battle by Poppies or Confusion. This makes that effect temporary, and then extends the ideas to other spells. Fireball and Healing are spells that may be cast only once. Thus, there is an argument for treating them differently. Note that dissipation is not relevant to Transport.*)

Battleboard Movement

A force with an “advance” order **must** move. This move must be into a space closer to the enemy’s side of the board or into another space in its own row (i.e., to or from a flanking space), **but only if that lateral space is enemy-occupied**.

A force with a “back” order **must** move to a space closer to its own side of the board. Units may retreat from the battle by leaving from their first row (see retreat rules, below).

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A force with a “stand” order may move into a space in the same row, if it is vacant or is friendly-occupied (even if it also is enemy-occupied). It may not move into a space of a different row or a space that is solely enemy-occupied.

Heroes unaccompanied by units may move two spaces on the battleboard. A Hero’s force moves at the speed of the slowest unit. If a Hero commands a force consisting of a single unit that is subject to Fleet Foot or Transport, the hero gets the benefit as well. However, if that unit were subject to Poppies or Confusion, the Hero may still move, leaving the unit behind.

A player may attempt to change a force’s movement orders at the moment it activates. Roll a die, subtracting 1 if the force is a group led by a Ruler. Results:

- 1-3: Success. The player chooses a new movement order.
- 4-7: Failure. The force must execute its current order
- 8-10: Chaos: The force is assigned a new order at random, which it then must execute.

Coordination: If a Ruler is in the same space as one or more additional forces with the same order as the Ruler’s group, the ruler may announce that she/he is “coordinating.” Instead of conducting the ruler’s activation, rotate its stack 180 degrees. As each other force in the space activates in the turn sequence, the player may attempt to add it to the Ruler’s coordination. Roll a die. If the result is 10, the unit must immediately execute its order on its own. Otherwise, rotate the force 180 degrees. The Ruler may then execute the order with all coordinated forces or wait in order to add more. The Ruler **must** execute the coordinated order when all eligible forces have been activated (that is, when the last eligible force has been coordinated or immediately after it fails coordination). (*Rationale: Allows for more concentrated attacks, at the expense of delays.*)

Battleboard Combat

The rules state that the **moving player** decides whether to imitate combat. If a force moves adjacent to an enemy-occupied space but does not initiate combat, then the enemy may not attack the moving force with ranged fire. If a force moves into an enemy-occupied space, melee combat is automatic.

If a force initiates combat against a space containing more than one enemy force, all the enemy may participate in combat. That is, the attacking force may not choose to attack a single enemy force.

If a group initiates (ranged or melee) combat against the units in a space and there are enemy units in other spaces with the range to fire at the enemy, these units do *not* participate in the combat.

An artillery unit may fire when its own group initiates combat or when the enemy attacks its space. It may not fire defensively when the enemy initiates combat against friendly units in another space or when enemy units simply move within its range. (This also applies to Giants.)

Forces in an area may designate two units as flank guards, one for each side. If an enemy attacks from the same row, then only the appropriate flank guard may engage. They are the

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first to be eliminated in such an attack. Any additional losses are applied to the full force as usual. (*Rationale: Gives some reason for using the flank columns.*)

A leader alone in a space at the end of a combat turn is placed in the nearest space containing friendly units. If no such space exists, it immediately retreats two rows towards its starting side. This may result in its retreating, as above. (*Rationale: Gives leaders the chance to stay alive a bit longer.*)

A cavalry unit may retreat before melee combat if the enemy has no cavalry in the same space. It moves into a space closer to its side of the board. It is not subjected to ranged fire.

A cavalry unit may charge by moving two spaces into an enemy-occupied space. It gets a +1 increase in its melee strength when it does so. However, it will be unable to attack again until *after* its next movement segment. This includes defense against enemy attacks. Flip the counter to its blank side as a reminder. In its next movement segment, it may move normally. Flip the counter back to its front side.

A flying unit may retreat before melee combat if the enemy has no flying units in the same space, in the same manner as cavalry.

Non-flying units may not attack a flying unit in melee combat, unless the flying unit chooses to participate. Non-flying units with ranged attack strengths may attack a flying unit, with a +1 die roll penalty, even if the flying unit does not participate in melee combat. Such units may not participate in melee combat in the same combat action. They are still subject to losses from enemy melee combat.

An artillery unit may not fire in the turn in which it moves. Flip the counter over until the beginning of the next turn. It may fire defensively before it moves. Exceptions: An artillery unit with Fleet Feet may move **one** space and fire in the same turn. An artillery unit may fire after being moved by the Transport spell. (*Rationale: limbering and unlimbering.*)

A unit with a color-coded movement allowance benefits from a +1 die roll modifier when being attacked in its home terrain, both melee and ranged fire. Units with a black movement allowance do not get terrain benefits. (*Just a bit of chrome.*)

Battleboard Retreat

The rules say that the last step of the battleboard action sequence is “Both players decide whether to retreat.” However, there is no explanation of how retreat works. These rules fill in that void.

Players simultaneously reveal whether they want to retreat. It may be useful to write the decisions on slips of paper or use agreed tokens (such as specified counters).

When a player declares a retreat, all units that can move are removed from the battleboard. Intrinsic strength units and units affected by Poppies or Confusion may not retreat. If such units remain after a side has retreated, the battle continues until units of only one side remain. The spells cast by the retreating side are cancelled.

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All retreating units must retreat to the same point, including any that retreated via movement.

Attacking units retreat to the point from which they moved into the battle point.

Defending units may never retreat into a point occupied by forces or Fortified Centers of a different nation, nor to the point from which the attacker arrived. In addition, they retreat using these priorities:

1. To a point closer to their Castle, provided that the Castle is not enemy-occupied.
2. To a point closer to their national territory.
3. To any other point, consistent with the restrictions above.

If a force has no point to which it can retreat, then it may not do so.

Retreating units are subject to attrition.

Retreating units may not be activated for movement on the strategic map in the current game turn. They may retreat if attacked again. (*Rationale: Gives some incentive not to retreat, and a reason to attack units that you know are going to retreat.*)

Sieges

The player may choose one medium artillery unit as part of the intrinsic strength of a Fortified Center. This is *instead* of one of the “standard infantry units,” not in addition. The player may choose two medium artillery units when defending a Capital. (*Rationale: Fortresses generally had heavy artillery.*)

The intrinsic strength units of a Fortified Center benefit from a +1 DRM when attacked. The intrinsic strength units of a Capital get a +2 DRM. (*Rational: Protected by the walls*)

Honors of War: An attacking player may, at his option, offer the defending player the honors of war. If these are accepted, the intrinsic strength is reconstituted as the requisite number of regular infantry units in an adjacent point, as if it had retreated. The Fortified Center is then razed, with no loss to the attacker. (*Rationale: Honors of war was a common custom in the early modern period. It spares the attacker casualties, and the defender salvages some troops from the loss.*)

Recruitment

When the Winkie and Gillikin players recruit their own specialist units in the Mercenary Recruiting Grounds (page 10), they are **not** subject to the Recruiting Mishap die roll.

If a Hero is recruiting at a point where specialized units are available, the player may choose those units rather than choosing from the entire force pool at random. If there is more than one kind of specialized unit available at the point, the player chooses among them at random.

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Ruler Return Phase

If a Ruler is killed, she or he does not return in the Ruler Return Phase in the same game turn. In subsequent recruiting segments, roll a die. The ruler returns on a roll of 1-5. Apply +1 DRM if the Castle is razed and an additional +1 for each **two** other Fortified Centers are razed (round down).

When the Ruler returns, she or he is placed according to these priorities:

1. In the Castle
2. In a Fortified Center
3. In a Population Center

(Rationale: As written, the Ruler returns in the same game turn in which she or he is killed. These rules add a bit more consequence to this event.)

Scenarios

“Meeting the Wizard of Ozz” has no turn limit or victory conditions in the rulebook. In keeping with the pattern in the other scenarios, this one is 10 turns long. If one side razes the other’s Castle, it wins an automatic victory. Otherwise, each side scores 1 point for each unit and population center they control on the map, plus the intrinsic strength of the Fortified Centers that they raze.

The Bell

The exact function of the Bell is not specified very well in the rules. This is an attempt to remedy that.

The underline on the Bell’s movement allowance indicates that it cannot move on its own. It must be carried by another combat unit. It is too heavy to be carried by flying units. On the battleboard, the Bell may move only one space per turn, even if carried by faster units. Exception: The carrying unit does benefit from the Fleet Feet spell, allowing it to move two spaces per turn.

If the Bell is subject to Poppies or Confusion, it may not be moved (but see the optional rule above concerning the interaction of Fleet Feet and these spells.)

The Bell is never destroyed. If “eliminated” by ranged fire, it stays on the map but may not create skeletons for the rest of the battle (*the operators are dead*). If “eliminated” in melee combat, it is captured instead. Munchkins and Quadlings may capture the bell but may not use it to create skeletons or participate in melee combat.

During the Assign Spells phase, the Bell may be used to create a skeleton unit, **unless there are already two such units on the board that it has created previously**. At the end of the battle, only the two national skeleton units, plus any permanent mercenary skeletons (as per page 8 of the rules) will persist. Note further, that an army is restricted to only one kind of mercenary unit

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(page 3). Thus, a player with other mercenaries will have to decide whether to keep the skeletons or the others.

If the Bell creates a skeleton, it may not move that turn. Flip the counter over as a reminder. Exceptions: If the carrying unit has Fleet Feet, the Bell may move **one** space after creating a skeleton. The Bell may move via the Transport spell and create a skeleton in the same turn.

Discussion: I don't know how, or even if, the Bell figures in the Oz novels or the Wars of Ozz rules. If the plain language on page 8 of the Campaigns of Ozz rules is to be believed, the Bell can pump out skeletons during every turn of a battle. This seems excessive. Was it intentional? Maybe it is meant to compensate the Winkies for their weakness in ranged firepower? All the scenario setup instructions use the phrase "the Bell and its skeleton." That seems to imply that there is usually only one skeleton. I put in the limit as an option because of this uncertainty. The optional limit on movement when casting envisions that the Bell is something you have set up and operate. It also means that the stream of skeletons will have to move forward to catch up with the rest of the army.